

of its scope of activities, it should be big enough to say, "We will recommend that certain growers who are prepared to grow this type of yellow flesh potato for overseas markets only should be allowed to do so. We will be prepared to let them grow it under special licenses and to market the potatoes through their own outlets and through agents overseas."

I believe there are people in this State today who are willing to do this. They are willing to grow yellow flesh potatoes for an overseas market of which they have been assured. However, I would prefer that this type of production be undertaken by growers who normally grow potatoes for the Western Australian board. I consider it can be done. We have some very efficient people who are growing potatoes in this State. Here again, it should not be a question of economics. If it is felt by our existing growers because, perhaps, of disabilities in some areas in regard to transport costs, that they cannot economically grow this yellow flesh potato for overseas markets, then I say we have no excuse for not letting others who wish to take this chance to do so. They should be allowed to grow potatoes and to market them themselves on the understanding and undertaking with the board that they will only sell them outside of Australia to this special Asian market, or anywhere overseas where this type of potato is popular. I consider we would be doing an injustice to ourselves, as Western Australians, if we did not accept this challenge and view it in this light.

Turning to the question of seed potatoes briefly once again, I would like to commend the board for the fact that it has very recently exported something like 500 tons in, I think, three consignments of Delaware seed potatoes to Mauritius, and this was against very keen competition indeed. I believe this competition is such that the price for seed supplied to Mauritius from other countries is lower than the price which they are paying for our Delaware seed. This is to the credit of the board and I commend it for its work. However, here again I commend the board, but mention the thought that this is not enough. We have a greater market awaiting us in Asian countries for this type of product.

On the question of processed potatoes, we realise that this is a problem of economics again, because we have only a very limited home consumption. However we in Western Australia today are eating processed potatoes which in some cases come from the United States of America. I would suggest that although the problem may be insurmountable at the present time, the question of processing potatoes, such as French fries and the like, should not be overlooked but kept constantly before us.

I do not wish to speak very much longer on this subject but I would like to emphasise my remarks very quickly in this way: I mentioned earlier some of the countries which supply yellow flesh potatoes to Singapore and the States of Malaysia. If we could take the place of the Netherlands in supplying these countries, this would give to Western Australia an income from this product of something like \$A1,000,000. This is something which we do not have at the present time. With our geographical situation and with our increasingly good relations with our northern neighbours, I consider this is not beyond the bounds of possibility.

Coupled with those remarks, I could mention Indonesia. This is a market which I have not mentioned before. I am not sure at the present time whether Indonesia is economically able to take our products in this way. However, I venture to say that the time is not far distant when its economy will improve to such an extent that it may be looking for this type of product from us. Therefore I say the field is virtually unlimited.

I suggest very earnestly that firstly the Western Australian Potato Marketing Board, secondly the Department of Agriculture, and thirdly the Department of Industrial Development should endeavour to get together on this problem and tackle it, because if ever there is a magnificent chance for people in this State who wish to grow potatoes for this market, this is it. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. N. McNeill.

House adjourned at 9.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 9th August, 1967

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

QUESTIONS (29): ON NOTICE

RAPID TRANSIT TERMINAL

Establishment at Midland

1. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Railways:

Taking into account the reported agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments as to the positioning of the east-west passenger terminal—

- (1) Will the plans and specifications already drawn up for the rapid transit terminal based on Midland Junction in order to serve the hills area be put into use?
- (2) If "Yes," when is it contemplated the work will commence and when is it anticipated the scheme will begin operating?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Now that the interstate terminal is to be located at East Perth, it is anticipated we can proceed with the previous plans and specifications for the rapid transit terminal at Midland.
- (2) Tenders were previously called for the erection of the terminal. The department will endeavour to negotiate with the tenderers to expedite this work and if this is not possible tenders will be re-called as quickly as possible.

PENSIONERS

Wyndham: Payment of Rates

2. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

Is a pensioner who owns a block of land in the townsite of Wyndham compelled to pay rates on such a block?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Yes. The pensioner must be owner and occupier of property to qualify for deferred payment.

COLLIE DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Laundering of Linen

3. Mr. MAY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is there any intention of his department transferring all soiled linen, etc., to Bunbury to be laundered at that centre?
- (2) Is he aware that if this rumoured rearrangement takes place it will mean the displacement of several female employees from the Collie District Hospital?
- (3) If this change is effected, will it be with his approval?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

KING BAY PORT

Control by Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.

4. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Why is it necessary for the Port of King Bay to continue indefinitely under the control of Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd. as a private port?
- (2) Is it not desirable that as soon as practicable all ports in the State should be subject to the Ports and Harbours Act, 1917?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) There is not considered to be any necessity to change the present arrangements at this juncture. The State's position is fully protected under its agree-

ment with Hamersley Iron Pty. Ltd.

The company is virtually the only user of the port, the whole cost of which it had to bear, and provision is made for other genuine users who might want to use the port.

Another factor to be considered is that if the port is proclaimed and the Government has to assume full control and full responsibility, additional costs will be incurred in regard to staff, housing, and equipment whilst the income from port usage will remain the same. In any case matters relating to the control of the port remain constantly under review so that the port may be proclaimed when it is felt such a step is necessary.

IRON ORE

Deepdale Deposits: Timetable for Development

5. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for the North-West:

Adverting to his replies to questions on Tuesday, the 1st August, relating to the new timetable for B.H.P. to meet commitments with regard to Deepdale, is the way open for the dates to be further extended at the decision of the Government or are the dates firm?

Mr. COURT replied:

As far as the Government and the company are concerned, the new timetable is intended to be firm but the way is open, within the overall provisions of the ratified agreement, for any Government at its discretion, due to changing circumstances, to negotiate amended dates.

SCHOOL TEACHERS

Shortage

6. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does he really believe that the shortage of trained teachers in Western Australia "will right itself here," as he has been reported as saying?
- (2) Is it not a fact that experience has shown in this and other States that positive action on the part of governments is necessary in order to ensure that trained teachers are in adequate supply?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes. The shortage of trained teachers will be relieved as the result of steps taken by the department to increase the number of students in the teachers' colleges

as indicated by the following figures:—

1964	....	1,319	students	enrolled.
1965	....	1,453	"	"
1966	....	1,696	"	"
1967	....	1,866	"	"

The completion of the new secondary teachers' college, at present under construction, and the planned new primary college, will result in a further increase in the number undergoing training.

- (2) Yes. This was the reason for the positive steps referred to above being taken by the Government.

MOTOR WRECKERS

After-hours Trading

7. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) How many motor wrecker firms have been given a permit for after-hours trading?
- (2) Is any firm which is not in possession of a permit advertising in the Press that it will give express delivery service, anytime, anywhere?
- (3) What are the grounds for refusing a permit for after-hours trading?
- (4) If the circumstances are as expressed in (2) and (3), why the discrimination?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Nil.
- (2) I have been advised that this is so.
- (3) Section 92 of the Factories and Shops Act, 1963-65, does not authorise the issue of a permit for after-hours trading, but only for the supply of a requisite required in an emergency to enable a motor vehicle to proceed or continue on a journey.
- (4) No permits have been issued to motor wrecking firms under section 92 of the Act. Appropriate action is taken when an offence relating to after-hours trading is deemed to have been committed.

PASTORAL LEASES

Damage from Mining Operations

8. Mr. BURT asked the Minister for Lands:

What protection has the holder of a pastoral lease against the actions of a mining company which has been granted a mineral holding on his property and which—

- (a) indiscriminately uses bulldozers to dig deep costeans and to clear lease boundaries;
- (b) carries out prospecting operations close to dams and other watering places thus preventing stock from using them;

(c) uses station roads with four-wheel drive vehicles in wet weather thus rendering them impassable for conventional drive vehicles;

(d) cuts fence wires or pushes over fences to gain access to selected exploratory sites;

(e) disturbs lambing ewes thus causing loss of lambs?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

Under the provisions of the Mining Act, pastoral leases are Crown land, but land within 440 yards of any artificial dam or reservoir, or any bore or well which has been sunk by the present or previous lessee of a pastoral lease is exempt from occupation by the holder of a miner's right. Provided that this exemption does not apply to land surrounding any excavation previously made and used as a mining shaft for the purpose of prospecting for gold by any person other than the lessee of the pastoral lease.

Mining companies prospecting on pastoral leases are generally careful to maintain good relations with pastoralists. If any damage is done to improvements, it is regarded as a matter between the mining lessee and the pastoralist.

KALGOORLIE-BOULDER RACING CLUB

Granting of Freehold Lease

9. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has a decision been made in regard to a request from the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club that the freehold title or a lease of Kalgoorlie lots 2565 and 2566 be granted to the club?
- (2) If not, when is it expected that the decision will be made and notified to the club?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes. Kalgoorlie Lots 2565 and 2566 will be made available to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club under a Crown grant in trust.

This will convey similar title to that of the existing racecourse.

LAND

Yilgarn: Releases

10. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) How many individual farmers hold in excess of 4,000 acres in the Yilgarn, either under C.P., lease, or freehold?
- (2) What area is held in each instance?

- (3) Have any of these landholders received Crown grants in the past 10 years; if so, what areas were involved and to whom granted?
- (4) What is the total area of land released in the Yilgarn in each of the past 10 years?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) to (3) Information not available. Specific cases relating to conditional purchase and special leases could be examined on request. I would say that freehold land does not come within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Lands.
- (4) Statistical information on this is available only from the annual periods ending the 30th June since 1960, and refers to the Yilgarn and Jilbadji land districts. It is as follows:—

Year ending the 30th June—

1960—	95,411 acres.
1961—	38,225 acres.
1962—	60,445 acres.
1963—	64,423 acres.
1964—	79,822 acres.
1965—	36,940 acres.
1966—	55,060 acres.
1967—	24,208 acres.

Total area for the eight years is 454,534 acres.

Present recording system was instituted by me in 1959, prior to which no such records were kept; and I instituted a system of recording land releases in each particular district.

South or South-East Yilgarn: Releases

11. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What stage has been reached in releasing areas of rural or grazing land in the area referred to as South or South-East Yilgarn?
- (2) When is it anticipated that applications will be called?
- (3) What will be the average size of blocks for selection?
- (4) What total area is to be released?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) 54 locations have been surveyed southward of Bodallin, Moorine Rock, and Southern Cross. The Department of Agriculture proposes to inspect this land to advise on methods of development.
- (2) On completion of requirements as in (1) above about the end of this year.
- (3) 3,981 acres.
- (4) 215,022 acres.

12. *This question was postponed.*

CARBON TETRACHLORIDE

Precautions against Poisoning

13. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware—

- (a) of *The West Australian* (the 23rd June, 1967) reference to two recent Queensland deaths arising from the use of the dry cleaning agent carbon tetrachloride;
- (b) that a Public Health Department pamphlet has been issued in that State to try to prevent further poisoning or fatalities?

- (2) What, if any, measures have been taken in this State to protect the community?

- (3) If none, will he ensure that the Public Health Department emulates Queensland in the manner mentioned and/or takes other precautions to eliminate accidents from the product alluded to?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (2) The sale of carbon tetrachloride is controlled by the Poisons Act, 6th schedule. Containers must be labelled "Poison", "Keep Out of Reach of Children", "Avoid Contact with the Skin", and "Avoid Breathing its Vapour."
- (3) Further restrictions on its sale are under consideration by the Poisons Advisory Committee.

RENTAL AND PURCHASE HOMES

Geraldton: Programme

14. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What number of houses are currently being built in Geraldton by the commission for—
 - (a) rental homes;
 - (b) purchase homes;
 - (c) two-unit flats?
- (2) How many are awaiting completion?
- (3) What is the building programme for Geraldton for 1967-68 for—
 - (a) rental homes;
 - (b) purchase homes;
 - (c) war service homes;
 - (d) two-unit flats?
- (4) When will tenders be called for the erection of homes in the 1967-68 programme?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Geraldton—Housing units under construction as at the 31st July, 1967:
 - (a) (Commonwealth/State Housing agreement) rental, 24 units.

- (b) State Housing Act Purchase,
5 units.
(c) Cottage flats, 4 units.
- (2) See (1) above.
- (3) Programme for 1967-68:
- | | |
|---|-----|
| (a) and (d) Rental homes | 80 |
| (includes two-unit flats
dependent upon demand). | |
| (b) Purchase homes | 20 |
| Total | 100 |
- Plus balance of 1966-67 Programme, 27 rental.
- (c) War service homes dependent upon any applications being received.
- (4) Land is at present being developed at Rangeway. It is expected that the first tenders will be called late this month for the first batch of houses.

PRISONS

Geraldton: Plans for New Structure

15. Mr. SEWELL asked the Chief Secretary:

What progress has been made with the planning and preparation for building the new regional gaol at Geraldton?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Planning is in its final stages and the time of commencement of the project will depend on the availability of finance.

POULTRY FARMING

Commonwealth Levy: Refund to Growers

16. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has a decision yet been made in regard to refunds to growers of Commonwealth poultry levy payments; if so, in what manner are refunds to be made?
- (2) If no decision has been made, when may this be reasonably expected?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) As soon as all relevant information has been collected.

TRAFFIC

Safety Belts: Survey in U.S.A.

17. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Traffic:

What comments has he on the following:—

"A nationwide survey in the United States of America, conducted by the Auto Industries Highway Safety Committee showed that in 1963, 47% of motor drivers used seat belts

for local travel whilst 74% used them for long trips. The latest survey in 1966 showed the corresponding figures to be 37% and 60% notwithstanding that in the latter period seat belts were standard equipment. Furthermore nearly two-thirds of 500,000 drivers questioned did not use seat belts when most needed—within 25 miles of home where 80% of traffic accidents occur?"

Mr. CRAIG replied:

What I am about to say is actually not an answer to the question but is merely a comment.

As I understand it, the position is that, while the percentage of safety belt wearers has dropped, the overall number has increased. I think this is explained by the fact that safety belts were an optional fitting in most States of the U.S.A. prior to 1963 when the first survey was taken.

It is reasonable to assume then, that most people who saw fit to equip their vehicles with belts would wear them.

Following legislation to compel manufacturers to fit safety belts, the total number of belts in motor vehicles would multiply many times and would affect a wider range of drivers including many not so amenable to wearing belts as were the previous volunteers.

With seat belts as standard equipment, it follows that they will be used if people can be convinced of their value, and education on these lines rather than compulsion is the accepted means to achieve this objective.

I assume the honourable member is referring to an article which appeared in the *Federal News Letter* of the 4th August, 1967?

Mr. Graham: That is so.

Mr. CRAIG: It is also pertinent to mention therefore that according to a study made recently for the United States Public Health Service, the regular use of seat belts by drivers and passengers could have saved more than 12,000 lives in the U.S.A. in 1965.

Mr. Graham: That was conjecture.

NARROWS INTERCHANGE

Height of Sand Mounds

18. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the height at present above low water mark of the Swan River of the tallest mound

of sand at the site of the Narrows interchange?

- (2) Is it proposed that the mound will be further heightened?
- (3) What will be the final maximum height of the roadway when constructed?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) 49 ft.
- (2) The height of 49 ft. referred to in the answer to (1) may be increased to 51 ft. to accelerate the settlement of the subsoils.
- (3) A number of roads will be constructed on the reclaimed area. The highest point of the highest road will be 45 ft. above low water mark.

AMBULANCES

Country Services: Commonwealth Financial Assistance

19. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

As there is a growing urgency for finance for country ambulance services, can he advise the outcome of discussions with the Commonwealth Government to assist financially such associations?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The matter is still under consideration by the Commonwealth.

ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Air Conditioning

20. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Can he advise if it is the intention of the Government to install an air-conditioning plant in the Albany Regional Hospital?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

It is considered that existing facilities are adequate.

SCHOOL BOOKS

Late Supply to Native Children

21. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) In spite of requisitions having been submitted three to four months before the end of the previous school year, is he aware that the free books and school requisites which are supplied to missions, State schools and convents for issue to native children are not issued until well on in the school year?
- (2) Is he also aware that the late arrival of school books, etc., is not only handicapping the children but making teaching more difficult for the teachers?

- (3) Will he have this matter examined and rectified so that the abovementioned free stocks will be available to children at the beginning of the school year?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes. Supply of books and requisitions cannot be made until schools open and a nominal roll is forwarded to the Department of Native Welfare.
- (2) Books are available from previous years and difficulties will only occur with increased enrolments.
Here, might I say that in the education circular which was issued in about September 1966, headmasters were given instructions as to what to do to ensure supplies for the next 12 months.
- (3) The matter will be examined to ensure that nominal rolls are submitted and requisitions processed as quickly as possible.

CARNARVON TOWN LOT 383

Revestment for Recreation Purposes

22. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) As Carnarvon Town Lot 383, Reserve No. 12205 is not now required by the Education Department for education purposes, has it again been vested in the Shire of Carnarvon for tennis and recreation?
- (2) If "Yes," is it now an "A"-class reserve?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) Action is currently proceeding to change the purpose of Reserve No. 12205 (Carnarvon Lot 383) from "School Site Extension (Carnarvon High School)" to "Recreation."
The new "Recreation" reserve will then be classified as of Class "A" and vested in the Shire of Carnarvon with power to lease for any term not exceeding 21 years with the approval of the Minister for Lands.

MINING

Nickel: Claims and Temporary Reserves

23. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:
 - (1) How many mineral claims have been approved for nickel and associated minerals?
 - (2) How many temporary reserves have been granted for these minerals?

- (3) Will he supply a list of the individual holdings of—
 (a) mineral claims;
 (b) temporary reserves;
 held by—
 (i) companies;
 (ii) syndicates;
 (iii) individuals?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) to (3) The information is being obtained and will be made available to the honourable member as soon as possible.

Royalties on Minerals

24. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Will he supply a list of the royalties payable on all minerals in Western Australia?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

These are set out in the following Acts:—

- (a) Minerals generally—Mining Act Regulations 205A and 205B.
 (b) Iron ore—in each iron agreement Act.
 (c) Bauxite—Alumina Refinery Agreement Act.
 (d) Oil—Petroleum Act.

Mr. Moir: Why not list them?

25. *This question was postponed.*

SCHOOLS

Enrolments of Less than Fifty

26. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many State schools have an enrolment of less than 50 pupils?
 (2) How many of these have less than 20 pupils, where are they situated and what is the respective enrolment at each such school?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Figures as at February, 1967—

- (1) 139.
 (2) Fifty-three schools have less than 20 pupils as follows:—
 Special schools:

Metropolitan:

Boordack (Wellington Street)
 Itinerant/Hospital—7.
 Davis Road Occupation—12.
 Lady Lawley Cottage—19.
 Melville Rehabilitation—9.

Country:

Albany Occupation—13.
 Bunbury Occupation—16.
 Busselton—7.
 Collie—7.
 Geraldton—13.
 Manjimup—10.

Special Native:

Argyle Downs—11.
 Cherrabun—13.
 Cosmo Newberry—16.
 Forrest River—18.
 Gnowangerup Agricultural—6.
 Kimberley Downs—15.
 Mt. Margaret—17.
 Nullagine—17.

Class IV:

Albion Downs—16.
 Aldersyde—7.
 Bengier—12.
 Camballin—17.
 Clifton—15.
 Coonana—16.
 Dale West—15.
 Doodarding—7.
 Fitzgerald—16.
 Gascoyne Junction—17.
 Hopelands—10.
 Jardee—19.
 Jerdacuttup—8.
 Jurien Bay—13.
 Kalbarri—18.
 Konnongorring—13.
 Kookynie—7.
 Kudardup—19.
 Kweda—13.
 Lake Varley—19.
 Marvel Loch—14.
 Mt. Hampton—10.
 Muradup—16.
 No. 7 Pumping Station—16.
 Ogilvie—10.
 Payne's Find—5.
 Tingledale—12.
 Wandering—17.
 Waterloo—19.
 Wellington Mills—13.
 Wialki—18.
 Widgiemooltha—15.
 Woodanilling—16.
 Yornup—13.
 Zanthus—15.

STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Ownership of Land in East Victoria Park

27. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Does the State Housing Commission or War Service Homes Division own land in Basinghall Street, East Victoria Park, running through to Hertford Street?
 (2) If so—
 (a) what area of land is involved;
 (b) what is intended to be done with the land?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Yes, the State Housing Commission owns Lots 5 and 6 Basinghall Street and Lots 26 and 27 Hertford Street.

- (2) (a) 3 roods 4 perches.
 (b) The commission is still studying the best utilisation of this land for housing purposes.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS
Accommodation in Superannuation Building

28. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Premier:

- (1) What is the total annual rent being paid by the various Government departments housed in the new superannuation building?
 (2) What is the respective space used by each department?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The rental will not be fixed until the capital cost of the building has been finally determined. In the meantime, the Government has guaranteed a return to the Superannuation Board of 6 per cent. on the capital outlay of the building.

	sq. ft.
(2) Main Roads Department	50,490
Treasury Department	19,180
Premier's Department	7,870
Superannuation Board	3,350
Amenities Room (shared by departments)	2,350

SCHOOL CHILDREN
Medical Examination

29. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) In what school grades are State school children medically examined each year?
 (2) Has the number of grades been reduced over recent years?
 (3) If so—
 (a) to what extent;
 (b) for what reason?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) School children in the metropolitan area have been medically examined in the first, fourth, and seventh grades, plus a sight and colour vision test in high school. In country schools all children are examined at intervals of two to three years.
 (2) Commencing this year, medical examination in the metropolitan area will be confined to children in the first grade, plus children not previously examined, plus any child referred by the teacher or school nurse, and any child the medical officer wishes to review. Some large country centres may be included in the new programme. Other grades will be inspected by the school nurse.

There will be no change in the existing arrangements for the smaller country schools.

- (3) (a) and (b) The alteration in the programme is in keeping with trends in other countries having an effective medical service. Few previously undiscovered defects are seen by school medical officers after the initial medical inspection.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS
Accommodation in Superannuation Building

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Premier:

In his reply to question 28 the Premier indicated that a return of 6 per cent. is guaranteed by the Government to the Superannuation Board in respect of premises rented. Is that figure of 6 per cent. net or gross?

Mr. BRAND replied:

Without doubt, I imagine the figure is 6 per cent. net. However, I will have it confirmed before I finally give the answer.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr. May, leave of absence for twenty-eight days granted to Mr. Curran (Cockburn) on the ground of ill-health.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIFTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 8th August, on the following motion by Mr. Elliott:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

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

MR. DURACK (Perth) [4.53 p.m.]: In rising to support the motion before the House, it is pleasing to note from His Excellency's Speech that the prosperity of the State is being maintained under the direction and policy pursued by the Government; that the economic progress of the State is also being maintained at a most pleasing level; and that there is every prospect of an even greater increase in tempo. I believe that this progress and prosperity is not a matter of accident. It is not something which is by any means self-generated, but it is the result of the detailed and steady application of the political principles with which this Government is charged and in which it believes.

Mr. Kelly: That shows how little you know.

Mr. DURACK: I consider that the progress of the State can only be maintained so long as the Government remains in the hands of the present members.

The extent to which the State has prospered and the level of progress which we have achieved now gives the Government and the Parliament an opportunity to pay more attention to matters of a cultural and aesthetic character, and to pursue values of this kind to a greater extent than has been possible in the past when maximum attention and effort had to be directed towards getting the State moving on an economic level.

In speaking to this motion, I would like to draw the attention of the House to certain matters, particularly in my own electorate, where there is clear evidence of interest in this most important role of Government activity and where there seems every reason to believe that sound basic policies and sound ground work in these directions are being laid down for the future.

Firstly, I would particularly like to congratulate the Government on the decision which the Premier announced shortly before the opening of Parliament. That decision was made in regard to what has been a policy under the metropolitan region plan to reclaim a section of the Perth water between Union Jack Square and the Causeway for the purposes of freeway development. This area—and, indeed, the whole question of reclamation for freeway purposes—has posed a very vexed and vital question which has been engaging the attention of the Government, the Parliament, and the public for several years.

As I have said, I particularly welcome the opportunity to congratulate the Government on its decision not to proceed with the plans in this area as they were originally laid down under the Stephenson Plan. I believe this decision indicates the basically sound approach of this Government to the problem of planning, to the problem of the participation of the public in planning, and to the importance of the river as an aesthetic attraction for the City of Perth.

It seems to me that this decision indicates the Government will be constantly alive to the necessity for the reappraisal of plans, whether they be for freeways or for other planning purposes. It indicates that the Government is responsive to public opinion on such matters. To my mind, it also indicates a proper approach to the use of experts in these fields, because the Government has told the experts, by its decision in this matter, that they are to prepare plans for road development in this area which do not involve reclamation of the river.

On several occasions I have spoken in this House in regard to my views on the proper use of experts in various fields. I believe the Government's decision in this matter is a classic example of the manner in which experts should be used. It is not possible for a Government of laymen or a Parliament of laymen to determine the technicalities, or the preparation of plans, but it is possible for us and the Government to lay down the guide lines within which a plan should be prepared and then for the Government, and ultimately this House, to determine whether the plan is to be accepted or rejected.

Mr. Davies: Did the Premier give any firm directions to these experts?

Mr. DURACK: I would refer the member for Victoria Park to the terms of the statement made by the Premier, which he no doubt has read as well as I have. I am simply commenting on the interpretation I place on the terms of the announcement, and my interpretation of it is along the lines which I have already stated.

Finally I believe this important announcement demonstrates clearly, once and for all, the *bona fides* of the Government on river reclamation, which has been questioned in certain quarters largely, I feel, for party political purposes; because it indicates, as the Government has said all along, that, at all costs, it is anxious to avoid reclamation and has approved of it only in certain circumstances when it has been absolutely necessary.

I am of the opinion the decision indicates that when problems of this kind arise in the future this Government will always avoid, as far as is humanly possible, any reclamation of the river for this type of freeway development.

Mr. Graham: It has not given much evidence of it up to date.

Mr. DURACK: That is exactly opposite to what I have been saying. The Government has shown, precisely, evidence of its attitude and approach to the problem. When one has evidence surely one can give credit where credit is due.

Mr. Graham: Do you mean to mark time until the election?

Mr. DURACK: To my mind what has happened is that an interpretation of the decision, which is in no way warranted, has been made in certain quarters and an effort has been made to play on it, which I would expect to come from the member for Balcatta, but I would not expect it to come from other quarters, such as the interpretation given by Professor Reid of the University, whom I would have thought would have no political interests in these matters other than a non-partisan interest. Yet his reaction is along the same lines as the reaction of the member for Balcatta. This indicates to me that certain people in the community are prepared to use this matter as a

political football and for party political purposes, and not act as interested parties to assist in arriving at a decision which will be in the best interests of the community.

Mr. Graham: With those words, you sound like a statesman.

Mr. Rowberry: Why give these people so many opportunities to protest?

Mr. DURACK: I hope this Government will continue to be given opportunities to make sound decisions in these matters.

Mr. Graham: It has about six months left.

Mr. Court: Wishful thinking again.

Mr. DURACK: As I have already said, this is a matter of first-rate importance from the point of view of both the future of the city and its planning, and as an example of the importance of maintaining this Government in power.

There are many other matters relating to the future planning of the City of Perth on which I would like to speak this evening and on which the Government has already shown some important leadership and given sound direction. I would next refer to the decision now made to build the railway passenger terminal in the East Perth marshalling yards, thereby clarifying a matter which has been in doubt for so long; and, coupled with it, is the decision to remove the present Perth railway station and to make available in that central area of the city a large piece of land—approximately 40 acres—for redevelopment.

The present decision on this project is an endeavour to formulate a plan for the lowering of the railway between Perth and Fremantle and thereby to open up, as it were, a new vision of the future development of the city. I was pleased to note that the Government's attitude towards this matter is quite flexible. Some time ago I noticed that the Minister for Transport indicated that, if plans of a suitable kind cannot be implemented economically, the Government is bearing in mind the possibility of the construction of a freeway along the line of the railway to Fremantle, or some portion of it.

At this time it may well bring forward an economic proposition to proceed with the tentative plans for the lowering of the railway. I believe this flexibility is an important factor which should be maintained when considering the development of the city area. What I also feel is important, and what I am sure the Government will keep in mind, is the vision of opening up the central area of the City of Perth for redevelopment and for cultural purposes. The Government has made a firm decision to abide by the Stephenson Plan with a view to establishing a cultural centre for Perth in the area just north of the present railway station and railway reserve.

Mr. Davies: That is, near the Trades Hall.

Mr. DURACK: I do not see anything wrong with that. It will, of course, increase the value of the Trades Hall, and I trust the honourable member will also appreciate the wisdom of this policy.

Mr. Davies: I hope we can get the same man to value the land as the one who valued the block of land in Scenic Crescent, South Perth.

Mr. DURACK: The importance of planning in this area—or in any area for that matter—is that there should be a noble vision of the city of the future. I would look forward with a great deal of excitement, and certainly with great interest, to the type of city we may one day have with the redevelopment of such a large area of public land in such a vital part of the city.

I hope the Government will make an early decision on the commencement of some of the buildings, at all events, for the establishment of a cultural centre. We speak of a cultural centre, but perhaps it would be better to speak of the type of buildings we will have. There will be a new library, museum, and art gallery, because the existing buildings have outlived their usefulness by the development of the city and the State and cannot provide the facilities they should provide in their present locations.

When the Government decides to select the exact position and the design for these buildings, I would hope to see great attention paid to the architecture that will be considered for them. This is a most important factor when considering redevelopment of a public area of the city and the erection of buildings of great merit; and excitement should be provided. I do not think this necessarily means greater cost in construction. In many ways I think they could perhaps be built even more economically if an open competition were held for a design for this type of building in order that the interest not only of local architects but also of architects outside the State could be aroused, so that they would be induced to submit designs for the construction of these buildings.

The City of Perth badly needs some public buildings of interesting architecture, and the fact that they are to be built in an area where there should be an adequate amount of open space and where they can be set off attractively, would indicate the great possibility which exists for the development of this area.

Mr. Bickerton: Don't you think we should retain the services of Paul Ritter?

Mr. DURACK: I do not think Mr. Ritter's services should be considered at pre-

sent by the Government in making a decision on this or any other matter. Perhaps if he is still here, he may care to submit plans which would be considered along with others that are submitted for this redevelopment.

It is also important that when a generous area of public land is available for redevelopment, there is an opportunity to preserve and to use it for open space, and for the cultivation of open space in an attractive and aesthetic manner. I hope there will not be a desire to clutter up the area to a great extent with buildings which are not of a cultural nature but that there will be, in the centre of Perth, an adequate amount of open space. I think this will give more character to the centre of Perth and will help to draw together what will undoubtedly be two parts of the city: the old city on the southern side, and a newer city which will undoubtedly arise in the future on the northern side of the area of which I have been speaking.

Another matter which I would bring within this problem of cultural and aesthetic development of the city is the need for the construction of a concert hall.

Mr. Davies: Hear, hear!

Mr. DURACK: Here again the Government has expressed interest in this sort of development, and it is only waiting for the city council to give the same practical consideration to it; and I hope this will not be delayed much longer. I think we all appreciate why the city council has not, in recent weeks, been proceeding with its plans in this direction at the speed at which it might have been. But in association with the city council and other local authorities in the metropolitan area, the Government should proceed at a rapid rate with firm plans to establish a concert hall in the city area.

As I said earlier, I think the time has come when greater attention and greater expenditure than has been the case in the past should be possible on matters of this kind within our State. The Government has been naturally concerned to get the State moving in the economic sphere, and it has had to devote a greater proportion of its loan money to matters such as ports, railways, and so on; because these are vital and basic fundamentals. If the State is not prospering, it will not be possible for us to enjoy any cultural advantages at all.

But with the progress of the State I feel sure the Government will be able to pay greater attention to, and expend more money on, these important matters.

I would like to say a few words on the question of town planning generally. It seems to me unfortunate that the question of town planning should so readily become involved in the political arena. There appear to be so many people who wish to

create, in many ways, unreal political issues on this subject.

The process of town planning is relatively new to us in this State, and indeed to Australia as a whole. In many ways we in Western Australia are moving at a faster rate in town planning than are other parts of Australia, and when we have given such attention to town planning as we have in recent years, it has caused the type of heated reaction and controversy which has recently sprung up.

I believe there has been a greater tendency on the part of town planners themselves to present a plan and say to the public, "There it is; that is the plan, and you have to like it." We are not even given much opportunity to lump it. The process of town planning, in my view, is one in which there should be a constant dialogue between the town planner and the public for whom he is planning. I believe we should expect from the town planners perhaps greater flexibility of mind and a greater capacity to accept criticism and alternative suggestions from members of the public. I feel that we in Western Australia have suffered from an absence of critical expert opinion in these matters outside our town planning department.

There is, however, growing evidence of an interest being shown in matters such as these by a number of people of an expert kind, who are now prepared to give to it a good deal of thought, to make submissions, and so on, for the consideration of the town planners.

As I have said, I think it is most unfortunate that this type of discussion should become too readily a political issue and be debated at a political level. I would not by any means suggest that important matters such as the freeway system and the reclamation of the river, and things of that kind, should not ultimately become political; but I think there should be much greater dialogue and discussion of them before they are presented in this fashion.

I have had an opportunity to read some articles delivered in August last year to the Ninth Australian Planning Congress, which was held in Sydney. The most distinguished guest at that congress was an American planner by the name of Edmund N. Bacon, who has achieved great distinction as executive director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission since 1949. He delivered a paper at the commencement of this congress which he termed, "Planning As a Viable Democratic Process."

He described the fundamentals of the approach to town planning of this kind, and his experience in the course of his replanning of Philadelphia. Having spoken of the necessity of the expert to start

with an adequate vision of the plan, and of the setting up of suitable democratic institutions for decision making on planning—both of which I think we have already done in this State—he referred to what he called the “Democratic Feedback,” and “The impact of the democratic response to the planners’ original vision,” and said—

I can tell you from my experience in Philadelphia that every project we put forth in the Commission was originally received with scorn and even derision. I can tell you that it is a painful thing to see the baby vision so carefully nurtured being mangled in the public dispute. But it is here that the vitality of planning-democratic feedback lies. The planner must be able to withstand the onslaught; he must receive the full force of the impact of democratic rejection. Then he must pick himself up, restructure the idea in the light of the public criticism, and proceed around the circuit again. On the fourth or fifth time he may suddenly find that he and the community are indeed one, on this issue at least, and, if he is totally honest, he will admit, of the idea that finally gets built, that he cannot tell how much of it was his own and how much the product of democratic feedback. Indeed, the process itself attunes the planner to become a sensitive instrument of community aspiration.

But all of this requires leadership. Unless the planner stood for something in the beginning, he would generate no heated controversy, spark no fire of action. Unless he is able to withstand the buffets of criticism, and to restructure his proposals in the light of response, there will not be the continuity of thought and action that is necessary to build at the scale of the city.

Those are the views of an eminent town planner; a man who has achieved remarkable success in the field of town planning, and who indicates in his article that the process of town planning is one of vision and democratic response. It is a constant two-way process.

If we are to be successful with our town planning in the future I believe it will be necessary for the town planner to adopt this type of attitude. It calls for an attitude of honest and disinterested criticism by the public, and particularly by those members of the public who are capable of expressing a valuable viewpoint in this sphere.

I hope that a lot of the difficulties we have experienced in recent years in relation to our town planning will be avoided in future by an adherence to the type of principle and approach to the problem that was expressed by this eminent town planner, Mr. Edmund N. Bacon.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [5.28 p.m.]: I would like to join with other members in expressing my deep regret at the sad and sudden loss of our esteemed colleague, Mr. George Cornell. Perhaps I would notice more particularly the absence of the late Mr. Cornell, because a large portion of our electorate boundaries adjoin, and we were quite frequently able to refer to one another matters which might relate to both electorates. For the many reasons that have been expressed here by other members—which I do not propose to repeat—it is very regrettable that we should lose such a luminary from our political sphere.

I would now like to touch on several matters in respect of which I am rather keen to see some improvement. There are a number of suggestions that could be brought forward to improve conditions generally in Western Australia.

I did not enter into the debate on the amendment which was moved concerning the housing question, for the very good reason that the speakers from this side of the House dealt very ably and forcefully with the general shortage that exists; they were able to point out very conclusively that all was not well with housing.

As a matter of fact, I can be more extravagant in my language by bringing to notice some of the things that have been happening in country areas. I asked some questions at the beginning of this session regarding housing matters in several towns and, among those towns, was Merredin, because it is the one centre that has a greater housing requirement than any other portion of the district I represent.

The position at that centre has progressively become worse, despite what the Minister has been able to explain to the House regarding his administration of the State Housing Commission. Like other members, I would say that he is not entirely responsible for whatever shortcoming the commission might have; nor have the men who comprise the commission been remiss in the amount of attention they have devoted to their job, and there is no reason why they should be castigated. After all, they are only carrying out the wishes of the Government. As has been stated, these shortcomings are very considerable.

In the answer to the question I asked in connection with Merredin, conjointly with Southern Cross and Bruce Rock, I found the figures supplied disclosed that in four years Merredin actually had 46 new houses; and that was the number of houses which the Minister mentioned as having been completed. At the end of the period under review, 10 houses were incomplete. That, of course, represents only 11½ homes per year over a period of four years. Under some circumstances, that figure might sound reasonable, especially in relation to a district that is not progressing as fast as Merredin is. But

that is not the case with Merredin. With only 11½ houses per year, the position is totally inadequate for the people in that district.

In 1963 there was roughly a shortage of 23 or 24 houses. However, today there is a lag of over 60 houses, which shows the position is gradually getting worse. The commission says it is only since April, 1966, that there have been outstanding applications for homes in that area; but that is very misleading, because never at any stage has the housing position been anywhere near up to date.

The answer to my question would imply that in April, 1966, the housing lag had been disposed of. It is ridiculous to say that; and that has never been the position in Merredin. I think the recognised number of applicants is 60. The shire council, which would have its finger on the pulse more than anybody else, claims that at the present time there are 80 people with a legitimate reason for seeking a home in that centre. Possibly that figure of 80 is nearer to being accurate than any figure the State Housing Commission or I could offer. Many people are discouraged because they are living in squalor, in poor circumstances, or in a house that should have been condemned long ago, and would have been, but for the housing shortage and many other reasons. These people are discouraged from submitting their names, because the number requiring homes in Merredin is getting larger and larger every month.

Even if we accept the figure of 60 as being correct, and allowing, too, that the State Housing Commission will complete its 1967-68 tentative programme, which in 12 months will provide a further 20 homes, we find that Merredin is facing a deplorable housing position.

Mr. O'Neill: I think you omitted the fact that tenders have been called for 10 houses.

Mr. KELLY: No; I said there were 10 people whose applications had not been dealt with, but whose home would be built. Let me pursue the argument I am endeavouring to put before the Minister. Even with the extra 20 houses that should be built according to the plan—which I understand from the Minister is a tentative plan, and there is no guarantee that 20 houses will be built—Merredin will be in a worse position than it was at this time last year. The Minister must know that this will be so. I think most of the people in Western Australia know what is taking place in country towns or districts, and that Merredin is a very fast developing centre.

This development covers a fairly extensive area from a town boundary point of view, and many people desire to go to Merredin. As far as the State is concerned, it would be in an infinitely worse position if it were not for the fact that

a few farmers have built better homes for themselves and their previous properties have become available on the rental market. If that were not so, 80 additional houses would not meet the present requirements of Merredin.

That shows the position is even worse than we know it to be. I say to the Minister that a great increase in the number of houses required will be likely in the next three, six, or 12 months, because the district is not standing still. There was a period—six or seven years ago—when we thought the requirements of Merredin would not be great, but that has not been the case and development is snowballing all the time. In addition to myself, various organisations such as the parents and citizens' association and the railway employees have approached the Minister and put up propositions from different angles in regard to housing, but we have all got nowhere and we are not catching up with the lag. This, undoubtedly, is distressing to a great number of people.

In some cases one puts up a case and knows there is little likelihood of its meeting with success, because of other urgent cases on the books of the State Housing Commission. Nevertheless, there is a tremendous number of sincere people who are anxious to get into homes because they are suffering hardship. Perhaps a lady with four or five children may be living in a house with a sister, her husband, and four or five children, because the husband of the first family is away somewhere in the north-west. In such cases the houses are overcrowded. It is a shocking state of affairs if we are going to allow that sort of thing to happen in what is essentially a very modern developing district. At whatever angle one looks, housing is vitally important.

Mr. O'Neill: Our success in decentralisation is placing enormous pressures on housing.

Mr. KELLY: There is not one penny-worth of decentralisation at Merredin. If the Minister cannot base progress on a sounder ground than that, he has a poor story to tell.

Mr. O'Neill: The increased demand for housing in country areas is sure evidence of our decentralisation policy.

Mr. KELLY: No; many farming people are reaching the stage where they are retiring because of age, and they build another home and pass their property to a member of their family, or, possibly, some other person. That sort of thing is taking place all over the State.

Mr. O'Neill: It is a very good thing, too.

Mr. KELLY: It is an excellent thing.

Mr. O'Connor: The standard gauge railway has increased housing requirements there.

Mr. KELLY: The standard gauge railway will not greatly increase the popula-

tion in country areas, because it simply passes through. The greatest effect the standard gauge railway will have is during the period of construction when everybody in a centre conducting any type of business is gaining an advantage from the large number of men employed.

Mr. O'Connor: I would have thought that in Merredin it would create distinct advantages.

Mr. KELLY: Merredin is one centre where it might, but as far as the rest of the towns are concerned—and it is an extensive line—very little advantage will accrue as a result of the standard gauge railway.

Whilst still on the subject of housing, but speaking from a slightly different angle, I want to say something in connection with the plight of single school teachers in country areas. Again, this is something which affects an area like Merredin, probably more so than many of the lesser ones. Merredin is one of those centres that has, over the last decade or a little longer, increased its schooling facilities more than have many other places which have become slightly stagnant as regards increased numbers of children attending school.

In Merredin the position is acute, although at the present moment there has been some alleviation by virtue of the fact that a number of bodies in the town got together and made a drive on private homes. As a result, they were successful in getting accommodation for a number of their single school teachers. This took place in the early part of the year, and, to some extent, it has relieved the position.

In 1950, irrespective of the convent, there was one Government school—the North Merredin School—which all the children of the district attended. I do not know the exact figure, but there was probably something of the order of 500 or 600 children attending this school at that time. The district, then, had two or three bus services bringing the children in from outlying areas, but today the position is vastly different.

We still have that original school and the Government is helping to keep it going by doing odd jobs and patching it up. It looks as though it will remain as the school in the area for some time. However, since the 1950 period we have added a senior high school and a junior high school, and there are 100 extra pupils from outlying districts staying at the hostel. Also, nine or 10 buses operate in the transport system of the district. So, instead of 500, 600, or 700 children—whatever the number was in 1950—there is now a total of about 2,000. The Minister might be able to quote a more accurate figure than that.

Whereas the teaching staff in 1950 was sufficient to handle about 600 children, it has increased immensely during the

period I speak of. This, of course, has created a housing difficulty. Most of the teachers in our country schools are single and therefore more or less thrown on their own resources to get some sort of accommodation. Nothing at all has been available in the way of community houses or hostels to which the teachers can go. At Merredin there are a couple of hotels, at which the tariff is extortionate, as far as a single person is concerned and particularly because of the wage bracket in which they fall. There is a very up-to-date motel, but practically no boarding houses. All this means that there is not much possibility of the teachers obtaining rooms within their financial standing. There is nothing for them. It is time the Government gave very serious consideration to doing something throughout Western Australia in towns similarly situated to Merredin.

Mr. Lewis: Would the local authority help in this respect?

Mr. KELLY: The local authority in Merredin does a good job. It has helped in almost every instance where problems have presented themselves. We have been told by this Government—and other Governments—that the Government has a lot more time for people who will help themselves. That has been the position at Merredin over the years, but there has to come a time when the local finances will not stand anything of the character of the project to which I think the Government must now give serious consideration.

Mr. Lewis: What is being done at Merredin is appreciated. Some local authorities have built residences and become the landlords.

Mr. KELLY: I think the Minister will find that in those localities this was a lesser problem than is the case at Merredin. In such centres there is, perhaps, a junior high school with five, six, or seven young teachers. It is quite likely that the local authority could put them into a house and cater for all of them. The supplying of meals is not as difficult as the supplying of accommodation. The time has arrived when the Government will have to face up to reality and expand its ideas to get an answer to this problem.

Mr. Lewis: There is nothing wrong with our ideas; it is the matter of funds.

Mr. KELLY: The only thing wrong with the Government's ideas is that there are not enough of them. That is very noticeable. The point is there should be a beginning, and now is the time. This is not the only centre which has this problem. As other districts expand—and I suppose there are 28 or 30 which face similar problems—the difficulty will have to be faced. Let us forget the unsatisfactory conditions which have applied in the past and let us not blame anybody. Let us, however, put forward something worth

while, even if it is only in a small way; let us provide the means whereby these young people can obtain accommodation in the towns in which they teach, otherwise there will be a repetition of what we faced recently, that is, the exodus to Canada. There will be an exodus to the United Kingdom and to other places. I heard the Minister state in answer to a question that this was not a problem.

Mr. Lewis: I did not imply that there was no problem.

Mr. KELLY: My inference was that the department was not affected in any shape or form.

Mr. Lewis: No. The Government is placing funds progressively towards easing this problem.

Mr. KELLY: That may be so, but the department has never instituted a scheme to overcome this difficulty, and there is this discontent all over the State because of that.

Mr. Lewis: We have set up an authority for this purpose.

Mr. KELLY: What is the good of an authority without a reasonable amount of money?

Mr. Lewis: The authority is able to borrow money on its own account, and this relieves the loan funds.

Mr. KELLY: Of course it does, and this is where the Government can really be of some assistance.

Mr. Lewis: Would you like more accommodation for teachers, or more classrooms?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KELLY: I want both.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member had better address the Chair.

Mr. KELLY: I like to see the faces opposite, Mr. Speaker, so I have to talk to them. Would I get any more sympathy if I addressed these remarks to the Chair?

The SPEAKER: I do not think I need to answer that question.

Mr. KELLY: Getting away from that line of argument, I feel that in all seriousness the time is now ripe for a change. The position has become urgent and the Minister would earn a good mark for himself and his Government if he were to put up something, not tentative, but something with a bit of meat in it. By that I mean the provision of hostels or whatever form of accommodation the Government likes to make available in this connection to give some relief in this matter.

I am sorry the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture are not in their seats. I see the Minister for Agriculture now coming around the bend.

Mr. Lewis: Did you say he was around the bend?

Mr. KELLY: He looks a bit that way. The matter with which I wish to deal, and which concerns the Minister for Agriculture, is the Government grant to aid district shows. This is a matter to which the Government has given some consideration; and, as a matter of fact, it has succeeded. However, the amount of money being spent is on a reduced scale. The Government has recognised that grants to aid district shows in the form of display areas for livestock are necessary, and the Government's action is very commendable.

The principle is good and sound; and, after all is said and done, country shows, irrespective of their size, are the show window of Western Australia. Certainly, the shows culminate in the Royal Show at Claremont where everybody joins in—all the agriculturists—and make one big show. But do not let us lose the identity and the importance of the country shows. There are a lot of them held.

What I am about to say to the Minister may not be the views of quite a number of districts. Some are more affluent than others and find it easier to raise finance. Some have different problems, and some cover very wide areas. Other districts have a pocket handkerchief size population, which is sufficient to finance the annual show. The time has arrived when we have to face the possibility of an increase in the amount of money allocated to the societies for country shows. If the Premier were here he would probably want to know where this would end. Of course, we cannot see the end in sight. A country which is on the move as much as we are told this one is must be futuristic enough to realise that it cannot stagnate. It has to keep moving.

Mr. Nalder: You are supporting this suggestion?

Mr. O'Neil: I thought you were about to ask for a reduction so that more houses could be built at Merredin.

Mr. KELLY: It is up to the Minister to convince Cabinet on that point. To back up my argument I want to refer to the situation in Merredin. I am sorry to keep inflicting Merredin on members of the House.

Mr. O'Neil: It is a very fine town.

Mr. KELLY: I am pleased to know the Minister appreciates that Merredin is a most important town.

Mr. Bickerton: A very fine member represents it.

Mr. KELLY: I will not make any aspersions against him! The agricultural society wrote to the Minister and asked for assistance to build suitable premises for the display of its wool. A very nicely worded letter came back from the Minister stating that his heart was behind a move of this kind, but finance was not available, and he was very sorry.

The society had another meeting, as most societies would when they get such a reply, and it then came to me. Of course, I have not a seat on the Treasury bench, otherwise the society would have got it immediately. However, the members of that society were adamant in their request for a building to display their wool. I have some correspondence which I think I should mention because it gives the feeling of the local authority. The following are some of the reasons which the society outlined to the Minister. At the beginning of the first letter there is a certain amount of build up before getting to the climax. The climax is contained in suggestion one, which is as follows:—

- (a) This Society had spent a considerable sum on live stock pens prior to the Government Subsidy being given and had we known we could have allocated those funds to a Wool Pavillion which also was urgently needed.

Of course, as we all agreed, Merredin is one of those centres which helps itself very thoroughly. When it is a matter of raising finance the people at Merredin put their shoulders to the wheel and away they go.

Mr. O'Neil: They also have to put their hands in their pockets.

Mr. KELLY: Yes, and very often too. The second and third paragraphs of the letter read as follows:—

- (b) Live stock facilities in Merredin and indeed in most country centres are now well up to standard. Is there a possibility that the funds set aside for Live Stock Pens could now incorporate the farm produce side of agriculture—which you must agree is well over 50% of production on an area such as ours?
- (c) In view of the ever increasing number of entries and the escalating interest—

There is that word "escalating" again. It was only recently coined and has been used a lot. Even these people are using it. To continue—

—in fleeces and farm produce we feel that a subsidy would be desirable and wisely spent.

I could not agree more.

Mr. Rushton: If that were introduced the fund would need to be doubled, I should think.

Mr. KELLY: I think it could be; and, after all, not a large amount is being spent annually. Last year the figure was increased to \$30,000, but when calculated in our old currency that is only £15,000.

Mr. Rushton: The scheme has been a great help to the shires, but your idea would mean doubling the figure.

Mr. KELLY: There may not be as many applications for assistance as the honourable member thinks. I have visited many country shows and a number of them have good wool-display buildings. In some cases farmers have to put their wool in sheds which are covered with iron. The sheds are not very serviceable and there is nothing very pleasant or enticing about them. Nevertheless, the fact that they are there means that the farmers can set out their wool in various ways. Some of it is on forms, some on benches, and some on fixtures attached to the walls. In most cases there is only one door and in some sheds there is no illumination other than a small artificial light.

However, these sheds are serving their purpose; and, in answer to the member for Dale, I would say that the societies are probably satisfied with what they have and I do not think my request would mean doubling the amount that is now spent on this work. To continue with the letter—

The present conditions offered at the Merredin Show grounds are quite inferior and inadequate to house the first class entries which are increasing each year. We are in desperate need of some financial support for the project.

The committee then asked me to present the case again, which I did. In that district, as in the Bruce Rock area, and nearby, we are faced with the fact that compared with the size of the district there are a great many stud properties. This means that there are several different breeds of sheep in the one district; and, to a stud breeder, the display of his wool is a very important factor. Because there are so many different breeds, the facilities for display must be greater. I suppose the Minister would say, "How much finance do these people raise on their own account?" In reply to that question, I would say they help considerably through donations and other forms of assistance, and this has a big bearing on the amount that a show committee can spend in providing facilities; and show committees, in conjunction with the shire councils, spend large sums of money on this work.

Both these organisations do excellent work in promoting their districts; they leave no stone unturned, and if it is possible to help in any way at all they will do so. As far as the district to which I have referred is concerned, the agricultural society there has helped no end and I know the Minister, if he has been there recently, will realise this. It is a well-conducted show, and the facilities for products are very good and have improved with the prosperity of the district. There is no doubt that the people there have helped themselves, and it is nice to be able to put up a case for people who have worked hard and who are prepared to help themselves.

The next letter from this committee was one written to me in which was enclosed a copy of the Minister's reply. I was asked not to let the matter drop but to continue to press the case. In the letter written to me the committee stated—

It is thus the suggestion of this committee that you may be kind enough to undertake to investigate the possibilities of such a subsidy being granted in the near future for the erection of badly needed accommodation for the farm produce side of agricultural shows.

Eventually, of course, I took the matter up with the Minister and I have his reply here. It was couched in certain terms, understandable up to a point. The letter is dated the 10th May and reads—

I refer to your letter of the 28th April in support of an application by the Secretary of the Merredin & Districts Agricultural Society.

I advised the Secretary that the broadening of subsidy conditions to include produce facilities had been considered but was found to be not possible at the present time.

It is appreciated that there are many worthy improvements of considerable benefit to Agricultural Societies not included in the conditions of the subsidy made by the Government to these Societies, including facilities for displays other than livestock.

The total amount available, which was increased from \$20,000 to \$30,000, has been almost completely expended for 1966-67 to meet the needs of Societies in providing facilities for the display of livestock. It is for these reasons that approval could not be given to the payment of the subsidy in this case.

A number of other Agricultural Societies with problems similar to those at Merredin have approached the Government for assistance during the two years in which the scheme has been functioning. In each case these organisations were refused, and I regret that it would not be possible to give preferential treatment to the Merredin Agricultural Society.

As far as it goes that is probably true, but I am saying to the Minister it is time consideration was given to increasing the assistance being handed out to the various country shows because of their great importance to Western Australia and the results that have been achieved.

Mr. Nalder: This was done originally to assist shows with the display of livestock.

Mr. KELLY: That is so.

Mr. Nalder: It took on straightaway and, as I said in that letter, the amount had to be increased. Even at this stage

a number of shows have requested assistance to enable them to continue with improvements in livestock displays. Therefore, we are not in a position to be able to accept this. That is the situation.

Mr. KELLY: As I said earlier, in regard to another matter, we have to revise our ideas if we want country centres to continue to have a pride in their districts and sufficient entries or exhibits to enable them to continue with their shows.

Mr. Nalder: If the show committees were not taking advantage of this, we would have to revise our ideas, but up to this point the offer in this field is being taken up.

Mr. KELLY: That is my point. We could increase the figure by \$20,000 or \$30,000. Why cannot we look at it from a liberal viewpoint—and that is appropriate to the Minister's outlook—and make the figure \$40,000 or \$45,000? Goodness gracious me, it is only a drop in the ocean compared with the funds the Government handles!

Mr. Nalder: I am surprised—

Mr. KELLY: The Minister is not the least bit surprised.

Mr. Nalder: —that you, who were at one time a Minister, do not realise the difficulty confronting a Government in financing various requests.

Mr. KELLY: I realise that during the time the present Government has been in office it has had over £120,000,000—pounds, not dollars—more than we on this side of the House had when we were the Government. With all the extra this Government receives from the Commonwealth, and through State taxes—some of which we would not dream of imposing—surely it could spare a few thousand dollars for something which has a tremendous appeal and does a tremendous amount for the State.

We have heard the expression that we are riding on the sheep's back and that we are taking everything from the poor old sheep and giving nothing in return. The question of providing display facilities for wool is a vital factor so far as the country shows are concerned, and instead of having wool displayed in a shed—and let me say that the facilities at the Royal Show are not quite as bad as that because, this is one aspect that has been given attention—

Mr. Nalder: Don't forget that a good deal of the wool displayed is on the sheep's back, and we have made provision for this with livestock facilities, as I mentioned.

Mr. KELLY: That is only one side of the story. I realise that the wool is on the sheep's back, but we have to get it off and show people where they are on the wrong lines with the production of

wool. In this way wool production would receive a filip. Nine out of 10 exhibitors today are complaining about the fact that there is too much congestion in the display centres and their wool cannot be shown to advantage. Some of the wool is piled four and five fleeces high and these fleeces lose their identity. Sometimes it is difficult to recognise good wool from poor wool and this is preventing many people from exhibiting.

Buildings used for wool exhibits should be properly designed instead of being sheds with a few fixtures. As I have said, some people will not exhibit their product, because the displays are frequently held in an old shed which has been taken over for that purpose. In the first place the display shed must be well lit with natural light and must enable people to display their wool on benches made for the purpose. Instead of there being only one bench in a shed a number must be provided. At the moment that is not possible, and I think the Minister could give a great deal of attention to this one aspect alone.

Mr. Nalder: I think the honourable member would agree that in many instances stock used to be tied up to a post at various shows. There were no facilities whatever; and it is much more important, in the first instance, to encourage the handling of livestock. When we get all the shows to the stage where the facilities are adequate, we will give consideration to the points you make.

Mr. KELLY: People used to wear loin cloths at one time, but that does not mean to say we should still wear them. I realise there is some need for expansion.

Mr. Jamieson: They would be a bit cold in this weather.

Mr. KELLY: They would be.

Mr. Nalder: I will reply more fully to the honourable member later on, because the Speaker will not allow me to continue interjecting.

Mr. KELLY: I hope the Minister will give some attention to these matters, and one or two others I have not mentioned as regards the wool business. Above all there should be no overcrowding and there should be freedom from dust.

Mr. Gayfer: Bulldust?

Mr. KELLY: That is there, too, as it is in the honourable member's district. I think there is a need for a closer look at the position and, as I said earlier, for more money to be spent on these facilities. Many of these centres are progressive and they want the best possible facilities. They are prepared to pay their share, too.

Mr. Nalder: Plenty of other agricultural societies have already made approaches on the same basis.

Mr. KELLY: That is no reason why the Minister should penalise a centre like Merredin.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. KELLY: I hope the time I have left will be sufficient to enable me to cover the remaining subject I wish to touch on. I am sorry the Premier is not in his seat. He looked remarkably well this morning, after his great endurance test yesterday. There was a very marked difference from his distinctive appearance last night, and I want to congratulate him on his fast recovery.

The remaining subject I wish to deal with concerns drug supplies which are available through the Government Stores. It is a subject with which I am not very conversant, and therefore I will have to depend to a large extent on the few notes I have made. This matter has been mentioned in a letter addressed to me from a doctor. It appears to have merit, and therefore it deserves the attention of the Government. The letter states—

I would be grateful if you would give consideration to the matter of drug supplies made available through Government Stores.

As you well know, every effort is made by the Government to reduce the cost of the drug bill, and to this end tenders are called for specific preparations, and presumably the lowest tender obtains the contract. The result of this is that quite frequently the local hospital is supplied with drugs which are sub-standard in their therapeutic effect. On paper this may not appear to be so and obviously the Government officials responsible for ordering these drugs are under the impression that the preparations supplied are equivalent to more expensive ones, but in use it is often proved that the cheaper and lesser known brands are in fact inferior. The supply of such drugs to a hospital is in fact a false economy, since when the attending doctor discovers their inadequacy he orders a supply of the brand that he wishes to use from the local chemist. This of course involves a prescription fee and in the long run costs the Commonwealth, if not the State, more money.

There are two matters which I would be grateful if you would consider raising in the House. The first concerns this problem of Government stores supplying alternative brands of drugs to those ordered by the Matron. In my opinion this is not good economy, and often proves most frustrating to the people responsible for the patient's care. It would be of so great help if pressure could be brought to bear upon the Government

to ensure that the orders sent in by Hospital Matrons are supplied in the form requested. As things are at present substitutions are often made by Government stores without any consultation with the person ordering the supplies, and I feel strongly that if Government stores have a valid reason for insisting on alternatives, then they should make this known to the person compiling the order. The ideal situation as I see it would be for Government stores to supply the items exactly as listed.

The second matter which I present for your consideration concerns sources of supply used by Government stores. Today there has arrived at the local hospital a supply of the drug Oxytetracycline, which has been manufactured in Czechoslovakia. This has been supplied as a substitute for Terramycin, which is a particular brand name of Oxytetracycline. I not only feel resentful because the substitution has been made, but I feel greatly incensed that the Government has seen fit to by-pass the Australian Manufacturers of this drug in preference for that supplied by an iron curtain country. This seems to be a most unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Although I am not conversant with this matter, I think it is worth bringing before the notice of the Minister because of the request which has been made to me. I trust that when the Minister representing the Minister for Health has the opportunity he will furnish a very full reply, because this state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. Many of those who are dispensing drugs through the Government stores are laymen, and any substitution of the goods required by the professional side of health is undesirable. Steps should be taken to stick rigidly to the type of drugs which have been ordered for doctors who recommended special prescriptions for certain of their patients. No deviation from the orders should be made. I realise there are occasions when the department is unavoidably out of stock of some particular drug as a result of a big demand.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: They can get the drugs from private chemists.

Mr. KELLY: That is what the doctors are doing now, but the Government has to pay an extra fee for a prescription and a higher price than the price of the drugs originally ordered. This doctor who wrote to me explained some aspects of the situation. What he has asked to be done does not appear to present much difficulty. The particular drugs should be made available to the patients requiring them, otherwise their recovery might be retarded. I bring this matter to the notice of the Minister, and I hope to get some very satisfactory reply from him.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [7.39 p.m.]: In speaking to the Address-in-Reply I would like, as other members have done, to pay my respects to, and offer my regret at, the passing of the late member for Mt. Marshall. At the same time I want to say how much I regret that the former member for Roe will not continue to be amongst us. His presence also will be sadly missed.

The member for Northam has indicated that he will not be with us in Parliament after this session. It was interesting to read his statement in the Press that when he retired he would be able to devote more of his time to tennis and snooker. We who have been interested in the many things he has done will welcome his presence here and will challenge him in the various activities in which he intends to devote more of his time.

I would like to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his election to that office. His term in this house represents nearly a lifetime to me. I am sure the experience he has gained will fit him well in the position which he holds. I wish the Deputy Leader of the Opposition well in the office to which he has been elected, and his term in this Parliament is drawing nigh on 24 years.

His Excellency's address shows clearly the continued social and material progress which the State has made, and is continuing to make. I am sure all fair minded people will congratulate the Government on the tremendous efforts it has made. Development above the 26th parallel is continuing at a great pace. Whilst that development has been highlighted to a great degree, I feel it is in balance with the development that is taking place below the 26th parallel. No-one will disagree with the necessity to push on with the development in the north, and I appreciate the courage which has been displayed to establish and to undertake this mighty programme.

Last evening the member for Albany mentioned development below the 26th parallel, and that brought to my mind the many developments that are taking place in the southern part of the State, both in the direction of services and of material gain to the community. I assure members that tremendous growth has taken place in many electorates, some being Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton Northam, and Dale. In those electorates there are obvious signs of great development.

Some time ago I was seeking an address in the Beeloo electorate, but I became somewhat lost. I have not been in that electorate for some time and I was astounded at the tremendous growth.

Mr. Jamieson: No useful purpose would be served by your going into the Beeloo electorate.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am sure the honourable member must be very proud indeed of

the developments there. Perhaps he should hire a bus and take us on a journey through his electorate to show what a tremendous result has been achieved by close co-operation between the Government and private enterprise.

In the months between the last session and this one, we have seen the provision of additional hospitals, schools, police stations, and the many other services which the Government has provided. As a Western Australian I am delighted to see the good work of the Government being rewarded, as illustrated by the statistics that were recently published. Relative to the population of the State, the figure of people who are employed is amongst the highest for Australia. This in turn presents a wonderful opportunity to our people in the way of careers.

The money which is deposited in the savings banks reflects the stability and prosperity of our people, and the ratio of babies being born per thousand of population is among the highest in Australia—not that I would hold the Government responsible for this. But the Government has created the climate which has encouraged this situation to be brought about.

Members of the Opposition have often charged this Government with materialism—the complete addiction to seeking that which is material. They sometimes state that the Government is mesmerised by this materialism. I would like at random to reveal a few of my thoughts and experiences of recent times which refute this statement and challenge.

One of the most pleasant exercises I have had as a member of this House was in being associated with the training of a blind person in the operation of a switchboard. I did not know when this matter was brought to me that the Government had been for a long while most sympathetic to this type of training. When I approached the Premier on the matter I received a very ready response. Through him, the Public Service Commissioner, the P.M.G., and the Minister for Agriculture and his department, the opportunity was given for my young person to be trained.

I feel this has been a very satisfying exercise and I do appreciate the contributions of all those concerned in helping this very worthy young person in his training. I believe that in the near future he will have an opportunity to be employed full time. For those members who may not realise how well these people can carry out these tasks—not that I wish to advertise, Mr. Speaker, because I know how much you frown on it—he works in the bank which has the elephant for a symbol.

Mr. Lewis: It is the biggest.

Mr. RUSHTON: As members know, I worked in the first bank in Australia and was very pleased to do so; but if any

member rings the bank to which I referred a moment ago, he would find that no switchboard could be operated by a more efficient person. It is very pleasing to know that people with this disability can fit so well into our community.

Although I did not attend the opening of a number of single units in Brentwood recently, I was very pleased indeed to observe in the write-up of that event that a blind person had been housed in the group and that the Minister and his department had provided the necessary housing also for the seeing-eye dog. This again proves what a feeling Government we have.

Mr. O'Neil: It was misreported. It was the Braille Society which provided it.

Mr. Kelly: Badly informed apparently.

Mr. RUSHTON: In recent times a picnic spot was established at Churchman Brook Reservoir. This is a very pleasant spot for the population of the city and all those who travel to such an aesthetically delightful area. This is another of the amenities provided by this Government, all of which disprove any belief that this Government has even a tendency to be only materialistic.

Mr. Bickerton: Did you happen to travel over any roads or see any buildings which were there before this Government came into power?

Mr. Kelly: Haven't you gathered the impression there weren't any?

Mr. RUSHTON: I will deal with housing in a little while. We had an interesting episode last week when housing was given the highlight, and I do intend to touch on the, what we might call, attack on the Government. I regret that the member for Victoria Park is not with us at the moment. During that debate he referred to me as the snoozing member for Dale—I think that was his expression. I listened with interest to the whole of the debate on housing and land prices. It is a subject in which I have taken a considerable interest and I am sure that if he had been here more than he was during the debate, he would have realised that the look he saw on my face was one of disappointment, because I had expected he would make a greater contribution to the attack.

I am in agreement with the Leader of the Opposition on two points of this matter. He said we had a very good Minister for Housing, and I think this in itself reflects great credit on the Government, because it has selected this Minister, who is doing such a good job.

The second suggestion with which I would agree is that supply and demand has a major effect on this price structure and all the things that go with it. In an interjection at the time, the Minister for the North-West did indicate it was his belief—and one with which I agree en-

tirely—that there are many other factors involved in this very demanding question.

However I would join issue with the Leader of the Opposition in regard to one statement he made concerning the resumption of all that land and those blocks which are able to be subdivided. His attitude rather appalled me, because I think it would be a most unjust thing to do and it would worry me if I thought he would come into power in a short time and implement such a policy.

I am sure he realises, and I know, that the value placed on these smaller holdings of, say, up to 20 acres—they could be classified as land which it is possible to readily subdivide—attracts the full value on a block basis. I think he was referring to a large holding in his own area, and from the research I have made on this issue I have found that this land has a value applied to it which has been decided by the High Court, and it is a value which is applied in all other States.

The reasoning related to this valuation is that in the view of the High Court it would take longer to place on the market and therefore a reduced figure was placed on it. This is where the complexity occurs.

I noticed also when reviewing the situation in the various shires that Melville was last revalued in 1963, and possibly when that area is again revalued, some of the anomalies he mentioned will be alleviated or removed.

What worried me when he made his point about resuming all these blocks, was that the next obvious step, when the desired result was not achieved, would be to resume all the single blocks, and on them the Housing Commission would then build homes. That would be the extension of the process of resuming all that land which was wanted to ensure that more blocks would be on the market. I disagree with that policy, and although I have many thoughts upon the matter I will not go further with it tonight. Another opportunity will no doubt arise, and then I will be very happy to express more of my research on this subject.

I welcome very much the Government's expressed intention of the reappraisal of the metropolitan regional plan. I think this was also publicised some time ago and I am in full agreement with the idea. All aspects of taxing on land, referred to in the debate last session, are also to be reviewed. And this is of particular interest to me because part of my electorate has been revalued in recent times. Those who read the south suburban supplement of *The West Australian* will have noted that valuations have increased tremendously because of investment in those areas.

I will certainly be very interested to see further thought given to the vermin tax which in my area is, in some cases,

attracting something like \$1 an acre. Because of this fact I am very interested in the matter, and from day to day I am compiling various figures which show the result of this revaluation.

I pass now to the subject of boat safety and the recent drownings in my electorate. I know that tragedies have occurred in other electorates but because some have occurred in my own, I am much closer to the subject. I for one feel sadness at the loss of life and I do extend my sympathy to the relatives.

A professional fisherman in the Safety Bay area has suggested that one way to warn those who are inexperienced that they should not take to sea on a particular day would be to fly a flag on the mast. This particular fisherman has been involved in various rescues. I do not want to take any credit from him. However I would make the observation that we must not remove from the individual his responsibility in assessing the situation before him when he takes to the sea.

I would suggest that the members of the professional fishermen's association, or whatever the body might be called, might organise themselves to provide, in conjunction with the Weather Bureau, information on the relative safety of the sea each day. This information could be made readily available by a telephone call to the Weather Bureau. This problem will never be completely overcome, but this is one suggestion I offer.

The next suggestion I wish to make is to the Press; generally the suggestion is usually the other way around. We need more local news in our communities, and I will give an illustration by mentioning an event which took place recently. If we had more local news, this in turn would lead to a greater contentment and knowledge, and, to some degree, I suppose, this would dispel the belief that authority is secretive.

I know there are many events which take place in my own electorate which I would like to see advertised, but I find it most difficult to do so, because there is no medium unless the Chinese system of wall notice is used. I know that a certain amount of information is passed on from mouth to mouth, but I think we could adopt a better way.

Recently the historical Kelmscott hall, built in 1891, was replaced by a modern, most up-to-date structure. I am very pleased to say that the Premier will be opening the Kelmscott show on the 6th October, when we will be viewing this very handsome structure. This item did not reach the news.

Whilst digressing, I might say I wish the member for Merredin-Yilgarn every success in his endeavours to obtain this money for his agricultural society, because mine will be in like vultures for their dip. They have had much help

from this fund which has served a tremendous need, and is a great encouragement to these worthy bodies.

I mention the opening of this hall, because it also has another interest for members of this House. The late R. S. Sampson, who was not known to me, left his mark in my electorate and his name frequently comes forward during the course of the many calls I make on my electors. He left \$2,000 on his death in 1944 towards the building of this hall. I am sad to say that I cannot see this gesture being repeated by the present member. However, it is a great tradition which has been established.

The other point which was of great interest to me was that he was owner and controller of 27 newspapers. This gentleman must have been a colleague of many members of this House, and certainly he would have been very well known in this Parliament. My research has yielded this information about his newspaper activities. I just wonder how many members here would, indeed, enjoy the opportunity of being able to write 27 leaders every week and spread them throughout their electorates.

Mr. Norton: His papers did not have leaders.

Mr. RUSHTON: He must have written all the papers, because from what I have read there was a great spread of local news and they were particularly interesting to the local scene.

Mr. Bovell: The Morawa paper was owned by R. S. Sampson.

Mr. RUSHTON: The suggestion I would like to make to the Press is that it should make space available for organisations to submit reports on the various events and that it should also make space available to allow shires to be able to include news items of a local nature in the paper. These items are, I think, quite vital to the local people. At the present time the Press very generously makes provision in our suburban supplements for announcements of the notices of meetings. It makes provision for various bodies to pass this information on. I would ask the Press to give thought and consideration to making space available, as I have said, for organisations to report on various events and for the shires to publish their news items. This would be a very worthwhile service.

I consider that no speech of mine would be quite complete without mentioning the flooding that has taken place in my electorate. On the television news this evening, we saw the tremendous flooding in the Eastern States. This was not very different from what has taken place in my area in recent months. Many members will recall that the six inches of rain which fell on a Sunday some five or six weeks ago caused a tremendous run-off which taxed our drainage to the full. At

this stage, I would like to record my appreciation of all who were concerned in the recovery of this besieged area. The local shires hopped in with their equipment and manpower, and so did the department, which was ably led by the chief drainage engineer.

I mention that this officer was most unwell, but nevertheless he was in attendance the following Monday at 8 a.m. He made a very valuable contribution towards ensuring that the right equipment and the right materials were available in the time of need. Then again, the local settlers themselves made a very co-operative effort in helping their neighbours and, at the same time, of course, in helping themselves.

I am looking forward in the years ahead to a continued improvement of this service. We should all realise that in time of flooding, no drainage system could be provided that could handle the floodwaters, particularly those which we experienced recently. However, recognition has been given to the problem. I am very pleased to say the Minister has written me adequately expressing what his department intends to do in the future.

Mr. W. Hegney: Will the works be adequate?

Mr. RUSHTON: The Minister was sympathetic, and I have every confidence in him and his department. I am quite sure they will look to the needs of this area where the run-off has been increased due to the bauxite development and to farmers opening up new land. These are the factors which have created this problem. One might say it is all a result of growth, and it is something we have to attend to as time goes by.

I understand the member for Merredin-Yilgarn has an interest in these parts, and I am sure he will agree with me when I say that a great deal of money and effort has been put into providing an improved drainage service in these areas.

In company with other members I have a fast-growing electorate which reflects very much this growing State. My requisition book, as I might call it, has a pretty full list of orders and throws its full weight on the Premier and that bin of money which he has. We all realise it is not inexhaustible. We all attempt to seek what we can, and it is balanced out. I have reached different stages in obtaining the needs in my electorate, but I mention a few in passing.

New classrooms have been added to the schools which have continued to serve the area well. I am seeking a new library for the Armadale High School, which will allow the reorganisation of the teacher and pupil space. There is a new school being planned for the Armadale-Kelmscott area which, in turn, will absorb the children who are there as a result of the tremendous housing growth in my electorate.

Mr. Kelly: You are lucky.

Mr. RUSHTON: This is so, and it is really quite amazing. I can assure members that as a parliamentarian it takes considerable effort to keep up with the number of new homes in an attempt to give the people the service one would like to be able to give them.

Rockingham has need of a new high school in the not too distant future. We are seeking a general hospital at Rockingham which will be the beginning and which will, in the future, be a major hospital for the Rockingham-Kwinana area. Those who read the local Press there will know that the site has been selected near and around Dickson Road. We are seeking the provision of this hospital because of the urgent need, and because of the pressure in the Fremantle area at the present time. It will be a question of funds as to when this hospital can be provided, but we look forward to an early start to this necessity.

I am seeking the replacement of an old historic bridge at Kelmscott. I took the opportunity of driving the Minister for Works over the bridge when he visited our area for the opening of the sewerage system in the Armadale district.

Mr. W. Hegney: Is that the bridge which is closed?

Mr. RUSHTON: I tried to convince the Minister how rough it was when we drove across it.

Mr. W. Hegney: Is it closed?

Mr. RUSHTON: Yes, it is closed at the present time, but the matter is being reviewed by the Commissioner of Main Roads, and he will see what can be done to help the situation. I was mentioning as a sideline that I had the intention of making sure that the Minister for Works should experience a drive over this bridge, which was as bumpy as it could be. I do not know if I was very convincing, but if he was not convinced on that occasion I will take him back again.

There is the need of the reticulation of water at Jarrahdale, and this is coming closer. It is a very small item for some, but it is vital to my area. There is, of course, the provision of a naval base at Cockburn Sound. Also, there is the highway interchange at Armadale, the rapid transport system, and the feeder services to the railways in many parts of the electorate. I mention the provision of further light industries to provide more employment for the area. I am sure members will recognise the growth in my electorate. We have prosperity, and I think my electorate reflects the vigour of our State.

In closing, I would like to congratulate, and pay a tribute to, those people in and out of my electorate who have helped the lot of the elderly and the needy; to those who have helped and assisted the

integration of all the old and new settlers in our many communities; and last, but not least, to those who have aided the employment and enjoyment of our young people in work, sport, and social activities.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) [8.11 p.m.]: I apologise, Mr. Speaker, for being a little slow in getting to my feet.

Mr. O'Connor: I hope you are not that slow in sitting down.

Mr. BICKERTON: I will do the best I can. The purpose of this debate, the Address-in-Reply, is, as we all know, to enable members to reply to the Speech made by the Governor. I think we all know that the Speech is prepared for him by the Government of the day.

I would like to deal very briefly with a few points concerning the matter of the Governor's Speech. I consider it has become a practice with Governments over the last few years—and I say Governments, and not a particular Government—to put the Governor in somewhat of an embarrassing position, perhaps, with the Speech that is given to him to read. It seems to be becoming a matter of practice for the Government of the day to use the Speech as a piece of political propaganda, rather than for what I think was originally intended.

As we all know, our Governor is well above politics, as is Her Majesty the Queen. I think it is our job to endeavour as much as possible to keep them that way. To do this, I consider great care should be taken in the preparation of a speech for the Governor to read in order to see that it avoids right to the limit any hint that it is a type of party-political propaganda. Going back over the years, and particularly the latter years, members will find reference to many matters which put forward the achievements of a particular party more than anything else. Of course, these are the days of party politics, and either one party or the other is in power.

It is interesting to read Her Majesty the Queen's Speech in the House of Lords as prepared for her by the British Government. This is a document which more or less sets out just what the Government intends to do in the coming session of Parliament. This seems to me to be much more to the point than to have a great long document which sets out what the Government has already done. Our Parliament has tended to do this, I consider, over the years.

It is also interesting, while speaking on this point, to note that Her Majesty the Queen's Speech in the House of Lords at the opening of the British Parliament covers no more than four very short columns of *Hansard*.

I do not think anyone would say we are any more important than Britain, where the Queen's Speech takes up four

columns of *Hansard*, but in 1967—that is the current year—the Governor's Speech has filled 8½ columns of *Hansard*. In 1966 it was 8½ columns; in 1965 it was 9½ columns; in 1964 it was 7½ columns; and in 1963 it was six columns. I did not continue my research further back than that year.

Mr. Brand: In some years the number of columns is even greater.

Mr. BICKERTON: Yes, that could be so. It took 8½ columns of *Hansard* this year to record the Governor's Speech so, if anything, that Speech was shorter than the one made in 1965 or in the previous years. To have to listen to such a long speech is a gruelling experience for all present on opening day. There are those persons who are required to stand throughout the ceremony, the members of the Opposition have to listen to it, and the people in the public gallery and on the floor of the Legislative Assembly are left on their lonesome, as it were, whilst the Governor makes his Speech in another place. Possibly the one who is subjected to the greatest trial is the Governor himself—particularly on some occasions if the Governor happens to be a discerning type of gentleman—because he has to read it.

Mr. Jamieson: He should have read it in Gnowangerup.

Mr. BICKERTON: I think the standard of our House could be lifted by having a close look at this situation with a view to taking steps to make it a real Governor's Speech. I would remind members that the Message that is brought to our Chamber by the Usher of the Black Rod reads as follows:—

Mr. Speaker: His Excellency the Governor desires the attendance of the members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber forthwith to hear his reasons for summoning the present session of Parliament.

That is the reason for our proceeding to the other end of the building; namely, to hear the Governor's reasons for summoning the Parliament together. One would therefore think that one would hear the real reasons for summoning Parliament together, instead of hearing the statements that are made in the Governor's Speech; that is, that so many piles were driven at the Wyndham jetty; that so much decking was completed on the Onslow jetty, and that a land-backed wharf was completed at some other port. To my way of thinking that would hardly be an excuse or a reason for summoning Parliament together.

I would think it would be more appropriate if the reasons given for summoning Parliament together were along the lines of what the Government intends to do. If the matter was viewed in that light, the Speech would state more or less just what the Government intended to do in

the forthcoming session of Parliament. This is a feature of the Queen's Speech which she makes in the House of Lords. I will not read it right through, Mr. Speaker, even though it is brief, but certain parts of it are as follows:—

My Government, in co-operation with the other members of the Commonwealth and with our allies, will continue to work for peace and security in all parts of the world through support for the United Nations.

A little further down, the following appears—

My Government will continue to give full support to the maintenance of the North Atlantic Treaty and its Organisation . . .

They will also support Britain's other alliances for collective defence, and press forward with policies designed to enable Britain to play her full part in the promotion of peace throughout the world . . .

My Government will continue to promote the economic unity of Europe and to strengthen the links between the European Free Trade Association and the European Economic Community.

My Government will pursue the policy of bringing the illegal regime in Rhodesia to an end . . .

Members of the House of Commons:

Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

From such information one would obtain all the knowledge of what the Government had done or had not done. The Queen's Speech continues—

In consultation with industry, the National Economic Development Council and the regional Economic Planning Councils, My Government will take action to stimulate progress in implementing the National Plan and in securing balanced growth in all parts of Great Britain.

My Government will promote a more positive system of investment incentives to improve the efficiency of those parts of the economy which contribute most directly to the balance of payments . . .

My Government will continue to develop, in consultation with management and unions, the agreed policy for productivity, prices and incomes.

My Government will continue to promote modernisation and increased productivity . . .

My Government will promote further progress in the development of comprehensive secondary education.

The Speech continues in that vein, so the whole of it indicates what the British Government intends to do in that session

of Parliament which the Queen had seen fit to call together.

If the Speech delivered by the Governor of this State in the Legislative Council on opening day was prepared by the Government more with a view to attaining a similar objective instead of using it as a type of political propaganda and a record of past achievements, it would be a more fitting speech to present to Parliament. After all is said and done, whatever Government is in power it must be admitted a record is made only of successful achievements; it is not a complete review of the Government's actions during its term of office, or for the past year.

So if the Governor's Speech contained only what the Government intended to do in the future, and the Government forgot about endeavouring to make it a form of political propaganda, the standard of the Governor's Speech itself would not only be raised, but when members came to make their contributions to the debates in this Chamber it is possible they would be discussing what was about to happen rather than what had been successfully achieved by the Government, or what other projects had proved to be more or less unsuccessful.

A few nights ago, during the debate on the Address-in-Reply, some matters were raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I do not intend to deal with the subject matter of his speech, but rather with the reply that was given to him by the Minister controlling the board he was criticising. This was the Bush Fires Board. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition did what I think any member of this Parliament should do if he considers an injustice has been done; that is, he brought the matter before this Chamber. The fact that his criticism was against the Bush Fires Board is coincidental. It was the manner in which the Minister who controls that board put forward his arguments against what the Deputy Leader had to say that concerned me most of all, because it seems to be a growing practice among Ministers that when criticism is levelled against a department or a Government body an endeavour is made to turn the criticism against the member who is making the complaint and make it appear that he is maligning the Government department which is under fire.

This is not a very satisfactory state of affairs and is not a particularly manly action on the part of the Minister. Looking at this matter more closely, Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the honourable member concerned had been approached on a matter which he considered represented an injustice to some individuals. Firstly, he investigated the complaint, which I think members will agree is the proper course for any member of Parliament to take. He then wrote to the responsible Minister and, after receiv-

ing a reply to his letter, he considered that the action taken by the Minister was not, in his opinion, the just course.

He then wrote to the Premier, who is considered to be the supreme person in our political field, pointing out that he still considered justice had not been done. On receiving a reply from the Premier he considered that the object which he believed should have been achieved had not been reached, so he brought the matter to this Chamber only to receive a reply from the Minister for Lands, who has jurisdiction over this board, to the effect that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was maligning the Bush Fires Board.

Let us hope this Parliament never reaches the stage when any member of this House, having taken a matter through the channels this member did, is accused of maligning a department. Does this mean that at some stage in the future a member of Parliament will be loth to get up on his feet and level criticism against the Government because he would feel that the accusation he made would be turned against him so that, in effect, it would appear he was maligning some individual department?

This House of Parliament is the forum of Western Australia—in fact, it is the supreme forum—and, in my opinion, it will be a poor show if any member of Parliament in this House, regardless of the party to which he belongs, fails to bring to the notice of the House some injustice he considers has been done because some Minister will probably twist the argument around to make it appear he is maligning the character of some individual.

Mr. Bovell: It was just the language used, perhaps.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Minister will agree it was not very good language, and I think all members will agree that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not deserve such criticism from the Minister even if his facts were not correct; even if the information he had received was only hearsay, but in this instance his case was complete in every detail.

If a member is not to criticise any department or individual lest he be accused of maligning the department or individual, what course is he able to take after exhausting every channel open to him to rectify an injustice which he considers has been done to an individual? And, undoubtedly, there was a wrong of some sort in this instance. Even the Government conceded this, because the Premier made certain concessions in regard to the case. That in itself proved that the complaint was justified.

Let us now consider, not so much that particular case, but the problem with which members would be faced if we reached the stage that they did not criticise various Government departments.

I thought that was one of the duties imposed on a member of Parliament; because when we criticise a department—though we may use the word, “department”—surely our criticism is aimed primarily at the person who administers that department.

The members of the Bush Fires Board, in my book anyway, are not to be blamed for this. If the Minister takes the responsibility which he does when he becomes a Minister, then the blame rests squarely on his shoulders and, as Minister, he must be prepared to accept that blame and answer it himself. He must leave the individuals of the particular organisations out of it.

One of the reasons I mention this is that it is not the first time we have been subjected to a tirade from a Minister when someone has made a criticism of the department. Last session, in connection with the shooting of an individual—in connection with the Beamish case—we had the same sort of thing from the Minister for Police, who said on a number of occasions—I do not know whether he used the word “maligning”—that the people concerned were officers of irrefutable character and that they should not be criticised in this manner. These things are not brought up by the Opposition with a view to criticising the officers concerned; they are brought up because the Opposition feels that an injustice has been done.

Even the Minister for Works could not understand why the Opposition should criticise the experts under his command when reference was made to the situation we had in front of Parliament House. In his best academy award winning manner he said it seemed incredible to him that the word of these people should have been doubted; that the Opposition should even query this information. The Minister had received it from the department, and to him it was incredible that it should be doubted by someone from this side of the House.

I think the Minister for Works is quite an intelligent person, and I am sure he did not think it was incredible at all that the Opposition should voice some criticism on this point. I think it was an attempt on the Minister's part to try to draw a red herring across the trail of criticism voiced by the Opposition.

I sincerely hope that no member, irrespective of the side of the House on which he sits, or whether he be a new member or an old member, will ever reach the stage where he will not voice just criticism, merely because he feels the Government will make it look as though he is criticising a particular individual in a particular department.

Mr. Brand: I am very interested in what you say. I have been listening attentively.

Mr. BICKERTON: I am very pleased that the Premier is interested.

Mr. Brand: This is very good.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Premier would be the first to admit that it is the Minister's responsibility to accept the blame for what goes on in his department. It is his responsibility to do this rather than endeavour to make it look as though the Opposition should not be criticising a particular departmental officer.

Mr. Brand: So long as the Opposition does not make it so that the suggestion of yours is one-sided.

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not suggest for one moment that criticism should be levelled in such a manner that it takes the form of character assassination of a particular individual. But it is necessary at times to be very caustic in one's criticism when one truly believes that the operation of a department is not being carried out in the manner in which it should. Even if one is not right, provided one believes one is right, one is justified in voicing one's criticism.

The other night the member for Stirling—I always seem to have difficulty with this; because of the transformation we have gone through I am rather tempted to call him the member for decimal currency—was very pleased with the operation of the State Electricity Commission in his area. I am very pleased for his sake that the S.E.C. is doing a good job in his area. The reason it can afford to do so is probably that it is not carrying out its responsibility so far as more than half the State is concerned.

I do not want the Minister for Electricity to tell me I am maligning anyone. This body is known as the State Electricity Commission. It is a complete misnomer. It should be known as the metropolitan and south-west land division electricity commission, because this is the only area for which it carries any responsibility. The northern half of the State must rely on other means for its power, and these means are costly. In some cases the power is provided by the Public Works Department, and in some cases by private individuals on contract, while in other cases it is provided by the local shire councils. The result is that the cost of this power is anything up to 20c a unit.

The object of the State Electricity Commission is to supply the power needs, surely, of the State; and this is precisely what the S.E.C. is not doing. What it is doing is supplying power to areas in the more heavily populated parts of the State, no doubt with the object of keeping down the cost of consumption to these people. But, of course, it is not carrying out its responsibility to the people in the more remote areas of the State. These places are finding the cost extremely high, and this in a portion of the country where

electricity is needed in ordinary every-day living for such things as air conditioning, cooling systems, cooking, and so on.

If the S.E.C. were to live up to its responsibility and take over the entire area of the State, naturally it would incur greater costs than those in the area which it now services. Perhaps this is the reason why the member for Stirling's party may not be interested in seeing that the S.E.C. takes over the responsibility to supply the entire State with power; because the cost of their own power would increase. We all know that the cost for power in the metropolitan area is about two-pence a unit whereas in the north-west it costs about 2s. a unit.

Mr. Craig: Convert it to decimals.

Mr. BICKERTON: It is near enough to 2s. or 20c a unit. This great disparity is surely unfair, because the people in the north have other difficulties which they have to put up with in the form of climatic conditions, and so on. Sooner or later some Government will make the S.E.C. accept responsibility for the supply of power to the entire State, even though this might mean losing a vote here or a vote there. It will not be long before the heavily populated areas will have to subsidise the more remote ones. The sooner this is done the sooner we will have a more equitable system so far as the supply of power is concerned.

I want now to deal briefly with the matter of iron ore and iron ore royalties. In his answer to a question referring to expected royalties on iron ore over the next five years, the Minister representing the Minister for Mines gave me an answer and quoted a figure in the vicinity of \$23,000,000.

I asked the Minister in charge of main roads a question regarding the cost per mile of bituminisation in the north, and I received a figure in the vicinity of \$28,000 a mile. The reason I mention these two figures one after the other is that I think one could considerably help the other. But before proceeding with that matter, I would point out that the Minister representing the Minister for Mines went a little further than the answer supplied to him by the Minister for Mines, and he made a comment of his own which I do not think was part of the answer given him. After giving me the figure of \$23,000,000 he said, "I would like to remind the honourable member that I remember him saying in this House that he would, do certain things if one ton of iron ore was ever shipped out of Port Hedland."

Perhaps the Minister would be good enough to tell me just where he got that statement from; because when a Minister makes a statement in this House one expects it to be factual. A Minister's job is a fairly responsible one, and when he is answering a question surely he would not say that a member of this House said

he would do certain things if one ton of iron ore was ever shipped out of Port Hedland if, in fact, the statement was not correct.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You said you would need to see it to believe it.

Mr. Court: You must admit you were a little incredulous at the time.

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not wish to weary the House by reading long screeds from *Hansard*, but I could read half a column in which the Minister for the North-West congratulated me for supporting his agreement. The Minister for Lands, who represents the Minister for Mines, only handled one agreement in this House. I do not know why the Government took the handling of these agreements off him, but he was quite pleasant in his remarks at the end of the second reading and thanked me very much for the co-operation I had given.

At no time did I ever say—and I would like the Minister to produce it if he can—that there would not be one ton of iron ore ever shipped out of Port Hedland. What I did say—and this is important, because I have been proved right—when the first Mt. Goldsworthy agreement made provision for the port to go to Depuch, was that it was a pity that this port was being established at Depuch, because it meant establishing another town when we could, in Port Hedland, well do with the facilities which would eventually be established there.

A reference to *Hansard* will show this to be true. I also said at the time that I could not see how, for certain reasons, the company could use Depuch. I had been speaking to those who had been doing underwater diving, and to marine engineers who were working on borings and testings in the area, and they informed me that there were three or four wrecks of ships which would cost a considerable amount of money to clear out of the channel. For geographical reasons it also seemed rather stupid to me at the time to have to go all the way from Mt. Goldsworthy to Depuch, when Port Hedland was in the middle. I also referred to the fact that with railway lines running at right-angles to the coast they would have to cross over a river, a stream, and other water hazards in the area; and a huge causeway would have had to be built at the Depuch end. None of these difficulties presented themselves at Port Hedland.

I said—though not in the House—that I would do certain things when the first ton of iron ore was shipped out of Depuch by the Mt. Goldsworthy people. Accordingly I think the Minister should check his statements in future before he makes them.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Were you one of those who said these iron ore projects were pie in the sky?

Mr. BICKERTON: I never said "pie in the sky" when I handled the iron ore

agreements as they passed through this House. I did what any member is entitled to do with any agreement when it is before this House: I criticised many aspects of the way the agreements were made up. In the main, I supported them. I have always supported the export of iron ore. I made reference to the fact that in my opinion—and it has not changed—a contract should have been made between the Western Australian Government and the Japanese Government and tenders then called by the Western Australian Government to supply the iron ore; or that contracts should be made between the two Governments. I see nothing particularly wrong with that.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You never said this was pie in the sky at all?

Mr. BICKERTON: That is a remark which might come from the Minister to me, but it is not one that I would ever use.

Mr. Bovell: Didn't you refer to the agreements as being scraps of paper?

Mr. BICKERTON: The Minister is thinking of the Kaiser! I criticised the fact that the Government was ratifying an agreement in this House before contracts were even signed. There was nothing wrong with that.

Mr. Bovell: Didn't you refer to scraps of paper?

Mr. BICKERTON: On many occasions I referred to the fact that these agreements should not come before Parliament to be ratified until a contract was signed and Parliament knew what was being ratified.

Mr. Court: You could not get a contract without a ratified agreement.

Mr. BICKERTON: As for pie in the sky, I suggest the Minister for Lands do a bit of research. In the future I think we will have responsible Ministers; and I think the Minister for Lands is fairly responsible and he may just check matters before we get to that stage.

I have figures concerning iron ore royalties which were given by the Minister for Mines, and I think they would be conservative. However, they are quite extensive and I would like to see this money, particularly in the earlier stages, used in connection with the road system of the north. I know the Premier is much more clued up on this than I am, because there are such things as the Grants Commission and others that come into it, but our problem in the north is roads. They are deplorable. When I say this, I am not criticising the Main Roads Department.

One of the reasons that the roads are deplorable is because the iron ore companies have been paying plant operators big wages and the Main Roads Department is having extreme difficulty in maintaining efficient gangs. The Main Roads Department gets drivers of

machines, and as soon as they become efficient operators, Bell Bros. or one of the iron ore companies offers them twice the money they are getting. In these circumstances, one cannot blame the men for leaving the Main Roads Department.

This is a problem which confronts the technical people of the Main Roads Department. Another thing is the increased traffic. It is true that in some cases increased sums of money are being spent, but we are still on the gravel road system, and I truly believe that much of the money being spent on main roads in the north is really being wasted. I say this because we are endeavouring to keep a system of gravel roads up to a fair standard; and when there is heavy traffic such as there is these days, gravel roads require a lot of maintenance.

We have to remember that in the days when there were gravel roads practically throughout the length and breadth of the State, the equipment needed for maintenance was not as modern as the equipment of today, and neither was the traffic using the roads. There were no huge tonnages over the roads to damage them, as is now the case. It seems to me that the only answer is to bituminise the roads which, of course, means money.

Let us say an amount of \$60,000 is to be spent on the road from Marble Bar to Port Hedlands. If \$30,000 is used on one section to put the gravel road into reasonable shape, and then more work is carried out some 15 miles or 20 miles away costing another \$30,000, it seems to me that with an odd shower of rain here and there, plus the heavy traffic, the first section completed is back almost to the original condition of the road. In this case, one is \$30,000 down. The money is being spent on the roads, but we are not getting a permanent asset. We must face up to the fact that these roads will have to be black topped if we are to save money.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is what is being done.

Mr. BICKERTON: At the rate it has taken to do the Perth-Carnarvon road, we will never get to Wyndham. We have been bituminising some portion of this road each year since I have been a member of Parliament, and that is over 10 years. If we progress at the same rate, it is going to take another 20 years to get to Wyndham; and, in the meantime, the money being spent trying to keep these roads open is just being wasted.

It seems to me that the problem is in obtaining sufficient money to have these things done in one fell swoop. If this could be done by calling tenders throughout the world, it is possible the whole project could be completed in two years. This work could be sectionised. If Utah Construction were given 300 miles, Bell Bros. another 300 miles, and so on, we could

complete the job and save the money the Main Roads Department is spending at the present time in an endeavour to maintain gravel roads.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Where would we get the money from?

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not know what the situation is. All I know is that the Minister for the North-West told me that for every dollar we gain in royalty, we are penalised by the Grants Commission.

Mr. Court: Not penalised; it just comes off.

Mr. BICKERTON: It strikes me that after all the work we have done in regard to iron ore, it is not doing us much good. Does the Minister agree with that?

Mr. Court: When we get the break through and get past being a claimant State, it will all be in our favour.

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not want to wait until that stage is reached before these roads are bituminised. If the royalty does not go through the Treasury, what happens to it?

Mr. Court: It goes into the Treasury and is taken into account as State revenue in assessing grants.

Mr. BICKERTON: Rather than pay royalties, perhaps the companies could put this money into bituminising the roads.

Mr. Court: We would have an all-night sitting with the Opposition complaining that the companies were not paying royalties.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Minister is twisting what I am advocating. The royalties would be used directly for State purposes for a set period of time. If these companies are financial enough, they could advance the necessary royalty without actually paying an additional amount. They would make an advance of a sum of money necessary to bituminise the roads. The companies have the necessary contractors attached to them to do the work; and, I suppose, like every other contractor, they must have a margin of profit. In this way we would get somewhere and the Main Roads Department would save the money that is now being wasted on gravel roads.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Money would still have to be spent on these roads. You cannot bituminise all roads in one fell swoop. You are being completely impracticable.

Mr. BICKERTON: Every mile of road that is bituminised is one mile less on which to waste money.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Everyone knows that.

Mr. BICKERTON: I did not say the Minister should bituminise every road in the north-west. I referred to the main channel roads and the coastal road through to Wyndham. Those are the

roads on which the people in the north, including the iron ore companies, are dependent for their goods. If the road is in a better condition, then cartage costs are less, with a resultant lessening of costs to the iron ore companies. The members of those companies are not fools; they can see this. Therefore it must be an advantage from a company point of view to have these roads bituminised.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: If these roads are bituminised—

Mr. BICKERTON: We are now a happy family. The Minister will be putting a cap on this thing in front of Parliament House!

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We are spending about 25 per cent. of main roads funds on roads north of the 26th parallel.

Mr. BICKERTON: I appreciate that fact, but the Minister is getting 50 per cent. of the road money because of the north. If the north-west were taken away from Western Australia, the Minister would not receive the amount of road money he is now getting.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The Government of which you were a supporter spent no more than 12 per cent. or 13 per cent. on roads in the north. This gives some idea of the thought that this Government is putting in.

Mr. BICKERTON: The money spent under that Administration could have done more good than some of the money is now doing, because the transport on the roads was lighter then than now and a great deal of maintenance was not necessary.

Mr. Bovell: You are stretching the long bow.

Mr. BICKERTON: No longer than the bows the Minister stretches. I want to establish the fact that the Minister is not being generous to us, as that geographic section of Western Australia is responsible for practically 50 per cent. of the road money and the Minister, as Father Christmas is spending 25 per cent. of it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is completely wrong.

Mr. BICKERTON: I am not grizzling about this, because I realise population has a pull. However, if Victoria worked under the same system, we would not be getting as much money as we are.

Mr. Brand: If we worked to your system, we would not get as much in the future.

Mr. BICKERTON: Twenty five per cent. of the funds of the main roads money is not being utilised to the fullest extent and it never will be while the roads remain gravel. This situation can only be overcome by the utilisation of the iron ore royalties for that purpose. Once the roads are bituminised, the normal allocation of money will cover maintenance. I am not asking that royalties be used for this pur-

pose forever and anon. I think the Minister for the North-West will agree with me that as soon as the roads are fixed up the north-west will be a better place than it is now.

Mr. Brand: That applies anywhere.

Mr. BICKERTON: I am talking about main roads.

Mr. Court: I am glad to hear you speaking this way, because the member for Albany last night was very critical of me because of money spent north of the 26th parallel.

Mr. Hall: If you take more away from us we will just about starve.

Mr. BICKERTON: Mr. Speaker, I hope you do not mind my butting in here. I have heard enough of wedge-tailed eagles and noisy scrub birds. A matter which may not sound of great import is the subject of a question which I asked the Minister for Education in connection with the school at Mt. Tom Price. I received an answer which did not satisfy me, although it may have satisfied the Minister.

I am told that the plans for the new school to be built by the company at Mt. Tom Price had to be submitted to the Government and that these provided for air conditioning. I have only local say-so to go on regarding this matter, so I am asking the Minister for the story. I understand that the plans providing for air conditioning were rejected mainly on the ground that other schools in the area had fans and that the provision of air conditioning would establish a precedent.

So the air conditioning was never carried on with. Fans are not satisfactory and never will be in inland towns in the north. They are all right on the coast but no good inland. However, they are better than no cooling at all. The result is that the parents and citizens' association is working to try to raise funds to buy a package type of air conditioner to put in the school. But the company was to put in the original air conditioner free of charge, and supply the power for nothing.

If this is so I would be grateful if the Minister could look into this matter. I am not maligning anybody, but I would think that perhaps something has gone wrong along the line, departmentally. The person from whom I received my information does not, as a rule, give me false information. That is the situation. I think that if a company offers to build a school with air conditioning supplied, it should be welcomed with open arms. We should not tell the company to build a school the same as we have elsewhere. Naturally, the plans would have to go before the Government so that the correct design of building would be put up.

I think the design of the school was a good one and the offer of the air conditioning was excellent. Power was to be supplied free, to the best of my knowledge,

so there would be no cost to the department—or at least, a very nominal figure. The situation is now that the parents and citizens' association is trying to overcome the problem and is endeavouring to buy air conditioning in package form.

Mr. Lewis: I think you will agree that this would permit of a certain amount of dissension among other schools.

Mr. BICKERTON: I do not think we should go backwards and lower the standard. If someone offers something we should not say that because someone else does not have it we cannot accept it. After all, the school at Exmouth has air conditioning.

Mr. Lewis: But we did not put it in.

Mr. BICKERTON: I should imagine that you would have some say about the standard.

Mr. Lewis: I do not think we had the same problem but I will look into this.

Mr. BICKERTON: I think it is important. Finally, a word on progress. It always seems to me to depend on which side of the House one is sitting whether there is any progress at any particular time when any particular Government is in office.

It would be well for us to remember that Western Australia has reached its present stage by the efforts of progressive Governments and it would be hard to say which Government was responsible for the most progress, just as it would be difficult to say which is responsible for the least progress. We can all point to certain deeds or certain increases in population; but is it not possible that the reason for one Government being able to channel its efforts in a particular line is because the previous Government had already brought the State to the point of prosperity which enables this to be done?

For example, a Government could take over in a State where such things as water reservoirs were not capable of carrying any increased water supply which would be necessary for development. That Government might have to use practically all its loan funds in providing such reservoirs. Then, of course, another Government could come in and channel loan funds into something else, because the water supply had already been provided. One could discuss many items which would come under this particular heading.

I suppose that if there was a change of Government tomorrow, it would be fair to say that the new Government would not have to expend as much money on the standard gauge railway to complete it, as was spent by the previous Government.

The SPEAKER: You have another five minutes.

Mr. BICKERTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Brand: I would be looking for the solution to the road building problem from such a new Government.

Mr. BICKERTON: The Premier will have an opportunity to say a few words later. All I know is that I was told that somewhere about £23,000,000 was coming to the Government over the next five years. In addition to this, another \$7,000,000 will be received from the Mount Newman project which is expected to commence in 1969. I think these figures would be very conservative. Most likely there would be more money in royalties from pelletising and ventures of that nature, so let us put on another \$10,000,000.

I think the Premier would agree that if that money could be used for bituminising the roads in the north-west then the roads would reach to somewhere near the township of Wyndham in the shortest possible time. It is only a matter of the iron-ore companies being good enough to advance the money on their royalties.

I do not believe anything is impossible, because the Government has told us that it is forward-looking. This is a way in which it can really take a leap forward, and the Government will benefit as a result. There is a large number of Government employees in the north. The State Housing Commission would benefit because of lower transportation costs, and persons who occupied the houses would benefit, to some extent, by lower rents. Let us face it: costs are inflated in the north-west, and they must necessarily suffer inflation where there is a sudden influx of population.

The company employees do not feel the inflation so much, because it seems to be the intention of the companies, naturally, for their own good as well as everyone else's, to keep costs down. However, the person working on the main roads does not gain as a result of that. In some of the smaller towns, where, to a certain extent, there is a monopoly the tendency is to raise prices because a certain section of the community can afford to pay the higher prices. However, another person in normal circumstances cannot afford these prices. We all know this happens.

Mr. Court: In negotiating most of the agreements the principle which you have enunciated in respect of roads was followed. This applied particularly to towns, railways, and ports directly related to the projects. But you cannot follow this into things not directly related to the projects. Obviously a main coastal road would not be directly related.

The SPEAKER: I think I had better give the member for Pilbara one more minute.

Mr. BICKERTON: I am sorry to go over your head, Mr. Speaker, but I thought the Minister had something interesting to tell me.

MR. WILLIAMS (Bunbury) [9.10 p.m.] : It gives me pleasure to support the motion, and I take the opportunity to pass a few remarks regarding my electorate and the State. Before I make these two or three points I would like to correct a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition when he spoke to this motion. He referred to some figures from the *South-West Region Council Conference Report* regarding the population in the south-west, and he quoted several towns. I won't go through the figures again, but the Leader of the Opposition said that in 1966 there was an estimated population decrease over the whole area. In only four of the 18 towns, he said, had there been an increase in population. Admittedly, the figures were estimated.

To put the record straight, the 1966 census figure in the South-West Statistical Division—which is the division quoted—taking in 18 towns, shows that in 10 of these towns there was a decrease, and in eight there was an increase. The overall increase was 1,393. I thought I would point out that correction to the Leader of the Opposition and to the House. The figures in the publication were not quite correct, and I do agree, as I said, that it was an estimated figure.

Since the House met last year, I have written to the Minister for Electricity requesting a certain factor. In Bunbury, the Housing Commission intends to develop a semi-high density housing area. Seeing that it was a new area and something which I imagine is new to the Housing Commission and the State regarding semi-high density housing, and because the supply of services to the area was also an exercise in urban planning, I thought the State Electricity Commission might agree to join in the experiment and place its power lines underground.

At present, the only supplies which are underground, I believe, are those in high density load areas. These are mainly commercial and semi-industrial areas. The lines are also underground at Koolyanobing where, I believe, the electricity is provided by the company but the houses were built by the State Housing Commission. I believe the lines could have been placed underground by the company concerned. I intend to ask the Minister for Electricity for some of the facts and if he cannot provide them, I will write to the company.

In reply to my request the Minister said he regretted that the commission could not agree to underground lines in this area. The cost was approximately five times that of overhead lines. I presume this would be the cost for the underground high tension mains as well as the low tension mains. The Minister also stated that major electricity authorities in Australia, and in some other parts of the world, had given consideration to underground power supplies, but it was found that it was a very costly and unjustified set-up. The Minister went further to say that nothing could be gain-

ed by experimenting with underground lines, as all the problems are already well known. The supply authorities, he said, had done some underground work where it was justified by the load.

On receipt of this letter I wrote to the other States to find out what was being done there in the field of underground power supplies. I wrote to the Federal Government in Canberra, and from the National Capital Development Commission—as it calls itself—I ascertained that it has a system whereby the low tension mains are run along the back fences, and the high tension mains along the streets. Poles are used in both instances. However, having the low tension mains along the back fences does tend to make them blend with the trees into the landscape around the homes.

Also, apparently there is a feeling there that more power lines should be placed underground. It was stated that investigations were recently made into the additional cost of putting underground the remaining high and low tension lines located in streets within new neighbourhoods over and above the costs of normal aerial reticulation, and that the costs are likely to be of the order of \$80,000 for a neighbourhood of 700 single building blocks. This would be a cost of approximately \$114 per lot. The cost of constructing the normal overhead reticulation in a neighbourhood of 700 residential blocks is about \$100,000, which works out to approximately \$143 for each lot.

So much for that section of the correspondence from the Federal capital. I also wrote to the Minister for Works in South Australia, because I believe that the power lines were placed underground in the new housing suburb of Elizabeth. The reply I received proved that this was so, but in the last three years it was pointed out that the authorities had decided that it was too expensive to place the mains underground, and the intention now was to put the mains on poles once again. The following is an extract from the letter forwarded to me by Mr. Hutchens, the Minister for Works in South Australia:—

At the present time, considering domestic residences only and with easy digging in a new area, the Trust estimates that underground mains would cost about \$270 per allotment in excess of an overhead system.

So it can be seen that there is a difference in cost between Canberra and South Australia of just over \$100. I also have in my possession a paper delivered by Mr. A. P. Mackerras of the Sydney University who wrote to *The Shire and Municipal Record*. He has made a thorough study of the position. He deals with several factors and, generally, it would appear from his paper that the cost would be much greater, depending

on the type of area in which the underground electricity mains were to be laid. He also said—

The experience gained shows that where the reticulation is carried out in virgin country, with complete mechanical excavation and back filling, and where there are no rein-statement costs and no obstructions by other utilities such as water, telephones etc., a satisfactory and comparatively safe system can be installed for approximately twice the cost of the equivalent overhead system.

Without going into the matter too deeply, my point, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. Crommelin), is that the cost varies from State to State, and the operations of the work carried out also vary between the States. I see good reason for the State Electricity Commission in this State to lay electricity mains underground in residential areas at this stage only as an experiment.

I know that the engineers in the Western Australian State Electricity Commission are as efficient as any in Australia and better than the engineers in some States. In fact, some of the engineers employed by the S.E.C. in this State are as efficient as any of their counterparts overseas on this type of power reticulation.

Therefore I ask the Minister to reconsider that if electricity mains cannot be placed underground in the housing area in Bunbury then, as an experiment, they should be placed underground in some other residential areas and thus the engineers of the S.E.C. may find ways and means to make underground reticulation of power lines more economical.

I know of one private subdivider in a portion of the State who wanted to put his electricity power mains underground. He contacted the State Electricity Commission and said he would pay the difference between the cost of placing the mains overhead and the cost of placing them underground. However, the S.E.C. replied to him and pointed out that if he put the electricity mains underground he would have to meet all the expense. I do not think that was quite fair.

I realise there are many country areas which still require electric power and that funds to provide them with this facility are not easy to obtain, but if a private subdivider puts forward a request similar to the one I have just outlined and offers to pay the difference between the cost of placing the power lines on poles and the cost of placing them underground, I suggest that the State Electricity Commission should accept such an offer without delay.

Last session, during the debate on the Address-in-Reply I suggested to the Minister for Industrial Development that he should investigate the formation of re-

gional development committees. I stressed the need for the community generally to dispense with the word "decentralisation" because of the interpretation of its meaning by each individual. In other words the meaning of decentralisation to any individual was that something had been decentralised only in his town, and if his town had not benefited, in his book it was not decentralisation.

If decentralisation was considered in the terms of regional development the outlook towards decentralisation would become broader, particularly when it applied to one's own area. I suggested a brief examination of existing organisations, with or without statutory power outside the metropolitan area, so that perhaps these bodies could be used as a basis for the formation of regional development committees. I mentioned that to promote growth, the important preconditions were a community attitude, the necessary infrastructure for economic growth, and the need for the collation of a resources survey within each region, so that each region would know what it had. In other words, each region would go into the field and onto the market knowing roughly what it had to sell.

I also referred to the formation of regional organisations to be called, perhaps, regional development associations. I am convinced because of the development in this State that there is taking place, and will continue to take place, a need for adequate planning on a regional basis. This is becoming more and more urgent. Countries throughout the world which are a little slower in their developmental programmes are learning from those countries which are far more advanced.

I have undertaken a deal of research into what has taken place, and is taking place, in some of these countries, and I make the point that my examinations are nowhere near complete. They have, however, convinced me that we have a great deal of room for improvement in connection with regional planning and regional development.

I believe this would be a safeguard to the problem which we will have to face in the future in relation to this development. It may be asked why development should be on a regional basis rather than that it should be based on, perhaps, an individual town. In the first instance I would point out that the concept of regional development is widely accepted throughout the world. As I have said, quite a few countries throughout the world have been studying the pros and cons of regional development. For instance, Canada has been doing this since 1950 and it appears to have had a great deal of success.

We have accepted the principle of regional development even in our own State to a fair degree. We find for specific purposes, traffic, hospitals, prisons, and

police matters are all now on a regional basis. The regional approach is often used to provide a number of adjoining local authority areas with services which they could not afford individually. We have, of course, other examples of this joint action which has provided some local authorities with the means to overcome a deficiency or a problem common to adjoining districts.

It is not necessary that the local authorities concerned should lose their identity through such joint efforts. All that happens is that a greater number of people from a wider area join forces to tackle problems which confront all persons within that area. We must be realistic and accept that a number of our smaller towns and local authority areas have little to attract development of any sort when considered individually as towns or local authorities. But should they join together on a regional basis, then anything that happens in such a region has an effect on the smaller towns and local authorities.

It is interesting to go back in the history of this matter a little to see how our present zone development committees have been formed. Purely by chance I came across a book printed by the Federal Government in 1949 entitled, *Regional Planning in Australia*.

There was a conference of Commonwealth and State officers on the 30th March, 1944. This was towards the end of the war when at that stage consideration was being given to post-war reconstruction, and a committee of Commonwealth and State officers met to consider the powers and functions of the suggested regional development committees. So this was thought of as long ago as 1944. The committee also considered the possible conflict between local councils and regional committees, and it was stressed that committees could act in a planning and advisory capacity only. As a result of this meeting an agenda was drawn up for a conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers. The items on the agenda included need for regional planning; regional organisation—constitution and functions; Commonwealth-State participation in relation to survey and investigation, co-ordination of data and plans, and finance.

A conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers was then held on the 3rd October, 1944, and at this conference all States were represented and they reported what they had done in the broad concept of this matter. The Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria said they had some form of regional boundaries in their States and that they had similar committees in operation. Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia agreed generally that action should be taken in this direction.

At later dates other conferences were held after those held between the officers and Ministers of the Commonwealth and

the States. On the 10th and 11th April, 1945, there was a conference of Commonwealth and State officers; and a conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers was held on the 20th August, 1945. We then find there was a conference of statisticians held from the 19th to the 23rd November, 1945, and as far as I can make out it was from this that we had our present statistical divisions drawn up. Before that time the areas concerned were much larger than they are now.

A further conference of Commonwealth and State officers was held on the 15th and 16th September, 1947. I believe that very soon after this the present zone development committees were formed in Western Australia. I think there are five of them still operating in the State. The member for Narrogin has been on one of these committees ever since its formation and I think he will agree that they are not functioning as well as they should, because of our social and economic changes. Something should be done to inspire these committees, and to provide them with more drive and interest in the work they have on hand.

In regard to regional development committees, the publication states at page 16—

The purpose of State Governments in establishing regional development committees is to bring the enthusiasm, knowledge and experience of local people to bear on the problems of local development, to give the people the opportunity of participating in the planning of development, and to provide a direct link between governmental and non-governmental planning interests.

As long ago as that the necessity for having individual interests and local interest in the planning of regions was realised. There has to be liaison between Governments, local authorities, and individuals in order to get the message across and to get the best out of the community. The Government can provide certain things. After that, it is, to a very large degree, up to the individuals to say and to go after what they want, with some departmental support.

On page 91 of the publication to which I have been referring the following is stated:—

In view of the present population of this State and its area, extensive development of Regional Planning is not practicable, other than in zones with special needs, which are met by zonal committees, as indicated in these notes.

It is thought that a general planning scheme for the whole State must stand in abeyance and only come as development proceeds.

I believe development has proceeded sufficiently, since that publication was

written in 1949, for Western Australia as a State to reconsider and to reorganise the whole of its programme. To illustrate the point I am making, in 1945 the number of people in Australia living in nine cities amounted to 50 per cent. of the total; in 1966 it amounted to 65 per cent; and some authorities estimate that by the end of the century 70 per cent. of the Australian people will reside in those nine cities.

What I have pointed out proves that up to date the programme implemented through the Commonwealth has not served a useful purpose. It is questionable whether the percentage of people living in the nine cities would be greater, or at the same level, if those committees had not been appointed. I suggest their appointment might have made some difference. It is quite possible that if we reorganised these committees, and gave them more power to work on an individual basis, the drift might be stemmed.

I have made some inquiries in Canada about this matter. I wrote to the Minister for Economics and Development of that country, and he sent me quite a lot of information, which I found useful. The officers of the Department of Industrial Development asked me to pass the information on to them; they have studied it and have also found it interesting.

The Industrial Development Council of the Canadian Province of Ontario put out a twelve-point plan for the use of zones and local areas for attracting industry. What I am about to say is based, to a large degree, on what I have been able to learn, because I have not been to Canada. The first point of the programme is—

Recruit a group of citizens who are prepared to work for at least five years on industrial promotion programme. It should be kept as free as possible from political influence. They should take a realistic view of the percentage possibilities of success.

The second point is—

Compile statistics and other data on your community. Study and be familiar with the unfavourable conditions as well as the favourable. Endeavour to eliminate, reduce or offset the unfavourable aspects as much as possible, but never deny them.

The third point is—

Have all the data on sites, taxes, present industry, services available, etc., in a concise form.

That would be for the purpose of sending the data out to the people in the region who might be interested. Other points of the plan are—

Cultivate others who are in industrial development fields such as representatives of banks, government, railroads, etc., and let them know you are working actively.

Secure lists of companies and search through them for the types of industries which would fit your community. That is, to seek industries for a region, and perhaps to bring about the expansion of those already in existence.

The sixth point of the plan is—

Do not concentrate on “large” industries necessarily. Many small ones are very good prospects and would tend to make industry in your community diversified.

The next point it—

Never overlook your present industries.

Wherever possible, attempts should be made to hold industries within a region with the idea of expanding them. The Department of Industrial Development has done that in many instances with small country industries. I can refer to one at Wagin, one at Busselton, and another at Esperance. Because of the research which it undertook it was able to find markets, and the people of those centres used their initiative to extend the industries.

The eighth point is—

Be sure that your area is planned.

This is a necessity.

The ninth point is—

Forget about concessions and other similar considerations. A good industry does not want them. It is more important for you to plan your work on the basis of knowing what industry wants rather than on what you think they want.

This is most important.

The tenth point is—

Do not be disappointed if tangible results do not come at once.

It is not the immediate set-up but the long-term view of projects which should be taken into account.

The eleventh point of the plan is—

If you feel you can afford to hire an Industrial Commissioner, give him a free hand.

The twelfth point is—

If industries come into your community through agencies other than the Industrial Commission, be happy and appreciative.

My point in referring to this programme is that it would serve a good purpose if the Minister and the Government sent an officer of the Department of Industrial Development to Canada, and to other countries which have tackled the problem of development on a regional basis, to look at the position first hand.

Some of the major problems which the Province of Ontario faced when it commenced the regional programme of development were interdepartmental relationship; the feeding of information from

one department to another; and the liaison between the various committees and the local authorities, and through the committees to the individuals.

I would now like to quote a few references from the report *International Conference on Regional Development and Economic Change*. The conference was held in Ontario in 1965. On page 29 the following is stated:—

Provincial Government Response to Regional Economic Development Needs

The provincial government has responded to these needs in five basic ways: (i) establishment of Ontario government administrative regions and implementation of programs on a regional basis, (ii) formation of inter-departmental committees, (iii) reorganization of government departments, (iv) creation of specific government branches and agencies, and (v) encouragement and assistance to municipalities in creating regional organizations in which the municipalities can cooperate with one another to solve their mutual problems, promote economic development, and plan for the optimum use of the resource base within the region's boundaries.

These are the main points brought up by Mr. Krueger who is a Professor of Geography at the University of Waterloo.

In conclusion I trust that the Minister for Industrial Development will give consideration to sending one of his officers overseas. There are other countries which have regional development programmes. Some of these are most of the Provinces of Canada, some of the States of the United States of America, Sweden, the Netherlands, Columbia in South America, and Britain, with the British regional development, which has a slightly different programme from what we want. It has the problem of unemployment and spill-over areas from industrial centres.

I trust the Minister will give serious consideration to this matter and that, if funds are available, a member of his department will visit some of those countries and come back with a greater knowledge of regional development—which some of the more advanced countries in this field have—thereby setting our State well on the way towards a complete programme of regional development.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [9.42 p.m.]: First of all, I would like to join in the many tributes that have been paid to the memory of that esteemed and popular late member of this Chamber, the member for Mt. Marshall. I would also join in the expressions of condolence that have been made to his loved ones. Further, I regret, as do other speakers, the premature resig-

nation, due to ill-health, of the former member for Roe.

My first remarks are directed to the attention of the Minister for Railways. Earlier this year I received a letter from a fireman employed by the Western Australian Government Railways. He put his thoughts on paper and sent them to his member of Parliament and explained why he had not put them through his union. I was very impressed with his sincerity and, for that reason, I intend to express some of his thoughts in this Chamber.

He said—I know it is a fact—that because of the hours worked by the locomotive crews in the Kalgoorlie district the union experiences great difficulty—it finds it almost impossible—in conducting union meetings at weekends. I have seen the roster and most of the chaps have either just returned from their trips or are out on Sunday, the normal day for holding such meetings.

The motive of this fireman writing to me was to have attention drawn to the position of the engine crew in the event of a rail crossing accident, particularly in the case of a fatality. He says that very little blame can be directly attributed to the train crew when an accident or a fatality occurs, but the enginemen concerned bear the subsequent heavy sense of shock and mental torment, especially as they carry this thought with them for a long time afterwards. The thought that they have been involved in an accident which they may have been powerless to prevent may seriously interfere with their powers of muscular and sensory control and their effective application to their duties.

He goes on to say that drivers and firemen dread the day when one of these accidents may happen—they dread the day when it could be said to be "our turn." He said it is painfully apparent that flashing lights and boom barriers are not going to afford the engineman any protection from that crazy element now abusing the highways; and the driver and fireman can do nothing once the emergency brake has been applied. All they can do is sit back in horror and observe the results.

He goes on to say how, in his opinion, the situation could be remedied. He mentions air horns which are fitted to our locomotives. He feels these are unsatisfactory and are far short of being effective. He says that these air horns are not as effective as the steam whistle, which was designed in volume for the days of open, and slow horse-drawn vehicles. They are not suitable for the diesel locomotives of today; that is, the air horn used by our own State system. He makes the submission that the fitting of air horns identical with those provided on Commonwealth Railways Class "GM" diesel locomotives, would greatly enhance the reduction of crossing accidents.

While I have the attention of the Minister for Railways, I will not try to abuse that privilege. I would make a plea at this stage for a little further consideration—knowing this is to be given by the Government—in regard to its decision as to whether or not it will close and terminate the service on the Kalgoorlie-Leonora railway line. I join with those people in the district itself and the surrounding districts of Leonora and Kalgoorlie in asking the Government to give adequate consideration to the fact that within 12 months the Government may be in a better position to appraise the mineral resources of the entire north-eastern goldfields and that perhaps the line might be reprieved for another 12 months.

Mr. O'Connor: I will be going up there on Friday.

Mr. EVANS: I would now like to refer to the complex situation which arises in some courts of summary jurisdiction throughout Western Australia. I refer to the Road Traffic Code regulation 602—the regulation which arbitrarily requires a driver to give way to the right. There have been many decisions arrived at in which this regulation has been quoted and in which it has been said that the give-way-to-the-right rule is not absolute.

As late as the 29th June last there appeared in *The West Australian* headlines in regard to a particular case in which the Chief Justice said the give-way-to-the-right rule was not absolute. These references to the rule not being absolute are in cases of civil litigation when one party is suing another for damages arising out of an accident in which one vehicle is alleged to have failed to give way to the right.

If I read the material part of the regulation, I am sure members will agree that because of the words used, the rule is extremely absolute. It reads in part—

The driver of a vehicle that is approaching, or has arrived at, an intersection shall give way to a vehicle on his right that is approaching, or has arrived at, that intersection, by or from another road.

There are no qualifications or provisos. There is just the provision that the vehicle shall give way to the right. It seems anomalous that in connection with litigation of a civil nature before a court the court will be prepared to hold that the give-way-to-the-right rule is not absolute, but if the question before the court is one arising under the Road Traffic Code, then the court has no option but to hold that the give-way-to-the-right rule is absolute.

Does it not seem ridiculous that the one rule of law is at one time absolute and at another time it is by no means absolute?

Mr. Jamieson: What do you think of the Minister's interpretation of the rule?

Mr. EVANS: I will come to that. I would first of all like to quote from an article I found extremely interesting.

Whether it appeared in *The West Australian*, I do not know, but it was published in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* last Saturday morning. It reads—

ACCIDENTS AT INTERSECTIONS Increased Blame On Give-way-to-right

Opinion of Two Traffic Authorities

Melbourne, Aug. 4.—Two road traffic authorities said in Melbourne today that the number of accidents to vehicles turning at intersections had grown since the introduction of the present give way to the right rule.

The rule is in force throughout Australia.

Mr. B. S. C. Harper, chief engineer of the Traffic Commission, said there has been a 16 per cent increase in this type of accident in the years 1962 to 1965.

There was a strong inference, but no conclusive proof, that the change in the right of way rule in 1964 contributed to the increase.

The deputy chairman of the Traffic Commission said: "If this is a definite trend and if it continues the commission will take it up with the Australian road traffic code committee."

Professor Arthur Francis, head of the university civil engineering department at Melbourne University, yesterday urged abolition of the give way to the right rule.

He said evidence showed that the rule increased the likelihood of accidents.

The Traffic Commission was not likely to recommend a departure from it unless a change was approved by the road traffic code committee, Mr. Westland said.

The committee consists of Federal and State officials and representatives of motoring groups and car makers.

Mr. Westland said there had been a big drop in accidents at intersections where give-way signs were installed.

Each intersection was considered individually in deciding whether it should have give-way signs.

Mr. Graham: Of course there would be no intersection accidents if motorists obeyed the give-way-to-the-right rule.

Mr. Craig: Quite true!

Mr. EVANS: My point in saying this is to endorse the view that has been adopted by the courts; and that is, that there is an onus on all drivers approaching intersections to take the utmost care in order to prevent an accident.

Mr. Graham: I think that is based on the general requirement that you must exercise care at all times.

Mr. EVANS: Yes; but as it is now, in a traffic court or a court of petty sessions

no matter how irresponsible a person has been, provided he has been on the left, the party who has failed to give way to the right must be convicted. No provision is made by the Road Traffic Code for any punishment to be meted out to the other driver. However that is not the position in civil actions. The judge is free to apportion responsibility accordingly.

Mr. Graham: Because of that general requirement.

Mr. EVANS: A well-known cliché often expressed in regard to the famous restaurant egg is that its birth certificate has been delayed. I would like to use that expression to open my remarks in connection with the register of births, deaths, and marriages.

I think it was in 1965 that the Minister introduced legislation to remove from the district registrars the original registers kept by them, the registrations to be concentrated in the City of Perth, where computer facilities were to be provided in order to make the recordings easier and more expeditious. It was also hoped in this way to avoid any of the great delays at that time occurring in connection with the issuance of certified copies of the certificates from that office.

This matter has been causing those in Kalgoorlie much concern for some time now. Naturally when a death certificate is required it is usually a comparatively urgent matter, and it is required a short time after a person's demise. However a delay of six weeks has been experienced, and sometimes more, before a certificate has become available.

Mr. Craig: I understand there has been some reorganisation.

Mr. EVANS: I thought I would mention the matter to the Minister. I do not know whether the same delay occurs in regard to birth certificates, but it definitely has in connection with death certificates.

Mr. Craig: That is right.

Mr. EVANS: I thought I would take the matter up to ascertain whether the reason for the delay could be rectified.

Mr. Craig: It is being rectified.

Mr. EVANS: On another subject, I was amazed to read recently a letter which appeared in the latest edition of the *Teachers' Journal*. It is a letter to the editor and concerns single-teacher accommodation. It reads—

The Government Employees' Housing Authority is prepared to build (financial considerations aside) blocks of flats for single teachers housing two teachers per unit. It will not build less than two units and it will not permit men and women to live in adjoining flats. Where more than eight teachers (increasing in multiples of two in the ratio of four female and

four male single-teachers) require accommodation this policy is not in any way restrictive. On those staffs where there are less than four females and/or four males then single teacher housing is going to be denied to either one or both groups. How many teachers this will affect only a detailed analysis of staffing in various schools would determine.

However, even if it affects only one school (and it does affect mine) it does not matter, because on a matter of principle it is an implied insult against the morals of single teachers.

The writer goes on to say that this policy by the housing authority in assuming the responsibility of dictating on the morals of teachers and passing judgment on them is a great inroad to the basic rights of teachers. It suggests that if men and women teachers are neighbours, then immorality will result.

I would like to ask the Minister: Am I correct in submitting that the Government housing authority is empowered by legislation from this Parliament to provide accommodation for teachers, but it has no mandate to nominate which teachers shall be the tenants, and it should have no mandate to pass judgment on the morals of teachers by providing that male and female shall not alternate in this proposed block of flats?

Finally, Mr. Acting Speaker (Mr. Mitchell), I will touch on the question of the Commonwealth poultry levy and the proposed refunds which are expected to be made to growers. Before the coming into operation of this Act there were eight full-time poultry growers in the Kalgoorlie district. It is a fact that there are now only three growers.

This has been due to the imposition of the tax on people who were finding the continuance of this industry in a remote part of the State very difficult, even as it was, without having to pay the extra levy. The persons concerned, who are still continuing in the industry, have directed correspondence to the Egg Marketing Board and they have written to the Minister. So far they have received no satisfaction at all. Those people have been seeking details as to when refunds can be expected but, as I have said, they have received no satisfaction.

This afternoon I asked the Minister a question, but I did not receive any better answer than my constituents received. Tonight I heard the member for Pilbara say he had received an answer with which he was not satisfied, and that he did not know whether the Minister was satisfied or not. I cannot give the Minister that much credit, because I feel he was directly responsible. I understood the decision was to be arrived at from a discussion between the Minister and the Egg Marketing Board. If any decision was made the Minister

would have first-hand knowledge of it. My question to the Minister was as follows:—

- (1) Has a decision yet been made in regard to refunds to growers of Commonwealth poultry levy payments; if so, in what manner are refunds to be made?
- (2) If no decision has been made, when may this be reasonably expected?

The Minister replied—

- (1) No.
- (2) As soon as all relevant information has been collected.

I protest to the Minister on such a paltry reply—and I use the word "paltry" in this case. I would hope the Minister would treat a parliamentary question with dignity and on a much higher plane in future.

I do not wish to delay the House, but I would make brief comment on the position of my electorate in this year of 1967. Kalgoorlie is the centre of the goldmining industry in Western Australia and it looks to its past still with a great deal of pride. It looks to its future with optimism and confidence. However, we would like to feel that the Government of the day was as vigilant as ever in pressing for, and taking advantage of, any possibility of an increase in the price of gold. Nevertheless, we are enjoying a boom at the present time brought about by the discovery of nickel and we are certainly bathing in this glory. We feel that Kalgoorlie will be a bright spot on the map of Western Australia for many years to come.

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

House adjourned at 10 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 10th August, 1967

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

QUESTIONS (15): ON NOTICE

EDUCATION

Kambalda: Provision of School

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

- (1) Is the Minister aware that—
 - (a) forty children are attending Kalgoorlie schools from Kambalda, and it is expected that a further 60 will be of school age in 1968;
 - (b) a large housing programme is to be carried out, which will mean many more families arriving at Kambalda, and