

such that they were compelled to take a second look at their attitude. Consequently after reflection they made my position very much easier. Had they not exhibited that self-restraint my position would have been much more difficult. I pay a tribute to those members, without mentioning their names. They must know within themselves to whom I am referring.

I want to pay a tribute to the assistance I have received from Mr. Roberts, Mr. Browne, and Mr. Ashley in the conduct of the affairs of the Legislative Council. I have not had such attention given to me in my whole life. It is not only that I feel that way; it is a fact. To Mr. Carrick and Mr. Joyner I wish to echo the sentiments expressed by the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Hall) on their attention and courtesy not only to members of Parliament, but to visitors. I feel sure they have left a very favourable impression on all the visitors who have come to Parliament House to meet members on business.

To the Hansard staff—Mr. Chinery, Mr. Hale, and the other officers—we owe a debt of gratitude for the manner in which they have carried out their duties. I also thank the other members of the Hansard staff of whom we do not see much, because they are seated in their rooms upstairs, perhaps not under the best conditions, but never complaining, and always carrying out their duties of typing in order that members might have a record of their speeches very promptly.

I thank the Controller and the typing staff who have given excellent service. I also thank the telephonists who have been at all times attentive and have served the demands of members with expedition in putting calls through. To the kitchen staff and the stewards, I express thanks on behalf of all members and myself.

To the members of the Press I also extend my thanks. I might have a wrong impression, but the conclusion I came to was that we were getting a little more space in the Press in recent months than for some time past. For that, if my deductions are correct, I wish to thank those responsible and, on behalf of members of Parliament, trust that next year we will see still a little more improvement in the space made available for topics of special public interest.

I feel Western Australia is on the threshold of some remarkable events; and it is the doings of members of Parliament, or the doings of Parliament, that will be responsible for bringing these events to fruition. Therefore, I feel we are entitled to the greatest amount of space it is possible to give us.

I echo the sentiments of Mr. Roberts and Mr. Browne when I say our thanks also go to the Government Printer and his staff. They must have some hectic

moments in order to comply with the exacting requirements inflicted on them from time to time by the wish of Parliament; especially in the latter days of the session when the sitting times are not quite as stable as they are in the earlier stages.

In conclusion may I extend to you all, and to the whole of the staff of Parliament House and those near and dear to them, a very happy Christmas and good health, as I feel if health follows, it is the equivalent of prosperity.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.53 a.m. (Saturday)

Legislative Assembly

Friday, the 25th November, 1960

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ALCOHOLIC CENTRE

Establishment in Western Australia

1. Mr. CURRAN asked the Minister for Health:
 - (1) Has he noticed the report in the *Daily News* of the 11th November, with regard to the establishment of an alcoholic centre in South Australia, costing £500,000?
 - (2) Does he agree that there exists a very urgent need for the rehabilitation of alcoholics in Western Australia?
 - (3) If so, would he give urgent consideration to the establishment of a similar centre in Western Australia?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) Yes. The Government has already decided to assist in the care and treatment of alcoholics by making finance available to enable the Salvation Army to proceed with the development of its Seaforth Estate at Gosnells for this purpose. Other aspects of this problem concerned with prison administration are being examined by departmental officers.

WELLINGTON MILLS SCHOOL

Enrolment and Accommodation

2. Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Education:
 - (1) What number of children are attending school at Wellington Mills?
 - (2) What is the anticipated enrolment for 1961?
 - (3) What facilities exist, at present, in the way of school accommodation at Wellington Mills?
 - (4) Is it considered that the existing school accommodation is adequate and satisfactory?
 - (5) If not, what plans has the department for the construction of a school at Wellington Mills?

Mr. WATTS replied:

I am unable to obtain the answer to this question today, but the honourable member and I have come to an agreement that I will supply the answer to his question in writing later, and I ask that the question be postponed.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

SUPERPHOSPHATE*Bulk Use*

3. Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) With reference to the price increase of superphosphate in new bags, referred to in *The West Australian* of the 24th November, can he indicate to the House what opportunities exist for farmers to increase their usage of superphosphate in bulk for the coming season?
- (2) What difficulties exist to prevent a substantial increase in the use of bulk superphosphate?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Bulk superphosphate is available at all works for delivery into farmers' trucks or contractors' wagons. Farmers are therefore able to obtain their supplies in bulk by road or rail and thereby increase the use of bulk superphosphate during the coming season. It is understood there are some contractors available for bulk handling of superphosphate from rail truck to farm, or direct to the land in the case of top-dressing. However, the number of such contractors is limited; and, in general, farmers would have to make their own arrangements for handling ex rail trucks, storage on farms, and subsequent transport to the paddocks.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).

HOUSING FOR NATIVES*Narrogin Experimental Homes*

4. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has he yet conferred with the Minister for Native Welfare regarding provision of larger type experimental native homes at Narrogin suitable for the larger families?
- (2) If so, with what result?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The matter is still being discussed.

MILK SUPPLIES*Time of Analysis*

5. Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the Milk Board any objection to analysing a composite sample of a.m. to p.m. milk when policing the quality of milk supplied by dairymen?
- (2) If so, what are the objections?

Improvement of Quality

- (3) When a producer's milk falls below the required standard, what period of time will the producer be given to correct the quality before the license is suspended?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Milk is sold to consumers from either the a.m. or the p.m. supply. It is necessary that the quality of both the a.m. and the p.m. milk should be satisfactory.
- (3) Consideration will be given to the circumstances in determining the period of time allowed for correction before a producer is advised that his supply will not be accepted until the quality is satisfactory.

WINNING BETS*Position of Totalisator Punters*

6. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has he seen the report in the *Daily News* of Wednesday, the 23rd November, that the V.R.C. proposes to ask the State Government to ensure that in future totalisator punters receive at least their money back when horses which they have supported are placed?
- (2) Does he agree that punters should not lose a portion of their investment when they have wagered on a winner?
- (3) Will he ensure that when the proposed off-course totalisator is established punters who wager for a win or place on horses which are successful, and pay an investment tax for the facility, will at least receive their money back?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes; generally speaking it is felt that punters should not receive less than their investment when they have wagered on a winner.
- (3) No assurance can be given in this direction, but I will be guided by the recommendations of the Totalisator Agency Board.

OFF-COURSE TOTALISATOR*Guaranteed Payments, and Government Subsidisation*

7. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) For what period have the racing and trotting clubs been guaranteed payments from funds derived from

the operation of the proposed off-course totalisator on a level not less than that of payments being made under the present system of licensed shops?

- (2) What is the estimated amount by which the actual revenue from the proposed off-course totalisator will have to be augmented by the Treasurer for the first twelve months after the off-course totalisator has commenced operations?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) No assurance has been given to the clubs that they will receive amounts equal to those now being paid from betting taxes under existing laws. However, it has been agreed that for a period of at least six months after the date of introduction of the new scheme, the clubs will be paid the same percentage share of the total taxation collected from off-course betting as received by them under the present system.
- (2) It is not possible to give an estimate at this stage as the amount involved will depend on the number and the speed with which agencies are established within the first twelve months of operation.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Number Stolen

8. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many motorcars were stolen in this State in the years 1958-59; and 1959-60 and what were the makes of the stolen cars?
- (2) What was the number of trucks stolen for the same years?
- (3) How many motorbikes, scooters and pushbikes were stolen for the same years?

Stolen Vehicles Recovered

- (4) Of the stolen vehicles, how many were recovered by—
- (a) the owners;
- (b) the police;
- for the respective years?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) During 1958, 435 motorcars were stolen. They were—
- Holdens, 340.
- Fords, 30.
- Vauxhalls, 15.
- Morris, 10.
- Austins, 10.
- Various other types, 30.

In 1959, 595 motorcars were reported stolen—

Holdens, 457.

Fords, 37.

Austins, 32.

Morris, 17.

Vauxhalls, 12.

Various, 40.

In 1960, to the 19th November—418 motorcars were reported stolen—

Holdens, 350.

Morris, 28.

Fords, 8.

Vauxhalls, 7.

Various, 25.

- (2) During 1958, trucks and utilities reported stolen totalled 128.
- 1959—141.
- 1960—to the 19th November—145.
- (3) During 1958—motorcycles, 250; scooters, 30.
- 1959—motorcycles, 216; scooters, 32.
- 1960—to the 19th November—motorcycles, 135; scooters, 50.
- Statistics regarding pushcycles are not readily available, and it would take considerable search to obtain them.

- (4) (a) Stolen vehicles recovered by owners, about 2 per cent.
- (b) The remainder were recovered by police by means of patrols, information supplied by police to the Press, taxi companies, and wireless stations, and private persons reporting abandoned vehicles.

LAMBS

Freak Births at Mt. Many Peaks

9. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many properties were affected by freak lamb births at Mt. Many Peaks, Albany?
- (2) What was the number of lambs lost, as a result of freak lamb births, over all farms at Mt. Many Peaks?
- (3) Are investigations still being carried out by a veterinary officer in that area?
- (4) If the answer to No. (3) is "Yes", has any progress been made towards solving of the problem of freak lamb births?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Three properties at Mt. Many Peaks were affected by freak lamb births, three properties at West Kalgan, and one at South Stirling were also affected.

- (2) The actual number of lambs lost is not accurately known; but on one property at Mt. Many Peaks two-thirds of the lambs produced by a flock of ewes were affected, and either died or had to be destroyed; and on another property at West Kalgan 50 per cent. of the lambs produced by 730 ewes were lost. The incidence on the remaining five properties was of the order of 1 to 2 per cent., and there was a similar incidence on a property at Kojonup.
- (3) These outbreaks were investigated in the field by the Government veterinary surgeon at Albany as well as at the Animal Health Laboratory, Nedlands, and inquiries are still being made. However, as the condition has subsided, and one of the severely affected flocks has since produced a crop of normal lambs, no active investigations are at present possible.
- (4) The investigations so far conducted have failed to determine the cause of the condition, and inquiries both in Australia and overseas have failed to throw any light on the problem.

NATIVE WELFARE FIELD OFFICERS

Resignations and Dismissals

10. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) How many officers attached to the Field Division of the Native Welfare Department have resigned since 1948?
- (2) How many officers have been dismissed during the latter period?

Location and Length of Service

- (3) For how long, and in what centres, have each of the various field officers been stationed in the course of their duties since 1948?

Importations from New Guinea

- (4) How many officers who have had experience in New Guinea are at present employed by the Native Welfare Department?
- (5) What are the classifications of the latter, and the salaries paid?
- (6) What anthropological similarities are there between New Guinea natives and Western Australian aborigines which make it desirable to import to Western Australia officers trained in New Guinea?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) Eighteen.
- (2) Two.
- (3) Since 1948 approximately 50 officers have been appointed as field officers of the department. They

have been stationed in various places throughout the State for varying periods. It is not practicable for a detailed statement to be prepared that would completely answer the question.

- (4) Six (including three Western Australians).
- (5) Commissioner—A-I-6—£3,062 per annum.
Deputy Commissioner—G-II-10—£2,318 per annum.
Three district welfare officers—G-II-7—£1,867 to £1,886 per annum.
One welfare inspector—G-II-1/3—£1,237 per annum.
- (6) Anthropology is a study of mankind generally and a trained anthropologist is competent to study objectively any people anywhere; but they usually devote their attention to the problems of indigenous aboriginal populations. Consequently the term "anthropological similarities" has no identifiable meaning as is the case with, for example, cultural similarities, social structural similarities, and so on.

TOTALISATOR TICKETS

Minimum Age of Purchasers

11. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is there a minimum age at which persons on racecourses in this State can legally purchase tickets on the totalisators?
- (2) What statute governs the position?
- (3) Is he aware that juveniles purchase tickets on the totalisator at country racecourses?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) There appears to be no enactment or regulation which defines the age at which a person may purchase tickets on the totalisator.
- (2) Neither the Totalisator Act, 1883, nor the Totalisator Regulation Act, 1911, refers to the age of persons purchasing tickets.
- (3) Such purchase is apparently not illegal.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Introduction of Falcon Car into Western Australia

1. Mr. ANDREW asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

Firstly, I wish to express my regret that I was unable to give the Minister prior notice of these questions. I had intended to ring him at his office this morning, but

I did not have time to do even that. My questions are as follows:—

- (1) Did the Minister authorise the Press statements that have appeared in *The West Australian* indicating he had conferred with the management of the Ford Motor Company regarding its policy in introducing the *Falcon* car on the Western Australian market?
- (2) Was he given an assurance by the company that employment would be fully maintained for workers employed by the local company in this State?
- (3) Was he aware of the concern of the Australasian Society of Engineers, and other unions, as to the effect of the Ford company's policy?
- (4) Is he aware that, since his assurance as stated, the Ford Motor Company has retrenched staff as a result of the policy followed by the company in Western Australia?

Mr. COURT replied:

This is a fairly long series of questions and I am not sure whether I have all of them completely in mind. However, on the general question of the Western Australian component of the Ford Motor Company's products, it is a fact that there have been consultations between the State Government and the Ford Motor Company—extending over quite a few months—regarding the local component in Ford motor vehicles. At this stage I might observe that of all the motor vehicles sold in Western Australia, the Ford vehicles have the highest Western Australian component, and it is unfortunate that in Press references in recent weeks this company has been singled out for some comment as though it is not doing the maximum amount of Western Australian work in its vehicles. The fact remains that it has the highest Western Australian component in its vehicles.

When it was known that the *Falcon* was about to come on the market, the local manager conferred with the Government; and, in fact, the Government had discussions with a director from Geelong and representations were made to him to try to have the same proportion of Western Australian work performed on the *Falcon* as is done on all other Ford vehicles. The company explained that, in

view of the immensity of the *Falcon* project, it would not be possible for it to commit itself at that stage. However, when it was ready to launch the vehicle on the market it would then be quite prepared to discuss with the Government the prospects of the same degree of Western Australian work being done on the *Falcon* as is done on other Ford models.

Those discussions are still being pursued, and we are finding the Ford Motor Co., both locally and at Geelong, extremely sympathetic towards the Western Australian approach.

I understand that there are to be some retrenchments made from the Ford Motor Co., but they are not related to this particular matter. They are more related to the general situation that is being felt throughout Australia in the motor-manufacturing industry. The retrenchments are not directly related to the matter that was under discussion between the Government and the Ford Motor Co.

SCHOOL LIGHTING

Departmental Policy

2. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has a decision been made regarding the acceptance of a general principle to be followed in connection with the lighting of schools and associated buildings where there is no town supply?

Position at Darkan

- (2) If so, will he advise its application to Darkan school quarters?
- (3) If not, can the matter be dealt with without further delay?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) No decision has been made regarding the installation of electricity in schools and quarters in localities where there is no town electricity supply.

In many such schools small generators have been installed with parents and citizens' association funds and Government subsidy, primarily for the operation of projectors, and consideration is being given to extending service from these plants to school quarters.

The cost of installation of departmental generating sets in schools and quarters where there is no existing installation is also being investigated.

- (2) Any policy adopted will apply to the Darkan School where the Parents and Citizens' Association

has installed a small set and has requested permission to replace this with a larger set to serve the school quarters as well as the school.

- (3) A decision on policy will be made in the very near future.

DRAINAGE AT YARLOOP

Mr. A. L'Eplattenier's Property

3 Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has he seen a communication, received by many members in this House, from Mr. A. L'Eplattenier of Yarloop drawing the attention of members to a drainage problem on his property?
- (2) Will he advise the House what drainage work is being undertaken in this area that would assist to alleviate Mr. L'Eplattenier's problem?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Yes. I did see these circulars around the House last night.
- (2) Mr. L'Eplattenier's property is located generally on and adjacent to the old Harvey River flats to the West of Yarloop. It is low country, generally lower than the surrounding lands on the north, east, and south.

The Harvey main drain is located on the western boundary of the property.

Prior to the construction of the Harvey main drain the general area was permanent swamp land but the construction of the drain rendered it capable of being farmed.

Increased development of upstream lands has progressively increased run-off and improvements have been carried out on the Harvey main drain from time to time to keep pace with the increased flow.

However, during the heavy winter periods of 1945-1955 particularly, the drain was far from adequate in the handling of floodwaters and due to breaching of the main drain, Mr. L'Eplattenier's land, being the sump of the area, suffered severely for many years. However, in 1957 substantial loan funds were made available to enlarge this main drain with a view to lowering flood levels in the area and generally allowing the smaller subsidiary drains to function more satisfactorily.

This work has progressed annually since 1957 and an expenditure of £21,000 has been incurred in drainage improvements works in this area.

The 6-foot bottom width drain referred to as "E" drain in Mr. L'Eplattenier's communication is designed to serve a local area of 1,360 acres including the 542 acres belonging to this settler plus neighbouring lands to the south. It is considered adequate and functioned satisfactorily during the 1960 winter.

The drain "EE" referred to is a small drain traversing Mr. L'Eplattenier's property. Prior to 1960 it served additional lands to the south but by construction of a further outlet to the Harvey main drain it now serves him entirely. It has a 3-foot bottom width and has been maintained in good condition.

In view of this property being low, the main drainage outlet has been fitted with a floodgate, to prevent backflow onto the property under severe flood conditions, from the Harvey main drain which is the major outlet to the area.

During the 1960 winter there was one period of flooding but not on the developed pasture lands. The flooding was due to the overtopping of a subsidiary drain approximately two miles to the south. However, this flooding was of short duration and not in any way serious.

Action is in hand to improve this subsidiary system to prevent breaching in the future.

It is considered that the drainage facilities for this property are adequate although short-period disability under peak conditions may be experienced.

However, it must be realised that the land is reclaimed from swamp and major works such as the Harvey River diversion and the Harvey main drain construction have involved very large Government expenditure.

In addition, the expenditure of £21,000 has been incurred since 1957 to improve conditions in this local area.

The area is watched closely during the winter period and the results during 1960 winter were satisfactory.

Additional smaller improvements to subsidiary systems will be carried out during the present summer.

If Mr. L'Eplattenier feels that rating of his property is not justified by the benefits received from drainage works carried out by the department he has recourse to an appeal to a Drainage Appeal Committee appointed to hear appeals and deal with rating anomalies. He has not taken advantage of this remedy.

BUILDING INDUSTRY

Apprentices

4. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Labour:

In answer to questions asked by Mr. Tonkin on the 25th October, the Minister stated that the intake of building trades apprentices would be higher if technical objections were not taken by the unions in certain cases. Will the Minister give particulars of objections taken by building trades unions and the court decisions over the last three years?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

I have made investigations into this matter, but I am unable to find any such questions or reply referred to by the honourable member, for the 25th October, or any day close to it. On the 25th October the member for Melville asked the following questions:—

- (1) What numbers of building trades apprentices are registered in the various categories of apprenticeship?
- (2) What is the number of building trades workers still employed by the Government, including men employed on maintenance?
- (3) What are the intentions of the Government with regard to apprentices indentured to the Public Works Department upon the completion or cessation of public works projects now in course?
- (4) What steps does the Government propose to take to promote apprenticeships to the building trades, particularly in view of the fact that the number of registered apprentices fell from 1,173 on the 31st March, 1959, to 910 on the 30th June, 1960?

I gave the replies detailing the various trades. The replies to the third and fourth questions were as follows:—

- (3) The interests of these boys will be watched. It is anticipated they will complete

their indentures in the organisation.

- (4) The intake of apprentices is steadily rising, and the Government is not unmindful of the position. It is in constant touch with the employers' organisations.

This does not apply to the question asked by the honourable member. I suggest that if he wants more detailed information he should write to me.

PORT HEDLAND HARBOUR

Tabling of Report on Widening and Deepening

5. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:

Would the Minister lay upon the Table of the House the report relating to the widening and deepening of the Port Headland Harbour?

Mr. WILD replied:

Cabinet has not yet considered this matter. I have had the report for some time, but Cabinet Ministers have been very busy recently and have not been able to get around to considering it. When a decision is made I shall make the report available to the honourable member privately.

MILK SALES

Charge for Bottles

6. Mr. LEWIS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it lawful for milk vendors to charge consumers fourpence for each bottle in which the milk is delivered?
- (2) If so, are the milk vendors obliged to refund the fourpence per bottle when the empty bottles are returned?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The matter referred to by the honourable member has been brought about by the decision of the milk treatment plants in an endeavour to ensure the return of empty milk bottles. This question arose from the complaints made by a number of local authorities about empty milk bottles being left on the streets and footpaths. The people were not taking the responsibility which they should take in returning the empties. I would like to be sure of the details sought by the honourable member. If he gives me the particulars of the questions referred to I shall make inquiries and give a reply at a later stage of the sitting.

PERTH-WITTENOOM ROAD TRANSPORT

Tabling of Papers

7. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Transport:

Would the Minister lay upon the Table of the House all papers relating to the Perth-Wittenoom Gorge road transport service?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

I do not know whether there are any papers relating to this matter. I certainly could not lay them upon the Table of the House if today is the last sitting. I will take me some time to obtain them, if there are any. It would be more practical to make them available to the honourable member at my office.

MONEY SENT TO MEMBERS

Disposal

8. Mr. J. HEGNEY asked the Treasurer:

Many members are worried about the £2 which they received from an elector in the Harvey electorate. What suggestion would the Treasurer make to members so that they will not breach the Constitution Act? Would he advise them to hand the money to the needy Treasury of this State, or to some charitable organisation? Alternatively, would he advise them to return the money to the member for Harvey?

Mr. BRAND replied:

While the Treasury is urgently in need of the money—I gather the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund could do with a boost—the wisest course for members to adopt would be to return the money as quickly as they can to Mr. L'Eplattenier.

KIMBERLEY DEEP-WATER PORTS

Cabinet Decision on Location

9. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Works:

With reference to the provision of deep-water ports in the Kimberleys, a Press report published a few days ago stated that the Minister would make further investigations and report back to Cabinet. Can the Minister give any indication when Cabinet will make a concrete decision on this matter?

Mr. WILD replied:

I cannot say exactly when. I shall be going north on Sunday, and I shall be away for a week. I am hoping that when I get back the information which I asked for will

be available for the forthcoming Cabinet meeting. It depends on how busy Cabinet is. I should say we would make a decision, all being well, in three or four weeks' time.

OFF-COURSE TOTALISATOR

Guaranteed Payments, and Government Subsidisation

10. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

It is probable that this question would not have been necessary if the Minister had been able to answer Question No. (7) on today's notice paper.

Mr. PERKINS: I shall have the information later on in the day.

Mr. TONKIN: I shall not then have the opportunity to ask questions without notice. I cannot guess what the answers will contain. I have been reliably informed that the Government guaranteed to the racing clubs £300,000 over the next two years, whether or not such money was obtained by way of revenue from off-course betting. I ask the Minister whether that is the position?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

I understood the question to refer to the guarantee of £300,000.

Mr. Tonkin: Over the next two years.

Mr. PERKINS: No guarantee of that nature was given. As I said during the debate on the betting legislation, it was arranged in the early stages—I think in the first half-year at least—that the same proportion of payment would be maintained between the racing clubs and the Government's revenue, as had prevailed in the immediate past period. There is no guarantee along the lines suggested by the honourable member.

11. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

To clarify the position, in the event of the amount of money not being obtained from the operations of the off-course totalisator and the licensed off-course bookmakers, is it the intention of the Government to make up the deficiency from the General Revenue Fund, in order to ensure that the clubs will receive not less than they have been receiving up to date?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

No. That was not the arrangement. The arrangement was on the proportions. If a lesser amount comes in, the Government and the clubs will share the reduction.

MILK SALES*Charge for Bottles in Country Areas*

12. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Following on the question asked by the member for Moore relating to the return of empty milk bottles, is the Minister aware that the charge for milk bottles in the country has been imposed for some considerable time; and that the charge is not 4d. per bottle but something like 9d.?

Mr. NALDER replied:

I am aware there is a charge being made by milk vendors in the country. I understand it is 6d. per bottle. I believe this arrangement has worked very satisfactorily.

CLAREMONT POLICE STATION*Transfer of Old Building to Police Boys' Club*

13. Mr. CROMMELIN asked the Minister for Lands:

Does the Minister recollect that the 1959 Reserves Bill contained a clause providing that a Crown grant be given to the Police Boys' Club, in relation to land on the site of the old Claremont police station? The club having waited for twelve months to obtain this grant, can the Minister now give me some indication as to when I am likely to hear the good news?

Mr. Hawke: The honourable member should vote the Government out of office.

Mr. BOVELL replied:

There appear to be a number of members in this House qualified to answer this question, from the noise they are making. I do recollect the Bill which I introduced in the last session, one provision of which sought to grant a certain portion of land, formerly occupied by the police at Claremont, to the Police Boys' Club. This portion included certain buildings which formed the old Claremont police station.

There has been a need to carry out some resurveying, because the site concerned does not embrace the whole of the area of the police station. Certain departmental action had to be taken in this regard. I have been advised that the Crown grant will be made available to me today for signature, after which the document will be presented to His Excellency for his signature. The Crown grant should be available after it has received the signature of His Excellency the Governor.

MONEY SENT TO MEMBERS*Disposal*

14. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Treasurer:

Referring to the reply given by the Treasurer to the question asked by the member for Middle Swan in respect of the £2 which has been sent to members of Parliament, does he consider it would be better if a concerted effort were made to return all the money orders together, rather than to leave individual members of Parliament to return the money?

Mr. Hawke: Why not invite the gentleman here?

The SPEAKER: I cannot allow any questions on this matter, because it does not concern the Treasurer.

Mr. FLETCHER: In that event I will address the question to you, Mr. Speaker, because I am concerned about the matter. Even should one money order not be returned, members of Parliament would leave themselves open to further allegations of bribery, or allegations of receiving monetary consideration for some purpose or other. I am genuinely concerned; and I would like some Minister of the Government or yourself, Mr. Speaker, to collect from each member the £2 he has received; and to check every individual refund to make sure that all the money goes back to the source from which it came.

The SPEAKER: The answer is, firstly, that members are all responsible persons, over the age of 21. They should be able to accept the responsibility for the return of these money orders. Furthermore, if every member individually returned the money with a covering letter, then Mr. L'Eplattenier will be well aware of any member who fails to return the money.

On the other hand, if all the money is collected and returned as a group, and one member happens not to hand his in, then all members will be under suspicion. So I would very strongly urge that members individually return their money orders to Mr. L'Eplattenier.

15. Mr. CORNELL asked the Speaker:

Referring to the remarks you have just made, would you care to say that because I and certain other members have not received a money order, we are like Caesar's wife—above suspicion?

The **SPEAKER** replied:

In view of the fact that I do not know who has missed out on this invitation—and I do not know whether the member for Mt. Marshall feels offended—this would be difficult. If the honourable member was not sent a money order, then he could never be under suspicion. If he wants to make the position perfectly clear, however, he could send Mr. L'Eplattenier £2.

Mr. Cornell: In that case I will not be making the position quite clear.

Personal Explanation

Mr. LEWIS: Dealing with the matter under discussion, the money order I received had my name written on the top. Whether that was to be some check by the sender that it would be returned and my name duly cleared in this matter, I do not know. However, I wanted to explain that within a few minutes of the receipt of that letter I—and I know that this applies to several other members—handed my money order to the member for Harvey who promised to return it with the others, in bulk.

MILK SALES

Charge for Bottles

16. Mr. NALDER: I have obtained information requested by the member for Moore in regard to deposits on milk bottles. It is as follows:—

- (1) There is no statutory provision for charging a deposit for bottles delivered containing milk.
- (2) If an arrangement is made for a deposit of fourpence to be charged, it is expected that a refund will be made when the bottle is returned.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Amendment

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the chair; Mr. Wild (Minister for Works) in charge of the Bill.

The **CHAIRMAN**: The amendment made by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 3—Delete.

Mr. WILD: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to. Before the Bill left this Chamber I agreed to an amendment moved by the Deputy

Leader of the Opposition. This amendment stipulated that the Fremantle Harbour Trust would be subject to the Minister; but members in another place have decided that this should not be so.

I have been primarily concerned—and on looking through the file I found that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was primarily concerned—about the projects on which the trust spent its money. I think that the terminal was under construction before the member for Melville was aware that one was to be built. He wrote a firm and pertinent minute to the then Treasurer—now the leader of the Opposition—which stated that the only way the wings of the trust could be clipped would be to restrict its loan funds. I felt in exactly the same position, which is why I agreed to the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

However, it has been pointed out to me that the provision contained in the amendment is already in the Bill, as a reference to proposed new section 58C. (2), appearing on page 5, will reveal. I must confess that I was not aware of that. I knew that the trust had asked for the borrowing powers and that the amendments were copied from those in the State Electricity Commission legislation. But now I realise that the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, is unnecessary. Furthermore, I am not prepared to lose this Bill, which I possibly could, if the matter were referred to managers, and that is the reason I desire the Committee to agree to the Council's amendment. This Act has not been touched since 1957, and many of its provisions need tidying up. It is therefore my intention next session to attend to this matter.

Mr. TONKIN: I regret very much that the Minister is going to agree to the Council's amendment. I believe that if the Ministers in another place had been informed of the Government's attitude to my amendment, it would not have been lost, because both Mr. Griffith and Mr. Logan voted against it. This demonstrates one of two things: Either they were not acquainted with the attitude of the Government towards this amendment; or the Government was not sincere in this House when it agreed to my amendment.

This matter goes a lot deeper than the Minister appreciates at present, and he will be made painfully aware of that fact later on. This control is an absolute necessity. I quote sections 24 and 25 of the Fremantle Harbour Trust Act as follows:—

24. The commissioners shall have the exclusive control of the harbour, and shall be charged with the maintenance and preservation of all property vested in them under this Act.

25. The completion and extension within the harbour of all harbour works shall be deemed Government

work within the meaning of the Public Works Act, 1902, and may be undertaken by the Minister for Works on the recommendation and under the advice of the commissioners.

The trust got around that by deciding to do the work itself and not recommend to the Minister that it be done. The net result was that two work forces were built up to do the same work. When I tried to prevent it I could not do so because I had no power. Unless the trust recommended to me that we did this work, I could not use the Public Works Department force for that purpose. Therefore it used the trust's day-labour force which it had built up.

Does not the Minister think that the trust ought to be stopped from doing that? Or should it be left in the position that it can continue to do it? Is it to the advantage of farmers that the trust is able to continue its present policy, thus incurring increased wharfage charges? Should the trust be in a position to be able to snap its fingers at the Minister and the Government and build up an organisation of its own, duplicating one already in existence, and thus creating unemployment for some? The position is absolutely ridiculous. Should the Government be running the trust or should the trust be running the Government?

The position was intolerable. My engineers were pointing out to me that they had men idle, and even highly-paid engineers had nothing to do. Ever since the inception of the trust those men had been utilised for the construction of wharves and wharfage facilities, but now they were being left on one side while the trust built up its own organisation to do the work, contrary to the intention of the Act. However, it has been able to do that because the Minister has had no control.

All I am asking is that the Government should be put in a position to control a situation like that, and be able to tell the trust that the situation is uneconomical and that the work must be done by the Government's work force as before. If the Government is not given that power, the trust can continue to build up its own work force contrary to the policy of the Government, which is that this work should be done by contract and not by day labour. Whilst that may suit me, because I prefer day labour and the Government's own work force, it is contrary to the principle that I support—that Government policy should be paramount.

All that is necessary in order that this amendment be agreed to is for the Ministers in another place to be notified of the Government's attitude on this matter and then there will be no chance that the Bill will be lost. I would not advocate that the Bill should be lost, because I appreciate that it would be of real advantage to the

State for the trust to have separate borrowing powers. But because of the circumstances I outlined, it should be subject to the Minister.

The Ministers in another place should be informed that this amendment was not inserted because of the whim or fancy of the member for Melville, but because the Government appreciated the merit of the suggestion. I hope that on reflection the Minister will take the necessary steps to ensure that its own representatives in another place support the proposition. If they do that, this amendment will be inserted into the Act. Whom could it possibly hurt? It will permit control over the Harbour Trust commissioners if they desire to do something contrary to Government policy. If they act in accordance with Government policy there will be no possibility of veto. Should the Harbour Trust commissioners be left to defy the Government, and go their own sweet way, irrespective of the Government's desires? It is unthinkable, especially as they are to be given additional funds with which to play.

I hope the Government will appreciate that the amendment was not moved as a result of caprice on my part. I had a real reason for requiring the amendment; and had we remained the Government, it was my intention to introduce a Bill to give effect to this matter.

We have the situation where the Minister administering the department is powerless to check something which he is advised by his top men is against the interests of the State. I do not know whether there are any minutes on the file to that effect, or whether I was told that verbally. I even went to the length of endeavouring to make it possible for the Director of Works to be present at Harbour Trust meetings as an observer in order to get the trust to appreciate that the Government had a point of view.

It is absurd that the Government, which has a responsibility to the people, should be in an inferior position to the trust, and obliged to stand idly by and see put into operation a policy which it knows is a wrong policy. This was brought forcibly to my notice by complaints from the Director of Works who pointed out the unnecessary duplication of labour forces and expense, which we were powerless to prevent. If the Government accepts a situation like that, it will not be acting in the interests of its supporters.

I appeal to the Country Party members, particularly, to realise that the amendment is to their advantage, because they represent exporters of large quantities of primary produce, on which wharfage dues have to be paid. Any move aimed at reducing costs is to their advantage. If the amendment is agreed to, it will give the Government power to keep a check on costs by preventing the setting up of two organisations. I hope the Minister will have

second thoughts on this matter and try the Council out by sending the amendment back.

Mr. FLETCHER: I commend the Minister for accepting the amendment originally, because I believe it is a desirable amendment. I would like him to give further consideration to the matter and, even at this late stage, retain the amendment. To do otherwise would be to permit the Harbour Trust to become a law unto itself. The Harbour Trust should be answerable to Parliament and the people through the Minister, just as the Minister is answerable to the people. I point out, also, that the State Electricity Commission is, through the Minister, answerable to the people of Western Australia; and so are the Education Department and other Government departments. To permit the Harbour Trust to be other than answerable to the Minister is to establish a dangerous precedent.

Mr. Guthrie: Do you think the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust should be treated the same way?

Mr. FLETCHER: This is a dangerous precedent. If the Metropolitan Passenger Transport Trust is not answerable—

Mr. Guthrie: Your Government introduced the legislation.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is beside the point. The two situations are different. Here we will be duplicating a work force.

Mr. Guthrie: I thought you were talking about principles.

Mr. FLETCHER: The situations are not parallel. Even though I may incur the wrath of certain elements in Fremantle, I shall still say what I wish to say because of the principle involved.

I suspect that the Ministers in the Council were not acquainted with the true situation; and I have no doubt it is because of the haste with which the legislation has been dealt during the dying hours of the session, that the amendment was rejected at the other end of the building. Whilst I admit that the senior officers of the Harbour Trust are highly qualified, I still say they should be answerable to the Minister.

Mr. WILD: I think there is a lot of merit in what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition had to say, and it adds to what I said before; namely, that it is high time we had a look at the Act. I admit that this is the first occasion that I have had an opportunity to look at it. When I was asked by the Fremantle Harbour Trust to give it these borrowing powers, the Under-Secretary for Works (Mr. McConnell), who is now Chairman of the Harbour Trust, said it was high time we had a look at this question.

I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that it is all wrong to have two work forces. I point out that so much goes on in my department that, in the short space of time I have been there, I have

not been able to learn everything that does go on; and, quite frankly, I did not know the department had a labour force at the trust.

I will have a look at this piece of legislation; and, if necessary, I will bring down next session another Bill which will go a long way along the road mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; but I will not risk losing this measure, because it is vital. Much money has to be spent on harbour works in the next two or three years, because of the increased shipping at Fremantle.

In view of the fact that for the time being I have the power to curb the Harbour Trust in connection with what it will do in regard to finance, I must accept the amendment from the Legislative Council.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—25.

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Mann
Mr. Brand	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Burt	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Naider
Mr. Court	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Craig	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Owen
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Watts
Dr. Henn	Mr. Wild
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Lewis	(Teller.)

Noes—21.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Molr
Mr. Brady	Mr. Norton
Mr. Curran	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Evans	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. Heal	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Sewell
Mr. W. Hegney	(Teller.)

Majority for—4.

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

RAILWAYS (CUE-BIG BELL AND OTHER RAILWAYS) DISCONTINUANCE BILL

Council's Amendments

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Railways) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Amendment No. 1 made by the Council is as follows:—

No. 1.

Clause 8, page 3, line 25—Delete the word "Act" and substitute the word "section."

Mr. COURT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to. This is a matter which was brought to the attention of the Committee previously by the member for Darling Range. The first line of clause 8 reads—

On and after the commencement of this Act.

Whereas in all the other clauses the first line reads—

On and after the commencement of this section.

It is a drafting error which I have confirmed with the Crown Law Department.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Amendment No. 2 made by the Council is as follows:—

No. 2.

Clause 11, page 5—Delete paragraph (e).

Mr. COURT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to. I move this motion with great reluctance, because the situation that arises in view of this amendment is quite farcical.

Mr. Mann: Why accept it if it is farcical?

Mr. COURT: I would rather have 99.8 per cent. of the Bill than lose the lot.

Mr. Bickerton: No; knock it back!

Mr. COURT: The section of line referred to is the Boya-Mt. Helena line, a distance of some 11 miles. I think I should mention that the Government has no intention of reopening this service; and I think we would be subjected to a fair amount of criticism from Parliament when the financial Estimates were under consideration if we did reopen it.

The history of this line is quite interesting. It was suspended in January, 1954, by the then Government, and it remained suspended right throughout the term of office of that Government. To the best of my knowledge, no attempt was made by it to retain the line, although it was considered on occasions, following local representations. It was not one of the lines the subject of the suspension motion which dealt with some 842 miles of railway; it was a small section of line closed by the then Government under an administrative act, and without reference to Parliament. I think the decision the Government made on that occasion, in the light of circumstances, was the right one; because the loss for the previous year, ended the 30th June, 1953, was £42,559.

Expressed in today's money values, and taking into account basic wage and other increases, it would be much more than that. This is in an area close to the city; and its main requirements would be for passenger transport which, quite obviously, could best be served by road transport. As

I explained the other night, following representations by the member for the district and other members whose electorates impinge on that area, it is the Government's intention to see that a proposition is worked out with the local people for a satisfactory system of road transport.

I think members will agree that the dispersement of the hills area does not lend itself to service by rail transport. A rail service goes from point A. to point B., and the route cannot be changed at any time when some new development takes place; whereas with road transport the routes can be changed to meet new developments. This amendment will mean that the line and other minimum equipment will have to lie there to rot and waste away. I reluctantly ask members to agree to the amendment.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Amendment No. 3 made by the Council is as follows:—

No. 3.

Fifth Schedule—Delete.

Mr. COURT: This amendment is consequential because it deals with the fifth schedule, which gives a complete description of the Boya-Mt. Helena line for legal purposes. Therefore, I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (RESUMPTION OF LAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Amendment

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment made by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 2.

Page 2—Delete paragraph (d).

Mr. COURT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to. This paragraph has been deleted by the Legislative Council because of an undertaking I gave when the Bill was previously before the Committee.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1960-1961*In Committee of Supply*

Resumed from the 24th November, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the Chair.

Votes—Chief Secretary, £129,843; Registry and Friendly Societies, £38,851; Prisons, £263,625; Observatory, £15,187; Medical, £4,585,243; Homes, £473,620; Public Health, £562,204; Tuberculosis, £640,124; Mental Health Services, £1,145,700; Fisheries, £79,400 (partly considered):

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [12.12 p.m.]: There are a few matters I would like to discuss with respect to some of the Minister's portfolios. The first item concerns prisons, and this is an annual issue which I have raised ever since I have been a member of this House. I would like to see the prison removed from the Fremantle area so that provision for better town planning can be made for the Fremantle district in general and the prison locality in particular. It would make a wonderful city block, and its removal is justified by the inadequate space that is available within the four walls of the prison.

I am gratified to learn there is a likelihood that a prison farm will be established in the Murray area. Perhaps the member for Murray may not share my enthusiasm in that regard, but there was a Press reference to it recently over the name of the Minister. Consequently, as I said, I am gratified to learn that there is a likelihood of prison facilities being made available elsewhere.

At this stage I would like to inform members that the gaol officers have very difficult work to perform. As dedicated and humane men, they find the rehabilitation of prisoners is most difficult under present circumstances, particularly under the crowded conditions that prevail in the prison at Fremantle. When these other prison facilities are provided, such as at the prison farms and other places, there is a prospect of doing something for those who are inmates of these institutions.

Gaol officers are at a disadvantage as compared with other Government employees, particularly—for the information of the Chief Secretary and the Minister for Labour—in respect of week-end penalty rates and shift-work loadings. They are at a disadvantage in that they are poorly paid in comparison with other Government employees who work shift work and also at the week end. I would like to bring that point forward for the information of the Minister; namely, that they receive inadequate pay for difficult and uncongenial employment. The men must be dedicated to that work, or they would not take it on for the remuneration they receive. So I would like the Minister to give sympathetic consideration to the improvement of the industrial conditions of those employees.

I notice another branch of the Minister's portfolio—Item No. 101—deals with homes. I assume that this refers to homes for the aged, including hospitalisation for the aged and sick, who may not be "A"-class hospital patients, but who are "C"-class hospital patients. We know that "C"-class hospitals are mushrooming all over the metropolitan area, and that some are better than others. As I emphasised earlier, I think that these should be under Government control. Private enterprise has spent money on them, and many of them are giving a service and filling a much-felt want. One that I mentioned recently in the Fremantle area spent £8,000 to erect extensions on to ancient buildings in order to provide facilities for a "C"-class hospital.

The service given to the patients in this hospital is splendid for the charge that is made. Under the hospital benefits scheme a pensioner receives an amount back from the hospital benefits scheme, and he is also given Commonwealth assistance. The charges made by this particular hospital enable pensioners who enter such places to still have a few shillings left over for any incidentals they might require. The hospital I have in mind is a splendid one, and I feel we could have many more of them established in the community.

These hospitals also assist in the disposal problems of "A"-class hospitals, in that patients can be removed from the Fremantle Hospital to one of these institutions. At the moment hospital facilities are inadequate, and I would like to see more of these places established, preferably under Government control, similar to the Mosman Park annexe. If that is not possible, then we should have institutions similar to the ones I have mentioned.

I am also very gratified at a Press statement made by the Minister in relation to a review of hospital needs, which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 17th November.

Mr. Tonkin drew attention to the state of the Committee.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. FLETCHER: I was about to quote from an article dated the 17th November, which appeared in *The West Australian* and was headed, "Review For All Hospital Needs". The Minister apparently made a statement to the Press as follows:—

A complete review of hospital requirements in the metropolitan area will be made by a special committee.

Health Minister Hutchinson announced this yesterday in the Legislative Assembly.

The committee will consist of Professor Gordon Stephenson; Dr. W. S. Davidson, Deputy-Commissioner of Public Health, and Mr. J. Griffith, administrator of the Royal Perth Hospital.

It would make its report as soon as possible, Mr. Hutchinson said.

The review would be related to the needs of the Medical School and the community. It would also have regard to the changing pattern of hospital and medical practice and other factors.

As I said, I was very gratified to see that statement. My earlier remarks are very pertinent in regard to the changing pattern of hospital and medical practice and other factors. With reference to that matter, I would like to quote a letter sent to me by the North Fremantle Municipality and dated the 29th June. I will read the first paragraph, which is as follows:—

At a recent meeting of the Health Committee of this Council, the Medical Officer of Health (Dr. Max Canning) addressed members on the hardships experienced by single pensioners because of the lack of suitable accommodation. The Council is very much in agreement with the opinion of Dr. Canning, and resolved to approach you in the hope that the State Government, through the Housing Commission, might be persuaded to give this subject some consideration.

Admittedly, that is in relation to State Housing; but as the Chief Secretary represents the Minister for Housing in this Chamber I thought it might be pertinent to read it. I would now like to quote the last paragraph of the letter, which reads—

While it is agreed that the institutions now available meet the requirements of the aged to some degree, it is true that many persons do not find such homes acceptable to them. In fact, it is the opinion of Dr. Canning that many persons, forced by circumstance to accept the accommodation available at these places, deteriorate rapidly because it is not agreeable to them.

I endorse the remarks of Dr. Canning in that respect. To continue—

The Council will appreciate anything which you, as the Member for Fremantle, can do to bring this matter to the attention of the Government. It is a problem which concerns us all and it is to be hoped that some progress can be made.

That puts the case very succinctly as far as I am concerned. In private conversation with Dr. Max Canning I found he also believes that in the suburbs more emphasis should be placed on geriatrics. Admittedly, there is Wooroloo which was previously used for T.B. patients but which is now being used for geriatric purposes. This arrangement, however, might suit some people and at the same time not be very convenient for others. For instance, it would be most difficult for an old lady who wished to visit her husband who happened to be there. On the other

hand, it would be all right for a young person who might care to make the visit. This is not so in all cases.

The doctor mentioned what he thought would be a desirable solution; namely, that there should be small cottage hospitals in the suburbs under medical supervision where single and double-unit accommodation could be provided, and where a doctor could visit from time to time, either daily or weekly, to keep in touch with some of the cases who perhaps would be otherwise accommodated in "C"-class hospitals, but who are well enough to potter around in small accommodation and who are able to look after themselves or one another.

There are other matters I could raise, but perhaps I will leave them to be dealt with by the member for South Fremantle. These are common problems that we have in our area, and I am sure the honourable member will deal with them in due course. The matter of prisons and the question of health were two matters on which I felt I should spend a little time. I could, of course, have enlarged on my comments, but I submit what I have said for the Minister's consideration.

MR. TONKIN (Melville) [12.26 p.m.]: I desire to offer a few remarks in connection with a couple of the Minister's departments. I foreshadowed earlier that I had a bone to pick with him over a certain matter, and I shall deal with that matter a little later on.

From time to time I have had occasion to place some emphasis on the fact that Ministers of this Government make statements with little or no sense of the responsibility that is upon them to make their words good. Ministers have appeared to resent that, but the remedy is in their own hands. If they do not want to be accused of doing this they should not make such statements. I have always considered that when a Minister makes a statement of his intention to do something he should do it, or explain why he cannot. He should not just let it go as if it does not matter at all.

Last year the Board of Visitors of the Heathcote Reception Home issued its report for the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1958. One of the recommendations of the board was that attention be given to the establishment of an occupational therapy centre in addition to that available through the Red Cross. That must have registered with the Minister; because, on the 7th November, 1959, he made a statement which appeared in *The West Australian*, and I quote—

Therapy Unit for Heathcote

A social therapy centre will be built at Heathcote Hospital for the early treatment of severe mental illness. Health Minister Hutchinson said yesterday that Principal Architect A. E.

Clare, was now preparing plans and specifications. The new centre would provide facilities for painting, modelling, handicrafts, and carpentry. It would also be used for dancing, films, plays, and discussion groups. Tenders would be called as soon as possible.

Anybody seeing that announcement, as I did 12 months ago, would have applauded the fact that at last very worthwhile provision was to be made for these unfortunate people. The Government would get considerable kudos, as it was entitled to get, from that announcement. But what happened? Precisely nothing. Not a shilling has been spent to establish this occupational therapy centre. It would have been better had the Minister said nothing about it instead of buoying up the hopes of people who are interested in this matter.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Why don't you be a bit rational?

Mr. TONKIN: Does the Minister deny that statement?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Not one scrap. The work is going to go forward. The wheels of government under your administration went much more slowly.

Mr. TONKIN: Never mind the wheels under my Government! My Government never said it was going to do this.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I gave the order to go ahead.

Mr. TONKIN: When?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: A good time ago.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister's explanation is not good enough for me.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: No explanation is ever good enough for you.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister's explanation is not logical, because he made this announcement 12 months ago. He said, "Plans and specifications were being prepared."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is quite so.

Mr. TONKIN: It does not take 12 months to prepare plans and specifications for buildings of this nature.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There is many a slip between the cup and the lip in Government work.

Mr. TONKIN: I'll say so! Therefore the Minister should not have made an announcement until it was certain the work could be put in hand.

Mr. Ross Hutchison: If I had known of the likelihood of the subsequent trouble I would not have made the statement. You have no tolerance or understanding whatsoever.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! I have been very lenient.

Mr. TONKIN: Mr. Chairman, I suggest that you be not lenient but enforce the Standing Orders.

Mr. Brand: Always?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, always. That will suit me.

Mr. Brand: It will not suit you very often.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. TONKIN: You will notice, Mr. Chairman, how the Government does not like this. I have said nothing that is not perfectly true.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are always talking the truth!

Mr. TONKIN: I have merely stated the facts. Here is a case where a Minister made an announcement to create the impression that something was to be done. That is the reason that this announcement was made 12 months ago. It was to let the people know the Government was going to provide these facilities; and the Minister will have the opportunity when he replies to give an explanation as to why it has taken all this time, or to say when these facilities will be provided.

If the Government has changed its mind the people are entitled to know, because there are no "ifs" and "buts" about this. The statement says, "Therapy unit for Heathcote." It should have said "in the sweet by and by;" but it did not. It said, "A social therapy centre will be built at Heathcote Hospital for the early treatment of severe mental illness." That was the Minister's statement. He also said, "The Principal Architect (Mr. Clare) is now preparing plans and specifications."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is the third time you have said this. How many times are you going to say it?

Mr. TONKIN: I know the Minister does not like it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You repeat yourself time and time again.

Mr. TONKIN: The truth always bears repetition. I am glad the Minister does not like it, because I want him to face up to this. It justifies my criticism of the attitude of Ministers to the statements they make. The Minister did not only say that Heathcote would get an occupational centre; he also said that Sunset was to get one. This is in the Minister's announcement which appeared 18 months ago in *The West Australian* of the 11th July, "Therapy scheme for Sunset." It reads well. It would cause people to say, "This is the Government! It has the idea of what is required." The Minister's statement continued—

proposals to develop occupational therapy worth £50,000.

Mr. Chairman, what do you think about this? Do you think it has been started? Not a bob of that £50,000 has been spent in 18 months! A complete financial year has gone by and not one brick has been placed upon another in pursuance of this announcement.

Is that the way to treat the people? Is that the way a Minister ought to act up to utterances he makes? It is deluding the people. If there were no insuperable obstacles in the Minister's way, the proper thing for him to have done was to go to the Press and explain that the promised expenditure of £50,000 for the occupational therapy centre for *Sunset* unfortunately could not take place for the following reasons. But that would not have suited the Minister's book. He wanted to create this impression that he was a live-wire Minister who had a proper appreciation of the needs of those people, and he was taking early action to satisfy them.

What did we get? Precisely nothing. I say it is the responsibility of the Minister to tell this Committee today why nothing has happened with regard to those occupational therapy centres, and when we can expect them to be started—if we can expect them to be started. The Minister cannot play with the public in this way by creating a belief in their minds that they are going to get things done.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Doesn't your conscience ever trouble you?

Mr. TONKIN: Never.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I thought so.

Mr. TONKIN: There is no reason for it to trouble me; I have never done things like this in my life. But it is obvious the Minister's conscience does not trouble him.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I haven't got one; that is the trouble.

Mr. TONKIN: It does not trouble the Minister. If it did he would have taken steps to see that this work was carried out or, failing that, explained to the people why he could not do it. The Minister cannot deny that the purpose of this announcement was to create an atmosphere. The Government is always talking about the right atmosphere. Well, these statements were made to create an atmosphere of confidence in the Minister; yet 18 months have elapsed since the promise of an occupational therapy centre for *Sunset* was made, and not one bob has been spent.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is the fourth time.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes; the truth bears repetition.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I want to see how many times you say it.

Mr. TONKIN: I can understand why the Minister does not like it—why it is not palatable to him. But it is his fault. If

Ministers did not create these situations for me to criticise, I would not be criticising them.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You would criticise anything.

Mr. TONKIN: I criticise those things that ought to be criticised, even though Ministers do not want me to. I will continue to criticise Ministers who show little regard for their responsibilities and who make statements and give assurances. I have one for the Premier later on.

Mr. Bovell: My word, he will be shaking in his shoes!

Mr. TONKIN: He will not like it any more than the Minister for Health is liking it now, or the Minister for Lands liked it the other day in regard to an assurance which he made and which I accepted, but which proved to be worthless. All I am saying is that we get these instances one after another where there are undertakings and assurances given which are not worth anything.

The only way the Minister can get out of it is to make a clean breast of the position and say why 12 months have elapsed and nothing has been done at Heathcote; and why 18 months have elapsed and nothing has been done at *Sunset*. He will also have an opportunity of giving an indication when it can be reasonably expected that work will be commenced. If he cannot do that, he can say why the work cannot be commenced, and not leave it, in the hope that the original impression has created in the minds of some people the idea that these things have been done. That is what people think. They read that something is going to be done, and then they assume—as they are entitled to—that it is done. It is only those who are in a position to find out who know that the promise was an empty one. I daresay that if we were to interrogate the people who saw these announcements, 99 per cent. of them at least would be under the impression that this work has been done.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Answer me this: In view of the criticism you are making, would you say this is unique in this Government; or would you be game to say that other Governments also have the same difficulties?

Mr. TONKIN: When I make a statement, I am prepared to stand up to it. All I can truthfully say is this: It is my belief that occasions like this have occurred under previous Governments. I would think it is possible. But I do not know of any instances which would enable me to say definitely that that has been so.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is difficult to think of cases in point.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not dismiss the possibility—

Mr. Bovell: I can give you one; but I won't!

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister is within Standing Orders, why not do it?

Mr. J. Hegney: Why not tell the Royal Commission!

Mr. Bovell: I will tell the Leader of the Opposition privately.

Mr. TONKIN: I am sorry to have to take the Minister to task for this; but he has let the people down—not only the people outside, but the unfortunate people in the institutions, and those who are running the institutions. They were led to believe that these desirable facilities were about to be provided.

From my experience of life, I consider it is much fairer not to say one is going to give a person something which he requires, when one cannot give it to him, than to give him the impression that he is going to get something, when he has little chance of getting it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I could not agree more; I think that is right.

Mr. TONKIN: I will conclude that part of my remarks with the wish that the Minister will do his utmost to make those undertakings good at the earliest possible time. I can assure him, of my own personal knowledge and experience, that these two projects which were promised are very worthwhile indeed, and should be given the highest possible priority.

I can think of nothing sadder than a person who has gone off-balance, and has had to enter an institution; and who, during the period that he is getting well, has got nothing with which to occupy his time, but just walks around the yard hour after hour waiting for the time when he will be fully recovered; whereas his recovery would be assisted very considerably if he had these occupations to which he could turn.

So we owe it to these people, if we are in a position to make the provision, to do it as quickly as we can; and I would ask the Minister to do his level best to make good his word that an occupational therapy centre would be provided at Heathcote and also at *Sunset*, where old people find time hanging heavily on their hands. I will leave it at that.

I now have a few remarks to make about the Department of Fisheries. I could not understand why the Minister agreed to fishermen having set nets in the Swan River. The Minister has shown a commendable appreciation of the desire and necessity to safeguard the crayfishing industry, knowing that if unlimited fishing is permitted the grounds will be speedily fished out and the industry will suffer.

There is no great industry based on fishing in the Swan River. It is true that some fishermen derive a livelihood from what they do; but there is no industry comparable with the crayfishing industry.

But quite a lot of people in the metropolitan area derive considerable enjoyment from being able to get in a boat and go out on the river and fish; and they have done it ever since Western Australia was a colony.

There is no question that the use of set nets will deplete the supply of fish in the Swan River, and therefore detract from the value of that river as a tourist attraction and an amenity for the people. I deplore the fact that commercialism is to be given priority in this matter, and that the criterion is to be the facility with which fishermen can get a guaranteed quantity of fish rather than the interest of residents generally who desire to go out in a boat and throw a line over the side. I can see no necessity for granting permission for set nets in the Swan. Carry that to its logical conclusion, and there would be very little fish left for the ordinary angler. I think it is a bad policy. I am sorry the Minister agreed to it, and I express my opposition to it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We are merely carrying on what has been happening in past years.

Mr. TONKIN: I was not aware that the previous Government permitted set nets in the Swan for fish. I do not think it did.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: To the best of my knowledge, it did.

Mr. TONKIN: I know the Government permitted it for crabs. I cannot say I was altogether in favour of that idea; but it was done, and I take my share of the responsibility for it. But I do not like the idea of set nets for fish in the Swan. The place is not absolutely teeming with them, under any circumstances; but people can get good catches of tailor and good catches of herring, and bream at times; and it provides good fishing. But if the river is to be fished out by the use of set nets, then I do not think we are acting in the best interests of the people. The Minister will appreciate that my electorate adjoins the river—the river is the boundary on the northern side.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are thinking more of people who indulge in fishing on the Swan for sport rather than as a means of livelihood.

Mr. TONKIN: Now you think you have the member for Melville; but you haven't!

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister will permit the member for Melville, who has the floor, to say what he wants to say, he will soon disabuse his mind of the idea that has suddenly got into it. I do not concede that it is necessary for the livelihood of any fishermen that they should be permitted to put set nets in the Swan. I would tell the Minister this: that if

what he has in mind is a valid argument, he should not be restricting fishing anywhere; he should not be telling fishermen anywhere in Western Australia that they cannot fish at certain times and in certain places, because he is threatening their livelihood. It is a lot of nonsense.

Sitting suspended from 12.50 to 2.15 p.m.

MR. CURRAN (South Fremantle) [2.15 p.m.]: I wish to avail myself of the opportunity to speak to the Health vote in particular because I believe it will be the only chance I will have to raise what I consider to be an important and urgent matter. Most of my remarks will relate to the question that I had on the notice paper today. Although the answers I received from the Minister covered the point in question to some degree, they really only tinkered with a problem that is growing at an alarming rate.

I am referring to the problem of alcoholics. I think all members will agree it is one to which every member of the community should pay urgent attention. It will also be agreed, I think, that for some strange reason most alcoholics congregate not only around Australian ports but also in the various ports throughout the world. If the Minister will conduct some investigations into this problem he will find that my statement is substantially correct. For that reason I wish to refer to the question as it affects the port of Fremantle.

In Fremantle, at present, there is a committee which is attempting to perform valuable work for the purpose of rehabilitating alcoholics. It has the title of The Good Samaritan Council. Many of Fremantle's prominent citizens are members of it, including clergymen and members of the Police Force. All members of Parliament representing the district of Fremantle act in collaboration with that committee.

I would like to point out that the work done by it is limited by lack of finance. At the moment it has a balance of only £50 to its credit with which to meet the expenditure incurred in its work. The volunteer helpers assist in premises where they are endeavouring to cope, as efficiently as they can, with the work done to assist these needy people. That building is known as *The Haven*. I feel sure that every member in this House has read about that establishment in the Press at some time or another. The lady in charge of *The Haven* at the moment is doing her best under extreme difficulty for the alcoholics who go there.

I think that at one time the Minister discussed with members of The Good Samaritan Council—when that body was first formed—what would be the best means of meeting this problem in the port of Fremantle. At that time it was suggested that *The Haven* should either be

demolished or vacated with a view to receiving assistance from the Government to establish a home that would serve most adequately the needs of alcoholics in Fremantle.

I think everyone would also agree that something more important is needed to treat these people than by supplying them with a bed and a meal. Unfortunately, up to date, in dealing with this problem, that is about all The Good Samaritan Council has been able to offer these people.

As most members are aware, alcoholism is a mental disease, and it is essential that the sufferers should receive treatment in a proper manner as urgently as possible. Not much progress can be made to rehabilitate them to take their place in society by merely establishing a home to house alcoholics for one night and to give them breakfast the next morning when it is known that they will go out from that home the same day and repeat their drunken orgy.

That is how the position stands in regard to the people at Fremantle at present. *The Haven* is most unhygienic; and the facilities it has to offer for the treatment of these people are appalling, and therefore it is an urgent necessity that the Government should tackle this problem.

I appreciate that grants have been made to the Seaforth Home to assist the alcoholics who are accommodated there. But I still insist that the problem is not being dealt with in a scientific manner; and, in my opinion, the circumstances that exist at the moment will continue until the problem of alcoholism will become a scourge on the State; and when that stage is reached the problem will be almost insoluble. Some action should be taken to resolve it now.

From statements I have heard various members make, I understand that some time ago Professor Saint, of the W.A. University, attended a meeting of members of both Houses of Parliament to discuss this question. I have been told that he related the evils of this disease to most members of Parliament; and therefore, having listened to the professor's address, every member should be fully aware of the urgent necessity for the Government to grapple with this problem with a view to dealing with it in a proper manner.

We have so many examples of how this disease can affect a nation. One has only to visualise what is taking place in the United States at present. It is a well-known fact that the U.S.A. has the highest incidence of alcoholism in the world.

Mr. Fletcher: Its victims occupy one in every three hospital beds.

Mr. CURRAN: I believe that is the figure. That country is endeavouring to cope with the situation before it becomes entirely hopeless.

In a country as young as Australia, we should make an attempt to tackle this problem, irrespective of what other financial commitments the Government may have. I believe this is the most urgent problem which faces the Government of this State. At least it has an opportunity, in conjunction with what is being done in South Australia and New South Wales, to cope with the problem of alcoholism, and thus set an example to the other countries of the world.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The honourable member should inquire from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition whether that is one problem which has been tackled.

Mr. CURRAN: I am not concerned with that aspect one whit. I would be just as critical of any Government for allowing the problem to develop into its present stage. I am not concerned with what previous Governments did; all I am concerned with is the problem as it is now. This is no occasion on which to indulge in criticism of what steps the Government took five, 10, 15, or 20 years ago.

Surely everyone must be aware of the alarming position into which the problem of alcoholism has fallen, not only in Western Australia but in the Commonwealth as a whole. It is only by tackling problems such as this in the early stages that any real check can be made. I do not wish to criticise any Government, whatever its political colour, for its lack of action in this regard.

In bringing this question before the House, I am making an attempt to check the disease. By taking steps to tackle the problem, the community will relieve itself of a great burden: I am referring to the burden which has become apparent to the Child Welfare Department, and which has arisen through the incidence of drunkenness in the home.

I am sure all members are aware of the fact that most of the burdens placed on the Child Welfare Department are more or less caused by broken homes, and these mainly result from alcoholism. If the Government were to spend money on the prevention of broken homes, then such expenditure would be offset by what the Government would save in Child Welfare Department assistance. The expenditure on prevention balances up against the saving to the Child Welfare Department.

I was pleased to hear the statement of the Minister that £50,000 has been allocated to the Seaforth Home. I appreciate the difficulties which the Government faces, but I appeal to the Minister and to the Government, irrespective of the urgency of other matters, to give attention to the point I have raised, concerning the need to take some action on a scientific basis to check the scourge of alcoholism which is developing in Western Australia and in the other States. We should not

allow the position in this State to deteriorate to the extent to which it has in countries abroad. I hope that the Minister, together with his colleagues in the Government, will give this matter urgent consideration.

MR. ANDREW (Victoria Park) [2.27 p.m.]: I want to speak on only one aspect of this vote; that is on hospitalisation. When I first became the member for Victoria Park eight years ago I found that the south side of the river was practically disregarded. I endeavoured to remedy that situation, and I organised a deputation to wait on the Minister for Health. The member for Beeloo and I introduced the deputation to the Minister, and a case was put up on the need for a hospital on the south side of the river. The Minister was most sympathetic towards our request. Arising from that deputation, the Minister, Dr. Henzell, the member for Beeloo, and I chose the site in the plantation at Bentley.

I have known right through that the powers that be—this does not refer to any particular Government but to all Governments—did not recognise the needs of the large population on the south side of the river; neither did they appear to realise the great increase in the population in that part of the metropolitan area. In saying that, I make one exception: I refer to the member for Eyre, Minister for Health in the previous Government. He recognised our need.

One of the medical officers of the Health Department called me to his office, and for two hours he tried to persuade me to discontinue the agitation for a hospital on the south side of the river. The only reason he gave me was that such a move would upset the plans which the department had in mind. After I left his office I weighed the pros and cons of the situation; I considered the rights and the wrongs. I came to the conclusion that I was doing the right thing in pressing for a hospital in that part of the metropolitan area, and I continued my activities. With the help of several members, we did get as far as obtaining a hospital site. The previous Minister for Health informed us that he would be prepared to build this hospital provided he could obtain enough money from the Treasurer. Unfortunately that seems to be the bugbear in this matter as in so many others.

In the early years the population increased north of the river, because that is where the development took place. There were not many living on the other side. Unfortunately those in office apparently have the idea that that situation has remained to the present day. They do not realise that there is a huge population on the other side of the river, which would be served by this hospital. It would also serve the requirements of the south-west.

I want to say at this stage that I am not asking for a hospital for Victoria Park; nor do I want a small one. The situation demands a major hospital because, as I have stated, of the population which exists. The following are the figures for the electorates situated on that side of the river, which would all be served by the proposed hospital:—

Beeloo	.....	14,008
Canning	.....	15,216
Middle Swan—the portion of this electorate in this area	.....	8,000
South Perth	.....	10,213
Victoria Park	.....	10,331
Dale	.....	6,586
Darling Range	.....	5,274

Those figures, which I obtained from the electoral roll, amount to 70,000. It is logical to assume that there would be, for every person over the age of 21, one under the age of 21. That means that the population of that area—16 or 18 miles square—is about 140,000. Therefore practically one-fifth of the population of the State is situated on the south side of the river; but those people have practically no hospitalisation of any kind. There is a small community hospital in South Perth consisting of, I think, 27 beds. There is also a small St. John of God Hospital on the Great Eastern Highway at Belmont, which has, I believe, about 30 beds.

It must be remembered that not only does that huge population live there permanently, but the proposed hospital would be near the many highways which meet in Victoria Park. These highways are Albany Highway, South-West Highway, Canning Highway, and Great Eastern Highway.

It is a well-known fact that to transport people from one side of the river to another is a problem, and that is a further reason for the need to establish a hospital on the south side of the river. All the highways to which I have referred—with the exception of Canning Highway, which also has an outlet over the Narrows Bridge—meet at the one point where they cross the river. This creates such a problem that even now consideration is being given to further improvements of the approaches to the Causeway in order to facilitate the flow of traffic. This was revealed in answer to questions I asked in this House.

Although I hope I am wrong, I am given to understand that the officers of the public Health Department are not enamoured of the prospect of building a hospital on the site suggested. It must be remembered that the north side of the river is well catered for with hospitals, whereas the south side of the river is not. I warn the Minister of the attitude of his officers and ask him to give the matter the further consideration it warrants.

Mr. Nulsen: Is the original site being retained?

Mr. ANDREW: That is something which the Minister could perhaps tell us, because I have not been able to obtain the information. Both the member for Beeloo and I have asked a question on this matter, and I understand that eight acres have been taken from the original site.

One of the mistakes which is so often made—and I am still answering the member for Eyre—is that when an authority sets aside land for a certain purpose, it does not set aside enough. As time goes on and the need for expansion occurs, it is found necessary to shift the amenity or service somewhere else. The member for Eyre stated—and I fully agree with him—that if land is to be set aside for a hospital, it should be ensured that it will be adequate for future requirements; and so we set aside 50 acres. I do not understand the position in connection with this land now, and I would like the Minister to clarify the position.

MR. NORTON (Gascoyne) [2.38 p.m.]: I desire to say a few words about the fisheries report. The section dealing with the trapping of snapper was quite comprehensive, but it is obvious that a full report on such a matter cannot be completed in one year.

Three points were emphasised in it, the first being that traps should not be set for any long period. So far as I can ascertain it is necessary to clear traps at 20-minute intervals at the most; because if the fish is left in them for any length of time a certain amount of bruising and injury occurs; and when the fish is treated this bruising and injury sets up a bacterial action which results in the fish being of an inferior quality. Where scales are knocked off fish, bruising results; and without snap freezing, bacterial action sets in very quickly, particularly after the fish are removed from the freezer. The deterioration, particularly the yellowing of the flesh around the gills, can be seen on many snapper sold in Western Australian fish shops.

The second point brought forward in the report concerned the damaging of coral. At present we do not know the extent of the coral patches or the number of them. It appears that these coral patches are not of any great area or in any great numbers, because they take a considerable amount of finding before the boats can fish efficiently on them.

The report pointed out that each trap, when it was pulled, showed a considerable amount of coral attached to it. It also pointed out that the anchors came up with a certain amount of coral on them. Therefore, every time a snapper trap is dropped and pulled up again, a certain amount of coral is damaged. We do not know the exact rate at which coral grows, but from my observations it does not grow very

fast in those waters. With the constant pulling of the traps and of the anchors, the coral patches could be damaged to such an extent that in a short time the fishing in the area could be spoiled. No doubt the Fisheries Research Department will carry out an investigation into that aspect of snapper fishing; and it is an aspect which the department will watch closely.

It is evident that at the beginning of the season, snapper come in big numbers for spawning; and it is during this period that the fishing boats get their best hauls. There is no doubt that the catching of snapper by traps is the most economical method for the fishing boats at this time of the year. But if the trapping of snapper is going to upset the fishing industry there, it will upset the economy of the district. This is a point that will have to be watched closely; it will probably take several years to investigate this matter in order to get down to the absolute basis of what is required.

I have taken the trouble to find out, through the C.S.I.R.O., just what is happening in other States in respect of catching fish by means of traps. It is evident that very little is known of this subject in the Eastern States because the only regulations in existence are those which limit the size of the traps. In Queensland, I understand, a considerable amount of trapping is done; and I am told that the average commercial fisherman there looks down on the trapping of fish. Nothing is done about the matter in Queensland, as I believe the traps are set in waters outside the area controlled by the State.

So members can see that neither we nor the Eastern States have very much information in respect of the trapping of snapper. I urge the Minister to see that his department continues these investigations so that they may be carried through to a conclusion; and so that we may know whether trapping is detrimental to the industry, or just what effect it is having on the fish.

I was pleased to see, in the recommendations of the research officer, that a certain area of the Shark Bay waters should be made as a closed area with respect to the trapping of snapper. As members know, Shark Bay is a small town of some 250 people, and its whole life depends on fishing. I have no doubt that this trapping has some effect on line fishing for snapper in those waters. The recommendations suggest the closing of certain waters for a trial period of five years. That is a step in the right direction.

Whilst I am not prepared to say now whether the recommendation is correct, or whether a sufficiently large area is to be closed, I point out that I am waiting on a reply from the Shark Bay fishermen giving their ideas on the position. They have fished there all their lives in the area, and

they would be able to give the best opinion. In the meantime I think the recommendation made to the Minister is one well worth studying; but before it is implemented I would strongly suggest that the Minister get the opinions of the professional fishermen at Shark Bay. The best two fishermen at Shark Bay were born in the area; and their father was also a professional fisherman there. These men have diaries dating back probably to the beginning of the fishing industry there; and the diaries would show the movements of fish in the different areas of Shark Bay, almost to the exact date. These diaries could be very helpful in determining what should be done.

Another point I wish to bring before the Minister concerns the provision of a fishing jetty at Carnarvon. As members will have noted, fishing is gradually moving further north. We recently read in the paper of a boat called the *Will Succeed* fishing as far north as Onslow. That boat is based at Geraldton, and it took very large catches of albacore and turtles north of Geraldton. I understand that a sister ship to the *Will Succeed* is to go further north, and that the *Will Succeed* is on its way back. Each of these two vessels has, I believe, a fleet of catchers with it; and there is no doubt that from time to time those catchers will want to come into Carnarvon for a spell, or for supplies, or for something of that sort. If they do come into Carnarvon they will find that there is no reasonable place where they can anchor or where they can tie up so that the crew may come ashore.

It is unsafe for a small boat to tie up alongside the main jetty, because if a swell is running the boat will be quickly damaged. A fishing jetty could be established at West Point in Tegg's Channel. Tegg's Channel is not very long; but the water is deep, and it is a safe place for boats in the event of a cyclone developing. Boats that have been anchored in Tegg's Channel during a cyclone have always weathered the storm without sustaining damage. This is the only reasonable place along the coast where boats can get harbourage in rough weather. I ask the Minister to do everything possible in this matter.

It might be said that at the present time there is no call for a jetty; but there are no calls for many things until they are established. However, once they are established people quickly use them to a far greater extent than was ever anticipated.

With the fishing for scallops, prawns, and now albacore and turtle meat, the snapper boats—30 or so of them—come to within 30 miles of Carnarvon in the snapper season. So there is no doubt this jetty would be a very popular place with the skippers of those boats. At present the vessels do not come in, because there is nowhere for them to anchor or tie up.

The other point I wish to raise in respect of fishing—now that fishing is developing further north—is that there should be some haven for fishing boats at Exmouth Gulf. When the member for Merredin-Yilgarn was Minister for Fisheries, I took up with him the matter of blasting the bar at Wapet Creek, Exmouth Gulf. Wapet Creek is a mangrove-enclosed creek of a fair size with a good depth of water, but at the mouth there is a limestone bar. This creek has been used on a number of occasions as a haven, during cyclones, for the fisheries research vessels, and other vessels in the area. As a matter of fact the *Lancelin* used it on one occasion during a cyclone, and it was perfectly safe. Although the boat was washed up on to the bank it sustained no damage. Had it not been able to get into the creek it would have been a total loss.

As the *Lancelin*, the *Peron*, and other fishing boats are using that area, it is only reasonable to suggest that such a haven be made available. The expenditure on opening the creek would not be very great; and, even if it meant the saving of one life or one boat, it would be worth the money expended.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Chief Secretary, Minister for Health, and Minister for Fisheries—in reply) [2.51 p.m.]: A number of members who spoke on these estimates did so in general terms; and I urge them, if they have any specific requests to make, to forward them to me, and in due course I will give them every consideration.

Commenting on some of the remarks, I would like to say that the member for Albany was most interesting in regard to his appreciation of the Californian report from which he quoted. It dealt with fish farming on desert seabeds by the use of old cars, taxis, and even tramcars. This subject, of which the department is aware, is one which no doubt, in due course and when circumstances warrant it, will be dealt with, and some action may be taken along the lines suggested. I would be interested in that report.

During his speech the member for Eyre mentioned the Health Education Council, and said that he felt it was not playing the part it had played in the past. I can assure him it is continuing to play a very important part in health education in this State; and I think its formation is a forward step.

Mr. Nulsen: I am very glad to hear that, because I have been informed it has lost a certain amount of enthusiasm.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: One or two individual members may have, but it has certainly not come to my knowledge that that is the case. I think the honourable member's eulogy of Sir Ross McDonald's work as chairman of the Royal Perth Hospital Board will be appreciated. It is

appreciated by me as the honourable member's successor in office, because I know what Sir Ross has done, and I am sure it will be appreciated by that gentleman.

The member for Leederville mentioned the midgets at Lake Monger. This matter is primarily one for the Perth City Council; but should the department be called on for advice or technical assistance, that will be given.

The honourable member spoke of the shortage of nurses; and it is true that at certain times of the year, in particular, we are faced with a dire shortage of nurses in certain country towns. This is a seasonal occurrence, and it usually happens with the onset of the summer months, and as we near Christmas, when nurses begin to go home, to the other States, or overseas.

The honourable member suggested that perhaps the standard of entry for nurses was too high. Consideration has been given to this matter in the past, but the nurses themselves are opposed to any great change in this regard, although the number of nursing aides has grown considerably. However, I think this is a subject which will be continually before the department and the nursing profession itself.

I think the honourable member posed some interesting possibilities with regard to the lowering of the standard of entry for these girls. However, I would like to point out that even girls recruited in the way which he suggested will, like girls who are recruited at present, still be lost to the department and the nursing profession because of the same reasons; I refer to the hazards of marriage which a girl must face early in her life.

Mr. J. Hegney: The hazards?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Perhaps a better phraseology would have been the hazards in regard to marriage. Quite a number of them, too, acquire a dislike of nursing shortly after they enter the profession, and there is a natural wastage. Furthermore, a great number, upon completing their training, leave for other States and even overseas. In part, we do have some reciprocity because nurses from other States and other countries come here.

During his speech the member for Fremantle made reference to the Fremantle Prison and the desirability of shifting this institution from its present site. That, indeed, is desirable, but unfortunately successive Governments have found it impossible of achievement. Besides being misplaced where it is at present, the Fremantle Prison is outmoded and overcrowded to the extent that it is impossible properly to rehabilitate the prisoners who are incarcerated in that institution. I hope that this Government—or if not, some Government—as early as possible, will take the step of persuading the Treasurer of the day to provide sufficient funds for a start in this direction.

Now I would like to devote a little time to the remarks of the amazing member for Melville. I say "the amazing member for Melville", because he speaks so intolerantly and so irrationally with regard to previous behaviour when he speaks on some of these matters. The honourable member is a very entertaining and excellent speaker when he so desires, but he is certainly anything but consistent in his approach to various problems. He gave two instances of how I, and the administration under me as Minister, had delayed implementing virtual promises made through the Press in regard to certain establishments. The two he referred to particularly were the social occupational therapy block at Heathcote and a similar type of block at *Sunset*—I think it was an occupational therapy block at *Sunset*.

I personally regret that there has been a delay in the implementation of the Heathcote proposal, because it is a very well worthwhile one. However, various factors occur from time to time which prevent a Minister from implementing, as soon as he would like, a project that he or the department has in mind. As regards the social and occupational therapy block at Heathcote, plans and specifications have been prepared and returned.

One of the reasons for the return was the new site. It was hoped that a portion of the land across the road from Heathcote could have been utilised instead of the site first agreed upon. With the slow turning of the various wheels of Government, it was found that this land was to be used for other purposes by another department. Some two or three days ago plans were forwarded back to the Principal Architect, and it is hoped that tenders will be called early next year.

I do regret these delays that occur. As the year went on, perhaps I could have made a statement to the Press apologising to the people of the State for not having proceeded with this project. I would remind the honourable member, however, that since I took over my department it has achieved many scores of things quite a number of which have not been published in the Press at all. If the thought had struck me that time was getting away, I might have made such an apology; although I doubt it.

Presumably the honourable member himself would have done so. That is one of the unfortunate things about the honourable member. He is so perfect that he always seems to do everything correctly. He cannot see imperfection kindly in any other person. I think it was Lin Yu Tang, the famous Chinese philosopher and writer, who said—

We are on the road to perfection; therefore we are excusably imperfect at present.

Perhaps if the member for Melville patterned his conduct on that philosophy, I would not have been as angered as I was and apologised to the Chairman for interjecting so continuously.

I am unable to track down reference to the occupational therapy block at *Sunset* that I allegedly promised through the Press. I wonder whether it might have been a physiotherapy section at *Sunset*; because the physiotherapy and virtual social therapy centre—a reconverted area at *Sunset*—has been implemented for some time past, and the staff there have done a very good job for many months past.

Mr. Tonkin: It was the proposed expenditure of £50,000 you mentioned.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I will have a look at that and see what has happened to it and let the honourable member know. But the reason why there has been delay—

Mr. Tonkin: You can check your statement in the paper; I think it was dated the 11th July.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: If the honourable member will be good enough to let me have it later I will be glad to have the matter checked. I would remind him that there will be times in the future when I suppose I will make promises through the Press to the effect that I am going to do this, that, or the other, and that the matters may be delayed. But I will endeavour to see that the delay is reduced.

Mr. W. Hegney: That would not be unusual.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I would point out, however, that the honourable member himself is not altogether perfect in that regard.

Mr. Hawke: How long did it take you to find out that the land you were going to use is held by another department?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Negotiations have been going on for a number of months.

Mr. Hawke: They have held it for years.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: An endeavour has been made to secure part of that land.

Mr. Hawke: Not that much of it.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Still, an endeavour was made to secure part of it.

Mr. Hawke: To cut it in half.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I feel the explanation I have given is a legitimate reason. Apart from that, I have promised to press on with the job. I cannot do more than that. The member for Melville also mentioned fishing in the Swan River. He took me to task for allowing the set-netting of fish in the Swan River. This is a practice that has been going on for many years.

Mr. Crommelin: It should still be stopped.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Individual members have their own views on this, as do many people in the metropolitan area. My predecessor in office, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, has probably had to face similar problems, and has had to decide whether the situation should be allowed to continue or not.

Since I have been in office all I have done is to continue the proclamations that were made in previous years. The argument advanced by the member for Melville is that set-net fishing is commercialism. He spoke in such a way as to almost indicate that it is a sordid approach to the making of profit. Then he went on to speak of this commercialism, and that people should be permitted their sport on the river. I agree that people should be permitted their sport on the river; but there are between 20 or 30 professional fishermen who gain their livelihood from the river, and I feel they should be permitted to continue to do so.

Mr. J. Hegney: Couldn't they change and get their livelihood from the proper fishing grounds?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Some of them have done so; just as we have suggested that some of the men at Collie be employed in a slightly different manner. I submit the member for Melville was very irrational when he spoke of commercialism, and related it to men who were earning their livelihood on the Swan River. On other occasions he has spoken feelingly when he felt someone was endeavouring to interfere with the people's modes of livelihood.

The member for South Fremantle made mention of the need to do something in regard to the treatment of alcoholics. He referred to the Fremantle haven. This Government has already grasped the nettle in relation to the alcoholics question. As has been pointed out in this House and in the Press, the Treasurer has given £30,000 towards capital extensions and renovations to the Salvation Army Seaforth Home at Gosnells. It has also provided £3,000 annually for five years. The Salvation Army, as a result of its great experience in this field, seems to be the right body to deal with this question of alcoholics. A great deal of work is being done there.

Mr. Curran: They are not qualified to treat them.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: They have people qualified to treat them; and there is a Salvation Army man who is coming here who is certainly qualified to treat these people. He has probably already arrived, and he will undertake the task of commencing this good work. The Fremantle haven is not a good type of building. Some attempt has been made to fix

it up, and some money has been spent since this Government has been in office in an endeavour to improve conditions there, but they are very difficult to improve at all.

The member for Victoria Park mentioned the siting of a hospital south of the river. This, too, is a problem that has been posed to many Governments over a long number of years. It is true there is a large hospital site of nearly 50 acres in the Collier Pine Plantation; and it is true there is a necessity for a large-scale hospital to be built south of the river. I have no personal desire to build the hospital in any one particular spot, but I would like to see a hospital built in the right place.

In order to determine the right place—I was advised that there was some difference of opinion—I had a committee appointed—comprising Professor Gordon Stephenson as chairman; Mr. Griffith (Administrator of the Royal Perth Hospital); and Dr. Davidson—to inquire into the matter of hospital requirements of the metropolitan area. That was undertaken. There was also a need to have a second look at the original proposed site for the Hollywood medical school. Again, there was no personal desire on my part to make any change.

However, advice was received from the University Senate that second thoughts were being given to this particular problem, and it was felt some investigations should be made. I am following the advice of my officers in this respect. I hope that very soon this committee will have worked out some finding. I also hope that the type of hospital that will be built in an area near the honourable member's electorate will be a very substantial one.

Mr. Andrew: I do not want to be parochial. I want the hospital to serve the general interests of the people on the other side of the river because they have no hospital.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I appreciate the tolerance of the honourable member. I cannot imagine the hospital being very far removed from the original site. Perhaps the distance may be five miles; or maybe seven or eight. I do not know; but it will serve that area.

The member for Gascoyne made mention—as he has done in the past—of snapper fishing at Shark Bay. The effects of trapping are being watched very closely, and I think the fishermen are watching it themselves. In fact, it is already known to the honourable member that the recommendation to me is to close certain inland waters of Shark Bay; and I would say there is every possibility of that being approved. Other facilities at Carnarvon include the provision of a development point, as it were, for the waters of the north-west; and this is something that is currently under review. There are a lot of problems in this regard which concern

departments other than my own; but as Minister for Fisheries I would readily agree to such facilities as mentioned by the honourable member.

Vote—Public Health, £562,204:

Item No. 8—Transport and Maintenance of Lepers Generally: Derby Leprosarium and Wooroloo Lazarette, £56,625.

Mr. HAWKE: I want to ask only one question in regard to division 53. This has to do with item No. 8 which is the last item in the division. It concerns the transport and maintenance of lepers generally; and covers mainly the leprosarium at Derby. The estimated expenditure for the current financial year is considerably in excess of actual expenditure for last year. I wonder whether the Minister has any information which he could give to the committee to explain why the substantial increase proposed is to come about.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The reason for the increased estimated expenditure is that it is hoped that this year we will be able to proceed with a considerable renovation and painting programme at the Derby Leprosarium. If I remember rightly two residences are to be built there, one of which is to cater for the married white staff. My only fear is that we will not be able to get the job done for the amount of money that is estimated.

Votes put and passed.

Vote—Local Government, £43,899; Town Planning, £42,933; Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, £726,660:

MR. HAWKE (Northam) [3.8 p.m.]: Mr. Chairman, are we to have no information from any Minister about these departments?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): I am unable to advise the honourable member. I only have to put the vote.

Mr. HAWKE: It is a poor show if the estimates of these departments are to be brought before us for consideration and no member of the Government is to make a statement to the committee in connection with them. It is an extremely poor show; and does not reveal the consideration for members of the Committee which should be shown.

Whether it is due simply to poor organising on the part of the Government, or whether it is due to carelessness or an anxiety to get the estimates through without any consideration I would not know. The departments in this bracket are Local Government, Town Planning, and Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, each one of which is very important. The total amount of money which it is intended to expend from the Consolidated Revenue Fund during the financial year on the three departments is over £800,000

The department with which I am most concerned is Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief. This department is one of very great importance in the community, because it is a department which deals directly—and indirectly too, in many instances—with the care and welfare of under-privileged children in this community.

In dealing with those children, it has, of necessity in many instances, to deal with parents, some of whom are the natural parents of the children concerned and others of whom are foster-parents. I think, and have always thought, that this department of governmental activity is one which not only deserves the maximum amount of skilled attention which the Government is in a position to give, but also requires and deserves the maximum amount of money which any Government might be able to make available—consistent always, of course, with the legitimate demands which come upon a Government from so many other directions.

The main point upon which I require information from the Minister in this House who represents the Minister for Child Welfare, has to do with the new home for hardened delinquent youths which was opened at Caversham a few months ago. We know that this particular institution—if we can call it such—was constructed by the Government for the purpose of meeting a very difficult problem, and one which has been growing as the total population has been increasing, and as youth generally has been developing a greater use of freedoms—and the worst of youth developing a greater use of what might be called license.

This institution caters only for hardened youths. They, of course, greatly outnumber hardened girls in the field in which the Child Welfare Department operates. Originally—going back some 20 years—delinquent boys were cared for mainly in a Salvation Army home at Seaforth. For various reasons, none of which need be stated here this afternoon, it was decided that an effort should be made in a different direction to have this type of lad cared for and reformed to the greatest possible extent.

As a result, the Church of England developed a home, or an institution, near Mundaring called Stoneville. This institution was found to be capable of, and quite successful in, handling the less hardened type of delinquent lad, but not at all capable of handling, with any degree of success, the tougher types.

Indeed, it was never developed for the purpose of handling the tougher types. It was not in any degree a prison or a semi-prison. In fact, it was so constructed as to allow any lad who did not want to remain there to leave. There were no locks; there were no bars; there were no high barbed-wire fences. Consequently, the

tougher types of lads who did go there, in the great majority of instances cleared out; and very soon most of them were into quite serious trouble again.

It was because of this situation that the closed reformatory, as it is called, was decided upon. This was constructed and, as I have indicated, is now in operation at Caversham. I think its official departmental name is Riverbank. In this place the tougher types of lads are under strict control. It is not easy for them to get out, although it is not impossible, I imagine. Experienced and skilled men are on the staff there, and the main purpose of the establishment is to redevelop the lads who go there; to redevelop them mentally; to give them skilled training in some particular trade or occupation; and generally to try to develop within each lad the spirit of co-operation—the constructive spirit, which is the basis of good citizenship; and thereby try to so reform and reclaim them as to cause them to become valuable units in the community in manhood, as against degenerating further, as they might otherwise do, into the criminal or the semi-criminal class.

The undertaking is experimental. However, it has been operating long enough to enable those who are in authority to have been able, by this time, to develop an impression as to how the experiment is operating; and, from this impression, to develop an opinion—an estimate, anyway—as to how the establishment is likely to continue in regard to the beneficial results which might flow from it.

It is a tremendously important social experiment because it is dealing with lads who have gone wrong; lads who need considerable guidance, encouragement, and direction. Most of the lads who go there will, most likely, be adequately reformed. I would place a considerable amount of value upon the skill, direction and training given them. I think it is true to say that, with most young people, an important consideration is to keep their minds constructively occupied. There would be no-one in this community today—or at least I hope that there would be no-one—who would fail to realise that young people must be active mentally and physically; and, basically, the problem is to guide their mental and physical activities into avenues which are for their good and for the community's good, and which will lay the foundation to enable them to develop into useful and valuable citizens as they grow older.

Therefore, I am most anxious that the Minister concerned will, even at this late stage, be able to give us some reliable and adequate information in regard to at least one Government department. Before resuming my seat I wish to record that the estimates have just been thrown at us by the Government without any explanation of any kind; not even an apology.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [3.33 p.m.]: I must apologise for my belatedness in rising from my seat to speak on these estimates. I was discussing a problem with the member for South Fremantle. On the subject of local government, I wish to have a few words to say in relation to how it affects North Fremantle. The existing problem in that locality has been brought about by the diminishing ratable area controlled by the North Fremantle Municipal Council, which is to the grave disadvantage of that local authority. The railways now occupy a large portion of that area, and the prospect of the new railway bridge being built will still further intrude into this locality and, consequently, will do nothing to alleviate the rating problem that is facing the local authority.

It is necessary to find an alternative area for sites for the homes and factories which have been and are being displaced as a consequence of this rapid and recent railway expansion in the district. I would like the appropriate Minister to give consideration to finding an alternative area so that this expansion may take place without hindrance in the North Fremantle area. It may be necessary to make an approach to the Commonwealth Government in order to obtain an area that would be most suitable. In my opinion where the guns are sited at present—that is, in the close vicinity of them—would be an ideal location for a factory area and for the erection of private homes. This site is in the Leighton district.

I am not suggesting that the factories and residences should be placed close together. I am merely saying that there is plenty of room to re-establish factories such as Pearse Brothers, Baguley's and Finucanes and other business enterprises, when they are forced to vacate their present sites. I hope, therefore, that the question will receive the Minister's consideration because it is urgent and necessary. I am making this appeal on behalf of the North Fremantle Council.

I now wish to make a few comments about the services rendered by the Child Welfare Department. I have had a beneficial association with this humane and most efficient department, and I take this opportunity to commend its officers and staff for their fairness and skill, and the understanding they have shown to parents, and the children who will be our future citizens. It seems to be a sad contradiction that there should be neglected children in our land of plenty. It is difficult enough to maintain a decent standard of living on the basic wage, but when parents are in receipt of less than the basic wage they are at a proportionate disadvantage, which would be all the more severe if it were not for the activities of the Child Welfare Department.

I have here a Press article dated the 2nd November, 1960, arising from a biennial conference of the National Council of

Women. Mrs. M. Horgan of the Australian Capital Territory, in relation to diet, is reported as having said that—

..... endowment was today 3.8 per cent. of the basic wage compared with 8.4 per cent. when it was introduced.

Diets

Only 73 per cent. of families with two children enjoyed a first-class diet. For families with three children the figure dropped to 63 per cent., for four children to 38 per cent., for five children 27 per cent. and six children 16 per cent.

"If we grant that a wife and child is provided for in the basic wage a man with four children gets 30s. a week to provide for the extra children," she said. "Today the 30s. will not provide one bottle of milk, one egg, and one orange a day each for the three children."

Since that has application to the basic wage, I quote that article for the purpose of showing the disadvantage that would be suffered by the children of parents who are in receipt of less than the basic wage, if it were not for the assistance that is rendered to them by the Child Welfare Department. As I have said, my purpose is to pay tribute to both the male and female members of the Child Welfare Department who operate in the Fremantle district. They have rendered valuable assistance to me and to other members of Parliament representing the Fremantle district when dealing with local child welfare problems. I thank them for their kind assistance, which has been tempered with firmness—and it is necessary for them to be firm on occasions—and I would like to place on record that the citizens of Fremantle and the children of that district in particular are much happier as a result of the activities of those officers in that locality.

It is my opinion—and I present the suggestion for ministerial consideration—that the establishment of an office, staffed with full-time officers, is most necessary in the Fremantle area. This is a large industrial centre and has its own particular problems. In view of the number of problems which arise there, I suggest that an office in Fremantle is necessary, with some staff, on a full-time basis.

MR. PERKINS (Roe—Minister for Transport—in reply) [3.40 p.m.]: There has been a great deal of discussion during this session on the Local Government and the Town Planning Departments, which are covered by this vote. In those debates everything that could be said about the activities of the two departments has been said.

The Child Welfare Department is rather complex. I have discussed the problems of that department with the Minister for Child Welfare, my colleague in another

place. While I can answer the questions in a general way, it is very difficult for me to deal with the day-to-day problems as he is able to see them. The only way I can satisfactorily answer some of the queries raised on this vote is to obtain the particulars from the members concerned, and refer them to the Minister for Child Welfare. I could perhaps give the appropriate information later to those members.

A new reformatory was opened a few months ago. I understand that the improved facilities have been instrumental in making the work of the department more effective. The man in the street can see only the results of the work done by the department, but not the day-to-day problems. On occasions it is unjust for the public to criticise this department. Members should understand that the problem of child delinquency is a most complex one and faces any modern Government. It would be optimistic to expect a full solution of the problem. On the other hand, suitable policies followed by the department can minimise the problem. The Leader of the Opposition has lavished praise on the activities of the reform institutions. This praise is well merited.

It is difficult for me, representing, in this House, the Minister for Child Welfare to give specific replies to the queries raised. Perhaps the member for Fremantle will discuss in more detail some of the points he raised. If he does I intend to have a discussion with the Minister concerned in order that I may give more colour in my answers to the points raised.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.8 p.m.

The **CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Roberts): The question is that the vote be agreed to.

Mr. ANDREW: Mr. Chairman—

The **CHAIRMAN:** Just a moment, and I will put the vote.

Vote (Local Government) put and passed.

Vote—(Town Planning, £42,933) put.

The **CHAIRMAN:** The member for Victoria Park may proceed. What is the item the honourable member desires to discuss?

Mr. ANDREW: I wish to speak on the Local Government Vote.

The **CHAIRMAN:** It is too late for the honourable member to do that, because the Minister has replied.

Mr. ANDREW: I did not know that.

The **CHAIRMAN:** The honourable member cannot speak on the Local Government Vote because the Minister has replied and the vote has been passed.

Mr. Andrew: That is a strange way of doing things!

Vote (Town Planning) put and passed.

Vote—Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, £7,226,660—put and passed.

Vote—Railways, £16,650,000:

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways) [4.13 p.m.]: I will endeavour to introduce these estimates as briefly as I can. Some members may desire to make some comment on the railway finances, and I would like to give them ample opportunity to do so.

Perhaps I should preface my remarks by referring to the results for this year, which are rather interesting, because we now have the figures of four months out of the 12 covered by these estimates. It is worthy of note that for the month of October we showed a net revenue surplus, so far as operating expenses are concerned, of £140,372. It is pleasing to learn that for the last two months, September and October, we have had a surplus. It is refreshing in view of the tremendous amount of work done by the commissioner and his staff in trying to improve the railway finances. In fact, for the four months to the 31st October, 1960, the surplus of revenue over operating expenditure was £94,116. These figures have to be taken in conjunction with the comparative figures for the two previous years. For instance, for 1958 the deficiency was £781,900; and for the four months to the 31st October, 1959, it was £213,469.

If this is carried through to the final figure, which includes depreciation and interest on capital, the loss for the month of October this year is £201,403 compared with £403,040 last year; and if we take the four months' figures to the 31st October this year as compared with the two previous years we have £1,272,984 for the present four months compared with £1,544,669 for the same period last year, and £2,045,100 for the four months to the 31st October, 1958. I thought it desirable to mention these figures to let members know that the Estimates put forward by the Government in respect of railway finances for this year are in fact proving to be a fair appreciation of the position.

The cash estimates for the current year, compared with the results for 1959-60, are as follows:— Expenditure for 1959-60 amounted to £16,661,294 and the estimate for this year is £16,650,000, showing a decrease of £11,294. This is a very pertinent figure because, with rising costs catching up with the railways so consistently, it is extremely difficult, in budgeting for a year's operation, even to hold last year's expenditure figures. But a determined effort is being made to hold last year's expenditure figures; and I think that with the vigilance that is being shown by the commissioner and his staff they will come fairly close to doing just that.

Mr. Tonkin: For our guidance, would the Minister indicate whether this result is in accordance with commercial accounting or Treasury accounting?

Mr. COURT: The monthly figures produced to the Government by the department are on a commercial basis. The figures I am now quoting are produced on a straight-out cash basis regardless of the movements of debtors and creditors. For instance, the cash results shown for October were less favourable than the true results, because there was a large outstanding amount for wheat freight which did not come in until early November. Had it been received during October, the month's figures would have been shown as being very satisfactory. But the Treasury has to work on a cash basis for its accounting. The railways, however, being a trading concern, have to use both methods of accounting in order to arrive at a true result.

The revenue for 1959-60 was £14,771,057; the estimate for this year, £15,713,000; the increase is estimated at £941,943. The cash deficiency, actual, for last year, was £1,890,237, and the estimate for this year is £937,000, or an improvement in the cash deficiency of operating expenses of £953,237.

Pensions for last year were, actual, £410,318. This year the estimated expenditure is £415,000, or an increase of £4,682. Interest last year, actual, was £2,339,789; estimated this year, £2,448,000, or an increase of £108,211. The total deficiency last year was, actual, £4,640,344; this year it is estimated to be £3,800,000, or an improvement in the total deficiency, including interest and pensions, of £840,344.

Before the commissioner's estimates are dealt with, a review of results for 1959-60 is desirable. On Treasury cash basis the collections for 1959-60 exceeded those of the previous year by £1,255,653.

In order to give an indication of how this was achieved, information has been extracted from the detail that will appear in the department's annual report. Goods and livestock traffic increased by nearly 620,000 tons, and there was an increased ton mileage of nearly 73,000,000. The total tonnage of 4,500,000 tons, and the ton mileage of more than 73,000,000 were the highest in the department's history. Yet these records were achieved with only the third highest train mileage, which is a clear indication of increased efficiency.

Wheat tonnage increased by 530,000 tons or an increase of 59 per cent. Fertiliser tonnage increased by 40,000 tons, showing an all-time record of more than 450,000 tons. The inter-system goods revenue increased by 14 per cent; and there were improvements in timber, wool, ores, oil, and "B"-class in which are included such items as iron and steel, mining machinery, and second-hand building materials.

Coal tonnage was a little more than 20,000 tons greater than in the previous year, but the earnings were some £15,000 less due to a large quantity being hauled the shorter distance to Bunbury instead of to the metropolitan area. I could go on and enumerate the various items within the different freight brackets in the railways in which there were spectacular increases.

On the expenditure side, cash payments including depreciation were £771,429 greater than in 1958-59. The increased depreciation accounted for £132,000, and of the balance of £639,000 basic wage and award variations accounted for approximately £500,000, and payroll tax for approximately £23,000. After deducting these uncontrollable items, the increase in real expenditure was only £116,000 for which the department had earned more than £1,250,000 additional revenue. That, I think, deserves the attention of members because the commissioner and his staff did a tremendous job in combating the steadily rising incidence of costs while at the same time carrying record tonnages. In the final analysis, the only hope for the railways to achieve something like a balanced finance, or at least deficits which are manageable within this State's resources, is for ever-increasing volumes of tonnage to be carried, with minimum costs. In other words, we have to put the brake on the costs; and this can be done only by the institution of better financial methods.

Turning now to the estimates for 1960-61, as already mentioned the cash deficiency budgeted for is £941,943 compared with last year's actual deficiency of £1,890,237, virtually cutting last year's deficiency in half. When pensions and interest are included, the improvement becomes £840,344. The revenue estimate is £15,713,000, representing an increase of £941,943, almost all of which is due from the increased freights and fares which operated from the 1st September, 1960.

Wheat and coarse grain traffic should again be heavy. The quantity of wheat stored in the country at the beginning of July was approximately 88,000 tons more than the amount stored 12 months earlier; and, with another record harvest in prospect, the department should haul more than last year provided storage arrangements will permit. One of the problems that besets the Railways Department in trying to keep its costs to a minimum and at the same time give a satisfactory service to its customers, is that of moving the harvest from the country centres to the coast, because Co-operative Bulk Handling can only allow the wheat to be moved to coincide with Co-operative Bulk Handling's storage capacity which, in turn, is directly related to its sales abroad.

The tonnage of oil in tank wagons is being affected by the opening during last year of country storage facilities at Bunbury and Esperance, and the department expects a decrease on that account.

Perhaps some of the natural increase in consumption will offset some of the loss. This has happened; and whilst it has a prejudicial effect on railway finances, we must encourage what has been done because it means that we are moving steadily towards a more efficient system of transportation within the State, and this in turn must affect the freight carried by the railways.

We are having the same reaction in the State Shipping Service as more modern methods of transporting petroleum products are introduced into the north of the State. Whilst these methods are having a consequential effect on the State Shipping Service, they are a great advantage to the local people.

The expenditure for this year is estimated at £16,650,000 or £11,294 less than last year; and, as is customary, no provision has been made in the departmental estimates for basic-wage increases made or likely to be made after the beginning of the financial year. Reference to page 40 of Division No. 20 for miscellaneous services, under the heading of "Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Tourists," will show that item No. 1 provides £480,000 for all basic-wage increases.

The task that has been set for this year will, of course, require a high degree of administrative skill and efficiency; but when it is remembered, as mentioned earlier, that the real increase in expenditure last year was only £116,000 for additional revenue of more than £1,250,000; that the alterations for improved and more efficient working which commenced last year will operate for a longer period this year; and that the drive for the elimination of non-productive expenditure will be increased, the budget shows a more realistic approach to the railway problem.

There is no haphazard and indiscriminate cutting of expenditure regardless of the consequences, but a systematic and thorough examination of procedures and of all items that comprise the cost structure of the department. In broad terms this policy embraces the optimum utilisation of manpower, motor power and rolling stock, and the lowest possible reasonable purchase and most advantageous use of stores and material.

At all times the need is kept in mind to provide services that are not only adequate for existing traffic, but sufficiently attractive to encourage new business. The examination is being conducted on the basis of sectionalised areas, and as one is completed another is undertaken. The amount of detailed work involved is enormous, but the results already achieved have proved its worth.

The first section to be examined was the lower south-west; and by a rearrangement of train working, locomotive mileage has been reduced at the rate of nearly

70,000 miles per annum, and the minimum monetary saving is in the vicinity of £46,000 per annum. Other savings will accrue, but are not so readily expressed in terms of money. For example, the altered train service provides for better wagon utilisation, which increases the annual earning potential of each wagon. Alternatively, the better utilisation means that fewer wagons are required to convey a given quantity of goods, which in turn means a saving of capital expenditure in the provision of new wagons.

On the upper south-west sections the analysis revealed that a saving in locomotive miles could be estimated at 116,000, and the saving in expenditure at £76,000. A review of the country passenger train services operated by railcars and steam trains showed that by substituting buses on certain routes a saving in train mileage of 266,000 could be effected.

In implementing the altered working, care has been taken to ensure that retrenchments do not take place but that the labour savings are effected from the normal wastage that occurs in such a large organisation. For this reason the maximum savings will accrue progressively.

I think that is a reasonable coverage, within the time available, of the railway figures both for last year and in prospect for this year. No doubt members will have some questions to ask on the detailed estimates, and I can reply to them when replying to the debate. I present the estimates for the consideration of members.

MR. MOIR (Boulder) [4.31 p.m.]: There are a couple of matters I wish to bring to the Minister's notice in regard to the Railways Department, and the first concerns freights on commodities used in the manufacture of aerated waters. I am sure that the Minister, quite apart from his dual capacity of Minister for Industrial Development and Minister for Railways, has a due regard for the importance of fostering industries away from the metropolitan area. I know he would agree with me that it is far better for 20 men and their dependent families to be employed in industry some distance from the metropolitan area than for those same people to be located in the city.

To refresh his memory on this matter, I would remind him that on the 1st November I asked a question with respect to it, and it is reported in No. 15 of *Hansard* this year. The question reads—

- (1) Does he consider that the rail freight charges from Perth to Kalgoorlie of 228s. per ton on fruit essences, and 178s. per ton on sugar, which are used in the manufacture of aerated waters, are reasonable, when the charge on aerated waters is 130s. 6d. per ton?

- (2) In order to assist goldfields manufacturers, would he give consideration to reducing the freight charges on fruit essences and sugar?

The Minister replied as follows—

- (1) and (2). The freight rate for aerated waters includes the conveyance of not only fruit essences and sugar, but also the volume of water which is mixed with these components to produce the drinks. The freight charges also are paid on the weight of the bottles containing the aerated waters and the cases in which they are packed. In addition, further freight charges are payable when the cases and bottles are returned to the manufacturer.

When these factors are taken into account, it will be appreciated that the freight rates on ingredients as against the manufactured aerated waters are equitable and should favour the local manufacturer.

I forwarded the answers to those questions to the manufacturing company concerned, and I have received a letter from it, and also a circular letter which the company has forwarded to other country manufacturers. The comments are pertinent and show that the Minister's reply in regard to one aspect of this matter is not correct—that is, in respect of the position of the return of empty bottles to the metropolitan manufacturer. The bottles are not returned by rail but are permitted by the Transport Board to be brought down by road.

The letter I received from the Golden Mile Aerated Water Company is dated the 23rd November, 1960 and reads—

Re Aerated Water Freights.

Many thanks for yours of the 8th instant also for your excellent service in putting our case to the Minister.

The Hon. Minister's reply to your question is not to our thinking practical.

Why should it cost less to freight Aerated Waters (104 cubic ft. ton) than sugar (64 cubic ft. ton) or fruit juice (66 cubic ft. ton) the inclusion of bottles irrelevant.

The position of the aerated water trade is one of constant take overs by a number of international giant firms. As a result the country bottler, and the independent city manufacturer too, is fast disappearing. I enclose a circular we are sending country bottlers in this State. As will be seen from this the Perth manufacturer does not pay freight on empty bottle returns.

It must be recognised that in setting freight rates due regard is paid not only to the weight but also to the bulk. I think examples of this have been given to us previously in this Chamber. For instance, breakfast foods are bulky and light, and the department has to charge a freight rate out of proportion to the weight of the article because of the space it takes up. The manufactured aerated waters that are transported represent 104 cubic feet to the ton, whereas sugar occupies only 64 cubic feet to the ton and fruit juices—that is, fruit juices used in the manufacture of aerated waters—represent 66 cubic feet per ton.

Empty fruit-juice containers do have to be returned to the source of supply, which is in the metropolitan area. This circular is to all country aerated waters manufacturers and reads—

To Country Aerated Water Manufacturers

At an Association meeting held on November 5th in the Chamber of Manufactures Perth the method of country distribution employed by some metropolitan manufacturers was discussed and the following facts were revealed.

The transport allow Metropolitan manufacturers to operate on the following lines:—

I take it that is the Transport Board. The circular continues—

1. Goods are railed to a country station.
2. The manufacturer's truck travels "empty" from Perth to the station which is the rail head.
3. The motor or diesel truck then delivers into the retailer's store for a radius of 35 miles from the rail head. (Note: An officer of the transport board admitted to a member of the association that when "a fair" amount of freight had been paid the delivery service was allowed to operate for much further than 35 miles.
4. The road transport was then allowed to take the empty returns back by road to Perth.

It is the belief of such country bottlers as I have contacted, and also the belief of some city bottlers that the latitude allowed by the transport board is grossly unfair, and even exceeds the function for which it was established.

It is suggested that country bottlers appeal to their parliamentary representatives for their assistance in righting this unfair assistance given to city bottlers. With a government avowed to assist decentralization it must only be a failure to appreciate the true facts that allows such an anomaly in permits to exist.

It may also be an opportunity to draw your members' attention to the freight rates that so favour the city bottler.

Taking Perth-Kalgoorlie freights—		ton min.	£	s.	d.
Manufactured waters	....	6	10	9	
Sugar	....	9	13	6	
Fruit juices, essences, etc.	....	11	8	0	

Asked a question in the House recently the Minister for Railways replied—

The freight rate for aerated waters includes the conveyance of not only fruit essences and sugar, but also the volume of water which is mixed with these components to produce the drinks. The freight charges also are paid on the weight of the bottles containing the aerated waters and the cases in which they are packed. In addition, further freight charges are payable when the cases and bottles are returned to the manufacturer.

It will be noted that the concluding sentence of the first paragraph does not show knowledge of road transport permits. However, why should centralised manufacturers have their products hauled at £6 10s. 9d. for a bulky fragile item as against up to £11 8s. for compact freight items. Does it cost less to have a ton of bottles than a ton of fruit juices?

Please consider presenting this case to your members and Chambers of Commerce.

Cordially yours,

Golden Mile Aerated
Water Co. Ltd.

I think it must be quite apparent to the Minister that there is a distinct anomaly in this matter, and that the freight rates do operate against the country manufacturer. This arrangement is affecting not only the manufacturer in Kalgoorlie, but also manufacturers in other distant parts of the State.

In my opening remarks I pointed out that it was far better for 20 people to be employed in a small manufacturing industry in one of these outer country towns than to have them employed in the metropolitan area. It is of great importance that these industries be kept going, and it is better to continue to have these people employed in country towns than to have them employed manufacturing the same article in Perth and having it transported to these far distant centres at a rate which is favourable when compared to the cartage of the raw materials to the country. I leave that with the Minister with the greatest of confidence.

There is another matter regarding railway transport to the goldfields—I refer to the Kalgoorlie Express. Earlier this year a good deal of concern was felt on the goldfields when statements were made that there was to be an alteration in the rail service between Kalgoorlie and Perth—I refer again to the Kalgoorlie Express as distinct from the *Westland* which takes passengers from the transcontinental train. I wrote to the Minister for Railways on the 8th April, 1960, as follows:—

Goldfields people are very disturbed by reports that the Railway Department proposes to reduce the Kalgoorlie Express service by three trains a week commencing from 1st June.

I would appreciate your advice as to whether this is correct or otherwise. If it is correct I want to enter an emphatic protest at this curtailment of rail service to the goldfields people, as in my opinion, it is entirely unwarranted and request that such a decision, if already decided or contemplated, be reconsidered.

The Acting Minister for Railways, (The Hon. C. C. Perkins) wrote to me as follows on the 13th April, 1960:—

I acknowledge your 8th April letter concerning the Kalgoorlie Express train service.

It has already been reported to me that misleading rumours were circulating in Kalgoorlie regarding this service and in consequence, I issued a press statement to clarify the position.

For your information a copy of the press statement, issued on Monday last, is attached.

The copy of the Press statement reads as follows:—

Rumours seem to be circulating in Kalgoorlie that passenger services between Perth and Kalgoorlie are to be reduced in the near future. Actually the opposite is the case and it will be possible because of an increase in the permissible speed from 45 to 50 m.p.h. to speed up the service slightly.

It is proposed during the coming winter season to combine the Kalgoorlie Express and *Westland* on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and to schedule this combined train to arrive at Kalgoorlie at 7.15 a.m. compared with 8.20 a.m. last year and the two trains will also be combined on the return journey on those days and will arrive in Perth at 10.20 a.m. instead of 11.03 a.m. in 1959. From 1st August it is proposed to run separate trains on Wednesdays in both directions.

There is also a rumour that alterations are to be made to the Meekatharra service but the Government has not considered this matter at all.

I want to point out that that statement did not really cover the position. It did admit there was a curtailment of services, inasmuch as two trains would be combined.

One of the advantages of the Kalgoorlie Express is that it departs earlier than the *Westland*, and the times mentioned in the statement are the *Westland* times, and not the Kalgoorlie Express times. The Kalgoorlie Express leaves Kalgoorlie at 5 to 7 in the evening and arrives in Perth about 9 o'clock in the morning. It leaves again about 5 o'clock in the afternoon and reaches Kalgoorlie at 7 o'clock the next morning. It provides a very good service.

I might point out that it has taken business away from the airlines because business people who have to make hurried trips to Perth find it more convenient to travel by train. They can get on the train at night and have a night's rest and arrive in the city at 9 o'clock in the morning. When they have completed their business they can catch the train back at 5 o'clock, sleep on the train at night, and arrive at Kalgoorlie at 7 o'clock in the morning ready for their day's activities.

That service is also very good for the people employed in the various industries on the goldfields, because it enables them to arrive early and to immediately start their day's work. The combined service would have meant their arriving in Perth at 10.20 a.m.—somewhat later.

But that is not the real complaint. That combined train would not have been able to depart from Kalgoorlie until the *Westland* had arrived. Any delay to the *Westland* would mean a delay to the combined train. We have had experience of the transcontinental train running many hours late. It is quite often a couple of hours late; and fairly frequently it is four hours late. When it meets with mishaps in its journey across the continent it is even later.

So, where a combined train is used, the time of arrival at Kalgoorlie would be entirely dependent on the arrival of the transcontinental train. This would mean that passengers between Leonora and Perth, Esperance and Perth, Kalgoorlie and Perth, and Boulder and Perth, would be dependent on the time of arrival of the transcontinental train. With the uncertainty in the time of arrival of the transcontinental train, and the consequent uncertainty to passengers, this could quite easily lose passengers not only to air travel; but it could lose them to people who decided it was better to bring their cars along; because we all know that there is an excellent bitumen road to Kalgoorlie along which they could travel.

However, this did not eventuate. Whether after looking at it the department decided to continue the old service or not, I do not know. But it was not proceeded

with. I was very happy that the old service was continued. The Kalgoorlie Express is a very well patronised train. I travel on it very often; indeed, if anybody travelled on it more than I do, he would certainly be travelling a lot. It is well patronised, both going to Perth from Kalgoorlie, and *vice versa*. So popular is it that one must book well ahead both from Kalgoorlie and Perth. If one left one's booking to the day of departure of the train it is unlikely that one would be able to get a booking.

So it is a payable train; and, as such, the excellent service it provides should be maintained. The Minister should resist any suggestion to combine those trains. No doubt it is cheaper running a combined train; but with the excellent service provided to the goldfields now, surely we should leave it as it is, and not be tempted into any alteration of the position—certainly no alteration that would mean passenger freight was lost to the railways. I will leave those matters with the Minister with the utmost confidence.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways—in reply) [4.49 p.m.]: I would like to point out that so far as aerated waters are concerned, this matter has been queried from several country centres, and that on analysis it must be accepted that with the present freight rates on ingredients it is very difficult to see why a local manufacturer cannot defeat the cost of the product that is brought from the coast. We will never stop them being brought in.

Mr. Moir: It is unfair competition, especially with the co-operation of the Transport Board.

Mr. COURT: I will look into the matter of the Transport Board, but it would amaze me if it is general practice. In any case I put this forward in all sincerity, because manufacturers must be realists and appreciate that even if empties do come back by road transport it is still a heavy cost on the part of the distributor; that is, the manufacturer in the metropolitan area or some major provincial town transporting his finished product elsewhere.

The commissioner has been into this very closely because of the number of representations that have been made, and it is difficult to build up a case. For instance, if we adjust the price of sugar freight, we do not adjust it only in favour of the local aerated water manufacturer, because there are other people who use sugar. So it is not only one group of manufacturers that are affected—

Mr. Moir: Can something be done about the scheme we were discussing?

Mr. COURT: When we get greater efficiency through standardisation we hope that Kalgoorlie will be one of the places which will benefit, because it is right on the line. We are watching it all the

time. I feel sure that on reflection the honourable member will agree that the local manufacturer has water on the spot; and with the comparatively small proportion of the product that goes up in essences and sugar, he should be able to compete successfully with the product imported into his area if he observes high quality and standard generally. I suggest that we should try to develop local loyalty in these things. However, human nature being what it is, people seem to have a fascination for buying a product with a name that is nationally famous.

On the subject of the Kalgoorlie Express, the honourable member has virtually answered his own question, because the change that was rumoured did not take place. I know there were all sorts of rumours about it at the time. The commissioner is very conscious of the importance of giving a reliable service. He must have regard, however, for patronage; and if the local people keep up the patronage in all seasons he is not tempted to change the service. But once there is pressure on him from his Chief Traffic Manager to have adjustments made because of uneconomic loadings, he must give full regard to it. We appreciate that the Kalgoorlie Express is a service of importance, and changes will not be made lightly.

I would point out, however, that we are inclined to overlook some of the good things that have been done by the railways over the years. The member for Gascoyne, for instance, knows of the really stupendous effort that was made by the railways to handle the bean crop from Carnarvon; and Kalgoorlie is a critical point in handling this trade through to Adelaide, because of the transshipment problem. But we only hear of the little things that go wrong and some of the big things that go wrong; we give very little prominence to some of the wonderful work that is done. Even during the Merredin flood the railways managed to keep the beans moving to Adelaide with commendable initiative. I will certainly have the matter of the express discussed with the commissioner.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—State Abattoirs and Sale Yards, £166,923—put and passed.

Vote—Country Water Supplies, Sewerage, Drainage and Irrigation, £1,662,960:

MR. TONKIN (Melville) [4.54 p.m.]: I seek your guidance here, Mr. Chairman. I propose to deal with the Metropolitan Water Supply, which comes under Division 63. But this is the commencement of two divisions of the Minister for Works and Water Supplies, and you will recall that when we were dealing with the other departments under the Minister for Works and Water Supplies I raised this question, and you then advised me I would be able to deal with water supplies when we

reached the appropriate division. I want to know whether I am obliged to speak at this stage if I want to speak generally; or whether you will permit me, if we pass Division 62, to speak to this matter when we reach Division 63.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will have an opportunity of speaking for one hour on Division 63.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department, £1,508,200:

MR. TONKIN (Melville) [4.55 p.m.]: I have a number of matters with which I desire to deal in connection with this division. The first is the way I have been let down by the Minister and the Premier in connection with my request for the tabling of the report of the "pay-as-you-use" committee. I say the Minister and the Premier, because the Minister's reply was given after he had conferred with the Premier. I want to go through these questions and answers to show to what a sorry plight we have descended in this Chamber, and to emphasise again what little reliance can be placed upon the word of Ministers.

In *Hansard* No. 15 of the present session, at page 2408, appears the first question I asked in connection with this matter. We were then dealing with the Bill to make some alterations to the Metropolitan Water Supply Act; and my question directed to the Minister for Works was—

In view of the fact that the second reading of the Bill to amend the Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act is down for consideration, will the Government table the report of the committee which was appointed to look into the question of "pay-as-you-use" for water?

The Minister replied, quite reasonably—

I will confer with the Premier and let the honourable member know.

So he did not commit himself at that stage, but he undertook to see if it could be done. That was on the 3rd November. On the 8th November—and the report of the proceedings is at page 2502 of *Hansard* 16 of this session—I asked this question—

At last Thursday's sitting, I asked the Minister for Works whether he would make available the report of the committee which was set up for the purpose of going into the new system for water rating. The Minister undertook to confer with the Premier and advise me in due course. Is the Minister now in a position to advise whether it is his intention to make the report available?

The Minister's reply was—

I have conferred with the Premier. We have, as yet, not finished with the detail of the report, but I have no doubt I will be able to make it available to the House before the end of the session.

That implies that the Minister, upon having a discussion with the Premier, was obliged to say that this report would be available. Subsequent events suggest to me that there was never any intention of making this report available; because it was obvious then that there was no real reason why the Government should be called upon to study that report again in the next three or four months.

It was not proposed to take any legislative action beyond what was already taken. There were more important matters to receive the consideration of the Government; and there was no reason why Cabinet should be called upon at that date, or subsequent to it, to give even five minutes' consideration to the report. Nothing has been done in the meantime. So I am firmly of the opinion that when the Minister gave that reply he had no intention of making this report available. And the Premier was in his seat and heard the the Minister make the reply; so he, too, has to take equal responsibility for what subsequently transpired.

That was on the 8th November. Ten days elapsed, and I asked this question of the Minister for Water Supplies—

Is he yet in a position to indicate when he will table in Parliament a copy of the report of the committee which was set up to inquire into a new system of rating for water based on the principle of "pay-as-you-use?"

Here is the Minister's reply—the only one I regard as being completely truthful—

The position has not altered since my reply to the honourable member on the 3rd November.

I have no doubt it had not. That is, he never had any intention of making it available; and that was still his intention. So the position had not altered. Four days later—that is, at the commencement of this week—I addressed this further question to the Minister—

As he stated in the House on Tuesday the 8th November, in reply to a question concerning the tabling of the report of the "pay-as-you-use" water committee, "I have no doubt I will be able to make it available to the House before the end of the session," why does he now decline to indicate when the report will be made available?

And question No. (2)—

Does the Government intend to make the report public after Parliament has gone into recess?

The Minister conveniently grouped the answers to questions No. (1) and No. (2) together. That made it possible for him to dodge answering question No. (2). This is his reply—

As previously advised, Cabinet has not yet had an opportunity, due to pressure of work, of finally considering the report of the "pay-as-you-use" water committee. A decision on the release of the report cannot be made before Cabinet consideration.

I would ask why a report of this nature, which is not secret and confidential—and could not be expected to be—could not be made available to the Press or to Parliament before the Government has completely finished dealing with it, seeing the Government had had ample opportunity of reading it and had decided to introduce a Bill which was not based on it?

What reason could there possibly be for refusing to make this report available? I will supply the reason. It is because the Government is afraid of it. It is afraid of what would be done with it if it were tabled. I told the Minister before this committee went into operation what type of report could be expected from it; and it is very significant that the Government introduced a Bill for the commencement of a "pay-as-you-use" system and announced through its Minister that the Bill was in no way based on the recommendations of the committee. So the Government embarked on this new line of procedure before it had completed the consideration of the committee's report. Have members ever heard of anything more ridiculous?

The point that riles me is that Ministers resent my criticism when I say their word cannot be taken and their assurances are not worth a flip of the fingers. But what else can they expect when we get this type of conduct repeatedly? Is there any feeling of responsibility on the part of the Government with regard to matters of this kind?

I asked a perfectly reasonable question: "Would the Minister table the report?" If he had no intention of tabling it, he could have said he was not going to do so and left it for me to move for it to be tabled if I wanted to go that far. He did not do that. He said that when he had conferred with his Premier he would make this report available, and before the end of the session. Here we are almost at the end of this session, which is timed to end today or some time tomorrow morning, and there is no sign of the report—and there never was any intention on the part of the Minister to bring it here.

What sort of conduct is that? I repeat: The Premier is equally blameworthy because the Minister's replies were made only after consultation with his Premier;

and both of them must have known whether or not they intended to make this report available. The word to apply to this sort of conduct is "chicanery," and I charge the Government with that in connection with this matter. It brings Ministers beneath contempt. It is not the sort of conduct that can be defended on any grounds whatsoever. I do not know whether it is considered to be smart, or in any way clever; but I know what I term it—it is dishonest, cowardly, and miserable. It cannot be justified in any shape or form.

The people of Western Australia who paid for the labours of the committee are entitled to know what is in the report—and so are their parliamentary representatives. They are not entitled to be fooled about in this way by statements that there is no doubt the report will be made available before the end of the session when there is no intention of making it available, because there was no greater obstacle in the way of making it available then than there is at the present time.

I daresay, if one were in a position to find out, one would discover that the Government has not given one moment's consideration to the report as such since I asked the questions. There would be no need for it to do so, because any action it proposed to take in connection with water supply had already been taken. I cannot imagine a Cabinet hard-pressed for time at the end of the session giving up any of its time to consider a report which was no longer urgent so far as the Government was concerned. So the conduct is worthy of the widest condemnation. But it is what we have been led to expect; it is only a repetition of what has gone on ever since the Government has been in office.

It has been denied here that the Water Supply Department has been used as a taxing machine. In an endeavour to placate the irate ratepayers, all sorts of statements have been used as to the requirements of the department financially, and the absolute necessity to levy the rates at the present level. Here again, the people have not been told the truth by the Government, as I shall prove beyond a shadow of a doubt.

In *Hansard* No. 9 of this year, page 1341, in a statement made by the Treasurer, there appear these words—

Increased Water Charges.

In order to cover increased operating costs and debt charges associated with major capital works, it has been found necessary for the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department to impose higher charges and revise its valuations of property. I will have more to say about these increases later.

This is the important statement—

Chiefly as the result of these increased charges and a higher level of Commonwealth financial assistance, it has been possible, despite a substantial increase in expenditure, for the Government to budget for a deficit in 1960-61 of £760,000, which is an improvement of £646,000 over the deficit of £1,406,000 for 1959-60.

The Metropolitan Water Supply Department is supposed to levy only sufficient rates to enable it to cover its costs. Therefore, if it does that it will give no assistance to the Treasury and could not help in reducing its deficit. But if it receives an income more than its cost of operations, it has a surplus of money which will benefit the Treasury and so reduce the over-all deficit. That is something the department is not supposed to do under its Act; and it is something which the Treasurer is not supposed to do. He is not supposed to use the Metropolitan Water Supply Department as a taxing machine to assist revenue. But in that statement he said that chiefly as a result of two things—firstly, increased water charges; and, secondly, increased financial assistance from the Commonwealth—because of money received from those two sources, his budgetary position was substantially improved. Generally, that shows beyond any shadow of doubt—and it is the Premier's own utterance—that he is using the Water Supply Department as a taxing machine.

Here is further proof; and I quote from *The West Australian* of the 2nd November this year, under the heading, "W.A. Deficit is Higher"—

Western Australia's accumulated deficit for the four months to October, 31st, was £3,381,000, compared with £2,391,000 for the corresponding period last year.

Premier Brand said yesterday that though the deficit was £990,000 higher at this stage, departmental expenditure was close to Budget provisions.

I will skip a good deal of the rest of the article because it is not relevant to the point which I wish to emphasise. I now come to the following paragraph:—

Increased water rates contributed to a rise of £144,000 in the net trading result of water supplies.

It must be kept in mind that the final date for the payment of rates in the Water Supply Department, in order to qualify for the cheaper excess water rate, is the end of November—the 30th November. So at this date, in September, there would still be a very substantial amount of the rates to come in, as most people pay their rates in the month of November.

But at this stage the Treasurer had benefited considerably because of a rise of £144,000 in the net trading result of the

Water Supply Department—further proof that the department was being used as a taxing machine to aid general revenue, and that the rates were higher than they need be. There is no question whatsoever about it.

I told the Treasurer about this time last session that the Estimates which he was presenting to Parliament were not worth anything. In order to refresh the memory of members, I will read out a portion of what I said—I am quoting from Vol. 3 of *Hansard* 1959, page 3795—

I notice in a footnote on page 120 that reference is made to the estimated revenue for 1959-60 of £2,416,000 as against the actual revenue for 1958-59 of £2,288,877. I will be very surprised indeed if the revenue of this department for the current year exceeds what it was last year for the reasons I have given.

As it transpires, I was absolutely correct. The increase in revenue did not exceed the figure for the previous year. I continue—

It seems to me as if the estimate is going to be some hundreds of thousands of pounds out. I can appreciate the fact that the Minister for Water Supplies is away on business and therefore not able to throw any light on this matter,

I am beginning to think now that it would not have made any difference had he been here. Continuing—

and I do not expect that any other Minister would be *au fait* with the situation. I merely wish to indicate that I do not accept this estimate, and that for all practical purposes it is worthless.

And that is exactly what it proved to be; because not only was the revenue down, but, as I predicted, the cost of operation was down as well, as anybody who had any knowledge of the department would know from the circumstances at the time.

The Treasurer indicated—and this is the part that lets the cat out of the bag—the amount of increased revenue that he anticipated getting this financial year as a result of the increased rates. I quote from a copy of his notes which he was good enough to hand me at the time he was making his speech. On page 28 of his notes appears the following:—

Provided 1960-61 turns out to be a reasonably normal year the collections of the department should increase by £563,000 of which an amount of £74,000 should come from revaluations and £329,000 from an adjustment of valuations in certain districts together with an increase of 3d. per 1,000 gallons in the price of industrial and excess water.

Is it not strange that the Treasurer should say that he anticipated raising £563,000 and would still run into a deficit of £14,000.

when his Minister, a few months before, had sent a minute to Cabinet saying that if he got an additional £315,000 he would finish up with a surplus? And it was on that minute that the Cabinet made its decision to put all water rates and charges up 25 per cent. because of the increase in valuations.

Let us contemplate those figures for a moment. The Minister, on the advice of his departmental officers, told Cabinet, in accordance with a Cabinet minute tabled here, that £315,000 would permit him to have a surplus. The Treasurer, when he introduced his Estimates, said he expected to get £563,000 and he would still be £14,000 in deficit. If you can add that up, Mr. Chairman, "You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din."

It is just utter nonsense. How can anyone justify these added imposts upon the people, when there is nearly a quarter of a million additional money being derived over and above that which was stated to be necessary? And then we are told that will still leave us with a deficit to the extent of £14,000.

Let us have a look at the probability in connection with this matter. In departments there is always a pattern. One can go through the years and one will see expenditure up perhaps £60,000 or £70,000. Revenue will be up £70,000 or £80,000. The next year the figures will be comparable, and one could plot a graph to show the trend either upwards or downwards. The figures I am going to quote have been taken from the report of the Auditor-General, and I have it in front of me. I have extracted these figures and I will guarantee their correctness in accordance with the report.

For the year 1958 the earnings of the Water Supply Department with regard to water rates, sewerage, and drainage—but excluding excess sales—were £1,596,127; and excess sales, £374,960. In 1959 the earnings were £1,697,226; and excess sales some £2,000 more than the year before, or £376,084. For the year 1960 the earnings were £1,814,309. That is up approximately £100,000 as, indeed, it was the year before. Excess sales fell to £170,000, the reason being, of course, the severe restrictions on the use of water in the metropolitan area, and therefore there was a lack of revenue from the sales of excess water, and the department was down £200,000 from that source.

I now turn to operating expenses. In 1958—and I am covering the water supply, sewerage, and drainage sections of the department—they totalled £980,118. In 1959 the figure was up about £100,000. So revenue was up £100,000, and operating expenses were up £100,000, the figure being £1,076,286. For 1960 the operating expenses were £1,140,267, or up about £70,000. So that the rise, as I had forecast last year, was not as great as the normal rise, because the operating expenses would be less.

There is the general trend: Approximately £100,000 more in revenue and approximately £100,000 more in operating expenses.

What do we find this year? We find that the Government expects its operating expenses and its depreciation and interest to jump more than £300,000. Why should there be a jump of more than £300,000 this year, when the average for years past has been about £100,000? I will tell members the reason: Because the figures are cooked, to try to cover up the position.

I would ask members to look at page 120 of the Revenue Estimates. They will see, under the figures for 1960-61, where it is anticipated that operating expenses will increase £220,000. Looking at the figures in 1959-60 members will see that the vote was £726,000 in that year; but the actual expenditure was £60,000 less than the vote. The actual operating expenditure was £659,000. We are now told that that operating expenditure of £659,000 is going to jump this year to £880,000.

What has gone wrong with the show if that is the true position? If that is the true position, and the cost of operating the metropolitan water supply works is going to jump 33½ per cent. on its total cost this year, what has gone wrong with the show? Of course, it is palpable that the figures are cooked.

It is absolute nonsense to say that in a department where the average increase in operating expenses per annum is less than £100,000, it will increase this year to that extent. So we find the Government is camouflaging the position to keep the truth away from people and is trying to recover its position by means of a worthless Bill to introduce a "pay-as-you-use" system when Cabinet has not completed consideration of the report of the special committee appointed to deal with this method of water rating.

If I read about this in some magazine whilst on a country trip I would think it was a priceless piece of fiction and showed marvellous ingenuity; but to have it trotted out here by responsible Ministers of Parliament is to treat us as if we were children. They are figures which will not stand up to examination by anyone who makes any sort of claim to being able to understand figures.

I challenge the Minister to indicate what will increase the operating expenses. It must be noted that this has nothing to do with interest and sinking fund. Therefore, I challenge the Minister to show how his department's operating expenses could be increased by £220,000 this year, when the total cost of operation last year was only £659,000.

We are asked to believe that, in a department which has been carrying on this work for years, and where the total cost of operation last year, after all these years, reached a limit of only £659,000. Yet this

year we are told that the operating expenses will jump to £880,000. I would like to know what the member for Mt. Marshall thinks of figures like that, and whether he is prepared to accept them. One could not get anybody to accept them. They are without rhyme or reason, and they will not stand up to five minutes' examination.

Why does the Government do this? Because it wants to tax a section of the people and not let those people know. It wants to use the water rates and the sewerage rates to levy these charges on those people without letting them know what they are paying and without giving them a reason why they are paying the increases.

Then, in an endeavour to placate them it introduces a worthless Bill to implement a "pay-as-you-use" system for water rates; and, in introducing it, the Minister says that the Government hopes that next March it will be able to give the ratepayers some relief. So far as I am concerned the situation is intolerable, and I will do my utmost to see that the people know what the true situation is—as they are entitled to know—which the Government is endeavouring to cover up at every opportunity. The members supporting the Government should have their sincerity put to the test on this question, if they have any regard for the rates which the people are called upon to pay. Have they a genuine desire to relieve the people of an unfair burden?

This idea of approaching the Taxation Department to get its officers to make valuations is only another attempt to mislead the people. On an earlier occasion I pointed out that the Taxation Department itself is five years behind, in some districts, in fixing valuations for the levying of land tax. In Nedlands and Dalkeith the land tax is levied on the 1955 valuations, but in Subiaco it is based on 1959 valuations. Despite this, there is an attempt by the Government to make the people believe that this change-over to Taxation Department valuations will effect an improvement.

That is laughable, because the officers already doing the work for the State will obtain employment with the Commonwealth Taxation Department and continue to do the work. So the valuations will be performed by the same men, but by another department at greater cost. In this matter the Government is highly culpable, firstly, for not correctly investigating the position; and, secondly, for deliberately misleading the people.

I challenge anyone on the Government side of the Chamber to explain away the fact that the Minister told his Cabinet that £315,000 would be all that would be raised from the increased rates, and that this would give him a surplus of £11,000. On the other hand, the Treasurer introduces Budget papers to this Chamber

admitting he is going to get £563,000, and saying that this will leave him with a deficit of £14,000.

If there is any country where we could find people who would believe that arithmetic, I would like to hear of it. I do not think we could get anybody here to believe in that sort of arithmetic. If it were not so serious for the people concerned the situation would be laughable. I am certainly not going to believe what has been told to us, because it is utter nonsense. So I register my protest and give other members an opportunity to do the same, because the Government has decided to take no action to relieve the people this year of the rates they are paying, and it has given no guarantee that the position will be any better next year. There is only a hope for some of them. Therefore, in order to test the position, I move—

That Item No. 1 (Salaries and Allowances, etc., £335,000) be reduced by £1.

That is an indication to the Government and the department that we do not accept the situation that has been presented to us; that it is not the correct position, and that the people generally are being grievously misled because of the Government's duplicity. The Government will not face up to the matter, in precisely the same way as it did not have the courage to face up to publishing the report by the special committee on the "pay-as-you-use" system of rating.

The Government is spineless to the last degree. It is frightened to stand up for the opinions it holds. It is afraid to express the truth, but wants to mislead all the time. It gives assurances with no intention of fulfilling them. It makes half-promises to delude. That has been the pattern ever since the Government has been in office, and the further it goes the worse it gets.

To take £250,000 excess taxation from the people under subterfuge cannot be defended in any shape or form. That is what the Government has done and is continuing to do on the spurious explanation that it is removing an anomaly. The anomaly was the so-called disparity between the charges on residential premises as against the charges on business premises, because the residential premises were rated at 60 per cent. of the net annual rental value, and the business premises at 75 per cent. of the net annual rental value.

The people having complained about that, what does the Government do? It introduces a Bill to permit it to continue to do that. The terms in the Bill give the Minister power to rate business premises at a higher rate than residential premises. One would almost think one was living in wonderland.

Mr. Bovell: We are, at the moment, in Western Australia.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes; we are!

Mr. Bovell: The State has never been so prosperous.

Mr. TONKIN: That is no reason why the Minister should rob the people.

Mr. Bovell: We are not robbing the people.

Mr. TONKIN: I invite the Minister to explain away that simple arithmetical problem. The Minister for Water Supplies told us that £315,000 would be raised from the increased rates, which would give him a surplus of £11,000. The Treasurer then tells us that £563,000 will be received from the same rates, but that will leave him £14,000 short. Will the Minister kindly explain that? I am sure he would earn an honorary doctorate at the University without the slightest difficulty if he did. If the Minister could reconcile those figures he would be nothing short of a marvel. But, of course, the Government will make no attempt to do that, because it is impossible. One might as well try to solve the problem of the irresistible force against the immovable body.

So I say that the Government should be condemned for its attitude in this matter and its failure to be frank about what it is doing and the method it has used to keep the position camouflaged all the time. I regard as one of the worst features in this matter the latest performance of the Minister for Water Supplies and the Premier who, having conferred, and having made up their minds what they proposed to do, were not men enough to say so, but continued to evade the issue; to procrastinate; and to put the issue off day after day until now, right at the end of the session, we have not even had the opportunity to see the report of the special committee on the "pay-as-you-use" system of water rating. I could not even get an assurance from the Minister that the Government intends to make it available to the Press after Parliament rises.

Therefore, I hope the Press will pester the Minister daily by asking for a copy of the report to be made available and will continue to do so until Parliament meets next session when I shall, I feel certain, again ask for the report to be made available—if it has not been made available in the meantime—and probably get the same result. I moved the amendment to reduce the vote by £1 in order to register my protest against the Government, and to enable other members to do the same thing.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I support the amendment as I consider the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has made out a sufficient case for the Government to answer. As no member on the Government side rose to answer the point raised, I propose to support the amendment. The facts which the honourable member adduced, in the

light of my knowledge cannot be contradicted. We have heard statements in this Chamber by the Minister for Water Supplies as well as by the Treasurer, in answer to questions and in speaking to the Estimates, regarding the excessive water rates.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated that not only would the increased rating raise sufficient revenue for the Water Supply Department to pay its way, but it would exceed the amount required by 100 per cent. The Treasurer expects to raise £563,000 from this source. The imposition on the users of water in the metropolitan area during this financial year is very severe. The Minister told members that the report of the "pay-as-you-use" committee would be presented before the end of the session.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): I draw the honourable member's attention, as well as the attention of other members in the Chamber, to the fact that the discussion must be confined to Item 1 of the vote.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition submitted a case when speaking to the item, and he moved that the vote be reduced by £1. I take it I am in order when speaking to this item, in referring to the "pay-as-you-use" committee. Item No. 1 of the vote states as follows:—

Salaries and Allowances, including Salaries of Officers under the control of the Public Service Commissioner; Salaries generally, including Temporary Assistance, District Allowance, Allowances under Public Service Regulations to Officers or their Widows, etc., and proportion of Salary of Officers due to other Departments.

I support the amendment because the Government has failed to present the report of the "pay-as-you-use" committee to Parliament before the end of the session.

Mr. Tonkin: You are in order.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I thought I was. I cannot confine myself to speak merely on the salaries.

Point of Order

Mr. TONKIN: I do not want the debate to continue in this way. I suggest that the ruling of the Chairman was not correct, in accordance with established practice. I ask whether you, Mr. Chairman, will review your decision so as to enable the member for Middle Swan to speak generally, as he should. I submit this is the time-honoured way to register a protest. The amendment is tantamount to a vote of no confidence in the Government.

Members are entitled to speak generally in registering the protest. If you were to restrict the debate to the vote of £335,000 less £1 you would be defeating this method of registering a protest. I suggest that the member for Middle Swan is entitled to

speaking generally on the vote because of the reasons given for the protest. The only way I could enable members to join in the protest was to move for the reduction of the vote. I ask that you reconsider your ruling, in order that the member for Middle Swan and others might be able to speak generally.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Since drawing the attention of the member for Middle Swan to this matter, I have ascertained that it is the time-honoured custom to enter a protest by moving to reduce the item. The honourable member may proceed as he was doing.

Committee Resumed

Mr. J. HEGNEY: Many people are perturbed by the high water rates which are being imposed in the metropolitan area. During this session attempts were made by the Opposition to persuade the Government to adopt a more conciliatory attitude. Members on this side considered that the Government should not slug the water-users. The Government has not changed its policy; instead, it introduced legislation which sought to impose increased water charges.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition pointed out that the Minister, with the connivance of the Premier, refrained from producing the report of the committee to Parliament, so as to prevent members from expressing an opinion on that report. As was pointed out by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, water rates are not designed for the purpose of raising revenue. They are imposed to enable the department to pay the cost of operation. It has been shown conclusively in this House that under the increased rating the department will receive double the amount that is required for the operating costs of the department.

The Government and the Minister should reply to the many factors which were referred to by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. This question affects the water users of the metropolitan area, and under the present situation there are anomalies. In some districts the water rates are low, while in others they are very high.

The Minister has indicated that he had consulted the Premier on this question, and that when the report of the "pay-as-you-use" committee was received it would be presented to Parliament, before the end of the session. The Minister has received that report, but he has not produced it, despite what he said.

Mr. WILD: We have been listening to a Billy Graham episode during the discussion on this vote. From what has taken place here during this session one would think that we were back in the days when the questions of the sirus wasp or the Austrian houses were raised. If Billy Graham were to return to this State it

might be a good idea for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to join in as his second-in-command.

The honourable member has been trying to get hold of the "pay-as-you-use" report for some weeks. I told him successively that when the report had been finalised by Cabinet it would be made available to him. I said some two or three weeks ago that I thought this report would be placed on the Table of the House before the end of the session. That would have been done had Cabinet not spent lengthy hours in discussing the coalmining friends of members opposite who are refusing to work the open cuts at Collie.

Mr. Jamieson: Utter rubbish!

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. Jamieson: It is utter rubbish.

Mr. WILD: Not at all.

Mr. Jamieson: That is nonsense. Call him to order.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Members will keep quiet when they are called to order.

Mr. WILD: Many matters which were placed before Cabinet in the last two or three months have not been considered, because Cabinet Ministers have spent hours and hours in working out ways and means to get the Collie miners back to work. We have had no assistance from members opposite.

Mr. Jamieson: That is a lot of rubbish.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. Jamieson: What a lot of nonsense the honourable member is talking!

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! The member for Beeloo will keep order.

Mr. Jamieson: Bring him back to order too.

Mr. WILD: Let me refer to the "pay-as-you-use" committee, if members opposite do not like to hear the truth about the position in Collie. I set up that committee and asked it to inquire into two aspects. The first was: Would it be possible to have a "pay-as-you-use" system? The second was: If so, could the committee recommend any rates which could be applied under such a system? The report was received by me, and after it had been given some consideration the next step was to bring it before Cabinet. That has been done. No-one knows better than the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—because he has occupied this portfolio for six years—that to apply a new system which has not been applied anywhere in Australia—or, to the best of my knowledge, in any country of the British Commonwealth—is difficult. It is not a decision which can be taken lightly.

I am reminded of the dark days of 1950 to 1953 when there was a shortage of houses. There was an acute shortage of

building materials and labour, but there were thousands of people clamouring for homes. At the time I thought those problems were big; but they were insignificant when compared with what I have endeavoured to do to straighten out the anomalies which have crept in under the water-rating system—a system which has grown up through the years. I do not blame anyone for the confusion which has resulted. Up to date no Government has been game enough to rectify the position.

When I probed into this problem I held conference after conference with the officers of the Water Supply Department, with members of the "pay-as-you-use" committee, and with Treasury officials. I visited the Eastern States, and finally I made a recommendation to Cabinet that an attempt should be made to alter the existing system. I want to repeat that anything that is contained in the "pay-as-you-use" committee's report has nothing to do with the amending Bill introduced to this Chamber—nothing at all. The committee was asked only two things:—

- (1) Did it think it feasible to have a "pay-as-you-use" water system?
- (2) Would it make some recommendation as to a rate?

The trouble about this "pay-as-you-use" system has, without a doubt, been whipped up by members of the Opposition, and they have no need to deny it. Firstly there was the meeting at Subiaco in connection with which hundreds of circulars were sent all over the place and about 600 people turned up at the meeting. The motion was moved by the ex-member for Subiaco (Mr. Potter). A second meeting was held as they were not satisfied with the first one. Unfortunately the 600 did not turn up. The number was reduced to 300; and when the vote was taken, only about 200 were game to record their vote. If we can believe the newspaper reports and what people say, no fewer than 100 did not appear to have voted.

Mr. May: Were you there?

Mr. WILD: The meeting was a fizzog. What was the next move? It was decided to have a meeting at Midland Junction and again the same thing happened. Supporters of the Opposition attended, trying to whip up people. The two latest meetings in this matter were at Melville and Canning. In Melville, the district of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, they are trying to whip the people up, and that is the case in Canning. In this latter district, another defeated Labor member (Mr. Gaffey) persuaded the Riverton Branch of the A.L.P. to request a meeting at Cannington. And the members of the Opposition talk about chicanery! I say that the boot is on the other foot. They are using this matter of water rates purely for political purposes.

I repeat that I have done what I considered to be in the best interests of the people of the metropolitan area. I will have to put my head on the guillotine next year. I may have been wrong, but I am prepared to take that chance. This is a system which is not operating anywhere else in Australia; but, recognising the many difficulties and shortcomings—valuations were all over the place, like a dog's dinner—we did what we considered to be a fair and reasonable thing. We will start off with fresh foundations; and so from that, next year will come the firm bricks with which we hope to build fair valuations and fair water rates for the people of this State.

As far as the financial side is concerned, it does not do the Deputy Leader of the Opposition much credit to start criticising the figures of the Treasury officers of this State. When they supply the Treasurer and myself with figures I believe them to be true. They are good and honourable gentlemen; and I am prepared to say that next year when the financial situation is revealed, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, if he is a gentleman, will have to eat his words and admit he is wrong. However, I am not going to go into that now. I have the utmost faith in these men. I am no accountant or figure man but these figures were presented in all good faith, and I am prepared to say they are right.

This move, as have been the others in the past four months, is nothing but a political move on the part of members of the Opposition who are trying to make capital out of the poor people who are listening to them. I oppose the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): To clarify the position for members, I would draw their attention to the fact that we are in the usual Committee stage on the Estimates. Each member will have a quarter of an hour from the time he first rises, and ten minutes on each subsequent occasion.

Mr. BRADY: I rise to support the amendment moved by the member for Melville because this is one of the opportunities for advancing the case of those people in our own district who have been badly hit by the increased water rates. I mentioned, when this matter was previously before the House, that the rates have gone up anything from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. in my electorate. In normal times anyone whose rates are increased by 5 per cent. or 10 per cent. believes he is very hard done by; but when the rates go up anything from 50 per cent. to 100 per cent., people are entitled to hold protest meetings. I think that they should have more protest meetings in the vicinity of Parliament House or the Minister's office in order that they might have more effect.

One can hardly see any justification for the Minister increasing the rates by 100 per cent. As the member for Melville pointed out, the operating expenses of the water section of this department this year are estimated to be increased to £880,000 as against £659,000 previously. This is an increase of £221,000. There is going to be a third more work done and the corresponding amount extra paid in wages than in the previous year. Yet, when I asked the Minister a question earlier in this session as to what major water supply works or sewerage works would be undertaken in my electorate this year, he replied that nothing would be done.

If I had no other reason for protesting against these increased rates I would have the right to do so because of that information given by the Minister. A further £221,000 is to be spent in the metropolitan area this year; yet the Guildford-Midland electorate—which extends from Bayswater to Greenmount—is to receive no benefit from it. Surely such an area is entitled to some consideration!

I am led to believe by responsible people that the water supplies in the metropolitan area are inadequate in certain areas. The pressure in my own electorate is much below that of ten years ago; and when I ring the officers of the department they inform me I can never expect the pressure in the future to be the same as it has been in the past.

People from Koongamia have told me that they cannot get water in the summer months if people in other areas turn their taps on too. Also, some time ago, since the Bill on this matter was introduced, a man from Bassendean saw me and said that he could not get any water at all. I give the department credit for the fact that when it was notified of this situation, it immediately took action to rectify it. However, I do not want people to have their water pressure cut, or to be without water altogether before they obtain some service from the Water Supply Department.

I pointed out earlier this year that, apart from the growth of Midland Junction, great expansion has taken place in recent times in places like Midvale and Koongamia, where new housing areas must be protected against the fire hazard. If any fires break out in those areas, there must be a sufficient water pressure in order that the fire brigade can fight the fires.

A thought has been going through my mind in recent months in connection with the inadequacy of the water supply. Some of the goods being handled today by the Railways Department are highly inflammable. A great many inflammable materials used by the farming community in their power machines are being transported by the railways. I refer to the thousands and thousands of gallons of

petrol and oils which are used for tractors and diesels, etc. All this petrol and oil is handled in the marshalling yards.

In addition to these highly inflammable materials in the railway yards, there is a greater density of traffic today than ever before. These marshalling yards are in close proximity to the Commonwealth ordnance stores where quite a lot of the defence material is probably highly inflammable. This could easily go up in smoke and cause a great deal of damage. Right alongside these stores there is the Midland Junction Abattoir. There the fats and dripping and other types of materials again create a fire hazard. Therefore, apart from the normal danger created in homes, there are these extra hazards to which I have referred.

In addition, in every business centre these days can be found at least one dry-cleaning plant. In the Guildford-Midland district there are at least three of these establishments as well as half a dozen shops which act as depots. There is no need for me to explain the risk of fire which is involved with these plants because of the highly inflammable solutions used in the dry-cleaning process.

Despite all these fire hazards, when I asked the Minister what major water supply works are to be undertaken in my electorate, I was told that there will be none. I then studied the Estimates and found that the Government is going to extract another £200,000 or £300,000 from metropolitan residents. Therefore I consider I am justified in supporting up to the hilt this protest moved by the member for Melville.

The Government is using this Water Supply Department as a taxing machine; and although the Minister has led us to believe that the new system will facilitate the rating, I believe the difficulties will be just as great as under the old system which was working reasonably smoothly. An annual valuation was taken and then 20 per cent. was allowed for rates and taxes, and another 20 per cent. was allowed for other outgoings. Then the valuation of 60 per cent. was struck. That system was working just as efficiently as the proposed new system, and there will be a greater number of anomalies under the new one.

The present system is that the Minister can hear any appeals and thus go through them quickly to make a decision. Under the new system these appeals will be referred to a board and thus a great deal of time will be lost. As I have said before, the Water Supply Department is building up unnecessary costs. It will have to pay the members of this board a reasonable retainer in order that the board will work efficiently. In addition the department is going to have the Commonwealth Government doing certain valuations, and

it will not do that for nothing. It will have to be paid. So that instead of the people gaining some relief from the new system which the Minister is going to introduce into the department, they will probably be steeped in more costs.

What I am concerned about is that I represent a fast-growing portion of the metropolitan area, which requires all the water supplies and sewerage facilities it can obtain. I believe that some parts of the Midland Junction Municipality have been held back because there are no appropriate sewerage facilities. It is appalling to realise that in that area some still have the pan system instead of the modern system.

Therefore I want to support the member for Melville's amendment. There may be good reasons for the people in Subiaco and Midland Junction being the first to hold public protest meetings. After all, they are the people on the basic wage and small margins—some are pensioners. They are not the influential people around Peppermint Grove and Nedlands and the more wealthy sections of the community. Therefore they have every good reason for protesting against increases of 50 per cent. to 100 per cent. in valuations. It can almost be termed hi-jacking, this business of raising rates by 50 per cent. and 100 per cent. while trying to make out that it is only being done because the old system has not been satisfactory.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): The member for Guildford-Midland may proceed.

Mr. Norton called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. BRADY: Before tea I was saying that the people in my electorate are not getting adequate water, and the rates have increased. I did say that I rang the department about the water pressures in my area, and then I mentioned the Koon-gamia area. The department challenged me in connection with the matter. As a result I gave the department the name of the man who said he could not get water. I have not since heard from the department. Whether its officers found that I was right and they decided to say nothing, I do not know.

In addition, the people at Midvale told me that the water pressure in their area was down. I do not want to continue along these lines, but when people are asked to pay from 50 per cent to 100 per cent more by way of rates, I think that even you, Mr. Chairman, although you are not directly concerned in this matter, would have good reason for asking the municipal council to call protest meetings.

I personally made unofficial inquiries in regard to fire brigade protection, but I could not get anything from the local officials because they were frightened that if they gave me any information they might be in strife themselves.

For some time I have felt that the water supply position in my area was not satisfactory. I think I have given sufficient reasons to let the Minister know that we are expecting a great deal more than he anticipates giving us; and I hope we will not be let down. I cannot see why, if, in the next 12 months, the Minister is going to spend in the metropolitan area £220,000 more than he spent in the last 12 months, the Guildford-Midland electorate—Guildford, Midland, and Bassendean—should not have adequate water supplies. I hope the Minister will make some inquiries into the water pressure at Koongamia, Midvale, Midland Junction, and West Midland where, as I said earlier in the session, even the State school at Middle Swan was not permitted to use water on the recreation ground on week days, but only in the evenings or at weekends.

I feel I have every justification for supporting the amendment moved by the member for Melville. I will be greatly disappointed if the towns in my electorate do not get some of the £220,000 that the Minister intends to spend this year.

I have already taken some deputations to the Minister in connection with the sewerage position; and no fewer than five different parts of Midland Junction are urgently in need of sewerage facilities. Some of the more recently developed suburbs have a sewerage service and other modern facilities, but the Municipality of Midland Junction, which has been in existence for about 60 years, is still without them.

I support the amendment moved by the member for Melville. He rightly said that this department is being used as a taxing department. I do not think there will be any relief as a result of the new valuation system; in fact, I think the appeals that will be lodged will keep the board going full time, and I doubt whether in the long run there will be any more efficiency than in the past. I also doubt whether the valuers of the Commonwealth Taxation Department can, in conjunction with their usual work, more rapidly assess the metropolitan area and get better results than the officers of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Following the remarks of the member for Guildford-Midland, I feel strongly disposed to support the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Mann: Speak up please; we cannot hear you too well.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: How long is it since the honourable member could not hear me?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I do not suppose that water is so scarce that you cannot wash your ears out!

Mr. Mann: Typical parish pump; self-satisfied, too.

Mr. Jamieson: You can get water out of that, too.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I hope, Sir, you will take time off for me.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Am I allowed to start from now?

Mr. Brand: You can start over here, too.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I will deal with the Premier before the end of 15 minutes. Following the remarks of the member for Guildford-Midland I feel strongly disposed to support the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; and I will take this opportunity—probably the final one before this session of Parliament closes—to protest on behalf of the electors whom I represent, against the attitude of the Government in connection with the increase in water rates.

What is necessary to bring before the people, too, is the misrepresentation—deliberate or unconscious—by the Government in connection with this increase. I heard the Minister for Works and Water Supplies endeavour to answer a very strong case submitted by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but I noticed that he astutely side-stepped the salient points made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The Minister for Works and Water Supplies started on the line that the protest meetings had been organised in electorates such as Subiaco and Midland Junction, and he mentioned that later there had been a protest meeting at Melville. I suggest these meetings were spontaneous, and that the protests were spontaneous and not inspired.

In my electorate I can say that numbers of people have protested to me against the increased water rates; and they wanted to know just when the relief would be given, because statements had appeared in the Press to the effect that the present water rates, or the present assessments, would be reduced, in the case of private consumers, by one-third.

The Minister for Water Supplies made the statement in regard to the places I have mentioned; and tried to give the impression that the protests were inspired. Also this session he has mentioned on a

number of occasions that he and the Government have been unable to make a final determination on the report submitted by a committee in respect to the alleged "pay-as-you-use" system. The Minister did give a definite undertaking in this regard, but it has not been honoured. I suggest his excuse was a very thin one—certainly it was not a reason. The Minister tried to indicate, to prove justification for his continued delay, that he particularly, and the other members of the Government as well, had been unable to arrive at a decision because they had been too busy with the Collie coalminers' strike. Well, that argument is too thin.

Mr. Toms: It does not take much to keep them busy.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Minister's argument will not hold water. The Minister has said that the Government has not been able to give due consideration to the report of the committee. Let us see what appeared in the Press. When the Minister introduced a Bill to amend the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act, he impressed upon the House that it was the beginning of a "pay-as-you-use" scheme, or that it dealt with the assessment of rates on the basis of the amount of water used.

I have recently again perused the contents of the Bill, together with the parent Act, but nowhere in the Bill can I find any reference to a "pay-as-you-use" method. The Minister's Bill was introduced, I think, on the 8th November—I believe that was the day on which the second reading was moved. The Bill contains no reference to a "pay-as-you-use" scheme; but there have been public statements to the effect that the metropolitan ratepayers will be relieved of a considerable amount of their rates in the 1961-1962 year.

I have here a statement which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 16th November; and, as far as I know, this statement has not been contradicted. Under the heading "Brand Points to Savings," the newspaper had this to say—

Householders in many categories would benefit under the proposed new system of water rating introduced into Parliament last week, Premier Brand said in his weekly broadcast last night.

Under the legislation, which in many cases would reduce residential water rates by a third, ratepayers who would benefit included:

Those who had high valuations, as in Subiaco, Leederville and Victoria Park, who were virtually being forced to buy water that they could not use.

People on low valuations who wanted to economise on water. They could use less and, consequently, pay less.

Householders who had sunk their own bores. By avoiding the use of excess water, they would face only the moderate basic charge.

The article concluded as follows:—

"I am hopeful that, when the new system has settled down, the whole question of water rating will be easier to understand and everyone will be satisfied they are getting a fair go," Mr. Brand said.

That statement emanated from the Premier, as leader of the Government, and it has not been denied. I invite the Premier—indeed I challenge him—to be good enough to explain—and I am prepared to move an extension for him if he cannot explain it in the time allowed to the Committee—the provisions of the Bill introduced by his Minister for Works which will enable ratepayers to be automatically entitled to a reduction of 33½ per cent.

I suggest that the Bill, apart from the appeal authority which is set up, did alter to a certain extent the basis of assessment; but the vital principle is that the rates will be levied on unimproved values, and it is only on the matter of detail that alteration will take place; and in the process of the alteration, any ratepayer in the metropolitan area who pays water rates will, arbitrarily, be paying an increase of 25 per cent. on last year's rates.

As has been indicated on previous occasions, some of the increases have been as high as 110 per cent. I know of many who have been charged an extra 60 or 70 per cent.; and I challenge the Premier, who made this statement, to show anywhere in the Bill that was passed that there was any reference to a "pay-as-you-use" system. I invite him to explain in what way ratepayers will receive a remittance of 33½ per cent. in 1961 when the Minister for Works said that Cabinet has not considered the report in regard to the "pay-as-you-use" system of water rating.

Indeed, the Minister for Works said that he could not be expected to indicate what relief would be given, but it was hoped that by next March something might be done. I think members are entitled to know from the Premier whether this report is correct; and if it is, I think he is entitled to explain—I have no doubt of his ability to explain it—on behalf of the Government the justification for this statement in his weekly broadcast. I think that is a fair proposition, because misrepresentation has taken place either consciously or unconsciously.

If it has been done intentionally, then I say it is not right and it is not fair; and it is certainly not decent for a responsible Minister of the Government to mislead the public, who have to pay the rates.

Mr. J. Hegney: And Parliament.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Yes. However, I do not think members on this side have at any time been misled by the misrepresentation indulged in by members of the Government. If it is not misrepresentation I think the responsible Minister or Ministers in the Government should explain to the public in what way relief will be afforded during the current financial year.

I do not propose to give any figures; suffice it to say that I have already mentioned the matter of figures, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has clearly indicated that while the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act sets down certain provisions in regard to the revenue-collecting side of the department, there is nothing to say that the Government can use it as a taxing agency.

Yet the Premier, when introducing the Estimates, clearly indicated in unmistakable terms that, due to the increased water rates, the revenue for the Treasury would be swelled by about £500,000. I think we are entitled to know, if it is proposed that the Treasurer is to remit in the next financial year 33½ per cent. of the unfair rates imposed this year, in what way he proposes to do it.

I think the amendment of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is amply justified. I hope it will be the means of inducing the Premier to explain the reasons for the Government's action, because certainly the feeble effort of the Minister for Works in reply to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition did not prove anything. On the contrary, it showed that he was still in a state of confusion, and that he would be too busy for the next six to 12 months to give any consideration to the "pay-as-you-use" report.

I think it is due to the Committee for the Premier to explain the reasons for his broadcast, and how and in what manner the relief mentioned will be effected.

Mr. JAMIESON: I support the move of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition because I believe, even at this late hour, that some opposition to the Government's action on water supplies is quite justified. We have heard the Minister indicate that he was of opinion that the only places where there had been any stir was where it had been organised.

Mr. Brand: That is quite true.

Mr. JAMIESON: That may or may not be so; but even if it is, there is nothing wrong with it. If there is something for people to be organised about it is quite justifiable; and I feel that on this occasion the action taken was warranted.

Mr. Brand: It is the reason for the organisation that we are interested in.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Premier should hark back to the time, a few years ago, when certain resurrections were being made, and when he and his merry gang did a lot of organising.

Mr. Brand: I don't recall that.

Mr. JAMIESON: Then the Premier's memory is bad, if he ever had a mind.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! The honourable member will keep to the motion before the Chair.

Mr. Brand: There is no doubt about this bloke. He likes to dish it out, but he can't take it.

Mr. JAMIESON: The "pay-as-you-use" system, as has been indicated, is nothing else but a damp squib on the part of the Government. It made a rash promise that it would endeavour to introduce it—the Government even had the temerity to ask the A.L.P. to nominate a representative to sit on the committee, after making a promise at the elections that it would do something about this proposition. The Government knows that it is not a feasible proposition; the Minister himself indicated that in no place has it been effectively worked wherever it has been tried.

While I do not decry any new system, or say that it should not be attempted, I say that this is not a new system. Many people have given consideration to it; but it is fraught with danger, and it has been side-stepped and not proceeded with. By its actions in hoodwinking the people in saying that it would bring in a "pay-as-you-use" system this Government has shown no regard for the facts that are available to it. Now it is saying that it has had no time to consider the report. The Government constantly refuses to table the report, and that indicates the position.

Mr. Brand: What interest would it be to you? You wouldn't take part in the inquiry, yet you want to see the report. What do you want the report for?

Mr. JAMIESON: We want to see what fools Ministers have made of themselves. That is why we want the report.

Mr. Brand: You don't think there is anything worthwhile in it; yet you want to see it.

Mr. JAMIESON: There might be something worthwhile in it, but we want to look at it to see what fools Ministers have made of themselves over it. The Government was foolish in the first place in promising that it would try to introduce such a system, and influencing people to believe that it could be established.

I say that this protest is quite justified. If there is any need to organise opposition to the Government in certain electorates, as there was on this issue, I think it is justifiable for members to take part in it; and it ill behoves people like the

Minister for Water Supplies to claim that it is being done only for political purposes. It might or it might not be; but it is completely justified, and we are entitled to do it. To go further and say that the reason why Cabinet has not considered it is that it has been trying to get the workers at Collie to go back to work is so much eyewash, and will not go down with anybody. The amendment of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on this occasion is quite justified.

Mr. FLETCHER: I rise—

Mr. Brand: You promised me you wouldn't talk again.

Mr. FLETCHER: —because I believe it is the duty of members of the Opposition to voice their opinions in relation to this matter, despite the fact that in another place I said that I would not rise again this session.

Mr. Brand: I don't think you were in another place.

Mr. FLETCHER: The situation is such that it is necessary for members on this side to speak, and we do so because so many red herrings have been drawn across the trail in an attempt to mislead the general public into believing that the criticism of the Government is not justified. I submit that it is justified, particularly on the issue of water rates. I believe the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was justified when he moved that the item be reduced by £1.

Mr. Brand: All right; sit down, and let's make a decision on it.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Government can well afford £1 from the money it has extorted from the general public through the medium of water rates. If the amendment is accepted as being a motion of no confidence in the Government, then I think that, too, is justified. A handful of people put the Government where it is now.

Mr. Brand: You remember what Mr. Chamberlain said—we have a mandate.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will deal with that aspect presently.

Mr. Brand: Lord forbid!

Mr. FLETCHER: I said that a handful of people put the Government on the Treasury Bench.

Mr. Mann: The wisdom of Solomon!

Mr. FLETCHER: It will be more than a handful of people who will shift the Government.

Mr. Brand: We will wait and see.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Premier—and earlier than that, the Minister for Works—alleged that we have created this situation. In effect, he was saying that we on this side were responsible for it; he was pretending that there was some conspiracy between us—we on this side and the people

in Subiaco and other areas. The reaction has been natural, and we are not responsible for the fact that the present Government has created an atmosphere that has caused hostility throughout many electorates. I submit that this reaction has been spontaneous.

Mr. Mann: Do you believe that?

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes I do.

Mr. Mann: Do you really believe it?

Mr. FLETCHER: I do. The member for Avon Valley is being of considerable help to me. I honestly and sincerely believe what I am saying. The people with whom I associate are the ones who can least afford to pay any extra impost, because their standard of living is already low, and it is rapidly becoming lower as a consequence of the policy of this Government.

Mr. Brand: Where did you read that? In the *Tribune*?

Mr. FLETCHER: They are the people we are thinking of. It is difficult enough for a working man to be able to own his own home without having to pay all the various rates, such as water rates and the like.

Mr. O'Connor: It is difficult for anyone.

Mr. FLETCHER: I agree; but it is much more difficult for a person who is on a lower weekly wage than members opposite, and the interests they represent.

Mr. Mann: What a lot of rot!

Mr. FLETCHER: I say that in all sincerity.

Mr. Brand: I don't think you do.

Mr. Mann: We have far more sincerity than you.

Mr. Jamieson: Don't take any notice of him!

Mr. Mann: What do you know about it?

Mr. FLETCHER: I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that you do to the member for Avon Valley what he suggested on one occasion you should do to me.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! I suggest that the honourable member keep to the amendment.

Mr. FLETCHER: I suggest through the Chair, Mr. Chairman, that you do that, because on one occasion the member for Avon Valley suggested that you should put me out.

Mr. Craig: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Mann: Even your own Deputy Leader is laughing at you.

Mr. FLETCHER: The original rotating method of rating, which was in operation during the regime of the Labor Government, was quite satisfactory, and ultimately it brought the various areas into balance.

The Minister mentioned the poor people who were being hoodwinked by us. I suggest to the Minister that they are poor, and they are rapidly becoming poorer, as a result of the policy of this Government, particularly in relation to water rates; and I suggest that the Government contributes to the poverty that the Minister has mentioned.

Mr. Brand: What about the cost of ships being unloaded?

Mr. FLETCHER: That has nothing to do with water supplies.

Mr. Brand: But why don't you answer it?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! I suggest the honourable member take no notice of interjections.

Mr. FLETCHER: Very good, Mr. Chairman. I will address the Chair. I think we should forgive the Government for it knows not what it does, nor does it know what it says.

Mr. Brand: I only made a simple remark

Mr. FLETCHER: In a more serious vein, I would like to say that the excuses made regarding the coalminers is quite ridiculous, particularly since it has no relation to this issue. The situation in which the Government finds itself now is one of its own making. The Colliie miners did not start the trouble. The Government started the trouble by its attitude to the coal-mining industry. Does the Government think that the Colliie coalminers are losing wages, and creating hardships for themselves and for their wives and families merely to annoy the Government? Does the Government really believe that?

Mr. Brand: No.

Mr. FLETCHER: From the remarks we have heard from the other side of the House one would believe that the Colliie miners are responsible for these papers not being tabled. I say that the Colliie miners have nothing at all to do with the question of water.

Mr. Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. FLETCHER: They are not losing wages just to annoy the Government. It is puerile nonsense for the Government to say that the Colliie miners are responsible for the papers not being tabled. The report should be here, but it is not, due to the inaction of the Government.

Mr. Brand: You get the ships loaded at Fremantle.

Mr. FLETCHER: The ships have nothing to do with this.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. FLETCHER: In an endeavour to cover itself, the Government is trying to focus attention on the Colliie miners, the waterside workers, the seamen, and anybody else it can think of. It is apparently the intention of the Government to channel

public opinion away from the water rates. The Government might be able to fool some of the people for a while, but I think it will find itself in difficulty when John Citizen receives his annual account.

Mr. Brand: Are you afraid it will work?

Mr. FLETCHER: When the householder receives his account on the "pay-as-you-use" scheme he will find it is well in excess of what he paid during the Labor administration. I wish to say that the suburban protest meetings were quite spontaneous, and a natural reaction to the Government's policy. They were not engendered or in any way supported by members on this side of the House.

Mr. Brand: Were they protesting about the high rate or about the system?

Mr. FLETCHER: I believe the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was justified in moving as he did and I support his amendment.

Mr. TOMS: In supporting the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition I might say that I have been very interested in the debate that has taken place; and also the effect it has had on the Government. The reaction of the Ministers has been such that it would seem that some of the remarks have cut a little deep.

Mr. Brand: It was a very pleasant debate.

Mr. TOMS: Even though Government members have said it so often that they have come to believe it themselves, I wish to make it clear that any protest meetings that were held were not organised by members on this side of the House. They were a spontaneous reaction of the people who found themselves suddenly faced with increased charges of up to 97 per cent. in rates. There could have been more protest meetings; the Government has not had one-quarter of the protest meetings that there could have been. Is it not natural that when people in these areas hold protest meetings they should invite the representative of their district to attend? When that happens, of course, the Government and its toady supporters say that the meetings are organised by the people who happen to be there by invitation.

I do not believe that the present policy of the Government is genuine. I believe it is the result of the protest meetings that have been held, and the Government has now sought a way out. The protest meetings have had their effect. It is not the first time that the Government now in office has somersaulted or tried to find a way out of something that it has found to be unpalatable.

Mr. Brand: What was the other?

Mr. TOMS: There have been plenty.

Mr. Brand: Name one other.

Mr. TOMS: Never mind about that; we are talking about water at the moment. The Premier may have been successful in side-tracking the member for Fremantle, but he will have to get up early in the morning before he can put me off.

Mr. W. Hegney: We will see what he has to say when he explains the position.

Mr. Brand: I will not be doing any explaining; I have not the time.

Mr. W. Hegney: I thought not.

Mr. TOMS: The Minister for Water Supplies has not only deliberately, but unconsciously, and with the support of the Government, used this as a taxing measure. The member for Mt. Hawthorn said he did not know whether it was deliberate or unconscious. I think it could possibly have been both.

Mr. May: It was certainly unconscious.

Mr. TOMS: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has put up a case that has not been answered by the Minister for Water Supplies on any occasion that he has attempted to answer it. Never have I heard such weak answers given to criticism from this side of the House. I hope the Government will strengthen itself and do enough to ensure public sympathy, because it will certainly need it in the end.

Mr. Brand: You nearly got bogged down there.

Mr. TOMS: The Premier will be bogged down before he is finished. I represent an electorate that is vitally affected by these water charges that the Government proposes to make. There could have been protest meetings held in the electorate I represent—and I am not saying that they will not be held—and if they are they will be as a result of pressure from outside; it will be none of my making.

Mr. Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. TOMS: I do hope that the facts will be presented to the public.

Mr. Craig: Who organised the protest meetings?

Mr. TOMS: It was not the member for Toodyay.

Mr. Craig: I am asking you.

Mr. TOMS: I told the honourable member earlier it was a spontaneous reaction on the part of the residents.

Mr. Craig: Do you believe that to be true.

Mr. Toms: I know it to be true.

Mr. Craig: I don't.

Mr. TOMS: If the member for Toodyay wishes to support this policy of the Government that is his business. The meetings have not been organised by members on this side of the House.

Mr. Craig: I asked you who organised them.

Mr. TOMS: I have already told the honourable member who organised them.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): The honourable member will address the Chair.

Mr. TOMS: Very well, Mr. Chairman. In conclusion, I would say that the people who find this vile impost has been thrust upon them will not be able to meet it. I have had elderly people come and ask me how they are to pay their rates. They have been struggling over the years to meet their local authority rates, and now they will have this extra burden thrust upon them. I know that pensioners are relieved of rates, but most of them have what we hope they will never lose; and that is, pride and dignity.

Mr. TONKIN: It is refreshing to see that good humour still prevails in this debate despite the anxiety of Ministers to get away. It must be patent to the casual listener that the Government has no answer to the criticisms which have been levelled at it. I have waited a reasonable time to see if any other Minister was going to reply on behalf of the Government to the very definite criticisms that were levelled from this side of the House. Apparently the Government has decided to rely upon what the Minister for Water Supplies has said.

I think it would be agreed by any impartial listener that the Minister's performance was pathetic. All he did was to indulge in personalities regarding myself. He took up the major portion of his time in doing that, and did not deal with a single argument. He made no attempt to explain or justify in any way the statement that he had no doubt he would be able to present the report to this House before the end of the session.

Mr. Curran: He blamed it on the Colliery miners.

Mr. TONKIN: He made no attempt to justify that statement, because the circumstances are no different now from what they were when he gave that undertaking with the full knowledge of his Premier, and after conference with his Premier.

That criticism was left unanswered. Nor did the Minister make any attempt to explain or reconcile the difference in the figures. According to his Cabinet minute, which the Minister acted upon, he advised the Cabinet that if the House valuations were increased by 25 per cent., and the cost of excess water was put up 3d. per 1,000 gallons the result would be an increase in revenue of £315,000, which would be enough to enable the department to have a surplus of £11,000.

Yet the Premier, when he introduced his Budget figures here, admitted that these increased charges would, in his opinion bring in £563,000; and that that would leave him £14,000 in deficit. I ask members: Did the Minister for Water Supplies

attempt to explain that? He never made a single reference to it. Is the Government going to let it rest there?

Either the Minister for Water Supplies misled the Cabinet or the Treasurer has misled the Parliament; and there is an obligation on one of them to admit who was wrong. But no! There is no attempt to face up to that criticism! Just generalities about "Billy Graham." One is entitled to assume, in the absence of any attempt on the part of the Government to face up to the charges, that it has no answer.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You would assume anything, anyway.

Mr. TONKIN: Is that not a reasonable assumption?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: No matter what was said, you would assume.

Mr. TONKIN: Would it not be the logical thing for a man who had an answer, to get up quick and lively and give it? If the Government had an answer to my criticism it would have been given long ago. Make no mistake about that! Man being built the way he is does not stay silent when he has got an answer to a charge; not by any means. He stays silent when it is better to be silent because he has got no answer. So I say I am entitled to assume that the Government has not got a single answer to the criticisms that have been levelled.

The Government cannot explain the disparity in the figures. It cannot explain away the Treasurer's admission that his budgetary position has improved because of the excess revenue in the Water Supply Department: an admission made in this Chamber that owing to two factors—increased allowances from the Commonwealth and increased water rates—his budgetary position has substantially improved. He cannot deny that.

Did he not say, as I have already read out from *The West Australian* of the 2nd November, that although the Western Australian deficit was higher, increased water rates contributed to a rise of £144,000 in the net trading result of the Water Supply Department? That is, in spite of excess revenue in the Water Supply Department, his deficit is higher; and it would have been higher still but for this excess revenue. But there is no answer from the Treasurer, and the Minister for Health says I am not entitled to assume the Government has not got an answer.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I did not.

Mr. TONKIN: What did the Minister say?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I said you would assume anything that pleased you.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh, no! The Minister's statement followed immediately my statement that I was entitled to assume the

Government had no answer; and the Minister implied by his interjection that I was not entitled to assume that.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I did not. I said you would assume anything.

Mr. Craig: He gets mixed up with assurances.

Mr. TONKIN: I would be pleased if the member for Toodyay could tell me of an assurance that has been kept, instead of just sitting there and prattling.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): The honourable member will address his comments through the Chair.

Mr. TONKIN: Certainly, Mr. Chairman; but I would tell you—and I think you would agree—that if the member for Toodyay has anything to say he should stand up on his two legs and say it and supply the answer which the Ministers have failed to give—that is, if he has got it.

Mr. W. Hegney: He could not do any worse than the Minister.

Mr. TONKIN: He prefers to sit there and snipe and talk about assurances when he knows full well that what I have had to say about unkept assurances is factual and right. So he has a cheek to refer to assurances. One would think that would be the last word he would use.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! What the member for Toodyay says has nothing to do with the reduction in the vote.

Mr. TONKIN: I submit with deference to you, Mr. Chairman, that if he was allowed to say it, I should be allowed to reply to it.

Mr. Brand: Just a brief reply.

Mr. Craig: Sorry, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TONKIN: Apparently the Government does not intend to attempt to answer the charges. They are serious charges; they are not trivial charges.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. MAY: I, for one, would never have taken part in this debate—

Mr. Brand: That is two. By jove, we are unlucky!

Mr. MAY: Owing to the fact that certain charges have been made against the Minister for Water Supplies and he has completely failed in any shape or form to reply to the charges made, I felt I had to speak. I do not think there is anything worse than when a member of the Opposition raises a query which has relation to money collected in taxes from the public and the responsible Minister says nothing in reply. The Minister made no mention of it. I think it is scandalous that a responsible Minister of the Crown who has had charges levelled against him in this Chamber does not have the decency to reply.

Mr. Toms: Not as much as the charges he put on the public.

Mr. MAY: The only reply he made was that the matter was one of a political nature. On top of that he had the audacity to tell the Committee that the reason the report had not been attended to was the Collie coal situation. I spoke for an hour the other night and traced the history of open-cut coal in Collie.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! I would draw the attention of the honourable member to the fact that so far he has not mentioned the amendment before the Chair.

Mr. MAY: I am going to come to it presently.

Mr. Brand: It looks as though you are going through an open cut to get there.

Mr. MAY: I will give the Premier some more open cut shortly.

Mr. Tonkin: Don't you think he has had enough?

Mr. MAY: I do acknowledge that the Premier has enough in his lap at the present time, and I do not want to open the wound. Fancy a Minister of the Crown in this Chamber getting up to answer charges made against him and blaming something that is happening 126 miles away! I spoke for an hour the other night, and I do not think the Minister heard what I said; because I saw the same Minister lying back fast asleep, with his mouth open. He could not have heard what I said.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! The honourable member will keep to the amendment.

Mr. W. A. Manning: He had his ears open, too!

Mr. MAY: Mr. Chairman, we have a perfect right to reply to an allegation made by a Minister when he does not reply to charges which have been levelled against him in connection with his own department.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! The member for Collie must keep to the amendment before the Chair which is simply to reduce Item No. 1 in Division 63 by £1.

Mr. MAY: I am speaking in favour of the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and also in regard to the Minister's comments on that amendment. The Minister spoke of Collie coal. I think, Mr. Chairman, you will agree with that. Anyway, you have to agree whether you like it or not. If something is said by a member on one side of the House, a member on the other side should be given an opportunity to reply.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has made practical charges with regard to water rates. He has proved by the figures, he has given to this Chamber that the

Metropolitan Water Supply Department has been used for the purposes of taxation. I do not favour all the taxes that have been placed on the people over the last 18 months, but the Government should not use the Water Supply Department as a means of getting extra taxation from the people. All the Minister did in his reply was to side-track the issue raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in connection with this matter. So, as a matter of fact, the Minister tried to treat it as a huge joke. He was pleased—smiling and happy—when replying to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Toms: He did not reply.

Mr. MAY: I do not think the Minister for Water Supplies even knows there is a wrangle going on at Collie. Much less is he in a position to use that as justification on this occasion. We are entitled to a reasonable reply from a responsible Minister. No Minister is prepared to get up and acknowledge whether the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is right or wrong. If he is wrong, tell us he is wrong! Likewise, if he is right, get up and acknowledge it! But no! For political reasons the Minister is not prepared to do that. I think members on this side of the Committee are entitled to make use of a political matter, just as members on the other side do. I hope the amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition will be carried. I intend to support it.

Amendment (to reduce vote) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—20.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Molr
Mr. Brady	Mr. Norton
Mr. Curran	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Evans	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Heal	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Noes—24.

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Mann
Mr. Brand	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Burt	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Court	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Craig	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Owen
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Perkins
Dr. Henn	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Wild
Mr. Lewis	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller.)

Majority against—4.

Amendment thus negated.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Cave House (including Caves of the South-West, etc.), £47,000; Medina Hotel, £31,948; State Batteries, £173,500—put and passed.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [9.35 p.m.]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1961, a sum not exceeding £54,713,955 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

STATE TRADING CONCERNS ESTIMATES, 1960-1961

Tabling of Estimates

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [8.40 p.m.]: I present a copy of the State Trading Concerns Estimates for the year ending the 30th June, 1961, and move—

That these papers be laid on the Table of the House.

Question put and passed.

In Committee

Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the State Trading Concerns for the year ending the 30th June, 1961, now considered, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the Chair.

Division—State Building Supplies, £3,075,000:

Mr. JAMIESON: I understand that negotiations for the sale of the State Building Supplies have been or are almost completed. There is some concern among the employees as to what the position will be with regard to long-service leave—whether a *pro rata* amount will be paid to them at the time of the take-over. It looks as if a New South Wales firm will be taking over this trading concern. If that is so, I would like the Minister to indicate whether the employees will be protected.

Earlier in the session I asked a question with regard to personnel who were on superannuation. Apparently the reply was satisfactory, because I have not had any more queries on the matter. I feel that employees on wages should be clearly acquainted with the position. Many of them have had many years' service with this trading concern. Is it the intention of the Government that when the take-over occurs the money will be payable to those employees now, or will the company taking over the concern become responsible for long-service-leave payments which become due? The protection of the rights of these employees is my main concern at the moment.

Mr. COURT: In reply to the honourable member, I would advise him not to take too literally any rumours that are heard about the so-called completion or

near-completion of sales. On one occasion during this session a question was asked—I think by the member for East Perth—as to whether a contract was to be signed that day.

Mr. Rowberry: It was the member for Warren.

Mr. COURT: The current rumour at the time was that an agreement was to be signed that day; and I was able to categorically deny it. So far as the employees are concerned, the position that I explained to the House still stands. I think it is satisfactory to the employees. If and when the Government reaches the stage when it contemplates a sale, we have promised to take the unions into consultation to let them know the proposed terms under which the employees will be protected.

At this point of time it is impossible to say what will be the conditions, because various conditions of sale would directly affect the conditions the Government would want to insist upon in respect of the employees. A committee was constituted and is still constituted. It comprises senior officers from the Treasury, the Superannuation Board, and the Public Service Commissioner. The committee has proceeded in its work as far as is practicable at the moment. Until it has a definite series of questions to answer concerning a particular situation, it is impossible for it to make a firm recommendation to the Government. As it has not been asked to make a recommendation in respect of particular situations, it has not done so. It is a responsible committee, comprising men who understand Government service, and it will make an official recommendation to the Government if a recommendation is required.

Mr. CRAIG: On a point of information, I rise to ask a question in regard to these accounts. Comparing the first item of expenditure with the other items appearing here, there is no uniformity. For example, dealing with the State Building Supplies, we have the item of administration and trade expenses. I presume that the administration expenses would include salaries. When we proceed to the Wyndham Freezing Works it is noted that there is provision for wages, salaries, and transport. I presume that the wages are in connection with transport. Then we proceed to State Shipping.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): I cannot allow the honourable member to speak on several votes at once.

Mr. CRAIG: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. COURT: I understand, from the honourable member's remarks, that he is interested to know why there is not some uniformity of accounting expression.

Mr. Craig: Yes, so as to make a comparison between them.

Mr. COURT: I think the answer is that these accounts, as presented to Parliament at this stage of the sitting, are purely cash accounts for Treasury purposes, but the true accounts are actually referred to in the reports of the particular undertaking or in the Auditor-General's report where the accounts are expressed on a commercial basis for an ordinary trading concern. In those accounts full credit is taken for stock movements and for debtor and creditor movements and all normal movements in current assets, that affect the trading results as a profit and loss statement.

These accounts, however, are expressed purely in terms of money and so distort the picture as far as the trading results are concerned. It will be appreciated that, in respect of the State Building Supplies, only a minimum of information is given, because of the advantage of such information to competitors. It does not apply so much in the case of the Wyndham Freezing, Canning, and Meat Export Works. However, if the honourable member wants any more information on any of these undertakings I will be only too pleased to let him have it in detail, and I commend to him a study of the report of the State Building Supplies or the Auditor-General's report, both of which were tabled early in the session.

Division put and passed.

Division—Wyndham Freezing, Canning, and Meat Export Works, £1,492,684:

Mr. JAMIESON: Under this vote, I notice that the estimate for payments to growers, under the subheading of "expenditure," for the year ending in 1961 is much lower than the actual expenditure for last year. I was wondering whether the Minister anticipates that the forthcoming season will not be as good as last season, because there must be some reason for a decrease of £300,000 in expenditure on payments to growers.

Mr. COURT: It will be noted from the details of these estimates that the financial year for the Wyndham Freezing, Canning, and Meat Export Works is a rather peculiar one. It ends on the 31st January and not on the normal 30th June. This is to fit in with the season and the normal clearance of the seasonal returns. Off-hand, I cannot explain why the amount is down so much in regard to this particular item. It could be that it is not anticipated that the final clearance will be made by the 31st January. I must confess that my information, in regard to the results of the meat works, is based on the proper profit and loss account prepared on an ordinary commercial basis.

This year, the growers, in fact, will receive a better return than last year because the weight per beast has shown a spectacular increase. In the last season

the export of first and second quality meat was amazingly high. This, of course, does not reflect the anticipated results for the next season, because the next killing season will start about May and end about September, 1961. These figures are meant to refer to the killing season just ended. However, if the honourable member so desires I will get him the commercial accounts for 1961 as soon as they are available.

Division put and passed.

Divisions—State Shipping Service, £2,012,570; The West Australian Meat Export Works, £830,000; State Engineering Works, £580,000; State Hotels, £184,170—put and passed.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED

1. Mount Yokine Land Acquisition Bill.
2. Parliamentary Superannuation Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1960-1961

In Committee

Resumed from the 1st November; the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the Chair.

Vote—Railways, £2,538,000:

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [8.55 p.m.]: I wish to raise a matter which I understand was discussed during a debate on the annual estimates. At that time, my colleague, the member for Victoria Park referred to the question of hospitalisation needs south of the river, and I wish to raise the same question tonight under these estimates. A considerable amount has been set aside for hospital building, and my complaint is that no hospitals have been built for that section of the public who reside on the south side of the river and who are growing yearly in number.

As I understand it, the member for Victoria Park stated that upwards of one-fifth of the population of the State is resident in that part of the metropolitan area. It is a crying shame, therefore, that Governments, from time to time, continue to change their minds over the hospital sites to be decided upon and the hospital needs for that area. I understand the Minister stated that he would bring down the report in regard to what hospitals were required and a possible site for a new hospital in the near future five miles further south.

No committee is needed to investigate the possibilities of that area for the selection of a site for a hospital, because the one already selected is excellent as it is most central. If the Minister refers to

the Stephenson report and has a look at the housing areas zoned in that report, he will see that there is very little of the area within miles of the site selected that has not been allocated for housing. That being so, this site is the most suitable one on which to construct a hospital. If we are to have a hospital in that area we do not want it erected at one end of the housing estate; because, if a person is to be hospitalised, he is anxious that the hospital he has to enter is in a central position not only for his own requirements, but also for the convenience of his relatives and friends who may visit him whilst he is in hospital.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The honourable member should not forget that the people of Victoria Park and those in his electorate are well served by the Royal Perth Hospital.

Mr. JAMIESON: They are not really. If the Minister makes some investigation from the point of view of the service rendered by St. John Ambulance and the urgency of transporting people to a hospital when they are seriously injured or dangerously ill, he will appreciate that those people are not well served by the Royal Perth Hospital. Even taking into consideration that the Narrows has now been spanned by the Narrows Bridge, the problem of transporting patients to Royal Perth Hospital from the south side of the river still exists when the ambulance has to use the Causeway during peak periods, because any delay that occurs as a result of congestion of traffic could mean the death of the patient.

The fact is that a central hospital is needed in any large housing area despite the fact that we have a large and principal hospital situated in the centre of the city. Royal Perth Hospital will always serve a purpose in treating serious cases and to enable internees at that hospital to gain further medical knowledge during the course of their studies by watching the progress of such patients. I feel that Royal Perth Hospital, for many years, will be required to fit into that particular scheme of things.

Nevertheless, as a general purposes hospital, it is now becoming too far distant for us to expect those people from the south side of the river to use it. If the Minister is to use that as an argument, the people in Mt. Hawthorn are no further away from the Royal Perth Hospital than those residing at Bentley, and it could be said that the Mt. Hawthorn residents are well served by the Royal Perth Hospital. However, the Minister cannot submit that as an argument, because it is proposed to provide a hospital to meet reasonable needs in the Mt. Hawthorn district.

Therefore, I would say the geographical situation of the area south of the river necessitates the building of a hospital not

in the distant future, but in the immediate future. The people living on the north side of the river are well served by the Government hospitals, including the new one in the Mt. Hawthorn area, and two of the largest privately-conducted hospitals in this State.

On the south side of the river there is not a general hospital to serve the large population. Ambulances find it inconvenient to convey patients from the south side of the river to the hospitals on the north side, because of the traffic congestion. Furthermore, there is also the difficulty of the general practitioners attending to their patients in the hospitals on the north side. Doctors practising on the south side of the river waste much of their time in travelling to treat patients in hospitals on the north side, especially those who are practising in the districts between Armadale and the Causeway.

I am aware that provision has been made for a small hospital to be built in Armadale, which in my view might not be fully justified. However, there is a pressing need for a large general hospital to be provided on the south side of the river to meet the requirements of the increasing population. At one stage the Medical Department decided that the site which had been selected and reserved was the ideal one; but later on it agreed to give a portion of the site away to an organisation for the building of homes for the aged. Although the building of homes for the aged is a commendable project, I suggest these homes could be built on the fringe areas of the city, instead of on the site reserved for the hospital. If the Minister were to examine the plans he would agree that what I am saying is correct.

Very little of the land on the south side of the river is reserved for industrial purposes. Nearly all of it is, or will be, used for building blocks. He should instruct the committee not to consider the matter of an alternative site for a hospital south of the river. He should have plans prepared for the hospital on the site which has been selected.

I understand that adjacent to the reserve site there is no vacant land available. The department has agreed to release 32 acres out of the 50 acres originally reserved for the hospital site. What is left might not be sufficient for the construction of a comprehensive general hospital.

I understand that steps are being taken by the Health Department to approach the Commonwealth Government with a request to release the land at the Edward Millen Home site, for the purpose of building a general hospital. This land is within a stone's throw of the site which had been reserved. The Commonwealth Government invariably expects the State to surrender land for Commonwealth purposes,

but the Commonwealth very rarely reciprocates, except when some obsolete defence project is to be done away with. The possibility of the State Government becoming the owner of the Edward Millen Home site appears to be rather remote. Perhaps this possibility had best be forgotten.

Furthermore, there is some difficulty associated with the original deed of gift, when the site was made available to the Commonwealth for a specific purpose. Coupled with that difficulty is the opposition of the ex-servicemen's league. Although there are not many patients left in the Edward Millen Home, the league has a keen regard for their welfare, and invariably it opposes any overtures to convert the site to other purposes, such as a general hospital site. Even if the Government is successful in obtaining this site from the Commonwealth, only a piecemeal approach could be made to the provision of a general hospital there, because of the existing buildings on the site.

Another problem in establishing a large hospital in the southern suburbs is the need to associate the facilities at the hospital with the medical school for the training of medical students. However, with modern transport, distance does not present a great difficulty. It will not make much difference to the students travelling from the University to the Royal Perth Hospital; and travelling from the University to a hospital south of the river. The difference would only be a few miles, and that would involve a few minutes of travelling time. The main consideration is the need of the population south of the river.

I ask the Minister to proceed with the construction of a hospital in the southern suburbs, on a central site. Particular attention should be given to the selection of a site which is in close proximity to the lead-in roads, and the back road to Manning. The site should be selected to serve the districts of Como, Belmont, Victoria Park, Carlisle, Queen's Park—where the Housing Commission has a large housing project under way—and Cloverdale.

After a site has been determined by the committee the Minister should approach the Treasury for the necessary finance to commence the project. I hope that by this time next year the people on the south side of the river, who are now starving for hospital facilities, will be catered for.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [9.10 p.m.]: The debate on the Loan Estimates provides an opportunity for members to discuss the financial difficulties confronting Australia. When he introduced the general Estimates the Treasurer informed the House of the amount of loan money that was available to this State for essential work. What has taken place in the

Commonwealth Parliament since the introduction of the general Estimates will have an effect on the amount of loan money which will be allocated to this State at the next meeting of the Loan Council.

I am duty bound to refer to some matters which affect my electorate. One is the extension of the sewerage system to Rivervale, Lathlain Park, and the Belmont road district. I awaited the introduction of the Estimates by the Treasurer, and I listened to his speech intently. I have seen the amounts which have been set aside for sewerage extensions around the metropolitan area. The need for an extension of the sewerage main to the districts in my electorate has been felt for some years. At the time when the Premier was the Minister for Works in a previous Government, I led a deputation from the Belmont Park Road Board to wait on him. A case was made out for the extension of the sewerage system to Rivervale.

At that time he said that he favoured the extension of the system to Rivervale, but the financial position of the State being as it was, he could not hold out any hope. Subsequently there was a change of Government, and other deputations waited on the incoming Minister for Works. Representations were made to him for the extension of the system, but he explained that there were insufficient loan moneys available to meet this urgent project, and that whatever loan moneys were available to the department had to be used on the extension of water supplies to country districts. I agree that the extension of water supplies was more urgent than the extension of the sewerage system.

The Belmont Park Road Board has been pressing me to make strong representations to the Minister for the extension of the sewerage main to Rivervale. Nine years have passed since I led the first deputation to the Minister for Works, and in subsequent years other deputations waited on successive Ministers. They all agreed that a case had been made out for the extension, but it was a matter of finance.

I notice that in the Loan Estimates a substantial amount has been set aside for the extension of the sewerage main to the Empire Games Village, which will be built this year and the next. That village is further removed from the city than the Belmont Park road area. The sewerage main has been extended to other parts of the metropolitan area as well. It has gone to the outskirts of Midland Junction, which is 12 miles from Perth. Yet the district of Rivervale, which is much closer to Perth, has been refused this extension.

There has been a fair amount of building activity going on in this district, as well as an increase in industrial establishments. The district has a number of hotels, and a large hospital—the St. John of God Hospital. During the last 12

months substantial additions have been made to the hospital, and a problem was experienced in trying to dispose of the effluent from the hospital. Apart from the sewerage side of the effluent, difficulty was experienced in disposing of the effluent from the theatre. It was being directed into the septic tank; but subsequently it was found that that was acting adversely on the bacteria in the tank, and other arrangements for its disposal had to be made.

The health officer of the district has from time to time discussed this matter with me, and the Belmont Park Road Board has written to me about it, and the matter has been brought to the notice of the Sewerage Department. I know it is a bit costly to extend the system over the Rivervale crossing, but I think the time has come when something should be done.

The Perth Oval has been constructed within the last couple of years, and that has been sewered. But when people adjacent to that area inquire from time to time whether they can be connected to the sewerage system, always they are told that it is not possible. The last reply I received to such a request was that until the outfall works were completed, there was no possibility of the sewerage system maintaining any further load. Because I believed that was a reasonable reply, I bided my time. After all, if the system cannot carry the load, one cannot expect further additions to be made.

However, according to the Premier's statement when introducing the Estimates, the time has arrived when the works at Subiaco will be completed and eventually further extensions of the sewerage system can be made. I am urging that when the loan funds are being studied next year, the question of extending the system to Rivervale and Lathlain Park areas be given fair and reasonable consideration.

I have also, by correspondence, urged the Water Supply Department to try to gain Commonwealth aid for the extension of the sewerage system to the airport. Again the health officer in the Belmont district from time to time reports on the subject to the local authority, which in turn communicates with me, pointing out the dangers at the airport from a health point of view. The number of people passing through the airport is going to increase because of the proposed extensions, and further difficulties will arise in days to come. After all, it must be remembered that people from all parts of the world pass through the airport, and it is urgent that this connection be made. The Department of Civil Aviation should be contacted immediately to provide money for this purpose.

I know it is a fair distance to the airport, but possibly it could be connected from the Rivervale end instead of either from Guildford or Bayswater. I understand, however,

that the department has a special line installed to deal with this particular problem, and the time has arrived when the matter should be given attention.

Nine years have passed since the first deputation was made to the then Minister for Works; but nothing has eventuated yet. It is amazing what a lengthy period passes before reforms are made in districts. I remember that when I entered this Parliament in 1930 the question of drainage in the Belmont district was paramount, and it is only in recent years that it has been faced.

Fortunately, because of the funds provided by the former Minister for Works, the difficulties in drainage in that area have practically been solved, although there is sufficient on these Estimates for the continuance of this good work which is necessary because of the health of the public and the development of the metropolitan area. But, as I say, it takes a tremendous amount of time before a representative of a district is able to achieve anything in this Assembly.

The next important matter concerning my district is one which has already been raised by the member for Guildford-Midland, because it affects his electorate also. I refer, of course, to the waste and drainage from Cuming Smith & Mt. Lyell Farmers Fertilisers Ltd. For years now, people who own property in the Bassendean district, and also in my territory in Ashfield and Bayswater, have tried to utilise the artesian water for gardening purposes. Unfortunately, after they put down the spear, obtain this water, and bring it to the surface and apply it to vegetables and suchlike, the plants are burnt because of the acid the water contains.

This situation has existed for years. As a matter of fact I think every Minister for Water Supplies since I have been in this Parliament has visited that location and seen the problem. Yet no attempt has really been made to tackle it. The member for Guildford-Midland, the member for the Suburban Province (Mr. Jeffery), the member for Maylands (Mr. Toms), and I accompanied two engineers from the Water Supply Department to the area to study the problem, in order that it might be solved. Unfortunately that could not be done, because of the limited amount of loan funds available. Therefore this problem still exists. This should not be so, especially when many of the Ministers concerned and also members of the Main Roads Department, including Mr. Millington and Mr. Tindale, have studied the problem. The time has now arrived when it should be dealt with.

The construction of a subway at the Rivervale crossing is another important necessity and should be tackled at the earliest possible opportunity. Members

will no doubt have read in the paper the other day that a motorcar was struck on the crossing and had to be pushed off. That crossing is on Great Eastern Highway, the outlet to the eastern suburbs and country, and a tremendous amount of traffic flows over it. Many serious accidents have occurred at the crossing, and the time has definitely arrived when a subway should be built.

While in Sydney I discovered that buses approaching crossings always have to stop, whether the warning lights are flashing or not. Private vehicles are allowed to go straight on without stopping if the lights are not flashing, but not passenger buses. These have to stop to make sure that no danger exists.

The Rivervale crossing is less than three miles from the city, and it is on a main arterial highway. For years this subway has been discussed. As a matter of fact I think it was mentioned in a report on town planning by Mr. Boas, who was appointed by the then Minister for Works, the late Mr. McCallum, to make a survey. He suggested a scenic road around the river as well as an underground subway to take the traffic; and I hope the time is not far distant when attention will be given to this problem.

MR. ROWBERRY (Warren) [9.26 p.m.]: I wish to address a few remarks to the Premier in connection with the allocation of £70,000 to State Building Supplies and the unexpended amount of £24,751. I really should have spoken earlier on this subject, but events have been happening so rapidly in this Chamber today that one cannot keep up with them. I desire to refer mainly to the drying kiln at Manjimup and the pressurised plant at Pemberton. The latter is still in its experimental or teething stage and naturally there are a few problems to be overcome.

However, the drying kiln at Manjimup is in an entirely different category. It was opened only about two years ago, as the Premier will recall because he was present at the time. I desire to draw the attention of the Premier and Ministers to the fact that this project at Manjimup is in an unfinished state, and quite a large amount of money has still to be spent on it. It has come to my notice from a reliable source that a great deal of money has already been spent in repairs to this kiln. It was built by a private firm from the Eastern States, as it was the successful tenderer. This was in spite of the fact that several drying kilns, built by local firms, were operating very efficiently in this State. As a matter of fact, one, operating efficiently in Pemberton, was completely discarded for this central one at Manjimup. And now the roof is giving trouble.

I hope that the Minister will investigate this matter, because although I know that my information is reliable, I would like him to prove it for himself. I think it is to be regretted that a project of this kind, which is only two years old, should already be falling into disrepair, especially when we know that kilns built by our own people are still working efficiently. Private enterprise and the tendering system do not always deliver the goods as they should. I draw the Minister's attention to this matter, and I hope that what I am telling him is not the truth. But if it is, it is much to be regretted.

The sooner we get back to using our own men and resources on projects that they know something about the better it will be for the economy of the State.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland) [9.31 p.m.]: My electorate being the hub of the railways in Western Australia, I am in duty bound to speak on the Loan Estimates in regard to the railways.

The railway expenditure has, in the General Loan Fund, been cut by approximately £700,000. That is a lot of money in anybody's language; and it is quite obvious there is not going to be the work done in the railways next year that has been done in the past. This will be very upsetting to the railwaymen who have made the railway workshops their life's calling. Anybody who looks at the estimate for this year and compares it with that of the previous year will see that practically no capital works are to be done.

Mr. Court: Didn't you read the Premier's speech when he explained there would be more this year than for years past?

Mr. BRADY: I am going to show that there will not be more, but a great deal less.

Mr. Court: Didn't you read the Premier's speech in which he explained about the rolling stock replacement fund which makes the amount higher than ever?

Mr. BRADY: I am talking on the figures here. These figures show that the expenditure last year was £751,000, and that this year it will be £149,000—at least £600,000 less. I would be glad if the Minister would tell me where this £600,000 has gone.

Mr. Court: Don't you know about the rolling stock replacement fund? And you represent the Midland area!

Mr. BRADY: I know there is an amount in that fund, but it will not be equal to the money that has been paid out in previous years for new building construction, which is what I am concerned about.

Mr. Court: I wish you had read the Premier's speech.

Mr. BRADY: I did read it, and I have some extracts from it here; and later the Minister will see that I am more conversant with it than he thinks. I am concerned because the figure on the Loan Estimates is down by £600,000, and the general estimates are cut considerably too. These reductions postulate that there is not going to be as much work done as there has been in the past. Even if there is a fund in the Treasury to provide for the building of rolling stock, somewhere we should be told what rolling stock is going to be built; and I would think that we would be told in the Loan Estimates.

Mr. Court: Of course not, because it is not loan money.

Mr. BRADY: I am not tackling it from that point of view, but why the loan moneys are cut down this year.

Mr. Court: I think you are just trying to make trouble. I think you know the railways have a record programme.

Mr. BRADY: No.

Mr. Brand: Does it matter where the money comes from so long as it is available to be spent?

Mr. BRADY: No, provided it is spent. But the figure in the estimates has been cut down. Am I, as a responsible member of Parliament, to take it that when the Premier supplies general Estimates and Loan Estimates to Parliament they do not represent the Government's policy? Both the Premier and the Minister for Railways are sitting there dumb. Answer my question! That is what I want to know.

Mr. Court: When you sit down we will tell you and show you how wrong and how troublesome you are.

Mr. BRADY: After I have been speaking for half an hour the Premier and the Minister for Railways will put their heads together and concoct some story to show that some work is going to be done and to indicate that I cannot read these figures.

Seeing the Minister for Railways is so smart, I ask him whether he has had a review of the railways costing system in order that we may compare its costs with outside costs; or is it a special system by which the Minister can cover up? Are we able to compare railway costs at Midland Junction with those of Tomlinsons at Welshpool? Will the Minister tell me that? No; he will tell me it is all right for the railways to use this system. I ask him to tell me why we cannot have a costing system comparable with that used at Tomlinsons. It is no good the Minister trying to laugh this off, because I want to know the answer; and, for the sake of the railwaymen and the system as a whole, it is my job to find out. That is what I am here for.

Apparently I am now allowed to continue. I want to deal with the figures set down in the Loan Estimates for this year. Diesel electric locomotives are provided for.

They will probably come from England or New South Wales, so that the money will not be spent in our workshops.

Mr. Court: Where did the engines come from that you ordered?

Mr. BRADY: From England, because at the time the railway workshops were not geared to handle that work; they did not have the necessary plant or machinery. But the workshops can do the work now; and the Minister's Government is not using them to capacity. There are machinery, plant, and buildings worth millions of pounds at the workshops but the Minister is not using them.

Mr. Brand: We use diesels, and they use less coal.

Mr. BRADY: The Minister wants to use overseas products.

Mr. Brand: I thought that was what you said.

Mr. BRADY: The Minister does not want to build steam engines with local manpower and material; he wants to buy locomotives from the Old Country; and we will get no benefit from the purchase at all.

Mr. Brand: Why did you do it?

Mr. BRADY: In my time the materials were brought from overseas by the Minister's Government. When I first came into this Chamber the Minister's Government had committed the State to millions of pounds' worth of overseas expenditure.

Mr. Brand: What about the two diesels we received the other day that you ordered?

Mr. W. Hegney: Do not let the Minister put you off.

Mr. BRADY: I am not going to be worried about them at all. I am concerned about the Estimates in front of me. The Premier will have to do some fast talking—

Mr. Brand: Not while you are about.

Mr. BRADY: —and show me where the railway workshops are going to get this new work. Let me come to the crux of the position. The railwaymen are not satisfied to have the railway workshops turned into a repair shop. Rather than be crawling around in old stock and working with old materials and old plant, they want to have their quota of new work at the workshops so that they can train the apprentices.

Everybody likes to be employed on new work. Even the Minister for Railways who is a chartered accountant, will tell us that he would sooner open a new set of books and work on them than take over a set of books that had been in existence for 20 years. The same thing applies with railwaymen. They like to feel that they are up to the times and are building modern railways, plant, and rolling stock.

I tell the Minister that I believe the railways are getting into a serious position in regard to rolling stock. The Minister is not contemplating building much rolling stock. As I was about to say, when someone rudely interjected, I think that on the Loan Estimates for this year there is provision for the purchase of diesel locomotives, and the construction of bogie wagons, refrigerated vans, four-wheel flat-top open and ballast wagons. I suppose the whole lot could be completed in about two months. So for the balance of the 12 months the men will be tied up in repairing old stock.

Mr. Court: You do not know what is going on in the workshops.

Mr. BRADY: I do; and I have read the annual report. The Minister promised to make the annual report for this year available before we closed, but that is just another of the idle promises made by the Government.

Mr. Court: I gave you some information.

Mr. BRADY: The Minister promised that he would try to have the report placed before us before the session closed; and the session will be closed within the next 12 hours.

Mr. W. Hegney: How do you know?

Mr. BRADY: Anything will do to throw the Opposition off the trail. The most up-to-date rolling stock—ADX diesel mechanical railcars—has been built in Western Australia in the last two years. This is mentioned in the report for 1959.

I would like to see a few more of these railcars built in 1960 and 1961, because I have even heard the member for Albany talk about the dog boxes that are being used to carry people to Albany. The Minister for Tourists ought to be interested in this aspect if he wants tourists to go to Albany and the other outposts of Western Australia. He should get some decent rail coaches for the tourists to travel in rather than have members of Parliament talk about dog boxes.

The Minister for Railways and the Premier should get their heads together and realise it is in the best interests of the State to scrap some of these old coaches. I do not know whether the Minister for Railways knows—I will wager 10 to 1 he does not—that 50 per cent. of the railways stock is over 10 years old. Of 9,000-odd vehicles, 1,000 are over 50 years old. So the Minister for Railways, who is going to make a success of the department by cutting down loan expenditure and general expenditure, has one-tenth of his rolling stock more than 50 years old. Some 690 vehicles are over 41 years old; 446 are over 31 years old; 803 are over 21 years old; and 1,200 are over 11 years old. If the railways were a private concern, these vehicles

would be written off by now, and the department would have rolling stock equipped with ball-bearing wheels and other modern extras.

What I am sorry about is this: The railways are going to have a breakdown in regard to the over-all position by virtue of the cutting down of the vote in the general Estimates and in the Loan Estimates. The railways are in a difficult position because the required money will not be spent on the railways. As a result the Commissioner of Railways will not be allowed to do the job he should do.

Of course this is playing into the hands of the private road contractors. One can go all over the State and find road contractors doing work, which, in my opinion, should be done by the railways. I took a trip to Bunbury about nine months ago and I must have passed about 15 motor trucks carting timber to Perth. In my view that freight should have been carried by the railways. The possibility is that the railway wagons were not there to cart the timber on the railways; or perhaps the railways were not able to do the job.

I was in the marshalling yards at Midland Junction one day this week, and I tell the Minister that the approach to those yards is a positive disgrace. There is an entrance there which the railwaymen use to get to work. This entrance is bridged by a culvert 7 ft. or 8 ft. wide and both sides of it are broken away, and there is grass and debris in the flanks of the shunting yards.

When I asked whether this was a fire hazard, one chap said that the railway gangs were expected to do the impossible; that they could not cope with the work. The department is using marshalling yards at Midland Junction that were built for the tonnages offering in the early part of the century. Now, in 1960, we are handling 4,000,000 to 4,500,000 tons of goods annually through the various railway yards, but those yards are virtually in the same condition as they were in at the beginning of the century.

Let me tell the Minister—it might educate him—that a lot of the rolling stock that has been built in recent times has been built so that it is wider and higher than usual, and this is creating a hazard from the point of view of the men working on the railways. Instead of speeding up the marshalling of trains, that work is actually being slowed down, because the men are not going to take risks which they would have to do under the present set-up at the marshalling yards.

If the Minister knows anything about railways he will know there are what are called in-coming yards and out-going yards, and half the time both types of yards are used for either ingress or egress of trains when they should be used for one-way systems of marshalling.

The Minister may not know it—it was probably before his time—but the previous Liberal Government tried to rush legislation through in about 1949 or 1950 to have marshalling yards built in the vicinity of Bassendean; and, overnight, the Government intended to break one of the towns in my electorate—that is, Bassendean—in half. The Government intended to build the chord line from Bassendean to Welshpool. That was decided upon because the Government said that marshalling could not be done in the railway yards at Midland Junction and East Perth.

But that is about 10 or 12 years ago, and yet the marshalling yards at Midland Junction are still expected to do the same amount of work. The marshalling yards at Bassendean have not been built, despite the fact that we were told the matter was urgent, and that the railways would break down overnight if these yards were not built. That was the argument adduced in this House to justify the bisecting of the township of Bassendean. Fortunately, that did not come to pass.

After many years we find that the chord line is to be built from West Midland to Welshpool; that is the route it should have taken in the first place. But even at this late stage I would not mind betting that ultimately it will be built so that it will come around the foot of the Darling Ranges where, 20 years ago, people said it should be built.

What I am trying to tell the Minister, for his own benefit, is that the marshalling yards at Midland Junction have outlived their usefulness. They are neither long enough nor wide enough to handle the railway traffic offering and that might account for stock being delayed in getting to the abattoirs. It could also account for the fact that at times the silos are bursting at the seams in various parts of the State. These silos are holding cereals that should be shifted into the bulk bins in various parts of the metropolitan area, and the rolling stock returned to those places where the cereals are held.

I do not know whether the Minister knows this or not, but this year there will be a record output of superphosphate amounting to 650,000 tons. I heard that over the radio recently. Probably it will be a record year in regard to cereals such as wheat, oats and barley. Yet in my opinion nothing has been done to make the railways efficient in order to handle the marshalling position. The only way to handle it is to have up-to-date rolling-stock, and not rollingstock that is 50 years old, 40 years old, or 30 years old. If the Minister looks at the annual reports of the department he will find that 50 per cent. of the rollingstock is over 11 years old, and about 80 per cent. of the bogies and goods wagons are in the same stage.

Therefore, there is ample work for the Government Railway Workshops to do in the way of building new stock, if only the

Minister will give that matter a little thought. After examining the excellent job railwaymen did in building modern rolling stock during the year, particularly the ADX mechanical diesel railcars—I think ten of them have gone into service and are doing an outstanding job—I think he should give some thought to what I am saying. These diesels are doing such a wonderful job in the metropolitan area that at certain times of the day they can run a 20-minute service, and that in turn has speeded up the passenger service.

At one time the number of passenger fares dropped from 18,000,000 to 9,500,000 for the year; but fortunately, with modern rail coaches, the number has built up to about 13,000,000, which is an increase of about 50 per cent. If the Minister will continue to build modern rail coaches he will probably find that a lot of people in the country who are buying new Falcons and Chryslers, will use the modern rolling stock, rather than drive their cars 300 or 400 miles to the city and tire themselves out, and then be confronted with parking problems when they get here.

In building these ADX diesels the workshops have built a first-class up-to-date unit. In addition, they have built a most up-to-date set of coaches to run to Bunbury. This is the pride of the people who travel to Bunbury. Bunbury is a fine town, and this new rolling stock should boost our tourist traffic. The Minister for Railways ought to think about doing something for the trains that run to Albany and Geraldton. If he provided new and up-to-date coaches for the run to Geraldton, he could make the train run via Mullewa, and in that way he would be doing an excellent job for the State, because it would help us to cater for the tourists who want to travel and see places throughout Western Australia.

If that were done it would encourage the railwaymen to stop in the department instead of seeking work in Victoria. I saw in the paper a few weeks ago where people are leaving Western Australia at a greater rate than the natural births and arrivals. Many of those who are leaving are railwaymen who are going to New South Wales and Victoria. I know of one man who left the railways. He was working in Bunbury, and only about two months ago left and went to Victoria. At Bunbury he was getting about £1 over the basic wage, but when he went to Victoria he was paid £30 a week. There are so many opportunities outside of Western Australia for tradesmen that they are leaving the State. I shall not give the figures, but I warn the Minister that in his own interest he should try to get some new work done at the railway workshops instead of using it as a repair and maintenance depot.

This would encourage young tradesmen who have served their time to stop in the railways, and it would also encourage the

tradesmen themselves to stop there. This in turn would ensure that the apprentices were properly trained in their trades. They should do new work rather than be employed on pulling down old rolling stock and trying to make it modern. Unfortunately, that is what the Minister for Railways seems to be trying to do.

A lot of the livestock that is coming to the abattoirs should be transported by railway instead of by road. It strikes me that in some respects the railways have lost the initiative in regard to this traffic. The other night it was pleasing to see the Minister introduce legislation to give him the right to cut rates where he felt that he was justified in doing so in an effort to get more freight for the railways. I would like to see him taking the initiative in getting the livestock vehicles in the railway system brought up to date, so that there would be some inducement for the farming community to bring their livestock to the abattoirs on the railway system, instead of bringing them down in road trucks and trailers, which they are doing at the moment.

If one goes to the Bushmead abattoir on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, one will see hundreds of vehicles coming in from places as far distant as 150 or 200 miles. The cartage of that stock should be done by the railways. I do not know whether the railways have not got the necessary rolling stock or the stock vehicles to offer to these people; but as approximately £51,500,000 of the State's money is tied up in the railways, the Minister for Railways ought to give some inducement to farmers to use the railways for the transport of their livestock.

At the moment, instead of using the railways, farmers are using road vehicles, and that is cutting up our roads. To some extent the economy of Western Australia is suffering because we are trying to run two forms of transport side by side. We are trying to keep a railway system going, which has cost the State about £60,000,000—although about £10,000,000 has been written off—and we are, at the same time, trying to build up our road system in Western Australia at a cost of about £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 a year. I would like to see the powers that be get together so that a lot of the goods which are now transported by road—the vehicles being used are cutting our roads to pieces and it is costing the Main Roads Department a lot of money to repair those roads—could be channelled into the railways, whether it be the Government railway system or the Midland railway system—I have an interest in both as the member for Guildford-Midland.

I feel that too much traffic, even in the metropolitan area, is being lost. Many types of goods which should be carried by the railways are being carted by road transport. Every day of the week, including Saturdays and Sundays, we see road

hauliers going down to the ships' sides and picking up goods. We see them cutting up and cluttering up our roads in the metropolitan area, transporting superphosphate rock, pyrites, and other raw material for the superphosphate works, when that material should be carted by rail trucks.

If the railways can be given a new look to suit the B.H.P., and can build vehicles to handle 50 and 60 tons, we ought to be able to build new vehicles to handle the goods that are now being carried by road hauliers.

Take the firm of Bell Bros. That firm started off with a 15 cwt. dray about 1917 or 1918, but today it has enough vehicles to handle thousands of tons of goods a year. The company has vehicles in the metropolitan area which are capable of handling 40 or 50 tons each. They are carrying goods that the railways should be handling. The Minister cannot tell me that he is making the railways a progressive concern. As I said before, it looks to me as though the private road hauliers are outrunning the railways in every regard. People have been driven away from the railways in many respects because, if they want to travel to Albany, as the member for the district says, they have to travel in what he calls dog boxes.

If the Minister for Railways would consider building modern rolling stock, such as new sleeping coaches and fast-moving vehicles, I think a lot of those who now travel by road in their own vehicles, would come to the city by train. I am very anxious to see the railways brought back to the position they occupied in the old days, when the workshops were handling both old and new work. Yet we get Loan Estimates before us, like we have tonight, which indicate that the railways are to be reduced to such an extent that they will build only a few bogie wagons and refrigerated vans.

I will do everything possible to build the railways up, and I will be interested to hear the Minister, when he replies, telling me what he is doing to rehabilitate the system, especially through the expenditure of loan funds, to enable it to handle all the traffic that will be offering in the next year or two.

I am always willing to learn, and I know that the Minister can teach me a lot in regard to costing. But I will be particularly interested to hear why he believes the railways should hide behind a system of railway costing as against what is known as commercial costing today. I would be pleased to hear whether the railway costing system has been brought up to date. I have a little knowledge of costing, and I am wondering whether the railways are using the same costing system as is in use in other businesses; because the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Smith, mentioned this matter. The Minister told us the other

night when he wanted to have policemen in the railways, that the Royal Commissioner had recommended it.

The Royal Commissioner recommended as far back as 10 or 12 years ago that we should have an up-to-date costing system. Seeing that the Minister is a professional man and a specialist in this direction and knows what he is talking about, I will be most interested to hear his views; but even when this Government goes out of office it would be a great help for the incoming Minister to have an up-to-date costing system to back him. The railwaymen, I know, would like to have the costing system brought up to date.

It is quite obvious that in a system where other work can be run in conjunction with construction work the costing should be lower. Where we can run a transport system, a maintenance system, and a new capital works system, all through the one workshops, I would say that the costing should be lower than that of the outside shops where they simply confine themselves to the specialised work of new construction only. What the railways would lose on the swings it would pick up on the roundabouts.

The Minister would have to talk fast to make me think differently. The railways were built to carry out new work, and maintenance work as well, and the McLarty-Watts Government and the Labor Governments allowed the railways millions of pounds for that work to be carried out in the workshops. I want to see that that is done. That is where it should be done, rather than set up more difficulties for the State and for private enterprise by inducing them to buy machinery for the construction of vehicles when the railways do not know from day to day where they will be, or whether they will be in the race when tenders are closed. I would be interested to hear the Minister reply to these matters.

I know the Minister is trying to save millions of pounds on the railways, and I give him full marks for that; but I might sound a note of warning, in that he could make too steep a cut in one or two years, which could cause great difficulties for the men in the railway system. As I have already mentioned, the marshalling yards are bursting at the seams. The railwaymen are continually asking me to try to do something to improve their position. There are all sorts of difficulties involved. I had a list here, which I have misplaced and which shows that the railways are trying to handle three or four times the volume of traffic that they were meant to handle in the marshalling yards.

The men find that even the diesel locomotives and the shunting engines which they must use, although they are up-to-date, are not equipped to handle work in the marshalling yards. The marshalling

yards at Midland Junction require lengthening so that the men on shunting work do not have to carry their lives in their hands. It is necessary to avoid major accidents. At the moment, when going round the curves on some of the roads over which they must shunt, it is not possible for the drivers to see the shunters when they are working. Over-wide vehicles are also a danger.

It is necessary for these men when shunting is in progress to jump on and off and in and out of vehicles which are travelling from 10 to 15 miles an hour. It is their job to hop in and out of the trucks, to connect them and to keep the trains moving. On modern trains they find that vacuum hoses dangle around their feet; they have vehicles which are 6 feet to 9 feet over the standard size; and vehicles which have been renovated in the workshops have often been made so wide that the shunter must get in between the vehicles to do shunting. Accordingly I hope that the Minister, apart from trying to save money by cutting down the Loan Estimates, will also have a look at the matter of marshalling yards so that the men concerned will not carry their lives in their hands.

The lighting system in the yards should also be improved, and there should be more roads in the yards to handle the number of trains coming in. Members may believe it or not, but over recent months the Railways Department has decided to receive trains on Sunday. They come into the marshalling yards and are sent out again without being examined. One of these trains could start off and get a flat tyre which, of course, would be a danger to the whole train. They pull out of the marshalling yards on Sunday without examination of any kind.

Mr. I. W. Manning: Whose duty is it to keep the tyres pumped up?

Mr. BRADY: It is the duty of members of Parliament; particularly the duty of the member for Harvey. Flat tyres are caused when the train brakes cause the wheels to skid, and running flat on the rims of the wheels can quite easily cause a derailment. There have been a number of derailments on the railways over recent years, and it could well be that some of them have been due to this lack of examination. I am now drawing the attention of the Minister to the fact that these trains come into the marshalling yards on Sunday and go out again without any examination being made at all. That, of course, could be the cause of some of the derailments which result in great losses to the railways. The Minister would do well to have his departmental officers look into the matter and consider what I have said. I know that some of them will not appreciate my remarks, but there may be a gravamen of constructive suggestion in them.

We should do all in our power to improve the over-all position of the railways with reference to the handling of goods traffic; because I am sure it is the desire of every member to see the railways competing with outside road transport which, as I said, is building up large numbers of units in Western Australia. This should not be allowed when we are supposed to have an up-to-date railway system that can do that work.

I could continue to speak for an hour yet on various aspects of the railways, but I am sure members will appreciate that I do not want to delay the Committee. I would not have spoken as long as I have done had the Minister and the Premier not tried to be a couple of smart alecks when I commenced my address. I have spent a few years in the railways, and I have lived among railwaymen for the best part of half a century; so I know their thinking and their difficulties.

The railways would be run a great deal more economically if we had more efficient marshalling yards. There are a number of modern improvements that could be effected in the railways. It might be a good idea if the Minister sent some of his men to the Eastern States to see how the railways are handled over there. I do not mean that he should send only the heads of the Railways Department; those men are going over there all the time and bringing back very good ideas both socially and industrially. But it might be a good thing if the Minister for Railways considered sending a few head shunters and guards; men who have the responsibility for marshalling four million or five million tons of railway trains in a year. Their over-all knowledge of the railways could be improved by a visit to the Eastern States. I am quite satisfied that the visual side of the railways at Midland Junction, particularly in the marshalling yards, could be improved upon.

For the purposes of shunting at night, the railways have now installed cheese blocks which are painted white on one side and black on the other, to enable them to be picked out by the men at night. I visited this place the other night and I could not tell the black from the white. It might be a good idea to use Scotch tape instead.

Mr. Cornell: They were made by the member for Mt. Lawley.

Mr. BRADY: I do not know who made them, but they are not up to date. I would now like to refer to the coupling system. For about 30 or 40 years the railways carried on a system of coupling in this State. Then a new Commissioner of Railways was appointed who decided the methods of coupling were not up to date. As a result, a new system was introduced. So we had a shandy-gaff arrangement of two systems of couplings operating.

Now we have a third system which is not facilitating the handling of the railway trains.

Mr. I. W. Manning: What is the third system called?

Mr. Tonkin: The "pay-as-you-use" system.

Mr. BRADY: It is called the spring steel type system, if my memory serves me aright. There is another A.D.Q. system, though I do not seem to be able to find my notes on that one. The member for Mt. Marshall may have been over here and stolen my thunder. I will not weary the House by giving a description of these three types of couplings. Suffice it to say they are making it difficult for railwaymen all over Western Australia. The Railways Department should retain one system of coupling and get rid of the others as being out of date. I presume that after having tried two systems it found them unsatisfactory and decided to adopt a third.

This system of coupling is causing great inconvenience to the men in the marshalling yards. It would pay the Minister to institute an inquiry into the marshalling of trains generally. I think I said that the trains in Western Australia handled an average of 325 tons a year gross, or a net tonnage of 150 tons. From the Minister's remarks about the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge railways which are going to handle 3,000-ton trains it would seem there is room for great improvement.

Trains go into the super works, or into the bulk-handling wheat silo and leave a rake of trucks there, and handle one truck about every half-hour. The whole rake should be untrucked in one movement and the train pulled out immediately. We would then get somewhere, instead of having such a big loss on the railways. We might even be able to pick up that loss. One of the weaknesses is certainly in the marshalling yards, particularly at Midland Junction.

I will conclude on the note on which I started—the approach to the marshalling yards at Midland Junction. I have previously told the Minister that this approach which has been there for 50 years, is a disgrace to the Railways Department. Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. has been there for only three years, and its yards and approach are 150 per cent. better than those of the railways. The whole of the railway yard needs bulldozing and levelling. From time to time the Railways Department does bulldozing work in other parts of the metropolitan area, so it is time that department bulldozed this particular approach to the marshalling yards so as to allow vehicles to go in and out.

Fences should be erected and the rubbish should be carted away so that the yard can be established and the area gravelled. If

this were done the job of burning off would not be a recurring expense on the permanent way. It should not be necessary to burn off each year. If something is not done to clean up this area it could cause a major conflagration in the metropolitan area as, from time to time, hundreds of tins of dieselene, petrol, kerosene, and other inflammable materials are stored in the yards.

Unless the yards are properly levelled off and gravelled, these hazards can become realistic; and if a fire occurs everybody will say that the place should have been cleaned up years ago. I am leaving these thoughts with the Minister for Railways in the hope that he will have an early look at the marshalling yards, and that he might do something about that 50 per cent. of rolling stock which is over 10 years old.

MR. TONKIN (Melville) [10.17 p.m.]: If I had any idea that the member for Murray intended to speak I would have been delighted to have given way to him because we hear him so infrequently. There are two matters with which I desire to deal, and it will not be necessary for you, Mr. Chairman, to pencil down the time. It will save you expending your energy.

I was amazed to hear the Minister for Railways keep asking the member for Guildford-Midland to read what the Premier said, for the simple reason that it does not pay to read what the Premier said. One cannot place any reliance upon it.

Mr. Andrew: You've got something there!

Mr. I. W. Manning: Where did you get that story?

Mr. TONKIN: I will read what the Premier said—and I quote from *The West Australian* of the 17th July last year. The Premier said this when referring to the new railway bridge at North Fremantle—

The new bridge would start as soon as possible because it was urgent that the old rail bridge be replaced.

Anybody reading that would be entitled to believe—in view of what the Government had done a few hours before in changing the proposed site of the bridge in a hurry—that in a matter of weeks one would see some activity with regard to the building of a new bridge. If members want a better example of still life than the present site presents, I do not know where they could go to get it, because there is no sign of any activity in connection with it—and eighteen months have elapsed since this statement was made. So we ought to be told about reading the Premier's statements!

Does that satisfy the member for Harvey? Now, perhaps the Minister will throw some light on this early announcement which was obviously made far too early.

and let us know what is proposed in connection with this railway bridge, the site of which was changed in great haste. Why, the Government hardly had time to sit in the seats of the Cabinet room before it hastened to change the proposed site of this bridge because it was a matter of such urgency. After making a bit of a show by putting down a few piles, it has done nothing for months. That is only one utterance to which I refer.

If the member for Harvey would like another, I ask him to read what the Premier said about the income from the water rates; and then compare it with statements made in this Chamber that the department was not being used as a taxing machine. He would then see how much reliance one can place on the utterances of the Premier. They are matters that speak for themselves. It only needs me to draw attention to them.

The other point I want to raise is in connection with the expenditure of loan funds in the Public Works Department. I asked the following question on Thursday, the 17th November—

- (1) What is the total amount of money which has been paid or is due to be paid to private architects by the Government since it assumed office for work performed in connection with the planning or construction of public buildings.

The answer was, £90,650. This amount of £90,650 in commission would indicate some hundreds of thousands of pounds, worth of buildings—at a rough calculation, £400,000 to £500,000 worth at least; and maybe £1,000,000—have been designed; and that designing work is being done by private architects. Surely the work of the Principal Architect must be substantially reduced.

On top of that, the work force for which the Principal Architect was previously responsible has been almost completely disbanded. So the Principal Architect is no longer responsible for that; yet it is proposed to pay the new Principal Architect the same salary. I cannot work that out at all. I asked on the 18th November what salary the Principal Architect was getting; and what salary it was proposed to pay the new Principal Architect. I was told it would be the same. I will read the question to members. It was as follows—

- (1) What salary was paid to Mr. Clare for his position of Principal Architect, Public Works Department?

The answer to that question was £3,978.

The next question was—

- (2) At what salary was the position advertised for his successor?

The answer was £3,978—precisely the same. The next part of the question was as follows—

- (3) Has cognisance been taken of the fact that the responsibilities of the position have been substantially reduced consequent upon—
 - (a) the virtual disbandment of the department's day labour organisation;
 - (b) the engagement of private architects to carry out a substantial portion of the work which it has been the practice to have done departmentally?

There is no gainsaying the fact that private architects are doing a substantial proportion of the designing work. If £90,000 has been paid out in commission to them, it is obvious some hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of buildings have been designed by them. Therefore the department has not got to do that designing itself. It is also perfectly obvious that if a work force of over 1,000 men has been reduced by 1,000 men, the supervisory task of the Principal Architect does not compare with what it was previously. Yet it is proposed to pay the same salary to the new man. Why? He will have a sinecure.

There is a big volume of such works which are carried out every year in this department and which involve a considerable amount of designing; and the supervision of their construction has been carried out by the Principal Architect at a salary of £3,978. But with that large proportion of the work being let out to private architects, and with only a skeleton staff remaining on the construction side, the new Principal Architect is going to get the same salary. So Mr. Clare must have been dreadfully underpaid for the work he was doing, or the new man is going to be overpaid. It must be one or the other, because there is no comparison between the volume of work to be done. This is the excuse given in the Minister's reply to my question—

- (3) The Principal Architect still has the full responsibility for the design and erection of public buildings, the only difference being that there is greater emphasis on supervision than on construction.

Mr. Toms: That's a beauty!

Mr. TONKIN: That is the justification for paying the new man the same salary as Mr. Clare used to receive! It does not go down with me. That is not an explanation. It is an excuse—and a pretty poor one at that. It is easily seen it is Government funds the Government is dealing with, or it would not have advertised this position at the previous figure. It is absolutely absurd. I do not know what percentage an architect

gets for designing, but I would think it would not run to a greater percentage than 5 per cent.

Mr. Cornell: It is 5 per cent. if he does the supervision, isn't it?

Mr. Toms: I think it is 6 per cent.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us take a rough calculation at 5 per cent. This represents £400,000 worth of buildings. I venture to say it is a lot more than that because I recollect that one of the buildings done by the private architects was the new high school for Melville. I think the value of that school is £400,000 alone. So there appears to be something wrong with this figure, now I come to recollect it, because we had a list of buildings here which showed that private architects were designing schoolrooms as well as buildings; and the Minister for Education announced they would be designing the new Melville High School. Speaking from memory, that building cost £400,000.

So it is pretty clear that a very substantial amount of the designing work which was originally done by the architectural branch of the Public Works Department is now being done outside. To say that the job is still as onerous as it was is absolute nonsense. The Principal Architect will, of course, be technically responsible for the work done outside. But surely he is not going to redesign it. The actual work of designing will be done outside; yet the Principal Architect, with the reduced amount of work, is to get the same salary. I say it cannot be justified.

Mr. Clare was responsible for the organisation and employment of 1600 men, and now I think there are 300 or 400. And there will be fewer still, because it is the Government's policy to further reduce the work force. So we have those two positions, and the volume of work is in no way comparable either on the designing side or on the construction side.

But the new man has to get the same salary as Mr. Clare has been getting. I think it is time something was done about things of this kind; and I repeat: If the Government were paying the salary out of its own pocket it would adopt a different policy, I am certain. It shows a disregard for the expenditure of public funds, and I protest very strongly about it.

SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [10.31 p.m.]: There is only one item on the Loan Estimates to which I wish to make reference: that is, the item with regard to police buildings and equipment, etc. I notice that the expenditure last year was £17,699; but this year, £96,000 is provided.

When I look at the work that was done for that £17,699, it appears to me that it went quite a long way. I notice that a new police station and quarters were built at Mandurah; there were additions to the Fremantle Traffic Office; new police stations and quarters were built at Kellerberrin, Mundijong, and Waroona; there

were additions and improvements generally to police stations, and also acquisition of land. It seems to me that that £17,000 odd provided a lot of buildings.

For 1960-61, the estimate is £96,000, or an increase of over £78,000 in the vote. Reference is made to a number of towns which are to have new police quarters or new police stations, and "additions and improvements generally to police stations and other buildings"; and this, too, will provide for acquisition of land.

I have heard the Minister say on a number of occasions that this is a department that in past years has had a pretty raw deal. I think that is probably so; because I realise there is a need in the State for more expenditure from loan funds in regard to adequate provision of police facilities in this State. I am inclined to think that in the past other public utilities have received very much more consideration than perhaps they were entitled to, at the expense of this particular department.

I am sure all members will agree that the Police Force should be adequately housed and should be provided with proper facilities in which to work. The Minister has told us that even the central police station is most unsatisfactory and it is high time that something was done with regard to providing reasonable and adequate accommodation.

Mr. Perkins: The central station is the worst in the State.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: I was referring to the central station, and the Minister now tells us that it is the worst in the State. I should not think that we could allow this state of affairs to continue much longer. I am of the opinion that some special effort should be made to provide adequate police facilities at the central police station; and I hope we will not, for much longer, hear the Minister say that the present conditions are a disgrace to the State.

Mr. Perkins: Preliminary work has been done this year, and there will be a big programme next year.

Sir ROSS McLARTY: I am pleased to hear that. I would like to make special reference to a matter in which the member for South Fremantle is also interested. We represent a portion of a road board area where a police station is urgently required. With the honourable member I attended a deputation to the Minister for Police some weeks ago making representation that the Rockingham district should be provided with adequate police facilities. The Minister was sympathetic, and we have both since received a letter from him stating that he hoped to do something next financial year.

I hope it will not slip off the list, because that particular area is making rapid advancement. Only recently a large motel was erected in the area, and I think there

are few parts of the State which are making more rapid progress than that one. It is visited by thousands of holiday-makers, and I think that adequate police facilities are very necessary indeed. In fact, I think they are essential; and I can only express the hope again that the Minister will be able to obtain the necessary loan funds to provide these much-needed police facilities.

The Minister visited my electorate some months ago and inspected the police station at Pinjarra—an old building. But right in the midst of the building we have the prison; and the police officer in charge has to reside in this particular building. It does not need much imagination on the part of members to visualise the situation when an unruly prisoner is locked up, or an intoxicated person. We have a pretty large native population in the area, and there are frequent arrests. All the noise can be heard in the dwelling; and all the bad language; and it is a most undesirable set-up. It is something that should be altered.

The police there have every reason for complaint. The conditions under which they are expected to live are very antiquated. I would, at this stage, ask the Minister to bear this complaint in mind, and remind him that he has already made an inspection of the quarters at Pinjarra, when he did express the view that something should be done about it and a gaol provided away from the living quarters.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Railways—in reply) [10.40 p.m.]: In reply to the member for Guildford-Midland, if it was not for the festive season marching upon us, I would really sail in for the next hour.

Mr. Brady: Don't make it too brief!

Mr. COURT: For a man who lives in Midland Junction, and who takes an interest in the workshops to make such a speech on them is a reflection on him. I wish to put him right regarding the amount of money being spent by this Government on the workshops this year. The remarks he made in this Chamber are the sort of remarks made by those people who are out to make trouble. I cannot imagine that the honourable member is a party to some of the groups at the Midland Junction Workshops who have but one ambition in life, which is to cause trouble. The amount of money being spent on railways this year is £3,689,801; and if the honourable member reads the Treasurer's speech, he will find that it is clearly set out in that speech.

Mr. Brady: Spent in the workshops, or on the railways generally?

Mr. COURT: Just listen! I am amazed at the remarks of the honourable member, particularly when he takes such an interest in this establishment.

Mr. Brady: And I am amazed!

Mr. COURT: I have told the honourable member twice this session. Last year the amount was £3,249,512.

Mr. Brady: What are you quoting from? You quote from the estimates!

The **CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. COURT: The festive season is fast marching upon us, so—

Mr. Brady: You quote from the estimates!

The **CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Roberts): Order! The member for Guildford-Midland will maintain order.

Mr. Brady: Mr. Chairman—

The **CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. Brady: I want to explain something.

The **CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Roberts): The honourable member can only raise a point of order.

Mr. Brady: Can the Minister quote his own figures in replying to comments on figures in the estimates?

The **CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Roberts): Order!

Mr. COURT: If the honourable member will take a tranquilliser for a moment, I will explain. The figure of £3,249,512 that I quoted is shown in the official estimates under the column 1959-60.

Mr. Brady: I am talking about 1960-61.

Mr. COURT: The actual amount we are spending this year, £3,689,801, is made up as follows:—

General Loan Fund	£2,538,000
which is the amount shown in the estimates, and—	

Rolling Stock Replacement Fund	£1,151,801
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Through being careful last year and not spending anything from the rolling-stock replacement fund, we had that much more money available this year; and instead of putting the amount through the loan funds, which were restricted, it was decided to use a higher amount this year from the rolling-stock replacement fund hence the amount of £3,689,801.

The break-up of capital works being done for the railways this year is as follows:—

	£
Coogee-Kwinana railway	744
Welshpool marshalling yards	68,319
North Fremantle interchange sidings	50,001
North Fremantle bridge	85,001
Works in progress, annual provision and new works regarded as additions and improvements	2,410,450

which is a total of £2,614,519; plus rolling stock works in progress and new works £1,075,282; giving a total of £3,689,801.

If the honourable member visited the Midland Junction Workshops he would have seen that we were undertaking more capital works there than has been the case for years. Surely he can see that; he goes there and sees these things being built. He said, "How about building these suburban cars?" If he went through the works he would find that we have 10 diesel railway car trailers down for construction this year. He will find it is the best balanced programme of capital works that the workshops have had for years.

On the question of marshalling yards, it is well known that they are not as big or as modern as we want them; and they have not been for some years. They were not during the time of the previous Government. That Government knew there had to be a new pattern of marshalling yards. How silly we would be to spend money on this when new marshalling yards are to be developed! The question of standardisation is under consideration; and it is important that what we do now should be dovetailed into the standardisation programme.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Tramways and Ferries, £20,000; State Electricity Commission, £500,000; Public Works, £7,014,259; North-West, £1,803,241; Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, £2,508,500; Mines, £210,000; State Housing Commission, £1,146,000; Agriculture, £265,000; Forests, £100,000; Fisheries, £10,000; Industrial Development, £301,000; Other State Undertakings, £2,305,000; Sundries, £1,515,000—put and passed.

This concluded the Loan Estimates for the year.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Message: Appropriation

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

First Reading

On motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), Bill introduced, and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [10.53 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. TONKIN (Melville) [10.54 p.m.]: I think this is a most appropriate time to point out that the Government is not obeying the law in regard to the Electoral Districts Act; and, before we agree to Supply in this way, the Government should be reminded of its obligations. I am sorry I have to take up the time of members at

this stage of the sitting, when they are anxious to get home; but this is a most important matter, and I feel the Government should be reminded of it.

When the redistribution of seats Bill was passed by the McLarty-Watts Government, the Minister in charge of the Bill was Sir Ross McDonald. This is what he said about the Bill—

The Bill further provides, if five or more electoral districts get out of balance, as to the number of electorates, by 20 per cent. or more, the commissioners shall proceed to make a new distribution of Assembly seats and action for redistribution will automatically operate.

That was the speech of the Minister when introducing the Bill; and the present Premier, if I remember rightly, was a member of the Government at the time. I will correct that statement; the Premier joined the Government at a later stage. This Bill was introduced in 1947. The Hon. Sir Ross McDonald made this further utterance—

—and at the same time enable an electoral balance to be maintained automatically and satisfactorily in a way that has been difficult to achieve in the past.

Those were the arguments advanced by the Minister in support of the Bill. The Hon. F. J. S. Wise, who was the Leader of the Opposition at that time, accepted the viewpoint of the Minister and made this comment—

Under the Bill, if it becomes law, when five seats show a variation of more than 20 per cent. up or down from the quota, it is incumbent on the commissioners to make the necessary adjustment.

No member contradicted that statement, because it was in accordance with the utterance made by the Minister who introduced the Bill. The member for Murray interjected on The Hon. F. J. S. Wise and said—

Does not that apply in the Federal sphere?

That question shows that the member for Murray believed that what his Attorney-General was saying was absolutely correct, and that was what the Bill was providing for; namely, automatic redistribution of seats as soon as five seats were out of balance.

It is well known that more than 10 seats are out of balance at present. The Hawke Government had a proclamation issued so that this automatic process should be commenced. The present Government cancelled it; and, on page 39 of Vol. 1 of the 1951 *Parliamentary Debates*, the Attorney-General was reported as having said this—

The revocation of the proclamation, however, as proposed in this Bill, is only to do this: to give the present

Government an opportunity of seeking the agreement of Parliament to proposals for the alteration of the law so that if Parliament accepts those alterations, and in the light of those alterations, the necessary proclamation can be issued to enable the commissioners to proceed with adjustments of electoral boundaries in accordance with the amended law to which Parliament would then have agreed.

On the other hand, if Parliament should reject those amended proposals, or any proposal which might be brought forward, then it is quite clear that the present statute will remain and the onus would be placed upon the Government of issuing a fresh proclamation to ensure the law is carried into effect.

On page 41 of Vol. 1 of the 1959 *Parliamentary Debates*, the Leader of the Opposition is reported as speaking on the Bill; and, during his speech, the Minister for Railways (Mr. Court) interjected—

He does not commit himself to the new Bill.

That is, anybody voting for the proclamation did not necessarily commit himself to the new Bill. That was the opinion of the Minister for Railways. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Hawke) said—

Of course he does not commit himself to the new Bill! But he cancels out the operation of the existing Act; and that is a very vital consideration.

To which the Minister for Railways replied—

No he doesn't! The Attorney-General explained why it would not do that.

So, in the opinion of the Minister for Railways, a cancellation of the proclamation did not cancel out the operation of the Act, and he said the Attorney-General had already explained that.

On page 47 of the same volume of *Parliamentary Debates*, I was reported as having said—and my views expressed then have since been borne out—

If it had, it would introduce a Bill now instead of making two bites at the matter. What it wants to do is to evade the law, and then take its own time in coming to agreement on the provisions for an amendment of the Electoral Districts Act. If the House agrees to the Government's proposal, this will be the situation: We will have a law which says that when the Chief Electoral Officer has reported after a triennial election that there are more than five seats out of balance, a proclamation shall be issued. That law will still remain if we pass the Bill that the Government has introduced, and the situation will be that the Government will be in

possession of a report from the Chief Electoral Officer saying that 10 seats are out of balance, and we will have a law requiring that a commission shall be set up as a result of a proclamation; that a redistribution shall proceed; and the Government will immediately do precisely nothing about it.

Was I right? Finally I want to quote from the same copy of *Hansard* the remarks of the Attorney-General—

It was certainly intended that when a certain state of affairs was reached, a proclamation should be issued in reasonable time. I do not think I have ever used the word "automatic," and I do not think it is the right one to use in view of the other provisions of this Act.

What he did say was that it should be issued within a reasonable time.

I asked some questions this week as to what was the latest date upon which a proclamation could be issued to enable the commissioners to bring about a redistribution of seats. The Attorney-General replied that there was no certain latest date. Just imagine that statement! There are certain statutory provisions which require to be carried out before the effluxion of a certain time; but according to the Attorney-General, there is no latest date.

If he does not allow sufficient time for a redistribution to be carried out, how can the law be obeyed, and the undertaking which he gave, and which the Minister for Railways emphasised, be honoured? When I asked whether he should not give the right advice to the Governor, the answer was that the right advice was the advice which the Government saw fit to give. That is a fine state of affairs!

Of course, the Governor cannot act unless he acts upon the advice of his Ministers. I remind the Ministers there is provision in the law providing that they can be punished if they give the wrong advice. The Government seems to be relying on an opinion from somebody that the cancellation of the proclamation leaves no obligation to act upon the report which the Chief Electoral Officer issued.

Our advice, which is good advice, is quite the contrary. Our advice is that the obligation still remains, because the terms of the cancellation of proclamation legislation indicate that the proclamation should be regarded as if its provisions have not operated; and the appointments of commissioners should be regarded as if they have not been made. So that in law the proclamation does not exist. But the report of the Chief Electoral Officer does exist, and the statute requires—as that report has pointed out—that when more than five seats are out of balance the Governor is to issue a proclamation. The Governor cannot act because the Government will not advise him of his obligation.

I say we are justified in holding up Supply, because the Government has failed to comply with the law—a law of its own design, and for which its side was responsible, and which was intended to act automatically. It was applauded by *The West Australian*, because of the automatic provisions.

What excuse has the Government? It wants to save its own hide. It wants to disobey the law and put the Governor in a false position to save its own hide, because it is afraid of a redistribution and wants to do its utmost to prevent that. Its attitude cannot be justified in any shape or form.

No wonder I have talked about the assurances of the Minister being broken! Is not one entitled to accept the second reading speech of Sir Ross McDonald when he introduced the Bill, which is now the Act; and when his speech was accepted as showing the true position when five seats were out of balance and the redistribution was automatic? How the member for Murray, who was Premier at the time, continues to support a Government which is disobeying the law for which he was responsible, passes my comprehension! He must know the Government is doing wrong.

The very intention of the Act was that no-one should be in a position to frustrate the redistribution, once the seats were out of balance. That was the very argument used in support of the original Bill. The Attorney-General said when speaking to the Bill, "You should do that which is right, rather than that which is expedient." What is he doing now? Is it right not to let the law operate, and advise the Governor that he has no obligation; or is that expedient? I leave it to members to judge.

Is it any wonder that I place no reliance upon the utterances of the Ministers of the present Government? We should do that which is right, rather than that which is expedient. I say in reply to that statement of the Attorney-General that example is better than precept.

So we reach the end of the session, when the Government knows full well there is barely time, if it issued a proclamation, to meet the requirements of the law. What justification can it advance for its attitude? What excuse can it make? None! But we know why. It is afraid of its own law. The circumstances have so changed that it is afraid of its own law. It was supposed to be medicine for the Labor Opposition at the time when the Government of members opposite introduced the provision and placed it on the statute book. Now they will not take their own medicine, and they are in a cleft stick because they cannot alter the law.

To show to what lengths they will attempt to go, there was this idea to which they gave credence a few weeks ago of

trying to get an absolute majority when the Government did not have it. I do not know whether all rank-and-file members were aware of what was going on; but we on this side knew. That will show to what lengths the Government is prepared to go to dodge this redistribution, and to try to stretch the Constitution Act to meet its own requirements, with as little compunction as it is showing in respect of its obligation under this law. I have never heard anything more craven than the attitude adopted by the government to this question.

I can well imagine what would be going on if the situation were reversed. The daily newspapers would be telling the people in no uncertain terms what the situation was. It has made one reference to date. For a principle which the newspapers applauded so highly when the legislation was introduced one would imagine that now, when the legislation is being abrogated, they would have something stronger to say.

No attempt has been made by the Government to give any reasons for this attitude. It is running true to form— withholding information, procrastinating, refusing to answer questions, and dodging the issue—in order to try to get away by rushing into recess. It is trying to get away from Parliament—where it has to face up to criticism—so that it can carry on its evasion of the law with impunity. Whilst this is going on we have people in the community being punished for not obeying the law; but the Government considers it is above the law.

The Attorney-General considers that a *mandamus* cannot be taken out against the Crown, so the Government is safe. It can do what it likes; it can evade the law; and nothing can be done about it. What a fine situation for a member of the Bar to be in! He must know full well on his own utterances and on the utterances made by the person who introduced the Bill in the first place, that the obligation exists at the moment, without any further report from the Chief Electoral Officer. The obligation exists for the issue of a proclamation. It will be issued in reasonable time, said the Attorney-General. I ask members what is "reasonable time?" Is it when the occasion is too late for anything to be done? Apparently that is to be the reasonable time, in the minds of the Ministers.

I take this last opportunity which is available to me to remind the Government, and I hope the people of Western Australia, of what is the situation, and of the Government's complete disregard of the law when its own life is at stake.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts), in the Chair; Mr. Brand (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2—Application of moneys:

Mr. HAWKE: I was very surprised that the Premier made no attempt to reply to the speech of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in connection with the deliberate evasion of the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act by the Government. I cannot know for certain whether the Minister proposes to ignore the statements made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this matter. I could quite understand the Premier desiring to do so, because it has been obvious, at least to members of the Opposition, for some considerable time now that the Government has decided to deliberately flout the provisions of this Act of Parliament.

There is no doubt, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has told us, that the obligation is upon the Government to operate this law as it operates any other law. We do not have to take our minds back many months to recollect the tremendous anxiety of the Government to operate this law about which we are now speaking, provided it could first force through Parliament amendments which were loaded and framed for the purpose of defeating the will of the people. We all know what was tried in that regard, and we all remember why the move failed.

As soon as the Government failed in its endeavour to amend the Act for the purpose of loading its provisions against the Labor Party for all time, the Government lost all interest in the law except to make a decision, or come to a conclusion, that the law in its existing form was not to be operated. It is not only a very poor show, but it is a very dishonest and dangerous show for a Government to deliberately decide not to operate a law because it does not suit its political fortunes, or because the Government thinks the operation of the law in question would not suit its own political fortunes.

That is making a travesty of the law and of responsible government. I point out that the present Government was able to obtain a constitutional majority in this House for the cancellation of the proclamation issued under this Act only because it gained a vote under false pretences. Had the member of the Government in question not indulged in false pretences at that time, the Government would not have got the constitutional majority which was necessary in this House to pass the Bill which finally became an Act of Parliament and brought about the cancellation of the proclamation.

So I say this is not a matter which can be ignored by the Premier even though we are in the last hour or two of this

year's session of Parliament. This responsibility to operate the law is a very grave responsibility, and the obligation is one that cannot be palmed off. From time to time we hear Ministers of this Government talking in such a way as to lead anyone who did not know them very well to believe that they are the very cream of responsibility, honesty, and consistency. Yet here we have a situation in connection with legislation which affects the very foundation of our democratic system of government—legislation which deals with the electoral boundaries which exist and which should exist.

We all know that the aspect of electoral boundaries—their distribution, or redistribution—is tremendously important in the election of members to Parliament and, consequently, in the election of Governments. Up to the time this Electoral Districts Act was passed into law in Western Australia, it was largely within the hands of Governments themselves to decide how electoral boundaries should be altered. It was because of that undesirable situation that this law about which we are speaking was introduced. The main purpose of the law was to take away from the executive Government the right to carve up boundaries as it thought fit.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition has referred to some of the statements made by the then Attorney-General (Sir Ross McDonald) when introducing the Bill into this House. It was clearly said at that time, and clearly understood not only by members of Parliament but the public generally, that the Bill represented a great step forward in taking away from individual Governments the right to gerrymander electorates in their own favour. It was also understood and appreciated that the dual main purpose of the Bill was to place in the hands of independent men of high standing and repute in the community the sole responsibility for deciding the electoral boundaries for both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

All members of Parliament in both Houses at that time praised those high principles as they were contained in the Bill; and Parliament approved those high principles unanimously at the time. Yet we have had a situation in recent months, a situation which is still with us, where this Government irresponsibly and deliberately evades the responsibility which is upon it of putting this law into operation. By negative action the Government is preventing the law from operating; and by preventing the law from operating the Government is breaching the rights of individual electors.

I take it for granted that every member of this Chamber has seen the latest electoral enrolments and knows, without my going into detail, that in some electorates, particularly in the metropolitan area, the total number of electors enrolled is three times the existing quota; whereas

the number of electors enrolled in other electorates in the metropolitan area is far below the quota. So we have the situation where one member of Parliament today is representing 18,000 electors at Wembley Beaches; and another member, at East Perth or West Perth, is representing perhaps 7,000 or 8,000.

Mr. Jamieson: Six thousand.

Mr. HAWKE: And as low as 6,000, according to the member for Beeloo. It is not enough for the Premier to ignore the criticism of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Premier is, in my opinion, in honour bound to tell us whether the Government intends deliberately and dishonestly to go on refusing to allow this law to operate. If that is not the intention and policy of the Government in the matter, then surely members of Parliament, who are vitally interested in this matter, irrespective of the party to which they belong, are entitled to know when the Government will issue the necessary proclamation and thereby have the provisions of the Act put into operation.

Mr. BRAND: I have listened to the Leader of the Opposition making charges of dishonesty in respect of this rather controversial matter; and I would like to remind him and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the beginning of this controversy followed the defeat of their Government, when the proclamation was issued.

Mr. Jamieson: That has nothing to do with it.

Mr. BRAND: If it was not a dishonest act, then what was it? For I assume that it has been customary for a long time for a defeated Government, no matter how long it is caretaker, to do those things that are routine, and nothing more.

Mr. Hawke: To carry out the law.

Mr. BRAND: And certainly not make major decisions, as were made; and I can only assume that the Leader of the Opposition and the Chairman of the Labor Party issued this proclamation with a view to getting a political advantage. If not, why did they do so?

Mr. Hawke: What, by operating the law?

Mr. BRAND: There is not the slightest doubt that the Leader of the Opposition, when he was Premier, and his Cabinet, sat around the Cabinet table and said, "While we are here we will issue this proclamation in order to get a political advantage."

Mr. Hawke: In order to operate the law—your law.

Mr. BRAND: There is not any doubt that it was an untimely and hasty decision on the part of the outgoing Government to ensure, as far as it was able, as a defeated Government, to bring about some advantage in the electoral law of this country which would return it to the Treasury benches.

Mr. Hawke: To operate your law.

Mr. BRAND: And if there is any amendment to the situation or to the electoral laws, surely it is the duly elected Government of the people, even though at the time it has not been sworn in—

Mr. W. Hegney: They have been sworn at ever since!

Mr. BRAND: Yes; that may be so; and we are still being sworn at. But as far as I am concerned, the Attorney-General has dealt with this matter. He has pointed out to this Chamber that the law has been complied with.

Mr. Hawke: It has not.

Mr. BRAND: And the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says he has very good advice which indicates that we are in the position where we have not carried out the law. The Attorney-General and the Crown law advisers of the Government have said we have honoured the law.

Mr. Hawke: By not operating it.

Mr. BRAND: We have honoured the law.

Mr. Hawke: By preventing its operation.

Mr. BRAND: And this Chamber took a vote which revoked the proclamation.

Mr. Jamieson: Conditionally.

Mr. BRAND: Conditionally on what?

Mr. Tonkin: Upon assurances being given.

Mr. BRAND: Who gave the assurances?

Mr. Tonkin: The Attorney-General.

Mr. BRAND: And who did he give them to?

Mr. Tonkin: To this Chamber.

Mr. BRAND: The Attorney-General changed them for a very special reason.

Mr. Hawke: He could not stand your crowd any longer.

Mr. BRAND: It is not a matter, tonight, for personalities. If he could not stand this crowd any longer, that is his business. I do not think we have missed him very much. Nevertheless, as far as I am concerned, the answers by the Attorney-General to the many, many questions asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, are the answers and the policy of the Government; and we stand firmly behind whatever advice he has given to the Governor of the State in respect of this matter. I say, in conclusion, that had not the present Opposition fiddled with the electoral law when it was a defeated Government, then there might not have been the difficulty which exists today.

Mr. JAMIESON: Had it not been for the arrant stupidity of the Premier, I would have had nothing to say at this juncture.

Mr. Brand: This big man!

Mr. JAMIESON: At least he has not got a small mind like the Premier.

Mr. I. W. Manning: I suppose he put them up to the move.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Premier knows full well that the outgoing Government took that action to prevent a deadlock taking place in the future. At the time it was not known whether there would be a deadlock in the Parliament of this State; and it was important for this action to be taken.

Mr. Brand: We took the average time to take over.

Mr. JAMIESON: The member for Murchison did not know for a week whether he would be the member or not.

Mr. Brand: That happens at every election.

Mr. JAMIESON: Not always. Generally there is a clear-cut decision. On this occasion there was not.

Mr. Brand: Whose fault was that?

Mr. JAMIESON: The electors, I suppose. The Premier is not going to blame them for this mix-up, surely.

Mr. Brand: You talk to them. You are blaming them.

Mr. JAMIESON: At the time the action was taken by the outgoing Government the position was not clear, and it had every justification for moving in the way it did; because had there been a deadlock it would have been absolute stupidity to face the electors on the same boundaries. As it was, the member for Murchison was elected by only a few votes.

The Premier could not expect the outgoing Government to be clairvoyant on this issue. It had no knowledge of what would take place when the distribution of preferences occurred. It was justified in doing what it did early in the week. I would say that if any other Government were in the same position, irrespective of its political colour, it would be justified in doing the same thing. It became apparent that if there was to be a deadlock something had to be done, and this was the way to do it. The Premier is just beating the air with words to try to justify his present position. Time alone will tell whether this Government is legally correct in its actions or not. I would say that the Government is wrong morally, and in all other ways, in not complying with the requirements of the Act.

If the Premier wants to gerrymander why does he not get up and say so? He knows very well that if there were a redistribution tomorrow, the seats of the members for North Perth and Murchison would no longer exist. The Government knows that if there were a redistribution it would start off at a disadvantage, and that is why the Premier and his colleagues are consistently refusing to obey the law

of the State. If he is prepared to continue to do that, then he is associated with absolute dishonesty; and I am not surprised at that, knowing the character of the person. It is typical of him.

Mr. HAWKE: I am sorry the Premier became overheated; by so doing he generated very much more heat than he generated light—in fact, he did not generate any light at all.

Mr. Brand: Didn't he!

Mr. HAWKE: He made the statement that the previous Government, after the election, had fiddled with the law, whatever that might mean.

Mr. Brand: You couldn't get the proclamation out quickly enough. Tell us why.

Mr. HAWKE: If the Premier knew the law he would know that it is laid down that a proclamation shall be issued following the receipt by the Government of a report from the Chief Electoral Officer subsequent to the holding of a general State election. No Government can issue a proclamation because it wants to issue one, or because it wants to fiddle with something or other. It can issue a proclamation only under the provisions of the law; and, after the election, the previous Government did that. So where does the fiddling come in?

Mr. Brand: You were a defeated Government, and you knew that was a major decision to take.

Mr. HAWKE: It was not a major decision to take at all.

Mr. Brand: It certainly was.

Mr. HAWKE: It was automatic. If we had not taken it, the incoming Government, if it had been a responsible one, would have taken it in the first week or two of its existence.

Mr. Brand: Why were you in such a great hurry to issue the proclamation, yet on the previous occasion allowed months to elapse before you did so?

Mr. HAWKE: What does it matter whether we were in haste or not?

Mr. Jamieson: We had a clear majority on the previous occasion.

Mr. Brand: Months passed before you issued the proclamation.

Mr. Tonkin: It was done in plenty of time.

Mr. Brand: The seats were out of balance for months and months.

Mr. HAWKE: I am emphasising that the proclamation was issued under the provisions of the law.

Mr. Brand: By a defeated Government.

Mr. HAWKE: That does not matter.

Mr. Brand: It matters a lot.

Mr. HAWKE: A defeated Government is bound to operate the law as is any Government, because there is no other Government in existence to do it.

Mr. Brand: 'You issued a proclamation with the object of getting a political advantage.

Mr. HAWKE: I will come to that in a moment, because it is quite silly.

Mr. Brand: No it's not!

Mr. Jamieson: The Government was bound to issue it.

Mr. HAWKE: If we take serious notice of the Premier's argument, as soon as a Government is defeated, no matter how long it takes the new Government to form itself, the defeated Government, whilst it still remains the Government, must not operate any laws. I could not imagine anything sillier or more irresponsible than that; yet that is the contention which the Premier seriously puts forward as being an argument which we should accept as conclusive. It is most impractical.

Mr. Brand: No it's not!

Mr. HAWKE: The Premier says, "You issued the proclamation because you wanted to gain a political advantage."

Mr. Brand: Surely you are not going to try to tell the people here that you didn't!

Mr. HAWKE: Let us have a quick look—

Mr. Brand: A very quick look!

Mr. HAWKE: —at the background of the situation. This law was not introduced by a Labor Government. It was introduced by a Government of the present Premier's own complexion.

Mr. Brand: Of course it was.

Mr. HAWKE: It was not introduced to benefit the Labor Party—far from it! It was introduced for a contrary purpose. It was introduced for the specific purpose of keeping the present Premier's political party in office permanently.

Sir Ross McLarty: Now, how could it do that?

Mr. Brand: Of course it didn't!

Sir Ross McLarty: Of course it didn't!

Mr. HAWKE: I did not say it did do it. I am saying it was introduced for that purpose.

Sir Ross McLarty: Which, of course, is quite wrong.

Mr. Tonkin: Was it intended to be automatic?

Sir Ross McLarty: When there was an electoral commission adjusting boundaries under the provisions of the Act?

Mr. HAWKE: The member for Murray is not one-quarter as innocent as he would have us believe. The member for Murray,

if his memory is not failing him, knows as well as I do that the quotas were not decided by the independent electoral commissioners. The member for Murray knows as well as I do that the quotas were worked out by his Government and included in the Bill before it was introduced to Parliament. He knows the quotas were worked out, calculated, decided, and loaded in the way they were at that time, to keep the Labor Party out of office in Western Australia for a great many years, if not permanently.

Mr. I. W. Manning: Did it do that?

Mr. HAWKE: Is it necessary to take any notice at all of someone whose interests, apparently, are all with reference to a Mr. L'Eplattenier, or whatever his name is?

Sir Ross McLarty: There is no need to talk about the honourable member like that.

Mr. HAWKE: This Electoral Districts Act was loaded in regard to the quotas, and those quotas were included in the Bill by the Government before the Bill was brought here. I say this, in particular, to the member for Murray: that if someone gave me the opportunity to work out the quotas as to the number of electors that should be in each electorate, and as to what classes of electorates there should be throughout the State, I would not care who the commissioners were who later on decided the boundaries on the basis of those quotas. I can see that the member for Murray is smiling meaningfully at me, which is surely proof that he now recollects how it was all wangled at the time.

Sir Ross McLarty: No wangle about it!

Mr. HAWKE: It was one of the biggest wangles ever. Yet, in view of all this, the present Premier is foolish enough—and I use a moderate term in the circumstances because Christmas is not far away—to say that a Labor Government wanted to operate this Act to get a political advantage. Could one imagine anything sillier! This was an Act in which the quotas were worked out by shrewd men in the Liberal Party and in the Country Party when the Bill was introduced here some years ago; yet the Premier is trying to mislead the members of the House into believing that a Labor Government was in a hurry to put the proclamation into effect for the purpose of gaining a political advantage. Of course, that is perfectly silly! Even if it were correct that the operations of this Act would advantage the Labor Party more than the Liberal Party and the Country Party, would that not be fair, reasonable, and just in all the circumstances?

How does it come about that an electoral law, which was introduced by the Liberal Party and the Country Party some

years ago, and which was praised by the members of those parties as being a great step forward in promoting democracy—

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Roberts): Order! the honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. TONKIN: I rise in order to make it possible for the Leader of the Opposition to complete what he desires to say because I think it is most important. What amazes me about this matter is that the Labor Government was blamed for carrying out the law and doing nothing else.

Mr. Brand: You did not have time; that is the only reason why you did nothing else.

Mr. TONKIN: We were blamed for carrying out the law, while this Government considers that no blame is attachable to itself because it will not carry out the law.

Mr. Bovell: We are carrying out the law by direction of this Parliament.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh no the Government is not! Because the Government gave an assurance that if no new Act were passed, the obligation would be on the Government to carry out the law.

Mr. Bovell: Yes; and we are carrying it out.

Mr. TONKIN: How? By doing nothing?

Mr. Bovell: We have still time, up to the next election.

Mr. TONKIN: The obligation would be on the Government to carry out the law. The Attorney-General said "at the appropriate time." Does the Minister know what he calls the appropriate time now? I will tell the Minister for Lands. I asked the Attorney-General this question—

If, in determining the appropriate time for the appointment of commissioners under section 13 of the Electoral Districts Act the Government leaves insufficient time for the commissioners properly to discharge their duties under the Act, would the Government be giving the right advice to the Governor in regard to the appointment of commissioners?

For the edification of the Minister for Lands, here is the Attorney-General's reply—

Whatever advice is given to His Excellency the Governor it will be what the Government considers the right advice.

Not what the law says; not what the law requires; but what the Government considers to be the right advice, having regard to its own political hide! That is the attitude the Government seeks to justify.

Mr. HAWKE: I am sorry the clock was just one minute ahead of me a moment ago. I was making the point—and I am

anxious to complete it—that the assertion of the Premier that our Government was anxious to gain a political advantage, and therefore issued the proclamation to operate this Act, was a silly assertion. I pointed out that the principles in the Act were put there by the Liberal Party and the Country Party; that the quotas which are tremendously important in regard to the final results which come from an election were very shrewdly worked out to benefit the Liberal Party and the Country Party and, therefore, to disadvantage the Labor Party. I was also emphasising that when our political opponents introduced this Bill into Parliament in the first place they praised it as a monumental piece of legislation; as a piece of legislation which was to promote and safeguard the real cause of democracy in Western Australia; also as a piece of legislation which would take out of the hands of individual Governments the right to alter boundaries, and give it to three highly-placed, independent citizens. Yet tonight the Premier tells us the Act would benefit the Labor Party if it were allowed to operate.

Mr. Brand: I said you believed it would benefit the Labor Party.

Mr. HAWKE: Was the Premier unconsciously confessing to the real reason why his own Government would not operate the Act?

Mr. Brand: I said you believed it would benefit the Labor Party.

Mr. HAWKE: This Act of Parliament was framed and put into operation by anti-Labor parties. All we did was to issue a proclamation to operate that law. Why did the Premier's Government refuse to operate the law?

Mr. Brand: It was nothing but political dishonesty on your part.

Mr. HAWKE: There could not be anything more politically dishonest—or even more personally dishonest if we come to that—than the attitude of the present Government in deliberately refusing to operate the law.

Mr. Brand: Parliament decided by vote to revoke the proclamation.

Mr. HAWKE: Parliament decided nothing.

Mr. Brand: It did.

Mr. HAWKE: Parliament decided to cancel one proclamation as if it had never been issued; to cancel the appointment of the commissioners as if it had never been made. As the Premier ought to know, although I doubt whether he does—

Mr. Brand: I thought you would get down to personalities before long.

Mr. HAWKE:—the proclamation still exists. It is a legal document under the provisions of the Act, but it has not been acted upon. The Premier would be foolish to think that the mere cancellation of the

proclamation issued at the time allows the Government to put the law itself into cold storage until it suits the political book of his Government to bring it out of cold storage and put it into operation.

Mr. Rowberry: That is political advantage.

Mr. HAWKE: We remember how the Government rushed along, after it had got its Bill through to cancel the proclamation, with the other Bill to amend this Act in vital particulars loaded even more heavily against the Labor Party. The Government is anxious to have a redistribution of electoral boundaries. Had the Government succeeded in getting the amending Bill through, no doubt the proclamation would have been issued months ago to put the amended Act into operation. But because the Government failed to pass that Bill, it has lost all interest in the law. It is not operating the law. It is refusing to operate it.

There is a strong obligation on every Minister to operate laws upon the statute book, especially laws dealing with the electoral rights of the people. Perhaps the Government is hiding behind the fact that it cannot be prosecuted at law on this matter. It is a pity it cannot be prosecuted at law, because the prosecution could not help but succeed. However, there may be other means of causing the Government to operate the law, and to shift it from the position it has adopted of refusing to operate one of the most important laws on our statute book.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Some 12 months ago, when the Government depended on my vote to cancel the proclamation which had been issued by the outgoing Government, my vote was sought by the Government whilst I was an Independent. An assurance was given me by the Government, both in this Chamber and outside of it, that if I supported the Government by giving it the constitutional majority to cancel the proclamation, and enabled it to proceed with suggested amendments to the Electoral Districts Act as outlined by the Leader of the Country Party in his policy speech of 1959, then, if the proposed amendments were not accepted by both Houses of Parliament, the Government would reissue the proclamation which we were about to cancel.

On that understanding I lent my support to the Government, thinking that if the amendments were agreed to by Parliament a redistribution would take place under the amending legislation, and the proclamation would be issued. There would also be amendments to the electoral boundaries under the existing law. There has been a lot of argument this session as to whether the new proclamation should be issued or not. I only know that I was given an assurance that if the Bill did not pass through Parliament a fresh proclamation would issue. The Bill did not pass;

in fact a vote was never taken on it—it was withdrawn. It has never been reintroduced into the Chamber. So we cancelled the proclamation to enable the Government to introduce an amending Bill to the Electoral Districts Act because of circumstances which arose, and which were none of my making.

One of the Government members fell ill, and another one went East because of an illness, which meant the Government was left without a constitutional majority. That was through no fault of mine. It is not known whether the Bill that was withdrawn would have passed through Parliament; but one proclamation having been cancelled, and an assurance having been given that if the Bill were not passed or proceeded with a fresh proclamation would be issued, I feel the Government should honour its undertaking.

Mr. O'Neill: Did you live up to your assurance?

Mr. OLDFIELD: In answer to the interjection, whilst the member for Beeloo was speaking a suggestion on those lines was made to him. I asked this question of the Premier or the Attorney-General: If I were still an Independent member of this House, and not a member of the Labor Party, would the proclamation have been issued by now or would it be issued in the near future?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I repudiate the unjust imputation of the Premier that the Labor Party Cabinet, whilst acting as a caretaker Government, did something dishonest. As a member of that Cabinet I strongly resent the Premier's imputation of dishonest motives on the part of the Government of the day. The Labor Cabinet, from the date of election of the new Government until it took over on the 2nd April, 1959, was charged with the responsibility of carrying out the laws of this State. Just as any other law would be carried out by the Labor Government, the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act were put into effect.

There was nothing dishonest or unlawful on the part of the Labor Cabinet between the period covering the 21st March to the 2nd April. Why did the Labor Cabinet have to carry on for almost a fortnight? It was because of the sordidness that was rampant between the two sections of the Government which wrangled for portfolios, and because of the disputes between the Liberal Party and the Country Party. Meanwhile, the Labor Party carried on the administration of the State.

Mr. Bovell: That is all rubbish. The late Philip Collier took 16 days to take over from the previous Government.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Labor Party carried on the laws of the State. It did nothing dishonest or unfair. If the private members of the two sections of the Government were to speak the truth they

would say there was a period when sordid statements were made and sordid actions were taken.

Mr. Lewis: How long did you say you acted?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: For nearly a fortnight.

Mr. Bovell: It took the Government of Philip Collier 16 days to take over from the Mitchell Government.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The member for Vasse says it took the present Government 16 days to take over after being elected to office.

Mr. Bovell: I said it took the Collier Government 16 days to take over from the Government of Sir James Mitchell.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: It took the present Government a fortnight to patch up the disputes between the two sections of the Government. After the disputes had been settled the present Government announced the members of the Cabinet. The Labor Party had to carry on until then.

I well recall, and *Hansard* will prove my statement—which no member in this House, whether he be on the Government side or on the Opposition, can deny—that the Attorney-General in no unmistakable terms—as outlined by the member for Mt. Lawley—said that if this iniquitous Bill introduced by the Liberal Party to sandbag the Labor Party for 100 years were not put into effect, the present law would be implemented. I recollect that when the Leader of the Opposition moved for an adjournment of the debate for five or six days, the Attorney-General very strongly opposed the adjournment. He said that it would have to be debated by Tuesday, because he knew the member for Avon Valley was about to go to the Eastern States on the 7th or 9th November, and that the Bill had to pass through all stages before he left.

Then an unfortunate incident occurred in the week end. A member supporting the Government was suddenly taken ill and entered hospital. From that day to this nothing has been done in regard to the iniquitous Bill introduced by the Attorney-General.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke quite correctly and fairly when he imputed motives on the part of the Government in refusing to carry out the law as it is. I hope that I shall never be a member of a Government which side-tracks the provisions of the law and uses all sorts of specious arguments to justify its attitude. I spoke aright when I said that some members supporting the Government—from both sections of the Government—felt ashamed of the action of Cabinet, and of its attitude ever since the iniquitous Bill was introduced, in not pro-

ceeding with the issue of a proclamation and in not taking any action to implement the provisions of the Act.

I remember when the Electoral Districts Act was passed in 1947 and a north-west seat was abolished. Quotas were set up for country and metropolitan seats. The provisions were generally accepted. The Attorney-General (Sir Ross McDonald) stated definitely that adjustments to electoral boundaries would be automatic if a number of seats were below or above a certain quota. Yet this Government says it is not breaking any law or acting unfairly.

Mr. JAMIESON: I would not have risen again except for the extreme display of hypocrisy by the member for Vasse, when by way of interjection he showed his hostility to any move to bring about a redistribution. I well recall the first session of the Hawke Government.

Mr. Bovell: I battled for two years to have the law carried out.

Mr. JAMIESON: For 16 months he repeatedly pilloried the then Government, with the aim of having a redistribution carried out. It has to be said in favour of the Hawke Government that it did bring about a redistribution in ample time for the election that was to follow. The honourable member well knows that on each and every occasion when he had the chance in this House, he got to his feet and asked when the redistribution would be put into effect.

Mr. Bovell: Because the law was not being complied with.

Mr. JAMIESON: The law is not being complied with on this occasion. He need not fool himself on that aspect. It does not need a Rhodes scholar to find that out. If the honourable member cares to look at the Act he will find that what I am saying is correct; the law is not being complied with, and he knows it.

Mr. Bovell: I am satisfied it is.

Mr. JAMIESON: It is satisfactory to the honourable member to do that, because it is to his advantage; but when he thought it would be to the advantage of himself and his colleagues, and when he occupied the seat now occupied by the member for Eyre, he was most insistent that there should be a redistribution, and the sooner the better.

Hypocrisy runs high in the ranks of many organisations. Surely it should not run to the extent which the member for Vasse is making it run in the ranks of the Government on this occasion.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 put and passed.

Schedules A to G put and passed.

Preamble put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading

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

LOAN BILL, £20,264,000*Message: Appropriation*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

First Reading

On motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), Bill introduced, and read a first time.

Second Reading

On motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), Bill read a second time.

In Committee

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

Third Reading

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

BILLS (2)—RETURNED

1. Companies Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

2. Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill.

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL***Council's Amendments*

Schedule of 9 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. Roberts) in the Chair; Mr. Perkins (Minister for Labour) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendments made by the Council are as follows:—

No. 1.

Clause 3, page 2, line 3—Add after the word, "amended," the following paragraph:—

- (a) by inserting at the end of paragraph (a) of subsection (5) the following proviso—

Provided that where any of the amounts, payments and benefits and the specific sums, representing the

maximum entitlement of the worker or the maximum liability of an employer, are, subsequent to the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1954, amended by any amending Act, such amounts, payments, benefits or specific sums shall be subject only to any increase or decrease in proportion to any alteration in the male basic wage as declared by the Court of Arbitration after, but not before the coming into operation of such amending Act.

No. 2.

Clause 3, page 2, line 8—Delete the words, "adding after," and substituting the words, "substituting for."

No. 3.

Clause 3, page 2, line 10—Delete the figure, "(7)," and substitute the figure, "(6)."

No. 4.

Clause 3, page 2, line 10—Delete the word, "subsections," and substitute the word, "subsection."

No. 5.

Clause 3, page 2, line 11—Delete the passage, "and (6)."

No. 6.

Clause 4, page 3—Insert after paragraph (c) a paragraph to stand as paragraph (d) as follows:—

- (d) By inserting after the word "years," in line 21 of the proviso to subsection (5) the passage, "or where the disease is silicosis, pneumoconiosis or miner's phthisis and the worker is not at the date of disablement employed in the mining industry but was previously so employed then during any prior period commencing on the date three years prior to the date on which the worker ceased to be employed in the mining industry."

No. 7.

Clause 4, page 3, line 30—Delete the word, "A," and substitute the word, "The."

No. 8.

Clause 4, page 3, line 30—Delete the words, "the proviso," and substitute the passage, "proviso (i)."

No. 9.

Clause 8, page 6—Delete all words in the clause after the words,

"amended by," in line 2, and substitute the following:—

- (a) deleting from lines 8 and 9 of paragraph (b) of subsection (1) the words, "and is unable to pay that compensation.";
- (b) adding after subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (d) of subsection (5), the following subparagraph:—

(iii) Notwithstanding the provisions of subparagraph (ii) of this paragraph, the Board shall, after the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1960, estimate annually the amount to be levied in each succeeding year to make provision for the compensation mentioned in paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of this section.

Mr. PERKINS: Actually there are only three main amendments in this message. The balance are consequential. One of the amendments is the result of an undertaking which I gave to the members here that I would examine the possibility of an alteration consequent upon the deletion of section 16 of the Act. The alterations provided in this amendment, which was moved in the Legislative Council by the Minister introducing the Bill, provides for the deletion of the words "and is unable to pay that compensation." Those words will be taken out of the parent Act.

This will enable the Workers' Compensation Board to deal with the case of an uninsured worker—that is, in the case of an employer who has broken the law and has not insured his workers. Unless the employer is able to pay the compensation directly, that worker is in a bad position; and, under the Act as it now stands, it can be paid from the funds established by the Workers' Compensation Board.

The difficulty in that procedure is that there is a statutory period of 30 days. In addition, it is possible for considerable delays to take place—as members on the other side pointed out during the debate—during which the Workers' Compensation Board can determine whether it is possible for the employer to pay.

The deletion of these words will enable the Workers' Compensation Board to do away with that inquiry. It will pay the injured worker and proceed against the employer to recover whatever the board has paid out of its own funds. I have discussed this matter with the member for Mt. Hawthorn in the few minutes available since the message came down from the Legislative Council, and I think he agrees with me that the amendment does what I say it aims to do.

I somewhat doubt whether the other two main amendments are really necessary. I think they only tidy up the Act. If members look at the Legislative Council notice paper they will be able to examine them. The first reads as follows:—

Provided that where any of the amounts, payments and benefits and the specific sums, representing the maximum entitlement of the worker or the maximum liability of an employer, are, subsequent to the coming into operation of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Act, 1954, amended by any amending Act, such amounts, payments, benefits or specific sums shall be subject only to any increase or decrease in proportion to any alteration in the male basic wage as declared by the Court of Arbitration after, but not before the coming into operation of such amending Act.

I think that is the law already. This amendment makes it doubly sure; and the effect will be that on any subsequent occasion when there is an amendment to the benefit, the basic-wage adjustments will be on top of the new base; they will not be cumulative on the previous basic-wage adjustments.

The other amendment is in regard to the clause dealing with the silicosis provisions, and the effect of that will be to provide that where a worker has left the mining industry and silicosis develops after the period of three years, the period of three years will relate back to the mining industry. A worker may be employed in another industry where there is a slight possibility of silicosis developing. There has been only one case that I have heard of, and I think that came from abrasives. However, it would be possible for it to occur in some other industries where sharp dusts are prevalent.

This provision will make it easier for a worker who has been employed in the mining industry to obtain employment elsewhere, because his subsequent employer will have the safeguard that if silicosis develops it will relate back to the mining industry. The only funds come from the mining industry and the effect will be to retain the position as it is at the moment. I move—

That the amendments be agreed to.

Mr. May: Will the Minister make it clear that there is no extension of the three years?

Mr. PERKINS: There is no extension of the three years. It does not alter the position. I have discussed the amendments with the Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board, and he assures me that they do no more than it is aimed that they should do.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

STATE CONCERNS (PREVENTION OF DISPOSAL) BILL

Second Reading: Defeated

Debate resumed from the 23rd November.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [12.36 a.m.]: I rise to oppose this measure. As the Leader of the Opposition said when he introduced it, most things that need to be said were said when the Bill was before the House on the previous occasion. In view of the lateness of the hour I will not labour those points.

I consider the Bill to be unnecessary. If a Labor Government were in office it would not, presumably, attempt to sell these concerns; so the object of this legislation does not arise. If there is a non-Labor Government in office, it has a responsibility towards the people and would have to be prepared to justify its actions to the people. The present provisions in the legislation have been there for 25 or more years and there has been no disaster as a result.

Mr. Jamieson: We had good Governments before this.

Mr. COURT: The approach of the Opposition to this problem is quite an unbalanced one because it seeks to force a statutory approval upon the Government of the day for the sale of these concerns, but does not propose that there should be statutory approval before it commences or expands one of these concerns. On the contrary, it expects the Government of the day to establish or expand one of these concerns without reference to anyone. I think it is quite an unbalanced approach, if one is not prepared to have it both ways, to demand the restriction to be placed in the legislation only one way. I think most Governments would be battling to get legislation through to establish or expand a State trading concern.

Mr. Andrew: It would be most unfair to have one Government put it in and another Government remove it.

Mr. COURT: A Government of the honourable member's colour wants to establish these concerns without parliamentary approval. If most Governments came to Parliament for approval to establish them, they would be battling to obtain it, because most members of the House would think twice before allowing the State to be further committed for trading concerns. The demand for loan funds which they involve is quite unnecessary in view

of the fact that there is such a tremendous demand on the limited funds available for essential Government works.

I think the present Government has demonstrated its responsibility in the matter. It was predicted by members on the other side that we would be sacking people left, right, and centre. We were told that we would be giving State trading concerns away to our political friends. But that has not happened. This Government has approached the matter in accordance with three basic principles, and I think we have honoured the three basic principles we said we would honour; otherwise we could have done what the Opposition predicted we would do. On the contrary, we know what our responsibilities are; and if we did anything foolish in respect of these things we would have to answer to the people; and the people have the last say.

Imagine the situation if the sale or lease of one of these concerns had to be negotiated before Parliament. The damage that would be done to employees would be tremendous. Goodwill would be shattered before the Opposition finished dealing with such an agreement. Regardless of whether the person concerned was prepared to go on with the agreement, tremendous damage would have been done to a concern. Once a concern is damaged, there is damage to the employees. For those reasons I oppose the Bill.

MR. ROWBERRY (Warren) [12.43 a.m.]: Despite the lateness of the hour, I am going to have a few words to say about this Bill, and I will be as long as I think is necessary. I notice that it says in the Bill, amongst other things, "or entering into any business beyond the usual functions of State Government."

I do not know what are the usual functions of the State Government, apart from dishonouring its obligations and assurances; but I do know that the Constitution Act of 1889, which established this Assembly and the Legislative Council, gave authority for this Parliament to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the State of Western Australia and its dependencies. I wonder how much peace this Government has engendered in certain State instrumentalities; and I wonder how much order it has left in the minds of the people. As for good government, since that is a relative term, and it could be slightly ambiguous, we had better draw the veil over that one.

But I would ask the Minister to realise how much dis-peace, un-peace, or lack of peace, or uncertainty, this Government has left in certain State instrumentalities. The Minister says that if, before these concerns were sold, the proposal had to come before Parliament for ratification, it would prevent a good sale, and it would act against the best interests of the employees, and probably cause them to lose their jobs. I know for a certainty that it is

the uncertainty which now exists in regard to the State trading concerns which has caused employees to leave; and some of these people are leaving the State. They are skilled workers, and when they are gone we will find it very difficult to replace them. I would refer to the words of Oliver Goldsmith who, in his poem, "The Deserted Village", said:

Princes and Lords may flourish and
may fade,

A breath can make them as a breath
has made.

But the bold peasantry, their country's
pride

When once destroyed, can never be
supplied.

As a matter of fact, the executives of these industries are more concerned about the uncertainty that is hanging over them than the ordinary workers. They stand to lose more because although these State trading concerns in which they operate might be sold, that is no criterion that the present executives working in them will be re-employed by those who take over the State trading concerns. It is more certain that the skilled artisans will be kept on, although, perhaps, not under the same conditions. There are certain conditions which they enjoy now, such as superannuation, long-service leave, family benefits, low rentals for housing, and cheap firewood, in the case of those employed in the State Saw-mills. If the State trading concerns are taken over by someone else, the men will not continue to enjoy those privileges.

Whoever takes these State trading concerns over is going to cause a degree of uncertainty, even by taking steps to effect a sale. By the same token, whoever takes the State trading concerns over would be operating with a measure of uncertainty should a Labor Government be returned to office at the next election following the sale. That probably would be the greatest deterrent against effecting a sale. Intending purchasers of State trading concerns should be assured that if they do take over a State instrumentality, the Labor Party, if returned to power, will do its utmost to restore the State trading concerns as soon as it gets the chance. It would only be fair to inform those who were negotiating to buy a State trading concern that they would do so under those conditions.

I notice that the Bill has a schedule annexed to it, and I would be much happier if it did not have a schedule. Why limit the Bill to the instrumentalities in the schedule? I would be happy to wipe out the schedule altogether and the Bill would then apply to every State instrumentality and every State trading concern. I cannot see how the members of this Government can deny the right of Governments to enter into trade or can prevent them from administering certain State in-

strumentalities. No Government can govern without having its own instrumentalities.

I do not know of any law, either moral or divine, which lays down that industries shall be carried on by private enterprise. In fact, there is no moral or divine law which does lay it down that private enterprise should have a complete monopoly of industry, and make profits as it thinks best.

I think the function of any Government, no matter what its political colour, would be the care and welfare of its people. That should be the primary function and first responsibility of any Government. I have heard it said that the present Government is more worried about people making money than it is about the people's wealth. It seems to have made money the be-all and end-all of its existence. The people's happiness, and the welfare of men, women, and children, apparently mean nothing to this Government. I have paid close attention to some of the Ministers on the front bench when they have been speaking, and I had almost given up hope that they had any feelings at all—

Mr. Bovell: What utter rot!

Mr. ROWBERRY:—when I heard the Minister for Railways utter the phrase, "They are our kith and kin." Apparently the only kith and kin he has are the people who own big businesses and huge financial concerns.

Sir Ross McLarty: It is early in the morning and we can expect this drivel.

Mr. ROWBERRY: That is the only statement the Minister has made in this Chamber and in public regarding our kith and kin, which implies affection or compassion of any sort on his part.

Mr. Toms: He was not aware of that. He will make sure not to use that term again.

Mr. ROWBERRY: Apparently big business must receive every consideration, but ordinary people can go by the board, no matter what happens. One has only to read the report of the manager of the State Building Supplies, to realise, in every line of the preface to his report, the frustration of a completely unhappy man.

Mr. Court: He has never been so happy in his life.

Mr. ROWBERRY: He says, "If something is to be done let it be done quickly." That is the attitude and mental outlook of a man who is in a condemned cell and is going to die—"Let us get it over with; let us get rid of this uncertainty."

I was hoping that when this Bill came before the House, I would be able to give some comfort and satisfaction to a large section of the people in my electorate by assuring them that the State trading concerns could not be sold over their heads during the night and that they could not wake up in the morning to find themselves out of a job. In fact, on my way up here

one day I spoke with a high executive in the State Building Supplies, and he said to me, "I wish they would adopt some plan and, having adopted it, let us know about it. But they have handled this situation with a bungled foot; and a ham-fisted, stubborn, arrogant attitude, and they have not taken their executives into their confidence".

Mr. May: It is the same with the Colliery miners.

Mr. Court: He is a beautiful executive to have in any organisation!

Mr. ROWBERRY: That man is able to comprehend what the ordinary people think. He said that the people would make a decision. They will, too. I have not the slightest doubt what the decision will be so far as this Government is concerned. I was hoping that if this legislation were passed it would at least give some comfort, some satisfaction, and some security of tenure to people who are employed in the State instrumentalities; and I stress, especially, the managerial section of the employees engaged in them because they are more worried than the ordinary workers. It would give them, at least, some breathing space during the time a disposal Bill was before Parliament for ratification after which they would know just how long they had to survive. I understand that some of the State trading concerns have been operating since 1916; and I do not know what the interpretation of the word "usual" is. I do not know how long a State instrumentality has to be operating before it is regarded as being "usual".

Incidentally, the Minister had better not forget that it was a Government of the same political complexion as the Government to which he now belongs which not only instituted these State trading instrumentalities, but which, in recent years enlarged them. Why? It was to give employment to people and to promote the best interests of the State. It was not to make profits; because, after all, the Minister talks about the demands on loan funds. He forgets that the profits of these concerns are paid into Consolidated Revenue and they stay there. When an instrumentality requires finance for expansion it has no reserves on which to draw and it has to ask for an allocation of money from loan funds in order to operate; and it has to borrow money back from Consolidated Revenue.

In conclusion, I hope that the House will agree to the Bill and the schedule attached thereto, together with the related conditions.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—in reply) [12.57 a.m.]: Two points made by the Minister for Industrial Development warrant a little attention. The first is that any Government which sells a State trading concern has to be responsible to the electors at the next succeeding election. It is true the

Government would have to face the electors, but the defeat of the Government, by the electors, would not achieve anything except the defeat of the Government. The trading concern would be gone; the decision of the electors would not re-establish the Wyndham Meat Works, the Western Australian Meat Export Works, or the State Engineering Works.

It could easily happen that a Government might sell each of these three concerns a few months after it took office. Before the next succeeding election, the private enterprise people who bought the concerns might be giving their customers an extremely bad deal. As a result, the Government responsible for the sale of the State trading concerns could be defeated by the vote of the people. However, that would not help the customers who were being exploited. It would not bring their exploitation to an end. They would still have to accept whatever prices or conditions might be dictated to them by the private enterprise owners of the Wyndham Meat Works, the meat works at Robb Jetty, or the State Engineering Works at North Fremantle.

It might be all right to say that a Government which has sold the State trading concerns—the decision to sell them having subsequently been found to have been most unwise—would have to face the electors in two years, or whatever the period might be, and that Government could then be defeated. In fact the concern would have been sold, and gone for ever.

Any degree of exploitation or dictation which the new owners might inflict on the customers of these works would remain, and would continue. The new Government elected by the people could not do a thing about the matter. Therefore the point which the Minister made in that direction is valueless from the point of view of the interests of the customers of these concerns. Most of the customers are farmers, graziers, sheepmen and cattlemen.

The second point was that the passing of this Bill into law, and the sale under its provisions by a Government of one of these concerns would create an almost impossible situation when the Government brought its proposal or contract of sale to Parliament. In that situation, so we were told by the Minister, the concern which was under contract of sale would be subject in Parliament to such a harrowing experience verbally as to wreck the concern; to undermine its previous good reputation; and to give to the employees of the concern so much worry, discouragement, and heartache that they would not be any good afterwards. I do not know whether you, Mr. Speaker, heard the argument put forward by the Minister. I am inclined to think that if you did you would have found it very difficult to follow in terms of logic.

The arguments of the Minister were not practical or logical. They did not in any degree accurately set out the situation which would exist in Parliament, should the Government under the law bring before Parliament for decision a contract of sale for the Wyndham Meat Works, the meat works at Robb Jetty, or the State Engineering Works at North Fremantle. The Government would bring the Bill before Parliament and it would put forward arguments in justification of the contract of sale.

The Minister concerned would not condemn the Wyndham Meat Works, the meat works at Robb Jetty, or the State Engineering Works. He would give a factual statement of the works. Those opposed to the sale would not boot the works, condemn them, or kick them to pieces. They would say constructive things about the works and point to their record of achievement and their protective value to the community, especially to those who were customers of the works. There is no valid or effective argument against the proposals in this Bill. I trust it will be carried.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—22.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Molr
Mr. Brady	Mr. Norton
Mr. Curran	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Evans	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Heal	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Noes—24.

Mr. Bovell	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Brand	Sir Ross McLarty
Mr. Burt	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Nitamo
Mr. Court	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Craig	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Owen
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Perkins
Dr. Henn	Mr. Roberts
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Watts
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Wild
Mr. Mann	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller.)

Majority against—2.

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

Sitting suspended from 1.10 to 1.17 a.m.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED

1. Appropriation Bill.
2. Loan Bill, £20,264,000.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

CLOSE OF SESSION

Complimentary Remarks

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier): We have come to the end—

Mr. Bickerton: Of a perfect day.

Mr. BRAND: —of the session and, in spite of some differences, I feel that the atmosphere which has existed throughout the session has, by and large, been reasonably pleasant. Personalities have been kept out of our discussions; and it is not the worst session I have experienced since I have been in this House.

I take this opportunity of conveying to you, Sir, best wishes for the festive season. You have acted impartially all the way through; and, in spite of forcing us to speak a little louder, on one or two occasions, the session has gone along very well from your point of view.

To the Chairman of Committees, the Deputy Chairmen, the officers of the House, and all those who are concerned with the running of this Chamber, I wish to express appreciation for the work that has been done; and to *Hansard* many thanks for the work that has been done and the long hours that have been spent over the period of our sitting from July until now. To the Pressmen and the lady in the Press gallery, our thanks. Just lately they marred a rather good record; but for all that, we wish them a happy and pleasant Christmas, and a prosperous New Year; and we trust they will keep on reporting in the paper that Western Australia is the best State in the Commonwealth.

To my colleagues on this side, the Deputy Premier, and my Ministers I would like to say, "Thank you very much for all the support you have given me"; and I particularly thank those who have sat behind us so loyally for all these weeks.

I take this opportunity of saying to the Leader of the Opposition, and the rest of his party, that I hope Christmas will be a happy time for them and their families; that 1961 will prove to be a healthy, happy, and prosperous year for us all, and that in spite of whatever political colour we may have we will be able to continue to work together to further the interests of the State of Western Australia.

I would like to mention also Mr. and Mrs. Burton and the staff under their control. They are important people in the running of Parliament House; they are responsible for feeding us and attending to our requirements. To all those concerned with the running of Parliament House I say, "Thank you for the co-operation you have given."

I have been reminded of the fact that for some weeks now the member for East Perth has been absent from this House;

he was laid aside through illness, but we are pleased to know that he is well on the road to recovery and, as far as we are aware, is resting and holidaying. I take this opportunity of wishing him a speedy recovery to full health, and I trust that he will be back again next session, but probably saying not quite so much as he usually does. I wish him good health and strength in his life ahead.

MR. HAWKE (Northam): I would like to support the remarks which have been made by the Premier, and also offer my thanks and appreciation to all of those to whom he made reference, and to any of those who may possibly have been missed out. I also wish to say thank you to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and all members on this side. Although we are a bit short of members at the moment we kept bowling up over after over to the Government.

Mr. Brand: And some googlies.

Mr. HAWKE: We sent up some fast stuff, too.

Mr. J. Hegney: And hot stuff.

Mr. HAWKE: And a few googlies; but, as far as I know, there was no throwing. I think the game was kept clean, and I agree with the Premier that the activities during this session of Parliament could be fairly described as cricket. A few hard words were said, but I have heard far worse said at cricket matches, and many worse words said at football matches.

I would like to thank the Premier for his reference to the member for East Perth (Mr. Graham). All the reports we have had recently about the honourable member are very encouraging, and it seems that he will be restored to his normal health and strength and will again be a very active member of this Chamber next year.

In conclusion I wish all of those to whom reference has been made, including members and their families, a very cheerful Christmas, and I hope the New Year, 1961, will see the end of the cold war throughout the world and the ushering in, not of an uneasy peace such as the one we seem to

have experienced during 1960, but a fair and honourable peace for all peoples, which would allow people in every country to shed the great burden of worry which, I am sure, is a part of almost every thinking person in the world today. A very cheerful and merry Christmas to everybody and a peaceful and happy New Year.

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman—Blackwood): I would like to say to the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition that I will most certainly convey the sentiments expressed to members of the staff whose duties precluded them from being present to hear an appreciation of their services being mentioned from both sides of the House. I think the sentiments expressed were thoroughly warranted, and I feel I can convey that message to the people concerned with every sincerity.

My own personal thanks go particularly to the Chairman of Committees, and to the Deputy Chairmen of Committees of whose services I think I have taken full advantage. They have always been very willingly given. To members of the House generally, I would like to express my own good wishes for the festive season, and my thanks for the co-operation I have received from them.

From my point of view this session has been a very much easier one than my first session. Admittedly the member for Mt. Marshall put up two points of order in two days, and, to my way of thinking, blotted an otherwise excellent record. But I am sure we can attribute that to a short lapse on his part, and say it was due to the fact that the session was drawing to a close. I would like to thank everybody for the consideration they have shown me, and I wish to add my personal felicitations to those that have already been expressed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to a date to be fixed by Mr. Speaker.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.32 a.m. (Saturday)