

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It would be an awful amount if it did.

The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS: The fact of the matter is—and I will deviate here—that I do not care what it costs. I do not believe any other members here should care at all what it costs because, as I have said before, as far as the Commonwealth Bank is concerned it is money the State has never had. I am quite sure, and I believe the Minister is just as sure, that the amount of money involved, as far as the overall picture of the State's finances is concerned, is pretty insignificant indeed, but as far as these organisations are concerned it is most significant.

I did not want to speak for very long so I will quickly give members an idea of some of those organisations which qualify and a few of those which do not qualify under section 49A of the Stamp Act. Some of those which qualify are the Y.M.C.A.; parents and citizens' associations; most, and perhaps all, church youth organisations; police and citizens' youth clubs; the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Guides. Those are some of the organisations which do, in fact, qualify.

Some of those which do not qualify are all the junior cricket clubs, football clubs, soccer clubs, athletic clubs, baseball clubs, basketball clubs, hockey clubs, and so on. These organisations, for some reason or other, are not exempt from this burden.

Those which do qualify are in the main defined as community welfare or charitable organisations. I do not believe that any member present today would argue with me when I say that any organisation which functions for the benefit of our young people is most surely a community welfare organisation if not, indeed, a charitable organisation.

Western Australia in recent years has received a great deal of publicity because of the great developments taking place in our mining and industrial industries. These developments are causing a great number of people to hear about Western Australia and are also responsible for a big influx of tourists to Western Australia. As we would all agree, the tourist business is a very good one. However, we must not forget the goodwill and publicity that is being created by our young people, be they from sporting, cultural, or other youth organisations, as they go forth to other countries of the world representing and spreading the word about Western Australia.

This is one of the best means of publicity as far as this State is concerned, and unless we allow these people every concession possible the progress they make in their particular activities will surely be curtailed and, as a result, they will be less likely to go forth into these other countries and represent Western Australia.

I believe the investments made in Western Australia are magnificent and a credit to the Western Australian Government; but I also believe that the greatest investment of all is the investment in our young people.

I realise that the Act now gives the Premier power to waive these particular charges; but, for various reasons, I do not believe the onus should be on the Premier to do this. In my opinion it should be clearly written into the Act in order that every organisation might know where it is going. I also realise that numerous other voluntary organisations are doing sterling work in our community and they are also excluded from these exemptions of which I speak. I would certainly support any move to make them eligible for exemption.

I conclude by saying that I trust all members in this House will share the concern I have expressed on behalf of the particular young people's organisations to which I have referred and that therefore the motion will be passed unanimously.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines).

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment Bill.
2. Mines and Machinery Inspection Act Repeal Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.41 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 1st April.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 26th March, 1969

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

QUESTIONS (55): ON NOTICE HOUSING: HIGH-DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

State Housing Commission's Plans

1. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Has the State Housing Commission a plan to carry out high-density development in any of the existing commission's developed housing areas?

- (2) If "Yes," which are the areas involved, what is the order of priority for each area, and when is it anticipated this will occur in each of the localities?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) Consideration is being given to re-development of some of the older metropolitan estates of the State Housing Commission adjacent to major work areas where the land is capable of being serviced to permit of higher density and where an adequate level of community and civic facilities is available.
- (2) As yet there are no firm redevelopment proposals as feasibility studies are still being undertaken. The honourable member may rest assured that the interests of the tenants will be safeguarded when any firm decision is made.

SEWERAGE

Extensions in Belmont and Bayswater

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

- (1) What amount of sewerage extensions have been carried out in the shire districts of—
 (a) Belmont;
 (b) Bayswater;
 during each of the last five years?
- (2) Are any extensions proposed during this or the next financial year in either of the above shire councils; if so, to what extent?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1)	(a) Belmont	(b) Bayswater
	\$	\$
1964-65	200,000	3,124
1965-66	6,366	17,096
1966-67	307,835 (including Shopping Centre)	4,104
1967-68	251,843	9,791
1968-69	85,000	Nil to date
(2) Yes.		
1969-70	320,000	120,000

Note: Proposed alterations to Bayswater Rising Main for \$116,000 not included in the above figures for the years 1968-69 and 1969-70.

3. This question was postponed.

LAND IN MAYLANDS

Improvement

4. Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Will he supply me with a map showing the proposals for improvement of land adjacent to St. Annes Hospital, Mt. Lawley, down to Fourth Avenue, Maylands, submitted by the Shire of Perth?
- (2) Have all the proposals been approved?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) The plan showing proposals for areas of land between Fourth Avenue, Maylands and Ellesmere Road, Mt. Lawley, was prepared by the Shire of Perth. It is requested the plan be tabled for two days.
- (2) Consideration of these proposals as they affect Crown land has not yet been completed.

The plan was tabled for two days.

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS

Resignations from Premier's Department

5. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Premier:
- (1) Has Mr. W. W. Mitchell, the Public Relations Officer of the Premier's Department, tendered his resignation, or is he about to tender same?
- (2) What are the circumstances associated with his resignation?
- (3) How many Government public relations officers have resigned since the 1st July, 1968?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes he has submitted his resignation.
- (2) The circumstances are of a private nature.
- (3) One.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

Around Australia Cruises: Discontinuance

6. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is it the intention of the State Shipping Service to discontinue around Australia cruises, as carried out by the State ship *Koolama*?
- (2) If "Yes," what are the reasons for curtailment of the service?
- (3) How many passengers have travelled around Australia since the inauguration of the service and what was the number in each year?
- (4) Was the service a paying proposition?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) By concentrating *Koolama* to the Fremantle-North West-Darwin trade and speeding up the schedules of the three larger passenger cargo vessels, the service at the present level of cargo traffic will be able to dispose of s.s. *Dorriga* which is due for costly special survey next year.

At the same time this change in schedule resulting in additional voyages by the passenger vessels will ensure greater reliability of the weekly sailings because of the priority granted at all ports.

(3) —

	Full Around Australia Voyages	Fremantle to Eastern States Ports
1964	154	45
1965	240	51
1966	198	67
1967	186	81
1968	186	169
1969	27
	<hr/> 991	<hr/> 413

(4) No.

ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL OVAL

Extension

7. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What was the year and date of the purchase of properties adjacent to Albany High School oval?
- (2) Has there been any expansion to the school oval since the date of purchase?
- (3) If the answer to (2) is "No." when is it expected that work will commence on the expansion of the school oval?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Properties for extension of the high school site at Albany were progressively purchased over a number of years. The last property, fronting Middleton Beach, was purchased on the 27th April, 1962.
- (2) No.
- (3) An overall scheme for the development of hockey fields and other playing area has been developed and work will be put in hand when funds become available.

Water Supply

8. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

Can he advise what progress has been made to supply and reticulate water to service the Albany High School oval?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

On advice from the Education Department, development of a scheme to supply water to the oval has been deferred pending availability of loan funds.

It may be possible to give consideration to a scheme in 1969-1970.

ROE FREEWAY

Realignment through Canning Vale

9. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

Has a decision yet been reached by the Main Roads Department with respect to the realignment of the Roe Freeway through the Canning Vale area?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The alignment of the Roe Freeway in the Canning Vale area as shown in the metropolitan region plan is satisfactory to the Main Roads Department.

SEWERAGE TREATMENT PLANT

Lynwood

10. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is it true that the proposed Lynwood area sewerage treatment plant and disposal site have been relocated?
- (2) When is the anticipated date of opening of the scheme?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The engineering consultants anticipate that the scheme will be in operation at the end of 1969.

FORESHORE ROAD, ALBANY

Construction

11. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the vast development of primary industry and wool production in the Albany region, will he give immediate consideration to the building of a foreshore road and the reclamation of land to provide for wool store expansion?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

A technical committee assisted by a firm of engineering consultants, is investigating, as a matter of urgency, the desirability of building a foreshore road at Albany.

Close liaison is being maintained with interested local bodies and a report and recommendation will be made available—that is, to me, as Minister—as soon as possible.

Albany Wool Stores Pty. Ltd. plans to erect an additional store during 1969 on land to be reclaimed by the company on the harbour side of the present wool store facilities.

McLEAN SAWMILLS (1966) PTY. LTD.*Reduction of Royalty*

12. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Forests:

As hardship is being experienced by McLean Sawmills (1966) Pty. Ltd. of Narrikup respecting the payment of royalties, and in view of the changed circumstances affecting the industry, will he agree to a reduction of the royalty now being paid by the company?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

These royalties were bid in close competition at open auction and in fairness to other bidders cannot be reduced.

KALGOORLIE COURTHOUSE*Renovations and Heating*

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

- (1) When will work commence on renovation and alteration of the existing courtroom facilities at Kalgoorlie?
- (2) Will air-conditioning operate within the courtroom before the onset of winter?
- (3) If not, what arrangements will be made for heating purposes?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) The date is not known as plans and estimates are still under preparation.
- (2) No.
- (3) The matter will be examined, having regard to the proposals to renovate and alter the facilities.

GENERAL LOAN FUND EXPENDITURE*Interest and Capital Charges: Waiving*

14. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

What is the explanation for his action in directing that expenditure from the General Loan Fund amounting to \$2,918,780, which was included in the Fremantle Port Authority's capital as at the 30th June, 1968, be free of interest and other capital charges until such time as the Cockburn Harbour is opened up for general merchandise and cargo?

Mr. BRAND replied:

The direction referred to was given before I assumed the office of Treasurer in April, 1959. It operated from the 1st July, 1956.

SUPERPHOSPHATE*Manufacturers' Discounts: Retention by Stock Firms*

15. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has he read the criticism made at the Farmers' Union annual conference of stock firms which, in distributing superphosphate, retain manufacturers' discounts for cash when they finance a farmer's purchases?
- (2) For how long has he been aware of this practice?
- (3) Has he taken any action in the interests of farmers to have the procedure discontinued?
- (4) If "No," what action does he propose to take and when will it be initiated?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) to (4) The subject appears to be one for determination between the stock firms and their clients.

16. This question was postponed.

OVERSEAS INVESTMENT*Government Controls: Representation to Prime Minister*

17. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is he aware that at the annual convention of young Liberals held at Canberra in February last, a motion which was carried by a substantial majority called for stringent government control on all forms of overseas investment?
- (2) Is he also aware that Prime Minister Gorton told the delegates their views would be considered?
- (3) He has communicated his views on this subject to the Prime Minister otherwise than by his reported utterance in *The West Australian* of the 1st February in which he indicated most definitely that he was opposed to all restraints on investment capital?
- (4) Was he expressing his own personal views in the statement above referred to or speaking on behalf of the Government?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I am aware of the resolution passed by the young Liberals at Canberra. Although I cannot recall seeing the Prime Minister's comments referred to by the Leader of the Opposition, I would regard them as logical comments for a leader of a Government to make when any proposals of this kind are put before him.

(3) My views on overseas investment in Western Australia are well known to the Prime Minister, his colleagues, and the general public. The Leader of the Opposition is not, however, entitled to make the statement in respect of my 1st February Press comment "in which he indicated most definitely he was opposed to all restraints on investment capital." I will seek the concurrence of Mr. Speaker to table a copy of the actual Press statement I made.

(4) The statement was made on my own initiative. However, if the Leader of the Opposition studies it he will realise it is consistent with the general policy followed by the Western Australian Government which is directed at achieving the maximum Australian participation in a practical and sensible way with a realisation that—

(a) we would have been unable to achieve our rate of growth over the last five or six years without a large influx of overseas capital, nor will we be able to maintain our rate of growth if we do not have substantial amounts of overseas capital progressively fed into our development programme;

(b) investors are entitled to know the conditions under which they make their investment, especially where risk capital is involved. Our attitude in this field is exemplified in the agreement submitted for ratification by the State Parliament in which obligations as well as the entitlements of the investors are clearly stated;

(c) there are important differences between takeovers, portfolio investment, and basic development investment.

The Press statement was tabled.

FERTILISER DISTRIBUTORS' ASSOCIATION

Withholding of Membership

18. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has he been aware of the policy being followed by the Fertiliser Distributors' Association in denying membership to distributors who will not conform to the rule that the 50c rebate for cash be withheld from farmers financed by them?

(2) Has he received any complaints from distributors who have been

excluded from membership of the Fertiliser Distributors' Association?

(3) What action has he taken to correct the attitude of the Fertiliser Distributors' Association which is indirectly detrimental to some farmers?

(4) If no action has been taken by him, what action does he intend to take?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) to (4) I cannot recall any complaints having been directed to me from distributors who have been excluded from membership of the Fertiliser Distributors' Association.

However, without knowing all the facts of the case, I assume manufacturers and importers would normally have the right to decide who shall distribute their products.

FORREST STREET STATE SCHOOL

Crossing Guards: Appointment

19. Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Police:

In view of the traffic hazard created by the hill (in Angelo Street) adjacent to the Forrest Street State School, South Perth, will he give consideration to having crossing guards stationed at the school to supervise children crossing Angelo Street on their way to and from schools?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

The matter was reviewed by the departmental committee representing the Police, Education, and Main Roads departments in 1967, and it was considered a crossing guard was not warranted. However, I will request the committee now to review the position.

DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLIES

Extension in Geraldton Area

20. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

When will the residents in the Waggrakine and Glenfield areas be supplied with domestic water from the Geraldton reticulation scheme?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

It is planned that water services in the Waggrakine and Glenfield areas will be progressively available between June and December, 1969.

OVERWAYS

Provision near Schools

21. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Works:

As school children in Hobart are provided with overways across highways and heavily traffic-laden streets to schools in and around the city, will he investigate the possibility and availability of finance to provide similar life saving amenities in appropriate locations in this State?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The provision of pedestrian overways in the metropolitan area has been under investigation by the Main Roads Department for some time.

Providing the local authority is prepared to make a contribution towards the cost, the department will consider the erection of pedestrian overpasses at situations where there is a warrant for such a facility.

NATIVES

Inoculation against Hong Kong Influenza

22. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

What action is contemplated by his department to make Hong Kong influenza inoculations available for native people who are not financially able to afford themselves this protection?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

This matter is still under consideration.

KALGOORLIE-COOLGARDIE RAIL PICNIC

Retention

23. Mr. T. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Railways:

Will he re-examine the question of endeavouring to maintain the tradition of the Kalgoorlie Railway Institute—the Coolgardie rail picnic—when the narrow gauge service in the eastern goldfields becomes isolated from the main network?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

As previously explained to the honourable member, notwithstanding the traditional atmosphere of the goldfields railway picnic, the cost involved in maintaining passenger carriage stock for this purpose, free of charge, once per annum, could not be justified.

DENTAL CARIES

Reduction by Fluoridation of Water Supplies

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

- (1) Has the introduction of fluoride into the metropolitan water supply reduced the incidence of dental caries?
- (2) If "Yes," would the proposed increase in dental fees mean less work and higher incomes for dentists?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) It is too early to estimate the effect of metropolitan water fluoridation on the incidence of dental caries.

25. *This question was postponed.*

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH STATION

Gascoyne River Area

26. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it a fact that an area near Rocky Pool on the Gascoyne River has been or is being surveyed for an agricultural research station?
- (2) If "Yes," when will work start on this new research station?
- (3) Will this station be run in conjunction with the present research station at Carnarvon or as a separate station with its own staff and facilities?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No. An area of land near Rocky Pool has been obtained for local trials with some of the major crops grown in the present plantation area.
- (2) Fencing and installation of irrigation facilities are under way, and plantings could commence during the spring of this year.
- (3) In conjunction with the present Gascoyne Research Station.

COURTHOUSE AT CARNARVON

New Building

27. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

When is it anticipated that a new courthouse will be built at Carnarvon?

Mr. COURT replied:

Proposals for the erection of a new courthouse are currently under investigation by the Public Works Department. However, the date of commencement of erection would be subject to availability of loan money.

BANANAS FROM EASTERN STATES

Carriage by Passenger Aircraft

28. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is it permissible for aircraft landing at Carnarvon to carry Eastern States bananas either as freight or as part of passengers' meals?
- (2) Is he aware that if Eastern States bananas were supplied with a meal prior to an aircraft landing at Carnarvon portions of the fruit could be off-loaded at Carnarvon with other scraps left over from such meal?
- (3) If it is not permissible for aircraft landing at Carnarvon to carry Eastern States bananas either as cargo or as part of passengers' meals, will he take steps to see that this regulation is adhered to?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Bananas and other fruit are not served on normal passenger flights to Carnarvon. The air company concerned advises that bananas, which could include bananas of Eastern States origin, are occasionally served on charter flights. Surplus and residues are returned to Perth for disposal.
- (3) Necessary steps will be taken with the air company concerned to re-affirm quarantine restrictions.

MAKESHIFT CLASSROOMS

Number in Use

29. Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister for Education:

In an advertisement appearing in *The West Australian* dated the 25th January, 1969, over his signature, it was stated that only 26 makeshift classrooms were in use at the end of last year. Was this reference related to the primary division only or did it refer to all divisions?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The reference related to the primary division only.

WEEBO STATION

Gangaring Stones: Aboriginal Custodian

30. Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) Is he aware that an aboriginal was appointed as custodian for the sacred gangaring stones at a site on Weebo Station?
- (2) Is he aware that this aboriginal is to be physically punished because the site is now publicly known and held as a mining tenement by a non-aboriginal?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

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

Mining Lease and Tonnages

31. Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) When did Mr. H. Hoffman first apply for a mining tenement of land on Weebo Station, which also has sacred significance to aborigines?
- (2) What are the details of such tenement?
- (3) How many tons have been mined so far?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) The 31st July, 1967.
- (2) Prospecting area 2705C for building stone was granted to W. A. Hoffman on the 15th August, 1967, and expired on the 14th August, 1968. The area was reapplied for on the 29th October, 1968, and was granted by a warden's court on the 7th March, 1969.
- (3) No production has been reported to the Mines Department.

COMMONWEALTH HOME SAVINGS GRANT

Ceiling Price: Increase

32. Mr. HARMAN asked the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that the Commonwealth home savings grant is not paid where the cost of the land and house exceeds \$15,000?
- (2) In view of the continued escalation of land prices in this State, has he made a request to the Commonwealth Government to lift the ceiling price for payment of the home savings grant in this State?
- (3) If so, with what result?
- (4) If not, will he do so?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) to (4) Various aspects of the operation of the Commonwealth Home Savings Grant Act have been discussed at Housing Ministers' Conferences. At present there is no indication that the Commonwealth is considering an increase in the \$15,000 limit currently applying. It would be highly improbable that the Commonwealth would be prepared to legislate differentially in a matter such as this.

DENMARK HOSPITAL

Treatments: Details

33. Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health: Will he give the following figures appertaining to the Denmark Hospital for each of the last three years—

- (a) The number of operations which necessitated use of the operating theatre?
- (b) The number of outpatients treated?
- (c) The number of patients who required use of the X-ray facilities?
- (d) The annual bed average?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Calendar Years	1966	1967	1968
(a) Number of Operations—			
Major	15	15	10
Minor	14	22	32
(b) Number of Outpatients	540	606	703
(c) Number of Patients using X-ray facilities	226	222	248
(d)	10.6	12.1	11.0

NANNUP PINE PLANTATIONS

Milling of Timber

34. Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Forests:

- (1) Will he indicate—
 - (a) reasons why thinnings from Nannup pine plantations are being milled outside the district of growth;
 - (b) whether efforts were made to have the milling of thinnings from Nannup pine plantations undertaken in that town?
- (2) If so, will he indicate the extent of these efforts?
- (3) Will he indicate the policy to be adopted for the future milling of pine grown at Nannup, when this industry attains greater significance?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) (a) and (b) (i) The "first thinnings" from Nannup were planned as part of the intake of a special case plant established in 1963 at Busselton, drawing supplies of small logs from plantations at Ludlow, Margaret River, and Nannup. Of course, from the point of view of the geographical situation of Ludlow, Margaret River, and Nannup, Busselton is the most convenient centre.
- (ii) The case industry, which is highly competitive, requires specialised plant and equipment to compete economically, and a constant log intake

greater than any one plantation could maintain at this stage.

(iii) Until Nannup plantation was old enough to yield first thinnings, supplies were drawn from a backlog of overdue thinnings at Margaret River and Ludlow, which were not previously salable.

(iv) With reduction of this backlog, both Nannup and Grimwade plantations are now contributing logs necessary to maintain the intake of the Busselton plant.

(3) Future supply and demand will determine whether second and later thinnings grown at Nannup will be milled there.

TRANSMISSION LINES

South Perth

35. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) Will he advise the date the South Perth City Council was advised of the commission's intention to erect transmission lines along Thelma Street and Labouchere Road, South Perth?
- (2) Was any indication given to residents prior to the erection of the power lines that this work would be carried out in their streets?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The 24th January, 1968.
- (2) The State Electricity Commission does not advise individual residents of proposals to erect power lines prior to the commencement of work. However, where major transmission lines are to be erected, the local authority concerned is advised.

EDUCATION

Textbook Subsidies

36. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the total amount of textbook subsidy paid by the Government this year to students attending—
 - (a) State primary schools;
 - (b) private primary schools;
 - (c) State secondary schools;
 - (d) private secondary schools?
- (2) What are the anticipated total amounts to be paid in 1969?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Textbook subsidies are paid to secondary students only, whether attending schools classified as primary or secondary.
 - (a) \$14,290.
 - (b) No separate figures are kept.
 - (c) \$175,060.
 - (d) \$31,930 (all private schools).
- (2) State—\$265,000.
Private—\$90,000.

POLICE

Basis of Assessment of Representation

37. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) What basis is adopted when assessing police representation per head of population?
- (2) What basis is adopted when assessing requirements of a particular suburb or district in so far as the provision of a new police station is concerned?

Station at Clontarf

- (3) As there is only one police station in the Clontarf electorate, would he give consideration to the provision of a police station in the Bentley-Wilson area?
- (4) Has a site for a police station been acquired in the Clontarf electorate and, if so, where is the location?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) There is no set formula for any one particular area. State wide for the year ended the 30th June, 1950, the ratio of police to estimated State population was 1 to 690.8 and for the year ended the 30th June, 1968, the ratio was 1 to 639.1.

The number of police per head of population is a factor in assessing the requirements of police protection. Other factors include area, crime and other offences, coverage by existing stations, and mobile patrols.

- (2) The factors referred to above, together with trends of population, and industrial and commercial growth.
- (3) Not at present. The Clontarf electorate is served by four police stations. The modern trend is towards mobile patrols, equipped with efficient communications, operating from fewer stations.
- (4) No.

SWAN QUARRIES

Dust Control

38. Mr. BATEMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health: In view of the effect on the health of the people living in the Orange Grove-Maddington area by silica dust from Swan Quarries—

- (1) Has the quarry been instructed to install equipment to arrest and control the dust?
- (2) If "Yes," are regular inspections made by the Public Health Department inspectors to ensure the equipment is working satisfactorily?
- (3) Are there regulations which control the hours of blasting by quarries?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) There are no regulations, but many local authorities have adopted a model by-law controlling the hours of blasting by quarries—including the Gosnells Shire Council.

STAMP DUTY

Receipts

39. Mr. DAVIES asked the Treasurer:

- (1) What amounts of money have been received from stamp duty on receipts—
 - (a) for the financial years ended the 30th June, 1967 and 1968;
 - (b) for the current financial year to the 28th February, 1969?
- (2) What is the estimated amount for the current financial year?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) (a) 1966-67—\$1,641,732.
1967-68—\$4,280,509.
- (b) \$3,361,405.
- (2) \$4,900,000.

CIVIL SERVANTS

Sick Leave Certificates

40. Mr. DAVIES asked the Premier:

- (1) Under what conditions does the Public Service Commissioner require members of the Civil Service to supply a doctor's certificate in connection with sick leave?
- (2) Does he insist that the nature of the illness be shown on such certificate?
- (3) If so, does this constitute a relatively recent change of policy?
- (4) Has there been any opposition from doctors in regard to showing the nature of illness on certificates?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Members of the Public Service are required to submit a doctor's certificate in connection with sick leave in accordance with the following Public Service regulation—

83 (2) (a) An application for leave of absence on the grounds of illness shall be supported by the certificate of a duly qualified medical practitioner registered under the Medical Act, 1894.

(b) The application and certificate shall be in the form approved by the Commissioner.

- (2) The prescribed certificate requires the nature of illness to be shown. In the case of illness of a confidential nature, the Commissioner of Public Health is to be advised by the practitioner in writing forwarded under confidential cover.
- (3) No.
- (4) There have been very few instances of opposition by doctors.

ABORTIONS

Medical Practitioners: Charges and Convictions

41. Mr. BERTRAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

During each of the 10 years ended the 31st December, 1968, how many duly qualified and registered medical practitioners have been—

- (a) charged;
- (b) convicted;
- (i) of having procured or attempted to procure an abortion;
- (ii) of an offence arising from an abortion or attempted abortion?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

This information is not available within the department.

ANIMALS

Local Government By-laws, and Restrictions

42. Mr. BERTRAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he considered the proposal to enable local government bodies to make by-laws under the Health Act restricting the keeping of herds or animals of any particular sex?
- (2) If "Yes," with what result?
- (3) If "No," when will he do so?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

May I preface my answer to this question by saying that the honourable member who has asked it has requested me to explain that the word "herds" should read "birds." I do not know whether the change can be made in the question, but the replies are as follows:—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) The proposal is not considered desirable.

The SPEAKER: I think it should be noted that the question has been asked on the basis that the word "herds" should read "birds."

MEAT INDUSTRY COMMITTEE

Tabling of Report

43. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

When is it anticipated the report of the committee appointed to investigate certain aspects of the meat industry will be tabled?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The report of the committee of inquiry into the mutton and lamb industry has been received and is now being considered.

INDUSTRIAL FUMES: KWINANA

Inspections by Department of Labour

44. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Is an inspector of the Department of Labour regularly employed in the Kwinana area to check on matters of work safety where fumes and gas emissions are involved?
- (2) If "No," on how many occasions since the 1st October, 1968, has a factories inspector visited the Kwinana area to carry out inspections?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) An inspector of factories regularly visits the Kwinana area to check on safety, health, and welfare matters in factories. Industries classified as mines are subject to inspection by the Mines Department.

Inspections under Clean Air Act

45. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

On how many occasions since the 1st October, 1968, have officers of the committee set up under the Clean Air Act investigated the emission of fumes, dust, and/or gas from industry in the Kwinana area?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:
Twelve.

BEACONSFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL*Land Resumption*

46. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the Education Department plan to resume any property adjacent to, or in the vicinity of, the Beaconsfield Primary School for education purposes?
- (2) If "Yes," what properties are likely to be involved?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2) The Education Department does not plan to resume property, but land will be progressively acquired as it becomes available.

New Building

47. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is a plan at present being prepared for the construction of a new primary school to replace the present Beaconsfield Primary School?
- (2) If "Yes," is it anticipated that the new school will be built on the site of the present school?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2) No replacement is contemplated at present.

INDUSTRIAL FUMES: KWINANA*Stoppage of Work*

48. Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) On how many occasions since the 1st October, 1968, have construction workers at the Australian Iron and Steel plant at Kwinana been ordered to stop work because of the suspected presence of gas emissions?
- (2) During the same period, and at the same plant, how many construction workers and/or employees have been treated for the suspected effects of gas?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) This is not a matter which comes within the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour.

SUBURBAN RAIL SERVICES*Restriction*

49. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Are investigations taking place in regard to limiting suburban rail services?
- (2) If so, what is the nature of the investigations and to what limitation or restriction of services are they related?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) and (2) A great deal of thought is being given to ways and means by which the W.A.G.R. can play an increasing role in urban transportation. Meanwhile a good indication of the Government's thinking is the Midland terminal and the new stainless steel diesel rail cars which, when combined to produce an urban transport system, have been very successful. However a close examination is being made of uneconomic evening and weekend services.

CARLISLE SCHOOL CHILDREN*Cost of Transporting to Lathlain School*

50. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the daily cost of transporting students from Carlisle School to Lathlain School?
- (2) How long is it anticipated that this practice will continue?
- (3) What are the future plans for increasing accommodation at the Carlisle School?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) \$3.80 per day.
- (2) Until Easter.
- (3) One room nearing completion. Two rooms listed on the 1969-70 building estimates.

WEEBO STATION*Quarrying Rights: Protection of Natives*

51. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) At what stage is the granting of quarry rights to promoters of quarrying at Weebo Station?
- (2) Will any action be taken to protect natives' interest in the quarrying site?
- (3) Has any action been taken by the Native Welfare Department with the Mines Department to protect natives' interest in the area referred to above?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Prospecting area 2734C for building stone was granted to W. H. Hoffman on 7th March, 1969, at the warden's court in Leonora.
- (2) The warden granted prospecting area 2734C subject to the natives having the right to remove such stone as they required to another location within two months of the date of granting.
- (3) The Native Welfare Department has had discussions with the Mines Department and is still examining the matter.

52. *This question was postponed.*

HOUSING FOR NATIVES

Commonwealth Assistance Scheme

53. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Native Welfare:

- (1) In what areas has housing been arranged for aborigines under the Commonwealth assistance scheme?
- (2) Are any new houses being built under the Commonwealth plan?
- (3) Is any preference given to families with applications waiting under the State Housing scheme?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Port Hedland.
Geraldton.
Metropolitan area.
Narrogin.
Bunbury.
Esperance.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.

LOTTERIES COMMISSION

Commissions Paid

54. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) What is the respective commission paid per ticket for each of the current lotteries being run by the Lotteries Commission?
- (2) Have these commissions varied since the inception of the commission's activities?
- (3) If so, what were the details of the variations?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) 25c—2.5c.
50c—4c.
\$1—8c.
\$4—30c.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Commission on 50c tickets increased from 4d. to 5d. on the 17th January, 1961.

JUNIOR UNIVERSITY EXAMINATION, 1968.

Commerce Paper

55. Mr. LAPHAM asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Were the questions set for the Commerce paper at the W.A. University Junior Commerce examination, 1968, taken from a textbook entitled *Social Studies in Commerce*, by P. Smith?
- (2) If so, was this textbook mentioned in the list of books recommended in the 1968 *Manual of Public Examinations*; if not, why was it used?

- (3) Was a protest lodged with the Chairman of the Public Examinations Board by the Commercial Teachers' Society concerning (1) and (2) above; and, if so, what was the result of such protest?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

The Public Examinations Board is not responsible to the Minister for Education, but I have been advised as follows:—

- (1) The questions set in the 1968 Junior Commerce paper were questions based on the syllabus in the *Manual of Public Examinations* for 1968.

No single textbook is prescribed as the one and only textbook to be used. The manual lists a number of books as "suggested textbooks" and it is left to the teachers in the schools to select the book or books which they prefer.

There has not been, nor could there be, an assumption on the part of the chief examiner that all candidates are in fact using the same book or books.

It is true that the information required in some questions is available in the recently-published book *Social Studies in Commerce* by P. J. Smith, but it is also true that the same information is given in other books appearing in the list of suggested textbooks and in other supplementary material which teachers have been urged to get.

- (2) The book cited above was not listed in the 1968 manual because, at the time of the publication of the manual, it had not been printed and released for sale. It is listed in the manual for 1969 as a result of a recommendation from the syllabus committee and schools were advised of its addition to the list of suggested textbooks in a circular sent out from the Public Examinations office on the 23rd September, 1968.
- (3) A letter from the Secretary of the Commercial Teachers' Society of W.A. was received on the 10th March, 1969. The letter will be presented to the Public Examinations Board at its next meeting on Friday, the 28th March, 1969.

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

NEWSPAPER TRAFFIC SURVEY

Examination of Suggestions Submitted

1. Mr. CASH asked the Minister for Traffic:

(1) Is he aware that the *Daily News* has offered to make available for examination by his department the thousands of suggestions for traffic reform that were submitted in response to the recent traffic survey conducted by that newspaper?

(2) Will he express his appreciation of the strong public interest in traffic problems by authorising his departmental officers to examine all the suggestions put forward in the survey?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) and (2) Like the honourable member, I feel the effort of the newspaper and the contributions made by members of the public, generally, should not be wasted. I appreciate the effort that has been made; I think it is very worth while. I have studied the suggestions from time to time as they have appeared in the Press, as no doubt the various departments have also done, because there are so many different authorities involved in the suggestions that have been made.

I know it will involve a lot of work and take some time, but I would like to say that some work has been done progressively in order to have all the suggestions condensed so that we can see the real, salient features which are vital so far as road safety is concerned. It is the opinion of various departments, of myself, and, of course, of the Government, that quite a number of the suggestions that have come forward are impracticable of implementation. Nevertheless there are many that could possibly be adopted, bearing in mind the consideration of costs and other factors.

I hope I am not speaking at too great a length. I think this is a vital matter which concerns everyone. I am not now speaking to the Press, but I am replying to the question of the honourable member and at the same time getting something out of my conscience. I believe this is a very worth-while effort. I would even like to see something on these lines continued. I do not think that the public is by any manner

or means fed up, or feels this matter has become stale. The question of road safety is uppermost in the mind of the public every day of the week; therefore we should not ignore the contribution that has been made. We will endeavour to compile some summary of the suggestions, and determine whether they can, or cannot be implemented.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEES

Appointment

2. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier: Would the Premier inform the House what steps he has taken to implement the decision to appoint standing committees, as was agreed to by a motion of this House some time ago?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I nearly got up to answer the question when I saw the honourable member rise! We have been giving this matter consideration but we have not reached any finality. I hope that in respect of the public accounts committee we can make some progress during this period of the Parliamentary session, or early in the next session—but preferably during this period of the present session.

As for the other two committees—the public works committee, and the subordinate legislation committee—I must admit that personally I am not enamoured of the idea, as I have looked at the situation in the other States. I cannot envisage that the Government will propose any action in the immediate future.

NATIVE WELFARE

Protection of Sacred Grounds: Grievance

MR. HARMAN (Maylands) [5.3 p.m.]: I have a very serious grievance to place before the Government. Unless some very urgent Government action is taken, history will record that on the 7th March, 1969, as a result of a decision in a warden's court, the Government of Western Australia commenced the rape of aboriginal culture in the State. On that particular day in the warden's court in Perth a Mr. Hoffman of Leonora was granted a prospecting area on Weebo Station, north of Leonora.

It was made despite an objection by the Department of Native Welfare; it was made despite the fact that the aborigines testified at the hearing that this particular area had sacred significance; and it was

made despite the fact that the warden made the following comment in giving his decision:—

Somebody digging in their tribal grounds would be to the Aborigines like someone knocking over the war memorial would be to a staunch R.S.L. supporter.

It was made without the warden taking evidence from a graduate anthropologist who was present at the hearing and was prepared to give evidence to the warden.

It has been said by the warden that the stones have some significance, but not the area. I find it difficult to reconcile this view with my own experience over some years and with my own knowledge of these matters. In fact, the particular area is closely tied to the Possum ancestral beings. As we all know, aboriginal culture is based partly on mythological stories which are handed down over the years and which are held sacred by the aborigines. They are held in esteem by people who have knowledge of aboriginal culture, and I believe that the people of this State should have some regard for aboriginal culture.

The Possum people held large circumcision rites at this particular centre. The story goes that the colouration on the rocks was caused by the blood dropping from circumcisions and from blood-letting ceremonies. The stones and the sites are secret and sacred. I was told as recently as today by aborigines; and they are absolutely dismayed that this decision has been made.

In this case I am also told that a direct patrilineal descendant is the custodian of this area. I notice the Minister has no knowledge of this. I am told also that this particular custodian of the area will be subject to punishment by his own people, whether or not he revealed the location of this site to Mr. Hoffman. The fact that this site has now become known to non-aborigines, and that it is now part of a mining tenement, will mean that the custodian will be punished by his own people.

This is not the first time that such a thing has happened. I can remember a case which occurred recently in which an aboriginal, who was the custodian of an area, was also subjected to punishment by spearing, because that particular site became known to non-aborigines.

My reason for rising is to request the Government, on behalf of the aborigines of this area, on behalf of the aborigines of this State, and on behalf of all people who have some regard for aboriginal culture, to use every endeavour possible to find some means of preserving the culture of the aborigines, so that the stones and this particular site remain the heritage of aboriginal people and so that in the future they will not be destroyed, broken up, or violated in any fashion.

I hope, too, that the Government will introduce legislation, as was promised in the speech the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator delivered to this Parliament, to protect important sites and objects of aboriginal origin. I would ask the Government to look into these matters. There is not very much time left before the holder of the mining tenement will be allowed to remove stones from the site.

I have not examined the contents of the answer given today by the Minister representing the Minister for Mines, but it does seem to me that if the prospecting rights of an area had been granted previously it would be difficult for similar prospecting rights to be granted over the same area, because my understanding of the Mining Act is that it is not possible to grant to the same person a prospecting right of an area after the existing one has expired. At that stage he has to do something about taking out a mineral claim or a mineral lease. I have not had a chance to study this matter, but it is one which the Government might look at.

Mr. Tonkin: In any event there is precedent for Ministers not to accept a warden's decision.

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Native Welfare) [5.11 p.m.]: This grievance, if it can be termed as such, is noted. The honourable member might have gained the impression from a reply given to a question asked of the Minister for Lands that this matter is still under active consideration and investigation by at least the Department of Native Welfare.

I tried to get the notes of evidence of the hearing, and I have read the report of a local officer who attended the warden's court. From what I have learned I understand his report indicated that half of the aborigines whom he questioned had no knowledge of, or interest in, this particular area. My understanding is that many of the others had their interest greatly stimulated as a result of a display of the stones from this area in a shop window in Leonora. However, be that as it may, there may be some justification for the action which the honourable member has proposed. At this stage I merely say that this matter is under active consideration to ascertain whether something in some form or other can be done.

In regard to the last part of the remarks of the honourable member in relation to proposed legislation, I would point out that this is wrapped up with other legislation dealing with the Museum and similar things. I doubt very much whether the legislation will be ready for introduction during this session; but it is certainly proposed to have it ready for the first period of the next session.

MINING ACTIVITIES

Effect on Pastoral Leases: Grievance

MR. BURT (Murchison-Eyre) [5.13 p.m.]: I want to take this opportunity to air a grievance which is very slightly related to that raised by the member for Maylands. In this case it concerns the unenviable position in which a number of pastoralists throughout the eastern gold-fields and the Murchison area find themselves as a result of the tremendous upsurge in mining activities which has taken place during the last two years.

The matter came to my notice rather forcibly when a pastoralist told me that in order to carry out his shearing operations unmolested by mineral investigators he pegged eight mineral claims in his own paddocks in the vicinity of his shearing shed at a cost of something like \$1,300. I felt that was grossly unfair, but that is the position under the Mining Act to-day. The holder of a pastoral lease has no recourse whatever against interference by mining companies which desire to prospect over his land.

Whilst every pastoralist realises that the mining companies must be given first preference, and that the minerals from a few acres of land can produce far more than can be produced from the activities of pastoralists over, perhaps, 1,000,000 acres, I do feel that at present the many pastoral properties which are now being overrun by prospectors, subcontractors acting for mining companies, geologists, and the like, should be given some protection by the Government.

There are something like 550 pastoral properties in Western Australia, and to date I understand about 8,000 mineral claims have been applied for—claims of an average size of about 275 acres—and this virtually ties up temporarily over 2,000,000 acres.

The investigations which commenced with the finding of nickel at Kambalda have virtually ruined one pastoral property. I refer to Woolibar Station on which Kambalda is situated. As the tempo moves further north a large number of pastoralists are going to be affected. In many cases companies do respect the rights of growers. They contact the pastoralists before sending men to prospect on their leases. Those men are usually given favourable consideration and work in very well with the pastoralists, but in a number of cases this is not so. I regret to say that university graduates, geologists, and others, seem to think they can run onto a pastoral lease without the courtesy of talking to the owner and they ride roughshod over fences and watering places, thus disturbing the sheep. They have no consideration whatsoever for the fact that a particular lease might have been held for up to nearly 100 years by one family, or by a number of graziers.

Mining operations are carried out by using modern earth-moving machinery which makes tremendous scars on the country. During these operations the ground is flattened for roads, thus preventing the growth of edible plants; sheep are disturbed; everything is covered with dust; pipelines are installed; and paddocks are virtually cut in half. All this, together with other operations, takes place merely in the search for minerals. In many cases, nothing comes of this because the minerals concerned do not warrant an operating mine, and the mining company moves further afield, the pastoralist being left to repair the damage to his property. In many cases this damage affects up to 25 per cent. of his holding.

Recently I attended a couple of meetings of pastoralists in my electorate and at one of them, although it was not desired that mining activities be cut down, it was felt that the Mining Act could be amended to make sure that pastoralists who are likely to be adversely affected by mining operations be given notice to this effect by the mining companies that are applying for mining leases on their properties.

I think the way for this to be done is to have the mining registrar in the district concerned advise the pastoralist of the fact that a number of mineral claims have been pegged on his property. At present I do not think the mining registrars have any idea on whose properties these mineral claims are being pegged. I think it would at least be a courtesy if the pastoralists concerned were advised. When an operating mine is established, as has happened already at Kambalda and will happen on Mt. Vethers Station when the Scotia Mine operates, and in other areas, some compensation should be paid to the pastoralists, and the relevant Act should be amended to allow for this.

We know that pastoralists have only grazing rights on these particular properties, but in past years many hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on them and, in many cases, they are a heritage for the younger members of the families concerned.

In the iron ore areas of the Pilbara, most of the companies have treated the pastoralists well. The companies have often purchased the portion of the station properties concerned and, in some cases, they voluntarily erected fences on either side of railways, etc. However, these companies are in a bigger way than those prospecting for nickel. They know how much ore they have because their ore deposits are on the surface, to be mined by open-cut methods, and they can afford to be generous. The companies that have to investigate underground are not so fortunate.

I feel an amendment should be made to the relevant Act—I do not know whether it should be the Mining Act or the Land

Act—to allow, at least, a pastoralist to be compensated by the mining companies for the area of land he loses on account of mining operations coming into effect. The value of this land varies according to the district concerned, but roughly an amount of 25c per acre would be a fair sum to compensate for the areas taken. I feel this is well worth consideration, as mining activity will increase and it is moving to the north.

A total of 470 mineral claims was lodged at Leonora in one day quite recently, and this gives some idea of what will happen as the tempo of this huge search for minerals moves into the Murchison and the Gascoyne. Therefore I ask the Government to give every consideration to amending the relevant Act so as to assist the people who have provided a tremendous amount of wealth for the State of Western Australia.

MR. BOVELL (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [5.21 p.m.]: I thank the member for Murchison for his comments and, in speaking to his grievance as Minister for Lands and Minister in this Chamber representing the Minister for Mines, I do not know in which category I will be—whether Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde. As Minister for Lands I am virtually the protector of the pastoralists and, through representing the Minister for Mines, I am guarding the interests of the Minister for Mines in this Chamber.

I will bring to the notice of the Minister for Mines all that the member for Murchison has said. Generally speaking, the extensive activities of mining companies in Western Australia have been orderly and in most cases there has been co-operation and understanding between the pastoralists and the mining companies concerned. I appreciate that in some instances where excavations are made and no mining activities are proceeded with, the pastoralist can suffer handicap.

In relation to the honourable member's reference to amendments to an Act, I would point out to the House that the Mining Act takes precedence over the Land Act, and I do not know whether it would be possible to amend the Land Act. There again, I will certainly discuss the matter with the Minister for Mines to see whether some scheme can be worked out to compensate the pastoralists for any loss they may have suffered.

INDIGENT PEOPLE AT COLLIE

Appointment of Permanent Child Welfare Officer: Grievance

MR. JONES (Collie) [5.23 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to bring a matter to the notice of the Government on behalf of the community of Collie. It

is a well-known fact that due to the decline of employment available in the Collie district in the mining industry, the timber industry, the railways, and owing to the completion of the fourth unit at the Muja generating station, a number of State Housing Commission homes have become vacant.

Organisations in the city have made approaches for homes for people in the category of widows, wives with husbands in prison, and other people, and, due to the number of houses vacant in Collie, people in these categories are being sent to our town.

A survey recently conducted shows some 48 people in the categories I have mentioned have been accommodated in State Housing Commission homes in Collie. If members will realise the effect that this has on Collie, they will understand why I am speaking today. It was found necessary, through the thoughtfulness of the Ministers' Fraternal to form an organisation in Collie called the Welfare Council comprising members of all church groups, the Good Neighbour Council, and other welfare groups to deal with this vexed problem.

The situation is that widows, and even wives with husbands in prison in Victoria, are being sent to Collie and these people have no means at their disposal. We had a situation last Friday week where the welfare officer at Collie was advised of a lady coming to the town and that he was to meet her. However, the welfare officer was on business in the Warren area, so the minister of the Congregational Church (the Rev. Mr. Watts) met this unfortunate lady, who had three children and very little household equipment.

Then comes the problem of the Collie community providing help for these unfortunate people. I realise it would be foolish for me to suggest that people of the metropolitan area who are in need should not be housed in the vacant houses at Collie, but I put it to the Government that if Collie is to receive these types of people then the Government should meet its responsibilities.

I am not suggesting that the people of Collie are not prepared to meet their responsibilities, but the position is such that it is becoming very difficult for the Welfare Council and welfare organisations to care for these poor unfortunate people and I appeal to the Government to send somebody down to Collie to have a look at the situation. I understand that the Good Neighbour Council has already written to the Premier on this question, and I further understand that the Welfare Council has drawn this matter to the notice of the Premier.

There is also the spectacle that irrespective of the number of the people whom I have mentioned being brought to the town, the child welfare officer is available for perhaps only one or two days per week. With such a large influx of these people to the town a greater responsibility is placed on his department and I would suggest to the Government that if the child welfare officer cannot remain at Collie for longer periods, then the office be kept open to cater for these people.

It must be appreciated that the assistance being given is making its impact felt on the business community. A survey shows that a lot of these people are running up big accounts, and the business people in Collie, according to representatives of the church groups and other welfare organisations, have reached their limit and it is time a good look was had at this question.

Seeing that 48 families in this category have been sent to Collie, surely it is not unreasonable to suggest that the child welfare officer be sent to Collie on a permanent basis so that he can go through the homes of these people to ascertain the plight they are in. I realise the people must be housed and given some assistance, but I do not think it is wrong for me to suggest that the whole burden should not fall on the shoulders of the Collie community. So, following the representations being made to him, I hope the Premier will send an officer down to talk with the welfare groups and the church leaders who will verify that the position is just as I am stating it to be in this chamber tonight.

As far as I can see there is no immediate relief for the unemployment situation that exists in Collie, and it will be aggravated if more of these people are sent to the town. I suggest that the time is right, in view of the great efforts being made by the people in the town to assist, for the Government to have a good look at the question with a view to offering some relief to the people concerned.

WEEBO STATION

Gangering Stone: Grievance

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [5.29 p.m.]: Like the member for Maylands my grievance concerns the sacred stone on Weebo Station. Recently it was said that nothing could be done in respect of this stone, but I suggest that under the Mining Act quite a lot could be done to overcome the position.

Before I get onto that aspect, I would like to read a letter from Mrs. Cullen, who is the mother of the owner of Weebo Station. When this happened she immediately got in touch with me and I had a conversation with her, and subsequently she wrote to me as follows:—

Thank you for listening to me this morning and being able to understand my distress at the thought of the

sacred stones from an ancient tribal ceremonial ground on Weebo Station to be sold to decorate our fireplaces and feature walls.

I lived on Weebo Station for nearly 20 years and during that time I came to love and understand the aborigines and to appreciate their customs and beliefs and way of life. My five children grew up there until school age. My eldest son, Robert Money, owns the station now and speaks their language.

It was only last year when visiting the station that they honoured me by taking me out to see this place. No aboriginal women are allowed to see it. I was most impressed, not only with the site, but with their tremendous pride and depth of feeling and their steadfast belief that God created that place especially for their people.

It was that day they discovered that a lot of stones had been removed and they were very upset and angry, as I am today. The site consists of a line of low hills of piled up flat blocks of stone, yellowy cream and pinky mauve in colour, with a pattern of fine lines running through them. Every fragment of this stone is precious to them, and it would be quite impossible for the natives to remove these stones in two months from the site. It is just as sacred and beautiful to them as Westminster Abbey is to the world.

These people have so little and we have so much. Please help the natives keep these few acres with their strange stony hills and their ancient cultures intact. Regards,

Jean I. Cullen.

That, I repeat, is a letter from a woman who lived on that station for 20 years. Her views, of course, have been backed up by the Professor of Anthropology at the University of Western Australia, and also by officers of the Department of Native Welfare. The latter is evident from the fact that officers of that department opposed the application for a prospecting area when it was before the warden's court. There is a clause in the Mining Act which gives the Minister tremendous power.

Mr. Tonkin: There is a precedent for the Minister reversing a warden's decision. Warden Malley's decision was reversed.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I have limited time at my disposal. I would like to quote section 29 of the Mining Act, which reads as follows:—

Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary, the Governor may at any time, by notice in the *Government Gazette*, exempt from occupation or further occupation by the holder of a miner's right any specified portions of Crown lands or any class of Crown lands.

So here is a situation where any mining tenement or lease or prospecting area can be exempted from occupation by the simple process of the Governor placing a notice in the *Government Gazette*. This can be done notwithstanding the fact that the individual concerned has a miner's right. That is one course of action open to the Minister.

A second course of action is open to the Minister because the prospecting area permit does not entitle, or give any right, to mine. That is not the intention at all. A prospecting area covers 24 acres for one dollar a year, and the whole object is to allow the holder to see if there are any mineral deposits on that claim. If there are mineral deposits on the claim then the prospecting area can be converted to a mineral lease or a mineral claim. One cannot have a prospecting area for more than 18 months. It is issued for a period of 12 months, and can be extended to 18 months, but not beyond that period. The holder is entitled to take away 50 tons of stone, and no more, without the permission of the warden.

After the holder ascertains that what he is looking for is actually on the site he has then to convert the prospecting area to a mineral claim or lease. He has to have the approval of the Governor to obtain a lease and that approval is all-embracing. The section of the Act reads as follows:—

The granting of a lease shall be in the absolute discretion of the Governor notwithstanding that the applicant may or may not have in all respects complied with the provisions of this Act and the regulations.

So, when the holder of the prospecting area applies to convert it into a lease, the Minister has only to make a recommendation to the Governor and that is the end of it.

The same thing would apply if a person tried to convert the prospecting area into a mineral claim. Again, under the regulations as a consequence of the Mining Act, we have, in respect of mineral claims, the following:—

Prior to the hearing before the Warden, a report shall be obtained from the Government Geologist or other professional officer. The application and objections (if any) shall be heard in open Court by the Warden, who shall as soon as convenient submit the application and report, together with his recommendation thereon, for the consideration of the Minister, and the Minister may, notwithstanding anything contained in this Regulation, refuse the application or approve the application for the whole or any portion of the area applied for, and may impose such conditions as to him may seem fit.

So an applicant can be stopped by the Governor in respect of a lease and by the Minister in respect of a mineral claim. It is as simple as that. If on investigation the Department of Native Welfare considers this is of consequence to the natives—and the Professor of Anthropology at the University of Western Australia has said it is—then the Minister has only to indicate to the prospector that he will not agree to his application to convert into a claim or a lease.

In those circumstances there would be no point in an individual continuing to prospect. He might have a permit to prospect the area but it is not designed to allow him to mine the area. It is as simple as that. In other words, action can be taken if the will is there.

After reading that letter from a woman who resided on the station; after talking to individuals in that particular area; and after taking into consideration that we have a huge number of nomadic natives in the area—I think that a few years ago when a Select Committee was there the natives between Kalgoorlie and the Warburtons numbered about 1,800—I am convinced that this is something which is of considerable consequence. I do hope that when the departments have considered this matter, as has been indicated by the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Native Welfare, the decision will be to protect the area. It can be done so simply if the will is there.

Resolved: That grievances be noted.

BILLS (12): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Banana Industry Compensation Trust Fund Act Amendment Bill.
2. Cattle Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.
3. Exotic Stock Diseases (Eradication Fund) Bill.
4. Brands Act Amendment Bill.
5. Poultry Industry (Trust Fund) Act Amendment Bill.
6. Noxious Weeds Act Amendment Bill. Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.
7. Alumina Refinery (Mitchell Plateau) Agreement Bill. Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and read a first time.
8. Reserves Act Amendment Bill. Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Bovell (Minister for Lands), and read a first time.
9. Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act Amendment Bill, 1969.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Water Supplies), and read a first time.

10. State Housing Act Amendment Bill, 1969.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing), and read a first time.

11. Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act Amendment Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Labour), and read a first time.

12. Motor Vehicle Insurance Policies Bill.

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Tonkin (Leader of the Opposition), and read a first time.

BILLS (6): REPORT

1. Fisheries Act Amendment Bill.
2. Criminal Code Amendment Bill.
3. Administration Act Amendment Bill.
4. Plant Diseases Act Amendment Bill.
5. Dividing Fences Act Amendment Bill.
6. Offenders Probation and Parole Act Amendment Bill.

Reports of Committees adopted.

PERTH RAILWAY STATION: LOWERING

*Parliamentary Approval of Any Agreement:
Motion*

MR. TONKIN (Melville)—Leader of the Opposition) [5.50 p.m.]: I move—

That this House declares that the Government should not enter into any binding agreement with Western Australia Development Corporation or any other company for the lowering of the Perth Railway Station until the proposed terms are first approved by Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I propose to attempt to establish that this motion is very necessary and one which the House should not hesitate to carry. It is well known that this Government has a penchant for carrying on negotiations in secret. When the negotiations are completed then a Bill containing an agreement, in the form of a schedule, is invariably brought to the House. Members are given little option to effect any alterations, because it is known that one cannot amend a schedule to a Bill. As the schedule contains the full agreement, then it is a question of accepting the agreement *in toto* or rejecting it *in toto*. There is no middle course.

In order to show that what I said about the Government carrying on its negotiations in secret is not an idle statement, I propose to illustrate my words by what has happened in connection with the Dillingham Corporation and a feasibility study for the construction of a dry dock.

Members will know that when the Government proposed to enter into an agreement with Western Australia Development

Corporation for a feasibility study for the sinking of the railway, the Government was prepared to make available—and actually did make available—the letter of intent, which indicated the terms and conditions generally upon which the feasibility study was to be undertaken.

Now, the Dillingham Corporation was given what appears to be, on the face of it, a somewhat similar assignment. The corporation was to carry out a feasibility study in connection with the construction of a dry dock.

The other day I asked the Premier whether he would make available a copy of the agreement. As I have said, on the face of it the situation was no different from the situation with regard to the sinking of the railway and the arrangement with Western Australia Development Corporation for a feasibility study. In both cases they were feasibility studies. The sinking of the railway is a proposition of much greater magnitude and importance than that of the feasibility study with regard to the dry dock, because it is already known that in connection with the dry dock there have been two Government inquiries and both of them said it was not feasible. Accordingly, I asked the Premier this question—

Will he table a copy of the agreement made with Dillingham Corporation of Australia Pty. Ltd. in 1967 for a feasibility study of the building of a dry dock in Cockburn Sound?

I was not asking for Dillingham's report which the Government has had for some time and has said nothing about. I was only asking for a copy of the agreement which enabled Dillinghams to go ahead and make the study. The Government, through the Premier, refused to make it available in these terms—

It is not proposed to table the papers which, as is to be expected in a matter of this kind, include much of a confidential nature.

I am in a position to say, however, that there is no formal agreement. The arrangement with Dillinghams is covered by a letter which authorised them to undertake at their cost a feasibility study to determine whether a dry dock proposal was economically and otherwise viable. Beyond that the Government's commitment only extends to an undertaking to be ready and willing to undertake negotiations with Dillinghams if the feasibility study indicates that a project would be economically and otherwise viable. This assurance they sought as a firm indication that we would not abandon our negotiations with them when we saw the result of the feasibility study and proceeded to negotiate

in another quarter without giving Dillinghams a fair and reasonable opportunity to arrive at an acceptable proposition.

I say, without the slightest hesitation, if that is all the letter of intent had in it there was no justification for saying it contained matters of a confidential nature and therefore should not be disclosed, because the letter of intent given to W.A.D.C. with regard to sinking the railway had more particulars in it than those quoted by the Premier.

When I asked for this information I did not expect to get it, because I have reason to believe that, although there is no formal agreement—that is, one properly signed and stamped and with all the requirements made—there is an agreement that Dillinghams are to be provided with a location at Point Peron to establish ship-building yards. If I had been able to get a copy of that agreement I would have been in a position to establish whether what I said a few weeks ago about this proposition was true or false. The Government denied it.

Mr. Court: The position is exactly as the Premier stated it yesterday.

Mr. TONKIN: What is, exactly?

Mr. Court: The position in respect of Dillinghams. It does not matter what you might like to read into it.

Mr. TONKIN: That there is no agreement of any kind?

Mr. Court: The only agreement in respect of the matter is to the extent that the Premier told you yesterday. There is no more than that. The company has gone on to do its feasibility study in good faith, and the only condition is that we at least give it a chance to negotiate.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister will forgive me if I am not in a position to accept that, because I recall a similar incident when I adopted the same attitude in regard to Hamersley. Both the Minister for Industrial Development and the Premier should make no mistake about that.

Mr. Court: I am telling you the facts.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister is telling me all right! The Minister told me before that he denied there was any proposal for the development of iron ore resources at Duck Creek when Blake Pelly told his shareholders there was.

Mr. Court: The Premier gave you the proper answers on that one, too.

Mr. TONKIN: No, he did not because subsequently when I twitted him about it and read the Blake Pelly letter, his question to me was, "What did they want in return?" If there were no proposal, they would not have been asking for anything. The Premier's next question, when I told him what they wanted, was "How big?" If there were no proposal the question was completely irrelevant. So I think there is

some justification for my accepting with reserve assurances which I am given from the front bench.

I cannot see that there is any more reason to withhold a copy of the agreement with Dillinghams if what it contains is what the Premier told me yesterday, which has now again been asserted by the Minister for Industrial Development, than there is to withhold the letter of intent which was tabled in order to make available information regarding the W.A.D.C. feasibility study of the sinking of the railway.

Why should the Government wish to withhold this information? The answer is because it wishes to carry on these negotiations in secret, and to present the House with a *fait accompli*. The question is far too important to all members of this Chamber—who represent a large number of people—and far too important for the people, and far too important for the city, for the Government to be in a position to make a firm agreement without disclosing the details, and then to bring here a Bill for us to ratify the agreement. So we should safeguard the position beforehand.

There is much disagreement in the community regarding the proposal to sink a railway. I have heard very cogent argument for a proposal to place the railway in the middle of the northern freeway—as is done in many countries in the world—and to utilise for the railway the land in between the dual carriageways. If that were done the railway would be removed from the city and would not be the obstruction it now is. It would save land and it would save money, and that is a proposition which could be looked at.

Then there is much disagreement regarding the use to which the land can, or should, be put. I do not want to see this all tied up in an agreement which is irrevocable, and which members on the Government side of the House will be obliged to support because of party discipline, before the general public is made aware of what the Government proposes to do.

Public opinion was so strong with regard to the reclamation of the river that it was not difficult to get this House to accept a proposition that not more than three acres of the river could be reclaimed without the approval of Parliament. If it is considered it is reasonable that before any work of that nature is undertaken Parliament should be advised and should give its approval, surely it is reasonable that Parliament should be asked for its approval of any proposition which involves sinking the railway and, possibly, the handing over of many acres of valuable real estate to private people.

Mr. O'Connor: What do you mean by "handing over"?

Mr. TONKIN: Just what I said. To give it to private people in payment for the work they are going to do. That was the original proposition. I am aware of the fact that more recently there is an indication that the Government is back-pedalling a bit, and it is now considering a lease.

Mr. O'Connor: You are trying to mislead the people into thinking we are giving it away.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not trying to mislead people at all. The Minister's original proposal was that in exchange for the work to be done—and so that it would not cost the Government anything in terms of money—the persons concerned would be given the freehold, and the air rights as well, to a lot of land which would become available. I am pleased to see the Minister is so touchy on this question, because we might get down to real detail on it.

Mr. O'Connor: You have never asked me for any detail on it.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister has changed his ground so often it would have been impossible to follow.

Mr. Brand: Well, we know what to do in future.

Mr. O'Connor: You have asked your questions through other sources.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not know what was meant by that interjection.

Mr. O'Connor: I think you do know.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not ask my questions through other sources; I ask them myself. But I might tell the Minister I do not get the right answers.

Mr. Brand: It is only a repetition of what has been happening for a long time.

Mr. TONKIN: The latest contortion in connection with this matter is to appoint an expert to advise an expert. I had to read the Press article which I have before me a second time when I saw it, because I just could not believe my eyes. Mr. Knox was brought here to take control of transport and to advise the Government on it, and is paid one of the highest salaries the Government pays to anybody. We also have the Chief Planner of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, and the Chairman of the Town Planning Board—two qualified men whose job it is, we suppose, to advise the Government on these matters.

We are now told the State is seeking an expert, and I quote the following from *The Sunday Times* of the 23rd March, 1969:—

The WA Government will soon begin a nation-wide search for an expert "Mr. Transport" to compile a

master plan for the future development of metropolitan road and rail services.

Mr. Speaker, would you not have thought the Government would have requested somebody to compile this master plan before it started on a feasibility study to sink the railway? Surely this is back to front! Before a Government should embark upon specific proposals it should be in possession of an overall plan, and the separate proposals conforming with that plan can then be put in hand and developed as opportunity and funds permit. But that has not been the procedure adopted here! Instead, the Government appoints as its adviser an organisation which is a shareholder in a firm likely to become the contractors. That is a most unusual procedure, to say the least! The firm that will advise the Government that this work ought to be undertaken, and to show it is feasible, is to benefit from the contract to do the work.

Mr. O'Connor: To whom are you referring?

Mr. TONKIN: I am referring to De Leuw Cather.

Mr. O'Connor: Well, you are well behind in your information.

Mr. TONKIN: Am I?

Mr. O'Connor: Yes. I agree that it was a shareholder once.

Mr. TONKIN: Has it pulled out?

Mr. O'Connor: Yes.

Mr. TONKIN: Why did you not advise the House when it did?

Mr. O'Connor: Why did you not ask?

Mr. TONKIN: Why did I not ask? If one wants an indication of the secret workings of the Government, where would one look for it? The Minister was aware of this information. He is aware that the article from which I have quoted had been published in a newspaper, but he said nothing because he was not asked; that is his attitude! Now, I will ask the Minister this question, through you, Mr. Speaker: Has De Leuw Cather & Co. ever been a shareholder in W.A.D.C.?

Mr. O'Connor: I will give my answers in due course.

Mr. TONKIN: I see. Here is an instance where the Minister has been asked and he does not give an answer.

Mr. Graham: He does not know and he has to find out during the tea suspension.

Mr. Brand: He would not be the first Minister who has had to do that, either.

Mr. TONKIN: Until evidence to the contrary is produced to me, I am entitled to rely on the published list of shareholders in the W.A.D.C., and De Leuw Cather & Co. is listed as one of them.

Mr. O'Connor: That is correct, but it is not any longer.

Mr. Graham: Who is subbing for them?

Mr. TONKIN: I think this is a most remarkable situation! Having embarked upon a proposition of such magnitude, the Government then decides to look for an expert. Let us examine this statement. The Government will first look for an expert in Australia on a two-year assignment only. If there is such an expert in this State there is no need to put him on the salary that is mentioned here. He can be seconded from his present job and paid an additional allowance.

Mr. O'Connor: Where did you get the information about the two-year assignment only?

Mr. TONKIN: That is what was said in the Press report.

Mr. O'Connor: Did it say it could be on contract?

Mr. TONKIN: It said he would complete the assignment which could take up to two years.

Mr. O'Connor: Take up to two years; but it might take only 12 or 18 months.

Mr. TONKIN: That makes it worse. Where does the Government think it will get a top man and a first-class authority to drop his present job and come to us for less than two years?

Mr. O'Connor: I said it might be on a contract basis.

Mr. TONKIN: It might be a lot of things! We have to guess because the Government will not tell us.

Mr. O'Connor: You are making a guess.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not making any guesses; I am dealing only with the realities of the situation.

Mr. O'Connor: You are telling only part of the story.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister will have the opportunity to tell all the story, if he is prepared to, and that will be a change! I am reiterating that it is extremely unlikely the Government will get a top man in Australia who can advise it on this question; a man who is prepared to drop out of the job he at present occupies and come to this State for two years or less with no guarantee from anybody of subsequent re-employment.

Further, I think it is less likely the Government will get such an expert abroad on this basis. I have discussed the matter with men who are more knowledgeable on the subject than I am, and I am informed it will take at least 12 months for an expert who may be obtained to learn enough about the question to be able to speak on it intelligently. So that means a delay of at least 12 months, and surely

the Government does not propose to proceed with the sinking of the railway whilst the feasibility study is being carried on to ascertain whether or not the work should be done!

So these are very disturbing features, and I think the Government's thinking has been very woolly right from the start, because its first proposition was nothing like the one that is now before the W.A.D.C.—nothing like it! Originally there would not have been more than five and a half acres available to the developers, and that is what caused me to say—on the advice of people who came here to examine the proposal—that it was not economically viable.

Mr. O'Connor: You have done a disservice to the State if you have sent them away with that viewpoint.

Mr. TONKIN: I did not send them away with that viewpoint; they told me that.

Mr. O'Connor: You said there were only five and a half acres available.

Mr. TONKIN: They told me that.

Mr. Court: They were not very careful with their examination.

Mr. TONKIN: Were they not? I think the Minister for Industrial Development was present on that occasion; and was it not he who arranged a cocktail party at the Weld Club?

Mr. Court: No, he was a guest like you were.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: Before the tea suspension I was making some reference to a little party which had been arranged at the Weld Club. I did this in order to give credence to a claim which I made that I had been told by several persons present that the Government's proposal was not economically viable, because the costs were such that they would exceed the return to be expected from the area of land to be made available.

It was a very convivial evening; it was most enjoyable, and I consider that very important information was volunteered to me. I did not seek this information; it was volunteered, and it was along the lines I have said.

I said before the tea suspension that I understood, or believed, that the area of land to be made available was about five and a half acres. As both the Minister for Railways and the Minister for Industrial Development disputed that, I took advantage of the tea interval to check up from two sources. I have been advised by two engineers, acting quite separately, the one without the knowledge of the other.

Mr. O'Connor: Will you name them?

Mr. TONKIN: No.

Mr. O'Connor: You are being secretive again.

Mr. TONKIN: Well, I like that! After the Government refuses to table the letter of intent to Dillingham's, the Minister has the temerity to suggest that I am obliged to disclose to this House the names of the people who are advising me. Will the Minister disclose to the House the names of the people from whom he obtains advice from time to time? What rubbish he talks.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are being secretive about it.

Mr. TONKIN: I will tell the Minister that both these people are engineers of considerable standing and experience, with experience both overseas and within Australia.

One of these engineers said to me in written form that the central city block was bounded by Roe Street, Wellington Street, Barrack Street, and William Street. This was at present occupied by the central railway station at ground level and it would continue to be occupied by that station, but with an open depression of 13 feet in the ground not more than one-third of this block would be released for redevelopment.

A calculation was made from the De Leuw Cather report which the Minister made available to me upon request, and that calculation appears to give a figure of between six and seven acres.

The other man who advised me said that he had been consulted by two of the overseas firms who were here to tender, and he had been asked to give his opinion on the value of the land which was to be offered in exchange for the putting of the railway underground. He said that the original invitation offered something of the order of seven acres, which was expected to cost about \$5,500,000, and that the Government had agreed that the basis of valuation was about \$800,000 per acre.

It was on the basis of that information that I made the statement I previously made. If the original area was considerably in excess of that, then the Minister can say so and I shall be prepared to accept it, because he is in the position to have it scaled accurately, whereas I have to rely on the expert advice tendered to me by people who are directly concerned with the tendering.

It should be remembered that the De Leuw Cather report was put out in 1963 and that the original proposal—plan 3—was modified by a working party in 1966. It was on the basis of that altered proposal that the Government then invited tenders.

Although this motion must necessarily traverse the proposals of the sinking of the railway, it is not a motion for or against the De Leuw Cather recommendation, or the basis upon which the Government invited tenders; or the plan which W.A.D.C. is required to submit by the end of May. This does not pass judgment upon

the proposition at all. I have my views about it, and for a number of reasons which I previously stated, I disagree with what the Government proposes to do; but that is not under consideration at the moment.

The question here is whether the Government ought to feel that in a proposition of this magnitude and of this importance to the people and to the City of Perth, it is entitled to proceed and completely sew up the proposition so that when eventually it comes to Parliament, if it does, it is irrevocable and we find ourselves in the position, as we have so often, that the agreement forms the schedule to the Bill, and we have no opportunity to amend it in any shape or form.

I want to avoid that situation. All the motion will do if it is carried will be to indicate to the Government that before it arrives at any agreement on this matter, Parliament shall be informed—the people of Western Australia shall be informed and have an opportunity to express their opinions about it; because you will very well know, Mr. Speaker, that there are many people in this community—some very highly qualified—who have ideas which are very different indeed from those which the Government entertains.

It is therefore only right that an opportunity should be afforded for those views to be expressed. You will recall, Sir, that the Government was very firm in its determination at one time to build the southern leg of the freeway. It was not going to brook any interference; but because of public opinion, which was very strongly expressed, the Government asked De Leuw Cather to go into the question, and subsequently it was announced that, for the time being, it was not intended to proceed with the building of the southern leg of the freeway. If no opportunity had been afforded, however, to object to the proposition and there had been no scope for the expression of public opinion, I have no doubt the Government would have proceeded with the work.

Here we have a repetition with regard to the interchange. Again, the Government was determined to build the complete interchange with all bridges, and I from my place in this House advocated, as did other people outside the House, that the Government could save a substantial sum of money by not proceeding with the top bridge of the interchange; but at the time we raised this question the attitude of the Government was that it would be built. In recent days, however, it has been announced it will not be built.

So we see the value of providing an opportunity for the people interested—those qualified and with knowledge—to express their views on what the Government proposes to do; and surely that is to be expected in a democracy. This is not a

dictatorship, although I have seen evidence from time to time that the Government believes it is a dictatorship. This is a democratic country where the people have the right to express their voice. What opportunity is there to do so when an agreement is signed, sealed, and delivered before it comes to Parliament, and we are told—as we have so often been told—that we have to take it or leave it, because the the agreement is invariably included in the schedule to the Bill, a schedule which we cannot amend?

I am endeavouring to establish a position where that cannot happen with regard to the proposition before us. However much the Government might want to rush ahead and tie it up irrevocably—I know the Minister for Railways is as keen as mustard to do this—I feel that the Parliament and the people should have ample time to know what the Government proposes to do. Then it will be left to the members to decide whether or not the Government is to be authorised to go ahead and enter into such an agreement. Surely there is nothing unreasonable in such a proposition!

I repeat that we have already agreed in principle to this with regard to the Swan River, in respect of which the Government yielded to public opinion eventually, although the Minister for Works characterised the people who were advocating some control as those who regarded the Swan River as a sacred cow. If the Swan River is a sacred cow, so is this part of Perth under discussion. This part of Perth provides the State of Western Australia with one of those rare opportunities which seldom arises.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Only if something is done about it.

Mr. TONKIN: What does the Minister want to do behind the backs of members of Parliament?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Not what you want to do. That is for sure.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not advocating that we do anything other than tell Parliament what the Government proposes to do. Apparently that is what the Minister does not want to do. This is in no way a decision on the merits of the case. I want a further opportunity to argue that. I do not want to be deprived of my opportunity, nor do I want any other member who is representing the citizens of this State to be deprived of his opportunity to express on behalf of those whom he represents what he thinks about the Government's proposal. That is the sole purpose of this motion: to say to the Government that it can proceed so far, but that before it enters into any agreement of this nature which is binding it shall bring the proposition to Parliament for scrutiny, for consideration, and for argument.

There are many people in the community who believe that the Government's ideas on this question are not generally acceptable. I am aware, Mr. Speaker, as you are, that the Minister prevailed on the Liberal Party to provide funds to enable him to go out and sell this proposal. There should be no need to sell it if it is a good proposal. If it is right, proper, and good, it will not have to be sold; it will be readily acceptable. But we do not want it to be sold; we want the opportunity to express our opinion on it, and to get expert opinion on it.

The Government's most recent move in deciding to appoint an overall expert to draw up a plan suggests the Government itself is uncertain, and as there must be at least 12 months' delay, the bringing of this matter to Parliament will not be disadvantageous to the Government. It ought to be perfectly obvious to members that this motion is one which preserves the rights of members of this Assembly, not one which makes them ciphers so that when they get here they are obliged to accept what the Government brings forward whether they like it or not. This motion will allow them to act as they are intended to act, to decide the question on its merits, and to obtain such expert advice as is available to them. This would be quite useless if the Government entered into an agreement beforehand and simply brought it here for ratification.

For those reasons I think this is a proposition which should commend itself to everybody but a party hack, and to everybody who believes that members of Parliament are not the beginning and end of all opinion but that they represent the people, and that they should take every opportunity to ensure that they are permitted—without being fettered—to represent the people. That is all this proposal is; that just as any proposition for the reclamation of an area of the river exceeding three acres has to be brought to Parliament before the Government can embark on it or let a contract for it, so should this proposition of the Government.

Thus, when the Western Australia Development Corporation's proposal is submitted to the Government, if it is a proposal which the Government is disposed to accept and act upon, before it does anything in that direction Parliament will be informed and given full opportunity to consider every aspect of what the Government proposes to do, and will be permitted to suggest alterations which might be improvements. It is unthinkable that a proposition can be brought here in such a way that despite our ability to suggest improvements there is no way of giving effect to such improvements. It is in order to safeguard that situation that the motion is being moved.

In conclusion I want to remind members that this in no way is a vote upon whether the railway ought to be completely underground or sunken a certain distance; it in no way deals with the merits of any proposal or any refinements; it is a straightout proposition that whatever the Government is thinking about doing in connection with this, the proposal shall first of all be brought to Parliament before the Government binds the State in any shape or form.

Mr. Court: Before you finish, I did not get the sequence of your comments when you carried on after tea from before tea in regard to the five and a half acres. The representative at the function you and I were at apparently told you five and a half acres was not an economic proposition. The same gentleman saw me and that was not his argument at all. He was not talking about only five and a half acres, he was talking about the fact they could not develop the full acreage quickly enough at that time to make it economic in the immediate future. His firm subsequently changed its mind.

Mr. TONKIN: You, Mr. Speaker, will appreciate I will have no more idea of what this gentleman told the Minister than he would have of what the gentleman told me, so I am not attempting in any way to indicate what the gentleman told the Minister. What I am saying is that the information he conveyed to me was that they would not be going on with this because it was not economically viable. Then he proceeded to give me some reasons, some of which I have quoted. I do not know where that gets us actually as I would not consider myself competent to express an opinion as to how much land in the original proposition was to be made available.

I have had a look at the plates behind this report and I have searched carefully through the report to see whether any figure is mentioned, and there is not, which I think is somewhat strange. However, I have no doubt an engineer or a surveyor using his instruments would be able to measure up from these plates, having regard to the land to be taken up by the stations, the bridges, the equipment for pumping, roadwidening, and the like, and arrive at a reasonable estimate of the land to be available.

One engineer told me, as I have read out, that about one-third of the total area shown in the plan would be available for redevelopment. The other engineer went further and mentioned seven acres. Previously in conversation with me the same gentleman said between six and seven acres, but in the written report—and I have checked with him tonight—he says it would be of the order of seven acres.

I notice that deLeww Cather & Co. expressed the opinion that the entire cost of the undertaking would be repaid in the

next 20 years by the indirect benefits. So if it is to get the land in fee simple, it is going to be well repaid for the outlay seeing that the area now proposed to be given to it is well above seven acres—I am told more than three times above it. So if it is going to be repaid in indirect benefits in 20 years, it ought to be a pretty handsome proposition to get this land in fee simple.

I acknowledge that in recent days an announcement has been made that the Government is now thinking about leasehold, and then it resolves itself into the question of leasehold for how long, in order to determine whether fair recompense or unfair recompense is being offered. But again, that is not the question we are determining now; what we are determining now is that we shall have the right, as representatives of the people, to pass judgment on any proposition before the Government enters into an irrevocable agreement in connection with it. I repeat: In my view that is not an unreasonable stand to take and I hope the House will agree to the motion.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley—Minister for Railways) (7.56 p.m.): In moving his motion this evening, the Leader of the Opposition covered quite a lot of ground. He has also, in my opinion, shifted a lot of ground. I want to make it quite clear that from my point of view I oppose the motion.

Mr. Jamieson: You will shift a lot of ground to sink the railway.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Recently there was a large ground movement at Kellerberrin, but that was minor when compared with the shifting of ground that has been made by some people regarding this project.

Mr. Graham: I think you have your geography mixed.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I wish to make it quite clear that I oppose the motion. For one thing, if we were to agree to it, it would be something new since I have been in Parliament in regard to agreements of this nature. It would take us back to the days when the present Opposition was in power, and prior to that when Governments had no agreements to sign. We would not put ourselves in that position, because if these agreements came before Parliament and were discussed before they were signed we would never get them through. If that were the case, we would still be discussing the first agreement in connection with the iron ore companies and getting nowhere as far as Western Australia was concerned.

Mr. Jamieson: There was an interesting letter about that in the Press recently.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It all depends on who writes the letters in some cases, and what sort of reception they get at the other end. The Opposition has used this matter as a political football. I am sincere when

I say that I believe the railway should be sunk. I believe it will be for the benefit of Western Australia generally.

Mr. Graham: How many tracks?

Mr. O'CONNOR: This is being discussed at this moment, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition probably knows. At present there is no agreement signed.

Mr. Graham: But your experts might suggest no tracks.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not know how the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can think that, because we have not received that suggestion.

Mr. Graham: You have not appointed your experts yet.

Mr. O'CONNOR: Do not be foolish! We have had a study to investigate this completely. There have been suggestions of four tracks and six tracks. This matter is being investigated by the Chief Mechanical Engineer and his staff to ascertain whether a track should go the back way to connect with Kewdale and the Kwinana line.

It is no good my saying something when I do not know. I am not going to tell Parliament something of which I am not sure. However, I do say that I believe this matter has been used as a political football. I can go back as far as the last election when the Leader of the Opposition, in Forrest Place, stated before the public that the Government had shelved the railway sinking project. This could have been for no other reason than political purposes, because the Leader of the Opposition had no such information. The Government had never shelved the railway sinking project, but had endeavoured to proceed with it. We did this because we, as a Government, believe it is the right way to give a free traffic flow to the north and the south of the line, to clean up the city and, from our point of view, make Perth a better city.

Mr. Graham: We are all agreed with you there. It is just a matter of what you will do with the land.

Mr. O'CONNOR: In connection with this we do not know entirely, because we have not agreed to anything put forward by the organisation concerned. This is again the reason I object to the Leader of the Opposition saying I have been secretive. No-one has been more forthright in connection with giving information on agreements than I have been concerning this project. I say this because I had the model displayed. We brought it here and let members have a look at it. We gave them information. We showed the letter of intent to the Leader of the Opposition and it was available to the public if it was required. I have addressed no fewer than 50 meetings, giving details of the project.

Mr. Graham: Do you think you are in front?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: He has certainly not been secretive, anyway!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I believe that I am right and that what I am doing is in the best interests of the people of Perth. I do not believe for one moment that while the Government needs housing—and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is one who agrees with that—

Mr. Graham: You can say that again!

Mr. O'CONNOR: —we should put \$8,000,000 or \$10,000,000 into 24-acre park in the centre of Perth. I believe that as far as Government funds are concerned, we should put them into housing, education, health, and so on.

A number of people have stated that there is no park within half a mile of the G.P.O. Recently I requested certain information from my colleague the Minister for Police and received a minute in reply. I asked him how many convictions were recorded and how many arrests made for offences in parks within half a mile of the G.P.O. I was informed there had been 634 in two years. Unfortunately, this is what occurs in connection with a lot of parks in the metropolitan area and as a consequence women, and a lot of men, are afraid to go through them at night.

I am not saying I oppose the establishment of parks. I believe they are very necessary and I would want them included in any proposal such as this one involving the centre of Perth.

Mr. Lapham: That is not a reflection on the parks, but on the administration of those who control them.

Mr. O'CONNOR: What administration does the honourable member think will be responsible for controlling the particular park under discussion? It will be the same administration that controls the others. If he wants to reflect on the City of Perth, fair enough. He can do that. But what I am saying is factual and is my belief in connection with this project.

Mr. Graham: Have you the figure concerning the number of crimes which took place away from the parks?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I asked for the figures only in connection with the parks. The Leader of the Opposition says that I have been secretive! Even in this House I have done all I could to make members aware of the facts. One night last year or the year before—I think it was last year—I asked your permission, Sir, to display the model here and answer any questions which might be asked. The permission was granted, but until approximately five minutes before the House was due to sit, not one Opposition member was present to avail himself of the opportunity I had afforded. This is the great interest—

Mr. Jamieson: That is quite unfair!

Mr. O'CONNOR: It is quite true.

Mr. Jamieson: You know the reason for that! We had a meeting on at the same time.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Railways will continue!

Mr. Jamieson: That is ridiculous! Fancy saying a thing like that!

Mr. O'CONNOR: The information I give is quite true.

Mr. Jamieson: Give the truth! Don't tell such half truths.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The Opposition did not have one member here.

Mr. Graham: Tell the truth.

Mr. O'CONNOR: It is completely the truth and the member for Balcatta cannot say otherwise.

Mr. Jamieson: Tell the truth!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am telling the truth! I can see this is cutting in.

Mr. Jamieson: Yes, it is!

Mr. O'CONNOR: But it is true. If it was of such huge importance why was not someone here to look at the model and—

Mr. Jamieson: You know very well why! You are just being stupid! You knew there was a meeting on at the time!

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Belmont will not make speeches under the guise of interjections!

Mr. Graham: The Minister for Industrial Development made a decent one a bit earlier!

Mr. Court: I was only trying to be helpful.

Mr. Graham: Your interjection went on for about five minutes.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I say there was no-one present despite the fact that the opportunity was given.

Mr. Jamieson: I again say you are being stupid!

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Belmont will remain silent.

Mr. O'CONNOR: We are used to the member for Belmont getting into the gutter.

Mr. Jamieson: I will get out of the gutter very quickly with you, don't worry about that!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I will be very pleased to hear the honourable member's views about that.

Mr. Jamieson: You will hear them.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I am hearing them now, but I hope for something helpful later on! It is a pity that so many false statements have been made about the project.

Mr. Jamieson: You just made one.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I say that, because from my point of view there has been no secrecy. Information has been given from the very beginning. We came along with

the model and displayed it and have also shown it to anyone who has been interested, and have answered questions about it. I have not had a request from Opposition members for information.

Mr. Jamieson: You discussed it with me in front of the model. What are you talking about.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I have not had a request for information in letter form. During this year I have not had, from Opposition members, any requests for information in connection with the project. I do not know whether Opposition members are in agreement or not with the sinking of the railway. This is apart from the point brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition tonight. Quite frankly, I think it is something we should proceed with in the best interests of the people of Perth.

We could disagree one way or another with the situation concerning the land. We could have a number of disagreements and not know what we were talking about, because there is no agreement at all in connection with what we are prepared to accept from the company. It will probably be the 31st May before the final proposals are submitted and, as members know, the Government is not committed to accept them even at that stage.

The Leader of the Opposition went on to say that if a Bill were submitted those on this side of the House would be disciplined. I take it by that remark he means his members won't be. It would be rather unusual if this position did occur, because I believe members on that side are disciplined to a much greater extent than members on this side.

Mr. Graham: You are completely wrong.

Mr. Jamieson: Turn the radio off Federal Parliament for a while!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Bickerton: You are so hot, you are single!

Mr. O'CONNOR: I will pay that one. It is very good. In connection with the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that I have been secretive, I have had no intention of being secretive. I have been prepared to give information on this project as I have been on every other project with which I have been involved. However, surely we cannot be expected to give information we do not have! We cannot be expected to make guesses and say that this is what we think, and then let people argue about it and later on find out that it was only a guess!

As I pointed out, the Leader of the Opposition has not requested any information at all from me recently in connection with this project. I have said he shifted his ground, and in that connection I would like to read a couple of

extracts from *Hansard*. At pages 2578 and 2579 of *Hansard* No. 3 of 1967, the Leader of the Opposition said—

I have spoken to qualified men, some from abroad, and without exception they have told me there is no possibility of this proposition, as it has been put up, being undertaken by anybody at all without a substantial subsidy.

Recently the Leader of the Opposition stated that by allowing an organisation to proceed with this project we are giving away a tremendous amount of money to an overseas organisation. Later on, the Leader of the Opposition said—

In view of the forthcoming election and the magnitude of this proposal, I hope the Government will make no firm decision on this issue—no decision which would irrevocably tie the position up so that nothing could be done in the event of a change of Government. In view of the fact that this matter has been under consideration for practically the whole of the year, a delay of another three or four months will not make much difference. Before the Government enters into any firm contracts or undertakings it should await the result of a general election, and if it is still in office it would then be fair enough for it to make a decision.

I think that is quite clear and indicates that at that stage the Leader of the Opposition himself felt that if we were re-elected to Government, it would be up to us to decide, or if the Opposition were elected it would be up to it to decide. He stated that in those circumstances it would be fair enough for us to make a decision.

I believe this is correct and that the Government should make a decision in connection with this project and submit a Bill to Parliament for ratification or rejection, as is normal with other similar types of Bill.

There has been a lot of airy-fairy talk on this at a much earlier stage than was necessary, because a lot has been guesswork. People have come forward and made statements in connection with the value of the land. Some have stated it was worth \$30,000,000 and then within six months those same people have raised that figure to \$100,000,000. Yet, I have had valuations made—I have had three made—and the highest was \$8,500,000, and some of those valuations were made by very reputable people. Unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I am prepared to name them if requested to do so.

Mr. Bickerton: Would you answer me a question? On the night you had the model displayed in this Chamber, did you not receive a message in the form of an

apology from the Leader of the Opposition indicating that the Opposition party was having a meeting and would attend as soon as possible?

Mr. O'CONNOR: I received advice after we were ready. I think after the tea break someone—

Mr. Jamieson: The meeting was not on until after the tea break.

Mr. O'CONNOR: The fact remains that no representative was sent here in connection with what the Opposition claims is a very important subject.

Mr. Bickerton: You received an apology explaining the absence of members of the Opposition.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I do not know whether I received it from the Leader of the Opposition; he might remember whether or not he sent one. I did get some information that an A.L.P. meeting was on.

Mr. Lapham: Did you make the model available to be discussed with Opposition members after that?

Mr. O'CONNOR: Have they ever asked?

Mr. Lapham: You made the suggestion. Did anyone ask you to come along in the first instance?

Mr. O'CONNOR: No; I requested the Speaker's permission to come along, and I thought members would be interested enough to come along, too. I thought it was most important as far as Parliament and the City of Perth were concerned, and for that reason I brought this matter forward. I might add I have had no fewer than 50 organisations request details, and I have given them those details.

In connection with the evening I have mentioned, not only did I take the trouble to come along myself, but I also brought representatives from the Town Planning Department and the Railways Department so that any information required could be made available.

Getting back to the point of the motion introduced by the Leader of the Opposition, as I said when I commenced speaking, I do not propose to agree to the motion put forward. If an agreement is reached—and I do not know that it will be—it will be brought to Parliament in the normal way either for ratification or rejection.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Jamieson.

COMMONWEALTH AID ROADS FUNDS

Protest against Change in Formula: Motion

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [8.13 p.m.]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House a most emphatic protest should be recorded and forwarded to the Prime Minister against the decision of the

Commonwealth to change the formula for the allocation of Commonwealth Aid Roads Funds to the States from one which was deliberately intended by successive governments to favour those States with heavy developmental responsibilities and the country areas in those States, to a new formula which deprives unclassified rural roads of their hitherto privileged position, places emphasis on centralism and accords priority of aid to the most populous and wealthy States of Australia.

Mr. Speaker, the allocation of roads funds from the Commonwealth is of tremendous importance to the States because the States depend so very largely for their road works, metropolitan and country, upon these funds which become available each year.

This Commonwealth money has been coming to the States for very many years, and when the formula was originally agreed upon it was only after full consultation and discussion between the Ministers representing the various States—or the Premiers of those States—and representatives of the Commonwealth Government.

The point I want to emphasise here is that in the early stages there was no suggestion that the Commonwealth should decide the matter and then hand it over to the States and say, "There it is; you accept what was decided," as was done on this occasion. Over the years it has been the practice to have a consultation in connection with the formula and for agreement to be reached amongst the Premiers.

In the very early stages it was recognised that the less populous States were in the greatest difficulty. Although more revenue was obtained from the more populous States, the greatest problem was in those where the population was of low density; and there was no argument when it was decided to give a very heavy weighting to the area of the State and to its population, and then to the amount of license fees being collected.

Although in more recent times there has been agitation in New South Wales and Victoria, and to a much less extent in Queensland, the Commonwealth, under successive Governments, turned a deaf ear to the requests for an alteration to the formula.

I can remember the Premier of Victoria, at the time we were building the Narrows Bridge, stating that the people of Victoria were paying for the Narrows Bridge.

Mr. Brand: He said that on several occasions.

Mr. TONKIN: He complained about it but that did not induce the Commonwealth Government to change the formula. Prime Minister after Prime Minister has refused

to disadvantage the less populous States by changing the formula in the way the Commonwealth Government has now done.

Now there is a very good explanation as to how Mr. Askin, the Premier of New South Wales, obtained the lion's share on this occasion. More than 12 months ago Mr. Askin set himself out, to get this result. According to his own words he sent officers all over the Commonwealth collecting and collating information in order that a case could be presented to the Commonwealth before the decision was made. According to Premier Askin he spent no less a sum than \$750,000 in doing it. Now there was an investment which paid off! He deliberately invested \$750,000 to prepare a case to influence the Commonwealth and provide the grounds for change.

Well, what did we do? I would like to know and I invite the Premier to tell us. Surely he must have been aware of what New South Wales was up to and what it was likely to lead to. He should have taken steps to counter that action. Possibly he did; I would like to hear about any such steps.

The fact of the matter is that a drastic alteration has been made to the formula in such a way that we are now placed at a very considerable disadvantage in the whole matter. I have in front of me a cutting from *The Sydney Morning Herald* of the 14th of this month and it is very interesting to read the comments of this journal. The heading to the article is, "Switch in Government Road Aid: \$600m for cities," and it reads as follows: —

N.S.W. will get the major benefits from a historic change in the emphasis of Commonwealth road aid from country to city.

Commonwealth aid to the States for road development will be increased by more than \$500m to \$1,252m over the next five years and greatly increased priority will be given to interstate highways and major roads in the great cities.

N.S.W. will receive \$380.4m of the \$1,252m, an increase of \$171.3m or 81 per cent. over the \$209.1m it received from the Commonwealth during the last five years.

N.S.W. will receive \$57m in 1969-70, compared with \$47.3m in 1968-69.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Gorton, announced the decisions yesterday at a meeting with all the Premiers in Canberra.

The only strong protests came from the Premier of Tasmania, Mr. E. E. Reece, and the Premier of South Australia, Mr. R. S. Hall.

The decision means that priority in road aid will be given to the most populous States, N.S.W. and Victoria, at the expense of the other States.

The Commonwealth will spend \$600.69m in aid for urban roads over the next five years—nearly 50 per cent of the aid total. Of this N.S.W. will get \$201m.

One wonders why our Premier did not join with the Premiers of South Australia and Tasmania in expressing his dissatisfaction very loudly; or was he not dissatisfied?

Mr. Dunn: What was the name of the paper which contained that report?

Mr. TONKIN: It was *The Sydney Morning Herald*. It was not the *Mukinbudin Times*.

Mr. Bickerton: Or the *Widgiemooltha Weekly*.

Mr. TONKIN: A similar reference was made in the *Canberra Times* and in *The Australian*. One paper characterised it as a mixture of centralism and political sleight of hand.

I do not know whether members who represent country districts have a full appreciation of what the transfer of funds from unclassified rural roads to expressways and freeways in the city will mean. Premier Askin has already announced what he is going to do with the expressways and freeways in Sydney.

However, Premier Askin was put in that position. Very strong protests were made to him from his own country districts and, in order to appease country members and country people, he undertook to take from his own State funds enough money to make up the difference between what would be received under the new formula and what would have been received if the formula had not been changed.

The Commonwealth is not being very generous in this matter, because it is only giving away to the States about half the money which it raises from taxation on petrol sales. What the Commonwealth has done, and why it has done it, is quite clear: because of the strong representation from New South Wales and Victoria the Commonwealth has changed the emphasis from country roads to city roads. Of course, that suits the people in the large cities.

Let us look at Western Australia's position. We have one-third of the continent to develop. Hitherto, there has not been a great deal of activity in the far-flung parts of the State and so there has not been a great call for road making. However, with the mineral development in various parts of the State, there is now a strong call for more roads into areas which previously had not been opened up by roads.

Even with the favourable treatment for unclassified rural roads, I can well recall having to say to people well out in the farming districts, when answering requests that they should be given black roads, that, as soon as funds became available, I would do my best to provide them with

black roads. Even despite the fact that the bulk of the money was available for country roads, there was not enough money to do all of the work required. If we were unable to do full justice to country roads under that generous allocation, how much more difficult is it going to be under the new allocation?

Mr. Gayfer: What percentage of the basic grant under the new formula is to go to rural roads?

Mr. TONKIN: It is 42 per cent.

Mr. Gayfer: What was it under the old formula?

Mr. TONKIN: It was 50 per cent. Mr. Speaker, I wish to correct that last figure as I have just found where I have written it down. Under the old basis it was 40 per cent, and it will now drop to 32.8 per cent.

Mr. Gayfer: What about the main trunk roads? They would have to be added to the 32.8 per cent.

Mr. TONKIN: That was not the question the honourable member asked me.

Mr. Cash: Well done!

Mr. TONKIN: Look at it whatever way we may wish, we cannot conclude any other way than that it is a major switch of emphasis from the country to the city, and it is an acknowledgement on the part of the Commonwealth that the more populous States must be given priority of aid.

Apart from our present situation, what disturbs me greatly about this is that, in making this change, the Commonwealth is serving notice on the States that after 1974, when a new agreement will be drawn up, it proposes to go even further in the direction upon which it has now started. I make that forecast quite deliberately having read carefully the statements and reports set out in connection with the matter. This decision unquestionably serves notice on the States of worse to come.

Under those circumstances, Mr. Speaker, would you not have expected the Premier of this State to have joined with the Premiers of South Australia and Tasmania in being most vocal on the question? For some reason or other the Premier of Western Australia said very little, if anything. It was left to his Minister for Industrial Development, who apparently felt pretty strongly about it, to say quite a deal. He said that the States had been given a raw deal. I agree, but I think it is an understatement. We were given a shocking deal in this State in view of the fact that for more than thirty years our special position has been recognised by Governments, irrespective of colour.

Money has been provided to enable the under-developed States to catch up and become developed; and if there was a time in the history of Western Australia when more money was needed for roads in the

country, it is now, when there is more activity in the country. But in spite of having more money, we are getting less, with worse to follow in 1974.

So we cannot let this opportunity go without making a protest. The Premier should have made a protest, but he did not, and when his Minister for Industrial Development made it the Premier said he should not have done so. I would like to know on what basis he arrived at that conclusion because the Minister most definitely should have made a protest, or somebody should have made one, on behalf of the Government of the State. Were we to accept this without a protest of any kind at all? Take anything the Commonwealth hands out? On this occasion the Prime Minister came to the conference and said, "This is it." In order to ensure that the formula to be adopted would not appear in its true light, the Prime Minister agreed to provide an additional sum to ensure that no State received less than a 50 per cent. increase.

Mr. Rushton: How much less actual money will we have in the country now, than we had before?

Mr. TONKIN: I think I can give the honourable member the information.

Mr. Bovell: It will be more.

Mr. Bickerton: He should put his question on the notice paper.

Mr. TONKIN: The member for Dale is reasonably good at arithmetic, I assume, so he can calculate this. There has been a 50 per cent. increase in the allowance to the State and the amount for rural roads has been reduced from 40 per cent. to 32.8 per cent.

Mr. Gayfer: The main trunk roads are free disbursement, and so is the disbursement—the \$52,000,000, of which we get \$42,000,000. That is free disbursement; there are no strings attached to it.

Mr. TONKIN: For very many years the unclassified rural roads—and they are distinct from the roads to which the honourable member who has just interjected referred—by common consent have enjoyed a privileged position, as indeed they should, particularly in this State. Under the new agreement the unclassified rural roads are to be lumped with the main roads in the country. I do not know whether the honourable member knew that no more than 32.88 per cent. is to be spent on both categories.

The Premier of New South Wales—and, in my opinion, rightly, from his point of view—regards the result as a vindication of the time and money New South Wales spent in making a total road needs survey and presenting it to the Commonwealth. In the face of such determination, we in this State should have been very wide-awake and ensured that the best possible case was presented to the Commonwealth

to counter the very definite thrusts which we have to expect to be made by New South Wales and Victoria.

When we come to consider it, those States have been at this for years, previously without any success. But this time New South Wales, at least, set out to make a certainty of it, and invested \$750,000 for the purpose.

I wonder what we in this State were doing when the officers from New South Wales were poking around in Western Australia getting information. Did we assist them and give them all they wanted to know in order to spike our guns? That is a question I would like answered.

Mr. Bickerton: We took them to a C.P.A. dinner.

Mr. TONKIN: It should have been realised at the outset that those officers were up to no good as far as we were concerned; and I hope we did not facilitate the task they set out upon.

In the absence of any protest, so far as I am aware, having been made by the Government—certainly no effective protest; that by the Minister for Industrial Development having been disowned by the Premier—I think Parliament should do something about the matter. This motion gives Parliament the opportunity to express its displeasure at what has been done—not that it will alter the present situation, but it could assist the State in 1974 when the agreement again comes up for consideration. There is already an indication that the trend which has been started will be continued.

I regret very much that our Premier considered this an occasion upon which to remain silent. He has plenty to say on other matters from time to time, but for reasons best known to himself on this occasion he had nothing, or very little, to say—certainly nothing that has been reported. That is something we must regret, of course, and try to remedy in the best way we can. So far as I can see this is the only right and sensible way open to us, and I hope the House will agree to the motion.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [8.38 p.m.]: I listened with interest to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say, and I feel I ought to put him on the right track in respect of a number of his statements. Before I do so I think it is well to remind the House that changes in this formula have been taking place over a number of years. To listen to the Leader of the Opposition, one would think that there had not been any changes, and certainly there have not been any since, I think, 1959—or it might have been a little earlier.

Originally—from about 1926, I think—the formula of two-fifths area and three-fifths population applied to the distribution of such moneys as were available. As

the Leader of the Opposition would know, a decision was made to change the formula from two-fifths area and three-fifths population to one-third, one-third, one-third. I am not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition was at the conference in question, but I know he was the Deputy Premier and Minister for Works at the time. I am not so sure that he made any protest, but I know Mr. Hawke expressed his opinion in opposition to any change, but I do not think he was very successful in making any impact on the decision that was made.

The result was that Western Australia was to get a sum of money for those five years during which, in the first year, I think, it was to get the same money under the new agreement that it got for the last year of the old agreement, and it was done under the same method that is used today; by a supplementary grant. This is the trend the Leader of the Opposition was talking about. This was the trend that took place when he was in office as Deputy Premier and it shows how effective he was in preventing a change which I think all of us recognised as one of those fundamental changes which must take place from time to time.

Since then all the Prime Ministers have stood by us and, only because of the Commonwealth vote at the last discussion on the new agreement, we in Western Australia enjoy a continuance of the advantage of the formula of one-third area, one-third number of vehicles, and one-third population. This, of course, has been the formula which certainly has benefited us because of Western Australia being one-third the size of the whole of the Commonwealth.

I would like to mention that Western Australia, before the first change, when the formula was two-fifths and three-fifths, enjoyed something like 19 per cent. of the fund. Incidentally, I do not want to be held to these figures. The percentage was reduced to 17.5 or 17.6, a very substantial reduction. But I am quite sure, if we are all honest with ourselves—including the then Minister for Works and the then Premier—that we would come to the conclusion that the supplementary grant at least helped us in the transition period of that agreement, which was one of those things that had to be. Of course there was pressure from Victoria and great pressure from New South Wales, but not so much from Tasmania because that State has always enjoyed a straightout advantage inasmuch as it received 5 per cent. of the total money available. It was very clear to everyone at one point of time that 5 per cent. of the total grant increase represented a very large sum that would go to Tasmania, and perhaps a larger sum than would be reasonable in any distribution which we arrived at.

I would like to emphasise that although the Leader of the Opposition has talked about the New South Wales committee wandering around this place, I, as Premier, did not know of this and I do not think the Minister for Works knew, but let me offer an explanation. After the last agreement of five years was decided upon, the Commonwealth Government set up a bureau of roads which was a committee established to ascertain the overall needs of every State and the needs of the Commonwealth. I think the Leader of the Opposition will find that it cost New South Wales \$750,000 to contribute information to the bureau, and I think it cost Western Australia something like \$400,000 to submit its case. All of this information was gathered by the bureau and put through computers to subject it to the closest examination, following which a report was produced; something which has been released to the Press, but not a great deal has been said about it.

I would advise members to read this document because it will explain the reasons for the change in the formula that took place just recently, and to cut a long story short, every State contributed to the cost of obtaining this information. Whilst Western Australia was receiving 17.95 per cent.—almost 18 per cent. of the moneys made available under the old agreement—our needs were ascertained at 8.6 per cent. Whether this was because we were getting substantial sums of money which enabled us to keep our roads up to a standard, I am not sure, but that was the finding of the bureau; and it would seem to me it is not very hard to appreciate that, as we went forward to the Premier's conference to decide on a new agreement in that knowledge, this bureau which had been set up for this purpose—costing \$2,000,000 a year for 2½ years—had decided that Western Australia's road needs were 8.6 of the total.

Mr. Jamieson: Where was the bureau centred?

Mr. BRAND: As far as I know the bureau was centred in Canberra, but it gathered this information from all the States, so it would not matter whether it was centred in Darwin or Perth, because it was doing a national job; a job for which it had been set up. It decided that 8.6 per cent. of the funds should go to Western Australia, and 8.6 per cent. to South Australia. I do not know the percentage allocation to other States, but all the information is contained in this report.

Having reached that decision it recommended a certain formula to the Commonwealth Government. It was a majority formula which gave to this State 13.7 per cent. of the money available. However, the Commonwealth Cabinet decided it

would accept the minority recommendation which, in itself, would have given 13.3 per cent. of the total to this State. I want members to appreciate that these figures were backed up by volumes of information supplied by all the States which clearly indicated that Western Australia's probability of maintaining 18 per cent. of the total funds available was very poor indeed.

The Commonwealth Government realised the problem so it decided it would add \$52,000,000-odd as a supplementary grant to ensure that the States—as the Leader of the Opposition has said—received 50 per cent. more money than they previously received under the old formula. To me, this seems to be a very substantial increase, but we must not overlook the fact that the Commonwealth had decided to provide \$1,200,000,000 over the five years for distribution among the States. The recommendation of the bureau was \$1,280,000,000, and allowing for something over \$50,000,000, it left \$30,000,000 which the States did not get, and although an effort was made by the Premiers, the Commonwealth decided it would go no further than the \$1,200,000,000.

It was quite clear from these reports and the findings of the road bureau, that the time had come to give to the cities of this country, including Perth, additional sums of money for road works. In view of the road problems confronting the city and the suburbs I would be amazed if city members censured a Government for making the first realistic attempt to grapple with the problem in the city as well as that in the country. It would be rather strange if this were done because every one of us knows the problems of a growing city, and the Commonwealth decided it would alter the formula, but it made more money available—I think an increase from \$750,000,000 to \$1,200,000,000—for this purpose.

So not only do the cities get an increased percentage, or a firm amount, for the first time, but the country also enjoys a greater amount of money; and in spite of what the Leader of the Opposition has said, under all categories of roads, and what I call main roads, rural roads, and other such roads in the country, the total was a greater percentage than was required under the old formula.

Let me add here that the Commonwealth has looked very closely at the problem facing the States, and it has decided to provide \$1,200,000,000 over five years. I cannot see how we can be very critical of the central Government for having provided the States with 50 per cent. more than they had under the old arrangement.

The Leader of the Opposition has emphasised the fact that I did not speak up for the State. I am not one of those

who get up and rant and rave and feel I have done a great job of work. Having learnt from the Prime Minister that instead of getting the 18 per cent that we thought we might expect we were going to get only 16 per cent., I pointed out to him that I was very disappointed that the percentage had dropped from 18 per cent. to 16 per cent.

I further made the point of asking him to include in the arrangements the \$40,000,000 which we got as a supplementary grant realising, of course, that this had to be a consideration at the end of the next five years. The Prime Minister said, "I cannot give you that undertaking." He was pressed by Queensland to do the same thing. Queensland did not get a mention either, in the Press as far as I know. It must be obvious to members that it was most important that the \$40,000,000 in our case should at least be considered as part of our financial arrangements under the new arrangement to be considered in five years' time. The amount of \$1,200,000,000 is divided up into \$600,000,000 under the old formula and \$600,000,000 under the new formula, in which emphasis is placed on money for the cities.

It would seem to me, therefore, that although Western Australia got 2 per cent. less, and was unable to obtain an undertaking from the Prime Minister that the supplementary grants would be considered when we next reviewed the formula, we did at least get \$200,400,000 as against South Australia's \$129,000,000, which accounted for the outburst by the Premier of South Australia. He argued, with some justification, that although the bureau had found that his State's needs were the same as those of Western Australia, we finished up with \$200,400,000, while he received \$129,000,000.

He spoke before I did, because the States speak in order of seniority, and we come after South Australia. He referred to the large amount that Western Australia had received as compared with his lot, and it seemed to me that in fact the big States were more or less satisfied; that Queensland was satisfied; but that South Australia was being critical of the amount we received. It did not suggest that the amount was too much, but it was critical of the amount that we received as against what the Premier of South Australia had hoped to receive. Had I intervened on South Australia's behalf it could quite easily have upset the applecart and the Commonwealth Government could have said, "If you do not think South Australia has enough, you had better give it some of your funds."

We must not lose sight of the fact that the Commonwealth faces a real problem, and because of this a national committee was set up to consider the road needs of

each State and of the Commonwealth. For this reason I must admit I was somewhat relieved at the proposals of the Prime Minister and of the Commonwealth, even though it turned out to be that our total percentage was down 2 per cent.

I emphasise that we have come out of all this with an agreement which will provide something for the cities. It is high time we considered the problems which confront them and which we know they have. I am sure it will not be suggested that we should tax the city people more to find the money needed. The country still has its percentage, and more; and we must not lose sight of the fact that Western Australia and Queensland share very liberally under the beef road scheme; and we have not only been getting dirt roads but sealed roads, which are a great asset to the State.

Mr. Jamieson: Queensland is getting the lion's share and that is why it is keeping quiet.

Mr. BRAND: It has been receiving a greater amount of that money over the years, just as Victoria has claimed that we were getting the lion's share of the funds, percentage-wise. We have lost our percentage, which was considered by the people who brought down these findings to be too much when compared with the proven road needs of Western Australia.

Mr. Lapham: Western Australia has one-third of the continent to look after.

Mr. BRAND: The Commonwealth is aware of that; its officers have been over these roads and obtained all the information they could.

Although I do not agree that it will be the right percentage, these facts were placed before us. As Premier of the State I was in a difficult position, but I felt that in coming home with \$200,400,000 at least for five years our situation was adequately covered, and that we could continue with an extended road programme in both the city and the country.

While we might have wished to retain our percentage, we could not have asked for more. I took advantage of the opportunity to put several other matters to the Prime Minister, because under this formula we will lose a relatively small amount of money which has been available to us under the heading, "Works other than roads"; money which originally came from petrol used in boats, launches, and so on. We have used this money from time to time in the erection of small jetties and similar facilities.

Under the new formula, however, this has been pushed aside, and we no longer enjoy that rather small privilege. Queensland supported this point of view, but it too was rejected by the Prime Minister and Treasurer. I was successful in pointing out to the Prime Minister that a

great amount of money was spent on plant and on plant replacement, and I am pleased to say that while he did not have the immediate answer, I do not think it was intended to include this aspect. He conceded the point and I am hopeful that plant replacement will be considered as one of those items under which we can spend Commonwealth money.

I should point out to the House that the Prime Minister emphasised time and time again that we could spend our money on whatever we wished, and that the conditions which were laid down by the Commonwealth would apply only to the moneys which the Commonwealth found. So, whilst regretting very much we were not able to maintain our place, percentage-wise, in the field, I think we have to admit there had to be some changes. There was no prospect—shout or argue as one cared around the Premiers' Conference table—of getting anywhere at all.

The Premier of South Australia did not get anywhere. The Premier of Tasmania raised the point that he was down by 1 per cent.; of course, he had an argument that he was down that much. He put up his argument, but again it did not make any impact and it did not create any change of attitude by the Commonwealth in this respect.

I was somewhat relieved that Western Australia's monetary requirements, or part of the total grant made available, was not in any way related to the findings of the committee mentioned: that our roads required 8.6 per cent. of the total grant of the Commonwealth.

Mr. McPharlin: In the bureau's report was it claimed the finding for such a low figure as 8.6 per cent. was brought about by the ease of construction of roads in Western Australia as compared with the other States?

Mr. BRAND: I could not say. It was not based on that argument at all. The bureau simply determined that our road needs required 8.6 per cent. of any amount that was made available. We realise that in this State we have been able to make our money go further in this respect, because in the main we have readily available good road-making materials, good flat stretches of country, and few ravines or rivers. We do not have to build many bridges. The fact remains that it was assessing the road needs. No doubt, we ourselves could have put that information forward, but it might have been information which would cause a smaller percentage to be made available to us; so we did not do that.

Mr. Lapham: Was the committee's assessment made available to you before you went to the Premiers' Conference?

Mr. BRAND: The committee's assessment arrived a couple of days before we went. I understand each State received

a copy. The night before the conference was held a copy was given to the Press. However, we could not study it, but I do not think there would be any great value in raising the argument because the Commonwealth had pretty well wiped the others off. We went over there believing that we might have to accept the recommendations of the bureau. We knew nothing of what was intended by the Commonwealth until it was given to us at the Premiers' Conference table. That has always been the position, as the Leader of the Opposition would know. If there are any propositions by the Commonwealth they are put forward at what it considers to be the appropriate time.

That is the position. I can assure members that the Minister for Works and the Commissioner of Main Roads are mindful that in the next five years a plan will have to be formulated to provide all the information possible, and to ensure that when another survey is made—which I am sure will be made before the consideration of the next five-year agreement—we will be in a position at least to claim that 8.6 per cent. is too little for a growing and expanding State, and to point out that the future requirements of Western Australia demand a great deal more money than we have been able to spend up to the present time.

The Premier of South Australia laid emphasis on the need to seal the balance of the Eyre Highway. This was one of his claims for more money, and I supported him. I felt this was a national road, and I told the Prime Minister it was a national responsibility and not the responsibility of either State. I told him that because money had been made available to us as a result of the area segment of the formula we had done the right thing by the people and spent it on a national road through an area which is not populated. Of course, this was the intention of the framers of the formula when they included the area segment. We are all interested in having a national road to the Eastern States. I think it is incumbent on the Federal Government to find some way of providing annually financial support to South Australia until such time as the road is sealed.

I cannot support the motion of the Leader of the Opposition. I do not believe it is justified in the light of events. It is all very well to pass some motion of censure which, after all is said and done, verges on the political.

Before resuming my seat I might say that the Minister for Industrial Development did express his disappointment with the overall situation of the Commonwealth, as he has done from time to time. If I came home a little tired and became hasty in what I said it was because I had seen the picture myself, and I felt we came away better than we had expected, having regard

to the findings of this national committee. I have already explained in the Press the situation which occurred, and everyone understands it. I can assure members that I have every confidence in the Minister and in the honesty of his statements and what he was getting at. I did not see his statement completely before I made the aside which caused some consternation. However, that is now history. It is for us to ensure that we maintain the percentage we have obtained when the next agreement is signed for the five years following this agreement. I oppose the motion.

MR. JAMIESON (Belmont) [9.7 p.m.]: After listening to the speech of the Premier, one might describe it as a "half a loaf is better than none" speech. This is mainly what we are complaining about. He did say that he was frightened by the statistics put up by this bureau. Although I have not had a chance to examine them, the bureau seems to have based its argument entirely on vehicle registrations. It is very difficult to imagine otherwise, when we compare the vehicle registrations of South Australia with those of Western Australia. Although the population of that State is a little above the population of Western Australia, our registrations are greater than theirs; yet the bureau has come out with the same basis of allocation of funds. That is why I ask how the figures have been compiled. It seems to me, after considering all other aspects, the bureau decided to deal with these matters in the easy way: where the most vehicles are registered the most money is required. In this lies the reason for the motion before the House.

I am glad the Premier mentioned that he knew about the position beforehand, because one of the things that shocked me was the fact that he did not protest. It is all very well to say that Hall or someone else ranted and raved—

Mr. Brand: I did not say that.

Mr. JAMIESON: —and that he would not get anywhere by doing that. The Premier said that if he had indulged in the same thing something might be taken away from Western Australia. I thought that the Premier of Queensland might have been influenced into saying more than he did, but our Premier seemed to be somewhat satisfied. I interjected and pointed out that Queensland had the lion's share of the beef roads funds, but those beef roads serve many more than the beef producers.

Mr. Brand: So do ours.

Mr. JAMIESON: The money from that fund is very handy to this State. So far the beef roads here have not been of any great use to anyone except those in the beef industry itself, but perhaps in recent times they have been used a little by other industries.

Mr. Brand: Anybody who uses the roads.

Mr. JAMIESON: I could admit this, and due to the more decentralised nature of Queensland, this fund is of greater use to that State in areas where the population is reasonably large and requires some form of roads.

It is good to know that these things are decided before the date of the conferences and that the decisions are made available to the Press prior to the conferences being held! One might say that it is a waste of our Premier's time and the finance of the State in having to send the Premier to such a conference, because we find that before the conference started, a headline appeared in *The Australian* which read, "Western Australia will be the loser at finance conference." That paper had a very clear indication of what would happen and surely it was up to the Premier to put up some outward sort of fight in regard to the issue.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I do not think the paper gave any figures, did it? It was just a bit of guesswork.

Mr. JAMIESON: I think the paper would have received a copy of the figures, because they were released to the Press the day before. The paper would have had a fair indication because it was known the day before that a total of \$1,250,000,000 for the Federal road grant was to be provided. It would not have been possible to work out the total unless the paper had some idea.

The funny part is that the Premier seems to think it is a problem for the Commonwealth to provide these funds. However, it has been clearly indicated by my leader that the Commonwealth is obtaining this money relatively easily and is not distributing it all. In fact, it keeps what one might call the lion's share for its own purposes. I think my leader said approximately 50 per cent. of the money was involved in this handout, as it were, to the States.

In a developing State we certainly cannot afford to drop 2 per cent. This may seem a small figure, but when one applies it to millions, it is not a small amount that is involved. This 2 per cent. over the five years would provide the money necessary for several large arterial roads and would improve the position appreciably.

I have seen the situation in regard to the other States and, according to the Victorian Press, I think Sir Henry Bolte was jubilant because he was able to see from where he would obtain the finance for his western gateway, or his western bridge, or whatever he calls it—this tremendous by-pass road that he envisages over the port area. We have all seen futuristic looking plans of it in our local papers.

I would say that in this State we have managed fairly well as a result of the system that was used to provide funds for roads, particularly when one realises the amounts that are owing on major projects and the amounts we have sunk into things that will not be able to be used for some years! We are in the position where we are ahead of our actual requirements. With the freeway complex we are miles ahead. Because we will not obtain full use of this complex for several years of its life the iron and other metal used will be rusting away. The complex will lie there as an ornament.

To my knowledge, no other State is in a position to do this. The roads envisaged at the present time by the Metropolitan Adelaide Transport System are a long way behind those in this State. We have the satisfaction of knowing we are ahead of the other capitals. There has always been a problem in Melbourne because of finance and, to some degree, because of the city's layout and the problems encountered earlier when the troubles in connection with King's Bridge had to be sorted out. In addition, in Melbourne, it has been necessary to use a considerable amount of loan funds—to a much greater degree than in this State—in order to develop roads.

As a result of road funds granted to this State, projects such as the Narrows Bridge have virtually been paid for in cash and there has not been the burden of finding a considerable amount of interest. We have not been put in a position similar to that in which the New South Wales Government found itself in connection with the Sydney Harbour Bridge, as it seems to be no closer to being paid for in this day and age than when it was built initially.

The community seems to think it needs the motorcar more than anything else; and vehicles are responsible for the Commonwealth Government receiving a tremendous income. Everything is bound up with the motor vehicle, so surely it is up to the Commonwealth to make sure there is no cutting back on the percentages allocated to the States for the purpose of providing roads. The only exception would be when a State was saturated with efficient roads. The Commonwealth would then have some justification for cutting back the allocation, but no-one could claim that that situation exists in any of the States at the present time.

I would say that because the Premier of this State was not prepared on this occasion to be outspoken against the Commonwealth he will find it hard to get on-side at a later stage. The Premier of South Australia expected \$2,000,000,000 as a grant over the period of the agreement, because he made that statement in *The Advertiser* the day before he went to the conference. He finished down a lot more

than we did; and, in comparison, probably he had to scream a lot more. However, that is no reason why we should have backed down in any way.

Mr. Brand: We did not back down at all.

Mr. JAMIESON: As I understand it the conference was to devise a means for the allocation of these funds. However that was not the case; the allocation was devised beforehand.

Mr. Brand: That is the case with every conference we have been to.

Mr. JAMIESON: Then we had better stop attending so many conferences, as they are futile. We should say, "send what you like and we will be satisfied." That is what the Premier is telling us.

Mr. Brand: No I am not.

Mr. JAMIESON: Premiers have to be prepared to fight a case to the nth degree and, on this occasion, the only two Premiers who appeared to be prepared to do this were Sir Henry Bolte and Mr. Askin; but they were silenced because of the rather generous handout they received. It is said that politics are being brought into the matter. Yes they are. I watched an interview recently with one of the Federal leaders on a local TV station and I would say his comment was symbolic of the times, the times being prior to a Federal election. It is in the minds of the Federal leaders that the largest population in Australia resides around the Sydney and Melbourne complexes and therefore they would have an eye to the future when making any decisions or statements.

My leader has indicated that the State of New South Wales spent a considerable amount of money in putting up a case to defeat the other States on this issue and that State evidently carried the day.

Mr. Brand: That was that State's contribution to the finding.

Mr. JAMIESON: It seems a high figure to produce the little blue book. New South Wales seems to have been in a position where its case meant more to the Commonwealth's change of formula than did the case of Western Australia.

As a consequence it appeared to people here—as it probably appeared to the Minister for Industrial Development—that we had not done all we might have done in connection with our case to the Commonwealth. However, we have had this explained. We know what can occur. When it was first suggested to me that there had been some sort of skirmish, I was old enough in the head to realise what Press men can do with a word or two which might be a mere expression of an opinion on a situation at the time. As a consequence we cannot take very much notice of such reports.

On the other hand I think this was an expression on the part of the Minister for Industrial Development as to what all

the people were thinking at the time—at least those who had any knowledge of road funds or have been concerned in any way with road funds in this State. As a consequence my leader was duty bound to have something to say—and very soon—on the matter when this Parliament resumed. Rightly, he submitted this motion.

I do not think there would be anything wrong with the Government of the day and its members supporting it. It would do no harm to them. It is merely telling the Commonwealth that we do not agree this was the best possible formula which could have been arrived at as a consequence of the conference. Therefore I support the motion.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [9.22 p.m.]: I would like to make a contribution to this debate. I know the field has been very adequately covered by the Premier, but I do want to add a few remarks of my own.

Firstly I would like to say that there is a little bit of *Oliver Twist* in all of us and this particular feature of humans is not confined to members of the Opposition only. Those in the Government feel very much the same way. However, as members will have heard from the Premier's remarks, we must be completely practical about what has happened and we must analyse what occurred prior to the meeting, what led up to the meeting, and what occurred at the meeting itself.

Secondly I would like to say that all the States of Australia have for years been trying to get the Commonwealth Government to give more money for Australia's road needs and have pressed for a body to be set up which would make a vital contribution upon sound economic lines to the States' requirements in this regard. It is largely because of the influence of the States at officer level, apart from the influence at ministerial level, which led the Commonwealth to set up the bureau which submitted its findings.

However, those findings were cold and analytical and, as the Premier has pointed out, the allocation this State was to have received was 8.6 per cent. However, a minority report in the bureau suggested that 13 per cent. would be a better figure for this State. This percentage was gained merely by adding the 8.6 per cent. under the bureau's categorisation formula to the almost 18 per cent. the State was receiving before, and arriving at 13 per cent.—the 8 per cent. plus the 18 per cent. equals 26 per cent., and half of that is 13 per cent. in round figures. However, instead of receiving this, we received 16 per cent.

Mr. Lapham: We received 12½ per cent. We received a supplementary grant of \$40,000,000. If you add that it gives you 16 per cent. In effect our formula is 12½ per cent.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: What the honourable member is saying is, to a very great extent, true. In fact, it is true generally, but I am taking in overall figures for this next quinquennium, and we will get 16 per cent. over this period.

It was on the point just raised by the honourable member that the Premier endeavoured to get the Prime Minister to give an assurance that this supplementary grant in some form or other would be written into the next alteration to the formula in five years' time. This was the vital part of the whole thing; and, in any case, I will have something to say about the supplementary grant a little later.

The bureau's overall efforts are of great value and what it has produced makes a firm basis on which to work, but it is only a basis on which to work. It has become history now because its final conclusions and recommendations have been departed from to quite a marked extent. However, that basis has been arrived at after a great deal of exhaustive work. As a result, virtually, of the bureau's work the Commonwealth has given all the States half a billion dollars more than in the previous quinquennium. This amount represents 67 per cent. more than the States received previously.

This State has received 50 per cent. more than it received last quinquennium, jumping from \$133,500,000 over the last five years to \$200,400,000 in this next five years. That is not bad, particularly when we had the fear—knowing what was in the bureau's report—that we would not fare very well.

Mr. Jamieson: It seems as though you were very shocked. You dropped your guard when you saw that blue book.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The honourable member might be forgiven for saying that. As I have said, we are not satisfied either. I am not satisfied, but we just come back to the fact that there is a little bit of *Oliver Twist* in me too.

Mr. Lapham: Just because they are in a little blue book does not mean they are accurate. The principle of analysis could be questionable.

Mr. Graham: They spent enough on it! That money should have been spent on roads.

Mr. Jamieson: The Premier of New South Wales spent \$750,000 having a look at this question and he seems to have done pretty well from his expenditure.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The honourable member does not quite appreciate how this money was spent. Each of the States agreed to contribute a proportion, on the basis of the old formula, to the expenses of the bureau to obtain this factual analytical data which will be a basis for a number of years to come. This is the point. Do not ask me to recommend to the

Commonwealth Government that it should have another inquiry into the bureau's report.

Mr. Lapham: Are you happy with the report?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: No.

Mr. Lapham: Neither am I.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: But I have been trying to show how it has already become history, how already it is the basis and provides fundamentals upon which to work. Indeed, very quick representations were made to the Commonwealth and this led to a change from the recommendations made.

Mr. Lapham: Apparently the Commonwealth was not so keen about it either.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The one feature I want to stress, and it causes me more concern than anything else, is the lack of flexibility inherent in the categorisation of roads and the rather strict formulae which are laid down concerning the spending in each category.

Had we not had the supplementary grant given to us there is no doubt we would have been in a great deal of trouble in trying to overcome the various problems associated with trying to spend the money where we felt it should be spent. This is a feature that none of us likes. I do not think the Opposition likes it and I do not think the Government likes it but the supplementary grant is given without strings. Admittedly, it is only for five years but it is without strings and can be used for the construction and reconstruction of roads or the maintenance of roads.

In all probability I will be speaking to the House on other occasions, because it may well be necessary for legislation on road matters to be introduced before the end of this session. However, I did want to point out—this is one matter on which I feel there has not been enough thought—the strict categorisation of some of the points that are laid down in the formula under which money can be spent. In some of the categories money can be spent only on construction and reconstruction and not on maintenance. This inhibits the Commissioner of Main Roads and his officers in trying to disburse moneys, perhaps where they should be placed.

Mr. Bickerton: In other words, you have not discussed a formula for dividing that money; so much for rural and so much elsewhere.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: A great deal of work has to be done. Members may have noticed that the Premier said that half the money was given under the old formula, and would be spent under the old formula. This will help in the transition period when going from one era into another.

As the Minister having jurisdiction over main roads for the time being, I do feel it would have been better to retain our 17.87 per cent.—or a figure in that vicinity—instead of dropping to 16 per cent. and gaining about \$66,000,000 over the next period.

I believe we must now make do with this and we must ensure—and I have no doubt the Premier will follow the role already adopted in regard to the supplementary grant—that we continue to work on the Commonwealth bureau and on the Commonwealth decision in regard to having something of this kind written into future formulae in order that we can have flexibility in the use of our funds.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) (9.34 p.m.): I just need a few minutes on this matter to demonstrate to the Minister for Transport, before he leaves, that we are sincere when we move a motion from this side of the House; and this, despite his assertions earlier in the evening, when speaking to a previous motion, that we demonstrated a lack of interest. However, I have not heard any reference to the motion from the other side of the House and I assume that those members concerned have not even analysed it. To refresh their memories on the subject we are discussing, I will read it again and then analyse it in part very briefly. It reads as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House a most emphatic protest should be recorded and forwarded to the Prime Minister against the decision of the Commonwealth to change the formula for the allocation of Commonwealth Aid Roads Funds to the States from one which was deliberately intended by successive governments to favour those States with heavy developmental responsibilities and the country areas in those States, to a new formula which deprives unclassified rural roads of their hitherto privileged position, places emphasis on centralism and accords priority of aid to the most populous and wealthy States of Australia.

Now, can those members on the Government side of the House conscientiously deny the substance of that motion? We feel that the motion is justified. I regret the Premier is not in the House at the moment, but he did emphasise the fact that he protested; that the Premier of South Australia protested; and that the Premier of Tasmania protested. If the other side of the House does not support this motion then the Opposition of this State is denied equal rights with those who protested. We, the Opposition, would also like to protest and protest in the manner inherent in the motion.

There is nothing unreasonable about that. I would ask members on the other side of the House if they are appreciative of the fact that there is very little difference in the last election figures recorded in favour of the coalition and those recorded for the Opposition. There was a difference of something like 300 votes in the whole of Western Australia and that difference separates the Opposition from the benches at present occupied by the coalition.

Are we not justified in wishing to record a protest? This is the only method open to us. Members from the other side of the House might assume that this is just some plot hatched in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, but I want to disabuse the minds of those opposite in that respect. The fact that the Leader of the Opposition is responsible for the three motions does not imply that he will not get the support of this side of the House on the matters concerned.

As I said, if the Premier does not wish to deny the Opposition the right to protest as did the Premier of South Australia and as did the Premier of Tasmania, then he will let us join with him in protesting in the manner we attempt in the motion before the House. The motion states that a most emphatic protest against the decision of the Commonwealth to change the formula for the allocation of Commonwealth Aid Roads Funds should be recorded and forwarded to the Prime Minister. The Premier has admitted that there has been a change in the formula, so we have a perfect right to protest.

There are many aspects with which I could deal, but I will deal with only one at the moment. Members are very much aware of the concern at the escalating accident rate within Western Australia, in particular, and also throughout the whole of Australia. With the indulgence of the House I will read briefly from an article which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 25th March, 1969, as follows:—

It looks as though the Commonwealth is to spend a little of its petrol tax income on vehicle safety research.

Australia has the world's worst road death toll with a rate of 28.3 in 100,000, according to the World Health Organisation.

The article says, "Australia" and we, I am ashamed to say, contribute to those figures.

Mr. Gayfer: We are the third highest, New South Wales is the highest, with the most money to spend.

Mr. FLETCHER: I anticipate the member for Avon will support me. The article continues—

Our constitution leaves the responsibility for road construction to the States. For this work the Commonwealth allocates about two-thirds of the sum it collects each year in the form of petrol, customs and excise duty.

The ratio seems about the same since 1926, though the car has assumed greater importance in our lives since then. In the year to June 30 last, the Commonwealth retained more than \$85 million in consolidated revenue.

The Leader of the Opposition made that point; namely, that we do not receive the whole amount and that the Commonwealth Government still retains \$85,000,000 of the amount collected.

My point is that to that extent we are denied the assistance we deserve, so there is a prospect of roads, not only in the metropolitan area, but in the country areas, too, being inadequate to cope with the situation. It is most important to mention that the impact could be felt in country areas. I am attempting, of course, to look after not only Fremantle, which is in the metropolitan area, but also country areas. The motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition incorporates that point by making reference to "a new formula which deprives unclassified rural roads of their hitherto privileged position."

I know it must concern rural representatives and, quite frankly, I do not blame them for being concerned. Our motion attempts to achieve one point; namely, that our concern in this respect should be made known to the Prime Minister.

This concern is apparent in other sections of the community. The *Daily News* has made reference to the high accident rate and has called upon people to make suggestions with a view to reducing it. Indeed, this evening's *Daily News* carried the headline, "W.A. Motorists Press For Traffic Reform." The Minister agreed with that statement in the House tonight.

The need exists for more and more finance to be made available so that the position can be improved. The Premier gained some satisfaction from the \$40,000,000 which he received by way of a consolation prize in respect of the changed formula.

Mr. Brand: And the \$52,000,000 supplementary grant.

Mr. FLETCHER: If the Premier wishes to be precise, the amount is \$40,200,000, but it is still an infinitesimal amount.

Mr. Brand: It might be to the honourable member, but it is not to me.

Mr. FLETCHER: Surely the Government must realise that the value of money is rapidly diminishing. One dollar is worth

very little now and it will be worth proportionately less five years hence if the existing private enterprise Government stays in office and depreciates further the value of money. An amount of \$40,000,000 will not go far over a period of five years.

The Minister for Works failed to console members of the Opposition by mentioning that the Federal Government had spent \$2,000,000 of the taxpayers' money on the compilation of the report that is now in the Premier's hands and to which he has been referring. The Minister for Works told us that the report was compiled by computer, and that report is alleged to have changed the formula.

We, on this side of the House, protest at the change of formula and, because of this, the Leader of the Opposition has moved the motion. We are, in all sincerity, asking for the right to express the protest of the House—not the protest of the Opposition only or the protest of the Government only, but the protest of the House—to the Prime Minister. In fact, it is suggested in the motion that a most emphatic protest against the decision to change the formula should be recorded and made to the Prime Minister. That is the whole core of the argument and I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) (9.45 p.m.): Mr. Speaker, I feel I should say a few words before the motion is actually put in view of the fact that my name has been brought into it, and because, to a certain extent, I have probably inspired the motion.

Mr. Bertram: Good heavens, no!

Mr. COURT: I want to say quite emphatically that this motion would merit much more respect as far as I am concerned if it were not reeking of political expediency. I have been in this game long enough to know that when one is in Opposition—and I do not care who it is in Opposition—one naturally seizes every opportunity to try to embarrass the Government, and *vice versa*. It was ever thus and it ever will be thus.

As I see it, the motion is intended to cause some division within the Government because of a chance remark—might I add, a very human remark—made by the Premier very late at night. We have all had the experience of disembarking from that plane after attending conferences and being confronted with a series of questions.

On this occasion, of course, the Premier had had a very exacting few days and, as we can all appreciate, he was himself very concerned about the amount of money because on the day before his return he did express some disappointment. The Premier did not at any stage say that he was happy with the amount of money allocated to the State. However, he did

say that, having regard to all the circumstances and the very bad start because of the bureau's recommendation, the State had done as well as could be expected.

I accepted that statement, and the Minister for Works accepted it in the comments which we made to the Press. In fact, none of the Ministers expressed any criticism of the Premier in their comments to the Press.

I think that I said the Premier had done extremely well having regard for the fact that all the cards were stacked against him. I cannot remember my exact words but they were to that effect. I still believe that to be true.

My statement was made in a different context altogether. It might have been easier for the Premier had I been able to talk to him and explain the context in which my remarks were made.

My complaint then, and now, is against the tendency towards centralism which is very marked in Australia. That remark might seem to imply some criticism of the present Federal Administration. However, I have declared myself on this particular point on more than one occasion and I make no bones about it, because I am a great believer in the Federal system and I believe it should be practised as the Federal system.

One cannot confine this only to the question of road funds. It is the total question of centralisation. Let us face it! Centralisation is a human tendency, and this applies to whomever is in Canberra. I suppose most of us who might rant and rave here about the centralism tendencies of all Governments in Canberra would, if we were in a Federal sphere, probably see merit in our own Administration and not so much merit in the Administrations of the States. I, for one, have never been silent on this particular issue.

I want to make one point with as much emphasis as I can; namely, that those who are advocating increased centralism—be they State or Federal people—should have a look at the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads report and let it be a warning. If development is left to this type of thinking and approach, there just will not be development.

This is the age in modern business, and in modern Government, of the cost benefit study. I think the official term used is the cost benefit analysis. I have seen enough of cost benefit analysis to know, both professionally and since I have been in Government, that it is possible to do sums and produce answers on all manner of things. I am ashamed to say that some people who do these sums can produce answers in all manner of ways, because with these cost benefit studies or analyses, if an individual desires, it is possible to start with certain presumptions or bases

and to finish up with answers which are very largely influenced by the points with which he started.

To my mind those who are advocating more and more Federal inquiries and Federal intrusion into these matters could well make the bureau's report something of a warning. For instance, if this type of approach is used in the clamour for a Federal inquiry into education, exactly the same result could come out as the one which came out under the Bureau of Roads' report.

Thank goodness for Western Australia that the Federal Government exercised a certain amount of judgment and did not follow the bureau's report. If it had not done that, I think the Premier and all of us would have been joining together in chorus and wanting to march on Canberra.

Mr. Bickerton: Does not this tend to creep into State Administration as well with all the committees of investigation into feasibility studies and that sort of thing? Is there not centralism there?

Mr. COURT: Well, feasibility studies are quite different from cost benefit analyses. Feasibility studies are very necessary in most projects that are undertaken, but one's approach to them is different from one's approach to a cost benefit analysis. The point I emphasised in my statement was that these people arrived at their results by arithmetic, whereas those who are responsible for government have to arrive at their decisions on developmental judgment; they are two different things. There were some things which the Leader of the Opposition said, and which other speakers have said, on this point that we could agree with, because we have to look at it in an entirely different atmosphere from what the mathematician or the economist looks at it. He is merely concerned with his arithmetic, and thank goodness there is room for judgment!

In my opinion the only worth-while decisions that are made in government are those which are made as a result of judgment by the Government of the day, and that is its job; that is, to take risks and to take into consideration developmental factors, human factors, and various other factors which the mathematician, the economist, or the professional man, does not take into account. He does not have to take them into account. He works out the sums and gives the answer which the Government has to interpret.

Mr. Bickerton: Don't you think that the Jackson committee arrived at its decision in exactly the same way?

Mr. COURT: I think the honourable member means the Jackson report on tertiary education.

Mr. Bickerton: Something like that.

Mr. COURT: If the honourable member is referring to the question of parliamentary salaries, I do not think that was a

subject for a cost benefit analysis. I think that committee exercised a degree of judgment; a judgment that was applauded by members of Parliament, anyhow. However, that is a side issue, and the point is well taken.

I return to the point I was making that my criticism was in no way directed to the results achieved by the Premier, and I repeat that I think he did a magnificent job having regard to the fact that the cards were stacked against him, and when I refer to the cards I refer to the Bureau of Roads. The Leader of the Opposition is in something of a cleft stick, because his motion is directed against centralism when, in point of fact, he supports centralism. He is tied to a party which has, as one plank of its platform, the support of unification. Therefore, if his party had its way at the Federal level we would have more and more doses of centralism, and if we had complete centralism we, of course, would not exist. In the final analysis there is no place in the unification set-up for State Parliaments.

In opposing this motion I want to make the point that, having regard for my comments, which I feel inspired this motion, we were not at all surprised when the motion appeared on the notice paper. We could have almost written it for the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We could have improved on it.

Mr. COURT: We might have improved the verbiage, and we could and have improved the points contained in it. My main objection to this general spirit of centralism was directed not against the allocation of road moneys only. I mentioned that the whole question of Commonwealth-State finances—not just the question of road moneys in isolation—is due for a rethink.

Things have changed a great deal in Western Australia and Queensland in particular. We are playing an entirely different role from that which we played 10 years ago. There has been no acknowledgment at the Commonwealth level that things have changed in this State, and even if it had gone along with the old formula used for the allocation of money spent on roads, it would not have allocated as much as the State desired.

Mr. Davies: Did not the Commonwealth Government opt out on the finance talks?

Mr. COURT: Not that I know of.

Mr. Davies: Did not Mr. Holt say he would hold talks between the State Premiers and the Commonwealth towards the end of 1967?

Mr. COURT: That was under the previous Prime Minister; the present Prime Minister has not abandoned that idea. I want to emphasise the point that the Commonwealth Government, to its credit, did

exercise some judgment. It could have slavishly said, "It has cost \$2,000,000 to prepare this blue book, and this is the word!" And it could have stuck to it. Admittedly it would not have got too many marks in Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia, and Tasmania, but it would have got a great many marks in New South Wales and Victoria. However, it opted to exercise judgment to build up moneys available to the States so that no State got less than it was getting previously; and Western Australia is getting more real money.

In my view, and I know this is shared by my colleagues, there is a lot of work to be done between now and 1974 to regain the percentage reduction this State has suffered. We have that job in front of us, but also we must give the Commonwealth some credit for the action it took in this instance in view of the fact that it was flying in the face of its economic advisers. Nevertheless, we have to ensure that we will regain the percentage reduction we have lost, and I believe if we work hard enough and constantly enough, we will be able to reach this objective in 1974, because so much will happen in the critical five-year period. We will have a very strong case to put before the Commonwealth for allocation of road grants under the old formula.

I have sufficient confidence in the Treasurer and his Treasury officials to know that they will keep plugging away at this subject of getting a complete rethink on Commonwealth-State finances as a whole, and not just deal with the one isolated factor of road funds. I oppose the motion.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [9.57 p.m.]: We have just listened to quite a clever speech from the Minister for Industrial Development, but in the main it was an apologia which has to be expected in the circumstances. However, I could not follow his patting his Premier on the back for the great job he had done at the conference, because it seems to me the Premier would have done just as good a job if he had stayed at home. I do not think his presence at the conference got us one extra dollar—

Mr. Court: It had a great bearing on the supplementary grant.

Mr. TONKIN: —because, in the Premier's own words, the matter was decided before he got there.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That was because he was going there; that was why they made the decision.

Mr. TONKIN: I did not gather from what the Premier said that the matter was decided because he was going there.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It was because all the Premiers were going there.

Mr. TONKIN: The situation was such that the question had been decided before the Premier got there. The Prime Minister could not have adopted the recommendation of the bureau; it would have been political suicide. He did not change its recommendations out of any goodness of his heart to Western Australia, South Australia, and Tasmania. He realised that there would have been such a furore—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is right.

Mr. TONKIN: —as a result of the drastic alteration that was being recommended he would not have weathered the storm. Why, the occurrence of last week would have paled into insignificance in comparison with what would have happened. There would have been uproar from one end of the Commonwealth to the other from the country districts. I am surprised that not a syllable has been uttered by a Country Party member on this motion. If the motion is defeated the conclusion to which people will come will be that the Parliament of Western Australia is satisfied with the result and is not prepared to make a protest.

This motion is not condemnatory of the Premier or the Government; all it does is to provide an opportunity for the Parliament, on behalf of the people of this State, to record a protest and pass it on to the Prime Minister. If the motion is defeated, the Prime Minister can then quite rightly interpret the situation as being one which is readily acceptable to the Parliament of Western Australia, so much so that it is not prepared to make a protest.

That is not our attitude. I will readily concede that if the Premier, while at the conference, had joined with the Premiers of Tasmania and South Australia and protested it would not have given us an extra dollar at that time, but it would have assisted in this hard work which the Minister for Industrial Development says has to be done between now and 1974; it would have given us a good start.

What is going to be the starting point if this motion is defeated? What is going to happen to this work that is to be put in to see we do not get further into trouble in 1974? The starting point will be that the Parliament of Western Australia was not prepared to protest.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The Premier has already made his protest over there.

Mr. TONKIN: I have not read about it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: He made it.

Mr. TONKIN: He certainly did not make a protest in the House this evening; most of his speech was directed towards justifying what he had done.

Mr. Brady: Backed up by the Minister for Works.

Mr. TONKIN: That is so. The Minister for Works made one or two references to Oliver Twist, but his speech was signally devoid of any real protest on what had happened.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It was even devoid of any real protest on what you are having to say.

Mr. TONKIN: I am inviting the House, and giving it an opportunity, to say what the Premier, in our opinion, should have said and did not; that this handout is completely unacceptable to Western Australia, to both the Government and the Opposition.

We think it is shabby treatment; we think, like the Minister for Industrial Development, that it was a raw deal, and we want to prepare the ground for this hard work we are to put in to see we do not get a worse deal in 1974, because the whole thing is sticking out a mile.

Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Speaker, that New South Wales, after having spent \$750,000 in preparing a case and satisfying itself in this matter, will not continue to improve the situation in 1974? It will leave us for dead in the preparation of a case, the same as it did in this instance.

What a bad start we will make if we are not prepared to register a protest at what has happened, and that is all this motion seeks to do. If there be any ideas in the minds of the Ministers that this is a censure of the Premier or the Government for not having protested, I disclaim any such intention.

I say quite definitely that we should not turn down this opportunity to indicate that we are dissatisfied and to tell the Prime Minister from this Parliament that we are dissatisfied. We should then get busy, as New South Wales got busy, and prepare a case to see that we do not suffer further in 1974. It is obvious from the trend which has been accepted that this will be continued when the next allocation comes to be made.

I agree with the Minister for Industrial Development that in these cost-benefit studies the result one achieves is the result one is hoping to get, and the result one can get if one adopts a proper basis as a commencement. The answer that the bureau handed to the Prime Minister is one which he found it impossible to accept for obvious reasons.

What I would like to know—and of course there is no way of finding it out—is at what stage this case, which cost New South Wales \$750,000, was available to the Commonwealth; whether it was a special case presented to the bureau before it made its recommendation, or whether it got to the Prime Minister after the bureau had made its recommendation to him.

I think this is very important. We are all familiar with what can be achieved by lobbying at the right time in the right quarters. I well remember years ago attending conferences with Sir Thomas Playford and, after a little experience, I observed very closely that it was always his wont to find an opportunity to have a meal with the Prime Minister on the day before. The pattern would then be very obvious, because Sir Thomas usually found it possible to agree to a number of suggestions which were coming forward, although the other States found difficulty in doing so.

If one can secure the ear of the person in charge and put forward the right thoughts and ideas, one can expect to get some beneficial results. It was ever thus. I know the Minister for Industrial Development practises this with some of the people he meets in connection with his negotiations.

Mr. Hall: Persuasive tactics!

Mr. TONKIN: It is a great help to put one's ideas into somebody else's mind and get him to think one's way before one gets into the conference. I have tried it myself with some benefit. It pays off and, of course, Premier Askin knew it would pay off.

Let us examine this in the cold light of analysis. The Premier of New South Wales, who has been crying poor mouth for some months, saying he is short of money, decides to invest \$750,000 on a gamble. That is all it was, just a gamble.

Mr. Brand: This \$750,000 was part of the total of \$2,000,000 to which this State contributed some \$400,000. The Premier of New South Wales did not act separately. He made a statement which I think does not quite tell the truth. The total cost of the inquiry was \$2,000,000 and each State made its contribution to the general costs of the bureau and the investigation was made over some 2½ years. I do not know of any separate inquiry that was made.

Mr. TONKIN: I am obviously not in a position to state whether what the Premier was telling the Press was true or not; but what I am saying is that according to the Press he told it that over a period of 12 months he had sent his officers all over Australia collating information.

Mr. Brand: I do not know anything about that. I know that the \$750,000 is part of the \$2,000,000 cost of the bureau.

Mr. TONKIN: He went on to say that the result obtained was a vindication of the time and money New South Wales had spent in making the total road needs survey and in presenting it to the Commonwealth. That does not suggest that this was a proportion of the Commonwealth

expenditure, because Premier Askin said that having got this report he presented it to the Commonwealth.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Each of the States had to do this.

Mr. TONKIN: He said he spent \$750,000 on this survey and on the preparation of the case of New South Wales. He subsequently said that this paid off.

Mr. Brand: Our \$400,000 evidently did not to that extent pay off.

Mr. TONKIN: I say it paid off, because New South Wales got an increase of 80 per cent. on its previous allocation. When the Premier of that State returned to Sydney one can imagine how proud he was of his achievement. His words were, "We got the lion's share."

Mr. Brand: Yes, I would not blame him.

Mr. TONKIN: Of course, he did get the lion's share, but he gambled for it. He was prepared to make an investment to achieve it, and a pretty substantial investment it was. The investment was \$750,000, enough to build a few roads.

Mr. Brand: Not too many.

Mr. TONKIN: He apparently knew. What is exercising my mind is this: When was this special case—and it must have been a good one to cost that amount of money—presented, and to whom? Was it available to the bureau before it made its recommendation, or was it available to the Prime Minister subsequently?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: There was nothing to prevent any of the States from presenting their case.

Mr. TONKIN: Why did the Minister not do that?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It has been done over the years.

Mr. TONKIN: Apparently the case which the Minister for Works put up over the years was not nearly good enough.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is not right even to say that.

Mr. TONKIN: Did the Minister say I was not entitled to say that?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: No. You are entitled to say anything you like so long as you are within the Standing Orders.

Mr. TONKIN: Exactly. That is the only thing that controls me in this House—certainly not the Government, although it would like to.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: And also a certain innate politeness.

Mr. TONKIN: After that soft impeachment I suppose I should readily round off, which I am prepared to do because I have said nearly all I want to say. What I want to fix firmly in the minds of members before they vote on this motion is that in no

way can it be construed as a censure of any member of the Government, of the Government itself, or of anybody in this State; but it is a censure of the decision of the Commonwealth for making such a radical departure from the existing practice for assisting road-making in the less developed States. This is being done for the purpose of helping us to the best extent possible and in the only way open to us to commence a case to retain what this State has got, and to make sure that we do not regress still further. If we turn this motion down the Prime Minister will be entitled to say, and no doubt will say, that the Parliament of Western Australia made no protest; that it was given an opportunity to protest; but that it declined to protest. On what grounds?

Mr. Bovell: Party politics.

Mr. TONKIN: On the grounds that we were lucky to get what we got. This was the burden of the story from the Government benches: It was more or less inevitable, so we should regard ourselves as fortunate in having got what we did, and we were afraid to open up to assist South Australia lest that could result in recasting the whole matter. That was what the Premier said, so he was afraid to upset the appeccart and he kept quiet.

Mr. Brand: No, he did not.

Mr. Jamieson: We will send Mr. Hall a copy of the speech. He will be pleased with it!

Mr. TONKIN: We on this side are not prepared to let this matter go without making our protest, whether or not this Parliament passes the motion. We are protesting on behalf of the country districts despite the fact the Premier thought we would be in some difficulty, because a number of our members represent the city. He did not weigh the situation at all.

Mr. Brand: I did not understand your attitude.

Mr. TONKIN: We consider that the formula under which we have operated for years, and which I concede has been altered from time to time in some respects, has been one deliberately designed to help development in the country, and we regret that the new formula now places the emphasis upon the city. Whilst that might be pleasing to the people in the city it is detrimental to the development of the State as a whole, and the Minister for Industrial Development knows that because he said so. It is no good the Minister for Works shaking his head because that shows a difference of opinion straightaway.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is right.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister for Industrial Development knows full well that this is detrimental to the development of the State, but he is placed in the position where he is not able to say so. That is

the cold fact of the situation. We have done our part. Let us be certain of this: If the positions of the Premier and myself were reversed this motion would still have been moved, and should have been moved, from this side of the House. There is not much room for argument about that. We cannot control the votes of the members of the Government. No doubt the whips have done that already, but at least we can give members the opportunity to say that Western Australia is not satisfied.

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

Ayes—23

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Kitney
Mr. Bertram	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. May
Mr. Brady	Mr. McIver
Mr. Burke	Mr. McPharlin
Mr. H. D. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Graham	Mr. Toms
Mr. Hall	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Harman	Mr. Davies
Mr. Jamieson	

(Teller)

Noes—23

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Mensaros
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Burt	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Cash	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Court	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Craig	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Eushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Stewart
Dr. Henn	Mr. Williams
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Young
Mr. Lewis	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. W. A. Manning	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Jones	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Molr	Mr. Dunn

The SPEAKER: The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Noes. Question thus negatived. Motion defeated.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 27th March, 1969

The SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS

Submission by Members

THE SPEAKER [2.15 p.m.]: Before this sitting opens today I would like to make a request to all members who wish to place questions on the notice paper to hand them in when the questions are ready, and therefore spread them over the period of the day on which they are handed in. We are running into some difficulty, with the great number of questions in the first three days of this period, in