

I mention these matters because I believe the problem is very acute and I have sympathy for the Minister and those responsible for overcoming it. Unless plans are made now so that in 1970 a move is made to expand our facilities, the position will undoubtedly worsen.

I support the Bill because I feel we might get some benefit from those other countries, and I would not be a party to anything which would stand in the way of solving the problem.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. G. Hislop.

House adjourned at 4.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 7th September, 1967

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Acknowledgment of Presentation to Governor

THE SPEAKER: I desire to announce that, accompanied by the member for Canning and the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, I waited upon His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech at the opening of Parliament. His Excellency has been pleased to reply in the following terms:—

Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly: I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen and for your Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament.

QUESTIONS (24): ON NOTICE

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Powers to Witness Documents

1. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice: Will he explain precisely what powers are vested in a member of the State Parliament as far as the witnessing of documents is concerned?

Mr. NALDER replied:

Pursuant to section 2 of the Declarations and Attestations Act, 1913-1962, members of Parliament have the same power

as commissioners for declarations to witness any statutory declaration either under State or Commonwealth law, and to attest instruments. A copy of the booklet *Notes for the Guidance of Commissioners for Declarations*, which is supplied to commissioners for declarations on appointment, will be forwarded to the honourable member.

HOUSING

Priority over Cultural Centre

2. Mr. BRADY asked the Premier:

- (1) In view of the great number of people waiting for purchase homes, tenancy homes, and single-unit flats, totalling approximately 12,000, does the Government intend to proceed with the proposed cultural centre in Perth in 1968?
- (2) Would it not be preferable for all available money to be spent on homes to ease the big demand from applicants to the State Housing Commission?
- (3) Is he aware of the distress caused to many families due to lack of housing?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) to (3) Whilst recognising the high priority of housing in the programme of works, the Government accepts the fact that some percentage of available funds should be set aside to provide for the promotion of cultural projects and associated works. The Government has gathered from various Press reports that the public generally are in favour of a start being made on this long-term project.

SUPERANNUATION AND FAMILY BENEFITS

Legislation to Increase

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Premier:

- (1) Is the Government considering amendments to the Superannuation Act to enable additional superannuation to be paid to Government employees on retirement?
- (2) When is the legislation to be introduced?
- (3) Can he give any indication of the Government's views on the proposed amendments?
- (4) Will all sections of Government employees be entitled to increased superannuation payments?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) In this current session.
- (3) and (4) The Government's intentions will be announced in due course.

TRAFFIC

Parking Restrictions: Roads in Northern and Eastern Suburbs

4. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Traffic:

Apart from normal intersection and traffic light approaches, are there any periods when parking of vehicles is prohibited at any of the following localities; if so, during what hours and since when?

- (a) Mt. Hawthorn—Scarborough Beach Road and Oxford Street;
- (b) Leederville—Oxford and Newcastle Streets;
- (c) Mt. Lawley—Beaufort and Walcott Streets;
- (d) Rosemount—Fitzgerald and Angove Streets;
- (e) North Perth—Charles and Angove Streets;
- (f) Tuart Hill—Wanneroo Road;
- (g) Menora—Walcott Street;
- (h) Highgate—Beaufort Street;
- (i) Norwood—Lord Street;
- (j) Scarborough—Scarborough Beach Road;
- (k) Wembley—Cambridge Street;
- (l) Inglewood—Beaufort Street;
- (m) Bedford—Walter Road;
- (n) Morley—Walter Road;
- (o) Maylands—Guildford Road;
- (p) Bassendean—Guildford Road;
- (q) Guildford—James Street;
- (r) Osborne Park—Main Street.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON (for Mr. Craig) replied:

- (a) No.
- (b) No.
- (c) No.
- (d) No.
- (e) No.
- (f) No.
- (g) No.

(h) Beaufort Street:

West side, Roe Street to James Street. No parking 4.45 p.m. to 5.45 p.m. Monday to Friday; 11.45 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Saturday. Date the 24th September, 1965.

James Street to Walcott Street, 4.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

East side, James Street to Walcott Street, 8.00 a.m. to 9.00 a.m. Monday to Friday. Date the 9th July, 1967.

- (i) Both sides, no parking any time, Short Street to Newcastle Street. Date the 23rd June, 1960.
- (j) Both sides, Main Street to St. Brigid's Terrace. No parking except between 9.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday and 9.30 a.m. to 11.00

a.m. on Saturday. Date the 17th November, 1966.

- (k) No.
- (l) No.
- (m) No.
- (n) South side, Crimea Street to Collier Road. No parking any time. Date the 29th March, 1966.
- (o) Both sides Lord Street to Leake Street. No parking except between 9.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday; 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. Saturday. Date the 10th April, 1967.
- (p) No.
- (q) No.
- (r) Both sides Federal Street to Eldorado Street. No parking except between 9.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday; 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. Saturday. Date the 3rd July, 1967.

LAND AT SOUTH PERTH

Ellam Street and Scenic Crescent: Acquisition for Roads

5. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has the Main Roads Department entered into an agreement to purchase a block of land in the vicinity of the land at the corner of Scenic Crescent and Ellam Street, which it has already purchased for \$85,000?
- (2) What is the area of the block and the purchase price?
- (3) For what purpose has the land been acquired?
- (4) What is the area of land in this locality which the department considers it is necessary to acquire?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Acting on the advice of the Main Roads Department, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has acquired, or is in process of acquiring, two further blocks of land in the vicinity of Scenic Crescent and Ellam Street. One is described as Lot 5 and the other as part of location 37.
- (2) Lot 5 was acquired for \$28,000, the area being 2 roods 6.9 perches. Acquisition of part of location 37 is in process for \$55,000—an area of 3 roods 27.2 perches.
- (3) As part of their assignment to examine the Inner Ring Road and the need for connecting radial roads, the Main Roads Department's consultants, De Leuw Cather & Company, have provided preliminary advice that a further river crossing downstream from the Causeway may be necessary. In view of this it was considered

desirable to protect certain areas of land in the vicinity of Scenic Crescent and Ellam Street against large scale flat development should a firm bridge proposal eventuate. With this in mind, negotiations were entered into with the owners referred to in the answer to (1) and (2) for the acquisition of the properties.

- (4) Not yet accurately known as design studies are incomplete.

STATE GENERAL ELECTION

List of Polling Places

6. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

In view of the alteration of boundaries consequent upon the redistribution of seats, will he have published as early as possible a list of probable polling places to be used in the various electorates at the forthcoming State general election?

Mr. NALDER replied:

It is considered undesirable to publish probable polling places, as changes due to the fact that those polling places may not be available on the polling day would be confusing to the electors. Polling places will be appointed and published in accordance with the requirements of the Electoral Act, 1907-1964, as far as possible in advance of the forthcoming State general election.

"DORMAY" SNACK BAR

Lease

7. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Railways:

In regard to the "Dormay" Snack Bar, No. 1 Melbourne Street, West Perth, could he advise—

- (1) Is there a lease in existence for this business?
- (2) If "Yes" what is the name of the lessee?
- (3) Has the lease been assigned and, if so, to whom?
- (4) How long has the lease to run?
- (5) What are the future plans envisaged for the area involved, and what time limits are likely to apply?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Mrs. D. M. Smith.
- (3) No.
- (4) The lease exists on a quarterly tenancy.

- (5) Planning is for the operations of the Perth goods depot to be transferred to the Kewdale freight terminal.

It is not expected that this will take place before 1970.

Future of the lease will depend on use of the area after that time.

HOUSING FOR TEACHERS

Country Shires: Use of Loan Moneys

8. Mr. ELLIOTT asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is his department endeavouring to encourage country shire councils to use loan moneys for the construction of houses for teachers?
- (2) Does he not consider that such a scheme could do much to help solve the present problem?
- (3) Considering the several shires that have built homes for doctors, does he not think there is ample precedent for such a scheme?
- (4) Does he agree that if the department guarantees a minimum annual rental for these houses they would be reasonably good economic propositions for the shires concerned?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Lewis) replied:

- (1) The provision of housing for teachers is the responsibility of the Government Employees' Housing Authority. That authority encourages country shire councils to use loan moneys for the construction of houses for teachers.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The department could guarantee rental only if the houses were occupied by teachers. In these circumstances they could be a reasonably good economic proposition for the shire councils.

HOMES FOR THE AGED

Woodbridge Home: Conversion to High School Annex

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

- (1) Is what was previously known as Woodbridge Home for the nursing and care of aged women patients now part of Governor Stirling High School?
- (2) Am I correctly informed that this hospital—
 - (a) was condemned as unsafe as a nursing home;
 - (b) was condemned after \$23,000 had been spent on alterations?

- (3) If not \$23,000, what was the cost involved?
- (4) Did this hospital accommodate—
(a) more than 50;
(b) fewer than 50;
bedridden and partly-bedridden aged patients, and for how many years prior to becoming part of a high school?
- (5) To what hospitals were the patients transferred when the building was acquired by the Education Department?
- (6) Am I further correctly informed that the cost per patient was less than \$20 per week at the time of transfer?
- (7) Were the majority of these aged patients in receipt of the \$14 weekly Commonwealth grant which assisted the Public Health Department in patient maintenance?
- (8) What percentage of the patients' pension was requested by the Public Health Department to assist in maintenance cost?
- (9) What was the total cost of conversion from hospital to part of Governor Stirling High School?
- (10) What use is now made of what was previously the matron's and other nursing staff quarters?
- (11) Did Matron Powell, of Mt. Henry Home, supervise Woodbridge as an annexe of Mt. Henry?

Mt. Henry and Sunset: Waiting List

- (12) How many women are waiting for admission to Mt. Henry Home?
- (13) How many aged men are waiting for admission to Sunset?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) No.
(b) Answered by (a).
- (3) Answered by (2).
- (4) Fewer than 50 aged female patients of varying incapacities—since 1942.
- (5) Mt. Henry and Wooroloo.
- (6) Gross cost was more than \$20 per week.
- (7) Yes.
- (8) As the \$14 per week nursing home benefit was being received from the Commonwealth, no portion of pension was paid to the department by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services.
- (9) This is a matter for the Minister for Education.
- (10) As for (9).
- (11) Yes.

- (12) and (13) Mt. Henry and Sunset are now hospitals and the waiting list of former years no longer exists. All applications for admission to these hospitals are made through the geriatric service of the Public Health Department. These two hospitals are but part of the facilities available for the care of the aged and, consequently, all applications are accepted in respect of all facilities, both public and private.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Unlawful Possession: Open Juvenile Court Hearings

10. Mr. DUNN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:
(1) Further to my remarks in the Address-in-Reply regarding the increasing number of vehicles being unlawfully taken and used by juveniles and the resultant hardship imposed on many law abiding citizens, is he aware of an article appearing in the *Daily News* dated the 5th September, 1967, and headed "N.S.W. Wants Open Juvenile Courts"?
(2) In order to give some further assistance to those responsible for handling this growing menace and to ensure that the younger generation adopts its proper role in the community, would he give consideration to following the lead given by New South Wales if suitable legislation is passed by that State?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Consideration has already been given to the publication of the names of offenders appearing before children's courts. Special magistrates have already legal authority to permit publication. No alteration in legislation is, therefore, necessary. There is no certainty that the publication of names will have the beneficial results suggested in the *Daily News* article. In fact, it may have the reverse effect of branding as criminals young people who commit one offence only and never offend again. Development in New South Wales will be watched with interest.

GOLDMINING

Paynes Find: Leaseholders

11. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:
Who are the six gold mining lease holders existing within a radius of 50 miles of Paynes Find re-

ferred to in answer to my question of the 30th August, 1967?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Gold Mining
Lease No.

Registered
Proprietors

- 1242—Yalgoo: Taylor, Alfred Ernest.
1243—Yalgoo: Hocking, Richard John;
Roden, Robert.
1244—Yalgoo: Staaden Leo.
1240—Yalgoo: Greenwood Albert Ernest.
1207—Yalgoo: O'Callaghan, Francis
Joseph.
1063—Yalgoo: Taylor, Alfred Ernest;
Taylor, Harold.

NATIONAL SERVICE

Teachers: Refresher Courses, Metropolitan Appointments, and Seniority

12. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) As national service trainees returning to civilian employment of teaching in Government schools will have been away from their occupation for two years, is it intended they be afforded a "refresher" course before returning to the classroom?
- (2) As these teachers will doubtless be anxious to resume interrupted higher academic studies, can they be given metropolitan appointments which would assist in this regard?
- (3) What is the relationship in regard to seniority and salary between teachers who have been away on national service and those who have not, and particularly those who have been able to continue higher studies?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Lewis) replied:

- (1) Yes. Arrangements will be made for courses according to the desires of the teachers concerned.
- (2) Yes. For the first two years following their return, ex-servicemen will be appointed to the town of their choice.
- (3) The period under national service will count as good service for seniority, certification, salary progression, long service leave, and promotional rights.
Ex-servicemen will be able to study for higher qualifications under the Commonwealth re-establishments benefits scheme.

WATER SUPPLIES

Eastern Goldfields: Increased Demand

13. Mr. BURT asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is he aware of the greatly increased demand for fresh water arising from the recent discoveries

of minerals in the eastern gold-fields?

- (2) What action will be taken to supplement the existing supplies delivered by the goldfields pipeline?
- (3) If sufficient quantities of water were not available, would this mean that any proposed smelting plant for nickel concentrates would have to be established outside the relevant mining districts?
- (4) Will investigations be made of all known underground fresh water supplies existing within a reasonable distance of proposed treatment plants?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Additional water required for known mining operations in the eastern goldfields will necessitate a combination of the following work:—
 - (a) The electrification and enlargement of Nos. 5, 6, and 8 pumping stations.
 - (b) Enlargement of sections of the G.W.S. main conduit.
 - (c) Additional main line booster pumps.
 - (d) Further inland storages.
 - (e) Improvements to the Coolgardie-Norseman main.
 - (f) Augmentation of the Mundaring source.
- (3) Yes. However, the location and availability of water for the proposed smelter are being given close consideration without finality having been reached.
- (4) Yes; this is in hand.

PASTORAL LEASE 395/1014

Inspection and Findings

14. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Further to my questions of last session (*Hansard* pages 659, 738, 835 and 929) with reference to pastoral lease 395/1014, has the promised inspection been made and the report received?
- (2) If so, what were the findings?
- (3) What is the present position with regard to the above lease?

Mr. O'NEIL (for Mr. Bovell) replied:

- (1) to (3) Pastoral lease 395/1014 was cancelled by notice published in the *Government Gazette* on the 27th January, 1967, for non-compliance with the conditions of the lease.

The lessees subsequently lodged appeal to the Governor under section 27 of the Land Act, 1933, and this appeal is currently being considered by the Governor.

FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES

Findings of Advisory Committee, Costs, and Variation in Fluoride Content

15. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee met; and, if so, on how many occasions?
- (2) Will he lay on the Table of the House a copy of the proceedings of the committee?
- (3) Have copies of the proceedings in whole or in part been communicated to the Local Government Association?
- (4) Has the Local Government Association representative been informed that—
 - (a) the cost of water fluoridation is to be recouped as a charge on water rates;
 - (b) the annual charge will be about 75c per ratepayer;
 - (c) the charge will not be imposed this financial year?
- (5) If the answer to (4) (c) is "No," who will bear the costs of—
 - (a) installation; and
 - (b) operation during the present financial year?
- (6) Does the information communicated to the association include—
 - (a) figures showing considerable fluctuations of fluoride content of water at Yass in New South Wales, such variations being of the order of 0.5 parts per million;
 - (b) directions for protection of water fluoridation operatives;
 - (c) disposal of fluoride containers and any residue of fluorides by burning?
- (7) If the answer to (6) (c) is "Yes," will he get advice on the destructibility of fluorides by incineration and, if this is found to be unsatisfactory, ask the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee to find a more satisfactory method of residual fluoride disposal?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes. On one occasion.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) A copy was posted to the Local Government Association representative on the committee, and it is

understood that he reported the proceedings to his association.

- (4) and (5) The Local Government Association representative has not been so informed. The cost of installation will be a charge against Loan Funds. Interest and sinking fund on capital expenditure and operation and maintenance are factors in determining what rates and charges will be levied.
- (6) No such information has been communicated to the association, but the position is as follows:—
 - (a) No such alleged fluctuations are anticipated.
 - (b) Directions are being prepared along the lines followed in other States.
 - (c) This matter is still under consideration, but burning is one of the methods being considered.
- (7) I understand that the committee has already discussed this matter in general terms but that it is due for more detailed consideration at the next meeting.

The paper was tabled.

POTATOES

Exports: Varieties

16. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has research confirmed an increased export market available for Western Australian potatoes?
- (2) Would this market be increased by growing additional varieties?
- (3) If "Yes," have the varieties in demand overseas been proved as suitable for economical production in Western Australia?
- (4) What is the estimated export market for each variety capable of commercial production in Western Australia?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No. Research has indicated that possibilities exist for the sale of certain varieties of potatoes on one export market.
- (2) This has not yet been ascertained, but there are indications that the market could be increased by growing additional varieties.
- (3) This will need to be assessed from commercial plantings.
- (4) This is not known, but potential could cover total imports of potatoes from all sources into neighbouring countries, including Malaysia (West), Singapore, Ceylon, and Hong Kong. Seven year averages of potato imports during

the seven year period 1959-65 are as follows:—

Ceylon—61,300 metric tons.

Hong Kong—19,100 metric tons.

Malaysia (West)-Singapore—36,300 metric tons.

17. *This question was postponed.*

ALBANY-BUNBURY HIGHWAY JUNCTION

Plan for Interchange

18. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has a design plan been finalised for the new interchange at the junction of the Albany and Bunbury Highways at Armadale?
- (2) If "No," when is the completed design plan expected to be available?
- (3) When is this new interchange expected to be completed?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) The Main Roads Department is preparing plans for a new intersection treatment at this junction. It will be some months before these are finalised.
- (3) At this point in time it is not possible to give a completion date.

MINING

New Compressor for Marble Bar Area

19. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) When will a new compressor be made available through the Mines Department for the Marble Bar area?
- (2) What is the make and type of the machine?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The new compressor should be available in the Marble Bar area in two or three weeks' time. It is at present at the Mechanical & Plant Engineer's Depot in East Perth for checking over prior to despatching to Marble Bar.
- (2) Consolidated Pneumatic Gnome portable compressor. Capacity—125 cu. ft. per minute. Type—two stage rotary air end powered by Perkins four cylinder diesel engine.

UNIVERSITY FEES

Burden of Increases on Students

20. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the heavy and increasing financial burden which is placed on fee-paying students

or their parents because the University raises its fees from time to time?

- (2) Has he given any consideration to possible alternatives which could be adopted with a view to reducing or removing the burden?
- (3) If "Yes," what means are available and why has nothing been done?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) I am aware that the University has raised its fees from time to time.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) This question presupposes that nothing has been done to reduce the impact of fees, which is contrary to the facts.

In the case of full time first degree students who are permanently domiciled residents of this State and who are not in receipt of assistance by way of scholarship, bursary, or similar award, the value of which is in excess of 50 per cent. of the annual fee, the Government pays a subsidy to the student of \$42 per annum.

In addition, the Vice-Chancellor has the power to reduce or waive fees in the case of academically deserving students who are not in the position to pay the prescribed fees.

Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that over 50 per cent. of total fees collected by the University are paid on behalf of students holding scholarships and other awards.

MITCHELL FREEWAY

Increased Costs, and Premier's Announcement in 1963

21. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

As the Premier when announcing in April, 1963, a six-stage plan for the western switch road from the Narrows Bridge to Wellington Street gave the estimated cost as \$9,000,000, will he explain the remarkable increase in cost as disclosed by his detailed estimate of the cost of the Narrows interchange, of \$17,000,000?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The six-stage plan announced by the Premier in April, 1963, referred only to the section of the Mitchell Freeway between Mounts Bay Road and Wellington Street, and did not include the cost of the Narrows interchange.

CEMENT

Bulk Supplies to Government: Price

22. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What is the price to the Government of cement supplied in bulk?
- (2) What was the date of the latest alteration in price?
- (3) What was the previous price?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) \$24.75 less 2½ per cent. discount for payment within 30 days.
- (2) The 26th September, 1966.
- (3) \$23.75 less 2½ per cent. discount for payment within 30 days.

CLAREMONT MENTAL HOSPITAL

Morris, S. J.: Tabling of Personal File

23. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Will he lay upon the Table of the House the personal file of Mr. Sidney James Morris, a former painter, employed at the Claremont Hospital?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

As advised to the honourable member in question 15 on the 26th October, 1966, it is normal to treat personal files as confidential. However, the honourable member is at liberty to inspect it at the department.

CHILD MINDING CENTRES

Legislation on Standards

24. Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare:

- (1) Is he aware that on the 13th April last a startling report appeared in the *Daily News* entitled "Babies Minded—Apply Within"?
- (2) Is he aware that child minding advertisements have recently appeared in a local weekly publication?
- (3) Does he consider that legislation is necessary to govern standards relating to child care?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Legislation is now being prepared relating to child minding centres.

QUESTIONS (4) WITHOUT NOTICE

MITCHELL FREEWAY

Increased Costs, and Premier's Announcement in 1963

1. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

If, as was mentioned, the statement made by the Premier in

1963 referred only to that part of the freeway from Mounts Bay Road to Wellington Street, will he inquire into the reason why the announcement said "from the Narrows Bridge to Wellington Street," and make the explanation at the next sitting of Parliament?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

If the Leader of the Opposition still feels there is any necessity to make a further inquiry, then I can do so. However, the wording "from the Narrows Bridge" need not necessarily mean the inclusion of the Narrows interchange section. However, if he still wants me to inquire into this, would he rephrase the question and either place it on the notice paper or give it to me privately, and I will endeavour to ascertain the answer?

2. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I think it is as well to have this matter clarified at this moment. The statement made by the Premier which was published in the newspaper referred to the cost of the switch road from the Narrows Bridge. As the interchange occurs on the road from the Narrows Bridge, I think it is necessary to clarify the answer which was given this afternoon. Therefore, I ask the Minister if he will give an explanation as to how it came about that when the announcement was made, it was stated that the cost of the switch road from the Narrows Bridge to Wellington Street would be \$9,000,000 when, in effect, from what we are now told it meant from Mounts Bay Road to Wellington Street?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

I will ask *Hansard* to let me have a copy of the query and I will give a reply in due course.

STATE HOUSING COMMISSION

Application of Mrs. M. Zurawski

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Housing:

Will he lay on the Table of the House the application, reports, and file in reference to the housing application of Mrs. M. Zurawski, of 15 Wroxton Street, Midland, which was made to the State Housing Commission in 1963?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

I heard just prior to 2 p.m. that the honourable member had been in touch with my office at 1 p.m.

in an effort to contact me in connection with this matter. Without having had a look at the file, I would say that I would decline this request. The honourable member must realise that there may be a considerable amount of personal information on the Housing Commission files of applicants. This information is confidential between the commission and its clients.

As all members would be aware, the Housing Commission has a parliamentary liaison officer. Consequently a facility is offered by the commission to all members of Parliament to have their queries thoroughly investigated. Under those circumstances the honourable member is free to visit the Housing Commission and discuss the matter fully with the officer and, if he is not satisfied with that discussion, then with either the general manager or myself.

Under those circumstances I feel I would decline any request to table a file relating to a personal application.

4. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Housing:

Arising out of the reply to my question without notice, I would like to ask the Minister a further question. Does he recall I asked him to make a special investigation into this matter when I was speaking on the Address-in-Reply; and, if so, did he make any investigation?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

I do not recall either having heard the request or having read it, but I shall look into the matter.

Mr. Brady: You sat in the House when the matter was being discussed.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You were a Minister once, and should know how Ministers have to operate.

Mr. Brady: No attention was paid to the request at the time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by Mr. May, leave of absence for 28 days granted to Mr. Curran (Cockburn) on the ground of ill-health.

BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Indecent Publications Act Amendment Bill.
2. Police Act Amendment Bill.

Bills read a third time, on motions by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and transmitted to the Council.

BULK HANDLING BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [2.41 p.m.]: On a point of information, Mr. Speaker, may I ask you at the outset whether this picture gallery of 64 excellent photographs exhibited in the Chamber is to be associated with the speech the Minister made when introducing the Bill, and specifically that part dealing with the history of bulk handling in this State?

The SPEAKER: I think that is a matter of opinion, but I would think it would be.

Mr. KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am sure most members would have been interested in the history outlined by the Minister on the introduction of this measure to the House. It is very appropriate that this detailed history should have been given at this particular stage to outline the achievements of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. over a period of many years, and all members who have studied the photographs—including those who have not had much to do with the operations of C.B.H.—will, I am sure, be amazed to realise so much development has taken place in country areas over the years. The photographs emphasise very clearly the great progress C.B.H. has made, and how the scale of its activities has broadened during the 34 years it has been operating.

In 1933, 1,250,000 bushels of wheat were handled in Western Australia. That was at the beginning of a period over which a marked change has taken place in cereal production. From that very small beginning we find that in 1966 a total of over 100,000,000 bushels of wheat was produced. This shows the great strides that have been made during a period which is not so very long, and it also illustrates that C.B.H. has always had an eye to the future, and has been abreast of the times in the matter of handling grain.

As the Minister has said, great credit is due to the originator of the scheme, the late John Thompson, for his wonderful forethought and his wide knowledge of the circumstances prevailing at the time when he stated what he considered should be the correct way to solve our wheat problem. As a result of his suggestion, a great organisation was founded and it has continued to prosper. In taking up where the Minister left off, I would point out that at the time Mr. Thompson came forward with his suggestion, a great deal of discussion had taken place in various circles. The feasibility of C.B.H. coming into being was closely examined and, over a period of many years, several Select Committees and, I think, one or two Royal Commissions investigated very fully all aspects of the proposition that had been mooted by John Thompson.

Finally, a Bill was introduced into Parliament—this is an important factor which the Minister overlooked—by The Hon. M. F. Troy, who, in 1935, was Minister for Lands in the Labor Government. After all the discussion that had taken place on the suggestion, he was in the box seat at a time when a decision had to be made. The legislation which this Bill seeks to amend was brought into being on the 17th December, 1935; and it was introduced by the Minister I have just mentioned. In retrospect, one must admit that the introduction of the legislation was a great achievement for the State, especially when one realises that so much has since been brought to fruition.

Mr. Gayfer: I recall it had rather a rocky passage!

Mr. KELLY: Many years ago one of our leading politicians said, "Thank God for the Legislative Council!", and I have heard that repeated many times. That still applies irrespective of the House in which the legislation is introduced. Sometimes it is detrimental for our windows to be open, because legislation often goes out the window. It is a fifty-fifty bet and a one-rabbit, one-horse proportion. Nevertheless the fact does remain that a Labor Minister saw fit to introduce a Bill into this House and much has emanated from the small beginning.

In the set of photographs now exhibited here we have depicted over 30 years of very successful operations of this organisation. This has been a very important period from the point of view of not only grain producers but also the State of Western Australia itself and the various Governments which have progressively administered the affairs of the State. It is well-known that producers, generally, have enjoyed the benefits of colossal savings during the period the bulk handling scheme has been in operation. In trying to assess the magnitude of those savings, several figures have been mentioned, and one which I think has some credence is that roughly \$150,000,000 represents the benefits that have accrued to grain producers since the inception of the bulk handling scheme.

Of course the scheme has brought forth many other advantages, not all of which have been enjoyed by farmers. During that period of 34 years the State and also State instrumentalities have benefited. Therefore, generally, we have enjoyed a wonderful period during which the production of our cereals has been smoothly handled, and this is realised all the more when one thinks of the partially chaotic state of affairs that existed prior to C.B.H. taking full control.

The C.B.H. method of loading wheat for export has not only been lauded in Western Australia, but also it has gained much approbation in other parts of the

world where similar schemes have been adopted, but perhaps not on such a large scale as the one which operates in this State. The C.B.H. methods, however, have been utilised elsewhere to very good effect.

It can also be said that harbour and berthing facilities have gained tremendous assistance and fillip from the activities of C.B.H. in handling wheat and other grain. I cannot help but feel that Governments, over the years, must have been saved a great deal of capital outlay because C.B.H. has handled wheat so expeditiously. Further, the company's control has meant that the Port of Fremantle has been able to handle shipping without there being any congestion in the harbour, especially at the time when our harvest was being exported to countries overseas. Because of the rapid turnaround of ships, other sections of industry have benefited from the improved harbour facilities, which would not have been made available had it not been for the system of handling wheat; and growers, generally, have found themselves in the position where they are able to eliminate almost completely the anxiety which they had in regard to handling the great harvest of grain. As a result they have been saved a great deal of worry, and they have been able to achieve a commendable objective.

Another prominent factor is that grain losses during the period of operation of C.B.H. have been significantly small. The method used in handling the grain has been partly responsible, and science has also come to the aid of the growers in reducing the amount of wheat destroyed. Because of the very excellent facilities that have been established in various parts of the State, the weather conditions have practically had no effect on the handling of wheat; therefore few losses have occurred.

The problem of weevil infestation seems to have been overcome almost completely. That is a great achievement by C.B.H. over the period of years it has been in operation. After some years of operation under the old system, it is very gratifying to realise that the grain producers have been given the opportunity to take over the concern. It was to their credit that they grasped the opportunity. Although the obstacles might have appeared to be gigantic at the time, the grain growers were able, within a short space of time, to get down to accepting the principle of bulk handling.

Today we find that this system of grain handling is owned by all of the growers of Western Australia. Loan moneys are available from the source provided under the legislation, and that source has been used for many years with the result that the toll has been kept to a reasonable level. The basis of a full return of contribution within a period of 10 years has been very acceptable to the industry.

I understand that from time to time dividends are payable to those who support the scheme, and there are 14,802 contributors to it. They are all eligible for this rebate from time to time.

Might I digress for a moment; and I promise not to go too far from the Bill? It has been said that the tremendous advantages which the wheat industry has enjoyed over a period of years could be applied to wool marketing. It would be to the advantage of woolgrowers if we could get another Mr. Thompson to introduce a plan under which the woolgrowers could participate—as has been done in the case of wheatgrowers over a period of 34 years. It would be wonderful for Australia if the wool industry could reach the point where wool was backed by a guaranteed price, the same as wheat is. Under such a plan the system of marketing could be financed by the woolgrowers and they could be placed on the basis of a return of capital over a specified period. It is not beyond the realm of possibility for such a scheme to be devised.

At the present time the price of wool is gradually going down, and in the last several sales this tendency has been evident. Many agriculturalists, producers, pastoralists, and others are becoming more and more concerned, notwithstanding the fact that the Federal Minister stated recently that he thought there would be a return to higher prices; but there is no guarantee that the price of wool will return to the previous levels. In fact, the price of wool has reached a level where there is not a great margin left to the growers.

Mr. Nalder: It was reported in this morning's newspaper that the Fremantle wool sales had shown a slight rise.

Mr. KELLY: That is so; but we must bear in mind that in the last four months the price has dropped by $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The present rise is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., so there is a big difference between the drop and the rise. There would not need to be very many drops of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for woolgrowers to be placed in a very invidious position. If a scheme could be devised to handle wool on the same basis as wheat is handled, the woolgrowers would have very little to worry about.

Mr. Jamieson: That would be completely socialistic.

Mr. KELLY: Socialisation does enter into it. If such a scheme could be devised, their future outlook would be guaranteed.

Mr. Nalder: They would still have the problem of the weather.

Mr. Jamieson: We will even socialise that.

Mr. KELLY: I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your co-operation in allowing me to refer to the handling of wool. I put this thought forward so that it might be given

some consideration. I think a scheme such as I have outlined is within the realm of possibility, and there are plenty of bright brains to work one out.

Mr. Nalder: I agree wholeheartedly with what you have said.

Mr. KELLY: The activities of C.B.H. illustrate the advantages of maximum co-operation. It is very gratifying to find that the handling facilities are being extended to many other centres beyond the rail terminals or sidings. For some time past the quantity of wheat that has come in from remote areas has been quite astounding.

It is very pleasing to realise that whereas in the past the handling facilities provided by C.B.H. were, on a legal basis, confined, more or less, to the sidings or to railways, generally, we find that under the legislation before us that aspect will be overcome, in that wheat deliveries at many other places will impose the same obligations on C.B.H. as wheat delivered at rail sidings. This is a very commendable move. As the production areas extend, this will prove to be of great assistance to farmers in remote districts, who, in many cases, are now battling. I think they will be very pleased with this amendment.

The year 1943 was indeed a blue ribbon—I think perhaps I should say red letter—period for producers, generally, because it was in that year they were able to reach agreement regarding the taking over of the operations of the then existing bulk handling system. They found themselves the fully fledged proprietors of a going concern with greased wheels and with a smoothly operating organisation. I think there would be few countries in the world that could boast of an undertaking of this kind.

Mr. Nalder: I do not think it has happened in any other country.

Mr. KELLY: I made inquiries, but I could not find anything to parallel what took place here; and undoubtedly it is one of those occurrences that has been very important for Western Australia and its citizens. Why this system of bulk handling has not been fully followed in other countries I do not know. Even in the Eastern States where they have adopted in part the articles of C.B.H., they have not gone the whole way, and at the present time they are not operating as successfully as Western Australia has operated over this period.

The Bulk Handling Act has been altered eight or nine times since it was first placed on the Statute book; and I feel the opportunity has been taken on this occasion to rearrange rather than alter many of the sections. This rearrangement will provide protection for the grain producers; and the welding of the obligations of the company and the outlook of the Govern-

ment will result in a smooth running organisation.

In many cases the obligations of the company seem to be quite severe, but, when analysed fully, one finds they are not unreasonable by any means. Apparently the Government took the organisation into its confidence, and agreement was reached on the basis of this measure. I think this legislation will result in a much broader interpretation of some of the sections which were slightly clouded by verbiage, and the handling of wheat in its various degrees of perfection—inferior or otherwise—will be greatly facilitated.

Both the growers and C.B.H. will know where they stand. A grower will know his position when it comes to a matter of arbitration in so far as inferior wheat and deliveries are concerned. In the past, the position was a little bit obscure. A farmer would take good quality wheat to the siding, but because it had one or two blemishes it would be knocked back on presentation. In the past his chances of obtaining legal redress have not been as great as they might have been and there has been some dissatisfaction on that score. There has been a lot of difficulty in regard to the disposal of this type of grain, but when this measure becomes law—and I have no doubt it will—a lot of the difficulties and doubts will disappear and the position will be much more acceptable to growers generally.

I have noticed that the reserve previously held by the company under the old Act was £20,000, but it is now proposed that the reserve will be of the order of £200,000. This is an indication of changing times in so far as the handling of wheat and the value of wheat are concerned; and to a great extent it will increase the obligation of the company in the interests of the growers. I think it is very good, too, that in the future all grades of wheat will be handled by the company; and the company apparently has the machinery to satisfactorily handle several grades or different types of wheat. This will be a distinct advantage to the growers throughout the country.

The general penalties—to which I made reference a moment ago—imposed on the company by this legislation have been increased manifold, but I feel they are in keeping with monetary trends as we know them today and with the high price the world is paying for wheat.

I now come to what could be regarded in some circles as a contentious portion of this measure. I refer to the increase in the toll of 2c, up to a maximum of 7c, on wheat delivered by growers. There is an understanding—I have confirmed this in some quarters—that it may not be necessary to call on the extra 2c for which this Bill provides. As a matter of fact, the legislation is couched in such terms as "if required" or "if thought necessary." Even if it is necessary to collect

the extra 2c, I think it represents a small sacrifice to producers when we have regard for the great strides which have been made in grain handling and which have been specifically in the interests of growers.

When the proposal was first made, prior to a poll being organised and taken, some primary producers were startled, particularly those who found that the toll at its present level caused hardship. Some growers do not do as well as others; and some growers have not had the opportunity of doing as well as others. In the case of newcomers to the industry, the adding of 2c to the existing 5c did originally appear as something that would react against their individual interests. So, in the early stages, the increase in the toll was held in rather grim perspective. The extra 2c was to be determined by a referendum, which was ultimately held; and there is one aspect on which I would like to comment.

I think the referendum of growers was held on the 3rd July, but I would not be too sure of that date. As I mentioned earlier, the Minister said there were 14,802 members, or shareholders, in the C.B.H. set-up. The votes cast at the referendum totalled 4,794. Some 2,811 were in favour of the 2c increase, and 1,983 were against it. This means, of course, that 10,008 growers failed to register any form of acquiescence of objection to this legislation.

The Minister claimed that the majority in favour was 58.6 per cent. Literally, that might be the case, but I think that statement is misleading when it is realised that less than one-third of the shareholders who were entitled to vote actually recorded a vote. Whereas it might sound quite well to say that 58.6 per cent. voted in favour, it is, nevertheless, a reflection on the wheatgrowers generally, particularly when we review the situation I have outlined in so far as C.B.H. is concerned. It shows that a great deal of apathy must exist within the rural community for so few to vote and for so many to disregard the opportunity to vote.

I do not think we should let those people off lightly. I believe they are due for a lot of criticism. They have in C.B.H. a wonderful institution and a system which is unequalled anywhere else in the world. The system of co-operative bulk handling has undoubtedly helped many people during the last 30-odd years. I cannot countenance apathy of this kind regarding a matter which is so close to home and so near to the back doors of those in the rural community. Those people should have been wholeheartedly behind this move and far more votes should have been recorded.

Following the referendum we find that Mr. Lane made a statement, and he gave quite a lot of interesting detail regarding the outlook of C.B.H. He mentioned the

advantages to be gained, the anticipated expenditure in the future, and many other matters. Mr. Lane said that the Farmers' Union did not advocate, to any extent, that shareholders should support the referendum. A simple statement of fact was made, and that statement should have been sufficient to bring a lot of people in behind the movement. However, that was not the case.

The comments in connection with Mr. Lane's statement came from the Farmers' Union and, as a matter of fact, the advice was that we should not accept the position whereby 2c would be added. The Farmers' Union seemed to think it was unjust and unfair, and I think some suggestion was made as to where the money should come from. A spokesman for the Farmers' Union said—

In the event of an adverse season it is pertinent to point out that usual banking practice is to carry the debt over to the following year, as is done in cases of farmers suffering under similar conditions.

I think that could have been left unsaid, because at that stage that type of utterance could quite easily have been responsible for a majority being against a proposition of this kind. I think we could have had a regrettable position, and undoubtedly the banks would not have come to the party in the way anticipated. It would have been a bad outlook for the future of the State, with regard to keeping abreast of the requirements of the handling of wheat and grain, if it was not possible for C.B.H. to go ahead progressively, and bring facilities to the back door of very many farms in Western Australia.

The Minister claimed that the Farmers' Union has now altered its outlook, and that it is quite happy with the legislation we have before us. That may be so, but I have not seen any such announcement in the Press; and I have not heard from any one farmer that this is the position so far as the W.A. Farmers' Union is concerned. Normally, we would expect an announcement, when such an important decision had been reversed, to be headlined. I am still waiting for confirmation. I have closely perused the whole of the *Farmers' Weekly* but there has been no mention of any alteration in the thinking of the Farmers' Union.

I did deal, to a small extent, with the point that some farmers might be disadvantaged to a temporary degree; but they will not be affected for any length of time by the additional 2c which will be imposed, if it is warranted. My plea is mainly in regard to those people who are just starting out.

It is a well-known fact that anybody who goes on the land at the present time has to face a large outlay or be disadvantaged in some way. Sometimes it is

possible for him to work in with a neighbour, or do work in return for services or use of machinery. In such ways he can, perhaps, avoid heavy expenditure. However, not everybody is circumstanced in that way. A man has to struggle hard to get a block allocated to him, and he has to do everything in his power to convince the board that he is a likely and worthy settler, and that he has enough finance to carry on.

Very often, if an examination is made of the finance, it is found that although the figure given is not exactly fictitious, the finance never eventuates. It is usually tied up in a house, or something of that kind, which the applicant cannot sell. The fictitious figure is not given purposely or deliberately, but when it comes to the production of wheat it needs only one bad season to set a man back. He could have used up his little bit of credit, and, with the help of his neighbours, done everything else possible to get a few bob and it would be then that his deliveries of wheat would be subject to the original 5c deduction. It will now be 7c.

If a man's crop is a total failure he is really in a spot of bother, and I think any increase in the rate of the toll would be a distinct hardship for such a person. I would hate to think that in supporting a Bill of this kind some of the settlers who had suffered adverse circumstances would be forced to the wall; and I know one or two who were in that position a few years ago, even on the 5c basis. They were unable to meet their commitments and they reached a stage where they had to transfer to some other occupation to get sufficient money to feed their families. As a result they had to give up any ideas of becoming successful settlers.

However, it appears that possibly within the next eight to 10 years Co-operative Bulk Handling will be called upon to increase considerably the facilities that it provides in various parts of the State. I understand the expenditure envisaged by the company in the next few years could exceed \$32,000,000; and even an expenditure of that figure does not give us a complete picture of the expansion that might take place.

Assuming that the 5c toll, which is now in operation, has been justified in past times, because of the programme that has been carried out, I would say the extra 2c is to be levied so that the company will have that much extra money available, and this will enable it to get credit from overseas, or from wherever the company does obtain its credit. In view of this I do not think many farmers in Western Australia will object to the proposal.

With the opening up of new land the lines of service are spreading rapidly. We have often heard the Minister for Lands, and the Government, commenting about the release of 1,000,000 acres of land each

year. That is quite true; the Government, through the Minister for Lands, has released 1,000,000 acres of land per annum. However, we can go back further than the 8½ years that this Government has been in office and we can see that for just on 20 years our average annual release of land has been in the order of 1,000,000 acres. Some years it was more than that, and in other years it was slightly below that figure. However, it shows that the present Government is not the only one which can claim successful land releases each year; Labor Governments, throughout their terms of office, had similar successes.

There have been some variations in the matter of pastoral land releases and, as a matter of fact, Labor also holds an enviable record in this field, too. Therefore, in considering a Bill of this kind we must bear in mind that 20,000,000 acres of land, over a period of 20 years, have been thrown open for development; and, no matter how we may look at it, the lines of service, so far as the company is concerned, that are now required, and will be required in the future, are considerable.

As far as wheat production is concerned, we, in Australia, and particularly in Western Australia, are in an exceedingly fortunate position; and, to Australia's credit, it can be claimed that succeeding Governments have been capable of reviewing the wheat position to such an extent that at the end of each five-year period they have been able to re-enact the wheat agreement which provides for a guaranteed price for wheat. That has been of tremendous assistance to wheat farmers in Western Australia, particularly.

There was a period when wheat production in this State reached a very low ebb. The emphasis was on restricted growing and, because of that, many people in Australia, and in Western Australia particularly, were in two minds whether to disregard wheatgrowing—or grain growing—altogether and to concentrate on stock. However, because of the guaranteed price for wheat grain, production has increased, and I think the only possible alteration to the present outlook could come as a result of a proviso; and I do not know whether that would be possible.

I had the honour of attending Australian Agricultural Council meetings when the question of wheatgrowing came up for review, and when the Commonwealth attitude to the continuation of a guaranteed price for wheat was not very favourable. Had the Commonwealth been able to obtain sufficient support from the grain-growing States the guaranteed price would have been discontinued; and, as I said, I think there is a possibility in the future of farmers having to face up to the question of a proviso.

We do not know what the present Government, or future Governments, or anybody else, will do when we reach the stage where we are producing, say, 200,000,000 bushels of wheat a year. At the present time, I think the figure under the guaranteed price provision is about 100,000,000 bushels, and fortunately any production beyond that we have been able to dispose of. I say, "fortunately" because I do not know whether we term selling wheat to China or any other of the alienated nations as a fortunate circumstance. Nevertheless, for a period of time we have been able to dispose of the surplus grain that has been grown.

With the release of land at the rate of 1,000,000 acres a year over the last 20 years we can see that a tremendous amount of country has been opened up; and, it is because of the guaranteed price, and the outlook in regard to grain, generally, that a great deal of this land has been and is being developed. Huge machinery that 10 years ago we did not realise existed is being brought into the country; huge belts of trees are being knocked down; our super requirements annually are increasing; and it will not be long, at least so far as grain production is concerned, before we will be brought to the position where we will have to face up to the fact that the wheat agreement will be continued on the present basis, or perhaps its terms minimised, or it may even be discontinued. Maybe the terms will be improved. Who knows?

To me that appears to be the only proviso to which we could give consideration. Another matter is the renewal of the International Wheat Agreement, but I understand that will be agreed to. However, the agreement still has to be signed and until it is we cannot take it for granted.

Because of that factor and one I have already mentioned, I do not have a great deal of serious misgiving as to the future. But these are the provisos and possibilities within the industry that could affect the future outlook.

Turning again to the Bill, I point out that to keep abreast of natural progress and to satisfy reasonable demands, the company on whose behalf the legislation has been introduced, will have to borrow quite an amount of finance. So, we come once more to the 2c rise which is sought. If the money necessary is not available in Australia—and there seems to be some doubt that it will be—it must be procured from overseas. Guarantees are much harder to obtain in connection with persons who seek loans from overseas for an Australian process than they are in Australia. Accordingly, C.B.H. is faced with the necessity to raise this huge amount of \$32,000,000 which will be spent within the next decade, possibly; and, in order to obtain the necessary guarantee, it is seeking a rise of 2c a bushel in the toll money.

As I said earlier, if we are to keep abreast of requirements, there is nothing more sensible than that this work should be proceeded with. In order to proceed with it, loan money must be raised; and, it does not matter that not 1c is raised from the farmers, it must be there as a guarantee.

That is how I see the position; and it is one which must give the industry a great fillip—to know that the money might never be drawn on. The 5 per cent. that has been drawn upon, has been returned in a never-ending stream through dividends and other channels known to the company. There are very few outstanding cases; they have all had their money returned.

Any one of us would go into a business of that nature; one with such a tremendous guarantee. It would be most lucrative. I do not suppose there could be any better security available to a banker for money that may be required, than the security of the rural production of a State like Western Australia. It would be a tremendous fillip to anybody endeavouring to start a business if he could have, as a background, the opportunity to pay his way in the manner in which this industry has always done.

It would seem to me the real reason for bringing the measure to the House is the 2c rise that is sought. It is most pleasing to see that the verbiage in the Bill is now in clear and simple language. Much of the professional jargon has been left out, and it will be easier to read it in language that we can all understand.

There are two or three other matters contained in the measure, which are not very important. One concerns the definition of a bin. I think I dealt to some extent with the definition given now in connection with receival areas. In the past receival areas were not well defined, and the present definition will be a distinct advantage to new settlers in the far-flung parts of the State.

I have mentioned some of the safeguards contained in the measure. They are not harsh safeguards; they are reasonable and rational, and although the company has been subjected to higher penalties these, I think, are in keeping with modern thought and modern financial outlook, and are quite reasonable.

The onus is on the company at all times to provide the necessary facilities; but I think it is a cheek that the Government should have so much say in determining the type of installation which is best suited; that the Minister should have complete control and be able to say, at any stage, "We do not want that sort of structure here; nor this type of handling somewhere else." From its past activities the company has shown that it can, in the future, be relied upon to do a very good job indeed. However, the Government probably felt the safeguard was necessary, and I have no hesitation in accepting it.

I have thoroughly examined the Bill; I have read through it several times. As I said earlier, it is pleasing to see that we have dispensed with the legal jargon which is normally used, and which causes Ministers a great deal of trouble. I have had the same experience myself. The Bill has been written in simple language and should be more acceptable because of this. The machinery clauses are quite clear and, by and large, are reasonable enough to be accepted. I support the second reading.

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [3.37 p.m.]: Last week I listened to the Minister for Agriculture when he introduced the Bill, and this evening I listened with interest to the member for Merredin-Yilgarn while he was speaking to the debate. I would like to congratulate both members for the way they explained the measure, and for the detail they gave in retrospect of the wheatgrowing industry and the wheat handling of this State.

Like a lot of others, I well remember the good old days when the farmers used the bagged system. I have often wondered whether any record was ever kept of the waste that occurred season after season under the old system. I refer now to the waste as a result of wheat being eaten by mice, or being infested by weevils, and other vermin around the place; and also to the tremendous losses incurred at the country sidings from thunderstorms which might strike the stacked wheat which happened to be without a roof. I also wonder whether a record was kept of the tremendous cost incurred each year in rebagging wheat at the sidings and at the ports. Anybody who knew what went on in those days would be foolhardy to suggest that the Bill should not be supported; or that C.B.H. should not be given a chance to further improve the conditions which we know exist in the State today. I have had considerable dealings with Co-operative Bulk Handling, and I have nothing but praise for the company. It is a good employer; though at times it might have seemed a little slow in erecting silos in the country areas where I thought they should have been erected. But this was largely governed by finance.

Now we come to the position where the company asks farmers and producers of grain for an extra 2c toll on every bushel of wheat grown. The younger farmers who perhaps were not farming in the period to which I refer, when the terrific waste was taking place, are very fortunate to have the present facilities.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn mentioned the off-line bins. I think these are a very good idea, and I know of a few in the northern areas. They serve a very good purpose, particularly where railway lines have been pulled up or the services discontinued.

I feel I should comment on the silos which have been erected at Northam. These are a wonderful boon and take the congestion away from the Port of Fremantle. A few years ago large silos were erected in Geraldton, and the company is continuing to erect them in various centres. These would cost the company a considerable amount of money, but it is money well invested, and money the State should be pleased to see invested for the storage of the grain. We know that too often produce that is grown is wasted because of no proper storage or handling facilities, or because of incompetence on the part of the dealers, or, perhaps, the farmers themselves.

However I would agree with the Minister and the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, because I believe that with the improvements to the facilities at the sidings, the facilities for grain handling in this State will, in a few years, be second to none anywhere in the world. This is a fact we should all be proud of; and we should be pleased to know we have a co-operative company in our State which is doing such magnificent work. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

MR. HALL (Albany) [3.43 p.m.]: The Bill before the House is a commendable measure when we consider the handling facilities that are being made available by this company, which will be spending \$4,100,000 in the Albany area.

I think we should consider the transport of grain, because I feel it is in this direction we may be able to reduce or minimise costs associated with the production and sale of grain. I believe that if we used pipelines to convey our grain, we would minimise considerably the cost of transport and also the risk of hazards on the road. Certain difficulties may be involved in gauging the requirements of this particular means of conveyance, but I think we should consider the matter, especially when we realise the company is spending such a gigantic amount of money on storage facilities.

Right throughout the world today the trend in transport is changing from road transport, because of maintenance costs and what have you, and I believe we should give very serious consideration to the transport of grain by pipeline conveyance. My belief can be substantiated considerably by the experience in European countries and in America.

The following article appeared in the *Albany Advertiser*:—

\$4.1m. Grain Facilities for Albany
Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited will spend an estimated \$4.1 million on additions to the Albany grain terminal.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.6 p.m.

Mr. HALL: Before the afternoon tea suspension, I was speaking on the tremendous number of facilities which are being installed at Albany. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I shall make reference to clause 31, subclause (1) which reads—

There shall be paid to the Company, in respect of all grain received in bulk, a toll, to be known as the foundation toll, of five cents per bushel or such lesser toll as the Governor may, from time to time, fix by Order in Council.

I do not think that any member of the House could, through any stretch of the imagination, seriously consider we could raise \$4,100,000 without putting some imposition on the costs of actual production and the costs, generally, to the State. If we consider the vertical containers which are to be built in Albany, we realise there is a tremendous burden of cost to be met, but we must realise that the imposition of this cost is justified.

As far as the measure is concerned, the main principle is to allow the imposition of this cost so that we can raise the money to provide the facilities at the respective ports. As far back as 1963, Albany was important as a grain port. While by no means the biggest grain shipping port in Western Australia, Albany is quite an important one with the rather unique distinction that it handles bulk exports of wheat, oats, and barley.

At this point, I would like to mention we will find in the future that other grains will become important. I believe experiments are now taking place whereby other grains will be introduced and exported. I understand that sorghum is one which will be introduced, and there will be yet another field of endeavour opened up. People, and such organisations as Co-operative Bulk Handling, who have imagination can easily see the possibilities of this occurring. That would be another outlet which could justify the addition of all these extra facilities at the Port of Albany.

Such development also means the provision of marshalling yards, which we must have under our present transportation system. I sound a note of warning: We should realise that we will have to have this expansion in all ports. Probably it will be brought about through reclamation, or other methods, and we will be able to expand our facilities to match the increased quantity of grain that will be produced in Australia, and in Western Australia in particular.

The expansion ideas of C.B.H. through the installation of these facilities at Albany is in keeping with the development that is taking place, and, as I have already mentioned, it is commendable. However, we find that in other directions—in matters such as rail links and marshalling yards—the development which is taking place is not matching the expansion of the company. I do not think any member of the House would dispute the

adventurous thoughts of the company, which have already been outlined by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, when each of us realises the advancement which has been made. I believe the member for Merredin-Yilgarn made some reference to a Mr. Thompson, who was one of the foundation members of the movement. I do not know of this gentleman, and probably it was before my advent into politics.

However, I think that if, with our other port facilities and berth requirements, we could only match the advancement made by C.B.H., then we could match the development of the opening up of our agricultural areas, and particularly our grain development.

I consider the Government should be taken to task a little at this point. I make reference to my electorate, because I find that our berthage is being restricted by certain grain activities. Eventually I am sure we will have to have a special berth to handle the grain that will be produced in the Albany agricultural zone. This will mean that the berthage for other ships will have to be delayed unless the Government is prepared to bring in some extensive development in regard to berth expansion. This company is prepared to spend \$4,100,000, yet our Government has resisted the actual berth expansion.

I do not think any member of the House could undervalue the principles of the company, its expansion, and the money it is prepared to outlay. Nevertheless, we find that the actual berthing facilities are not available to meet the requirements. Therefore the facilities have been badly neglected. In keeping with the development of the area, the land has been opened up and the facilities have been supplied by C.B.H., but we find that the Government has lapsed into a false state of security through not thinking in terms below the 26th parallel.

In all seriousness, if we were to analyse the cost of machinery, the cost of development, and the monetary value of wages and suchlike, which are tied up in primary industry in the southern part of the State, and in other portions of the State, we would find that the cost exceeded by far the cost of the development of iron ore in the north. We would also find that the return to the State and to the Commonwealth is far greater than what might be obtained through the royalty charges which will be imposed on the export of iron ore.

We would find that the employment, the agricultural machinery, and the land development all link up with the \$4,100,000 grain facilities. The company is prepared to plunge itself in debt in order to supply these facilities and make Albany into a growing port. However, we cannot belittle, or belie, the fact that the Government has not matched the development of the company. Port charges

and all kinds of other charges have increased. Unless the Government can match the development in the Albany region, I am afraid it will have a lot to answer for to the populace of Western Australia.

No-one will begrudge the money that has been expended for development in the north; but I cannot see why the south-west and the southern portions of the State should have been deprived, for so many years, of their share of funds for development, especially when development has occurred as a result of expenditure from the private sector. This clearly emphasises that the Government has not kept abreast of such development.

The measure before the Chamber no doubt is rather commendable. It has the approval, I think, of our former Minister for Agriculture, and I feel sure it will have a safe passage through the House. I can only reiterate that the development that has been brought about by C.B.H. has outstripped by far any development that has occurred as a result of Government expenditure. This company has been instrumental in providing port facilities at Albany to handle the product that is being produced in the hinterland. To assist in minimising the cost of transport, serious consideration should be given to the transportation of grain by pipeline.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [4.17 p.m.]: I rise to join others who have commended this Bill, and, at the same time, to acknowledge the remarks made by the Minister for Agriculture when he introduced the measure to the House, and those made by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn. I have heard that honourable member referred to as the member for Yilgarn-Merredin, but I am quite sure his electorate is Merredin-Yilgarn. That honourable member supported the Bill with one or two reservations. The other two speakers to the measure were the member for Geraldton and the member for Albany.

In my opinion those who have spoken have brought forth points of great interest. As a practising farmer, what impressed me most was the credit they showered on the company for the work it has done, and their making known the acclaim it has received from other parts of the world. I quite agree that the Chamber this evening somewhat resembles a picture gallery, but I am reminded that a few evenings ago the Deputy Leader of the Opposition also was responsible for having the Chamber looking like a picture gallery. If his action has been taken as a precedent, I am indeed sorry.

I entirely agree that it is a sound move to have the photographs exhibited in the Chamber, because they clearly depict the progress of the company over the years since it was inaugurated in 1933. It is

only a few months since I spoke at great length in this House on the excellent work that has been done by this company, and I do not think I should repeat myself at this juncture, because I am sure every member in the Chamber knows how I feel about the company. I only wish to endorse the remarks of the member for Merredin-Yilgarn when he said that not only was it a marvellous asset to the farming community of Western Australia, but that it had proved to be of tremendous benefit to the State as a whole. I do not think it will be denied that this is recognised by everyone in the State.

Recently a Mr. Conacher, who is one of the senior officials on the Board of Grain Commissioners for Canada, and a world authority on wheat, returned from a visit to Australia, including this State, and to other parts of the world, embracing even those countries that come within the Iron Curtain. In his report to the Board of Grain Commissioners for Canada he had a few comments to make on the bulk handling installations in Western Australia. He said—

In the areas visited, producers are not required to store any grain on the farms except that which they retain for their own use.

Evidently that would be regarded as a remarkable thing in Canada. During my visit to Canada I saw grain stored on many farms. I continue to quote—

Consequently, almost the entire saleable crop is delivered into the elevator system, directly from the harvesting machines.

How remarkable that must appear to the Canadians! There is no doubt that we have become quite used to that type of thing in Western Australia. Continuing—

Thus the collection points, or country elevators, plus the terminal elevators, must have sufficient capacity to receive and ship or store an entire crop in a matter of about two weeks.

That is very real. Mr. Conacher's remarks continue—

This is a sharp contrast to the Canadian system, where, taking into account farm-stored carryovers, the equivalent of an entire cereal crop has been stored on the farms of western Canada.

I marvel at the efficiency and flexibility of the elevator handling and storage facilities in Western Australia.

The terminal at Geraldton, W.A., operated by Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited, first came into operation in 1961. This is the most efficient-looking and cleanest terminal elevator that I had seen in all of my experience; the dust collection system is so efficient that there is no need to wear dust coats on a tour of the premises.

Members will realise that, over the years, in compliance with the provisions of the Health Act and other necessary laws, dust collection units have been installed at the bulk handling terminals to make them the cleanest and the most efficiently operated in the world. I continue to quote—

The terminal at Fremantle, which was put into operation in 1964, is the newest of the Australian terminals; it is similar to, but even more efficient than, the Geraldton terminal. I am sure that the management are correct in their claim that there is no terminal more modern than this anywhere in the world.

Mr. Sewell: The bulk handling facilities at Geraldton are certainly very good.

Mr. GAYFER: It is only fitting that the remarks made by Mr. Conacher, who is a recognised world authority on grain, should be aired in this House to show what people overseas think of our bulk handling system. In certain parts of the State, C.B.H. is often subjected to a little criticism over its bulk handling facilities, as against the facilities that are provided by handling authorities in other parts of Australia. In answer to this, let me say that C.B.H. is unique in the fact that it handles three varieties of grain. Further, very often it handles an off-grade line of wheat, and also a secondary grade of coarse grain, and now the company is handling two-row barley in bulk. This veritably means that C.B.H. is becoming a handler of all grains produced in Western Australia.

I think it should be recorded that last year C.B.H. even handled 2,500 bushels of wheat out of the Port of Wyndham. When one realises that Western Australia represents one-third of the Commonwealth of Australia, one can readily understand there should be nothing to prevent this State being regarded as the place that provides the finest bulk elevator system in the world. There is no doubt that is the position this State will shortly reach.

I notice that in Queensland a system of delivery quotas is in operation. I also notice that in New South Wales there is provision in the legislation to introduce quotas, and for the introduction of such a scheme as the one now being discussed for the coming season. That is common practice in America. In that country producers rely on quotas because the grain has to be stored on the farms. But in those circumstances, how can grain be properly stored to make it suitable to meet the requirements of overseas buyers?

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn referred to the fumigating methods that are employed in the bulk handling system in Western Australia; and I might add that those methods are being copied by other authorities throughout Australia at the present moment. The methods of C.B.H.

have been approved generally by the Australian Wheat Board, and at odd times acknowledgment has been given of the great work that is being done in this sphere.

Last year a great deal of consideration was given by the Eastern States—especially New South Wales—to the fact that it may be necessary to incorporate co-operative systems within the Government-owned instrumentality; that is, the Grain Elevators Board. In relation to this I wish to quote extracts from *The Land* referring to Collarenebri, but before doing so I would point out there were 15,000 bags of stacked wheat to be moved, and at that stage 90,000 bushels had been received by the trucking agent which in our case would be C.B.H. The extract reads—

At this stage, 90,000 bushels had been received by the trucking agent, Mr. Carl Roach of Collarenebri, while further south on the Burren Junction-Pokataroo line, the Merrywinebone Co-operative 150,000 bushel storage and the Burren Junction silos were both filled.

Mr. Roach told *The Land* that he expected to receive about 200,000 bushels this season.

That would be about the quantity of wheat that would be handled at one of our smaller sidings. Of that quantity 45,000 bushels have been stacked at the siding. Another extract taken from *The Land* of Thursday, the 8th December, reads as follows:—

They further showed that, on the present rate of rail truck allocation to the Boggabilla line (about 330 weekly), it would take another six months for the receipt of all wheat, apart from the clearance of the then still-filled storages before the 1967-68 harvest.

Mr. O'Neil: Where is that?

Mr. GAYFER: This all occurred in the State of New South Wales. In the northern part of that State hundreds of motor trucks were lined up waiting for the grain to be delivered. The photographs which I have before me show 200 trucks queued up to get rid of wheat at a siding called North Star.

As the Minister who introduced the Bill stated, apart from a few instances, there have been virtually no hold-ups at any time in the disposal of grain through the C.B.H. organisation; a feat of which that company should be proud.

Four points seem to be covered in the Bill. The 1935 legislation, as the member for Merredin-Yilgarn has stated, has been amended eight times, and this Bill is practically a consolidating measure of the principal Act and all the amendments. It has been rewritten in everyday language and the provisions of the legislation have been put into proper sequence

so that the average person can understand them. Minor amendments contained in the Bill are to make the legislation more workable.

There are four points in the Bill which possibly are entirely new. One is the alteration of the limit of the toll money that has been mentioned by other speakers. The second point is to give recognition to the dockage and sampling systems, and the third point is to give recognition to the fact that C.B.H. operates bins—apart from the terminals—that are away from the railheads and railway lines altogether; and, in my opinion, the fourth point in the Bill would be to give more practical expression to the C.B.H. operational facilities at port terminals.

There are one or two other minor amendments, such as the one relating to a person who is directly interested in the marketing of grain sitting on the board of C.B.H. I think this provision will be referred to when the particular clause in the Bill is discussed, but I can assure members there are just reasons for including the provision.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn spoke of the 2c toll and of the voters' apathy towards polls that are conducted from time to time by C.B.H. I agree with him fully on this point. In 1958 when a poll for districts was suggested, the papers were circulated for 23 days before voting closed, and in this poll there was a 23.6 per cent. vote. In regard to the increase in the foundation toll in 1961, the papers were circulated for 34 days. The members of the directorate of C.B.H. travelled the State lecturing on this proposition, and as a result there was a 41.6 per cent. poll. This was higher than usual, mainly because the directors travelled the length and breadth of the State to put the proposition to the farmers.

In the poll for the election of directors in district No. 1 conducted in 1964, the postal cards were sent out 20 days before voting closed, and there was a 46.9 per cent. vote. In the poll for district No. 5 in 1965, the papers were sent out 48 days before the vote was taken, and there was a return of 45 per cent.

Mr. Kelly: Was that the percentage of all the shareholders?

Mr. GAYFER: Yes. The papers which were posted to shareholders for the poll which has been referred to by members went out 16 days before voting closed, and 36 per cent. of the total number of shareholders voted. On an average, of all the polls which have been conducted among shareholders the result is 38 per cent. I can therefore agree with the member for Merredin-Yilgarn that apathy has been shown by the shareholders. This apathy is somewhat of a reflection on them, because it is in their interests that the organisation is doing what it is.

The meetings of shareholders are well attended, but more shareholders could attend. Possibly on an average 150 out of the 14,800 shareholders attend the annual general meetings, when various points are discussed, and when business propositions and the finalisation of the activities of the year are put to the shareholders. I think it is because of the strides the company is making in their interests that generally they feel happy with the position. In the light of the credit that has been given to the company by the members who have spoken on this occasion, and in the light of its remarkable achievements over the years, it is fair to suggest that the shareholders are quite happy with the organisation in the way it is proceeding.

In the last five years C.B.H. has built 38,000,000 bushels of storage, at a cost of \$27,000,000. In the next five years it will spend \$40,000,000 on additional facilities. It will provide 56,000,000 bushels of storage in the country, and it will build this storage at the rate of 11,000,000 bushels per year. That will be a colossal performance by the company; and what it is undertaking to do will keep pace with the agricultural development that is taking place in the State. The company is meeting the needs in providing facilities for the new farmers who are going on the land, and who have not contributed to the toll for as many years as those in established areas.

The new farmers are to get facilities within a short distance of their properties, and they will be provided with these facilities in fairly smart time. As a matter of fact, the Bill provides that sidings or receival points shall be constructed 25 miles apart. Theoretically, that means the furthest any farmer will have to cart is 12½ miles. It is also provided that growers shall establish a right to a receival point if they have delivered, on the average, 200,000 bushels over a period of five years prior to a bin being erected. That is fair enough, and that will set a standard.

At some periods in the establishment of receival points it might be necessary to construct bins a little more or a little less than 25 miles apart. This will depend on the road systems, which are the important links with the bins.

In regard to the 2c toll, I would like to make it perfectly clear that the directors of C.B.H. have indicated to the shareholders in the papers which were sent out with the voting cards that they have no intention of applying for an increase in this toll, unless it is absolutely necessary. If it is necessary they will have to apply to the Minister for Agriculture for permission to invoke that toll, or a part of it. It will then have to be ratified by the Governor-in-Council. The growers will therefore have a safeguard in respect of this provision in the Bill.

In order to build all the large facilities and modern refinements which have been mentioned, C.B.H. is to spend \$40,000,000 in the next five years, and that sum will take a little bit of finding. Although C.B.H. operates on a \$6,000,000 overdraft, made possible by a Government guarantee, it still has to find on the market a further \$12,000,000, \$22,000,000 being available from toll and other sources. That is not easy for the company to raise. Some people say that the Government should advance the money. If the Government cannot finance the Ord scheme on its own, I do not know where it will raise the money required by C.B.H. Certain claims have been made that such moneys are supplied by the Governments in other States, but I refute those claims. An investigation into the difference between loan moneys and grants will verify that what I have said is correct.

The provision of the 2c toll within the Act will only allow the company to have a safeguard for the payment of interest and amortisation, should there be a poor harvest. In the view of some members, the amount received by C.B.H. seems to work in a reverse way, and it is quite true. In a year when C.B.H. expects to meet its interest and repayments and a small toll is imposed, because of a poor harvest it might be necessary to increase the toll to meet the company's obligations. That is an occasion when the toll will be increased.

We know that over the years C.B.H. has pursued active investigation into means of borrowing money from overseas and within Australia. In 1961 an approach was made by the company for a loan, but because the loan was offered at the rate of 8 per cent. interest, plus brokerage, it decided the interest charges and the repayments would be too high. The company calculated that it would be cheaper in the long run to impose the toll, because eventually the growers would have to repay any money that was borrowed to keep the company operating. The directors told the shareholders they would try to raise the money, but if it was not available they would have to invoke the toll.

That was only one aspect of the case put to the growers. It should be realised that C.B.H. also promised to amalgamate all debentures by 1968, and that the company will do. It will cost the company \$2,300,000. When that is put into effect, all tolls will be placed on the one level; and whereas the port equipment toll expires at the end of every five years, and the foundation toll expires at the end of every 15 years, the two will be amalgamated to give the shareholders a return on a 10-year cycle.

Theoretically it will mean this: If a grower has been producing and marketing grain for more than 10 years, then the amount of money which he has paid in each year by way of tolls will be returned

in equal amounts, under the system that is to be introduced; that is, provided he has delivered a constant quantity of grain. The new system will be put into effect next year.

Other sources of income, on the borrowing side, were investigated by C.B.H. in August, 1961. Again borrowings from overseas were considered, but again the required money was obtainable at 8½ per cent. interest, plus brokerage. The Commonwealth Government was unwilling to guarantee unrestricted repatriation. The conditions of the loan were such that C.B.H., which is the mouthpiece of the growers, could not accept them.

In 1962 another approach was made, but again the conditions of the loan were not suitable to the company. There are other illustrations I can give in which the company endeavoured to borrow money, but on each occasion there was the insistence—the same insistence that is imposed by a lending organisation to anybody who wishes to borrow money—that certain safeguards would have to be included within the constitution of the growers to cover, in case of necessity, any deficiency in interest payments; in other words, it was a simple collateral. A guarantee by the Government is one thing; and a guarantee by the growers through their company is another.

The growers have indicated what they want, and that is the reason for the particular provision to be included in the Bill. Other members have referred to the planning which C.B.H. is undertaking. This is very obvious and very real. Two members have spoken about the position in Geraldton and Albany, but it could be claimed that Bunbury and Esperance should be added. These four ports are expanding at such a rate that unless one has seen the installations that are being established one would not be aware of the magnificent strides which the company is making.

The member for Albany referred to the building of a pipeline to convey the grain to the sea ports. He should realise that this is not a new idea, because C.B.H. has investigated this means of transport.

Likewise, when I was recently in Canada, I investigated possibilities there and found that quite a lot of research had been carried out. As members will be aware, there are oil pipelines across Canada, and the idea was to put the grain into capsules and float them down the pipelines with the oil. However, all research into this method has proved it is impracticable because of the expense involved. I do not think this means the end of it by a long shot. Nevertheless, research that has taken place in Canada and, to a lesser degree, in America has shown that the financial structure is far in excess of the present method of disposing of their grain.

At this stage I do not intend to speak any further on the Bill. As the clauses come forward in Committee, I think they

will meet with approval and, from the remarks that have been put forward, I feel sure that the measure is a commendable one and is in the interests of Western Australia.

I understand the Bill will be completed at another time when, perhaps, I will speak on some of the clauses as they are dealt with. I commend the Bill to the House.

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

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), read a first time.

ALBANY HARBOUR BOARD ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 24th August.

MR. HALL (Albany) [4.48 p.m.]: The Bill before the House looks rather large in its concept, but it actually contains four points. One of the principal points is related to a visit the Minister made to Albany for the opening of the new port building. Prominently on the side of the building were the words "Port Authority" and the Minister and his under-secretary said rather astutely that this was not in accordance with the law—and justifiably so.

Mr. Williams: You mean, they jumped the gun?

MR. HALL: At that time there was no authority to use those words. However, one of the principal amendments contained in this Bill is to allow the use of the words "Albany Port Authority," which already appear on the fine new building.

Another amendment will give the board power to raise money for the implementation of works that will match the development of the area. In regard to this aspect, a sad point is that the Albany Port Authority—as it will be known—was being forced to raise money in order to carry out extensive works necessary for port development, while in the past loan moneys were provided for this purpose. I believe the Albany Harbour Board, or Albany Port Authority, is to raise something like £70,000—

Mr. Williams: Dollars?

MR. HALL: —I think pounds—for the development of the third berth. I am hoping the Minister will agree to find matching money so that the third berth will be developed in such a way as to provide port facilities to match the development in the area—development of which we have heard so much in connection with grain installations.

Another amendment will give the port authority power to appoint a management of officers. This is necessary because Al-

bany has grown in magnitude and the job is becoming too great for a secretary to control. This has been borne out by mistakes that have occurred recently.

I think I have covered the main points contained in the measure. Although the Bill is voluminous, it is minute in character. By changing the name of the Albany Harbour Board to the Albany Port Authority we will be adding some dignity. The fact that the port authorities will be able to borrow money for further extensions will help the development of our outer ports, which is essential and in keeping with the development of the State.

It seems to me that today the Government is unloading a lot of responsibility on to local government. The responsibilities of different departments are being transferred to harbour authorities and local government. Whether this is good or bad, I do not know. If we are to help ourselves locally, we must get away from the effect of political pressure. I think this is exemplified in the area represented by the member for Bunbury where there has been pressure by political interests; and this would be borne out by those members who represent neighbouring districts.

This measure will benefit isolated areas, as matching money can be obtained either from the Government or the Loan Council. I would point out that we have no fears regarding this legislation. I have conferred with the Albany Port Authority and it is quite in accord with the measure. However, when one looks at the Estimates and sees what has been spent in other portions of the State as compared with what has been spent in the southern portion of the State, one realises that more money should be spent in the southern areas than has been spent in the past.

The Albany Port Authority is now being asked to almost finance its own expenditure by representation through the Loan Council. I think this is something to which the Minister should give serious consideration. Albany has grown as far as its port and regional development are concerned, and it is time the Government realised that it will have to give substantial monetary support to the Albany Port Authority.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [4.55 p.m.]: I would like to thank the member for Albany for his support of this measure. Indeed the meeting to which he referred, on the occasion of the opening of the Albany Port Authority building, was one at which I suggested to him it would be unwise for him to oppose this legislation. It is true that the Albany Harbour Board did name its building, "The Albany Port Authority"; and it is true it was a little previous in doing so. However, I hasten to say that coming events had already cast their long shadows before them.

In regard to the third berth, this is something which is very desirable for the town of Albany and, although I am not yet in a position to announce that we will proceed with it during this forthcoming year, I am hopeful that the necessary arrangements can be made to ensure that it will be commenced.

In regard to loan money, generally, I note that the honourable member said the State appeared to be unloading its responsibilities. I do not think that was quite a fair statement to make. A better phrase might be, "A proper balance of the responsibility." As a matter of fact, the harnessing of the funds available to statutory organisations means taking sensible advantage of arrangements that have been made by the Loan Council. It would indeed be foolish of the Government not to avail itself of the advantages that can accrue from the proper balancing of loan moneys. In any case, I hope before long that I can make a favourable announcement about the third berth.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BUNBURY HARBOUR BOARD ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 24th August.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [5.4 p.m.]: When the Minister presented this Bill and the previous one to the House, the member for Albany was unavoidably absent and I took the adjournment of both measures. This Bill is precisely the same as the one dealing with the Albany Harbour Board, which has just been discussed. While the Bill contains 77 clauses, in the main, it purports to do four things. The other provisions are principally consequential upon the changing of the title of the Bunbury Harbour Board to the Bunbury Port Authority.

I think the Minister is possibly being kind in changing this title; not that he did not consider Albany and Bunbury as harbours. I think he was possibly correct. His idea was to bring them into line with modern-day thinking. However, because the member for Bunbury will no doubt want to say a few words on this measure, and because the member for Albany has already fairly well covered the subject, I will resume my seat. I support the Bill.

MR. WILLIAMS (Bunbury) [5.6 p.m.]: As has been said, this Bill of 77 clauses is rather large in appearance but, in actual fact, it carries out only four changes to the present Act. I have no doubt that when the Minister introduced this Bill, and the previous one, he chose to introduce them in their alphabetical order, rather than in

accordance with the importance of the ports. I thought that remark might bring a laugh from the member for Albany!

To get on with the Bill, the first major amendment is that of changing the name of the Bunbury Harbour Board to the Bunbury Port Authority. This is virtually a status symbol. The Minister said, when introducing the Bill, he thought harbours were places where ships went to hide from storms and that ports were places where ships loaded cargo. Both Bunbury and Albany are major ports of the State and they will operate under a port authority. This is a step in the right direction to bring uniformity to those ports.

Another section of the amending Bill changes the title of the secretary to that of managing secretary. The secretary, of a harbour board, of course, does most of the work, so I think this amendment is in order. There is also provision for the port authority to enlarge the executive staff, and this will allow the authority to keep up with the growth of the port from time to time. Both of the ports mentioned are growing, and over the last six years Bunbury has practically doubled its trade. I have no doubt that within the next six years we will see that trade doubled again.

Mr. Sewell: You will soon catch up with Geraldton.

Mr. WILLIAMS: We might do that if we could find some iron ore in our vicinity. Another power which will be granted to the authority is to carry out works up to a maximum of \$10,000. I would like the Minister to clarify this position when he replies. Does this mean that the port authority will be able to carry out works only to the amount of \$10,000, or does it mean that the authority can carry out more than one set of works during the year to the value of \$10,000? Is \$10,000 the maximum that can be spent during a year on works which the authority can handle itself?

Mr. May: It will be \$10,000.

Mr. WILLIAMS: That is not very much, but I should imagine that work could be carried out during the year on more than one project costing \$10,000. I would like the Minister to tell me if two sets of works can be carried out at the same time.

There is also provision in the amending Bill for the port authority to purchase or resume land. Again, I wonder what will be the determining factor as to how much land can be purchased or resumed in any one year and what the cost can be. I feel this will be a very important power for the port authority to have, because, as the Bunbury port area grows, the port authority will require more land to service the commodities that are to be exported. At the present time negotiations are taking place for coal from the Collie field to be exported through the port of Bunbury. This is the sort of bulk cargo

which I believe the port of Bunbury will handle to a greater extent over the next few years, and a considerable amount of land will be required for this and similar commodities.

Also, through negotiations which are proceeding at the present time, there is the possibility of a wood chip industry being established. Apparently it is quite likely that the products of this industry would be shipped through Bunbury.

The member for Albany has just left his seat, but doubtlessly he would like to have a shot at me over this possibility. However, he would have to consider the economics, and in all probability Bunbury will obtain this trade because of its proximity to the area in which the industry is likely to start.

I would like the Minister to clear up those two points; namely, the works maximum of \$10,000, and also what will be the determining factor regarding the resumption or purchase of land.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Before you proceed, could I inquire what you mean when you ask what would be the determining factor?

Mr. WILLIAMS: I mean in relation to how much land can be acquired. Does the authority pay for it, or is it done through the Public Works Department? I would like to mention one other factor. I notice that the penalties under the Act are the same today as they were in 1909. This measure at least contains provision to lift these penalties to anything from \$40, which applies to some offences at present, to \$100, and from \$200 to \$300. With those few words, I support the Bill.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [5.12 p.m.]: Again, in connection with this Bill I would like to thank both members who have supported the second reading. I note that the member for Bunbury made mention rather jokingly of the relative importance of Bunbury and of Albany. This merely leads me to say that each port is of very great and very real importance in regard to unlocking the tremendous potential which lies in the hinterland of each port.

It has been the Government's aim to try to upgrade the facilities of not only these two ports but of ports all round the coastline with a view, as I say, to having the proper key to satisfy import and export requirements.

The question was raised by the member for Bunbury regarding the works that the port authority might carry out. If this amendment is carried, it will enable the port authority to carry out more than one work each year. Each work, if the port authority carries it out itself, may not exceed \$10,000. I imagine the only limit which would be imposed would be based on the urgency of the work, its

priority, and the authority's own availability of funds.

The other query raised was in connection with land being acquired. This is also a power which is given to the port authority to enable it to acquire land in its own right instead of having land bought and held in the name of the Public Works Department. Here again, land will be bought according to the urgency and the necessity as considered by the port authority. If there are any points which need to be raised in connection with costs or the capabilities of the port authority, then the very closest liaison will be maintained with the Minister for Works, whoever he may be.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 26 put.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether you would agree to what I am about to suggest, but clauses 26 to 36 are exactly the same type of amendment. Perhaps they could be joined together; but I do not know what is demanded by Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that under Standing Orders as they are at the moment, we must proceed in the normal way. Next session you might be able to do something different.

Mr. Hawke: Is this a private conversation, or are we all invited to know what is going on?

Clauses 27 to 77 put.

Clauses 1 to 77 passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [5.22 p.m.]: As I see it, the Bill proposes to do three things. Firstly, it proposes to delete certain machinery clauses to bring the Act more up to date and to facilitate administration. Secondly, it proposes to revise penalties upwards. In one or two instances the penalties are to be increased very substantially, which could, I think, be justified. In one instance that comes readily to mind the increase is from \$10 to \$40, and, generally, the increase in penalties seems to be about 100 per cent.

Thirdly, the Bill proposes to give the department additional powers.

I have no objection to the proposals in the Bill. Any criticism I have to offer is more in the direction of what it does not propose to do. I shall make a suggestion to the Minister for his further consideration. At the outset let me say that what I am objecting to now was in the Act when I was administering it, and so I must take some responsibility for not having amended it in the direction I am now suggesting it should be altered.

As the Minister proposes to deal with this particular section in the Act, this is the appropriate time for me to express my views on it. I am now referring particularly to the Minister's intention to amend section 103. That section of the Act deals with the liability for rates. In the first instance this imposes the liability upon the occupier when he is not the owner. I think this is quite wrong. In some cases where the occupier is not the owner, the owner—sometimes the State Housing Commission—has already taken care of the amount that has to be paid in rates by including it in the rent.

So in the first place the person responsible and liable for any rates on property should be the owner. I think it is quite wrong to make the occupier the collecting agent. The rate notice ought to be issued to the owner of the property who, in advance, is already collecting the amount of the rates in his rent. I have yet to meet the landlord who has not taken into consideration the amount of rates that have to be paid upon the property which he has let to a tenant. In the weekly rent the tenant is paying is included the rates on the property, which the owner will ultimately have to pay.

It is true the legislation provides that the occupier, having paid the rates, can present the receipt for such payment to the owner of the premises and claim the amount as part payment of his rent; but we must not lose sight of the fact that in some instances that would be tantamount to a notice to quit, because the owner could take umbrage at being presented with this bill and could forthwith issue a notice that he wanted possession of his premises; and, as the Act stands at present, he could get it.

It is wrong in principle to make a person liable for something for which, directly, he is not liable. It is the owner of a property who should be paying the rates and not the occupier. Therefore, to make the occupier responsible at law for payment of the rates in the first instance is not quite fair.

Mr. Crommelin: The owners of some small factories being built at the moment are incorporating in the rentals a fixed rate of interest, plus the rates and taxes. There are quite a few, in fact.

Mr. TONKIN: All right. As it stands at present the Act provides in section 103 the following:—

Liability for and Recovery of Rates.

- (1) The amount of any rates made and levied under this Act shall be payable, in the first instance, by the occupier of the land rated.
- (2) The amount of such rates may also, at the option of the Board, be recovered from the owner of the land rated.

Why should it not be the other way round? If the recovery of the amount of the rates from the owner is at the option of the board now, why not provide, in the first instance, that the liability for the payment of the rates is on the owner? He is the one against whose property a summons could be issued; he is the one who has the asset. If it is necessary to issue a summons against the occupier for unpaid rates, it might be found he has no assets, other than his furniture. It is rather remarkable that section 103 goes on to state—

Provided that, except where the Crown is the owner, any of such rates paid by an occupier shall, in the absence of special agreement to the contrary, be afterwards recoverable by the occupier from the owner.

Why should the crown be excepted? If the occupier pays the rates, why should he not be able to recover the rates from the owner whether it be the Crown or somebody else? If the occupier is forced to pay the rates when, in fact, it is not his liability—unless there is a special agreement to the contrary—why should he not have recourse against the Crown in the same way as he has against a private individual? I cannot see the reason for the Crown being excepted.

Mr. O'Neill: Property owned by the Crown is not rated, is it?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: No. I cannot quite follow your reasoning in this instance, but I can see a good deal of reason for the first part of your argument.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us cite the example of a house which belongs to the State Housing Commission and which is being let to a tenant.

Mr. O'Neill: We pay the rates.

Mr. TONKIN: But according to section 103 the rate notice would be issued against the tenant.

Mr. O'Neill: There is a provision whereby if a person owns three properties, the rates for those properties are sent to the owner.

Mr. TONKIN: All right. I cannot see why that should not be the general principle; that is, that in the first instance the charge for the rates should be the liability of the owner, because he will take care of them. They will be included as

part of the rent, make no mistake about that! As the tenant in most cases has already paid the rates in his rent, why should he be called upon to pay them direct to the department and then have to submit a receipt to the owner to claim them as a deduction from his rent? Surely the owner is in a much better position to find the money to pay the rates than the tenant who has already had to pay instalments in his rent.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Can you advance any thoughts on who should pay for excess water?

Mr. TONKIN: In most cases that, of course, is the responsibility of the occupier; although a special agreement may be entered into to the contrary where, in accordance with the rent being paid, the owner of the property agrees that he will pay the full charges for rates and excess water. I know of cases where that is done; especially where people let a property and go away for an extended holiday and want their lawns and gardens to be kept in good condition. In such cases they agree with the tenant to pay any costs for excess water.

Generally speaking, apart from that, tenants are responsible for the payment of any excess water; and that is the position with the State Housing Commission. If the Acting Speaker (Mr. Davies) will permit me, I shall point out how unfairly this operates with the State Housing Commission. If there is a change of tenancy with the State Housing Commission, as the commission pays the rates, but not the excess water, it is quite possible—and does often happen—that, when a new tenancy commences, the whole of the allowance for water has been used, and the new tenant comes in immediately on the use of excess water. There is, however, no reduction in the rent so far as he is concerned, and accordingly he pays a rent which ought to entitle him to a water allowance, which he does not get, because it has already been completely used by the previous tenant.

What is required, in common fairness, is that, in the first instance, the liability for rates should be placed upon the owner. The amendment in the Bill extends this from rates to charges as well, because it proposes to repeal and re-enact subsections (1) and (2) of section 103. Subsection (1) of that section will then read—

(1) The amount of any rates made and levied under this Act and the amount of any prescribed charges levied under this Act shall be payable, in the first instance, by the occupier of the land rated or of the land in respect of which the charge is levied, as the case may be.

This will mean a further liability on the tenant or occupier which may not be his responsibility at all. Why should a bill be sent to him and he have to find the

money, in the first instance, to pay it in a lump sum, when he already might have paid the full amount of these rates and charges in the rent he has paid from week to week?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I think these are only in connection with churches and other organisations.

Mr. TONKIN: That does not alter the tenor of my argument. As this is definitely the responsibility of the owner of the property, the liability should be his, because it throws upon the occupier the responsibility of having to recover the amount in some way; but he is prevented from doing this against the Crown.

That rather startles me, because the Crown is not behindhand in charging, in the rent, the amount to cover rates, as the Minister has indicated.

Mr. O'Neill: I think our operations are not regarded as Crown operations.

Mr. TONKIN: I regard them as Crown operations.

Mr. O'Neill: We pay all rates in respect of rental properties.

Mr. TONKIN: With regard to subsection (3) of section 103 the proposed amendment seeks to include the words "or prescribed charges." So it will remain as worded except for the words to be added, and will read—

Provided that, except where the Crown is the owner, any amount of such rates or prescribed charges paid by an occupier shall, in the absence of special agreement to the contrary, be afterwards recoverable by the occupier from the owner; and any receipt for rates or prescribed charges so paid may be tendered to and shall be accepted by the owner in satisfaction, to the extent of the amount specified in the receipt, of any rent due to the owner.

The Minister says that if the owner is the Crown it cannot be rated. In that case the occupier should not be rated either.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Not necessarily; the occupier is given a service.

Mr. TONKIN: For which the Crown will get payment. If the Crown lets a house—and the Crown often does when it resumes properties from people—it subsequently allows those people to remain there on rental; and, sometimes, when it gets rid of an original owner, it puts a fresh tenant in. I have no doubt that the Crown, in those circumstances, has regard for the fact that certain rates will have to be paid on that property.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: No—

Mr. TONKIN: Do not tell me that the metropolitan water board supplies water to houses which the Government has resumed, and which it has let to tenants, without any charge; because, if it does,

then it is imposing a charge upon other tenants to make up for the loss.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I was not telling you anything. I was going to say that a tenant of the Crown should not receive any favourable discrimination as compared with a tenant of private enterprise.

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot see that; because if the metropolitan water board issued a rate notice to a tenant of a Government-owned house, it would be for the water rates on the property. Would it allow a tenant to remain there and use the water without issuing a rate notice?

Mr. O'Neill: This might be one of the charges rather than rates.

Mr. TONKIN: The tenant should be permitted to present the receipt he has for his water rates and get a rebate for it. Why should there be an exception in the case of the Crown? According to the law, if the occupier pays the rates, when the owner collects the rent, the occupier can claim a rebate off the rent for the amount he has paid by way of rates. All he has to do is tender a receipt; so why should not he also be able to do that in the case of the Crown?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The Crown has always been exempt from payment of rates.

Mr. TONKIN: In those circumstances it should not be. If the metropolitan water board supplies a water and sewerage service to a house owned by the Crown, and then issues a rate notice to the tenant of that house—just as it would to the tenant of the house next door, where the tenant happens to be the owner—then surely in both cases, if the tenant pays the rates, each one of them should be entitled to claim the benefit of the payment off his rent. One should not be excluded, because the owner happens to be the Government.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You said the tenant was the owner in this case.

Mr. TONKIN: In one case. I am taking the illustration where the houses are side by side; and where in one case the tenant is the owner, and in the other the Government is the owner. In both cases rate notices are issued. In the first instance, where the tenant is the owner he obviously is responsible, so there is no argument; but in the second instance, the tenant has paid the rent, but he cannot claim from the Government the amount which has been paid as rates, even though in the rent might be included some amount to cover the rates.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That does not follow necessarily. You said earlier you assumed the rate factor was included in the rent.

Mr. TONKIN: That is the way in which the rents are determined.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: More often than not the Government acts as a benevolent landlord.

Mr. TONKIN: The State Housing Commission does not, because it increased the rents after it had made a profit of \$1,000,000. I think what I have said should be looked into.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You were on stronger ground in regard to the first aspect, but I shall have a look at the matter.

Mr. TONKIN: If, in effect, a property is being rated I cannot see why the tenant in a Government-owned property should be placed at a disadvantage compared with a tenant of a property owned by a private person. There is no difficulty with the owner of a private property, and the tenant can claim the amount which he has paid as rates in the rent, although he might not get it. I have known private owners to tell the tenants to vacate the properties, when the tenants pointed out that they had paid a certain amount in rates which the owners had neglected to pay.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You missed the point that the Government in leasing a property or a house would make an arrangement with the tenant for the rate payments to be the responsibility of the tenant, and would indicate that the rates were not incorporated in the rent.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not missing that point. There would be no difference between the Government and a private person making such an arrangement, if one was made. I am dealing with the cases where no such arrangement is made.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: This arrangement is made by the Government.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister is only guessing when he says that the Government makes such an arrangement in all cases. If it is made, why exempt specifically the Government from any claim? There would be no claim to make if there was such an arrangement in all cases. The Minister is putting forward the strongest possible argument when he says the situation could not arise where the Government was responsible. If the situation, where the Government as the owner is responsible for the rates but the tenant pays them, could arise then the tenant should be allowed to recover the amount from the Government. If, as the Minister says, the situation could not arise, then there is no need to have the provision in the Statute to exempt the Government as there could not be a claim against the Government. I am not satisfied that the situation could not arise; and I think I know of some cases where it has arisen.

In these matters the department should not be permitted to take the easy way out, to the disadvantage and inconvenience of private citizens. This seems to be a simple way for the department to make sure that it can get the money

quickly, and, in so doing, leave it to the tenant to be recompensed. The owner of a property might be on a trip overseas, but under this provision the occupier will have to pay the debt although he might have paid the rates already in this weekly rental. The responsibility ought to rest on the department to collect from the owner of the property. If it cannot collect from the owner then it should take action against the owner, and not against the occupier.

Apart from that, I have no criticism to offer. The other amendments in the Bill are necessary and desirable, particularly those in relation to the granting of additional powers. I agree that where a meter has not been registering, some method to facilitate assessment of rates should be available; and the only reasonable method is to average the consumption over a period of years to arrive at a figure which is a fair estimate of the actual usage. The assessment could not be completely reliable, because from time to time different circumstances arise; but, as near as possible, the averaging of consumption over a period is the fairest method. The proposed amendment in the Bill will insert a power into the Act to average consumption to determine the amount which can be regarded as the reasonable consumption. With those ideas I conclude my remarks, and I support the Bill.

MR. GUTHRIE (Subiaco) [5.48 p.m.]: I would like to comment on the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition. If he had researched deeper into the Act he would see how the problem of the Crown does arise. The provision for placing the onus on the occupier has, I think, been in the Act ever since it was passed in 1909. I think the reason was that back in 1909 there were many absentee owners of land in this State, particularly of vacant land around Perth, and difficulty was experienced by the department in collecting the rates. Many of the landowners were in New Zealand and Victoria, and for that reason the onus was placed on the occupier, if there was an occupier, and if there was not the department would have to chase the owner.

The definition of owner makes it quite clear that he is the person, other than His Majesty, who for the time being is entitled to receive the rent, etc. Further on in the Act, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the phrases "the Crown" and "His Majesty" are used; but there is no definition of those terms in the Act. For that reason we have to fall back on the Interpretation Act which makes it quite clear that the term "Crown," when used in the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act, means Her Majesty the Queen. It cannot be submitted that it includes the State Housing Commission and other instrumentalities.

When the Act was passed in 1909, the main purpose of the provision was no doubt to cover special leases, under the Land Act, of town lots. There were some in the metropolitan area, and I know of some in my electorate.

There are still some in Jolimont and in Daglish. Of course there are a lot in the country districts of Western Australia, but the Act does not extend that far. These people pay a very nominal rent to the Crown. The reason they cannot get a freehold title is simply that the Crown is not prepared to give fee simple title to the land. The Crown is, in effect, the owner and that, I suggest, is the reason redress was not given against the Crown. I would say that Crown instrumentalities are not covered. If the land is in the name of the Minister for Works or anybody else, such as a body corporate, the problem does not arise.

I suggest to the Minister that the case of the Crown resuming land is something which could be looked at. When the Crown, as such, resumes land, the land is, as I understand it in most instances—not all—taken in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, and if the house, or whatever is on the land is let, the water supply board collects the rates from the tenant as occupier, and there would be no right of redress against the Crown. The only fair way would be make a reduction of rent equivalent to the rates, and leave it to the occupier to pay. I would point out, however, that there is no provision in the Act which protects the occupier.

Subsection (a) of section 72 makes it clear that land, the property of the Crown and used for public purposes, or unoccupied, is exempt from rating altogether. In the case of Crown land which is, firstly, used for public purposes or, secondly, unoccupied, a rate cannot be levied at all. So the question does not arise; but if the land is occupied and not used for public purposes a rate can be levied and it would be charged to the occupier who would have to pay; and, as I see it, without a right of redress against the Crown. Where land on which a house is occupied and let is acquired by the Crown for, say, a future road, the rent should be reduced accordingly.

The only other observation I wish to make is in connection with section 103 of the Act. As mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, the water board has the right to levy the owner direct for rates. Speaking from memory, and having made applications to the water board under this section—and I have always understood that this was the practice in the days of the department—the board automatically exercises its option if the owner owns at least three ratable properties. In that case the owner receives three assessments. However, if a person owns fewer than three ratable properties, the board

does not send an assessment to the owner. Presumably the board reckons that the man who owns three properties is of sufficient substance for it to take a fair risk with him.

This is the section under which the State Housing Commission would get its rate notices sent direct to the Housing Commission because it obviously owns more than three properties. With those comments I support the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Toms.

House adjourned at 5.54 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 12th September, 1967

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

WEST PROVINCE

Seat Declared Vacant

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [4.36 p.m.]: I move (without notice)—

That this House resolves that owing to the death of The Hon. Arthur Raymond Jones, former member for the West Province, the seat be declared vacant.

Question put and passed.

QUESTIONS (9): ON NOTICE

CARAVAN PARKS

Applications for Sites

1. The Hon. C. E. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Town Planning:

Further to my question on Tuesday the 1st August, 1967, in regard to the number of applications for approval of sites for caravan parks received by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority during the last 24 months, will the Minister advise—

- (1) The name of the applicant, the location and size of the site for—
 - (a) each of the nine sites approved; and
 - (b) each of the four sites awaiting determination?