

reason to suppose that the effectiveness of the legislation is impaired in any way by some supposed conflict of laws. I do not see the necessity to take this up with the Commonwealth Government but the matter will be closely watched.

2. *This question was postponed.*

3. ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BOARD

Financial Position

The Hon. J. DOLAN asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Do the financial operations of the Artificial Breeding Board, as shown on page 5 of Bulletin No. 3580 issued by the Department of Agriculture, show the following results for the period the 1st May, 1956, to the 3rd March, 1967:—

(a) Profit \$20,584 after charging \$27,028 for administration and \$63,970 for depreciation;

(b) Surplus over operation costs \$111,510?

(2) Do the financial operations of the board show substantial losses for the periods the 3rd March, 1967, to the 30th June, 1967, and the 1st July, 1967, to the 30th June, 1968?

(3) If the answers to (1) and (2) are correct, what are the reasons for the worsening of the financial results since the 3rd March, 1967?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) Figures are as quoted; the period refers to the operations of the Department of Agriculture, not the board which commenced operations after the 3rd March, 1967.

(2) Yes.

(3) For the period the 3rd March, 1967 to the 30th June, 1967 income was low due to seasonal fluctuations. For the period the 1st July, 1967 to the 30th June, 1968 two major factors contributed.

(a) All administrative costs are now met by the board. This now includes management, board expenses, office staff, equipment and sales tax. Prior to the establishment of the board part of this cost was met from departmental sources.

(b) Increased cost of semen. Deep frozen semen was imported to supply nominated service and access to proven sires. This incurred an average cost increase of 82c per dose.

4. ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

Subsidies

The Hon. V. J. FERRY asked the Minister for Mines:

In regard to the Government grant paid to the Artificial Breeding Board on the basis of \$1 for each cow submitted for first service—

(a) is it anticipated that the charge per cow to each farmer will be reduced accordingly; or

(b) will it be applied to reduce the operating deficit of the board?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(a) and (b) The use of the funds provided through this assistance is a question for the board to decide. The board will meet next on the 17th November.

5. *This question was postponed.*

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE:

SPECIAL

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [5.38 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 11th November.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.39 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Friday, the 7th November, 1969

The SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Time for Lodgment

THE SPEAKER: Before we start I think I should correct the announcement I made yesterday, because the situation regarding next Tuesday's sitting has now become clear. As members will recall, I said yesterday that we would not know today whether or not there would be a sitting on Tuesday. In the circumstances that have arisen I think I should permit questions to be put on the notice paper, and the time for lodging questions with the Clerk will close half an hour after the time of answering of questions this afternoon.

Further, as I also announced yesterday, questions will not be taken today until as soon as practicable after lunch.

WHEAT DELIVERY QUOTAS BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 6th November.

MR. YOUNG (Roe) [11.4 a.m.]: I rise to continue the debate we had yesterday evening on this Bill, and in doing so I wish to add my support to the measure. Each member who has spoken previously has agreed that the measure is urgent. We have to accept the fact that Western Australia has been allocated a quota of 86,000,000 bushels of wheat this year. Complementary Commonwealth legislation must be passed in order that farmers can be paid for their wheat under this proposed system. Therefore I do not think there is any way that we can oppose the establishment of a wheat quota system within the State.

To implement the wheat quota system the Government, some time ago, appointed a committee to investigate ways and means of allocating quotas to individual farmers, and at this point I pay a tribute to the men who were appointed members of this committee. They have had an extremely difficult task to perform to smooth out the anomalies in the system. They had to consider various suggestions put forward, and the one they have finally decided upon at this date has obvious anomalies.

In the work of this committee, which has been under extreme pressure to try to get the quotas out prior to the commencement of this year's harvest, there have been some errors in calculations and some anomalies that would not otherwise have occurred. As a wheatgrower myself, I wish to acknowledge, on behalf of other farmers, the efforts of this committee.

At this point of time the members of the committee are under heavy fire from farmers who are dissatisfied with their quotas, but it is not the fault of the committee. The members of that committee have performed their duties within the terms of reference that were given to them and the fact that the system has not worked out as well as we hoped cannot be laid at their door. The farmer who is dissatisfied with his quota has the necessary machinery to approach the committee with a view to obtaining some redress within the terms of reference.

We now have the Bill before us and I have some misgivings as to its ability to achieve a just and fair basis for quotas, particularly in relation to the shortfall that some farmers will experience this year and the over-quota which other farmers will have. Clause 16 of the Bill deals with the growers who will, in fact, have an over-quota of wheat this year. The object of this clause is to restrain growers from over-production in the future.

The **SPEAKER**: Order! There is far too much noise in the Chamber.

Mr. YOUNG: From my observation and from information I have gained there is not a great number of them, but there are some farmers who have deliberately planted additional acres this year in the hope that they will gain some benefit from the quotas that have been announced. Clause 16, which relates to an over-quota of wheat, has been specifically drawn to prevent a similar situation arising in the future.

Bearing in mind that quotas have been allocated on the average of the best five years within the last seven, less 17½ per cent., we find that some growers have experienced adverse seasons through no fault of their own; that is, they have been affected by successively wet years which have resulted in their being unable to sow their crop; or if the crop were sown it has been subsequently washed out, or the grain has burst. This has resulted in a low yield and a poor average.

In the first year of the quota system, namely, this year, some of the farmers who have experienced wet years, and those who have had some rain which they did not expect because of the drought, will find that, in fact, they will have a normal yearly average, and as a result they will exceed their quotas. In fact, I have had one farmer in touch with me who states he has a low quota because of adverse conditions and he will, this year, produce approximately 12,000 bushels of wheat on a 2,800-acre farm. This is a normal level of production, but it will give him a quota which will be filled for six years. This will virtually put that farmer out of production for the next five years.

Further on in the Bill we find that provision is made in clause 21 to enable the Wheat Quotas Committee to revise and allocate additional quotas. I have been assured that these anomalies can be corrected within the framework of the Bill, so that a farmer who is only delivering what he should normally be producing will not be penalised to any great extent in the years to come; because it is obvious that if his quota—I am referring to a farmer in a purely wheatgrowing area—is to be filled for the next five or six years he must go out of business.

Under the provision in clause 17 of the Bill farmers who have shortfalls this year will be catered for adequately, because on application to the committee they can request that any shortfalls this year be added to the production of future years. This will, in fact, ensure that if the committee thinks there is a need to add a certain amount to their quotas, such as in the cases of hardship experienced this year by farmers who have been affected by the drought, the shortfalls can be added to future production.

The Bill provides for sufficient room to enable the committee and the Minister to get over the major trouble spots of the quota system this year, in that it allows for a revision of quotas, and for the committee after the pressure is off to have a look at the position and, perhaps, iron out some of the worst anomalies that have arisen. As a representative of farming areas it is worrying to me that under this formula some quotas as low as .4 bushels to a cleared acre and as high as 10 bushels to a cleared acre have been issued. I know of two farms of comparable area—6,000 acres—and in one case a quota of 7,500 bushels has been allocated but a quota of 47,000 bushels in the other. These are glaring anomalies, and somewhere along the line they will have to be ironed out.

Another interesting factor that has come to light in the allocation of quotas is the allocation to new land settlers. Whilst I agree that it was a very difficult job to determine the requirements of the new land settlers, I must point out that I have received a communication from the Lake King district which illustrates the differences in the quotas that have been allotted. In this instance nine farmers appeared before the same land board, were allocated approximately the same area of land on the same day, and carried out development along the lines laid down under the conditional purchase leasing agreement, yet the quotas that were allocated ranged from 800 bushels, to 2,400, 3,350, 5,500, 7,500, 8,800, 10,000, and 18,000 bushels. These farmers all went on the land at the same time and appeared before the same land board, yet we find a difference of 17,200 bushels between the highest and the lowest quota.

Mr. Toms: Are all the properties developed to the same degree?

Mr. YOUNG: They would not be, but as these blocks were allocated only about 18 months ago there would not be a very great discrepancy in their development. These settlers were placed on properties which the Lands Department considered to be economic units in size. They went on the land to grow wheat, but we find that one farmer is given a quota of 800 bushels while another is given one of 18,000 bushels. Even the Chairman of the Wheat Quotas Committee has gone into print in acknowledging these anomalies. We all agree that there is need for a revision of the quotas.

In the *Farmers' Weekly* of the 30th October it was reported that the Minister had announced that 9,145 wheat quotas had been issued. In answer to a question asked by the member for Warren yesterday we learned that 1,087 farmers have either written to, or personally contacted, the Wheat Quotas Committee expressing their dissatisfaction with the quotas that have

been allotted to them. These farmers represent between 11 per cent. and 12 per cent. of the number to whom quotas have been issued.

I have received some telegrams which express concern over this matter. One is from the Lake Varley section of the Farmers' Union. On behalf of one of its branches, the Lake Varley section wishes to know how the Government can expect new land farmers to carry on under their quota allocations. Another is from the President of the Nyabing-Pingrup Shire couched in the same terms. Others are from the settlers at Scaddan, and the settlers in the Jacup area. I have also a list containing 99 signatures of people who attended a meeting held in Grass Patch, at which they protested against the quotas that had been allocated to them. This proves there is an urgent need to have a revision of the quota system, to examine all other systems, and to ascertain whether one cannot be devised to iron out some of these problems.

It is very obvious from the volume of correspondence received by other members and myself that a very large proportion of the newer settlers, who have been affected by adverse wet seasons, will be in serious financial difficulties if some consideration is not given to improving their quotas, if possible. It is not possible to give assistance to all farmers by an increase in their quotas, because there are only 86,000,000 bushels to be allocated.

I must state at this point that any system which is devised will not make everybody happy. It would be impossible to come up with a scheme to satisfy everyone. We are aware of glaring anomalies, as was indicated yesterday by an answer to a question asked in this House—the answer showed that the quotas range from 25 bushels to 250,000 bushels. In fact, 4,212 holdings produced under 8,000 bushels of grain and they represent 47.1 per cent. of the total number of holdings; yet these holdings produced only 14 per cent. of the total wheat yield. This proves that there is justification for some of the very large quotas, possibly held by big companies, to be reduced to give an improvement to some of the very low uneconomic quotas.

We find that 74 per cent. of the holdings produced less than 16,000 bushels of wheat each, yet in total they only produced 52 per cent. of the wheat grown in Western Australia. This shows that a larger amount of wheat is grown by the producers in the very high bracket—and these are the ones who can possibly stand a greater reduction in their quotas—than those who have been allocated quotas ranging from 3,000 bushels downwards.

Of course, the small producers are not always in the traditional wheatgrowing areas, and many of them possibly grow

wheat as a sideline. In many instances they are located in areas which enable them to diversify into other types of production, such as meat production or coarse grain production, much more readily than can the farmers in the drier regions.

I do not advocate that they all be given an opportunity to grow more wheat because that would completely destroy the purpose of the exercise, which is to reduce the amount of wheat grown to saleable proportions, and to arrive at a just quota for all the farmers engaged in wheat-growing. I think the object of any Government will be to develop a system which will do justice to the farmers and give every assistance to keep the family-farming units in operation.

The quota system affects other matters beside the actual producing of wheat. The quota system will affect the settlers' commitments and the financial arrangements they have entered into with their banks. We find that pressure is now being brought to bear on some farmers who have more recently taken up wheatgrowing. They have large commitments to meet from their very small quotas. I have already had inquiries from two farmers who find that their whole future stake in farming is balanced on the quotas they have been allocated. Whether their quotas can be raised is a matter for a revised system.

With the uncertainty which exists now because of the very low quotas being allocated, the banks are telling some farmers that there is no future in farming for them because of their low quota. The banks will not lend any further money and from that point of time the farmers are virtually out of business. I urge the Minister to give some hope to those settlers by making a statement to the effect that a complete revision of quotas will be made. I urge the Minister to agree that very low quotas will be investigated with a view to seeing that justice is done and that the farmers will not be destroyed by the quota system. Of course, other economic factors have to be considered.

The economic factor takes us a step further and involves the country towns. Over the years, the Government has spent large sums of money in providing amenities such as hospitals and schools in country towns. Already, since the introduction of the quota system, we find that small country businesses are being placed on the market. The people who run those businesses are hoping to get out while the going is good. This will involve a further transfer of population from country areas to the city, and we will probably find that four and five-roomed schools and 20-bed hospitals will be left in towns denuded of population. Those amenities will have to be provided in the metropolitan area, and the newer areas which have been opened up over the last few years will revert to virgin bush.

Another effect of the quota system is that there will not be so much need for rural labour and this will accentuate the drift of married couples to city areas. The reduction in the demand for rural labour is inevitable to some degree, because we cannot go on with the increased rate of production which we have enjoyed in the past. However, if the quota system can be worked out in a fair and just manner so that the largest number of farmers possible can be kept on the land, I think the Government will have done all it possibly can to maintain our farming system.

The system being used in this State has been commonly adopted in the other States of Australia, in varying degrees. The quotas in the other States are not all worked on the five out of seven year basis, but evidently in Victoria the same problems as we are facing have arisen. I will quote from an article published in the *Melbourne Weekly Times* on Wednesday, the 1st October, 1969. The article reads as follows:—

A new bushel-acreage wheat quota plan will be presented to a special meeting of the grains division of the Victorian Farmers' Union in Melbourne next week.

The plan, which calls for the registration of all Victorian wheatgrowing properties, has already been approved in principle by a number of branches of the union.

That article shows that the system of the best five seasons out of the last seven places too much reliance on short-term measures. A farmer in an area which has received above-average rainfall during the last seven years will have had his average yield limited, and will get the worst end of the stick. However, a farmer in the drier areas, where the crops have not been affected by flooding, will enjoy a higher quota.

I would suggest that the system should be based on a longer period of rainfall records, which would give a truer picture. A system worked out on that basis would probably mean that the wheel would turn completely. If we included some of the drier years of the 1950s, the farmers who produced the crops at that time would now probably have the highest average quota. If we are to examine a revised system we must take into account a longer span of rainfall to cover these periods.

It is only the heavy production over the last four years which has caused the 86,000,000-bushel limit to be placed on this State. Possibly, with a return to more normal seasonal conditions, and with the co-operation of growers, we might find that the maximum quota will not have to be reduced drastically below our production figure of 106,000,000 bushels. A 20 per

cent. reduction of the farmers' good average yield should be satisfactory, and should be within the bounds of the scheme.

I have covered the points I wished to discuss with regard to the Bill before us. I support it with the reservations I have expressed. I hope that within the limits of the Bill some flexibility can be found to allow a review of the quotas. I would express my hopes that the Wheat Quotas Committee can be left in peace to get on with its job. This applies especially because of the urgency of the matter of farmers having to make further financial commitments. I do not want the committee to rush into another scheme; I want a revised scheme to be the ultimate answer. We do not want to see another fiasco as is the case with the present system.

If the committee can settle down, consult with the leaders of the wheat industry, and devise a system which gives justice to all farmers—and when I say justice I realise that we will not be able to satisfy the wants of everybody—I think it will be to the advantage of the industry. So long as we see that the scheme is just and based on good solid foundations so that there is no valid reason for complaint, I think we will get out of the spot which we are in, perhaps, at the moment as a result of the obvious inequalities and anomalies which have appeared in the present scheme.

Mr. Nalder: Have you heard of any farmers who are satisfied?

Mr. YOUNG: I remarked earlier that we will not satisfy everybody. I have not heard of any farmers who are satisfied as yet, although I have heard of some who have a quota in excess of what they anticipated. I presume those farmers would be satisfied, but some of them—and the Minister himself told me this—went along to the Wheat Quotas Committee and freely acknowledged that there was a mistake which was to their advantage. They voluntarily surrendered the extra wheat they gained as a result of clerical errors. I think this shows the spirit of goodwill which is abroad amongst the farmers. If the farmers are convinced that the system is a just one, they will go along with it. However, I repeat: We will not satisfy everybody. I support the Bill.

MR. McIVER (Northam) [11.32 a.m.]: Like the previous speakers, I also rise to support the measure which is before the House because it is a measure of great and paramount importance. This is one of the most important Bills we have discussed this session, because the quota system which has been placed on the primary producers of this State through no fault of their own is going to have a far-reaching effect not only on the farmers themselves, but also on the economy of Western Australia.

I make my contribution to this debate because I have had many phone calls from, and interviews with, farmers in the Grass Valley-Meckering-Cunderdin area. Although I will try to avoid traversing ground which has been covered in this debate, it is inevitable that I must elaborate on some things which have already been said.

The Leader of the Opposition expressed the situation clearly in the remarks which he made in his very capable manner. He was followed by the member for Avon who gave an address which I enjoyed very much. It was a very enlightening speech indeed, and we are all aware that the member for Avon is a specialist in the wheat field. However I thought he gave us something of a James Fitzpatrick travel talk in relation to the Eastern States quotas, and I feel he could have devoted more attention to the quota system which is applicable in Western Australia.

Mr. Gayfer: I did that in response to a question by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. McIVER: I stand corrected on that statement. In the research I have done I found that the State of Victoria does not have the number of new farmers that we have in this State. Victoria does not seem to have the number of farmers on conditional purchase land or the number of farmers under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme that we have in Western Australia. As a consequence, the Victorian farmers would be in a far better financial situation than the new settlers in our State. I feel it is unfair to compare the Eastern States quota system with ours. However, I stand corrected on my earlier statement.

All the speakers in this debate have been unanimous in the view that there are more anomalies in this Bill than there are hundreds and thousands on a birthday cake. The Chairman of the Wheat Quotas Committee joins with them and, no doubt, although I have not had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Clayton, he is a very capable person; otherwise he would not have been appointed to the responsible position he holds. I certainly do not envy him his task of sorting out these problems.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn commented on the report in *The Countryman* concerning Mr. Clayton. However, I feel that he did not mention one of the important factors in it, and I will quote from the article as follows:—

Mr. Clayton urged that a decision be made about wheat quotas for next year as soon as possible to enable farmers to plan their superphosphate and seed requirements.

"It is no use waiting until next May to think about wheat quotas. An announcement should be made by December," he said.

This brings me to the fact that a suggestion was made by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Warren that a committee be set up immediately to have a look at the anomalies so that the farmers may be advised of the situation. I think this is a positive way to approach this measure. It is of no use reiterating the anomalies which exist; we are unanimous on that matter. However, I think we need to look at the situation and bring forward some positive ideas to assist the committee and the primary producers of the State.

Like other speakers who have contributed to this debate, I point out that some big syndicates have large wheat quotas. For example, we find that the highest quota of 250,331 bushels has been given to one farm. I think I am correct in saying that the member for Avon referred to this type of farm as a farm factory. I know of one syndicate in the Southern Cross area, and if members look at the yield of the Southern Cross area over the last four years they will appreciate the vast profits which have been made.

The point I would like to make is that small family unit farmers have for years conscientiously applied themselves to the very principles and fundamentals of farming. However the large syndicates do not even worry about soil erosion, and they put nothing at all back into the industry. All they are concerned about is farming everything in sight.

I referred to a syndicate in the Southern Cross area. Over the last five years 95 per cent. of the acreage held by that syndicate has been farmed. It is not concerned with soil conservation or soil erosion; it is concerned only with the profit it can make, and it has cashed in on the profitable yields which the good seasons in the past years have produced.

I was interested to hear the Minister remark that no farmer will have to leave his farm as a result of the quota system. I would like him to elaborate on that statement, because many farmers have spoken to me and have strongly emphasised the point that owing to their financial commitments they will be bankrupted and will have to leave their farms. I think members will agree that if the farmers do leave their land the syndicates I have referred to will no doubt move in and purchase the properties very quickly.

If I had the privilege of being the Minister for Agriculture I would have no hesitation in reallocating the quotas of large syndicates. I would reduce those quotas and give the extra to the small farmers who are in the business in the interests of the industry and the prosperity of the State. I would have no hesitation in quickly implementing such a policy.

Let us have a look at the effect this quota system will have not only on the farmers but also on the people of Western

Australia. Already a young family has come to me asking for my assistance to help it obtain a house in the metropolitan area. That family had to leave a farm in my electorate as a result of the quota system and, naturally, the drought which was in parallel with it. The farmer concerned has been unable to obtain further employment in the farming field. That is the only case I know of, but no doubt this trend will spread, to the disadvantage of farmers. I am sure the representatives of the farming fraternity will agree with me that trained labour is very hard to obtain in the agricultural industry.

It is only logical that farmers who are heavily committed financially will not be able to retain the services of their employees when they are uncertain of the future. A move must be made in the field of commerce, especially among machinery firms. There must be a tightening of finance as farmers look to these people to carry on, because it is evident that many are heavily in debt. I would like the Minister to elaborate on this statement, because this will not solve the situation. Further loans may be granted to those farmers who are already heavily in debt and who, as a consequence, will no doubt have to abandon their properties. However, I do not think we can dwell on this point until we hear what the Minister has to say. His assurance given in the House that no farmer will have to leave his property because of the present quota system is very encouraging.

I emphasise once again that I feel that, as outlined by the Leader of the Opposition, and as supported by the member for Warren, a committee should be appointed immediately to examine these anomalies thoroughly with a view to farmers obtaining answers to their questions—particularly small farmers—as quickly as possible. As the Minister himself said, we do not know what next year will hold for them. Therefore the industry is in dire straits. I feel it is a challenge to the Government, and no doubt it will do everything possible to ensure that the wheat quota system will work satisfactorily. However, there must be dissatisfaction among many farmers when they realise that huge syndicates have been allocated large quotas and that small farmers, who are in the industry because of their love of the land, have received only small quotas.

Mr. Runciman: What would be the economic quota for a small farmer?

Mr. H. D. Evans: The Minister could not tell me yesterday.

Mr. McIVER: The honourable member's question has been answered by the member for Warren.

Mr. Rushton: He did not give you much time to answer.

Mr. McIVER: To continue with my remarks would only be to reiterate what other speakers have said. I represent a large agricultural area and I can understand the feeling of farmers in Western Australia, and I certainly join with the previous speaker in supporting the measure. I trust that this reverse in the industry will be of only short duration, because we must all agree that over the years the economy of the State has depended on primary producers. It is our responsibility to ensure that these people obtain all the assistance that is in our power to render to them.

Mr. Nalder: Have any of the farmers in your electorate indicated that they have received satisfactory quotas?

Mr. McIVER: In the discussions I have had with farmers, only opposition has been shown.

Mr. Nalder: To the whole system?

Mr. McIVER: No; to their individual quotas. On behalf of the farmers in my electorate, with those sincere remarks I support the measure, and I trust the suggestions of the Leader of the Opposition will be put into effect and the existing anomalies examined expeditiously so that the industry and the future prosperity of Western Australia can be maintained.

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [11.45 a.m.]: I desire to contribute to the debate on this Bill and, in doing so, I wish to state that I thought the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition were fair inasmuch as he recognised that it is necessary for the Bill to be passed to enable complementary legislation to be enacted so that the first advance can be paid to farmers who are now in the process of delivering their wheat from this season's harvest. The Leader of the Opposition also stated that he does not believe the present system of allocating wheat quotas is fair and equitable.

We have been looking at this situation for many weeks, and I think we can all say that there are anomalies now which initially did not present themselves. After some study it is clearly evident that these anomalies do exist and we must pay a tribute to the committee and the executive of the Farmers' Union, because they also admit there are anomalies and they are prepared to have another look at this system which is being used to implement this, the first quota scheme.

I also join with those who have paid tribute to the Wheat Quotas Committee, which has done a tremendous amount of work, and to the leaders of the Farmers' Union who have given a great deal of their time to endeavour to work out what they considered may have been a fair and just method. Once again I say that all of us should pay a tribute to the Wheat

Quotas Committee and to the wheat section of the Farmers' Union for their efforts.

Mention has been made of the large speculators who are not traditional wheat-growers. I join with those who have criticised those organisations. They have entered the industry and taken advantage of the years of work that have been performed by those who have endeavoured to promote the industry and give it the buoyancy and the profitability that those who are engaged in it have enjoyed for many years. I repeat that they have achieved this only after many years of hard struggle. The big companies, or the large wheat factories as they were referred to by the member for Avon, have entered the industry for their own benefit and not for the benefit of the industry as a whole.

If there were any possibility that some action could be taken to curtail the activities of these companies I would certainly support such action. A number of speakers have, I think, departed from the provisions in the Bill. I think you have allowed a great deal of latitude, Sir, on this measure. I will endeavour not to talk away from the Bill but to keep to its provisions.

I would first like to refer to clause 6 which gives the Minister certain powers by which he can in certain directions decide after a conference with the members of the industry what action should be taken. Clause 6 gives the Minister certain discretionary powers and I think this is a desirable feature and one which I would endorse.

I would now like to refer to clause 14 subclauses (3) and (4). In subclause (3), as I see it, some protection is offered to the sharefarmer. If a farmer decides he cannot go on with the agreement with the sharefarmer the agreement can lapse and no quota will be obtained at all by the sharefarmer. Some protection is provided by subclause (3).

Subclause (4) provides protection to the lessee who has a lease with a farmer. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to a particular type of farmer who is not covered by either of these provisions. I do not suppose there is a great number of this type of farmer but I nevertheless feel that he should be given some protection. I refer to the sharefarmer who has entered into a sharefarming agreement, clears all the land, crops all the land, and takes all the income. It is possible that the farmer with whom he enters into the agreement may later decide he does not want the sharefarmer to carry on and the latter accordingly finds himself out on a limb.

I can see no protection written into the Bill for such an eventuality and perhaps the Minister could clarify the point when

he replies. My colleague, the member for Roe, has covered the provisions contained in clauses 16 and 17, which refer to under-quotas and over-quotas, so I will not repeat what has already been said.

I would, however, like to comment on clause 21. Quite a number of farmers are concerned about the provisions contained in this clause of the Bill, which states that variations will be allowed. We hope the quota system can be revised to allocate a better system of quotas. I do not think any one of us can say that this system or that system is the best without first carrying out a thorough investigation.

If the system can be varied, a variation should be made. If a system better than the present one can be found, it can be applied and the allocation could be related to the new system. So far as the farmers are concerned I think it would be a desirable feature.

Perhaps the Minister could elaborate on that matter when he replies. Another aspect to which I would like to refer is a particular type of grower—and I refer now to a man who over the years has concentrated on producing seed wheat. I would like to mention one gentleman who has made a special effort in this regard, because he has done a great service to the wheat industry in Western Australia. I refer to Mr. Leon Riley of Trayning. This man has set aside acre upon acre of his farm land to produce special types of seed wheat which the farmers have asked him to produce. He has done a wonderful job in producing these new varieties of seed wheat which the farmers are quite prepared to try. Yet we find that no safeguard is provided in the Bill for this type of grower, and I do think some protection ought to be given so that he may be permitted a reasonable quota which will allow him to carry on in the future.

I know this position has been considered and I know the industrial leaders and the Wheat Quotas Committee are quite prepared to give consideration to wheat-growers who have been selling seed wheat under permit from the Wheat Board as distinct from those who sell it without a permit. Possibly some system of registration could be introduced which would permit those who wish to do this sort of thing as part of their livelihood to concentrate on producing seed wheat. They could be registered as seedwheat producers.

My colleague, the member for Roe, made reference to the action taken by some banks. I have received letters from farmers in my electorate and they have advised me of their concern in connection with the tightening-up attitude adopted by the banks in the last few months. It has been said that this situation is fast developing

and they are relating it to the position that existed in the 1930s during the depression years. This may seem strange to those not connected with the wheatgrowing industry, but in my electorate there are farmers who will not take their harvesting machines out of their sheds; they will not harvest a bushel of wheat; and they will not be receiving any income whatever from their wheat crops this year.

Only in this morning's paper I noticed that the Minister for Primary Industry announced that a number of Western Australian shires were under the drought bonds legislation. In checking through this list I noticed that every shire in my electorate is included.

This brings me to the point mentioned by the member for Northam when he said that a number of these areas will become dust bowls. This will happen in parts of my electorate where crops are complete failures and the result will be that the areas concerned will become dust bowls. Accordingly I think there is some justification for me to relate the position in several areas in my electorate with the situation which existed during the depression years. In those days America had the controlling interest of world markets; it had the whip hand in connection with primary products. I think America still has the whip hand in the holding, selling, and administration of primary produce.

The member for Northam made some reference to conditional purchase land. Over the past few years we know that the Government encouraged settlers to go out and take up land by the millions of acres. I do not think we were prepared to criticise this action of the Government because it was a popular move and there were many applications received for this type of land. In many cases the proportion was about four to one—for every four applications received, one was granted.

I heard criticism of the Government for adopting a policy like this which would permit of so much overproduction of wheat in the future. I do not recall, however, any economist coming forward to advise the Government—either State or Federal—not to adopt this policy; and even if such advice had been received I feel sure the farming community would have taken no notice of it. The move was a popular one, and this was evident from the number of applications received for this conditional purchase land. I can remember one block in the North Kalannie area which was returned to the board, and 125 applications were received for it. Therefore I do not think it is fair to criticise the Government and say it should not have released this land; because it was a popular move and was endorsed by all those seeking more land.

Reference has been made to the number of appeals which have been made in other States against the quotas issued. I think it was the member for Avon who last night mentioned that New South Wales had 3,200 appeals, and South Australia 8,000 appeals out of 11,000 quotas. According to the figures given by the Minister yesterday, the number of appeals here was about 1,100, which represent about 10 per cent. of the quotas. All the appeals were not complaints. Some were for information and some for overstated quotas, and some for other reasons. Of course we must remember too that the quota system here has not been in operation for as long as it has been in the Eastern States and therefore more appeals could be received by the committee than have already been received. However, I have given the comparison as it is at this point between Western Australia and the Eastern States, and the situation is favourably loaded towards Western Australia.

Like several speakers before me, I must say that I, too, have some reservations about the Bill. Certain aspects do need revision, and I feel sure the Minister will, after further discussion with members of the industry and with the Wheat Quotas Committee, make variations and additions, and insert some manoeuvrability into this Bill, which applies to so many who are at this time very concerned about the position in the industry. Therefore, while I feel that it is necessary at this time for the Bill to be passed and a quota system to be applied, I have my reservations.

I must say, before the Minister asks me the same question he has asked others, that I have heard farmers say they are satisfied with the quota they have been given. I have had some farmers come to me and say that they have not been given as much as they had expected, but that it is fair enough because they realise that there must be some form of control. I merely say that because the Minister had asked questions, and before he asks me, also, I thought I would pass that information on to him.

Mr. Nalder: Thank you very much.

Mr. McPHARLIN: So, with some reservations, I, too, will support the Bill.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [12.4 p.m.]: I am naturally going to support the Bill, because it is imperative that it pass. However, if I thought for one moment that any permanency would be given to the present system, and the same formula would be used next year to arrive at the new quota, I certainly would not have a bar of the legislation in its present form.

In saying that, I am not criticising the committee. I realise it has been tied down to a special formula for the allocation of the quotas, and in the circumstances it has done the best possible job. However, the formula is such that it must mean

that many serious anomalies will arise. Therefore, under no circumstances could the present system work. It is as simple as that.

So many farmers will be forced off their properties if the system is adhered to that the whole situation would become utterly chaotic. This is why I am quite confident that next year a completely different formula will be established on which to decide the quotas.

I have heard some members say that there is the possibility that quite a number of farmers will be affected, and there is a suggestion, therefore, that a great number are reasonably happy; but this is absolute nonsense, and if anyone has that impression he has obviously not been to the marginal areas or to those areas which have suffered excessive rain during the last few seasons.

The experiences of some farmers have been absolutely incredible. One farmer has been illegally cropping Crown land alongside his property and he has finished up with a quota which is something like 30 bushels an acre; whereas in some cases a genuine individual farmer, because of the adverse seasonal conditions and other factors involved, and notwithstanding the fact that he has been growing wheat for a number of years, gets a fraction of a bushel per cleared acre as his quota.

The examples are legion and there is, therefore, no point in my recounting any of them. I would like to say, though, that my principal objection to the present formula for arriving at a quota is based on the fact that those farmers who have had a succession of good years finish up with a marvellous quota, while those who have had a succession of bad years, and as a consequence need a good quota, must finish up with a poor one. This has to be the result of a quota based on the present formula. As a consequence farmers in areas which are traditionally excellent from a wheat-producing point of view, because they obtain high yields with very little trouble and have an extremely reliable rainfall, have received huge quotas. On the other hand, only a few miles away in marginal areas, farmers who normally have poor crops and rely on one good one every few years are on extraordinarily small quotas and have no possibility, under the present system, of disposing of their crops on the occasions when, by a stroke of fate, they have reasonably good ones.

I would like to emphasise that particular point by quoting one case of which I am aware. The individual concerned is in a marginal area in which it is possible to produce only 16 bushels or so of wheat. This would possibly be the district average per year. However, this year, not a good one in that particular locality by any means, he might have a crop which will average, say, 18 bushels, but because of

the quota this individual has been allocated, he will not be in a position to grow wheat for the next three years. I think the member for Roe quoted the case of a farmer in his electorate who will not be in a position to grow wheat for the next six years.

How stupid is this, and what a mockery it makes of the system of shortfalls. We have a tremendous amount of support for this, but, when we look at it, it is not the gilded lily it seems, because if a farmer in a good area has had a succession of good crops he is given a large quota. If he has experienced a drought year this year his shortfall this year will be added to his quota next year.

I would go along with that if it were not for the fact that other individuals will be penalised in consequence. Again, we can point to the marginal farmer who, for several years, has had poor yields but who this year has had a reasonable yield.

Mr. Gayfer: Some were bad.

Mr. GRAYDEN: This is the situation. The marginal farmer will have an over-quota of wheat this year, but it will be deducted from his quota next year. For this reason I consider the principle of shortfalls needs to be looked at very carefully. I personally do not think Parliament would be entertaining the principle for a moment if it were not for the fact that the vast majority of wheat farmers in Western Australia are in the position of having reasonably good quotas. I think this is the only reason. If a farmer has had a succession of good yields but, because of the drought this year, cannot make up his crop and does not have the wheat to supply, then that is his bad luck. We should not penalise the poor individual who, by a stroke of fate, has had a good season this year.

Of course this does not apply in every instance. Many farmers in marginal areas, or in areas subjected to excessive rains in the past few years, have not had good seasons. I say that a farmer of this kind certainly should have the opportunity next year to make up any shortfall that he experiences this year. However, all farmers are not in that position.

Mr. Gayfer: Many in the marginal areas are at present covered because of the drought.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I appreciate the point which the member for Avon has raised. I go along with the shortfall principle when it is applied in those circumstances.

Yesterday the member for Avon talked in terms of diversification. He mentioned that he made a study of primary production when he went overseas recently. I can recall that on his return he virtually warned Parliament of the dangers of failing to do more to implement a policy of diversification as far as the wheat

industry is concerned. I agree with him. I say that many farmers in Western Australia have not adopted that policy.

However, this method of allocating quotas will not encourage the farmer to diversify. If a farmer is in a good area where he could diversify and if he is given a wheat quota, he will grow wheat and that is all there is to it. On the other hand, if we gave away the idea of allocating individual quotas—and this could well be done—it would encourage diversification. For instance, as a first step we could simply limit wheat production to existing wheat farms, instead of the present proposal. Then again, we could simply advise the farmers concerned that they may crop, say, only one-third of their properties. If this were done it would limit production and in all probability it would be limited to approximately 86,000,000 bushels, which is the State quota.

The second step would be to do away with the fixed price and to simply take the value, in dollars, of the State quota of 86,000,000 bushels. The next step would be to divide that amount by all the wheat grown in Western Australia under the limited cropping programme. In this way we would arrive at a price per bushel. It might be \$1.20 or \$1.30 or some figure in that vicinity.

The effect would be that a farmer could not say that he had a certain amount of land to crop and he was going to obtain a certain price. Instead, it would mean that he would have a certain amount of land to crop and he would have to take the price determined, depending on whether it was a good or bad season and how much wheat was produced.

This would have the effect of making a farmer on the Esperance Plains switch to, say, the production of linseed if that is a viable crop for that district. Rather than take a risk with wheat, he would diversify into, say, linseed or sorghum, or into the production of beef cattle or fat lambs, or into wool production. This would happen because he would be in an area where he could diversify.

Similarly, under this system, farmers in the Avon Valley would diversify into oat-growing, fat lamb production, and other types of production which were suitable to the area. This would be the natural result.

Under this method we would simply limit wheat growing to farms in areas which have a history of wheatgrowing. We would advise the farmers that they are permitted to crop only one-third of their property in wheat and this of course would overcome the problem of the position of the farmer who crops his entire property.

Mr. Gayfer: What if there is no crop.

Mr. GRAYDEN: As I mentioned earlier, we would take the value, in dollars, of the quota of 86,000,000 bushels and divide it

by the amount of wheat produced. In this way we would get right away from the haggling which must ensue as a consequence of allocating quotas along the present lines.

Mr. Gayfer: But this will give a quota to the person who has never produced wheat on a farm.

Mr. GRAYDEN: No, it will not.

Mr. Gayfer: It will, if the honourable member is suggesting one-third.

Mr. GRAYDEN: No, it will be limited to farms with a history of wheatgrowing.

Mr. Gayfer: It will give those farmers more.

Mr. GRAYDEN: It will not. The suggestion I have put forward has a tremendous amount of merit, because it will force the farmer who is able to diversify to do just that. Surely this is what we are striving for! I do not think we can get away from it. The present system presents many problems and there are some atrocious anomalies. One member this morning mentioned that quotas allocated to farms varied from a fraction of a bushel per acre to as much as 30 bushels per acre. Of course this is a stupid situation.

I understand that Mr. Clayton of the Wheat Quotas Committee has recommended that next year the formula should be based on acreage. I would go along with this suggestion, because I think it would be infinitely more satisfactory than the quota which is arrived at under the present formula. I am not adamant on the suggestion to abolish individual quotas whilst we accept a State quota. The suggestion which I am putting forward is, I consider, more desirable than the present system, but I am not absolutely wedded to it. If someone comes along with a quota system based on wheat acreages, I would be prepared to go along with that.

What I am saying is that the present quota system is inequitable and there are many anomalies. The anomalies are so serious that many hundreds of individuals will be forced out of the industry. The system simply cannot work. The sooner the Minister for Agriculture puts farmers who are in a dilemma out of their misery and makes a firm statement to this effect the better it will be.

Mr. Nalder: How will the Minister do that?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I hope when the Minister replies he will say that the Government acknowledges that there are difficulties associated with the quota system.

Mr. Nalder: I have said that already.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Every member in this House who is associated with wheatgrowing areas and to whom I have spoken appreciates the difficulties.

Mr. Nalder: I acknowledged the difficulties when I introduced the Bill.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I am sure all those in the wheat industry appreciate the difficulties, too. I have talked with many of them and the consensus of opinion is that the present formula cannot survive. There must be a completely different formula next year.

Why should this information be confined to members of Parliament and leaders of the wheat industry? When the Minister replies I hope he will make it clear that the present system contains so many anomalies that it simply cannot work and that a completely new formula will be arrived at next year. In doing this, the Minister should explain that the only factor which will be taken into consideration will be the deliveries to the bins this year and that new quotas which have been issued this year will not be taken into consideration.

Mr. Nalder: Has the honourable member met any farmer who is satisfied with the quota?

Mr. GRAYDEN: After hearing of farmers who have been allocated up to 30 bushels per acre, I should imagine very many individuals are satisfied. Surely the Minister must have heard of individuals who have, say, 2,000-acre properties and who have been growing crops illegally on Crown land for many years. They have been allocated quotas based on their 2,000-acre properties when, in actual fact, the wheat for which they are given a quota was grown on several thousand acres. Members must also have heard of instances of pastoral properties where people were illegally growing as much as 10,000 acres of wheat. I do not know how much of that wheat found its way to individual properties, but it must have been a good deal because most of it was sold.

Of course, this boosted the quotas of those properties from which the wheat ostensibly came. This is the sort of thing that has been going on and, as a consequence, there must be a great number of farmers in Western Australia who are eminently satisfied with the wheat quota system. However, for every one who is eminently satisfied, there is another farmer who will be forced off the land. There can be no question about that.

The Minister has said, and we have read statements in the paper to this effect, that if any of the farming community in Western Australia are dissatisfied with their quotas they can write to the Wheat Quotas Committee. I think as recently as two days ago I read that in the paper. I can imagine what would happen if a person wrote to the Wheat Quotas Committee. What would be the point in writing to it? The committee has no wheat left to allocate, as far as I understand the position. I believe

it has allocated all the wheat available to it. The Minister can correct me if I am wrong, because I do not make it as an adamant statement, but I understand that to be the position.

If all the wheat has been allocated what is the purpose in a farmer writing to the Wheat Quotas Committee? We have read articles about this matter and a member of the Opposition said that several hundred farmers had written to the Wheat Quotas Committee requesting a reallocation of the quota. But the committee has no wheat left to enable it to reallocate quotas. How silly is the position. Is the Wheat Quotas Committee likely to take some of the wheat from those individuals who are eminently satisfied and allocate it to someone else? Of course, it is not. The Minister should make the position plain.

The Minister should also realise that most of the farmers who are now writing to the Wheat Quotas Committee complaining about their quotas stated their cases very fully when they submitted their original applications to the committee. But no cognisance was taken of the cases submitted. Therefore, if no cognisance was taken of the position of those farmers then, is the Wheat Quotas Committee likely to take any cognisance of complaints made now and make a reallocation of the quotas? Of course, it is not, and it cannot do so. In these circumstances I think it behoves the Minister to make the facts plain.

The only possible way that farmers who cannot survive as a consequence of the wheat quotas that have been allocated can get any satisfaction is for a completely new formula for wheat quotas to be put into operation. This year, of course, it will not matter because Western Australia has been allocated a quota of 86,000,000 bushels and we will have a shortfall. All the wheat produced can be put into the bins and, furthermore, it will be paid for. Therefore, there is nothing to worry about this year; but the point is that it will be imperative next year to have a new formula and to ensure that no credence at all be placed on the quotas that have been allocated this year.

That is my understanding of the position and I understand, too, that that is the impression gained by the leaders of the wheat industry. If that is so why keep the information to ourselves? Why does not the Minister make it quite clear that the quota system we have at the moment just cannot work and state what the Government intends to do? I would urge the Government to talk in terms of working out a new formula for next year. We should not talk in terms simply of accepting a State quota and allocating quotas to individual farmers. We should be thinking of restricting acreages and production of existing farms and dividing

the value of the State quota by the amount of wheat produced. Then we would definitely see in Western Australia the commencement of a process of diversification.

I would like to refer to the question of successive cropping because there is an anomaly in this respect. I know of a person working a property not far from a place I have at Morawa. He intends to leave that farm, and take up a conditional purchase property which he has in the south-west. For several years he has been cropping the entire property at Morawa and he intends simply to abandon it and go to the south-west. That individual, of course, will get a huge quota, and quite undeservedly.

That is only one example of the many anomalies that must apply when a formula of this kind is used. There is one other point I would like to refer to and this was mentioned by the member for Mt. Marshall. He said that the development that has taken place in the last few years with the opening up of 1,000,000 acres a year, and so on, was applauded by all. I would not agree with that. I think that in Western Australia we have done some rather silly things in regard to wheat.

I think members will recall the trip we made to the Ord River project a few years ago. It was a wonderful trip and it was most interesting. When we arrived there, to my horror—in view of the warnings being received from all parts of the world about the possible overproduction of wheat, and notwithstanding the fact that every wheatgrower in Western Australia at the time, and the wheatgrowing organisations, knew that Australia was coasting along so far as wheat was concerned simply because the United States was paying its farmers not to produce wheat—individuals there were talking in terms of this vast irrigation project being geared to the production of wheat. We were taken out and shown trial plots and it was obvious to all at that stage that it was stupid to think in terms of growing wheat on an irrigation project at the Ord, particularly in view of the world difficulties in respect of the marketing of wheat and the fact that it could be produced so easily in the wheatgrowing areas of Western Australia.

That is only one illustration. Another illustration, of course, was the proposal of the Western Australia Development Corporation to open up huge areas of land for the production of wheat and sheep. That was a silly proposal, too. Another instance of stupidity occurred not long ago when we were talking in terms of throwing open big areas of pastoral properties so that the pastoralists could crop them.

Mr. McPharlin: Not for wheat.

Mr. GRAYDEN: That was the original suggestion by some individuals. In those circumstances it is absolutely imperative that, in respect of all our primary products, a great deal more research should be carried out into the long-term possibilities of marketing crops instead of going blindly into production.

Mr. Fletcher: What about the penalty imposed on the farmers who have co-operated by reducing their acreage of wheat and raising more sheep? Will they not be penalised for having voluntarily reduced their wheat acreage?

Mr. GRAYDEN: That issue does not come into the question. The farmers who reduced their acreages of wheat this year did so because they were able to diversify, and because the production of fat lamb and wool was equally profitable. I have heard members talk about farmers who could have grown more wheat this year than they did in previous years, as though it was a terrible thing to grow more wheat.

Sir David Brand: Is this not a question of being wise after the event? You have greater faith in human nature than I have.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I am talking in terms of the growing of wheat on the Ord.

Sir David Brand: This has nothing to do with the Ord.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I spent some time speaking to that aspect in this House on another occasion, and I pointed out how foolish it was to grow wheat on the Ord. That was two years ago, and in that instance it was not a case of being wise after the event. I can recall criticising the proposal of the Western Australia Development Corporation on the same grounds; so again that was not a case of being wise after the event. I can also recall criticising the proposal to crop the land on pastoral properties.

To get back to the point raised by the member for Fremantle, it has been suggested that farmers who have put in increased acreages have done a heinous thing, but that does not apply in every instance. Over the last few years, many farmers in an endeavour to cope with the rising costs realised that they had to clear more land. They might have chained the bush two years ago, and this might be the first year the land had come into production. Other farmers might have made arrangements for the sharefarming of their land, and they cannot go back on those arrangements. Therefore not every instance of farmers who have grown additional wheat this year can be regarded as deplorable.

I appreciate that the Government is experiencing a particularly difficult time, and the fact that some wheatgrowers have been penalised is no fault of Government. However, I do not think it is possible to

allocate a quota which will satisfy everybody. That is manifestly and absolutely impossible. I realise that when it was suggested the quota system was satisfactory, the suggestion sounded reasonable. It sounded reasonable because it was emphasised that the Wheat Quotas Committee would retain a certain proportion of the wheat which it would use to increase the quotas of the farmers who were experiencing hardship. Everybody accepted the system on that basis and thought the committee would set aside sufficient wheat to enable it to rectify all anomalies. Of course, this was not the case. A certain amount of wheat was set aside, but it was set aside for new settlers.

As far as I can determine, the only producers who are placed in the category of new settlers are the conditional purchase farmers; and that is absurd. No provision at all has been made for individuals who have bought their properties freehold and who have cleared the land. They are not included in the category of new settlers. How stupid is that!

We have the situation where conditional purchase properties have been allocated perhaps 15,000 to 20,000 bushels, but the next door property, which was acquired freehold and which was developed at the same time as the conditional purchase property was developed, has finished up with virtually nothing in the way of a quota. This happened, because when the Wheat Quotas Committee talked in terms of new settlers it did not take into consideration the settlers who had purchased their properties freehold. One should not have to be a conditional purchase settler to be classified as a new settler. One is a new settler if one has bought a property and developed it.

Under the circumstances I would implore the Minister for Agriculture to set at rest the minds of all farmers who will be severely and adversely affected by the wheat quota system. I would implore him to make it obvious to the farmers that no credence is to be placed on the quotas that have been allocated this year; that the new quotas which will be allocated next year will be allocated on a much more equitable basis; and that only the deliveries of wheat this year will be taken into consideration, as distinct from the deliveries under the quotas that have already been allocated.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [12.36 p.m.]: I thank the members who have contributed to this debate and for the assurance that it is their desire that this legislation be passed. It is of interest to point out that members have said that there has never been any farmer who has been satisfied with the quota he received. From the facts that have been supplied to me I find that a vast number of farmers have accepted the

position as it has been presented to them. This was evident even before many of the farmers had put their crops in.

I appreciate very much the work that has been done by the president, the vice-president, and the executive of the wheat section of the Farmers' Union in pointing out to the wheatgrowers of this State the need to look at this legislation in a sensible and practical manner.

There is no question that many wheat farmers have voluntarily reduced their acreages of wheat, because they accepted the position. I do not want it to be thought that we do not appreciate what a great number of wheat farmers have done in this regard. We appreciate the action they have taken and the responsibility they have shown. No doubt the same can be said of many of the wheat-growers in Australia as a whole.

Most people realise that Western Australia has been given a quota of 86,000,000 bushels. It has been stated very clearly by the Minister for Primary Industry that the Commonwealth Government will pay for 86,000,000 bushels, and for that quantity only, as an indication to the farmers of this State that the farmers cannot go on producing wheat without thought or without a sense of responsibility. The Minister has made it very clear that \$1.10 per bushel will be paid for the 86,000,000 bushels.

All members who have participated in this debate have referred to the anomalies which have arisen. I suppose it is quite natural for the representatives of the people to do this, because in the main they have received representations from farmers who are not satisfied with their quotas. Every care has been taken in this legislation to ensure that those who are not satisfied with the allocation of quotas will be given the opportunity to appeal. They can indicate to the Wheat Quotas Committee what their problems are.

I would remind members that this was publicly stated in the first place before the quotas were allocated. The farmers were asked to indicate to the quotas committee the problems they had faced because of abnormal seasons, illness which caused the farms to remain uncultivated and cropped, heavy rainfall, no rainfall, or anything else. This was stated when it was indicated there would have to be a reduction of wheat growing in this State. So it is clear that the farmers were advised to do this.

Mr. Grayden: It was not taken into consideration. This is the point.

Mr. NALDER: That interjection indicates the honourable member is not fully informed, because even yesterday, in answer to a question, it was indicated that a number of farmers had been given

special consideration. Therefore the honourable member's interjection indicates that he is not informed.

Mr. Grayden: It does not indicate anything of the sort.

Mr. NALDER: I have the assurance of the chairman of the committee that special consideration has been given to a number of requests by farmers.

Mr. Grayden: You are misleading the farmers of Western Australia.

Mr. NALDER: I want to say here and now, and I think most members would appreciate it, that it does not matter what type of formula is produced, we cannot expect it to create a 100 per cent. perfect situation. In this case it is the wheat-growers who are concerned, and we cannot expect every one of them to be completely satisfied.

It has been said that because of the wheat quotas there will be a universal walk-off from properties. This is not the situation, and when people talk like that it creates panic. Every bushel of wheat produced in Western Australia this year will be received into the wheat bins. We have heard of farmers who have had bad seasons for three, four, or five years. In those circumstances, it is a wonder they have not walked off their properties before now. It will certainly not be the wheat quotas which will force those farmers from their farms, because every bushel grown this year will be accepted into the bins.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Those who get surplus quotas this year will be in a bad way next year.

Mr. NALDER: Let us deal with that in a moment. I am dealing with the statement that because of the wheat quotas some farmers will be forced off their properties. I want to emphasise the point that we are going to accept all the wheat that has been grown, so it cannot be said that because of the wheat quotas farmers will be forced off their properties.

I repeat that those farmers who have had bad seasons for two to five years are still on their properties; but had it not been for the introduction of the wheat quota system, it is possible they would have had another two or three bad seasons. This is a feature of farming in this State and in every other farming area in the world. There are good seasons, not so good seasons, poor seasons, and bad seasons; and the farming community, in the main, has been able to adjust itself in order to handle the situation.

Sitting suspended from 12.44 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr. NALDER: I was indicating to the House that provision has been made in the Bill to allow farmers, who feel the information which has been given to the committee has possibly not been considered by

the committee when allocating the quotas, to reapply. I thought I had indicated that situation, and I would like to emphasise that the provision is contained in the Bill. We do not want to create a situation in the mind of any farmer that an appeal will not be considered by the Wheat Quotas Committee.

I think some feeling in this regard might have been generated by the fact that immediately the quotas had been allocated many farmers got into their cars, drove to Perth, and lined up at the doors of the Wheat Quotas Committee office. In some cases verbal complaints were made to the committee about the quotas, and I understand that in some instances the committee indicated there was very little hope of the farmers getting any increase in their quotas.

The Bill states very clearly—and, as I have said, I want to remind members of this fact—that farmers who have received a quota and are not satisfied with that quota may put in writing the reasons why they believe they have not been given due consideration, and send those reasons to the committee.

Mr. Grayden: How much wheat is left for allocation?

Mr. NALDER: I do not know how much is left for allocation, but I do know that quite a number of farmers have been returning part of their quotas to which they believed they were not entitled. However, that has nothing to do with the point at the moment. I want to indicate that farmers have the right to approach the committee and the committee can look at the situation with a view to making an alteration.

If the Wheat Quotas Committee reconsiders a quota, and it is satisfied on the facts supplied that the quota is low, it can allocate another quota. The previous quota is then completely wiped out. No further consideration will be given to the first quota if the committee is satisfied that it is too low.

I also want to emphasise that this present legislation will operate for this year. At the end of January, 1970, the committee will cease to exist and it will then be up to the Government either to reappoint the committee or other members to the committee, or appoint another committee. Members will appreciate this provision. The new committee will look at the situation as far as future quotas are concerned.

Whether or not the formula which has been accepted this year for the establishment of quotas under this Act is satisfactory, the Wheat Quotas Committee will look at any other formula which is suggested to it. The committee will make another assessment of the situation and it can depart entirely from the formula used for this year.

I think one member indicated that the committee did not have any elasticity as far as the quotas for this year are concerned. That is not the true position because the committee was asked to examine a number of formulas. The first formula was whether quotas could be arrived at by looking at the average of the last seven years of delivery. Other formulas were the best five years out of the last seven years; or just the last five years or the last three years; or any other system which the committee felt would be workable. The committee was given a fair amount of elasticity or latitude in this exercise so that the fairest and best formula could be obtained.

When the Farmers' Union considered this, it thought the seven-year average would be the fairest method. When the committee and others concerned looked at the matter, they came out in favour of the best five years in the previous seven years. This suggestion was accepted by the union and the committee went to work to assess the situation. Forms were sent out to farmers who were invited to fill in the forms and to indicate any special circumstances. I have already mentioned this fact.

Two provisions in the legislation make it necessary for the situation to follow on into next year. So far as shortfalls are concerned, any farmer who is not able to fill his quota will be able to demand that the shortfall be added to his quota for next year. Full consideration will be given by the committee as to whether the shortfall will be added in full to his next year's quota.

Mr. Graham: Should it not be automatic?

Mr. NALDER: There are reasons for its not being automatic. The legislation provides that if a farmer is able to use his shortfall next year it will be added in full. However, farmers have already come to the committee and have said that they will not be able to produce their full quota next year. Consequently there is provision to subtract the relevant number of bushels from the quota if a farmer finds that he will not be able to use his full shortfall next year on top of his quota. It is also provided that the total amount of shortfall which a farmer did not produce will be recorded and added at some future date if he so wishes.

Mr. Graham: If he wishes, or if the committee decides?

Mr. NALDER: If he wishes. It is stated that he may apply to the committee to have the shortfall added at some future date.

Mr. Graham: The committee could reject his approach.

Mr. NALDER: It could, under circumstances of which he would have full knowledge. The other side of the picture is

concerned with over-quotas and some members have made reference to this. This has been included for the reason that some people purposefully went ahead, ignored the advice and warning that was given, and cropped more than they had in other years. In these cases, the carry-over will be subtracted from the quota for next year.

I want to emphasise that the whole system will be reviewed. Already arrangements are in hand for the Wheat Quotas Committee, representatives of the Farmers' Union, and representatives of the Department of Agriculture to meet and work out a system or to consider carefully any system which might be agreed to for next year's quota.

Mr. Young: How soon will this be done?

Mr. NALDER: It will be done as soon as the committee has completed issuing quotas for this season.

Mr. Young: Thank you.

Mr. NALDER: The committee still has some quotas which have not been completed because of lack of information from those who require the quotas. However, immediately this has been completed the committee will examine other systems to see whether or not there is a more equitable basis for allocating quotas for next year.

In the meantime I suggest that farmers should make their applications. I hope all members who have approaches made to them by those who are not satisfied with their quota this year will make the same suggestion.

Mr. Grayden: Would the Minister hazard a guess as to how much wheat will be left for reallocation?

Mr. NALDER: No.

Mr. Grayden: Not even a guess?

Mr. NALDER: It has nothing to with the situation.

Mr. Grayden: It is quite impossible to find out.

Mr. NALDER: It has nothing to do with the situation. There are so many other factors included in this exercise it would be ridiculous for me to hazard a guess at the number of bushels which are likely to remain for allocation. The point is that all wheat will be received into bins this year. As soon as we know what the total receipts are—and I anticipate this will be some time in January—consideration will be given to allocating supplementary quotas to those who do not have a quota; it will cover those who have produced wheat and have no quota whatsoever. This is provided for in the legislation.

If there is a shortfall in the State quota of 86,000,000 bushels consideration will be given immediately to allocating supplementary quotas. A decision will then be made of the percentage of over-quota and non-quota wheat which can be taken and for which full payment will be given. I hope I have made that position clear. The Bill provides for this, and I have simply repeated the situation.

That is the position as far as this season is concerned. A number of other points were raised and I think the member for South Perth said that no special cases of hardship had been considered. During the luncheon suspension I asked the chairman of the committee about these cases and I find the committee gave consideration to 154 special hardship quotas. The allocations involved were 961,331 bushels or an average of 6,236 bushels per farm. Special consideration was given to the farmers in that category.

Special consideration was also given to 1,267 new land farms. A total of 8,078,215 bushels was allocated to them, which is an average of 6,376 bushels per farm. It is obvious the committee did consider a request for special allocations to those farmers who may require them. I have already said twice, and I again repeat, that if those farmers are not satisfied with their quotas they can make an appeal in writing against them to the committee, and I urge them to do that if they think they are justified.

It is only right that I should comment on some of the facts put forward during the debate. The Leader of the Opposition wanted to know what determination had been made by both the Commonwealth and the States in an effort to reach some uniform system under which quotas could be issued. It was agreed that because of the different situations in all States, the issuing of quotas would be the responsibility of the States themselves. All State Ministers agreed to this, and it was also agreed upon by the representatives of the industry.

Therefore the need to have uniformity among the States is referred to in part III of the legislation and this will, of course, be followed up when the Commonwealth legislation is introduced.

It may be of interest to members to know the difference that has occurred in the formula accepted by the various States. The quota in New South Wales was fixed on the basis of the acceptance of 85 per cent. of the last five-year average, or 50 per cent. of the last year's delivery, whichever was the greater. An appeal committee was formed, and 6,000 appeals were made following the issuing of the quotas. In South Australia the system was accepted on the basis of the average delivery over the past five years, less 10 per cent.

The new growers in South Australia were considered, inasmuch as an allocation of 3,000,000 bushels was held back to cater for them. Consideration was also given to the district average. I am not in a position to give the House the details of this, but it was part of a formula agreed upon in considering allocations to new growers. When the average was made, the maximum for any grower in this category was 4,000 bushels. In South Australia 11,000 quotas were issued, and at the time this information was made available, 8,000 appeals had been made.

In Victoria the formula accepted was on a basis of 61/69ths of the average delivery over the past six years. A review committee was appointed, and so many appeals have been made against the quotas issued that the committee has stated it will not be able to finish hearing the appeals until after the harvest has been completed. I have made that information available because I thought the Leader of the Opposition made some comment on the situation in this State regarding appeals by growers.

I would point out to the honourable member that this situation was given a great deal of thought. The representatives of the industry were invited to enter into the discussions that were held in this State, and they expressed the opinion that they had full confidence in the committee that was appointed. In view of the provision in the legislation permitting full consideration to be given to any complaints made by growers, it was considered that the appointment of an appeal committee would only cause unnecessary delay which would not be in the interests of all concerned.

Another important point is that the committee had accepted the formula that had been compiled on an acreage basis, which made the facts very clear. The quotas were assessed on the basis of delivery of grain to Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. This answers the point made by the member for Warren that some farmers were not scrupulous in supplying their figures to the committee. If they did not supply correct figures, the committee was able to check them with the records of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. So there is no chance of anyone supplying the wrong information.

Apparently the comment that was made on the position of the small farmers has been brought about because of the publicity that has been given to them in past months. Here again I will not argue about the position in which small farmers are placed, because they will be given the same consideration as any other farmers in a similar situation. If a small farmer has been delivering wheat in line with the average in normal seasons, he will be granted a quota in proportion to that which is granted to others who are in different categories.

I think I have answered the point made by the Leader of the Opposition in regard to the extent to which the committee can depart from the agreed formula. I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition was in his seat at the time, but I did indicate that the committee, under this Bill, can consider every aspect of the present formula if it finds that any farmer has not been given a fair quota because of the circumstances in which he finds himself. In such a case, if fresh evidence is submitted, the committee has authority to give it special consideration.

Suggestions have been made that quotas should be issued in December, January, or some other month. The Government appreciates that next year's quota should be issued as early as possible. I remind the House, however, that until we know what the details are, not only in this State, but also in every other State of the Commonwealth, I cannot see how quotas can be issued. Consideration will be given to this aspect by the Agricultural Council, which I understand is to meet in February next.

For that reason I would suggest that in this situation the quotas will be issued at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime, as I have already indicated, consideration will be given to the type of formula to be used in allocating the quotas; and when the total number of bushels of wheat is allocated to each State it will be for the committee to get to work on this matter; and I have no doubt that with all the information at its disposal it will be able to continue the allocations at an earlier date than has been the case this season.

Some point was made with reference to the ordering of super. Here again I feel farmers must anticipate what the situation will be as far as an average season is concerned. A farmer must put in, by November, a provisional order for his super requirements for the following year. This does not tie him to taking that order because if he needs to vary it during the season he may do so; but that is for the farmer to decide. The super will not be received until the cheque is paid. Accordingly I suggest that farmers look at the situation in an endeavour to assess the quantity of super they will require for the following season and place their provisional orders on that basis.

I have already mentioned the point raised by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn with reference to new land farmers, so it is not necessary to go back over that. The member for Avon gave some history of world production and the situation we have been forced to accept. I think this information is now probably known by most people. I have also given information with reference to the problems that exist in other States.

I have already replied to some of the points made by the member for Warren. He did query whether the handling authority would be able to accept all the production. There is no doubt that Co-operative Bulk Handling will be able to receive all the wheat that will be offered for delivery during this season.

A number of speakers said that because of the quotas this year farmers will be forced off their properties. I have already indicated this will not be the situation, because all wheat will be received; and I have given an indication of the situation so far as the first payment is concerned.

Mr. Gayfer: All the wheat? The known quota wheat as well?

Mr. NALDER: Yes. As I said earlier, it is anticipated that the majority of deliveries in this category—if not all of them—will receive a first payment of \$1.10.

Mr. Grayden: If a farmer is on a crippling quota, how will he be able to order his seed and super for the next year?

Mr. NALDER: Surely I do not have to go back through the whole story and indicate that if a farmer is not satisfied with the quota he can appeal to the committee to revise his programme. If the farmer has had enough experience in growing wheat—and this is something which the honourable member does not seem to appreciate—he will have some idea of his fertiliser requirements and as a wheat farmer he will also have made provision for any seed that he might require. The member for Collie made some comment about the wheatgrowers in his area. I would point out that consideration will be given to these growers in the same manner as it will be to farmers in other areas.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has another five minutes.

Mr. NALDER: I have covered a number of the points raised by the member for Roe and I do not think it is necessary to go back over them. I would say, however, that every endeavour has been made to meet the situation. I do not think it is at all fair to be critical of the scheme. As a matter of fact I think one honourable member used the words, "The fiasco we find ourselves in at the moment." I suggest it is an exaggeration to use such words. Anyone would think the system had been designed to force people off their properties. This is not the case at all; it has been devised to try to meet the situation we have; to reduce the quantity of wheat grown in Western Australia.

I have had many people come to see me about their quotas. One of them came to see me yesterday and said that his quota was 22,000 bushels and he would go broke and would walk off his property if he did not have 40,000 bushels. Those in the various categories who complain, all believe they have been hard done by.

This has been a most difficult job. We hope it is something which will not be perpetuated in the years ahead. We also hope that the situation will right itself so that the farmers can decide for themselves what quantity of wheat they will sow. I know this is a farmer's prerogative; he should be able to please himself as to what he does. It is possible that this is the reason people like the job of farming, because they can make up their own minds what to do, when to do it, and how to do it.

Mr. Jamieson: As long as they do what they are told.

Mr. NALDER: That is a matter which could possibly be discussed at some other time. The member for Northam mentioned the situation in his area. Here again in those areas where, in the past, wheat has been grown for a long time the situation is, in the main, reasonably satisfactory. I say this because I have already had comments from a number of people in the areas concerned and they seem to be reasonably satisfied with the conditions which exist.

The member for Mt. Marshall mentioned seed wheatgrowers. They could possibly come into a special category, and if the situation is not satisfactory during this season I am quite confident that consideration will be given when discussions take place in relation to the conditions that might apply in the succeeding quota year.

I have already referred to several points made by the member for South Perth. I hope members will accept the situation and the comments I have made with reference to the problems associated with this legislation and the circumstances that have brought it about.

I would invite members to put in writing either to myself or to the committee any suggestions they might have which they feel should be considered in an effort to improve the situation. The whole thing is wide open and I do invite members to submit their ideas, because these will help the committee to bring down a scheme which may perhaps be more acceptable than the system operating at present. If this is done I will be happy to have any of the suggestions made included in the discussions that might take place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

QUESTIONS (23): ON NOTICE

1. EDUCATION

Classrooms: Dale Electorate

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Education:

What additional classrooms are estimated to be needed at Roleystone, Kelmscott, and Armadale primary schools during 1970?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Roleystone—One.

Kelmscott—Dependent upon decisions concerning Westfield Park.

Armada—Temporary accommodation will be provided to meet enrolment growth.

2. EDUCATION

West Armadale Primary Students

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What provision is being made to accommodate West Armadale primary students at the beginning and during 1970?
- (2) How many children are expected from this area at the beginning and during the 1970 school year?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) A new three-room school is anticipated to commence about June, 1970. In the interim pupils will be accommodated on the Armadale Primary School site.
- (2) It is estimated that children from grades 1 to 3 in the West Armadale area will attend the new school. The anticipated enrolment as at the beginning of 1970 will approximate 100. Any determination of future enrolments is dependent upon rate of building activity.

3. EDUCATION

Kelmscott Primary Students

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many primary school students are expected from Eden Park (Westfield), Kelmscott, at the beginning and during 1970?
- (2) If it is still intended to accommodate these children at the Kelmscott Primary School, will the department negotiate with the local authority for the extensive use of the adjacent shire oval?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) By the end of 1970 approximately 360 houses are expected to be completed or under construction, giving an approximate primary school population of 250 to 260.
- (2) Decisions concerning the accommodation of children from Westfield Park have not as yet been finalised.

4. ARMADALE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Library and Science Blocks

Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) When are the library and science blocks to be built at the Armadale Senior High School expected to be ready for use?

- (2) If these buildings are not ready by February, 1970, what alternative accommodation is to be provided to house the estimated increased numbers of students?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Tenders will be called by Christmas, 1969. The contract period will be for six months with the anticipated completion date June, 1970.
- (2) Demountable classrooms will be erected according to the requirements.

5.

HOUSING

Applications Outstanding

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What is the total of outstanding applications on the books of the State Housing Commission at present?
- (2) Of these, how many are in respect of the metropolitan area and country districts respectively under the headings of—
(a) purchase;
(b) rental?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) 18,309 as at the 31st October, 1969. This includes 2,825 dual applications and 1,426 single women of whom 296 meet current criteria for assistance.
To give the exact figure these last-mentioned figures will have to be subtracted from the total.
- (2) (a) Metropolitan—6,719.
Country—292.
(b) Metropolitan—9,653.
Country—1,645.

6.

HOUSING

Number of Units Completed

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What was the number of units of accommodation completed by the State Housing Commission since the 30th June last—
(a) individual houses;
(b) flats;
(c) terrace houses;
(d) other, if any?
- (2) What are the respective totals of dwellings completed under the headings of the several schemes operated by the commission?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) (a) 556
(b) 118
(c) 44
(d) 10

728

(2) Commonwealth and State Agreement	329
State Housing Act	229
War service homes	28
Other departments	46
Native Welfare	35
Government employees housing	54
Shire building scheme (for Government Employees' Housing Authority)	7
	<hr/> 728 <hr/>

7. SHARK BAY INLETS

Closure

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna:

- (1) Is his department still in favour of the closing of Brown and Depuch Inlets for the production of salt and associated minerals?
- (2) Is his department in favour of the granting of Temporary Reserve No. 4849H, which covers all the water adjacent to Denham?
- (3) If "Yes" to (1) and (2), what effect will it have on the fishing industry based at Shark Bay?
- (4) If "No" to (1) and (2), will his department oppose the granting of renewal or transfer of any temporary reserves in the area?
- (5) If not, why not?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) The Department of Fisheries and Fauna has always recognised that the closing of Brown Inlet and Depuch Loop would reduce the area inhabited by small fish in Shark Bay, and therefore could reduce to some extent the fish population level. It is a matter of judgment as to the relative values of the two industries.
- (2) I am informed that Temporary Reserve No. 4849H is still under consideration by the Minister for Mines.
- (3) Answered by (1) and (2).
- (4) The renewal or transfer of temporary reserves is a matter under the authority of the Mines Department.
- (5) See (4).

8. SHARK BAY GYPSUM

Temporary Reserves

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Has he had any discussions with Shark Bay Gypsum and Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. in respect of the taking over or leasing by

Shark Bay Gypsum of the interests of Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. at Shark Bay?

- (2) If so, is he in favour of the granting or transferring of Temporary Reserves Nos. 4173H, 4174H and 4849H to Shark Bay Gypsum?
- (3) Is his department still of the opinion that the closing off of further loops or inlets at Shark Bay will not be detrimental to the valuable fishing industry in that area?
- (4) If (3) is "Yes", will he give reasons for such opinion?
- (5) Is he aware of the continued steady decline of the scale fish catch in Shark Bay waters over the past five years?
- (6) If "Yes", what does he attribute this to?

Mr. O'CONNOR (for Mr. Court) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) As no application has been made for transfer of these temporary reserves, the matter has not been considered.
- (3) and (4) The closing of further loops and inlets will reduce the area inhabited by small fish in Shark Bay. This may reduce the fish population level to some extent.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) The reduction is probably due to a number of reasons, including the reduced fishing effort in the catching of snapper and whiting, and difficulties in providing adequate processing facilities at Denham.

9. SHARK BAY GYPSUM

Temporary Reserves

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Can the occupier of a temporary reserve sell or transfer his interest in such reserve?
- (2) If "Yes", has he received an application from Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. to transfer its interest in Temporary Reserve No. 4172H to Shark Bay Gypsum and, if so, has he approved such transfer?
- (3) If (1) is "No", has he received an application from Shark Bay Gypsum for Temporary Reserves Nos. 4172H, 4173H, 4174H and 4849H and, if so, has he granted such application for all or any?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Yes, with the written approval of the Minister for Mines.
- (2) No.
- (3) Temporary Reserves Nos. 4172H to 4174H inclusive are registered in the name of Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. and have been extended to the 30th March, 1970. Application for Temporary Reserve No. 4849H by Shark Bay Salt Pty. Ltd. is still under consideration.

10.

RAILWAYS

Tube Thesis

Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Railways:

As further consideration of E. Booth's proposal presented as a tube thesis was deferred until such time as a decision was made on the proposals of the Western Australia Development Corporation—*vide* Mr. Horrigan's minute the 16th May, 1969—will consideration now be given to developing the tube thesis?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

Consideration will be given to Mr. Booth's and any other suggestion put forward although it is thought there are many difficulties in Mr. Booth's suggestion, not the least of which could be the high financial costs.

11.

TRANSPORT

Bus Route: Victoria Park

Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is he aware of the difficulties confronting M.T.T. passengers on routes from South Perth who have to change buses to Victoria Park destinations at the eastern end of the causeway?
- (2) Is he aware that passengers are compelled to make a difficult and dangerous crossing over two major highways to effect this change?
- (3) In view of the inconvenience and danger, particularly to children and the aged, will he investigate the possibility of buses on both routes being deviated to an area where change from one bus to another can be effected without hazard and inconvenience?

Mr. O'CONNOR replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The M.T.T. is aware of the position and investigations have been carried out along the lines suggested but to date a practical solution has not been arrived at.

12.

DROUGHT

Assessment of Losses

Mr. H. D. EVANS asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Are assessments of drought losses of affected areas of the State being made by officers of the Department of Agriculture?
- (2) Will he table such reports as have been compiled by these officers?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) and (2) Department of Agriculture officers make weekly reports of crop, pasture, stock, and stock water conditions in drought-affected areas, to the Director of Agriculture, but no detailed assessments of drought losses are attempted.

13.

CREDIT UNIONS

Government Departments

Mr. DAVIES asked the Premier:

- (1) In which Government departments are deductions for credit unions made from employees' wages or salaries?
- (2) What is the charge for this service in each instance?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

(1) and (2)—

Government departments etc. in which deductions for credit union are made from employees' wages or salaries	Credit Union	Charge made for the service
All departments under the Public Service Act	C.S.A. Co-operative Credit Union Society Ltd.	No charge
Midland Junction Abattoir Board Perth Dental Hospital W.A. Fire Brigades Board Health Education Council Library Board of W.A. Milk Board of W.A. W.A. Museum W.A. Art Gallery Main Roads Department State Engineering Works Road and Air Transport Commission Totalisator Agency Board W.A. Institute of Technology W.A. Meat Export Works Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry, Wundowie	" "	No charge
Police Department	W.A. Police Union Co-operative Credit Union Society Ltd.	No charge
Hospitals	Hospital Salaried Officers' Association W.A. Co-operative Credit Union Society Ltd.	No charge

14. "GILT DRAGON" COINS

Counterfeiting

Mr. HARMAN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) On what date were police inquiries into alleged counterfeiting of coins, referred to in my question of the 5th November, concluded?
- (2) Are the legal aspects referred to being examined by the Crown Law Department or some other authority?
- (3) If so, when was this advice sought?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) The main inquiries were completed about the 20th October, 1969, but any information forthcoming even subsequent to that date is included in the final information desired.
- (2) Crown Law Department.
- (3) Opinion was sought on completion of the main inquiry and was finalised on the 5th November, 1969.

15. METROPOLITAN REGION IMPROVEMENT TAX FUND

Receipts and Payments

Mr. BRADY asked the Treasurer:

- (1) What has been the annual receipts for the metropolitan region improvement tax fund for each year since the tax commenced?
- (2) What has been the annual payments from the fund for each year since payments commenced?
- (3) What was the balance in the fund at the end of June, 1969?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

- (1) Collections from the metropolitan region improvement tax were—

1959-60	....	421,186
1960-61	....	442,434
1961-62	....	471,062
1962-63	....	371,394
1963-64	....	389,648
1964-65	....	474,280
1965-66	....	489,428
1966-67	....	549,501
1967-68	....	1,101,277
1968-69	....	1,656,201

- (2) Annual payments were as follows:—

1959-60	....	57,790
1960-61	....	364,342
1961-62	....	538,284
1962-63	....	1,042,020
1963-64	....	1,456,798
1964-65	....	1,265,628
1965-66	....	1,700,967
1966-67	....	1,332,470
1967-68	....	2,105,877
1968-69	....	2,515,282

- (3) \$299,632.62.

16. COMMONWEALTH AID ROADS ACT

Loans Raised by Local Government

Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Works:

Re: Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, 1969—

- (1) Are the amounts of principal and interest paid on loans raised by local government for road construction and purchase of plant allowed by the State and Commonwealth Governments as amounts on which to claim additional grant moneys?
- (2) If "Yes", from which years of local government operation do these amounts qualify for additional grant moneys?
- (3) If (1) is "Yes", has provision been made in the 1969 Federal Aid Roads Act for local authorities to claim additional grant moneys?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

- (1) No, they are not allowed by the Commonwealth, but they are allowed by the State in respect of the matching scheme in the State legislation.
- (2) Under the State scheme these amounts qualify for additional grant moneys to local authorities for five years commencing from the 1st July, this year.
- (3) No.

17.

LAND

Karratha

Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Lands:

Reference premium of \$2,950 charged on blocks at Karratha for services—

- (1) What services will be supplied for this figure?
- (2) If more than one service, will he give detailed costs of charges for each service?
- (3) Will purchasers of these blocks be rated; if so, what costs will the rates cover?
- (4) Is it the intention of his department to use this method of premium charge on the sale of all blocks of Crown land in the future; if not, why the discrimination with regard to Karratha?
- (5) Will he consider waiving the premium charge on the Karratha blocks prior to the auction on the 25th November, 1969?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) The service costs per residential lot are made up as follows:—

	\$
Water	250
Sewerage	750
Power	450
Roads, drainage, and foot-paths	990
Landscaping, filling, and tree planting	250
Contingencies	260
Total	2,950

- (3) Levying of rates is the responsibility of the local authority.
- (4) There is no discrimination regarding Karratha. Because of unusual conditions applying to this land a premium charge is made to cover the cost of services. Normal policy is to recover the cost of servicing new Crown townsite land from the sale price of the lots sold. Where this price is insufficient, a premium charge is made to cover the cost of services.
- (5) No.

18.

ROADS

Guildford Road, Bassendean

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) Are extensive alterations being made to Guildford Road, Bassendean, adjoining the rail crossing leading to C.S.B.P. & Farmers Ltd. superphosphate works?
- (2) Is the work being performed at the cost of the Main Roads Department?
- (3) What is the purpose of the alterations to the existing road?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

- (1) Yes. Some channelisation work is being carried out by the Main Roads Department.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The channelisation treatment is in connection with the installation of traffic control signals which will be provided at the junction of Iolanthe Street and Guildford Road and which will be linked with proposed half boom gates at the level crossing.

19.

EDUCATION

Auditoriums

Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

With reference to my question of the 6th November, 1969, can I correctly interpret his answer to

part (3) to mean that no schools are at present programmed to be provided with auditoriums in the foreseeable future?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

Yes.

20.

TRAFFIC

Vehicle Standards Regulations: Prosecutions

Mr. BERTRAM asked the Minister for Traffic:

- (1) How many prosecutions (if any) have been made under regulation 3004(1) and (2) respectively of the Vehicle Standards Regulations of 1965?
- (2) Is there any power to prohibit the sale of devices or instruments which may be used in breach of said regulation 3004(2)?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Nil. Offences relating to fitting of bells on bicycles would have been dealt with by caution or under the Minor Offences Regulations. From the 1st July, 1968 to the 1st July, 1969 there were 10 offences against Regulation 3004 of the Vehicle Standards Regulations of 1965 dealt with under the Minor Offences Regulations.
- (2) No.

21.

EDUCATION

Living-away-from-home Allowance

Mr. JONES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What are the existing living-away-from-home allowances for students?
- (2) How long have these rates applied?
- (3) In view of increased costs of living, when is it intended to review these rates?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

		Up to Third Year	Fourth and Fifth Years
(1) Zone A	\$	\$	
(North of 26° parallel)	160	200	
Zone B			
(As defined in regulation 14)	120	160	
Zone C			
(As defined in regulation 14)	100	140	
Zone D			
(S.W. Land Division)	80	120	
Special classes and handicapped children—\$140.			
(2) 1st January, 1965.			
(3) Alterations to existing rates are at present under consideration.			

22. SUPERPHOSPHATE

Distributors

Mr. McPHARLIN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many companies have held distributing rights for superphosphate over the last 30 years?
- (2) What are the names of these companies?
- (3) Have any new distributors been appointed in that time?
- (4) Have any companies ceased to operate as distributors?
- (5) What are the names of the companies who now hold distributing rights?
- (6) Who controls the issuing of this right?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) to (5) The Government does not have detailed listings of superphosphate distributors.
- (6) Appointments are made by mutual agreement between the manufacturer and the distributor.

23. RAILWAY LAND

Sale

Mr. BURKE asked the Premier:

Is there any truth in the newspaper comment that the Government is awaiting information on returns that might be expected from the sale of some of the railway land in Perth?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

I presume that the member for Perth refers to the railway land associated with the Perth central station. The answer to his question is that I am not aware that we are awaiting any information regarding this land.

However, in view of the recent announcement, when the whole position is re-examined, no doubt the question of the land and its value will be considered, and information about this will be forthcoming if it is called for. Information will also be forthcoming about any arrangement which may be made in the future.

QUESTIONS (8): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. HOLLYWOOD HOSPITAL

Unrest

Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

I regret it has not been possible for me to give any prior notice of this question but, according to a telegram which I have received,

the matter is of great urgency and concern, not only to the Government, but to the Opposition. A similar telegram was received by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

The telegram which I received was read to me over the phone this morning from the General Post Office. It reads as follows:—

Grave unrest among trained staff of Hollywood Hospital over wage injustice request your support and assistance to avoid hospital closure.

The question I ask is: Has the Government had any indication that there exists at Hollywood Hospital unrest which could lead to the closure of the hospital if something is not done?

Speaker's Ruling

The SPEAKER: I must point out that Hollywood Hospital is a Commonwealth hospital. I can permit the question only as a factual inquiry as to whether the Government has any knowledge of it. The Government has no control over Hollywood Hospital.

Mr. TONKIN: With due respect to your statement, Sir, I understand that portion of Hollywood Hospital is used by the State to accommodate State patients. Is that not the position?

The SPEAKER: I would also point out that questions without notice are allowed only at my discretion. This question will be allowed on that condition or not at all.

Dissent from Speaker's Ruling

Mr. TONKIN: I move—

That the House dissent from the Speaker's ruling.

I am about to give my reasons for having moved this motion. This is a matter of grave public importance. I submit that the ruling given by you, Sir, for disallowing the question in the first place is not a correct one inasmuch as Hollywood Hospital is not wholly confined to Commonwealth expenditure but some State expenditure is involved. Therefore I have a perfect right to ask a question about it.

Next, Sir, I would explain that, because of the special circumstances, it was not possible for me to do that which I invariably do; that is, give due notice of any question which I propose to ask. This is the last day of sitting this week. Surely it is a matter of the gravest importance if a hospital is about to close. Even if Hollywood Hospital were entirely the prerogative of the Commonwealth Government, surely it is in the interests of the State to see that some representation be made to the Commonwealth in the circumstances.

My question is a simple one. I asked whether the Government has any indication of the existence of unrest. Because I believe that, on the points I have mentioned, your ruling is incorrect, Sir, I feel obliged—indeed, I consider it my duty—to move, as I have done, to disagree with your ruling.

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

Ayes—13

Mr. Bateman	Mr. Lapham
Mr. Bertram	Mr. McIver
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Norton
Mr. Burke	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Graham	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Harman	Mr. Davies
Mr. Jamieson	

(Teller 1)

Noes—21

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Mitchell
Sir David Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Craig	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Ridge
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Runciman
Dr. Henn	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Kitney	Mr. Williams
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Young
Mr. W. A. Manning	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. McPharlin	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Hall	Mr. Burt
Mr. May	Mr. Court
Mr. Brady	Mr. Stewart
Mr. Molr	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. T. D. Evans	Mr. Cash
Mr. Jones	Mr. Mensaros

Question thus negatived.

Questions Without Notice Resumed

Mr. BOVELL: Mr. Speaker, what question am I required to answer?

The SPEAKER: Whether you factually have any knowledge of this matter, or any knowledge of the answer.

Mr. BOVELL: The Leader of the Opposition said that he received the telegram this morning. He is quite aware that the Minister for Health is not a Minister in this Chamber. It could not be expected that I could convey the information the Leader of the Opposition requires. The Minister for Works, who generally represents the Minister for Health here, is away on public business. That is all I can say on the matter.

The SPEAKER: I take it the answer is that you know nothing of it?

Mr. BOVELL: Not personally, no.

2.

PUBLIC SERVICE ACT

Disciplinary Appeal Provision

Mr. BURKE asked the Premier:

In view of the fact that the existing disciplinary appeal provisions of the Public Service Act are legally ineffective, will he assure the House that early action will be taken to introduce amendments to the Act to provide public

servants in Western Australia with effective disciplinary appeal rights?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. I might add that there is insufficient time properly to consider a large number of questions without notice. However the answer is that it is not agreed that the existing disciplinary appeal provisions are legally ineffective. Some clarification may be desirable, and this is receiving consideration.

3.

DROUGHT

Distribution of Booklet

Mr. YOUNG asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has his department completed the booklet which is to be issued in connection with drought relief measures?
- (2) If so, when will it be available for distribution?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is in the hands of the printer and it is hoped the booklet will be available for distribution next week.

4.

EARTHQUAKE DAMAGE

Safe Construction of Buildings

Mr. BURKE asked the Premier:

- (1) Was any investigation made of earthquake damage to the various types of buildings in Perth to ascertain which type of construction is safest?
- (2) If "Yes," who undertook the investigation and what is considered the safest type of structure?
- (3) If "No," why not?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

- (1) to (3) Professional officers of the Public Works Department have examined the effects of earthquake damage on Government buildings and believe that buildings constructed to current building codes are adequate to withstand earthquake shock of the magnitude experienced to date and anticipated by the experts in this field.

The Western Australian Branch of the Institute of Engineers has conducted a seminar on the effects of the earthquake on buildings. This seminar had the widest possible representation from all sections of the building

industry—architects, engineers, and builders—and was attended by a number of departmental professional officers. Because of the wide divergence of opinion expressed at the seminar no firm conclusions and recommendations were made regarding changes to building practice. A subcommittee of consulting engineers is, however, examining all the information available and it is expected that this committee will make recommendations when its investigations are completed.

5. EDUCATION

Commonwealth Science Blocks

Mr. McIVER asked the Minister for Education:

With regard to question 5 on Wednesday's notice paper—

- (1) Would he advise if tenders have been called for the construction of a Commonwealth science block at Northam?
- (2) If the answer is "No," would he advise when contracts will be called and when it is anticipated the building will be completed?

Mr LEWIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The answers are as follows:—

- (1) and (2) Tenders will be called on the 15th November and the duration of the contract will be 16 weeks.

6. SWAN RIVER

Authority of Local Governing Bodies

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What authority has the East Fremantle Council over leases issued on the river foreshore by the Harbour and Light Department with approval of the Swan River Conservation Board?
- (2) Does the authority of the various local governing bodies fronting the Swan River extend beyond the high water mark?
- (3) If so, how far?

Mr. BOVELL (for Mr. Ross Hutchinson) replied:

- (1) The East Fremantle Council has no legal authority over leases issued by the Harbour and Light Department.
- (2) The authority of the various local government bodies fronting the river does not extend into the river beyond the high water mark.
- (3) Answered by (2).

7.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

Engineer

Mr. BURKE asked the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware that the position of Engineer, Department of Local Government has been abolished?
- (2) If "Yes"—
 - (a) Why was the position abolished at a time when building activity is at a peak in Western Australia?
 - (b) From where does the Minister for Local Government now obtain advice on technical issues in cases of disputed building regulations and/or by-laws?
 - (c) Is the advice from qualified architects and/or engineers?
 - (d) If not, what are the qualifications of the advisers?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

Once again, I acknowledge that the honourable member gave me some notice of this question. The answers are as follows:—

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Actual engineering duties associated with the position were few.
- (b) From within the Department of Local Government, Public Works Department, or Building Advisory Committee.
- (c) Yes, where necessary.
- (d) Answered by (c).

8. FRUIT GROWING INDUSTRY (TRUST FUND) ACT

Requirements

Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Further to my questions with regard to the Fruit Growing Trust Fund Act on the 21st October, 1969, and his answers—

- (a) Did the trust fund committee collect the outstanding amounts from the dealer involved and, if so, what was the total amount?
- (b) Was the period involved, in fact, more like nine years than six years?
- (c) Is he aware that an advice was made available to Fruit Growers' Association branches throughout the State dated the 6th May, 1968, which gave details of the previous 12 months of the quantities.

of citrus intakes by various factories but which omitted one operator?

- (d) Why was this operator not listed in the advice made available to the branches?
- (e) If there are any moneys yet to be credited to the trust fund, is it the intention to ensure such moneys are collected immediately?

Mr. NALDER replied:

I thank the honourable member for giving me prior notice of his intention to ask this question. The answer is as follows:—

- (a) and (b) All known collectable moneys have been paid. It would only be an assumption that there was a period of default prior to the year 1968.
- (c) A list was made available to the Fruit Growers' Association of Western Australia (Inc.) by the secretary of the fruit fund in 1968.
- (d) All fruit dealers known at that time to the secretary were included in the list.
- (e) There are no collectable moneys outstanding.

WHEAT DELIVERY QUOTAS BILL

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 20 put and passed.

Clause 21: Reconsideration of applications for quotas and revision of quotas based on incorrect calculations, etc.—

Mr. GRAYDEN: There are certain parts of this clause that I would not go along with under any circumstances and I propose to move an amendment to it. I intend to do this after having listened to the Minister for Agriculture make some statements in regard to this clause which I find absolutely astounding. I have known the Minister for Agriculture for too long and too well to accuse him of deliberately deceiving members. Therefore, I can only assume that what he did was unintentional; that he has been completely misinformed on this clause; that he does not understand it; and that he has not the vaguest idea of what it is all about.

He invited members to go to their constituents and if they found any individuals with a grievance about the quotas they had received then they should advise those people to write to the Wheat Quotas Committee to explain the position. As far as possible, the cases would be taken

into consideration; and, if a case justified it, a person would receive an additional quota. That is an invitation to members to look out for people in this category, but nothing could be further from the truth. Aggrieved people can write in but the Minister knows only too well that the Wheat Quotas Committee has no more wheat to allocate. The committee will certainly not take wheat from farmers who have already received their quotas. Yet the Minister talks about people writing in and, if they can establish a case, getting an additional quota.

Under the circumstances the Minister certainly has misled me and he has misled every member of this Chamber. If this clause is passed then the Bill will be passed under false pretences. As far as I am concerned it is a cruel hoax on all those who will suffer hardship as a consequence of inadequate quotas; because they are being led to believe, and members are being led to believe, that if there are cases where the quotas are so low that the individuals concerned will be forced off their properties they have only to write to the Wheat Quotas Committee. But that committee has no wheat to allocate—or virtually it has no wheat to allocate. The Minister knows that, yet he went over and over this point until he had convinced members that in fact that was the position.

As recently as the 5th November, according to *The West Australian*, he had this to say—

Agriculture Minister Nalder said last night that the wheat quota committee would review all alleged mistakes and cases of hardship after all quotas had been sent to farmers. A few more had still to be mailed.

There had been quite a few mistakes in mathematical calculations.

The committee would examine anomalies at the first opportunity. If a farmer was not satisfied, or thought there had been a mistake, the case would be reviewed.

That, of course, is a downright untruth.

Immediately the quotas were issued members may recall—and certainly the farmers who will be forced off their properties will recall it—the Chairman of the Wheat Quotas Committee made a statement to the Press. It is in *The West Australian* of the 28th October and, under the heading "W.A. Wheat Quotas Bring Protest," the following appears:—

The wheat quota committee yesterday received calls from farmers complaining about their quotas.

More than 50 farmers called at the offices in Victoria-avenue and at least the same number telephoned.

Most farmers received their quota notices on Saturday.

This is the significant point and I ask members to listen to it carefully, because they will realise how much truth there is in the statements which the Minister made not long ago, and which he has made over and over again since wheat quotas were allocated. I quote—

Committee chairman J. M. Clayton said: "Some of the callers were hostile, some were just after information. We had made some errors, which will be corrected.

"However, where the quotas were worked out correctly there is nothing we can do for farmers disappointed with the amount.

"They had to be worked out to a total of 86 million bushels and we could not go beyond that."

Mr. Clayton said there was very little wheat left to be allocated. Most of it would be used to correct mathematical errors.

According to that newspaper article, when all sorts of protests were being received, the Chairman of the Wheat Quotas Committee pointed out that where mathematical errors had occurred something would be done, but, with cases of hardship that would not be possible because there was very little wheat left to be reallocated.

We know that several hundred individuals realise that they cannot carry on under their present quotas. Yet the Minister is encouraging them to write to the Wheat Quotas Committee. There are many hundreds of others who have not bothered to write because they realise the position.

I have one of the wheat quota applications with me, but nowhere along the line is there a suggestion that if a person had experienced extraordinary circumstances which warranted consideration when the quotas were being allocated those circumstances would be given such consideration. On one side of the quota form certain instructions are set out and there are spaces for the name of the person concerned, the postal address, the location of the property, the acreage, the land tenure—whether held freehold or under conditional purchase, contract of sale, leasehold, perpetual lease, and so on—the total bushels delivered for seven years, the total number of bushels lost by fire, hail, etc.; and at the bottom there is a statutory declaration which the person has to sign stating that all the information he gives is correct. On the back of the form there is provision for the farmer to mark in the details of his crops over the previous seven years.

We know how the quotas were allocated. We have been told by the Minister that the quota is based on the best five years of the last seven years' production, less 17½ per cent. Special provision was made for new settlers, but the people who came

within that category were the conditional purchase farmers, and anyone who had purchased a property freehold was not included in that category.

I can tell the Minister that many hundreds of people in this State sent, with their application forms for quotas, letters which set out their special circumstances. Some said that they had been in hospital for a long period, others said that they had purchased their properties in the last few years only, and others said that no wheat had been grown on their properties for three years. These factors were not taken into consideration when the quotas were determined, and the Minister cannot deny that.

In answer to a question the Minister said that 154 individuals had received quotas as a special consideration. Having seen some of the circumstances of hardship included in the letters which accompanied the application forms, I would like to know what cases the 154 individuals submitted to justify special consideration. This is a serious matter.

There are hundreds of people—not dozens—in Western Australia who will be forced off their farms as a consequence of this legislation and the provision in clause 21. The Minister, because of certain assurances he has given, assumes that the Bill will be passed; and, no doubt, members will convey those assurances to their constituents. They will be told that if farmers can point to hardship all they will need to do is to make application to the Wheat Quotas Committee for a reconsideration of their quotas. I hope every member will hold the Minister to his assurances, because what he has told us is the only justification for passing the Bill in its present form. If we can be assured that what the Minister has told us will be put into effect then I have no objection to the Bill.

However, if the Bill is passed in its present form and the hardship cases receive the treatment which I think they will receive from the committee, then I will hold it against the Minister. He has heaped coals upon his head, and he has made a whip for his back, because if I come across a case of hardship I will have it referred to the Wheat Quotas Committee; and if I do not get any satisfaction, and the case is a reasonable one, I will hold the Minister responsible. He has told us what the situation will be, when all the evidence points to it as being nonsensical. If it is nonsensical then the assurances given by the Minister are a hoax; and this is a despicable thing to do to the wheatgrowers.

I suggest that we can improve the situation by deleting the words "to the determination of his application for a quota" in lines 22 and 23. If those words are retained then I believe that in the review of an application, the committee will say

that the quota has been determined according to the formula. We all know what the formula is: the best five years out of the last seven years' production, less 17½ per cent. By deleting the words the meaning of the provision will be altered, and people who have a genuine case of hardship will be able to apply to the committee; and, in view of the assurances which the Minister has given, the committee will have the obligation to do something about it.

Mr. Lewis: From where do we get the extra quota?

Mr. GRAYDEN: That is a problem for the Wheat Quotas Committee. This is a problem which has been heaped upon the committee by the Minister. Obviously there is one source from which the quota can be obtained: from somebody who has already been given a quota. The Minister has said that many farmers have handed in portions of their quotas, because they consider them to be excessive.

I would like to move an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member's time has expired, but I will allow him to move the amendment.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I move an amendment—

Page 13, lines 22 and 23—Delete the words "to the determination of his application for a quota".

Mr. NALDER: We have just heard an outburst from the member for South Perth. He has said that I have deliberately attempted to give wrong information to the House, and he appears to be a full-bottle on this question. I shall repeat what I have said. I said in all honesty that if a person was not satisfied with the quota he received he had the right to make application to the committee in writing for a reconsideration of his quota. That is how I interpret the provision in this clause. If an applicant has already given the special circumstances of his case on the making of his application for a quota, he can repeat the exercise in his appeal against the quota; and the committee will give every consideration to the points that are raised.

I would like to stress what clause 21(2) provides—

The Committee shall consider every application made to it by a person under subsection (1) of this section and the reasons set out in the application and if it is satisfied that, in determining the quota granted to that person, it erred or failed to give due consideration to any special circumstances relevant to the application for that quota, it shall issue a quota or revised quota to that person and thereupon the quota first granted, if any, to the person by the Committee shall cease to have effect for the purposes of this Act.

According to my interpretation of this provision, if in the opinion of the committee, after it has assessed the information supplied by the application, the quota is inadequate, it will issue a revised quota. It is clearly set out that if an incorrect quota has been issued the committee has the power to cancel the quota which has been issued and give the applicant a new quota.

In my opinion, that clearly covers the situation. I have not in any way, by intention or otherwise, tried to convey a wrong situation to members, and I stand by what I have said.

Mr. TONKIN: I regret that I must say I feel the Minister's reply is most inadequate. Nobody disputes that the farmers will have the right to refer their quotas back to the Wheat Quotas Committee. However, the Minister did not satisfy me as to whether the farmers have any chance of getting some relief if they do go back to the committee.

The member for South Perth makes the point there is no wheat quota left to be reallocated and, therefore, even though the committee may feel that a case has been made out for an alteration in the quota it cannot reallocate a quota if it does not have one to reallocate. Up to date we have been given no indication as to the extent, if any, of the amount of unallocated wheat quotas to be allocated in the event of a farmer establishing that a mistake had been made in the determination of his quota in the first place. That is the point which the Minister fails to grasp.

It could be that the Minister and the Wheat Quotas Committee are relying upon the fact that many farmers will be unable to supply wheat to fill their quotas, and that this will provide a portion of wheat quota which could be available for reallocation in the event of the committee deciding that a quota should be altered.

We then come up against the difficulty of the principles upon which the quotas have already been decided by the Minister and the farmers' organisation. There is no suggestion that those basic principles will be varied from what they are now. At present a quota can only be wrong if there has been an error in the calculation, or if some relevant information which should have been supplied has been omitted.

In the event of a farmer referring the matter back to the Wheat Quotas Committee, if he can advance additional information which, on the principles obtaining would have enabled him to get a different quota from that allocated to him, the committee will make a reallocation. However, has the committee any quota to reallocate? That is the whole point.

I go a long way with the member for South Perth in his explanation of the situation. I think he has a grasp of the difficulties and the Minister made no attempt to deal with that angle. It is no good the Minister saying that the farmers have the right to have another shot. They have the right to take the matter back to the quota committee, but what chance have they of getting any relief?

To satisfy me that this is nothing more than just an exercise, and that there is a real opportunity to get an increased quota, it is necessary for the Minister to say from what source this additional quota will be available in order to enable the quota committee to reallocate the quota.

That is the point and we owe it to the farmers to see that there is no doubt on this question. On the explanation given by the Minister I do not think there is the slightest chance of very many—if any—farmers receiving a reallocation of the quotas allotted to them, because the wheat quota will not be there.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.5 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: The amendment moved by the member for South Perth will not add a single bushel of wheat to the pool that will be formed for any reallocation of quotas, but what it may do is enable those persons who have already made a submission to the Wheat Quotas Committee without succeeding in obtaining any alteration to their quotas, to have the submission considered on a somewhat different basis to that on which it was first considered. Then, if there be any wheat over for reallocation in such circumstances, the farmer making the submission may get some of it. That is all this amendment can offer.

As the Bill stands, it is really cruel to those people who believe it will provide some relief for them, and that if they have a chance of referring their quotas to the committee they may get a reallocation. All the committee can do is to see whether a mistake was made when the matter was considered in the first instance. No new principle will be involved. To change that situation we will have to write into the provision some other principles which can be taken into consideration in addition to those observed when the quota was being determined.

The member for South Perth endeavoured to achieve this objective, but I am not satisfied he will completely succeed. However, at least his amendment provides the possibility that there may be some benefit granted to the farmer concerned. What the honourable member seeks to do is to say that, if a farmer who has failed to get his quota altered puts forward some special circumstances such as the fact that he had been ill, had been in hospital, or had suffered an injury,

and therefore was unable to put in the normal quantity of crop, or that a thunderstorm had passed through his property in one year and destroyed all his crop, these additional factors may be taken into consideration by the Wheat Quotas Committee; but it cannot take them into consideration now because they are not included in the basic principles.

What the member for South Perth seeks to achieve is quite clear, and he should be given every assistance to achieve it, if he can. In the ultimate it will all go back to the amount of wheat which will be available for reallocation; and that can only be allocated on the basis of the number of farmers who have been allocated a quota but who will not deliver any wheat at all. I mentioned the case of one man who had been granted a quota of 2,800 bushels, and who has not grown any wheat, so that amount of wheat will be available for reallocation to someone else.

With a few hundred bushels here, and a few hundred bushels there, it could be that a few thousand bushels will be available for reallocation; but if the quotas are considered on the basis of the Bill as it stands, very few farmers will get any benefit. However, if we make it possible for other important factors to be taken into consideration, there is a possibility that some of these unfortunate farmers will benefit.

That is the objective of those on this side of the Chamber, and obviously it is the objective of the member for South Perth. For those reasons, we intend to support the amendment.

Mr. NALDER: At present the committee is acting on the understanding that there will be a quantity of wheat available under the conditions outlined by the Leader of the Opposition and under other conditions as well. There is still a quantity of wheat that has not been allocated, and the committee has already been considering the complaints made, with the result that many farmers have been reallocated new quotas.

If the amendment will help to allay the fears of members of the Committee, I have no objection to it, because it allows any other information which the Leader of the Opposition has mentioned to be included in a request that will be submitted by any farmer. As I said before, if there is any fresh information a farmer feels he should have included in his original request, and he wants to make a further application to the committee, I have no objection to such a move being made.

I emphasise that the committee still has a quantity of wheat available for reallocation and when it alters the quotas already issued it anticipates there will be further quantities of wheat available which it can reallocate to those farmers who consider their quotas are not sufficient. I want the

Committee to know that at no time, in the course of the statements I have made, has the position been falsely conveyed to the wheatgrowers of this State.

Mr. GRAYDEN: The Minister has stated that no false information has been conveyed to the wheatgrowers of the State, and that there is still a quantity of wheat available for reallocation. I accept his assurance. My complaint is that there is not enough wheat available for reallocation to alleviate the plight of hundreds of farmers whose quotas are completely inadequate. This is borne out by the statement made by the Chairman of the Wheat Quotas Committee. This statement was published in the Press on the 28th October, 1969. He was reported as having said—

"However, where the quotas were worked out correctly there is nothing we can do for farmers disappointed with the amount.

"They had to be worked out to a total of 86 million bushels and we could not go beyond that."

Mr. Clayton said there was very little wheat left to be allocated. Most of it would be used to correct mathematical errors.

That statement was made by a man who is fully aware of all the circumstances.

On this clause the Minister gives an unequivocal assurance that there is a quantity of wheat available for reallocation, thus implying that there is sufficient wheat to satisfy the hundreds of farmers who feel they have been unjustly treated by the Wheat Quotas Committee. We cannot have the chairman of that committee making one statement, and the Minister making another.

As Parliament will not finish its business today, and will have to resume its deliberations next Tuesday, the Minister will have plenty of time to ascertain exactly how much wheat is available, and when he has done so he can have the true position explained in another place.

I think the Minister could overcome the entire problem if he were to give an assurance that not only the quotas of those who make application will be reviewed, but also that all quotas will be reviewed. I feel sure that the situation could be retrieved if he were to do this. I think he can do it for the reason that if every quota is reviewed wheat can be taken from those who have too much.

Mr. Nalder: I have already said that.

Mr. GRAYDEN: This clause provides for farmers to make application to have their quotas reviewed.

Mr. Nalder: I have already stated that all applications will be looked at.

Mr. GRAYDEN: The Minister has given an unequivocal assurance that all quotas will be reviewed. Am I to understand that

he will take from those who have too much and give to those who do not have sufficient?

Mr. Nalder: That is correct.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I am glad to hear that. We now know that every quota that has gone out will be reviewed, and this will go a long way towards making the legislation reasonable. I am glad the Minister agrees with this minor amendment.

Mr. NALDER: I have already said the committee will consider every quota to ensure no mistake has been made. I assure the Chamber that this is what the committee will do. I would like to make some comment on the next clause which will be put in a moment and I hope I will be able to assure members on this issue.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 22: Committee may obtain information, etc.—

Mr. NALDER: I omitted to reply to a statement by the member for South Perth that he knew of cases where wrong information had been given to the committee; where farmers had grown wheat on other land and had included it in applications to ensure that they received a certain quota.

This clause gives the committee authority to take action to secure any necessary information. If farmers have made statements to the committee which are incorrect and if they have tried to mislead the committee by giving false information which might provide them with a larger quota than that to which they are entitled, the committee is given power—even to the extent of entering a property—to make investigations to reassure itself that the information is correct. If incorrect information is submitted this will certainly be followed up by the committee.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 23 to 31 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with an amendment, and the report adopted.

APPROPRIATION BILL (CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND)

Second Reading: Budget Debate

Debate resumed from the 5th November.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [4.21 p.m.]: It was with some interest that I noticed, when speaking to the Loan Bill yesterday, that following a speech made by the Leader of the Opposition, the Treasurer agreed he was placing great accent upon the procurement of loan moneys for the

extension of water supplies within the State. I feel sure that members of this House would be disappointed if I did not, as I have done at various times during the last nine years, mention something about the shortage of water, generally. I do not think a year has gone by without my having said something about the shortage of water throughout my electorate of Avon, particularly as it relates to the areas of Bullaring and Greenhills.

I fully recall the promises made by the Public Works Department through the Minister that consideration would be given to these areas when the next modified scheme was introduced. As members well know the further modified extensions which are to be made within the comprehensive water scheme during the seven-year period are dependent on the loan moneys which can be obtained from the Federal Government. An amount of \$10,250,000 has been provided and this must be matched evenly by the State. As has already been mentioned in this House, more money is required for the scheme to be brought to completion because of rising costs, and so on.

The need for extra money to complete this scheme and to commence another together with the attendant difficulties are well known and acknowledged by the Government. I do feel, however, that because of the move in the wheatbelt areas, generally, from grain into stock production, there will most certainly be an immediate alteration in the water needs of the farms involved. This is inevitable because of the situation facing the farming community, generally, in those areas.

I agree that greater accent should be placed by the Government on borrowing these moneys from the Federal Government to help complete the present scheme and, indeed, to assist in the commencement of another scheme. I might even go so far as to suggest that another scheme be started before the first one is completed. However during the interim period I think there is a means by which water can be introduced into the country areas. I feel this method would satisfy a number of the holdings and farms which are switching to stock production; it would provide a solution a great deal faster than would the extension of the pipeline.

I do, of course, believe that the extension of the pipeline is the only sure way that water can be introduced into these areas, but I am also convinced that the implementation of a water conservation scheme on the farms involved, although it might prove a fairly expensive operation, would not cost any more than a pipeline scheme; at least not in the ultimate.

I realise that dams are very much dependent on the annual rainfall of the particular district, but it is well known

from the key dam system which is being introduced in the eastern wheatbelt that if dams are made large enough and can be filled in any one year it would be possible to cater for at least a two-year supply of the water needs of a particular farm.

As I have previously said the water needs of the farms involved—particularly as these needs relate to stock—are greatly increasing. I appreciate that pipelines are just as necessary, because in some areas it is not possible to put down a key dam structure which might be envisaged and which, indeed, is being done in the far eastern wheatbelt beyond the bounds of the comprehensive water scheme.

I believe that even if these dams were put down within the bounds of the present comprehensive water scheme they would relieve a great deal of the water usage within the comprehensive scheme. This is a scheme in which every Government must be interested particularly if it is possible to implement.

I think the Treasurer said last night that it was absolutely essential that cognisance be taken of the fact that water must come from the coast and be taken back into the farming areas. I do not believe this is altogether true. It may be the practical solution in certain areas where it is impossible to cater for such areas by means of dams. It is, however, possible to install dams in other areas and this would help relieve the pressure on the comprehensive water scheme.

I do think this is a fairly sound suggestion and that money should be advanced to farmers throughout Western Australia—not merely within the bounds of the present key dam scheme but anywhere in Western Australia—to enable them to build dams where there are likely catchments. This could be done after a survey had been carried out by the Department of Agriculture or by the Public Works Department. I am sure this would quickly satisfy the immediate needs of the farming community.

When I talk about large key dams, I am talking about storage of six cubic yards of water per sheep. A farm of 6,000 acres running 3,000 sheep would need an 18,000-yard dam, which would cost from \$3,600 to \$4,000. My plan is that farmers who require such a dam and have a site where it can be established should be assisted by the Government to make this possible. Perhaps some arrangement could be arrived at whereby a farmer would pay a deposit of 25 per cent. with the balance to be paid over a 20-year period at 5½ per cent. interest, which would be similar to the interest charged by the State Electricity Commission. This would be a great means of putting water into the agricultural areas quickly, and it would permit of increased production and stock-carrying capacity.

This type of scheme would be an immediate means of satisfying the water requirements of a number of farmers. These water needs will be paramount before the start of the next season. We hope that the drought will break fairly early, which will mean that farmers will be restocking early to a greater capacity to counteract the depletion of income from the sale of grain.

I do not intend that this should take the place of a comprehensive water scheme because this type of insurance will be more necessary than ever; but at least it will be something which will meet the water storage position in the immediate future. No other scheme has been suggested at this present juncture which will enable us to do this.

The Government could immediately survey the possibility of obtaining extra loan money in order to put down these types of structures, which would have the depth and the storage capacity to withstand the evaporation of two summers, but which would provide enough water to carry on at the approved storage rate which, as I said before, is around six cubic yards per sheep.

I do not think this has ever been suggested before. I realise that there is a scheme for lending money to farmers in the far eastern wheatbelt only if they cannot satisfy a certain means test. If the Government made this a wide-open scheme and advanced the money, it would receive interest on the loan money. In addition it would have the loan money paid back and it would accept as collateral the farm title, or whatever is left of it. A lot of the farmers would be able to raise 25 per cent. of the initial cost, which could be \$900 to \$1,000 for a dam of this type.

It must be realised also that the provision of the dam is not necessarily the end-all of the whole project. The farmers must also provide a mill and a pump to transfer the water to the essential tanks for it to be pumped into the other paddocks. All this would cost in the vicinity of \$1,000. Therefore the farmers would still be up for a fairly hefty figure. However, if they could pay the balance of the cost of the dams back over a period of 20 years at 5½ per cent. the project would not be beyond the ability of the farmers.

Such a scheme would certainly not take the place of the comprehensive water scheme, but it would make do until that scheme was extended to the properties concerned. Therefore I ask that the Government consider this matter because somehow or other large quantities of water will have to be provided quickly in the agricultural areas. It is no good the Government closing its eyes to this fact, because the lack of water will stop production. Water is needed for summer feeding. The development of clovers has

made it possible for more sheep to be carried, but extra water is an urgent necessity.

It is possible to cart grain by the truckload to the sheep and thus satisfy the appetites of the sheep for months, but a truckload of water would satisfy the sheep for no longer than a day and perhaps for only portion of a day. So I urge the Government to seriously consider this matter. I certainly hope the Minister for Water Supplies will feel there is more merit in my suggestion so that the water shortage will be alleviated. The shortage is, as time goes on, becoming more and more apparent in the country areas. I therefore do not see any reason why my suggestion should not be agreed to and accorded its full merit.

I wish to touch on one other subject; that is, abattoirs. I am of the opinion that again, because of the increasing number of stock which will be carried in the agricultural area in the very near future, consideration must be given to a complete appraisal of the abattoir system throughout Western Australia. I believe we should appoint a committee similar to the ones which recently investigated the South Australian abattoir set-up and the New South Wales set-up. I might add that those investigations were carried out for two totally different reasons. The New South Wales committee was appointed because it appeared that there were too many abattoirs in New South Wales, while the situation in South Australia was similar to our position. It was felt that the Government facilities were not adequate.

I believe that a similar committee should be appointed here to investigate the future potential of killing arrangements. I am referring not only to Government abattoirs, but also to all the private facilities available. It must be remembered that with a normal sheep population, 12½ per cent. needs to be killed off annually through the abattoirs. In the very near future an 80,000 kill will be necessary if the trend towards increased stock carrying numbers continues, in order to combat the present wheat quotas and grain uncertainty which is affecting some of the farmers.

In my opinion the abattoir at Midland has possibly been expanded as far as possible on its present site. If a committee such as I have envisaged were appointed, in all probability it would be found that a new Government abattoir should be established on a new site.

We have all been told it is no good catering for a glut period, but every need exists for the present killing facilities to be increased, as they have been over the last two years. However, the facilities will have to be increased to a much larger degree in order to cater for the future. There is nothing surer than that by the year after next, our water requirements

will have increased and our stock carrying capacity will have increased. Therefore an investigation into the abattoir system by the committee which I have suggested and which I will detail later should be carried out immediately in order to ascertain the future needs.

The committee which investigated the South Australian set-up was a committee of abattoir experts; that is, efficiency experts, or men versed in their field. They were imported from outside South Australia to make a complete appraisal. They had no parochial interest whatever in connection with the abattoir set-up in South Australia.

This type of committee, if it were to make an investigation here, would make its report almost immediately, and this would give the Government time to budget for, or to alter, examine, or carry out the recommendations which might be forthcoming, so that in two years, when the envisaged 12½ per cent. of the sheep population will require abattoir facilities, the system in Western Australia will be big enough to cater for it.

Undoubtedly we are losing exports. It is well known that our sheep are going to South Australia, and beyond to Victoria, to be slaughtered and even exported to markets which have been traditionally ours.

Sir David Brand: I agree with the idea of a committee, but would it not need to go further than simply to look at the abattoirs? Should it not go into the export processes and the problem of marketing?

Mr. GAYFER: My basic idea is to have a committee of abattoir experts appointed, as was the case in South Australia, to investigate the whole abattoir set-up here in order to ascertain whether it can cater for an ever-increasing kill which will come about because of certain changes. If the field could be broadened and an investigation could be made also of the aspects suggested by the Premier, I would be doubly happy. I agree with the Premier that not only must we attend to the roots; we must also investigate the tree-top. The overseas selling of our stock by Eastern States killers is at present indeed worrying.

We must realise of course that it has been impossible to cater for the glut which is being experienced at present, but what we call a glut now will be the average figure, plus, in the very near future; that is, inside two years. I therefore implore the Government to examine the suggestion of appointing a committee of experts to examine both aspects; that is, the aspect I have suggested of the killing set-up, and the aspect the Premier, by interjection, covered.

As the Premier has been allowed to interrupt his heavy session in his office and join us once more in the Chamber I would like to repeat the plea I made a short time ago for assistance towards the general implementation of key dams right throughout the agricultural areas, based on a 25 per cent. deposit by the farmers and the balance to be carried by the Government at an interest rate of 5½ per cent. and repayable over 20 years. I made the point that it is absolutely imperative that water be made available in the agricultural areas as quickly as possible. The type of dam I have suggested is on the key dam principle to be covered by the same surveys and everything else, but with a capacity of about six cubic yards per sheep, and good enough to cater for evaporation over a two-year period.

Sir David Brand: Per sheep in a region?

Mr. GAYFER: Per sheep on a farm, the farmer to pay 25 per cent. deposit, and the balance to be advanced as a 20-year loan at 5½ per cent. This would counteract the water shortage we have at the moment because of comprehensive scheme extensions. These are held up because of a lack of finance, and at present we have a means test governing the key dam installations in the eastern area. I know it would cost a lot of money, but it would be loan money. It is not gift money for which I am looking. The cost would be somewhere on an average of \$3,600 to \$4,000 for an 18,000 cubic yard dam. On top of the 25 per cent. deposit the farmers would have to pay, they would also have to pay for mills, pumps, and so on, because the water must be piped out, and all that sort of thing is an expense. I estimated extras would cost about \$1,000 per farm.

The Minister for Water Supplies has been experiencing trouble for many years endeavouring to obtain more money to start another stage of the comprehensive scheme parallel to the one in existence at the present moment.

Sir David Brand: Would it mean that the Government would pay over half of the cost of a dam to be put on private property?

Mr. GAYFER: Over half the cost is my suggestion to the Treasurer. Alternatively I am trying to arrive at costs which would be comparable with the cost of the comprehensive water scheme.

In the light of what the Premier said yesterday afternoon—namely, that water must come from the coast to the country—I have made this suggestion. I am trying to keep the water from the coast in the country.

We know many areas where my suggestion would be possible, but it is the initial cost which presents the difficulty. It is

difficult even for an established farmer to look for finance of \$4,000, even though he may admit it is a good idea. However, it is rather frightening to spend this amount of money on one hole in his farm when he has to buy stock and other things.

What farmers are doing is to put down 2,000 yards this year, another 2,000 next year, and so on. However, this does not catch up with the evaporation troubles which we experience in Western Australia.

I implore the Treasurer and the Minister for Works to look at this point and see whether such an exercise is possible. Also, I implore the Premier, in the absence of the Minister for Agriculture, to take some heed of my suggestion for a committee of inquiry into the abattoir needs of the State along the lines I have mentioned.

Sir David Brand: Would not a contribution to a dam call for a contribution to the cost of a bore?

Mr. GAYFER: No; I do not envisage this at all. I am looking at this on the principle of the key dam structures which are being built at the present time in the eastern wheatbelt. At the moment a means test is applicable in order to obtain any governmental money or special money.

My suggestion is to lift the means test and to bring in a deposit of some sort. I have suggested a deposit of 25 per cent. If a deposit or a contributing factor was brought in for the dam, the farmer could be allowed to pay the balance off over a period of years at a fairly reasonable rate of interest similar to that which applied with respect to the rabbit-proof fence and other loans.

This would at least give farmers water much sooner than the extension of the comprehensive water scheme. The modified comprehensive water scheme still has until 1971 to run before another seven-year period is started. Even so, it will still not cater for the needs of this rapidly expanding industry.

I think both these factors are essential in the very near future in order to cater for the large increases in stocking which will occur in this State from next year onwards. As I have said, I hope and pray the Treasurer and his Ministers will look at the two points I have raised. Incidentally, I support the Bill.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.48 p.m.]: Quite a number of years ago I received rather rough treatment from the daily Press. I well recall that I protested and fulminated against the Press on account of that fact. Since that time perchance I have mellowed somewhat—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Who told you this?

Mr. GRAHAM: —and, accordingly have gone about my business. The Press has either taken notice of, or ignored, me and

it has agreed or disagreed as it has felt disposed. I intend to make no comment or criticism in respect of myself.

I do feel, however, that all members of this Parliament, irrespective of political allegiance, must have been sickened yesterday afternoon to have read a full page article—accompanied by photographs—in an exercise against the newly-elected member for Perth in our Federal Parliament. That young man, whom I have known for quite a number of years, is an outstanding citizen with many qualifications. He has not yet taken his seat in the National Parliament. He has said nothing to offend either on political or personal issues. He has committed no offence in a political sense and yet, for some unknown reason, his personal affairs have been subjected to minute scrutiny.

I do not know the author of the article. Indeed, I have never heard of him before; namely, one, Graham Coddington. I can only conclude that the editor of the *Daily News* suffered some sort of lapse midway between the Melbourne Cup racing carnival and the Federal Liberal Party leadership stakes because, in my view, this is offensive in the extreme.

What purpose is served by trotting out the personal details of a member of Parliament? By all means hit as hard as one likes—one member against another or a member against a Minister—on political issues.

If this is to be the start, can we expect an impertinent reporter to go searching through the Land Titles Office and the company share registers and then lay out the facts—although I say in advance that there is nothing to hide, of course; it is something purely personal—of the business activities of the honourable the Premier, the Minister for Industrial Development, the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Mines, or anybody else?

Mr. Lapham: Or of each in turn?

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. Because this has taken place in respect of one recently elected member of Parliament, is it to be the commencement of a process; and is the political balance to be maintained by this form of persecution and inquisition into the personal and private affairs of a member of the Liberal Party or anybody else?

I repeat that this young man is being subjected to this before he has taken his seat and been sworn in as a member of the National Parliament. What sort of encouragement or inducement is it to any citizen, irrespective of political affiliation again, if he feels there is a prospect of this sort of thing happening? It is, I repeat, sickening in the extreme.

Mr. Toms: Trash!

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, of course it is trash. Nevertheless, many thousands of people have read the article. In consequence it becomes a topic of conversation and people draw wrong conclusions. The political career of one of the brightest young people I have seen enter Parliament could be crippled, ruined, or handicapped in some manner because of the complete and utter irresponsibility portrayed in yesterday's *Daily News*.

Up to date Mr. Berinson has had to stand on his own two feet. Whether it be the Press, television, or radio, he has been subjected to interview, inquiry, and indignity. I feel it is proper for somebody else to speak, not only in defence of a decent, clean-living citizen, but also in defence of those who seek to aspire to Parliament and who serve in Parliament. Finally, I say that my thoughts would be exactly the same if it were a member on the other side of the House who had been subjected to this sort of treatment.

Mr. Bickerton: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRAHAM: I turn from that issue. I now find it necessary to become a little critical of the Government.

Sir David Brand: What a pity!

Mr. Lapham: The normal process!

Sir David Brand: Is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition still being mellow?

Mr. GRAHAM: Mention has been made in recent weeks of the situation of the residents of a small rural community situated at Beacon who, because of a water shortage, have been restricted to eight gallons of water per head per day. I understand that allocation has been increased recently to 16 gallons per day.

I asked questions recently and was informed that the average consumption during the summer months over the last three years was in the vicinity of 100 gallons per day per head. Therefore, members will appreciate the sacrifice, the deprivation, and the difficulties under which these people will be required to live.

In reply to questions I elicited from the Minister the information that something of the order of \$300,000 would be required to connect this community with the gold-fields water scheme. I am sufficiently realistic, I hope and trust, to appreciate that very many calls are made upon the Government and it is impossible to deal with them all at the same time. However, in this matter, as in so many others, the Government has its priorities all mixed up.

Members will probably be aware that I have some association with a small community which is 50 miles from Perth where there is nothing but holiday homes. Those who have built weekend cottages or holiday homes have either sunk bores—and it is not necessary to sink to a great depth—in order to obtain a full water

supply or they have installed rainwater tanks. The great majority of them have been operating this way for quite a number of years and, as they are catered for in this way, doubtless they would be prepared to so continue for some years to come.

To my horror and dismay I learnt some 12 months ago that it was the intention of the Government to spend \$108,000 to institute a public water supply at Guilderton at the mouth of the Moore River, 50 miles from Perth, to cater for those with holiday homes who have made provision for themselves. I protested at that time and I protest with increased vigour now. I say this is a shocking and scandalous thing to do when there is such a crying need for water in so many places throughout the State.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Did not the honourable member make application for a water supply?

Mr. GRAHAM: I was informed that a water scheme was to be introduced into the area. I was asked whether I wished to be connected. I said I had no need of the water. I was then informed by a very polite public officer that I would be required to pay water rates anyway. I then said, "If that is the case, the department had better make a connection to my property as there is no water service to it."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition made no application himself, at all?

Mr. GRAHAM: None at all.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I will check it.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is a delightful comment from the Minister! I hope and trust that when I say I have not—and it is recorded in *Hansard*—the Minister will accept my word.

Mr. Williams: Like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition accepts the Minister's word?

Mr. GRAHAM: This is a purely personal activity. Surely I would be aware whether I had made application or not. I do not know how difficult the member for Bunbury is, but I repeat for his special benefit that at no time did I make any approach to anybody in connection with water at Guilderton. Indeed, this is the third occasion on which I have protested that a water scheme is being provided for the township when there is so much need elsewhere.

I turn to the question that concerns the most pressing problems in Western Australia: housing and land. The Government pretends, and has said so often, that there is a housing problem at the moment. You might remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a couple of years ago there were merely "pressures"; but now there is a housing problem because

of the tremendous economic upsurge and the rapid increase in our population. However these are merely excuses. It has been said on many occasions that an outstanding job has been done by the private sector. It is the Government that has failed the people of Western Australia. The Government's housing programme is insignificant compared with what is required. It is far less than the programme which was carried into effect by the McLarty-Watts Government, and that programme, of course, was very much less than the one conducted by the Hawke Labor Government. So the problem is with us because the Government tapered off its house-building programme.

I daresay that the comments of the Minister for Industrial Development were largely responsible for using the old cry "This is a job for private enterprise. This problem can be satisfied by private enterprise rather than by using the loan funds of the State, which are required for so many other purposes." But we are aware of the fact that today a block of land with a house erected on it costs a private developer, in total, somewhere between \$12,000 and \$15,000. If houses were built for rent—and scarcely any are these days—it would be necessary to charge a rental which would meet all outgoings and contingencies and provide some return on the investment. In order to do that a rental of approximately \$30 a week, or \$1,500 to \$1,600 a year, would be required.

Of course, the working people in the community find this completely and utterly beyond their means. Therefore private enterprise cannot make a contribution; it is the duty and the responsibility of the Government. Only the Government can satisfy this vast demand which is represented by between 15,000 and 20,000 outstanding applications on the books of the State Housing Commission.

I suppose the average applicant would have an income of \$50 to \$60 per week, and to expect him to be able to meet a rental commitment of \$30 for private enterprise rental accommodation is, of course, simply fantastic. It is the Government and only the Government which can provide the accommodation; and it is the Government which has reduced its building programme to minimal proportions. That is why the list is getting bigger and that is why the waiting period is getting longer.

Only this morning I had occasion to contact the State Housing Commission on behalf of an applicant. He applied in April, 1966, and, goodness knows, that was a long while ago. However, at the present time the State Housing Commission is allocating accommodation to those who applied in May, 1965—four and a half years ago—and the wait is getting longer and longer. As I indicated the last time

I spoke on this question, if we go back four or five years the waiting period was 18 months to two years, so the Government has fallen down on the job.

Mr. Bickerton: It can't even supply blocks of land at a reasonable price for those who are prepared to build their own homes.

Mr. GRAHAM: I fancy I heard a remark along those lines from somewhere in the vicinity of Pilbara last evening, and I was most impressed with the statements made and the conclusions drawn.

Mr. Bickerton: I am grateful for your acknowledgement.

Mr. GRAHAM: We seem to be getting on famously. In connection with the land question, this again is a problem besetting many people, and one which has been created by this Government. The Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act was passed in 1959 and almost from the day of its coming into operation the ills from which we suffer at the moment commenced to make themselves felt. I have said so often—perhaps in exasperation and desperation more than anything else—that the members of this Ministry spend far too much time unveiling plaques and not giving sufficient attention to their jobs. I could say that regarding the Minister for Town Planning, just as I could regarding many others.

The metropolitan area has been put into a straightjacket, and it is necessary to go through a whole set of convulsions and long drawn out procedures in order to achieve anything—if that be possible. Of course, it is an idealistic concept that everything shall be in its place; that everything shall be done according to the plan. But it is completely unrealistic, and it impedes the normal activities of decent citizens in the community. Of course, the overall result is that prices skyrocket and the position lends itself to what one might term questionable practices, or results that lend themselves to being questioned, if one has a suspicious mind.

To give an illustration: if I had a block of land worth, say, \$5,000 and I could prevail upon some authority somewhere to declare it a commercial site for the purpose of erecting a service station, the land would probably be worth \$50,000 overnight. So there are people in certain places who, instead of allowing the natural laws to take their place, are, by their lack of decision, making the difference as to whether a person just gets by, whether he suffers some sort of handicap, or whether he is verging on becoming a millionaire. I used the service station proposition, but the same thing applies with regard to the zoning of land in the broader perspective, such as urban, rural, industrial, commercial, and so on.

So we are getting this according to the planned concept, but at a price; and during the course of things so many people are suffering financially and in many other ways. I have already stated that many suffer because they are called upon to pay high prices, and they have no alternative if they desire to erect a home or business premises for themselves. Many of our citizens are unable to sell their land because the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has a reservation over part of it, and prospective buyers tend to shy away when they find that a large piece of the land has yet to have its definition determined. There are others who seek to quit their properties, which are to be taken over wholly—or the greater part of them—by the authority, but they are unable to obtain compensation.

Many people are uncertain as to the extent of the reservations affecting their properties. I had a case the other day—fortunately, now successfully resolved—in which a certain person was to have every square inch of his land taken for the purpose of a major road; but on account of a redefinition not one square inch is now to be taken from that person. This, whilst being very necessary, perchance, in the planning of the metropolitan area for the future, is causing untold worry and hardship to many of our citizens.

We are aware that many people who are the holders of land at the moment have complete doubts as to the ultimate zoning of the land they live on or the property they own. They are afraid to sell because it is rumoured somewhere that the land is to be rezoned. It may be rezoned or it may not be; but because of the uncertainty the owner is in a dilemma. There are, of course, terrific delays in the process of having land rezoned. There are inordinate delays in the processes of subdivision and the various steps to be taken in order that this may be brought about.

In many cases the owners are themselves prepared to do certain things, but we find that a local authority steps in and says, "This area requires a town planning scheme over a considerable acreage and we cannot do everything at once. There are certain procedures to be followed. I am afraid it will be approximately two years before it is possible for your land to be subdivided."

Then, of course, where subdivisions are undertaken or are in prospect, we find that the position has arisen—and surely it must be a Government decree—that a subdivider is responsible for paying the entire cost of installing a water main—if I may use water as an example—and connecting it to the estate proposed to be subdivided for the erection of homes or other purposes.

I know of one area where there are some half a dozen developers of considerable magnitude involved and each one is sitting

waiting for the other to move first instead of having a simple arrangement under which, if a water main is to be taken from point A to point B, all those in the area who receive the benefit would pay their proportion as and when they were connected to it. But no! The first to move is required to meet entirely the full cost of the water supply extension.

This is grossly unfair and, of course, it places that developer at a disadvantage compared with the others who sit back and wait. It is certainly not encouraging the expeditious development and subdivision of areas where there is a heavy demand.

I mentioned just now that lengthy procedures are involved in the reclassification of land from rural to urban zoning. A person who has a great deal of experience in this matter has set out for me the procedures, and I think what he has set out deserves to go into the reports of the debates of Parliament because I very much doubt whether many members are aware of what is required. If I simply told members, they would not believe me. The procedures are—

- (1) Formal application lodged with local authority.
- (2) Planning committee of local authority recommends approval in principle to the local authorities' council.
- (3) The local authority gives approval in principle and recommends the rezoning to the group committee.
- (4) The group committee considers the local authorities' recommendation and if required refers same to the technical subcommittee.
- (5) The technical subcommittee considers the proposition and makes its recommendations back to the group committee.
- (6) The group committee reconsiders the application and recommends to the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority.
- (7) The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority makes a resolution to amend the Metropolitan Region Planning Scheme.
- (8) The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority prepares an amendment to the Metropolitan Region Planning Scheme and submits same to the Minister for Town Planning for his approval.
- (9) If the Minister for Town Planning approves the proposed amendment the matter is advertised in the *Government Gazette* and in various local newspapers for a period of three months for the purpose of receiving any objections to the proposed amendment.

- (10) If any objections are received then a meeting of all objectors is held and a decision made by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority.
- (11) If there are no objections or the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority decides in spite of objections to continue with the proposed amendment then the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority submits same to the Minister for Town Planning for his approval.
- (12) If the Minister for Town Planning approves the proposed amendment then the same is submitted to the Governor for his approval who in turn arranges for the amendment to be available for public perusal and also advertises same in the *Government Gazette*.
- (13) The amendment is then laid before each House of Parliament within six sitting days of the House next following the date of the publication of the scheme in the *Government Gazette*.
- (14) The amendment remains before each House of Parliament for a period of 21 sitting days and if no objections to same are received then on the day after the expiry of the 21 sitting days the amendment comes into effect.

Surely this sort of thing, which is an importation of recent vintage, should not be necessary in order that attractive land in Kelmscott or elsewhere may be rezoned as urban. What I have just read out is the exasperating procedure that has to be followed. Unless the procedure is documented, scarcely a member will be prepared to believe it.

I have often criticised the Government in respect of land, rezoning of land, and the release of land; I have said that the Government is doing too little too late. Some mention was made this afternoon about how easy it is to be wise after the event. I well remember saying in November, 1967, what I thought about the Government because it adopted this dilly-dally procedure when a certain company wanted to spend \$12,000,000 to erect 1,000 houses. It did not want a single cent from the Government for this development; it just wanted to be allowed to go about its business; in other words, it wanted the approval of, and the green light from, the Government to get the project under way.

After the case was aired in some detail in this House, the Government some 12 months or so later bestirred itself. In November, 1968, I had some unkind things to say about the Government in respect of land at Mullaloo where a company wanted to develop an area and build 5,000 houses. It was prepared to give parcels

of land to the Government for the building of a police station, a fire station, etc., and to give \$20,000 towards the cost of those buildings. It was prepared to build an Olympic pool, and to provide a dual carriageway, concrete kerbing, footpaths, kindergartens, and the rest. The answer of the Government was "No," and the proposition flopped.

Yet a few weeks ago in respect of not exactly the same area, but one immediately south of it, several development companies have been given approval to proceed. I wonder what merit there was in the Government's attitude a year ago and a couple of years ago in respect of the cases that were presented to this Parliament. Why does not the Government take the initiative in the development of houses for the people? We on the Opposition side have not the services of clerks and other staff; and many things are occurring of which we are unaware; but the Ministers, who have competent staffs and facilities to enable them to move around and keep in touch with matters appertaining to their portfolios, seem to be oblivious of the world in which they live. It requires somebody outside—I am speaking not only of members of Parliament but of the Press and the people generally—to urge the Government to take action before the Government belatedly arrives on the scene.

In the last couple of weeks a land development company—I know this is not the only one interested, because as late as yesterday I had discussions with others—was prepared to develop some land at Mandogalup, a little inland from Kwinana. In this instance we have a company which does not want anything from the Government, except its approval. It is prepared to build 400 houses in the first year and 400 houses in the second year—double brick and tile houses.

Sir David Brand: Did the company suggest at what price?

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes. Instead of the \$14,000 that is normally required, this company is prepared to fix the maximum cost at \$10,950.

Mr. O'Neill: Does that include the land?

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, including the land. If anybody is interested, no block in that development will be sold in excess of \$3,000. The proposition has been put before the Government in black and white. I fancy that the Premier has been approached in connection with it, but he may not have been. I do know that the Minister for Town Planning has been approached. Why is this concern not permitted to proceed?

It is true that the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority has indicated in its report which was tabled in this House last night that it is necessary to conserve some areas as public open space, green belt, and

the rest; but there is a crisis in land prices and housing. Here are willing parties anxious to get on with the job. The attitude of the Government to these developments is so different from its usual attitude to private enterprise, which invariably stretches out both hands for concessions, with the theme, "Give me, Give me!" All that these development companies want from the Government is its approval to proceed.

Let the Metropolitan Region Scheme be varied from time to time. After all, for a century we had no town planning in this State yet the City of Perth has been developed in the overall in not too bad a manner, despite the few things we find wrong. We do not mind guidelines being laid down, but there is too much interference.

Sir David Brand: Do you think we have overplanned?

Mr. GRAHAM: Yes, very much so. The Opposition has spoken in connection with housing and land on every conceivable occasion, year after year; but year after year the position has got worse and worse. The Government has a little nibble here and makes a hesitant move there, but the basic problem remains as heretofore.

I do not expect the Government to agree with me when I say that we on this side of the House confidently expect that we will be the Government within 18 months. Because of that we think it is necessary—because the Government has been remiss in this matter—to start laying the foundation so that immediately we become the Government we can step in and make effective moves in order to meet the situation.

In accordance with that, the Parliamentary Labor Party at a recent meeting decided to set up a committee, and one has now been appointed to undertake studies; to consult with town planners, local authorities, developers, land owners, and any other bodies or persons deemed necessary; and generally to take whatever steps are open to it in order to become fully informed on the question of availability of land and associated matters.

More specifically, the task of the proposed committee would be to investigate matters relating to land zoning, subdivision processes, conditions imposed on developers, provision of essential services, town planning schemes, the delay factor of (a) local authorities and (b) the Town Planning Department, obstructions by unco-operative landholders, possible incentives to encourage subdivision and development, and generally to examine any features which might facilitate and expedite the availability of residential and industrial sites, with the object of offsetting the present cost spiral of land.

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

Mr. Rushton: The Opposition should have known something about that before this.

Mr. GRAHAM: Here is one of the three blind mice who invariably makes speeches in the sitting position! As I have already pointed out, we are aware of it in a general way as individuals, but we feel it is necessary to carry out an authoritative survey. We might regard this as an unofficial Select Committee. We hope and trust that the various bodies mentioned will be co-operative. The spirit and intention of the inquiry will be to learn and to become apprised of the problem in its various aspects, so that we will be ready to take the steps that are necessary immediately we become the Government in or about March, 1971.

The committee comprises the member for Ascot who has a background of local government experience, the member for Mt. Hawthorn with his legal knowledge, the member for Cockburn for his practical experience in this sort of problem in the Cockburn area, The Hon. W. F. Willesee (The Leader of the Opposition in another place), and myself as the chairman. We appreciate that this inquiry will involve us in a tremendous amount of work, and that all sorts of difficulties will arise; but the problem is of such importance and of such great dimensions that somebody has to do the job, because the position worsens with every day that passes and the consequent delay. We consider that to waste six months after we become the Government in order to carry out the survey and obtain the views of the authorities and the individuals concerned, is that much time lost. We are not prepared to have that time lost; if we did we might just as well be running around unveiling plaques. We feel that a great deal of this work can be done now in order that we will be ready when the time comes.

I sincerely hope and trust that this move by the Opposition will do something to bestir the Government into action. All we can do now is to criticise, to suggest, and to point out the anomalies. The Government is in the position of being able to do something about the matter, but so far it has not made any effective moves. Before I resume my seat, in case I forget, I support the second reading of the Bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Williams.

TAXATION (STAFF ARRANGEMENTS) BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE:**SPECIAL**

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Premier) (5.30 p.m.): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.15 p.m. on Tuesday, the 11th November.

I do hope that we will finish on Tuesday. However, knowing the procedure of Parliament, members should not book themselves for anything exciting on Wednesday.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.31 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 11th November, 1969

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

BILLS (10): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Metropolitan Market Act Amendment Bill.
2. Prisons Act Amendment Bill.
3. Alumina Refinery (Pinjarra) Agreement Bill.
4. Architects Act Amendment Bill.
5. Associations Incorporation Act Amendment Bill.
6. Iron Ore (Dampier Mining Company Limited) Agreement Bill.
7. Iron Ore (Cleveland-Cliffs) Agreement Act Amendment Bill.
8. Fremantle Port Authority Act Amendment Bill.
9. Firearms and Guns Act Amendment Bill.
10. City of Perth Parking Facilities Act Amendment Bill.

QUESTIONS (4): ON NOTICE1. **SHIPPING***Port of Albany*

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of a recent statement indicating that food prices would soar with the termination of the regular shipping service between the Port of Albany and the Eastern States—

- (a) what are the reasons for the termination of this regular shipping service;
- (b) for each of the years 1964-65; 1965-66; 1966-67; 1967-68 and 1968-69—
 - (i) what tonnages of cargo were discharged at the Port of Albany on each of the regular services;

(ii) what were the cost charges to the shipping service for the discharge of each of these cargoes; and

(iii) of the total tonnages discharged, what was the tonnage of grocers' goods discharged at Albany on each of the regular services?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(a) Due to the impact of ever-increasing expenditure, beyond the capacity of the commission to control, a review of operating policy was undertaken to endeavour to curb the rising annual deficit of the Service.

The around-Australia operation of *Koolama* was not of itself a profitable venture, results depending, and varying, according to whether capacity cargoes were obtained both west to east and east to west.

The future of east to west cargo was also becoming uncertain with the introduction of the new container services, resulting in a weekly service from Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne to Fremantle (as against a two-monthly service by *Koolama*.)

s.s. *Dorrigo* was becoming due for a major survey which would involve the service in heavy expenditure and it was calculated that by returning m.v. *Koolama* to the Fremantle-Darwin trade and by accelerating the schedules of this vessel and the other three "K" class vessels, sufficient additional voyages could be gained in a twelve month period to offset the need to trade s.s. *Dorrigo* enabling the latter vessel to be sold.

(b) As statistical records are kept in the service's trading years figures have been given for each calendar year.

- (i) 1965—3097 tons (8 voyages) average 387 tons per call.
- 1966—2633 tons (7 voyages) average 376 tons per call.
- 1967—2490 tons (8 voyages) average 311 tons per call.
- 1968—1955 tons (6 voyages) average 326 tons per call.
- 1969—1852 tons (5 voyages) average 370 tons per call.