

Page 20, lines 27 to 30—Delete the interpretation “associate member” and substitute the following:—

“associate member” means a female member who is entitled to exercise without restriction all the privileges of the club that under its rules female members may exercise;

Page 21, line 2—Add after the interpretation “honorary member” the following interpretations:—

“ordinary member” means a member (not being an honorary or a temporary member) who is entitled to exercise without restriction the full privileges of the club;

“provisional member” means a member, whether male or female, who is entitled to exercise, subject to any restrictions that the rules of the club may provide, the full privileges of the club, and is elected as such a member;

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 52: Section 185 amended—

The Hon. H. K. WATSON: I would be obliged if the Minister would have a look at the concluding words of this clause. That is, the words appearing on page 22, starting from line 23 and continuing to the end of the clause. That is a new provision and my query is whether it will preclude, or possibly cut across, the practice which is common in some clubs whereby the rules of the club provide that certain persons such as the chiefs of the armed forces or Commonwealth Ministers are automatically and permanently made honorary members of the club without any further action having to be taken. It has occurred to me that the addition of these words in the section may prevent this practice—which I understand is rather general at the moment—being followed in the future.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It may. The best suggestion I can make is that I investigate this point before the Bill passes the third reading, and, if necessary, make any alterations. I point out that the same words were in the original Bill.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Yes, I am aware of that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the honourable member is satisfied I will have a look at the point he has made before the third reading stage is completed.

Clause put and passed.

Bill again reported, with further amendments.

House adjourned at 11.41 p.m.

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 6th November, 1962

## CONTENTS

	Page
<b>QUESTIONS ON NOTICE—</b>	
Fremantle Harbour Passenger Terminal : Tenders and Contract for Steel Framework .....	2368
Hospital at Boddington : New Building .....	2370
Industrial Extracts Mill at Boddington : Reopening .....	2370
Kent Street Weir : Cost of Repairs and Charges for Water .....	2368
Kindergartens— Control in Eastern States .....	2368
Increased Fees, and Government Assistance .....	2368
Male and Female Nurses : Salary Discrimination .....	2367
Migration Mission's Recruitments— Guarantee of Employment .....	2369
Trade Categories .....	2369
Millen Primary and Infants' Schools : Enrolments .....	2369
Mineral Claims : Applications by Messrs. Hancock and Moore .....	2367
Perth Airport : Legislative Control of Bar Railways : Annual Leave— Attitude of Grants Commission .....	2370
Negotiations for an Extra Week .....	2368
Spanish Immigrants— Charges at Northam Centre, etc. ....	2369
Expected Arrivals .....	2369
Number .....	2369
Trade Classification and Employment .....	2369
State Housing Commission— Appointment of Mr. J. Coram : Tabling of File .....	2368
Traffic Offenders— Instructional Classes .....	2367
Suspension of Licenses .....	2368
<b>QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE—</b>	
Mineral Claims : Applications by Messrs. Hancock and Moore .....	2372
Native Flora : Protection— Government's Intention .....	2371
Prawn Trawling : Licensing in North-West .....	2370
Rail and Bus Services : Weekly Concession Tickets .....	2370
Standard Gauge Railway : Unveiling and Future of Plaque .....	2371
Unemployed Children : Number and Government's Intention .....	2371
<b>BILLS—</b>	
Acts Amendment (Superannuation and Pensions) Bill— Intro. ; 1r. ; 2r. ....	2372
Message : Appropriation .....	2374
Bush Fires Act Amendment Bill— Conference Managers' Report : Bill Laid Aside .....	2382
Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment Bill— Intro. ; 1r. ; 2r. ....	2375
Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act Amendment Bill : Returned .....	2409
Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance Surcharge) Bill : Returned .....	2409

## CONTENTS—continued

BILLS—continued		Page
Noxious Weeds Act Amendment Bill—		
Com. ....	.....	2376
Report .....	.....	2382
Reserves Bill : Returned .....	.....	2374
Road Closure Bill : Returned .....	.....	2374
Royal Visit Holiday Bill—		
Intro. ; 1r. ; 2r. ....	.....	2374
ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1962-63—		
Committee of Supply—		
Votes and Items Discussed ....	.....	2382
ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE :		
SPECIAL .....	.....	2409

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

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## MALE AND FEMALE NURSES

*Salary Discrimination*

1. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is he aware that as a result of the current £3 14s. 8d. per week disparity between the male and female basic wage—

(a) a trained first-year male nurse receives that much more per week than his female equivalent;

(b) that this disparity is anomalous when the male nurse is restricted to nursing male patients only, while the female nurse requires much broader training in regard to both sexes, juvenile and adult;

(c) that a female third-year student receives 65 per cent. of the female £11 4s. 1d. basic wage;

(d) that a female fourth-year student receives 80 per cent. of the female £11 4s. 1d. basic wage;

(e) that a male third-year student receives 80 per cent. of the male £14 18s. 9d. basic wage;

(f) that a male fourth-year student receives 95 per cent. of the male £14 18s. 9d. basic wage?

(2) Is any consideration being given to rectifying such apparent discrimination?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) This is a matter for the determination of the Arbitration Court.

## MINERAL CLAIMS

*Applications by Messrs. Hancock and Moore*

2. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

(1) Is he aware that applications have been made for mining tenements, other than by way of lease, for mineral claims Nos. 888H, 889H, 890H, 891H, 892H, 893H, 894H, 895H, 896H, 897H, 898H, 899H, by Langley George Hancock and Frank Albert Moore?

(2) Who were the holders of the leases, as referred to above, prior to applications by Langley George Hancock and Frank Albert Moore?

(3) Is it the intention of the applicants, Langley George Hancock and Frank Albert Moore, to work mineral deposits referred to if their applications are successful?

(4) If the answer to No. (3) is "Yes," will he undertake to see that the terms of the contract are carried out, and the working of the leases commenced as soon as possible?

(5) If it is not the intention of the applicants to work the leases as mentioned, would he undertake to see that the point is taken into consideration when applications are being considered?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) This ground was previously held by Griffin Coal Mining Company Ltd. as dredging claims Nos. 41H and 51H to 58H, inclusive.

(3) to (5) The present applications have only been lodged, and the department has no information at this stage as to the applicant's intentions. Applicants have to support their applications in the warden's court, and the warden's recommendation, with evidence, is submitted to the Minister, who considers same before making a decision. If a granted claim is not subsequently worked in accordance with the labour provisions under the Act, or exempted from work, it is open for any miner to apply for forfeiture.

## TRAFFIC OFFENDERS

*Instructional Classes*

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Police:

(1) What types of traffic offenders are referred to traffic classes for instruction?

(2) Are the offenders prosecuted?

(3) Are similar classes conducted outside the metropolitan area?

*Suspension of Licenses*

- (4) Is any distinction made between offenders whose livelihood is dependent upon having a driver's license, and those driving for pleasure, before licenses are suspended?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Persons who have committed offences where no element of danger to other road users is apparent, and who have not previously attended such classes. Their previous good record is also a factor.
- (2) Only if they do not attend the class to which they are invited.
- (3) No.
- (4) No.

**KINDERGARTENS***Increased Fees, and Government Assistance*

4. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware the Kindergarten Union is being forced to increase kindergarten fees to parents using metropolitan kindergartens?
- (2) What assistance has been granted kindergartens in the current year?

*Control in Eastern States*

- (3) Are not kindergartens run and controlled by the Education Department in the Eastern States?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) It is understood than an increase is being considered.
- (2) The estimated Government grant to the Kindergarten Union for 1962-63 is £45,800.
- (3) No.

**KENT STREET WEIR***Cost of Repairs and Charges for Water*

5. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What was the cost of repairs and reconstruction of the Kent Street Weir on the Canning River during the last financial year?
- (2) Were these costs contributed to by the other parties to the original construction agreement?
- (3) Have any increases been imposed upon charges for water being drawn from the weir by property owners located along the Canning River?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) £6,854.
- (2) and (3) No.

**STATE HOUSING COMMISSION***Appointment of Mr. J. Coram: Tabling of File*

6. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing: Will he lay upon the Table of the House the file in connection with the appointment in 1946 of Mr. J. Coram as a member of the State Housing Commission?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:  
Yes, for one week.

*The file was tabled.*

**FREMANTLE HARBOUR PASSENGER TERMINAL***Tenders and Contract for Steel Framework*

7. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) With reference to the replies given on Thursday, the 1st November, was any part of the contract obtained by J. & E. Ledger Pty. Ltd. for the supply and erection of the steel framework of No. 1 terminal sublet to Saunders & Stewart?
- (2) If "Yes," approximately what proportion?
- (3) Was not the amount which was ultimately paid to J. & E. Ledger in respect of the contract nearer £59,000 than £34,110 which latter figure was given by him last Thursday?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).
- (3) No. The amount finally paid to J. & E. Ledger Pty. Ltd. for the contract plus extras was £34,178 as given in answer to question No. (2) on the 1st November, 1962.

**RAILWAYS: ANNUAL LEAVE***Negotiations for an Extra Week*

8. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) At what stage of negotiations (if any) on Arbitration Court action is the railway employees' claim for an extra week's holiday?
- (2) Is the Government aware many agreements have been registered in recent years for three weeks' annual leave?

*Attitude of Grants Commission*

- (3) Does the Grants Commission give additional finance to the States where railway employees are denied similar margins and working conditions to those employed in the standard States?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) An application for leave to be granted to apply to amend the award in respect of annual leave has been lodged with the Court of Arbitration by the unions and such leave was granted by the Court on the 2nd November, 1962.
- (2) Two weeks' annual leave is the standard grant in this State and the Government has no knowledge of many agreements being registered with the State Court of Arbitration for three weeks' annual leave.
- (3) The Grants Commission does not publish the details of its adjustments with respect to State railway finances, but it is understood that it has regard for levels of charges and costs of operation. As the latter is influenced by conditions of service, any betterment could result in an increase in the present adverse adjustment.

#### SPANISH IMMIGRANTS

##### Number

9. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Immigration:

- (1) How many Spanish migrants have now arrived in this State as a result of the recently instituted programme?
- (2) What numbers of—
  - (a) males;
  - (b) females;
 will be added to the work force as a consequence?

##### Trade Classification and Employment

- (3) What are the trade categories of these migrants?
- (4) How many have been settled into permanent positions?

##### Charges at Northam Centre, etc.

- (5) What are these migrants charged for living at the Northam Holden Migrant Centre?
- (6) What are the charges to any migrants living at the Graylands Migrant Centre?

##### Expected Arrivals

- (7) How many additional Spanish migrants are expected?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) to (7) All Spanish migrants arriving in Western Australia are under the control of the Commonwealth Government, and the information requested is not recorded by the State Immigration Department, which has no jurisdiction in such matters.

#### MILLEN PRIMARY AND INFANTS' SCHOOLS

##### Enrolments

10. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) What were the enrolments of children commencing school at—
  - (a) Millen Primary School;
  - (b) Millen Infants' School;
 for the years 1960, 1961, and 1962?
- (2) What are the anticipated enrolments at both schools for 1963?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

		(a) Millen Primary	(b) Millen Infants'
(1)	1960	566	160
	1961	607	161
	1962	641	161
(2)	1963	665	174

#### MIGRATION MISSION'S RECRUITMENTS

##### Trade Categories

11. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Immigration:

- (1) Further to my question of the 22nd August, 1962, can he now supply current figures relating to Nos. (1) and (2) of the question dealing with the trade categories of male migrants?

##### Guarantee of Employment

- (2) Is it now possible to indicate the names of the companies who are guaranteeing employment to any of these migrants?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) As at the 31st October, 1962, the mission has arranged for 495 workers with wives and dependants to migrate to Australia. Trade classifications are as follows:—

Boilermakers	....	58
Welders	....	80
Electrical installers and fitters	....	42
Turners	....	17
Motor mechanics	....	17
Fitters	....	79
Coppersmiths	....	1
Steel erectors	....	8
Machinists	....	8
Sheet metal workers	....	17
Moulders	....	6
Panel beaters	....	1
Blacksmiths	....	1
Coach builders	....	2
Coach painters	....	2
Process workers	....	16
Pattern makers	....	2
Cabinet makers	....	1
Electronic technicians	....	1
Building tradesmen	....	136
		<hr/> 495

- (2) No.

**PERTH AIRPORT***Legislative Control of Bar*

12. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

Is the bar at Perth Airport subject to the provisions of the State Licensing Act?

Mr. COURT replied:

No. Since the coming into operation of the Federal Airports (Business Concessions) Act, 1959, the State licensing laws do not apply to the sale and supply of liquor at the airport.

**INDUSTRIAL EXTRACTS MILL AT BODDINGTON***Reopening*

13. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

What is the position regarding the opening of the Industrial Extracts Mill at Boddington?

Mr. COURT replied:

A decision by the company to reopen Industrial Extracts Mill at Boddington depends upon the world market for tannin extract. There is a gradual improvement, but large stocks held by the company require to be cleared first.

Plant design for Boddington is dependent upon pilot plant work being conducted by the company at its Toodyay establishment.

The company hopes to be in a position to give a firm decision about the plant reopening after the return of the managing director from overseas during December this year.

**HOSPITAL AT BODDINGTON***New Building*

14. Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister for Health:

When is it intended to make a start on the building of the new hospital at Boddington?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Preliminary planning is already under way and it is expected that work will commence towards the end of this financial year.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE****PRAWN TRAWLING***Licensing in North-West*

1. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Has his department made any decision regarding the number of licenses it will issue for prawn trawling for the 1963 season in the Shark Bay waters?

- (2) If the answer is "Yes," how many trawlers will—

- (a) be licensed;  
(b) operate from shore stations in Shark Bay and Carnarvon;  
(c) be freezer boats operating with or without catcher boats?

- (3) Have any licenses been granted; and, if so, to whom?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

I wish to thank the honourable member for giving me prior notice of this question. The answers are as follows:—

- (1) Yes.  
(2) (a) 25.  
(b) 17.  
(c) 7 without catcher boats. One license has not yet been allocated.  
(3) No licenses have been granted. The undermentioned have been advised that they will be permitted to trawl for prawns in the Shark Bay-Carnarvon area:—

	No. of Boats
Nor'-West Whaling Company	10
Planet Fisheries, Shark Bay	5
Eureka Fishing Company	1
Poole's Fisheries	1
Kingfisher Corporation	1
M. de Sousa	1
R. J. Phillips	1
Ocean Trawling Company	1
Tropical Traders Ltd.	1
T. Doak	1
W. P. & D. I. Goode	1

**RAIL AND BUS SERVICES***Weekly Concession Tickets*

2. Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Railways:

Has the Government given consideration to the suggestion I put forward regarding a comprehensive ticket at a special rate to encourage tourists and others to use rail and bus services within a fairly extensive area along the lines of the scheme practised in some parts of America and known by such names as "90 days for 90 dollars"?

Mr. COURT replied:

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

Yes. The Metropolitan Transport Trust and Railways Department have investigated this suggestion and arrangements are

now in hand to introduce a scheme for provision of weekly tickets.

These tickets will be available for unrestricted travel on trains and Metropolitan Transport Trust buses within a 30-mile radius of Perth at a cost of £2 5s. per ticket.

This scheme will be introduced on Monday next and visitors to Perth during the Commonwealth Games period will be able to avail themselves of this travel arrangement.

In the light of experience two-weekly and monthly tickets may be introduced with a graduated scale of fares to further encourage use of the services.

### UNEMPLOYED CHILDREN

#### *Number and Government's Intention*

3. Mr. WILD (Minister for Labour): The week before last the Leader of the Opposition asked two questions pertaining to the number of young boys and girls still registered for employment to the 30th September, 1962; and he also asked what the Government intended to do to organise employment for these people. Mr. Baden-White, the Western Australian director, has submitted the following answers:—

- (1) and (2) Two boys and 18 girls. A further 5 boys and 8 girls have re-registered for a repeat placement. These figures include all offices of the Commonwealth Employment Service, both metropolitan and country, as at the 30th September, 1962.

The majority of these young people are subject to some placement disability such as a physical or mental handicap, or insistence upon specific employment.

- (3) The vigorous industrial development policy of the Government has apparently cared for these young people.

### NATIVE FLORA: PROTECTION

#### *Government's Intention*

4. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Premier: Following the defeat of the Native Flora Protection Act Amendment Bill in another place, can he inform the House what steps the Government is going to take to protect wildflowers in the State of Western Australia?

Mr. BRAND replied:

We have to accept the decision of the Upper House as we have had to do on other occasions. We will examine ways and means of protecting our wildflowers in the period between this and the next session of Parliament, when we hope to reintroduce legislation.

5. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Premier:
- (1) Further to the protection of our wildflowers, is there not sufficient power under existing legislation for full protection to be given to the wildflowers in Western Australia?
  - (2) If so, why does the Government not force people who are empowered under the Act to make sure our wildflowers are fully protected?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) and (2) The position is being examined at the present time. These points were made in the Assembly at the time of the debate; and I can only say that the decision of the Council was a regrettable one. However, in the meantime we might appeal to the public of Western Australia and to visitors to do what they can to preserve our local flora.

### STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

#### *Unveiling and Future of Plaque*

6. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Railways:

At yesterday's ceremony in connection with the standard gauge railway a plaque was unveiled. Is it true that this plaque will be shifted to another site; and, if this is correct, why did not the unveiling take place at a site where the plaque would not have to be shifted?

Mr. COURT replied:

It is intended the plaque will be erected at a place where it will be accessible to the public, when the work on the project has been completed.

Mr. J. Hegney: At another ceremony, possibly in Northam!

Mr. COURT: With the blasting to a depth of 80 ft. which is to take place there, it will be realised that it is impracticable to leave the plaque where it is. I meant to mention at the ceremony that the plaque would be removed; but most people seemed to take it for granted in discussion afterwards that the plaque would be shifted to a more suitable place.

Incidentally, the local authority has made an approach to the Government to assist in finding a place which will be accessible to the public; and that local authority would like to have an additional plaque arranged to give visitors an indication of the historic significance of the piece of ground on which the undertaking is being commenced.

### MINERAL CLAIMS

*Applications by Messrs. Hancock and Moore*

7. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

With regard to my question No. 2 on today's notice paper, I believe the leases referred to were held by Hancock, Jackson, and Moore. Can the Minister refute this?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

I was replying on behalf of the Minister for Mines. That was the information given to me, and I have no further comment to make.

Mr. Tonkin: Is not the matter *sub judice*?

### ACTS AMENDMENT (SUPER-ANNUATION AND PENSIONS) BILL

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and read a first time.

#### *Second Reading*

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [4.53 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In moving the second reading, I would like to point out that the measure has two objectives. The first is to remove certain anomalies which exist in the benefits now payable under present legislation, and the second is to increase the rates of pension for all pensioners covered by the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, 1938-1961, the Superannuation Act, 1871-1960, and the Government Employees' Pensions Act, 1948-1957. It is proposed to amend each of these measures, and for this purpose the Bill contains three separate parts.

Part I deals with the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, 1938-1961 which provides for superannuation benefits to persons in permanent Government employment following retirement on or after the 1st July, 1939. The scheme laid down by the 1938 Act is a contributory one and benefits are governed by the number of units for which a contributor elects. At present an anomaly exists with respect to pensioners under the 1938 Act who contributed for seven units of superannuation

or less inasmuch as those persons who commenced on pension after the 1st January, 1958, receive a smaller pension than those who retired prior to that date. The difference in weekly pension ranges from 2s. 6d. per week in the case of seven units of pension up to 15s. per week where the entitlement is for two units of pension.

These differences are due to units being valued at 15s. per week plus a flat supplementation of pension by £1 per week where pension commenced before the 1st January, 1958, in comparison with a unit value of 17s. 6d. per week without supplementation in those cases where pension commenced after the 1st January, 1958. This difference in treatment between pensioners has caused more dissatisfaction than any other feature of the 1938 Act and correspondence is continually being received seeking removal of the anomaly which was created on the 1st January, 1958.

I think most members have received or have heard of complaints from four-unit pensioners who retired after the 1st January, 1958, and who cannot understand why they receive a pension of £3 10s. per week whilst colleagues or workmates who retired before the 1st January, 1958, receive £4 per week. This difference of 10s. per week in pension exists between the pre-1958 group and the post-1958 group, despite the fact that members of both groups may have been contributors to the superannuation fund for the same period and accordingly have contributed equal amounts to the fund.

In order to remove the anomaly and at the same time provide for a modest increase in all pensions, irrespective of the number of units, it is proposed to increase the value of each of the first two units to 28s. 9d. per week, and to fix the value of each of the next five units at 15s. Units in excess of seven are to remain at their present value of 17s. 6d. each. Now the effect of this proposal will be to vary the average value of each unit according to the number taken out by the contributor. For example, the average value of each unit will be—

- 28s. 9d. per week for 2 units.
- 21s. 10½d. per week for 4 units.
- 19s. 7d. per week for 6 units.
- 18s. 9d. per week for 8 units.
- 18s. 6d. per week for 10 units.
- 18s. per week for 20 units.
- 17s. 10d. per week for 30 units

and approximately 17s. 9d. per week for 42 units of pension which is the maximum entitlement under the Act.

In the case of ex-contributors who retired before the 1st January, 1958, an increase of 7s. 6d. per week will be paid to those with an entitlement of seven or less units, whilst the increase will be 10s. per week where the entitlement is eight units or more.

For those who retired after the 1st January, 1958, the increase in the weekly pension will range from £1 2s. 6d. where the entitlement is two units, down to 10s. where the entitlement is seven units or more. It is to be noted that ex-contributors with seven or less units who retired after the 1st January, 1958, are to receive the greater benefit, but in this respect it must be remembered that those persons who retired before that date have drawn supplementary benefits in the past which have not been enjoyed by those who retired after the 1st January, 1958.

The new scale will place all pensions on exactly the same footing, and it will completely remove the anomalies to which I referred a short time ago; and in this respect I will again make reference to the four-unit pensioner.

Under the proposed new scale, each four-unit pensioner is to receive £4 7s. 6d. per week in the future, which in the case of the person who retired before the 1st January, 1958, means an increase of 7s. 6d. per week, and where retirement took place after the 1st January, 1958, the increase will be 17s. 6d. per week. This action will remove the difference in treatment which has caused so much dissatisfaction and for this reason alone should commend itself to members.

A total of 2,792 pensioners will benefit from the proposed new rates at an annual cost to Consolidated Revenue of £66,000 which, of course, will increase with the passage of time as existing contributors retire. Anomalies also exist at the present time with respect to existing widows' pensions on the lower rates. An example is in the case of an entitlement of two units.

One class of widow on two units receives a weekly pension of £1 15s., another £1 5s., and yet another £1 2s. This odd situation is the result of the flat supplementation of pensions prior to the 1st January, 1958. It is proposed to remove this extraordinary anomaly, and a number of others, by adjusting widows' rates to 22/35ths of the rates now proposed for ex-contributors; and the Bill provides accordingly. In this way all anomalies in the way of widows' benefits will be completely eliminated. Increases to widows will range from 1s. 2d. per week to 14s. 2d. per week according to individual unit entitlement, and the date when pension first commenced.

As is the case with ex-contributors, the greater benefits will accrue to those on the lower rates of pension, where payment first commenced after the 1st January, 1958. Here again it must be remembered that those whose pensions commenced before the 1st January, 1958, have been receiving supplementary benefits which were denied to those who commenced on pension after that date. The

annual cost to Consolidated Revenue of implementing the proposal will be £32,000, and 1,788 widows will benefit.

Part II of the Bill is concerned with the Superannuation Act, 1871-1960. Under the provisions of this Act free personal pensions are provided for all officers who served in an "established capacity" prior to the 17th April, 1905. There are now 187 pensioners drawing benefits under the 1871 Act, and although the number is small the greatest pressure for pension increases has come from this group.

Members will recall that in 1960 the Act was amended to place the 1871 pensioners on a similar basis to that applying to the 1938 Act pensioners. The effect of the 1960 amendment was to grant to each 1871 pensioner the number of units of superannuation under the 1938 Act which would have been necessary at the time of his retirement to give him the same original pension as granted under the 1871 Act. The increases in unit values since the date of a pensioner's retirement were then applied in order to determine the appropriate current pension.

The application of this method resulted in about 60 per cent. of 1871 pensioners receiving increases; whilst the balance, who were on the lower rates of benefit, received no increase as they had been well treated in the past in comparison with the lower-graded pensioners under the 1938 Act. Although the 1871 pensioners as a body were not satisfied with the treatment accorded them in 1960, I now understand that they are prepared to accept the situation but have suggested that consideration be given to compensating them with respect to widows' benefits.

Under the 1871 Act there are no widows' benefits and the pension dies with the pensioner. However, it was possible for an employee who was eligible for benefits under the 1871 Act to contribute to the Superannuation Fund to provide for payment to his widow of a pension under the 1938 Act. Some of these contributors have outlived their wives and they now seek a refund of contributions plus interest. Refunds are also sought where wives are still living plus widows' pension benefits at the cost of the State should they survive their husbands.

As the Government sees the position, the 1871 pensioner had the opportunity of contributing for a pension for his widow after the 1938 Act came into operation. If he did contribute then his widow receives the benefits applicable under the 1938 Act. If his wife predeceases him he is in exactly the same position as a normal contributor under the 1938 Act in similar circumstances, and is certainly not entitled to a refund of contributions.

If the 1871 pensioner did not contribute for a pension for his wife he is in exactly the same position as a person who declines

to take out units under the 1938 Act, and he should not expect the State to accept responsibility for his widow. It may be argued that the 1871 pensioner who retired before the 1938 Act came into being did not have the opportunity of covering his wife for widows' benefits. This is so, but here I must draw attention to the fact that a similar state of affairs existed in relation to all Government employees at that time.

Between the 17th April, 1905, and the 1st July, 1939, there was no pensions scheme in operation for State employees, and employees who commenced service with the Government after 1905, and retired before 1939, received no pension whatsoever from the State. Therefore the 1871 pensioner who retired before the 1st July, 1939, is in no worse position with respect to widows' benefits than many others who also retired before that date. The Government therefore is firmly of the opinion that the 1871 pensioners have no legitimate claim for special consideration in respect of widows' benefits.

The principle adopted in the 1960 legislation of relating the 1871 pensions to the 1938 pensions has been maintained in the provisions of this Bill, which will mean that each 1871 Act pensioner with an equivalent entitlement of seven or less units will receive an increase of 7s. 6d. per week. Pensions which are equivalent to eight or more units will be increased by 10s. per week. The reason for the higher increase in the case of entitlements of eight or more units is that pensioners with seven or less units have been receiving higher benefits in the past because of supplementary payments.

Under the provisions contained in this Bill, 20 of the 1871 pensioners will receive increases of 7s. 6d. per week, and the remaining 147 will have their pensions increased by 10s. per week. The annual cost to Consolidated Revenue will be £4,200.

Part III of the Bill deals with the group of pensioners who receive pensions under the Government Employees' Pensions Act, 1948-1957. Under this Act free personal pensions equivalent to a four-unit pension under the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act are provided to wages employees who were employed prior to the 17th April, 1905. As a four-unit pension under the 1938 Act is to be lifted to £4 7s. 6d. per week, each of the pensioners under the 1948 Act will receive an increase of 7s. 6d. per week in accordance with the provisions of the Bill.

The present number of pensioners is 15 and the annual cost of implementing the proposal will therefore approximate £300 per annum. The total annual cost of implementing the proposals contained in the Bill will approximate £102,500, and 4,762 persons will benefit from the proposals. As the new rates of pensions are to operate on and from the 29th December, 1962, in the

case of the 1938 and 1948 Act pensioners, and from the 1st January, 1963, for the 1871 pensioners, the cost of implementing the proposals in this financial year will approximate £51,000. In this respect the Budget for 1962-63 contains an allowance of £50,000 for this purpose.

It would seem that this Bill will at least remove many of the anomalies about which I have received complaints from pensioners who benefit under the three Acts mentioned in the Bill.

I should like to pay a compliment to the Treasury officers who have spent so much time in trying to resolve some of the difficulties which have existed under this Act. Although in some cases the increases are very small, as I have already announced, on the other hand there are some substantial increases as compared with the actual pension itself. I am sure this will offer some relief to the difficulties in which certain of our ex-State employees find themselves.

Mr. Brady: Can the Treasurer tell me whether the Commonwealth Social Service Department will make reductions in pensions because of an increase in superannuation payments?

Mr. BRAND: I would say the Commonwealth is not likely to amend its Act, but I am sure these increases have been made after due consideration of the point which the honourable member has raised, and that we have had regard for the Commonwealth Social Services contributions, and the means test which applies.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Hawke (Leader of the Opposition).

## ACTS AMENDMENT (SUPER- ANNUATION AND PENSIONS) BILL

*Message: Appropriation*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

## BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Reserves Bill.
2. Road Closure Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

## ROYAL VISIT HOLIDAY BILL

*Introduction and First Reading*

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

*Second Reading.*

MR. WILD (Dale—Minister for Labour) [5.15 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to provide for a special holiday in honour of the visit by Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness

the Duke of Edinburgh in 1963. The Bill is based entirely on the legislation passed in 1953 which made provision for a special holiday in honour of the visit of the Royal couple in 1954.

It is expected that the Royal visitors will be in Perth on the 25th and 26th March, 1963, but no specific date has been placed in the Bill as the dates mentioned could be subject to change. It is proposed, therefore, that the Governor may, by proclamation, fix a date to be observed. Provision is also made for a day for a holiday to be proclaimed throughout the State or different days in different parts of the State.

The Bill provides for the effect of the special holiday on awards or agreements under the Industrial Arbitration Act or any other Act by ensuring that this special holiday is a public, bank, or Public Service holiday without deduction of pay. A provision also explains how a worker is to be compensated if required by his employer to work on this special holiday. This is quite a simple measure and is self-explanatory.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. W. Hegney.

## INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Introduction and First Reading*

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

### *Second Reading*

**MR. WILD** (Dale—Minister for Labour) [5.17 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The main purpose of the Inspection of Scaffolding Act is for the protection of workmen and the general public wherever scaffolding or gear is used. Since the advent of modern multi-storeyed, steel-structured buildings, greater emphasis must be placed on safety in the use of modern scaffolding and gear.

The previous Minister for Labour (The late Hon. C. C. Perkins, M.L.A.) introduced safety in industry and formed the Building Industry Safety Committee to study and report on safety measures in this important industry. The committee, representative of management, labour, and Government, sees the need, however, to amend the Inspection of Scaffolding Act to bring Western Australia further into line with the other States, but at the same time emphasising safety to workmen and to the public. With the transfer of administration of the scaffolding section to the Department of Labour in 1959, the provisions and requirements of the Act have been approached with an attitude of co-operation and assistance to the building industry rather than with the attitude

that it be a policing measure, with the result that building contractors now look to the Scaffolding Department for guidance and assistance in their many scaffolding and gear problems.

The first amendment—a minor one—seeks to insert the word "gear" into the long title to make the title conform with the rest of the Act. The title will then read, "An Act to make provision for the Inspection of Scaffolding and Gear and for other purposes."

A new section is being inserted to bind the Crown. It is considered that the Crown should set the example and not be exempt from the provisions of the Act. In the Scaffolding Acts of most other States the Crown is cited.

The next and most important amendment recommended by the committee is the deletion of the provision for the differing scaffolding heights limits as existing between the metropolitan area and the country districts. Differentiation of height should now no longer apply, especially with the similar type of industrial and other large buildings now being erected in the country areas and, in particular, provincial towns and centres.

Regulations under the Act provide for notification to erect scaffolding and for the payment of fees. It is intended to provide that no fee or notification will be necessary for country single-storeyed domestic buildings or single-storeyed buildings on farm properties. However, in the interests of all concerned—workmen, members of the public, owners, and contractors—the Act still provides that adequate safety provisions relating to scaffolding and gear shall always be observed notwithstanding that no payment of fees or notification has been made. Subsection (2) of section 1 therefore becomes redundant and will be deleted.

The amendment to the interpretation of "gear" seeks to clarify the existing definition. The Inspection of Machinery Act covers power-operated jib and hammer-head cranes, but the rest of the definition covers all gear which is generally used by builders. It is necessary to insert a new interpretation to define "rigger." With the rigger becoming more important over the last few years on the newer type of multi-storeyed building, it is now required to insert a definition of licensed rigger in the Act.

The interpretation of "scaffolding" is being amended by deleting from the definition the minimum height of eight feet. The committee considers that all scaffolding should be subject to the Act, especially as some contractors deliberately keep their scaffolding one inch below the statutory height to avoid the payment of fees and this often leads to the erection of dangerous and defective scaffolding. The new interpretation in the Bill seeks further

to clarify the meaning of "scaffolding." "Demolition" is being replaced by the word "dismantling."

The regulations will again be amended to provide that all building activity should bear equally the cost of scaffolding inspection, excepting country single-storeyed buildings and farm buildings. No fees will be required for any scaffolding under six feet and this will have the effect of levelling fees generally.

It is proposed to alter the definition of "serious bodily injury" by reducing in the notification the period of incapacity from seven days to three days to conform more closely with the standard code for industrial safety throughout the Commonwealth. Previously, the Act covered only licensed scaffolders and provided that licensed men were required for the erection of buildings and their demolition, but not for additions. The proposed new section sets out more clearly the requirements of and the certification not only for licensed scaffolders, but also for licensed riggers.

The Bill seeks to replace the word "demolition" by the word "dismantling." The height limit of scaffolding, when licensed men are required, has been reduced from 27 feet to 20 feet because, in reality, scaffolding tubes are in 20-foot sections. This is only a practical move. It will be seen that care is taken to exempt single-storeyed dwelling-houses from the requirement to employ licensed men.

To meet the demand for trained and licensed riggers and scaffolders in the industry, the department has authorised training so that men can become certificated and safety-conscious for the job. The fact that the new building trades award provides for a monetary incentive to certificated riggers and scaffolders has spurred employees to attend departmental training. The building industry welcomes the trained and certificated employee on the job. The amendment sought in the Bill simply has the effect of giving authority to what has been the general practice of issuing certificates.

The section which provides that the inspector may give directions as to scaffolding is being strengthened by providing "that the owner shall make safe, dismantle, render unusable or remove such scaffolding and/or gear from the site." Previously, considerable condemned scaffolding was simply being removed from the site to other jobs in other districts and being used again to the danger of the workmen or the public.

A further amendment to this section will clarify the position in regard to whom the inspector may give directions to as to such scaffolding and gear. The section which provides that the inspector be notified in the event of an accident happening to scaffolding or gear is to be amended by the Bill to provide that notification must

be made as soon as practicable so that investigations can be made for the purpose of preventing a recurrence of the accident.

There are a number of minor consequential amendments to various sections of the Act in respect of the definition of "gear" and "scaffolding." It is intended to amend the section providing for the licensing of riggers to include scaffolders and also to provide power to make regulations for the licensing of workmen when they are operating particular gear in the building trade. Furthermore, the word "casks" is to be replaced by "drums," as casks are no longer employed in the industry.

It must be emphasised that there has been a very marked increase in building activity in Western Australia. This will be appreciated when it is realised that in 1947-48, there were 2,721 notifications of work to the value of £3,500,000, and these jumped to 5,188 notifications of work to the value of £30,000,000 in 1961-62, which involved 30,466 inspections in the metropolitan area alone.

The amendments in the Bill have been the subject of considerable debate by the Building Industry Safety Committee, which is unanimous that the recommended amendments are necessary to assist both management and labour in the conduct of this important industry.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. W. Hegney.

## NOXIOUS WEEDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *In Committee*

Resumed from the 10th October. The Chairman of Committees (Mr. I. W. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after clauses 1 and 2 had been agreed to.

Clause 3: Division 6 to Part V added—

Mr. NALDER: It is some weeks now since the Bill was discussed. I was unavoidably absent when the second reading debate took place, during which several points were made by various members. However, there may be some opportunity during this stage of the Bill when answers can be given to the questions that were asked by those members. I would like to take the opportunity now to point out that some opposition has been raised to proposed new section 48B which appears on page 4 of the Bill. From various quarters representations have been made to me to draw my attention to the fact that the finance required to administer this legislation will be raised by a tax of a portion of a penny on the valuations of unimproved land in the pastoral areas, and by a tax of another portion of a penny on valuations of unimproved land in other areas of the State.

It has been suggested that the percentage rates of both taxes are not comparable with the maximum rate. As previously mentioned, it was intended that a rate of 2d., with a maximum of 3d., be struck in the pastoral areas, and that in the other areas of the State a rate of one-sixteenth of a penny, with a maximum of 1d. be struck. If members work out the percentages it will be found that they are not comparable, and if an increase in that rate continued, it would be necessary for the Bill to be brought back to Parliament for reconsideration to increase the maximum rate in the pastoral areas. For that reason, I am quite agreeable that the rate in all other areas be a maximum of one halfpenny. So, in line 21, I will move—

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Mr. Chairman, I would draw your attention to the fact that I wish to move an amendment to words in lines 12 and 13 which will come before the Minister's proposed amendment.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. I. W. Manning): Very well; we will hear from the member for Narrogin first.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Clause 3 seeks to impose a tax on land in certain areas, but on no property under 10 acres. In this measure the important factor is that small holdings may not be taxed. There are considerable areas of land of under 10 acres, some of it being in the city and some of it in the country. Under the Bill it is proposed to impose a tax only on land of over 10 acres, and action will have to be taken by the Agriculture Protection Board to protect land of this acreage, as well as land under 10 acres.

Under section 9 of the Act the Agriculture Protection Board is empowered to take action to eradicate noxious weeds in a local government area at the expense of that local authority. Under sections 17, 18, and 19 power is given to that board to clear Government-owned land of noxious weeds. Further, under section 23 it is given power to take steps, at the expense of the owner, to eradicate noxious weeds growing on private land.

Eradication would be quite successful and effective if these steps were taken by the Agriculture Protection Board; but from observation it will be found that noxious weeds are permitted to grow, without interference by local government bodies or the Agriculture Protection Board. That occurs in many instances. If certain areas are to be taxed for the purpose of raising finance to eradicate noxious weeds, then that finance will have to be used to eradicate weeds from blocks of land of less than 10 acres.

Mr. Hawke: Is your amendment on the notice paper?

Mr. W. A. MANNING: It is not. My proposal is to limit the provision in clause 3, which seeks to impose the tax, to a period

of two years, so that in the meantime observations can be made of the efforts the Agriculture Protection Board to eradicate noxious weeds. If the board carries out its duties effectively there will be no need to tax areas of land under 10 acres because the board will be carrying out the work at its own expense. If it does not carry out the required work other consideration must be given to this taxing provision in the Bill.

In order to effectively control the activities of the Agriculture Protection Board which is to be provided with the tax to be imposed under this clause I propose to move an amendment to limit the provision in the clause to two years. I move an amendment—

Page 2, lines 12 and 13—Delete the words "at that time in each year thereafter" with a view to substituting the words "one thousand nine hundred and sixty-four."

Mr. NALDER: I assure the Committee that the points raised by the member for Narrogin will be dealt with; that is, the points he made with reference to the activities of the Agriculture Protection Board and the responsibilities of that board in respect of certain areas. Such local authority areas or built-up areas will be covered.

At this stage some very active steps have to be taken to control the spread of noxious weeds, and that principle has been accepted by members of this Chamber. The Agriculture Protection Board cannot function without the necessary finance, and the Government has agreed to meet the contributions made by the pastoralists and landholders on a pound for pound basis. This principle has received the commendation of the Farmers' Union and the Pastoralists' Association.

The fears which have been expressed were perhaps reasonable, in that in the past much which should have been done was not done. On previous occasions mention was made of areas of land controlled by the Railways Department on which Cape tulip grew prolifically. I know of cases where an all-out effort was made to control and eradicate this weed, and it proved successful.

Some members consider the activities of the Agriculture Protection Board in controlling and eradicating the growth of noxious weeds in built-up or town areas should be reviewed from time to time. If members consider it is essential to have a trial period of two years, the Government is not opposed to it. We have to place some faith in the Agriculture Protection Board, which was created by this Parliament, and the introduction of this Bill indicates that the Government is keen to take the necessary action to control noxious weeds.

I want to mention something which is very important to this Bill. It is some information I have obtained on skeleton weed. The money to be raised under this clause will enable steps to be taken to ensure that skeleton weed does not enter Western Australia.

Mr. J. Hegney: Isn't it here already?

Mr. NALDER: It is not in the State as yet. The money to be raised under this Bill will enable the Agriculture Protection Board to keep it out.

Mr. Cornell: Is there a school of thought which considers that this weed is good fodder?

Mr. NALDER: If the honourable member had heard the discussion which took place at the meeting of the Agricultural Council and the views expressed by the Ministers from New South Wales and Victoria, he would not consider this weed to be fodder of great value.

Mr. Hawke: Is the Minister in favour of, or opposed to the amendment?

Mr. NALDER: I did indicate that the Government was not opposed to it. The information I have obtained on skeleton weed is as follows:—

As an indication of what one serious weed can involve financially—Skeleton Weed—C.S.I.R.O. estimated that a programme of research into control of this pest could involve capital expenditure of about £15,000 and an annual expenditure of about £60,000.

It has been decided to spend on a Commonwealth basis £20,000 a year for the first two or three years, thence £15,000 if the investigations prove of sufficient promise to warrant continuance. These funds will be contributed from the Wheat Industry Committees in each State.

The above is cited to show what one weed can involve and, although Skeleton weed is not established in Western Australia, everything possible must be done to prevent its introduction and to try and eradicate it from the vast areas in the other States where it has resulted in thousands of acres having to be changed over from grain production to grazing.

If members wish this clause to be limited to two years I am not opposed to it.

Mr. KELLY: The limitation sought by the member for Narrogin is the maximum for which this legislation should be enacted. The Minister said he was agreeable to a trial period; this is an essential move in view of the stage this State has reached in controlling Cape tulip. Notwithstanding the complacency of the Minister and his faith in the activities of the Agriculture Protection Board I cannot agree that we are achieving any great success with the methods employed at the

present time. There should be a very definite limit to the period if we are to achieve any result. I do not know whether failure was due to the fact that we have not reached the stage in the destruction of Cape tulip when we can be certain that the methods being employed are the best methods; that the type of weedicide being used is the correct application; or that the weedicide is being used at the correct time. These matters must receive far greater attention from members of the Agriculture Protection Board if Cape tulip is to be controlled and eventually eradicated.

I had a bundle of Cape tulip from one area which had received eradication treatment for five years, and which again was treated this year; but still the weed grew. At present the infestation in that area is far greater than it was five years ago. If I had brought the species along it would have indicated to the Minister that although spraying was undertaken this year there are still millions of seed pods intact. Apparently the pods are not affected by the spray.

By our placing a limitation of two years on this provision in the Bill a further trial will be available to show whether or not the achievement which the Minister is inclined to believe has resulted in the last two years in the control of Cape tulip, can in fact be demonstrated. I do hope that he will go further into this matter because those who are having to pay these extra costs and charges in connection with the destruction of this weed are not at all satisfied that the department is making the correct approach to the problem. A far greater observation of the incidence of this weed and of the results of the methods used in its eradication should be made.

Mr. HALL: The amendment has some merit. However, it appears to me that the whole measure is designed to place a tax on certain people who should not have it imposed upon them. If we study clause 4 we will realise that it gives power to local authorities to levy a tax for the eradication of weeds. In other words, anyone who has noxious weeds in his backyard could be taxed by the local authority, under paragraph (q). Therefore this will become a taxing measure on the whole of the State.

Mr. O'CONNOR: I would like to support the amendment and also to ask a couple of questions which I trust the Minister will be able to answer later on in the debate. During his speech the Minister stated that the money obtained under this Bill will be used towards the eradication or the arresting of noxious weeds. I am not quite sure just what weeds are included in the term "noxious weeds". For instance, are all toxic plants in Western Australia to be included? There are hundreds of them.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn mentioned that the Cape tulip, which is probably one of the worst noxious weeds in

the State, has continued to spread more than ever before, despite the fact that it has been sprayed. Recently I inspected an area infested with Cape tulip. A weedicide had been used to spray it, but unsuccessfully. The parties concerned went into the matter and sprayed a second time, only on this occasion they used double the quantity of weedicide suggested by the Department of Agriculture. This time they were very successful, and it appears that in that particular area they have got rid of Cape tulip.

Mention has been made previously of other noxious weeds such as caltrop and Bathurst burr, but I feel that a great deal more research should be made into a number of new poison plants that have become more evident in this State in the last few years. A lot of light country has been brought under agricultural production—mainly through the use of fertilisers—and many previously unknown weeds have been found. Many of them are responsible for heavy mortalities of animals, one being the plant known as blind grass. This is believed to have affected horses, goats, and sheep, but is not known to have affected cattle. In the early stages it causes staggers, and later on sends the animal blind. While it will recover from the staggers, there is no known cure for the blindness. Therefore a certain amount of research is necessary into the effects of some of these plants, and I trust that some of the money to be obtained under this Bill will be used for that purpose.

Mr. NALDER: I would like to make mention of one or two points raised. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn suggests that as Minister I am complacent about these important matters. As he has held the position of Minister for Agriculture he should know something of the work being done by the board.

Mr. Kelly: I only made the remark because you said you were perfectly satisfied.

Mr. NALDER: It strikes me that it ill-becomes a member who has held the position I now hold, to make the statement to which I have referred. However, I can assure him—

Mr. Hawke: What point are you making?

Mr. NALDER: —that the board is doing an important job in the interests of the State.

Mr. Kelly: It is not achieving enough in the interests of the State.

Mr. NALDER: Members on the board represent the local authorities and also the two organisations that we accept as representing the important areas in this regard—the pastoral and agricultural areas.

Mr. Tonkin: But are they getting rid of any of the weeds?

Mr. NALDER: They are making a determined attempt to do so, and this measure is designed to help them in their

efforts. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn referred to an experience he had in dealing with Cape tulip. I think he said that an area had been sprayed for five years.

Mr. Kelly: It has not been mine for five years though.

Mr. NALDER: I would like to relate an experience of mine in this regard because it might assist the honourable member. I acquired a property on which there was a very bad patch of Cape tulip. However, I would defy any member to find one plant of Cape tulip on it now. It has been sprayed for three years and the weed has been completely eradicated. The spray used was that advocated by the board.

Mr. Kelly: It is increasing on the tablelands though.

Mr. NALDER: I believe that if a determined effort were made to carry out the instructions of the board this weed could be controlled. I have no doubt about it. I hope the House will agree to this amendment because I have every confidence that the activities of the board will prove successful in the period suggested.

Mr. J. Hegney: Will it present a report to Parliament at the end of two years?

Mr. NALDER: Yes. I hope that I will be able to give a report next year on the activities of the board. I definitely state that if I am in this position then, I will submit a report on the measures adopted and the results of the efforts to control the spread of the noxious weeds in Western Australia.

The member for Albany stated that this is a taxing measure. There is no doubt about that. Unless we obtain the finance to tackle this problem, how are we going to do it? If we do not do something now the problem will become one that will involve the State in a sum which will be far greater than that which we anticipate at the moment.

The member for Mt. Lawley asked whether toxic plants would be included under this measure. They will not be included. Most of them are natural to Western Australia and once the ground on which they grow is cleared and brought under production, if ordinary farming methods are adopted these weeds do not present a problem. The noxious weeds declared as such by the board and mentioned by local authorities are mainly those which are introduced from other States and other countries and which are a menace to our agricultural production. Those remarks, I think, answer the points raised; and I am in favour of this amendment.

Mr. CORNELL: On the question of finance, I understand the expenditure on noxious weeds has risen from £3,000 to £63,000 in 11 years; and yet, on the Minister's own admission, the weed position in this State has never been worse. Therefore

if the expenditure has risen to the figure I just mentioned and yet the position is worse than when we first started, I am happy to support this measure if the small amount involved will help to achieve the desired result.

However, for the reasons submitted by the member for Narrogin, I support the limitation of two years. I am not satisfied that the board is tackling this problem in the best possible manner. As the expenditure has increased to such an extent without any results, I am left in some doubt as to the efficiency of the methods adopted by the board.

Mr. NALDER: Could members suggest any improvement? I am sure the board would be quite prepared to consider any suggestions made by members.

Mr. CORNELL: There are some people in my electorate who would have suggestions, but they would have to be written on asbestos.

Mr. Graham: Concentrate on weeds and leave the rabbits alone.

Mr. CORNELL: The board has not a happy history in my part of the wheatbelt, and I regret to say that its efforts there are not regarded very favourably. Admittedly the board does have a wider representation now, there being representatives of local authorities and the Farmers' Union. However, the two-year period provided under the amendment may give the board time to improve its work and for that reason I support the proposition, but not beyond the two years.

Mr. NORTON: I intend to support the amendment because I cannot see why this should be a permanent tax. Like the member for Albany, I believe that this can turn into a double-taxing measure to a number of people. As I understand it, the local governing authorities have the right to levy a tax for noxious weeds and vermin and they also have the right to charge for the destruction of weeds by spraying. There should only be one charge.

The Minister asked for suggestions. I believe that one way of stopping the spread of these weeds would be to prohibit the transport of chaff or hay from an infested district. There is strong evidence in the Gascoyne electorate that chaff has spilled out along the roads and, shortly after, safflower thistle has sprung up. I have reported this to the weeds and seeds inspector hoping that something will be done. Hay and chaff are amongst the greatest spreaders of noxious weeds. It is only right that we should be able to have a look at this taxing measure again in two or three years' time to see whether the Agriculture Protection Board has done something to eradicate or reduce noxious weeds in the State.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: I move an amendment —

Page 2, line 12—Substitute the following for the words deleted: "One thousand nine hundred and sixty-four."

I point out that this measure does not apply only to the country but concerns the city as well. Cape tulip has been mentioned. If the public parks and gardens and private properties in the city become infested with Cape tulip it will be a sorry day for the metropolitan area. Cape tulip has a pretty little amber-coloured flower, and I have seen it growing on the verges of Rosalie Park. It will spread all over the place within a year or two because it propagates by means of the bulb and also by seed. It can also be found on the golf links at Nedlands.

Mr. Kelly: There is plenty in Belmont.

Mr. W. A. MANNING: Anyone who knows the flower will be able to pick it out next spring. I am alarmed in case nothing is done because Cape tulip is easily carried from the city to the country and from the country to the city.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. NALDER: I agreed earlier to decrease the maximum from 1d. to 3d. in the pound of the unimproved value of holdings. I move an amendment—

Page 2, line 21—Insert after the word "one" the word "half."

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. NALDER: Members will see that I have a long amendment on the notice paper. Through a misunderstanding in regard to the drafting—I mentioned this when I was dealing with the second reading of the Bill—this portion of the clause was not correctly drafted. The Parliamentary Draftsman broke the clause up into a number of paragraphs, and in doing so he excluded some areas of land in municipal and shire districts.

This matter was mentioned by the member for Subiaco in his second reading speech. It is intended that the paragraph (d) appearing on the notice paper shall be substituted for paragraphs (d), (e), and (f) in the Bill. I hope the Committee will agree to the amendment, because it is in line with what I indicated at the second reading stage. I move an amendment—

Pages 2 and 3—Delete paragraphs (d), (e), and (f) and substitute the following paragraph:—

(d) land owned by a person or society, and occupied or used exclusively for or in connection with any public hospital, whether supported wholly or partly by grants from the Consolidated Revenue Fund or not, benevolent institution, public charitable purpose, church, chapel for public

worship or the site of a residence of a minister of religion ministering at some place of public worship, or the site of, or occupied for the purposes of, a school attached to or connected with any place of public worship, or as a mechanics' institute or school of art; all land the property of and belonging to any religious body, and occupied or held only for the purposes of that body; land on which is erected any municipal or State market, town hall, or municipal council chamber; and all land owned by or vested in any municipal corporation, or other statutory public body; but the exemption from rates does not apply in respect of land which, not being the site of, or intended site of, or occupied for the purposes of a school or hall used or to be used for educational purposes the property of and belonging to a religious body, is a source of profit or gain to the users or owners thereof;

Mr. HAWKE: I must admit I have not studied this very closely, and I would like to know from the Minister what vital differences are involved between his proposed new paragraph and the three which he has moved to strike out.

Mr. NALDER: The Bill excluded from this rate areas of land held by municipalities and shire councils.

Mr. Hawke: What sort of land?

Mr. NALDER: The position is indicated in paragraphs (d), (e), and (f).

Mr. Hawke: What is the difference in principle?

Mr. NALDER: The difference is that the Bill excluded land owned by a municipality from coming within the provisions of the amending Act. The clause was taken from the Act, and land owned by municipalities, but leased to companies or private people, was rated. By mistake this type of land was excluded from being rated. That is the reason for my amendment.

Mr. HAWKE: I am not satisfied yet.

Mr. Cornell: The answer to the problem is at the tail end of the amendment.

Mr. Nalder: Yes.

Mr. HAWKE: I am prepared to leave the matter open to the extent of saying that I am not yet satisfied.

Mr. Nalder: Will the Leader of the Opposition read the last few lines of the amendment?

Mr. HAWKE: Yes; but the Minister did not read them. The Bill states—

(d) is owned by, or vested in, a municipality or other statutory public body, or on which is erected any

municipal market, town hall or council chamber;

(e) is occupied or used exclusively . . . The proposed amendment reads, in the appropriate part—

land on which is erected any municipal or State market, town hall, or municipal council chamber; and all land owned by or vested in any municipal corporation, or other statutory public body.

Then it goes on to state—

but the exemption from rates does not apply in respect of land which, not being the site of, or intended site of, or occupied for the purposes of a school or hall used or to be used for educational purposes the property of and belonging to a religious body, is a source of profit or gain to the users or owners thereof.

What that all means, I am not too clear, because I have not had time to study the Bill. As far as I am able to judge it at the moment, on a quick reading, it is a jumble of words. Why the intention could not be expressed in a clear-cut way, I cannot understand. I am not yet certain as to the exact difference between the provisions in the Bill and this amendment, and I am wondering whether the Minister can amplify it a little further.

Mr. NALDER: Subsection (2) of proposed new section 48A states—

The weed rate shall not be imposed or be chargeable on any holding that—

The provision then goes on to enumerate the various types of land that will not be rated.

Mr. Hawke: I know that; that is not the point.

Mr. NALDER: My amendment provides that the land to which I referred—land which is owned by or vested in a municipality and is leased out to companies or private individuals—shall not be exempted. This clause is taken from the Vermin Act.

I mentioned in my second reading speech that this tax is collected on behalf of the Government by the Taxation Department, and the department suggested that the Bill should be exactly the same as the Vermin Act for the purposes of uniformity. The Parliamentary Draftsman was so instructed, but he misunderstood and split this portion up into paragraphs, and the intention we had in mind was not carried out. I hope I have made the position clear to the Leader of the Opposition.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. I. W. Manning): Owing to the fact that the conference of managers on the Bush Fires Act Amendment Bill will meet at 6.45 p.m., I will leave the Chair until the ringing of the bells.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 9.42 p.m.

**Clause 4: Section 67 amended—**

Mr. HALL: This amendment gives local governing authorities more elasticity. It means they may levy rates and taxes under certain regulations, and that they may continue to do so. That is very dangerous.

**Point of Order**

Mr. NALDER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, Clause 4 only seeks to correct a misprint. It is not altering the Act at all.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. I. W. Manning): I would point out that this clause does not permit a discussion of section 67 of the Act.

Mr. HALL: I cannot agree with that, Mr. Chairman. The clause permits local authorities to levy certain rates and taxes.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. I. W. Manning): The honourable member can only discuss the letter being corrected.

**Committee Resumed**

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

**Report**

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture [9.35 p.m.]): I move—

That the report of the Committee be adopted.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Is it true that the Bill imposes a rate of taxation?

Mr. Nalder: That is correct.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I would refer the Committee to section 46 (7) of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act which says—

Bills imposing taxation shall deal only with the imposition of taxation, and any provision therein dealing with any other matter shall be of no effect.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Is that a point of order?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am only seeking clarification, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think this Bill deals entirely with taxation measures.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is what we are complaining about.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I think the Bill is in order, and I will put the question.

Question put and passed.

Report adopted.

**BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

*Conference Managers' Report: Bill Laid Aside*

MR. BOVELL (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [9.49 p.m.]: I have to report that the managers appointed by the Council

met the managers appointed by the Assembly, and failed to reach an agreement. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed.

Bill thus laid aside.

**ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1962-63****In Committee of Supply**

Resumed from the 18th October, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. I. W. Manning) in the Chair.

Vote: Agriculture, £1,118,475—

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [9.50 p.m.]: In introducing the Estimates for the Department of Agriculture, I might say that this is the fourth time I have had the honour, and privilege of speaking on these Estimates as Minister for the department. I think it will be agreed by everybody in the Chamber that agriculture has played a most important part in Western Australia in the past; and it is continuing to do so. There is no doubt that it has enjoyed much of the rapid development that has taken place in this State. Primary producers are continuing to progress in this development and are using all modern techniques and assisting in establishing many new records which have been the picture in many sections of agriculture over the last few years.

The total estimate of expenditure for the three agricultural divisions, Nos. 21, 22, and 23, is £1,230,660, which is an increase over actual expenditure last year under these divisions of £102,041. The major increase in expenditure, £43,105, is in the provision of salaries. This follows an increase of professional and technical staff by 37. At present there are 45 cadets in training, comprising 27 agricultural scientists and 18 veterinary scientists, of whom 12 are training in the Eastern States and six are completing their first year of study in the State of Western Australia.

Three cadets in training in the Eastern States are expected to finish their course this year and are available for work in the department. A veterinary surgeon has been allocated to serve the Narrogin district, and a further country district allocation is in sight. A senior veterinary pathologist will take up his duties at the Animal Health Laboratory towards the end of this year, and an animal husbandry officer has been appointed to undertake pig research and to provide an investigation and advisory service in respect of beef cattle. A new regional district office has been erected in Albany and an agricultural adviser has been allocated to Margaret River to serve the dairy farmers of that area.

The officers employed by the Department of Agriculture, including professional, administrative, technical, and clerical staffs,

together with wages employees, total 731, plus those employed by the Agriculture Protection Board, who number 144, making a total of 825 officers in the Department of Agriculture and representing an increase in all categories of 56.

Last year, under the heading of "Assistance to Agriculture" £25,000 was provided to meet the State's allocation to the Dairy Cattle Compensation Fund. Up to the end of June last, 78,163 cattle in 1,634 herds had been subjected to the tuberculin test, and 671 reactors were detected with the incidence of infection, or 0.86 per cent. Of the herd tested, 1,442 contained no positive reactors. The drain on the fund was much lower than had been anticipated and allowed a larger amount to be provided for testing, which proceeded at a rapid rate.

It is now expected that the whole of the initial tests covering more than 85,000 cattle will be completed by the end of this year. When that stage has been reached, the whole of the dairy herds—both whole-milk and butterfat—comprising about 125,000 cattle, will be under regular test, and it is reasonable to anticipate that tuberculosis will be virtually eliminated from the dairy cattle population of the State. A sum of £25,000 has again been provided to bring this about.

Research station expenditure is expected to increase by £10,933 although some of it is recouped by sale of produce. The field days at the research stations were well attended, showing the interest of the farming community in the application of research to land and stock problems. This is having its effect in the increased improvement of the general farming "know-how" and is resulting in farmers increasing development.

For Argentine ant control there is an allowed increase of £6,000 to £26,000. For the past two years the difference between the £20,000 allocated and the actual cost has been obtained from the credit balance remaining in the fund under the old Act. This source is exhausted and provision is now made for the anticipated cost for the year.

There was an increase in operating expenses for Muresk Agricultural College, but this is offset by the extra students now accommodated. Reference will be made to the north-west by the Minister for the North-West, so I will leave that in his care.

New records have been established and the production of wheat for grain last season on 4,400,000 acres resulted in a yield of 65,700,000 bushels, representing an average yield per acre of 15 bushels. Given good finishing conditions, the estimated yield this season is 68,500,000 bushels. The area sown to oats was 1,200,000 acres from which 20,200,000 bushels were harvested; and this was only 100,000 acres less than the 1960-61 record, and 2,400,000 bushels

less than the 1958-59 record. For barley, 500,000 acres were sown for a yield of 7,300,000 bushels, only 9 per cent. and 14 per cent. respectively less than the records of the previous year.

The number of dairy cattle, mainly in the south-west division, rose by over 11,000 to 235,600. For beef cattle there was an increase of 106,600 to 982,800. In the agricultural areas there was a 20 per cent. increase of 16,600 to 982,800. In the agri-pastoral areas from 586,100 to 616,700 was concentrated mainly in the Kimberley division where 56 per cent. of the State's beef cattle are located. Sheep numbers increased by 1,200,000 to 18,300,000. There were nearly 15,000,000 representing 82 per cent. of the State total in agricultural areas.

An increase of over 1,000,000 sheep and lambs shorn to 19,500,000 caused the State wool clip to rise from 178,600,000 lb. to the record figure of 180,000,000 lb. despite a fall in the average fleece weight from 9.7 to 9.2 lb. The over-all production increase is more remarkable as the cut per head reflects the effect of the dry season.

Most of the increases occurred in the agricultural areas where 83 per cent. of the State's wool was produced. The number of sheep and lambs shorn in those areas rose to 16.2 million from which 149.7 million lb. of wool was cut at an average weight of 9.3 lb. per fleece. It was 9.6 lb. per fleece the previous season.

Mr. Norton: Grown sheep or shorn sheep?

Mr. NALDER: Grown sheep and lambs. Rural holdings have increased by 160 to over 22,000 and the total area of all holdings increased by over 5,000,000 acres. The area under crop increased by over 200,000 acres to nearly 7,000,000 acres, and that under pasture by nearly 500,000 acres to a total of 8.2 million acres.

That briefly illustrates the activities of the department. I know that some members are interested in hearing the reports of the War Service Land Settlement Board, but as that comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Lands, I will take the opportunity of informing the House briefly of the activities of the board when we deal with that particular vote.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [10.2 p.m.]: There are a few items I would like to discuss, one being the old faithful. There are not many agricultural pursuits in the electorate of Beeloo, but there is still plenty of fruit fly. As the Minister for Agriculture is responsible in this regard, I should like to know why the Government of the day is not more active in disposing of this menace.

We have heard from year to year that we cannot tackle this problem in the same way that the Argentine ant problem was

tackled; but surely, in this day and age, with the insecticides and the various other ways of combating this menace, the Government could be more active in dealing with the pest in the metropolitan area than it has been in the past. Either the Government has to adopt some radical measure of controlling fruit fly or it has to eradicate all fruit-bearing trees in the metropolitan area; otherwise the Government will find it will not make progress in combating the menace in nearby orchards.

It is quite obvious, from the experience of most householders over the past years, that this scourge is not decreasing in any way. As a matter of fact, it is increasing. Ruthlessness such as that of the South Australian department which sends its officers around to forcibly remove all the fruit from the trees in infected areas is possibly one of the few ways we could overcome the menace in this State. Unless the Government is prepared to take such drastic steps, we will not overcome the problem.

Last year the department seemed to be going somewhat backward in this direction. It did not even expend all the funds which were made available to it by the vote for the department the previous year. If ever a department had reason to call on the excess funds which had been granted, it was the Department of Agriculture, in order to eradicate the scourge of the fruit fly in this State. That this has not been done is obvious from the information contained in the estimates.

We have heard a certain amount about noxious weeds because of a Bill which was introduced. Here, as in other States, we have seen in recent years the spread of various types of weeds. Some of those weeds are noxious and some might be considered to be of some benefit. The worst one in the metropolitan area is the veldt grass. Whilst it contains a certain amount of nutriment which might be accepted by farmers, it is a nuisance in certain areas.

I am sure that if we are not careful we will be troubled by other grasses such as skeleton weed and others which have been a scourge of farmers in the Eastern States. Although these weeds are not widespread, they do exist in secluded spots. They make their way here from the East by various packaging methods or they are carried here in the fleeces of imported stock. The cost to the department would be considerable, and this would seem the opportune time to examine all stock which are entering the State from areas which possess undesirable features such as skeleton weed and Bathurst burr. The latter exists already in parts of the State. If such weeds could be eradicated in the early stages, it would be of advantage to the State.

One section of the Minister's department which affects some of those people I represent is the section controlling poultry farmers. Poultry farmers have had a very unbalanced sort of existence for many years. While the Egg Marketing Board has been successful to a reasonable extent in the handling of its products, the future does not look rosy. Now that the European Common Market is on the horizon, it would appear that this is one particular section of our rural pursuits which could be affected at a very early time if the European Common Market comes into being.

The other day I heard of the problem which the Victorian Egg Marketing Board was facing. That board is already finding that it does not have the sales in the United Kingdom which it had previously, and I should imagine that we in Western Australia will find it difficult to dispose of eggs over and above those for local consumption at the price which our poultry farmers would have to expect if it is to remain an economical proposition.

The only way to overcome that is for the Government to get busy with agents and to see whether we can find some closer markets, or markets which are more readily available; and those markets which would be readily available for such a good protein line of food as eggs—namely, the Near East countries and the islands north of Australia—probably would not be able to afford to pay the price which our poultry farmers would require.

This may require some re-thinking on the part of the Government. A subsidy may have to be provided through Federal spheres in order to market our eggs in those areas, until such time as the economic position in those countries improves and they become established markets. Once such markets are established, we find they rarely die out completely. When people become accustomed to such foodstuffs they find some way of improving their lot so that they are able to spend the money necessary, even though at this juncture such money is not available. I would like the Minister to have some further activity maintained in connection with the three sections of his department to which I have referred. That is all I wish to contribute to the debate on the vote for the Department of Agriculture.

**MR. KELLY** (Merredin-Yilgarn) [10.10 p.m.] I was very surprised that the Minister wound up the introduction of his departmental Estimates so suddenly. I happened to be out of my seat for half a minute, and although he had a handful of notes he terminated his speech suddenly, and out they went.

Mr. Tonkin: Not a line, not a word, about guayule.

Mr. KELLY: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition will be telling the Minister something about guayule in a moment.

That is his particular section. I was rather surprised to find the Minister taking some satisfaction in the fact that the Department of Agriculture has an expenditure of nearly £1,250,000. That is, of course, a considerable increase. Even although that amount has been added to the expenditure of the department, we find the Minister had little to say, when we boil down the whole of his remarks.

The Minister dealt with a few of the increases which have taken place in agriculture over the past 12 months—increases which, I might say, are normal because of circumstances through which we find ourselves passing. I do not think there is anything very remarkable about an added amount of grain grown, or an added number of pigs, or that the cattle market has improved; because those are all things which are occurring irrespective of whether or not alterations are taking place in regard to other sections.

These are just ordinary increases that a departmental head shows have existed over a period of time, particularly in a buoyant industry such as agriculture. The Minister seems to think he had something by way of achievement because £1,300,000 is the amount the Government is spending through the Department of Agriculture. As a matter of fact, the Minister sought to show at Kelmscott recently that the increase was made because the Government recognised the value of primary industry to this State. I do not think the Government would have any score of its own on that particular subject. I think successive Governments have been equally alive to the importance of the agricultural industry. I do not think he would have any separate claim in that regard.

I would remind him that the spending of £1,300,000 in Western Australia is a very small amount when we consider the expenditure of Great Britain on the same departmental subjects. I had sent to me some little time ago a cutting from *The Daily Express*, which shows us to be in a very poor position in regard to the subsidies and other estimates which are allocated to agricultural people in Western Australia. The Press cutting is remarkable because it shows the tremendous expenditure which Britain has undertaken in the matter of subsidies where industry generally is concerned. I say it is remarkable because Britain is, comparatively speaking, a very small country compared with Western Australia.

The agricultural increases in Western Australia in one year in connection with arable land under production is greater than the total amount of land which is farmed in England at any one time. We, in this country, are spending roughly a little over £1,250,000; and England is spending, on promotion of cereals in one year alone, £58,000,000; and she is spending £49,000,000 on fat stock. I do not know

whether the Government of Western Australia gives assistance where fertilisers are concerned, but England subsidises fertilisers to the tune of £31,000,000. In the matter of egg production, England assists to the tune of £21,000,000.

As regards the production of calves, the rearing of calves, and the various other departments connected with the calf industry, the British Government subsidises to the tune of £15,000,000. The report shows lime as coming under the department's purview in that country, but that is not the position here.

As to the ploughing of grasslands, and general assistance in ploughing, the British Government subsidises to an extent of £8,000,000; and on miscellaneous items, which cover all the other sections of agriculture, the subsidy is £43,000,000. So we can see that in a small country like Britain tremendous importance is attached to agriculture. I would say, too, that because of the very small holdings there it would be necessary to subsidise to a greater extent than we do in Western Australia. Nevertheless, it does highlight the importance—and that is the point I want to make—of agriculture in that country.

I was pleased to hear the Minister assure us that work is continuing, in connection with tubercular complaints in cattle, and that a great deal of attention is being given to that section; because it is one part of our agricultural outlook that should be given first-class treatment, and so far as expenditure on this item is concerned, the Government should always view the matter leniently.

I notice that the Argentine ant position must have worsened judging from the increased expenditure anticipated this year. It is not long ago that we were looking to the time, in the not too far distant future, when the Argentine ant problem would be confined to one or two swampy areas and nowhere else, and thus a general weaning-off of that account would be likely to take place in the near future. We were led to believe that at the very worst there would be only one or two isolated areas of infestation and the ants would be confined to those areas with no chance of spreading.

It will be interesting to hear the Minister tell us why it is necessary to increase the expenditure this year; because it would be a very bad day for this State if the Argentine ant were once again to become the menace it was a few years ago. Indications are, from the amount it is anticipated will be spent this year, that there have been further outbreaks and that the position is not as good as we thought it was. The amount to be spent this year will be much more than has been spent in recent times.

The Minister also said that the agricultural industry is enjoying rapid development. It is, and there is every good reason

for it to be in that position. We not only applaud that fact but we also believe that the State is rightly taking its place in the field of agriculture, and that it is maintaining a very forward movement in many sections of agriculture.

However, the Minister did not make any comment regarding the tobacco-growing industry, the dairying industry, or the apple-growing industry of Western Australia. All of those three industries have passed and are still passing through quite serious times in their own particular spheres.

I would like to have heard something from the Minister regarding the Government's views on the outlook for those three industries in the future, and also some idea of their position at the moment. We know that the tobacco industry reached the crossroads some considerable time ago. But what of the several hundred people who were engaged in that industry? Some of them have found other employment. I understand some are engaged on alternative forms of production. But what is the position of the several hundred people who were engaged in the industry and about whom we have heard very little in recent times? I think the Minister could have given us some details in that regard.

For some time we have seen in the daily Press, and have understood from conferences that are taking place that the position in the apple industry is not a very happy one. I understand a Bill is to be introduced in respect of this industry, but I do not know whether it will be brought down this session, or whether it will be next session. From what I have been told it will be a measure which will regulate the quality of apples coming on to our market; but what I want to know is whether the Minister, by this legislation, intends to have only a first-class product sold on the Western Australian markets. If that is to be the position it will deprive very many people of the opportunity of purchasing apples.

Even at the present time second and third grades—badly marked apples—are bringing a price as high as 1s. 9d. to 2s. 3d. a lb. That is an extortionate price for apples; and if the proposed legislation is designed to discard all apples coming within that category then I think many people in this State will go apple hungry; and that will be an indictment against the Government, or any other Government which introduced similar legislation.

The general public are getting at a reasonable price little enough of the fruit produced in this State and I believe it is a very inopportune time to introduce legislation which will condemn a big section of the crop. I do not know whether that is the effect the legislation will have, but I understand it will do that from what I have read of it in the Press.

As I said, even for second-grade and third-grade apples people are paying an extortionate price; and rather than introduce legislation such as this, if the department thinks it necessary for apples to be of such a high standard it would be better to provide some means whereby the public could purchase, within a reasonable limit, apples that do not quite come up to the marketing standard the Minister proposes to introduce.

It is a shame that in a State which has a potential for producing apples of such quality and in such quantity as we can produce them, more apples are not made available to the public at a cheaper price. Irrigation has made apple growing so much easier and much more satisfactory because it has eliminated a great number of the windfalls that we used to see in the past. It has also meant the elimination of poorer qualities because it is now possible to continue watering and so improve the fruit. Yet, with all these advantages, we have reached the stage where instead of the general public of this State being able to benefit from the extra production we find that limitations are to be imposed which will prevent a good deal of that fruit from reaching the market.

When I speak of fruit that is not entirely perfect I have in mind a proportion of the Granny Smith crop which has come on to the market in recent years and which has had a blemished appearance. That blemish is only skin deep and the quality of the apple is not affected to any great extent. It is because of the appearance that the apple is not particularly sought after and is not considered to be of first quality.

Therefore I hope that the Bill the Minister proposes to introduce will not contain anything detrimental to the best interests of the people of this State. If it is to contain provisions such as I have suggested it will undoubtedly preclude many people from having apples of any kind on their menu, and particularly of the quality we have been accustomed to purchasing over the years.

I did not hear the Minister when introducing his departmental Estimates say anything at all about the possibility of wool stabilisation. As a matter of fact, he said very little in the short time he was speaking, and it would not have been possible for him to deal with many items that should have been dealt with, although he might have touched on this matter during the half-minute I was out of the Chamber. I do not think we are by any means out of the wood so far as the wool industry is concerned. Over the past 12 months or so the price has remained well and truly stable; sometimes it has gone down a few points, and at other times it has gone up a few points. At one sale it would go down 2½ per cent., and at the next sale it would go up 2½ or 3 per cent. It has fluctuated slightly as

the year has gone by, but with very little increase in price. I did notice recently that several bales brought 81d. or 82d. a pound; but that, of course, was an exceptional price.

However, I still feel that this is a tremendously valuable industry, particularly to Western Australia, and unless we are prepared to face up to the possibility of achieving stability we are not going to get the best results from this industry. I had anticipated hearing something from the Minister about the deliberations which took place some time ago with the committee appointed by the Commonwealth Government. As far as I know we have at no time had a report on the findings of that special committee, either from the Federal Government or from our own Minister in this State.

Mr. Nalder: That report is available for the asking.

Mr. KELLY: I think the report should be laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. Nalder: It has been laid on the Table of the Federal House.

Mr. KELLY: That is not here.

Mr. Nalder: You have only to ask for a copy and it will be made available to you. You have taken a long time to show any interest in this matter. It has been available for many months.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. I. W. Manning): Order!

Mr. KELLY: I think the Minister has a responsibility, and he need not try to shelve it on to me or any other member of this Chamber. He has a responsibility to members here.

Mr. Nalder: Other people have come and asked me about it and they have seen the report.

Mr. KELLY: It is news to me.

Mr. Nalder: Quite a number of other members have asked me about it and they have seen a copy of it.

Mr. KELLY: When the Minister has finished babbling I will continue. I think that this matter was one of intense interest to a number of members in this Chamber, but I do not remember hearing or seeing anything of this report. On no fewer than three occasions I asked the Minister questions in reference to the report, but on no occasion did I get any satisfactory reply. He did not say that there was a report out, or anything about it. Seeing that I was interested in it he could have easily followed up the matter and let me have a copy of the report.

As a matter of fact, the same thing occurred in connection with the dairying industry. I sought a report from the Minister, but finally I got it from the department. Whether the Minister forgets these things or not I do not know. We do not bring these matters forward just so that

we can make some comments about them, or so that we can enhance our own positions. We want to know because these matters are of interest to the people whom we serve. I think the Minister responsible would be the first to complain if similar treatment to that which we have received in this Chamber were meted out to him. I do not think any excuse he could offer would satisfy me, because I consider he has an obligation to let us know what is happening.

Mr. Nalder: Nothing would satisfy you—nothing!

Mr. KELLY: The Minister seems to be very susceptible to a little criticism.

Mr. Nalder: I am not susceptible to criticism, but nothing satisfies you.

Mr. KELLY: As soon as anybody criticises the Minister he gets off his bike and tries to talk the other person down and make his own ally good. I can assure him that he has the job in front of him to make his ally good in lots of cases. If he sat and listened quietly until the end of the debate he would be in a position to reply to what has been said. But no; the Minister endeavours to throw the onus back on to the other person and it does not become him at all.

I did notice the Minister made one short comment in connection with the appointment of a veterinary surgeon to Narrogin. That is most interesting, and I am pleased to hear that Narrogin is to have a veterinary surgeon. However, there are many parts of the State that are wanting veterinary surgeons too. I can remember when the present Government was on the other side of the Chamber and how its members repeatedly brought forward this matter of veterinary surgeons. They said there was a great need, a dire need, for the appointment of many more surgeons or officers. I do not think the number has been increased very greatly since this Government has been in office; as a matter of fact we cannot get any factual information as to what the increase has been. The only reference to an increase in the estimates is shown under the heading of "Agricultural Scientists and Veterinary Surgeons".

However, one cannot dissect that item without ascertaining how many veterinary surgeons are represented. For all I know 99 per cent. of those officers could be agricultural scientists and the one per cent. could represent veterinary surgeons. There is keen demand for the services of good veterinary officers in many parts of Western Australia which are at present denied the assistance of such men. So the appointment of veterinary surgeons and the training of young people in this profession is a very live question because the State could benefit considerably if the number of veterinary surgeons at present giving of their services were increased. I

take it if the Minister replies to the debate he will give some indication of the number of men now employed on veterinary work.

During the debate on a Bill which was before the House a short time ago the Minister again proved himself to be a little testy when it came to speaking on various matters, particularly when he spoke about Cape weed. I do not know why he should, when replying to such debates, think we are casting aspersions on the officers of his department.

Mr. Nalder: You mean Cape tulip.

Mr. KELLY: Yes.

Mr. Nalder: You said Cape weed.

Mr. KELLY: I meant Cape tulip. Without casting any slur on the Agriculture Protection Board, I was endeavouring to point out to the Minister that, together with a large contingent of other people, I am not happy with the results that are being obtained in regard to the steps taken to eradicate Cape tulip. The Minister has assured us that great inroads have been made into infestation by this weed, but there is not a general improvement, and there must be some reason for it. I am asking that the Minister himself give more attention to the question even if it is a matter of his drawing the attention of the Agriculture Protection Board to the fact that certain action should be taken, that certain improvements should be effected, and that more science should be brought to bear, or some other approach made for the purpose of eradicating Cape tulip. Whether that is the correct thing to do or not, I do not know, but the Minister has asked for suggestions. I suggest to him that areas which come under my close attention have been subjected to this present method of eradication for many years. In fact, one area has been treated by the present method for five years running, but the increase of Cape tulip is most marked. Not only has the increase taken place in this area, but in the adjacent lands there is also indication that the pest is spreading.

The criticism which I was accused of levelling against the board is not criticism; I am merely groping for information to ascertain if it is possible to obtain a scientific approach to this problem. I believe that if great efforts are being made and concerted action is taking place, there must be some answer to the problem. If, for the sake of argument, the type of weedicide being used is the correct one, we have overcome obstacle No. 1, as it were. If the weedicide is applied at the right time, then that problem is overcome. If it is a matter of applying the weedicide at a time when there is no wind, and no rain or moisture in the air, then there is no need to worry about that aspect. However, if any one of those factors has not been handled correctly, or there is something missing, then all our activities are

nullified because we are not applying sufficient technical knowledge to achieve the best results in eradicating this pest.

So instead of the Minister looking upon my comments as criticism, let him regard them as questions seeking information in regard to what results are being achieved. I can take the Minister to any number of places where, at present, unhappiness exists among many people because of the lack of results from the present method employed. These people cannot understand why results are not being obtained, because the spread of Cape tulip is considerable. I have had sent to me a sheaf of these plants which have been treated again this year, and I can let the Minister have the seed pods of every plant so that he can have hundreds of small seeds to examine to assure himself that no apparent harm has been done to them with the spraying of weedicide. Thus, instead of the Minister being complacent about this matter he should be taking a lively interest in it so that he can fully assure this Chamber that everything possible is being done in an endeavour to alleviate the effects of this pest.

I take it we will be receiving from the Minister something in the nature of a report covering the activities of the various research stations scattered throughout the State. I think that the work which is carried out by these research stations is most interesting and other members besides myself will be extremely pleased to have a concise report presented to the House covering the activities of all research stations. We know that these stations in different parts of the State are dealing with various problems in all kinds of circumstances. I do not know whether the department publishes any information concerning the area or district in which these research stations operate so that people in the respective areas could have a written record to assist them in solving their own problems, or if only general treatment of these subjects is made by the research station when field days are held.

I think it would be an excellent idea if from each report issued by the particular research station, a number of bulletins could be published which would enable the local people to acquaint themselves with first-hand written information of what is taking place in their district and be acquainted of the best methods to adopt to solve any of their problems. These bulletins could be similar to many that are already published by the Department of Agriculture, the Lands Department, and the Mines Department. Many of them are circulated with great benefit to the people interested. These activities could be carried out in those areas where the various research stations are located with the purpose of dealing with different problems and the ultimate advantage to everyone concerned would be extremely great.

I notice that this year the State is again suffering from lack of copper supplies and that imports of this product have to be made. I dealt at length and in considerable detail with this matter when I spoke on the Estimates last year. Also I asked a series of questions on whether it was possible for the Government to assist in the production of copper so that the supply of local superphosphate requirements could be assured by the manufacturers. The replies I received firstly from the Mines Department were not very helpful because they did not indicate that any serious attempt would be made to investigate this position fully.

At one stage I was told that a committee had been appointed and until its recommendations were made available the Government would not take any action. That report was handed to the Minister, but I do not know what became of it from then on. This Chamber certainly did not hear anything about it, and I think it is something we should hear more about. I do not think we should have to continue to frame questions to obtain information such as that.

The information should be made available to those interested and they would then know where they were heading. In this State there is no excuse for not being able to produce all the copper that is required for the manufacture of superphosphate. If the grade is low—as has been indicated sometimes in the past—then steps can be taken to increase the percentage to that required for agricultural purposes. It is a poor consolation to the agriculturists of Western Australia to know that they have to pay through the nose for the imported product especially when we have an abundance of low-grade copper ore in this State.

Another matter about which I was a little concerned was the fall in the output of butter. Some slight reference was made to this in the Press, but nothing very conclusive. I am wondering why there has been a decline in the production this year as compared with last year or the previous years because this year we have had a reasonably good season. We have had a good feed year in most parts of the State and although cereal grain production may have fallen off a little in some areas, that is not of much concern to the butter producers.

However, in this year, when other production is on the increase—as has occurred in the last decade fairly consistently—we find that the production of butter has decreased—not very greatly, but there certainly has been some decrease—and if the Minister is going to reply to the debate, I would like him to let us know the reason for this decline in butter output. The balance of my remarks can well be made when we deal with the various items of these Estimates.

**MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [10.43 p.m.]:** There are a few matters to which I want to draw the attention of the Minister for Agriculture. Firstly, I would like to know from him, when he replies to this debate, if there is any intention of establishing a shearing shed at Kalgoorlie so that the many sheep in the wool brought from the Eastern States—particularly those for the Esperance area—can be shorn at that centre instead of being sent on to the metropolitan area to be shorn and then trucked all the way back to Esperance. That is a farcical situation, especially when one knows that the goldfields district is a large wool-producing area. In fact, it is one of the best in the State, and there is no shortage of the required labour in that district for shearing the sheep.

It seems to be out of keeping completely to impose that additional cost of transporting the sheep to Perth and back to Esperance on the people concerned when they have already to meet the cost of transporting the sheep from the Eastern States. I know that one of the reasons why precautions have to be taken is the danger of importing in the wool the seeds of noxious weeds which are not at present in existence in this State. What I want to bring to the Minister's attention is the spread of caltrop weed which is not only in the goldfields areas, but in the agricultural areas of the State. Over many years warnings have been issued about this pest. The position is becoming rather serious now inasmuch as there are probably thousands of acres on the goldfields affected by this weed.

I cannot see that vigilance is being exercised by keeping noxious weeds outside the State, when very little regard is paid to the eradication of those already here. This appears to be a question of locking the stable door after the horse has bolted. I can assure the Minister there is a very dense growth of caltrop on the goldfields; and that weed can have a very detrimental effect on the wool produced in that part of the State because it affects wool as greatly as does burr.

I was surprised that the Minister did not refer to any steps being taken to combat the disease of rust which affects wheat. I expected him to say that the agricultural scientists in the department are endeavouring to breed a rust-resistant type of wheat which will combat the newer types of rust found in this State. In case the Minister does not know, there are large areas of wheat in Western Australia which have been affected by rust this year, particularly those in the higher rainfall districts.

Strains of wheat which up to date have been regarded as rust-resistant are being affected, and that seems to indicate that a different type of rust virus is making its appearance in Western Australia. This feature is not peculiar to Western Australia, because I understand that the Eastern States are similarly affected. Newer

types of rust which made their appearance in Queensland have been carried south into New South Wales and Victoria.

I find it difficult to ascertain the number of agriculture scientists and veterinary surgeons employed by the department. One is not able to tell how many of each are employed out of the 95 for the year 1961-62, and the 104 in 1962-63. There are only two plant geneticists engaged by the department; this is a very sorry state of affairs in a State which depends so much on the production of grain. Many years ago Western Australia produced quite a number of strains of wheat which became popular. One was very well known throughout Australia, and that was Bencubbin wheat, which has now been superseded. At the time, and for many years, it was grown very largely throughout this and the other States. There was a greater acreage planted with Bencubbin wheat than with any other variety.

Mr. Nalder: The same remark applies to Nabawa wheat.

Mr. MOIR: That is so. This variety was one of the parents of Bencubbin wheat. In years gone by this State played a large part in developing new and successful varieties of wheat; but in latter years such development has been left to the Eastern States, because at the present time the better-known varieties grown here have been developed in the Eastern States. There is an urgent need for the Department of Agriculture to pay particular attention to the problem that has arisen in regard to the new types of rust which have affected some districts to a large degree. I expect to hear some reference by the Minister to indicate that the department was aware of the situation and was taking steps to combat it. We know these problems cannot be overcome in one season, but attention should be given to them as they arise, and not when they have overwhelmed us.

I now refer to the veterinary surgeons employed by the department, the actual number of which is not shown in the Estimates before us. In any case the number appears to be far too small. At the present time there is a great need for making veterinary services available in the newly-developed areas, particularly in the Esperance district where a vast amount of country has been opened up and stocked with thousands of valuable animals. As a consequence problems will arise in such districts that have not arisen and will not occur in other parts of the State, because of the varying conditions. There is a great need for veterinary services to be made available, preferably at the Gibson Research Station, so that the problems which arise in the district can be tackled by the people on the spot.

I must again voice my concern at the lack of activity by the department to eradicate the fruit fly. In the fruit-growing areas

near the metropolitan area some activity is carried on, but the whole campaign against the fruit fly will be rendered useless unless the department adopts a very strict form of control. One has only to move around the metropolitan area to find fruit trees in backyards full of fruit fly. I have seen this for myself on a number of occasions in different parts of the metropolitan area, and it appears that no inspection of fruit fly is made.

It is of no use for fruitgrowers to take steps to eliminate the fruit fly if it is allowed to breed without hindrance in the backyards of houses in the metropolitan area.

Mr. O'Connor: Last year there were a number of convictions in the metropolitan area.

Mr. MOIR: I read about a few convictions being launched, but I guarantee that if one were to look around any part of the metropolitan area one would be able to bring forward enough cases to occupy the courts for a few weeks. I have seen isolated instances of people being prosecuted, but they form only a very minute portion of the owners of properties whose backyards are infested with fruit fly. One can find citrus trees on which the fruit is absolutely pitted by fruit flies, and if one approaches such a tree one disturbs a cloud of the insects. Yet in districts where the fruit fly is known to be active, but where preventive measures are taken, one has to stand very near a tree to spot the fruit fly. That shows how greatly the backyards of houses in the metropolitan area are infested.

The people on the goldfields are very conscious of the fruit-fly menace and they voluntarily enter into schemes designed to eliminate the pest. These schemes have proved very successful in that the nuisance has been reduced to a large extent. Practically every home on the goldfields has a fruit tree of one type or another; in the backyard of my quarter-acre block I have planted over 40 fruit trees and grape vines. Quite a number of people there plant fruit trees, particularly grape vines.

Mr. Lewis: I have seen some of the best fruit in the State coming from the goldfields.

Mr. MOIR: The people there are very conscious of the fruit-fly menace and have voluntarily entered into schemes under which the properties are sprayed. A charge of between 2s. 6d. and 5s. is made and the trees are sprayed once a week. The Kalgoorlie Town Council has adopted a slightly different scheme where the charge is 2s. 6d. to 10s. according to the number of trees to be sprayed. A different type of spray mixture is used, and under this method a property needs to be sprayed only three times a year.

The people on the goldfields are required to register their fruit trees, just as the people in the metropolitan area are required to register, but not one penny of the fees they pay is spent on the eradication of the fruit fly. The people have to use their own money for that purpose. The department should release at least a portion of this registration fee to the goldfields to assist in the eradication of the fruit fly.

Eradication methods are of no avail if an over-all system of eradication is not implemented. If people leave fruit on the trees in their backyards, and it becomes infested with fruit fly, this Government should adopt the practice adopted by the South Australian Government; that is, to send men around and strip all fruit from the trees, whether or not it is infested, then take the fruit away and destroy it. They strip all the fruit whether it is infested or not and destroy it. If the person allows the trees to be infested again, they request him to cut the trees down. That should be done because people should not be allowed to harbour something that can do immense damage to the commercial production of fruit.

Another thing about which I am not very happy is the fumigation legislation introduced here a little while ago. As I understand it, the only result of that legislation will be to kill the grubs in the fruit so that when people eat the fruit the grubs will not be wriggling.

I have objected before, and I want to voice the objection again, that fruit which is infested by fly, while not allowed to be carried south where, I might add, the fruit fly already exists, is sent to the goldfields for sale. As we know, fruit can be struck by the fly but it is not apparent until the eggs hatch and the grub starts to work. Then the fruit rots and it is at that stage the agricultural inspector can notice the presence of the fly and condemn the fruit. There is quite a lot of fruit going from the metropolitan area to the goldfields which is undoubtedly infested by fly, but it is sold in the shops up there. It is not a fair thing that when local people are doing their best to combat the fly, fresh infestation is made possible by the fruit being sent up there.

Mr. Nalder: Have you had any reports of fruit being sent from the markets to Kalgoorlie—fruit that has been infested, I mean?

Mr. MOIR: I have seen it myself.

Mr. Nalder: But has it come from the markets?

Mr. MOIR: It has come from somewhere down here.

Mr. Nalder: It may have come from a private sale.

Mr. MOIR: That might be so.

Mr. Nalder: We would have no control over that.

Mr. MOIR: I would not know whether it was sent from the markets here, but I do know it has been sent by some of the wholesale people here to the firms up there.

Mr. Nalder: We would be very interested to hear of any reports so that we could follow them up.

Mr. MOIR: Yes; but I think we should have a better over-all system of inspection. If it is good enough for the Agricultural Department to post people out on the Eyre Highway to prevent diseased or infested fruit coming in, it should be good enough for it to police the railways or any other means used for transporting fruit to not only the goldfields areas but any areas. I think all fruit should be inspected, and if it is found to be infested with fruit fly it should not be sold. Why should people have to buy it? Why should children have to eat fruit which, although it is apparently all right is, in fact, full of fruit-fly eggs or grubs? It is not a very nice thought that children eat this type of fruit.

I know it is quite a serious problem, but it will become far more serious if something drastic is not done. I feel that at present—and I have felt this for a long time—we are only playing with the matter. We are not really getting down to treating this as the emergency it is. It should be treated very seriously.

Mr. Jamieson: We have to be far more drastic. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Nalder: Would you suggest an increase in the license fees and registration fees?

Mr. Jamieson: You are not using all the allocation now.

Mr. MOIR: That is the point. I noticed that the amount allocated last year has not been used. Of the £20,000 allocated for research and control, only £17,000 was spent. All that is proposed to be spent extra this year is another £3,000-odd. Therefore I cannot see that the Government intends to do much about the matter.

Mr. Nalder: It is a pretty big increase on the amount spent when you were in Government, if that is any point to make.

Mr. MOIR: I could tell the Minister what happened in 1915, but it would not justify the position now.

Mr. Nalder: You cannot do it without finance.

Mr. MOIR: Why should we make the same mistake because someone did not do something five years ago? Why should we continue in the present manner? I am not saying this to be critical of the Government. I am trying to emphasise the necessity for something to be done. It is quite useless blaming someone because he did not do something in the past. Let us do something as from now and in the future. That is the point. Until we get down to doing something serious about this matter I am afraid the State will be faced with the expenditure of many thousands of

pounds besides depriving people of the beautiful fruit that we should be able to produce.

Like the member for Merredin-Yilgarn I sincerely hope that some worth-while provisions will be contained in the legislation concerning the marketing of apples, which is to be introduced soon. The apples which are on the market for local consumption are shocking. Only this morning a relative of mine showed me some apples she had bought, and I said to her, "They are worse than the apples our brother buys at Pemberton for his pigs." The apples he buys are the wind-falls—those which the orchardist is not allowed to sell for human consumption. But those apples that he buys for his pigs are far better than those offered to the public for consumption. There is something drastically wrong when that situation exists. Everyone knows that good apples are very hard to obtain.

The situation is doing this State harm. Quite a number of visitors from the Eastern States have asked me why it is not possible to buy decent apples in this State when we are supposed to grow such beautiful apples. They asked me whether it is because we export our best apples overseas and only sell the rubbish to our local people. I do not know the reason. I only know that it is always possible in the Eastern States, and particularly in Victoria, to purchase good apples. They do not seem to be con-

However, I do not want to delay the estimates any longer. I hope the Minister will take notice of my remarks. I have not spoken with any desire to criticise but merely that the Government might take some notice of these problems in order that something might be done to rectify them.

**MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [11.9 p.m.]:** I would like to make a few comments on three phases of the Agriculture estimates; first of all on the need to establish in the Great Southern area somewhere a research station in an endeavour to solve some of the problems associated with farming in that particular area. The next matter on which I wish to speak is the marketing of primary products. I had intended to speak on war service land settlement, but as the Minister has indicated that that subject will be dealt with under another heading, I will leave it until then.

There has been quite an agitation in the Great Southern area for the establishment of a research station to assist in the solving of some of the problems which are so evident in that area. I feel it only right when one makes a request of that nature to try to impress upon the Minister and the House in general the desirability of such a research station. In doing that, I would like to give a few figures to the Committee as to how primary production has developed in my own particular electorate.

In the northern part of that electorate, the Tambellup area is not so concerned with the problems that effect the moister part of the electorate on the south coast. However, in the whole electorate of Stirling there are 1,750 active farmers and the total land held by them is 2,068,000 acres. The Total amount cleared is 1,173,000 acres. Members will recall that I asked a question of the Minister in connection with war service land settlement. Those war service land settlers hold 340,000 acres of which 184,000 acres have been cleared.

The animal population of that particular area is 1,275,000 sheep, and 65,000 head of cattle. What is not generally realised by people is the amount of money invested in primary production. If we hear of a new industry of £10,000,000 or £12,000,000, we are amazed. So I took out a few figures which I think could be of interest to the Committee.

I mentioned that there were 1,750 active farmers and none of them would have spent less than £5,000 in actual structural improvements. Therefore that would be nearly £9,000,000. The land has been cleared for not less than £20 an acre so that would amount to over £22,000,000 invested in clearing. The value of the sheep is just over £3,000,000, while the cattle would be worth £2,000,000. The total investment by private individuals in that area is therefore somewhere in the vicinity of £36,000,000.

I think we should realise this when we hear of such a project as the Kwinana refinery which involves an investment of about £40,000,000. We would think that was marvellous but we do not even realise that in the little portion of the State to which I have referred there has been at least £36,000,000, and it could be up to £50,000,000, invested in primary production.

It is admitted that the Government has provided rail and road services, port facilities, and other types of facilities, but there is definitely a need for the provision of a research station in that area to assist in solving a few of the problems which I will mention.

There is a point which I would like to make. It struck me as rather ridiculous the other night when it was suggested that primary producers were trying to get rid of a certain industry because it was going to damage their particular type of industry. There are no other people in this State or anywhere in the world, except primary producers, who share their knowledge so readily with one another. A farmer is only too willing to share his knowledge with his neighbour in order that his neighbour might improve his production.

The problems on the south coast are these: Due to the long damp summers we have there and the very average seasons, we have quite a few problems with stock

health for a start. The pastures established on much of this new land, although they grow prolifically, are deficient in certain trace elements. I can mention such deficiencies as cobalt and copper; also the lack of selenium which causes muscle diseases in lambs and the recent malformations in lambs.

Some people might say that these problems must have been solved pretty well because over 1,000,000 sheep are being raised. However, they have been solved at great cost to the primary producers and the problems require further investigation in order that primary producers might get the best out of their stock.

Another problem we have is the finding of cereal crops of a suitable variety. A lot of oats are grown in this particular area and some farmers are getting up to 90 bushels to the acre. The general average is over 60 bushels to the acre. Unfortunately, the variety of oats is rather light in bushel. The grain has a bad weight covering and it stains very readily with the damp weather which we generally have at harvest time. This problem is costing farmers a considerable sum of money.

We have not a good variety of barley for growing in that district. With the closeness of the port and the reliable rainfall in that area it could be a very heavy producer of coarse grain. We also have a problem to find what is the best of the perennial grasses. Much of that country is damp and could grow perennial grasses and have permanent pastures of green feed all the year round.

There is also the problem of excess nitrogen and lack of potash which causes very weak stems in most of our grain crops. Linseed has been grown successfully, but further research is required. There are many such problems which should be investigated by a research station.

We have a research station at Esperance and another very small one at Denmark, which deals chiefly with dairy production, but there is no other research station in Western Australia which deals with the problems that are associated with the south coast of this district. This district will eventually extend from Albany to Esperance and probably 30 miles inland from the coast. Most of its problems are associated with my own electorate.

Another problem we have is the control of weeds which are causing considerable loss. One in particular I would like to refer to, but which is not noxious, is known as samphire weed. This takes terrific toll of the carrying capacity of the country east of Mt. Barker and extending to Jerramungup. In places it is so thick that the sheep will not go into it in search of feed. It has been suggested that this weed can be controlled by cultural methods, and I think it is a problem that should be tackled.

Another problem I would like to refer to briefly on this particular vote is the marketing of primary products. Whilst I realise that Governments have more to do than worry about the marketing of primary products I wish to make some comments on meat marketing as it affects Western Australia. Principally, I want to say something about the export lamb market. I believe that over the years growers in Western Australia have been—to express it colloquially—taken for a ride as far as export lamb marketing is concerned.

Many years ago we heard a suggestion that we had a 15 year-guarantee for export lambs, and we were really excited about the fact that there was a guaranteed market. However, it was not generally known that that price was not a guaranteed price to the producers but a guaranteed price to the exporters. For some years the price was above the guaranteed price, so the guarantee did not come into the question; but in 1960 the price fell far below the guaranteed price, and a suggestion was made that the producers were entitled to some consideration and some bonus on their exports to England. But then it was found that there was no money in any fund to pay the bonus, so it was claimed that no payment could be made.

At the end of 1960, a payment of some description was made by the British Government to the Australian Meat Board. It was then declared, in 1961, that a bonus of 2s. a head would be paid on all lambs exported. But much to our amazement, it was again found that that payment was not to be made to the producers; it was made to the exporters in the hope that they would pass that payment on to the producers. I know of some cases where sales were made and half the lambs went to exporters and half to private buyers or local butchers and the price was exactly the same to the producer.

I would say without hesitation that no payment was made to the producers at all. The 2s. bounty was paid to the exporters simply to make sure that they at least got the price that was guaranteed. In 1962 we had another guaranteed price and it was going to return the producers 1s. 1d. a lb. on the farm. To show how useful the Australian Meat Board has been in this matter, the normal price paid this year by exporters—who have at last seen the light a little—was 1s. 5d. a lb. There is nothing more ridiculous than the Australian Meat Board guaranteeing the producers 1s. 1d. when the price exporters paid was 1s. 5d. a lb.

To show how useful that price is to producers in this State I would draw attention to the fact that in 1938 I sold my lambs to an exporter at 7½d. a lb.—all weights, all grades, including rejects. In those days the basic wage was about £4 a week and the price of superphosphate was under £4 a ton and 7½d. a lb. was the

price paid for export lambs. This year the producers are told that they have a marvellous chance because they have a guaranteed price of 1s. 1d. a lb. for lamb. We all know that the basic wage is at least three or four times what it was in 1938, and the price of super is twice what it was in that year and the price of lamb is 50 per cent. higher than then.

The point I am making is that whilst many people talk about the marvellous times primary producers are having and what a marvellous thing it is to have a guaranteed price, as I see it we would have been far better off without the guaranteed price because it has been of no use to the producer.

I want people to know that meat marketing still has many problems; and although there is a tremendous increase taking place in the production of meat, it is very often at great cost to the producer. I want to comment on the meat market in general because I know it is universally accepted that meat is too dear out of the shops and it is too cheap out of the paddock. Unless somebody can conceive some idea of getting meat to the consumers at a price more in relation to what is paid to the producer, then the producer is going to be in a serious position.

Mr. H. May: What is the union doing about it?

Mr. MITCHELL: I do not know. I do not think it is doing very much about it. A few years ago all baby beef was sold in the one pen: heifers and steers. There was no differentiation between the two; and even today, when beef is dear, they are still sold from the one pen. However, when the price recedes to any extent the heifers are sold separately from the steers because it is claimed that there is excess fat on the heifers. The difference sometimes means £2 per 100. The most peculiar thing is that when the stock is dear there is no excess fat because they pay the same price for the same pen.

All these things lead me to believe that very close investigation is needed to bring this matter before the people to see whether we cannot do something about straightening up the market so that everybody will get a fair deal.

Members opposite have spoken about the apple industry and particularly about marketing. I believe that some control should be exercised over the marketing of apples because nothing tends to give the product a bad name more than some of the rubbish which I have seen sold in the markets of this State. I do believe that something should be done to ensure that a sufficient quantity of apples is kept in the State to supply the local market at a reasonable price.

The general tendency is to export as much of the crop as possible, and often the local market is left very short and then we have fantastic prices such as are

being asked this year. Admittedly, this year the price was brought about by the poor season. Very little fruit was exported last year; but, in a normal year with a normal crop, I believe an assessment should be made of the quantity of fruit required to supply the local market for the six-month period between the picking and the next season, and an average price should be applied to it so that everybody receives a fair return.

Mr. H. May: There should be some control over the cold storage facilities.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes; that is so. It is quite understandable that the export price governs the local market, because if all growers exported their crops we would have fantastic prices on the local market, and if all kept their crops for the local market they would get nothing at all for it.

So I think an assessment should be made of the quantity of fruit that will be required for the local market. I am not one of those who believe that high prices for this type of commodity are good for the producer; I believe it is damaging to the producer because he has a duty to supply the home market first at a reasonable price.

Those are a few of my thoughts on the Agriculture estimates. I believe that we have had a great advance in agriculture during the last few years and I believe that the advance will continue. However, we must, as a Government and as a Parliament, do something to regulate prices better than they have been so that producers will receive a just reward and at the same time consumers will receive quality products at a fair and reasonable price.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [11.29 p.m.]: I would like to comment on the remarks made by the member for Stirling regarding the price of lamb. I was rather astounded to hear that the guaranteed price was 1s. 1d. per lb. when it is something more than four times that price in the shops. As was pointed out by the member for Stirling, the price of super and the basic wage have gone up four times and the price of lamb has also gone up four times; that is, to the consumer. But, as he pointed out, the guaranteed price for lamb is only 1s. 1d. a lb. and it makes one wonder who is getting the profit in between. Or perhaps, as he suggests, an inquiry by the Government into meat marketing might indeed be well received by all sections of the community. However, it was not on that score that I rose to speak.

The first point I want to make is that I was rather staggered on the 11th October, or some day before then, when seeking a copy of the annual report of the Department of Agriculture for the year ended the 30th June, 1961, to find that

report was not available. Whilst I have not a great many agricultural problems in the electorate I have the honour to represent, there are a number of matters which I wish to check. Accordingly I was rather aghast to find that the only report available was that for the year ended the 30th June, 1960; which is over two years ago.

However, we have had the current report tabled in the House today; but for the life of me I cannot see why it should have taken 17 months from the 30th June, 1961, to get here. So far as the number of pages is concerned, it is one of the least of the Government's reports; and though it does contain a variety of information, most of the information on the individual subjects is fairly condensed.

So I hope that the Minister will see that the report for the year ended the 30th June, 1962, will become available in less than 17 months; because, after all, these reports become somewhat redundant as time passes, and when one wishes to seek information on specific subjects it is necessary to make inquiries from the department concerned. This is very often a waste of our time, of the Minister's time, and of the time of the officers of the department who have to prepare the replies to the questions asked.

There is not only that fact which must be considered. It would appear that it is also a waste of money to put out departmental reports, because of the late information they contain. The cost of these reports must run into many hundreds of pounds. I am sure some of them would not be best sellers, but it must cost at least £1 a copy for some of them to be presented. In this regard the report of the Mines Department, particularly, comes to mind.

On Thursday, the 11th October, I asked the Minister for Agriculture what progress had been made with the growing of guayule rubber plants in this State, what area was now under cultivation, and what were the findings on this question of the officer of the Department of Agriculture who visited the United States. The Minister's reply told me something I already knew; that the report had been tabled on the 14th November, 1961.

I was expected no doubt to content myself with that information. But, of course, it was 12 months since that report was tabled, and I was hoping that the question I posed would bring out more up-to-date information on this subject. I have a reason for inquiring about this matter, and I gather from what the Minister said tonight, that if approaches were made to him he would be only too eager to make information available to members on any subject. I refer particularly to the cross-fire that ensued between the Minister and the member for Merredin-Yilgarn.

In many respects the report on guayule rubber that was tabled in November, 1961, is quite amazing. It is certainly not a very hopeful report; but on the other hand it is certainly not a hopeless report. From the tone of it I feel that the department is no longer interested in even experimenting with this type of plant. There are many interesting points in the report, but it also contains several contradictions, and a number of amazing statements. It may be as well if I refer to one or two of them.

A rather important point is that synthetic rubber has approached something like half the world's rubber production. This will become significant in some of the remarks I will make later. It appears that, as time goes on, more synthetic rubber will be used in the United States. I have no figures of the amount of synthetic rubber and natural rubber used in Australia; but owing to our lack of natural rubber, and the fact that it is necessary for us to import it, I should imagine we would use more synthetic rubber than any other country. But, as I say, I have nothing to corroborate that statement. I would like to quote the following paragraph from the report presented to the Minister for Agriculture:—

Techniques for successful production of seedlings under irrigation were developed but field establishment and growth of transplanted seedlings without irrigation has been generally very poor and discouraging.

This is to be expected of this type of plant, because it is patently clear from information later in the report that irrigation is necessary in the early stages. The plant is drought resistant, but until such time as it is established one cannot expect any plant under any conditions to grow and flourish.

I would like to read a couple of other points taken from the report made by Mr. N. Halse, research officer, Plant Research Division, Department of Agriculture. The two major points he made are as follows:—

The production of synthetic rubber has caused U.S.A. to have practically no further interest in guayule. 32,000 acres of guayule planted as a wartime project were not carried through to maturity and harvested. Even the investigation programme of U.S.D.A. is being concluded.

Once again we wonder why the project was abandoned, particularly after so much money was put into this scheme, and after so much inquiry and research had been made into the project, and even though a recommendation was made that it be carried on. Once again mention is made of the fact that irrigation is needed in sandy

soils. The same gentleman makes mention that irrigation is needed in sandy soils to get the plants established but then he says—

... even though established plants are known to be drought resistant.

Before I get off these notes, from the report made to the Minister, I might say that there was a report put in in August, 1960 by the Conservator of Forests (Mr. A. C. Harris) who had a look at the position in Spain. He said—

After 18 years investigation and an expenditure of £A1,875,000 commercial rubber production has not yet been achieved.

One could imagine that to be quite reasonable, and begin to despair that after 18 years the project should not be under way. But of course this point has been taken completely out of context; because later on in Mr. Harris's report he points out that the first seedlings have not yet been planted four years. Investigation has been going on for 18 years, but I think it would be something like three years and three months since plantings got under way at the time Mr. Harris's report. So it means that the success of the venture has yet to be proved in many respects. Again that is a completely unfair point, particularly when specific mention is made of this fact; because it is taken out of context.

There are other interesting facts in this report, and in the reports from the research officer of the Department of Agriculture. Some of the figures of successful cultivation are not very encouraging in many respects. The point that is patently clear is that there are several areas in Western Australia which are apparently quite successful for the growing of the guayule rubber plant. One such area appears to be Lancelin, where there is 96 per cent. success. The other areas are around Kalgoorlie. The fact that plantings took place, and were successful, does not indicate that the whole project would be successful; because, possibly, at many of these places the land is just not available for the number of plants that would have to be put out. But it does indicate that there are places where guayule rubber plants will grow successfully.

Naturally we would expect some of them to fail, because it was merely an experiment. All types of grounds should be tried before the best area is selected to cultivate these plants. There are various other reports in the file that was laid on the Table of the House; and one or two of the points in the report of the Conservator of Forests are well worth mentioning.

It is hardly fair to expect this man to submit a reliable report, considering the circumstances under which he was making his investigation. The first page of his report deals primarily with the

language difficulty. In his report the conservator said that in the company of Senor Ramos he visited the research laboratories in Madrid, and discussed technical details of extraction with him and Dr. Dorado, who is a chemist-scientist of considerable repute, but speaks only Spanish and French. He said that Senor Ramos spoke English reasonably well.

He then mentions that he went out to one of the pilot establishments where the first field started eight years ago. He spent two days there. There, Senor Montesario who is also a professional forester, spoke English only with difficulty. He says—

Conversation between us was of necessity carried out in a mixture of English, French, German, Spanish, and at times even Latin—a somewhat painful process but nevertheless with careful checking we were satisfied that the information had been correctly received.

If one is speaking these languages which are foreign to most Australians, I should imagine it would be a painful process; and it raised some doubt in my mind as to the satisfactory checking that has been claimed in the report. Further down he mentions and apologises for the fact that he was unable to speak Spanish.

So the report goes on. Much of it, together with some of the attachments that were laid on the Table of the House, is written in Spanish which, I think, raises some difficulty as to interpretation. It also appears it has raised some difficulty in interpretation so far as the members of the Forests Department are concerned when they were trying to relate the information that the Spanish statistics gave with types of tests that were carried out in Western Australia.

The last part of the file deals with a research that was carried out during 1961 by Mr. N. J. Halse, research officer of the Department of Agriculture. He visited the United States to study some aspects of the tobacco industry in that country and he was also requested to look at the guayule position at the same time.

Once again Mr. Halse seems to have drawn a blank, because many of the people he was given to contact had either retired from the departments at which he was to contact them; were working at other jobs; or were unavailable, and could not see him. I understand Mr. Hugh Anderson, who was greatly interested in this project, was not contacted by Mr. Halse. He said, "I did not visit Hugh Anderson while in the United States," and then detailed two people from whom he obtained information; and listed five other people who were unavailable to him.

Here again he comes out with much the same old reasons as to why we should not grow guayule in Western Australia. I

see something sinister in this guayule production. Wherever it has started to be successful in the world, for some reason or other the project eventually collapses. In America they carried out extensive plantings on approximately 32,000 acres; and I understand there were plantings in South America. In addition, we started some in Western Australia. However, the Spanish plantings look like being the only ones that will be drawn to a successful conclusion.

As I have pointed out, it is a plant that needs careful care and attention in its early development, but I wonder now what kind of experience members of our Department of Agriculture had. Purely by accident when I was in Los Angeles I was contacted by Mr. Hugh Anderson through a chance acquaintance. I was at the University of Southern California and someone asked where I came from and if I knew anything of Mr. Hugh Anderson who had been over there on many occasions. I said, "I do not." He said, "I understand Hugh Anderson is completely disgusted by the reception he has had from the Government of Western Australia." I asked why this was so. I was told Mr. Hugh Anderson came here with a guarantee of something like \$5,000,000 to invest in an industry and was rejected by the department.

I cannot believe this, although I have spoken to Mr. Anderson; and I hope the Minister, when he replies tonight, will explain the circumstances of it. Eventually I said, "If Mr. Anderson cares to contact me and let me know his side of the picture, I will be only too pleased to see what I can find out when I get back to Western Australia, because we can do with \$5,000,000 of capital investment." The next day Mr. Anderson contacted me. I believe he tried to contact me the same evening, but I was not at my hotel. He told me that some time ago he made a visit here to see how the investigations were going; what progress had been made with the trial plantings; and what the future of the industry would be. He had come to Western Australia with a guaranteed \$5,000,000 to invest if he could show his backers there was some likelihood of successfully establishing this industry. I believe one of the backers was a firm called Sabre Pinon, which was very interested in this type of industry. However, Mr. Anderson was met by complete apathy on the part of the Government.

Mr. Anderson told me he had to wait one week to see the Minister for Industrial Development. I asked him if there was any reason why this should be and he said he did not know of any reason. He offered some criticism in regard to the way the experiments had been carried out by the Department of Agriculture. He felt there was a lack of knowledge in the control of the plantings and the raising of the seedlings; and that earlier in the

piece there had been more collaboration between him and members of the Department of Agriculture. However, on this occasion there was a complete lack of interest on the part of the department.

It was pointed out to me that the industry—although the Congressional Committee recommended that it be continued—had for some reason been allowed to collapse and that it was almost finished in the United States. However, he considered Western Australia to be a likely country to establish the industry; and although he came out here possibly to make a great deal of money, he was aghast at the lack of interest the Government had shown.

I believe that in America the recommendation that the guayule rubber plant be continued had been adopted and indeed endorsed by the four top American rubber companies. Therefore, it was something to his amazement to find that as far as the United States was concerned that country did not intend to proceed. I would like to know from the Minister when he replies just what are the difficulties as far as the Department of Agriculture is concerned.

Is it indeed a fact, as claimed by Mr. Anderson, that the Government did show complete lack of interest in the project? I would like to know why there were no further plantings and what the present position is in regard to the plantings that were established and appeared to be successful in some areas. I would also like to know how interested the Government is in this question. It appears to me that the mighty oil companies which seem to have so much sway with so many Governments in so many parts of the world may have had a finger in this pie as they are rumoured to have had a finger in the position in the United States.

Mr. Anderson said that on his last day in Perth he had been invited to a luncheon by representatives of one of the oil companies and had had a considerable fuss made of him. Indeed, he said more fuss was made of him than he ever got from the Government. Because the oil companies are associated with synthetic rubbers, I wonder what bearing this could possibly have on the complete and utter collapse of the guayule rubber industry in Western Australia. As I said earlier, the whole thing seems to have collapsed everywhere in the world wherever it has been established. I can see something sinister in the actions of the oil companies.

Not only does this plant produce a good rubber, but I understand the wood is good for pulping; and that would have assisted the paper pulp industry when it is eventually established at Kwinana in 1968 or later. If the Minister would care to comment on any of the questions I have raised I would indeed be interested to hear his answers.

**MR. ROWBERRY** (Warren) [11.55 p.m.]: Mention was made of the apple industry by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn and the member for Stirling. I am reminded that recently a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into that industry, and recommendations were made, but up to date we have heard nothing from the Government about the implementation of any of those recommendations.

The Royal Commissioner recommended that a stabilised form of industry should be encouraged. He recommended—

The stabilisation of local market prices for apples at satisfactory levels is, no doubt, a matter that engages the attention of the apple industry in each State.

Apparently there is only one State which has adopted a stabilisation scheme. It has implemented a scheme to stabilise the supply of apples to the local market and the prices; and the prices are agreed upon by the distributors and by a committee appointed by the growers. The recommendation of the Royal Commissioner, to which I have referred, continues—

In that State, it appears that the degree of organisation achieved in the industry is sufficient to bring about general adherence by wholesalers and growers to prices determined at about fortnightly periods by a committee comprised of representatives of that State's Fruit Growers' Association and of its Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries, a wholesale merchants' organisation.

**Mr. Nalder:** What State is that?

**MR. ROWBERRY:** South Australia. I draw the attention of the Minister to the report of the Royal Commissioner. It appears that in Western Australia too much attention is paid to the export of prime fruit and products, including lamb, beef, and milk products. We should adopt the suggestions made by the Royal Commissioner to stabilise the local industry, the local supply, and the local prices. I am confirmed in this opinion by the fact that the *Farmers Weekly* of the 30th November, 1961, contained an article by Mr. A. C. B. Maiden, the Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in Canberra. He commented on estimates produced by the bureau which pointed to a depressing outlook for Australian agricultural producers. He said that the folly of a situation where efficient producers of major commodities are virtually forced to dump their exports must be gradually dawning on Governments.

That appears to be the position in Western Australia. We have been advised that if our costs are reduced we will be able to export our produce and gain overseas markets. We seem to forget completely that by so doing we would be forcing our competitors to reduce their costs. We would

be engaged in a cost-cutting war with our competitors, as a result of which no advantage would be gained by anyone; whereas if we adopted a system to build up the home markets and home economics we would at least have a stabilised background for our export products.

When reference is made to adjacent foreign markets and to the need to cut down our costs of production, I am reminded of the days of the last depression when the people were told to tighten their belts; that meant they were to cut down on costs. By reducing our costs we would be lowering our standard of living. In the apple industry in Western Australia there is a local market which used to absorb all the inferior fruit. Inefficient and unscrupulous growers were encouraged to unload the inferior quality fruit on the home market, because it was not accepted for export. We should establish just as high conditions of quality for fruit sold for home consumption as that sold for export. I would like the Minister to take notice of some of the recommendations made by the Royal Commissioner to bring about a set of conditions which will improve the apple-growing industry.

Another matter I put forward for consideration by the Minister concerns the potato industry which at the present time is at the cross-roads. The potato industry of Western Australia is in danger of losing the local market to the manufacturers of potato flake, or what is more commonly known as instant mash. I understand that the president of the Potato Growers' Association of Western Australia is now in the Eastern States examining the economics of establishing a factory for the manufacture of frozen French fries. The local potato, the Delaware, does not lend itself readily to manufacture into potato mash, because of its irregular shape and because of the variety and number of eyes it contains. This potato does not lend itself readily to mashing and cleaning for the purpose of flaking. It also has a very high moisture content and this quality is not suited to the making of instant mash potato.

The instant mash product which is coming on the market in Western Australia has made great strides in the United States of America. Nearly 75 per cent. of the potatoes sold in the United States are sold in the form of instant mash, and this aspect should cause us serious concern. Potatoes grown in the Eastern States, which are not imported into Western Australia as fully grown potatoes, can enter this State as instant mash and destroy our own potato-growing industry. So it behoves us not only to look into the economics of the making of these processed types of potatoes but also to go into the question of other markets.

I have read that the Minister for Agriculture is opposed to subsidising primary industry. However, I would suggest to

him that to dispose of the likely surplus of potatoes this year, other markets will have to be found; and for that reason he should consider subsidising the freight of potatoes to South-East Asia.

I previously quoted an estimate of the cost of freight to South-East Asia and I find that the estimate I gave then of £20 a ton was nearer correct than I imagined. Therefore I would bring to the Minister's attention the fact that much research is necessary into the growing of a different type of potato in Western Australia because this will definitely be necessary if we are to keep this industry on its feet.

Members have heard me speak plenty of times on tobacco. I cannot let this opportunity go by without once more bringing it to the attention of the Minister; but on this occasion I am not going to deal with the matter in my own words. I want to quote the sentiments of a tobacco grower in Manjimup. Believe me he has put the matter very much better than I could myself. It is for that reason I intend to read the following letter which was some time ago sent to Mr. Adermann:—

Dear Sir,

Western Australian Tobacco Industry

I wish to bring to your notice many points concerning the failure of the tobacco growing industry in this State and request your assistance in the problems met.

Firstly, tobacco growing was commenced over thirty years ago in this area, and has been sold to manufacturers for some thirty years. The growers were not informed that their product was of no use, in fact they were granted reasonable prices and as in any primary industry since World War II, were virtually given the assurance that reasonable sales would follow similar production. However, although the same type and quality of leaf was produced no sale was made, and the whole industry thrown into turmoil.

Consider that many such as myself were immigrants to this country some thirty-five years ago, and having commenced and held such an industry by sheer hard work, find that after that time a monopolistic attitude destroys the best part of a life time's labour. This is not good publicity for the immigration policy to meet and I feel quite strongly about this matter.

The tobacco growers here in Manjimup did not squander the proceeds of their crops, and any profits were reverted into improvements to the growing area mainly, by the purchase of machinery, sinking of dams and supply of irrigation equipment to ensure

a more reasonable method of production, and insure against lack of water when required. No Government controlled or sponsored water supply is available, and many thousands of pounds were invested to gain private supplies so necessary to enable an improved production. The area cleared and cultivated for such an intense crop is not large, and therefore to use the land available for any other purpose for which a reasonably priced outlet is available is almost impossible. Should potato licenses be granted, can we gamble with our already serious overdrafts on there being no "glut" and poor prices?

I understand that Western Australia alone uses six and one-half million pounds of manufactured tobacco each year; we growers produced one million pounds, but even this is not wanted and in no way meets the mandatory amount of 43 per cent use of Australian leaf. We ask for a "fair go" and the right to have our product marketed reasonable, but the buyers monopoly apparently does not desire to encourage W.A. nor the people who have stuck by this State and town through depression years until a reasonably sized industry was apparently established.

The local grower ran his farm in business-like manner, which must be proved by the number of successful men, but unlike other business, manufacturers are permitted to ruin the W.A. section overnight and bring to a thriving agricultural area, heavy debts to business firms, banks and so many others, and a problem of unemployment to an area where such has been unknown for a considerable time. Do you consider that after such a long period of farming tobacco, that a man should be entitled to look forward to some security in his declining years? How can a man of 60 gain employment? To see your life's efforts virtually decay before you is not a pleasant thought, but finances will not permit the expensive clearing needed for other industries which would require years to develop; nor can the present development of our lands be used for other purposes without costly modifications.

We had faith in this country and the industry as the local inhabitants had in us, and I feel that I can say we are accepted as an integral part of the Manjimup area and the State, but whilst local persons and others have given every encouragement and possible assistance, this must be limited, and we appeal to the Federal Government to aid the people who have developed this once thriving industry.

Would you accept this letter as an appeal on behalf of growers in W.A. as well as personal and to briefly summarise I request you consider the following:—

(a) Our product is the same as that purchased for years before. Rothmans when first manufacturing in Australia did actually use tobacco leaf which was rejected by other firms in 1956 year, and this leaf was obtained in Western Australia as well as other States. Why is it now refused?

(b) We have been led to believe that our industry was assured and have placed all our life's savings into its requirements. Why should we be destroyed in this way?

(c) We are willing to grow produce which will be purchased. Is there no law of the Commonwealth to provide us with some form of protection from the destruction caused by monopolies?

(d) Our future appears hopeless. Is there any encouragement by way of Commonwealth assistance, financially or otherwise, to grant us some security in future?

(e) We have given over 30 years of our working life to establish a once flourishing industry. Is the Government considering this point in its deliberations and the fact that a man's confidence in this land has been severely shaken?

(f) Is there no way in which you could assist by permitting us our share of placing our product with manufacturers?

(g) Please advise your Government's intentions concerning the future of this industry. You will be aware that our creditors cannot afford to be ignored, and a large sum is owed in Manjimup alone to those whose actions in a private capacity have assisted the whole industry from its infancy. You would be aware that farms values would represent a capital investment of a sum in the vicinity of two million pounds; but this is now in jeopardy due to the heavy overdrafts and other debts of which I presume you are also aware. Most growers are facing threatened prosecution and some complete bankruptcy which means the loss of home and lands not easily gained in earlier trying years.

Therefore I appeal to your Mr. Adermann to fully consider our plea for a "fair go" and hope that you

and the Government can quickly improve the lot of the W.A. tobacco grower.

Yours faithfully,

I do not intend to add any more to that. I leave it to the Committee.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.15 a.m.]: I listened with the greatest of interest to the member for Victoria Park who obviously had given careful study to the attempts—the perfunctory attempts, I might say—to establish a guayule industry in Western Australia. I feel that in connection with this matter an opportunity is being—if it has not already been—completely lost to Western Australia. It seemed to me, when this was first brought under my notice, that this offered the best possible prospects of any project then offering for development in this State on a very large scale.

It must be borne in mind that during the war the Governments were frantic to establish the growing of natural rubber, and quite a lot of money was spent in experimenting with a view to establishing the plant in this country. With the end of the war the work practically ceased, but not altogether; and those who were in charge of it lost interest. Mr. Hugh Anderson, who had considerable experience in the United States of America, was prepared to devote his energies to the establishment of an industry based on guayule, and to that end he came to Western Australia and interviewed the Minister for Industrial Development; and he may have spoken to other Ministers.

He reported to me from time to time that he was extremely disappointed at what was being done; but so that I would not jeopardise his chances, I kept quiet on the matter. I felt that if I started to be critical of what was being done here, the Government would immediately become political about it and would leave Anderson to his own devices. So, although I felt that some gingering-up was necessary, I did not take any action in connection with what Anderson complained about, and I waited to see what would develop.

Unfortunately the Government seems to have done little more than ordinary routine planning, which would have been done in connection with anything in the experimental stages. I felt that here was something which demanded the closest attention, and if we had been the Government I would have very strongly urged the Minister for Agriculture to select two or three officers from the Department of Agriculture and to send them abroad to those places where guayule was being successfully grown, in order to ascertain what the requirements of the plant were; because I believe that if a proper effort had been put forward successfully to grow this plant in this State, then an industry worth many

millions of pounds to the Commonwealth would undoubtedly have been established to the great advantage of our people.

Instead of that, we have had some half-hearted attempts to get a few plants to survive here and there, with no real concerted effort to grow the plant successfully. My experience is that if one sets oneself out to grow a plant, one can grow it. It may be that it is not economic to grow it; but that has to be shown. I have yet to learn that Nature will not respond if a proper study is made of the requirements of a plant; and it does not always pay to take notice of the so-called experts in this matter. We have got to examine what is happening in a plant's natural state, and then bring to bear upon the knowledge we acquire in that way the results of experimentation, so that we can effect improvements.

I recall that 25 years ago I went into a florist's in Perth and asked to buy a rhododendron. He immediately asked me where I proposed to grow it, and I said in East Fremantle; he told me I should look for some other plant because a rhododendron would not grow in East Fremantle. Well, a rhododendron is growing in East Fremantle and has been growing there for 25 years; because I saw to it that the plant got what it required; and although it is growing surrounded by limestone sand, it is a healthy, thriving plant.

That experience leads me to believe that if the Government would set itself out to prove whether or not this plant can successfully be grown in Western Australia, it would prove it, provided it is prepared to do it in a thorough and a competent manner. In my view, what is required initially is that we should take some officers from the department here and send them abroad. What did the Minister for Railways do when he wanted to learn more about the railway systems of the world? He did not rely upon textbooks which could be found, but he selected his most competent officer in Western Australia and sent him abroad, to see for himself on the spot.

That is what I would do with regard to any product I wanted to establish in Western Australia—get hold of somebody with some nous and send him abroad with instructions to find out how to grow this plant, even if it meant going around the world to do it. I would send him to Mexico and let him see the plant growing in its natural state. I would send him to Spain, and let him see the large area there which has been planted in guayule, and find out what are the soil requirements and other requirements, and then attempt to grow it in Western Australia. Only after the most exhaustive tests would I be prepared to accept the situation that this plant cannot be successfully grown in Western Australia.

Now that is all that is needed to be able to get for this State an industry of tremendous value; to be able successfully to grow the plant here. The finance was available for the processing. Anderson had a processing method which had already successfully, in the pilot stage, produced a rubber which was superior to the natural rubber of commerce—Hevea rubber, I think they call it. University tests had demonstrated that guayule rubber was superior in the various requirements to the natural rubber which is in general use commercially. Anderson was satisfied that the economics of production were definitely on the side of guayule rubber. It required to be able successfully to grow it in this State; and if that could be done the way was open for very considerable development.

Tonight the Minister for Agriculture never even gave the subject a reference. Although in the report which was tabled last year it was mentioned that further experimental plantings were to be made we were not even given a line to indicate what the results of those plantings were, and whether they were good, bad, or indifferent. That suggests to me a lack of enthusiasm and interest which is most unsatisfactory and most disappointing.

No wonder Anderson feels that the Government lacked enthusiasm for this proposition. It is obvious from what the member for Victoria Park said that he has gained the same impression as I have gained in connection with this matter. I think it is deplorable that such an opportunity should be missed because of our failure to proceed in the way I think we should have proceeded, and in the way the Government has proceeded with some other propositions which have come forward.

It fell over backwards to encourage Australian Paper Mills to put forward its establishment date a year or two; and it gave B.H.P., which already had most of the iron ore resources of Australia, a further one as an inducement for it to speed up its establishment. If the Government had shown half that enthusiasm for this proposal of Anderson's I think we might have got somewhere. But it seemed to me that the proposition was regarded as just something in connection with which somebody had to make a bit of a show and it was nobody's particular responsibility to achieve results.

I am reminded of what an ex-Governor of Western Australia, the late Sir James Mitchell, said in connection with the land settlement scheme in Western Australia. When he was anxious to put the group settlements in, and to speed up the pace at which they were being established, he was having some difficulty in getting the land supplied which was required to establish these farms. So he called in one particular gentleman who said, "Sir; we just can't find the land that your scheme

requires"; and Sir James said to him, "If you can't I will soon find somebody who can."

That is the spirit I would like to see adopted in connection with the growing of guayule. To the officer who says, "We just can't grow it in Western Australia," I would like to say, "If you can't then stand aside, because I am going to find somebody who can." To do that I would get a man, or two men, and send them abroad to find out what this plant requires in order to become established. It would be worth spending some tens of thousands of pounds if, as a result of the inquiry, and the consequent effort, we could demonstrate that guayule could successfully be grown on a large scale in Western Australia; because it would form the basis of a very valuable industry for Australia.

It would not only provide an extra benefit for the people engaged in primary production—and a very welcome one it would be for them—but it would also provide opportunities for employment at the secondary industry level as well. It would mean the saving of a good deal of exchange for the Australian Commonwealth. When the prize is worth so much, initial investment would be fully justified, and I would like to see the Government make a determination to test this right out and really get into it with some enthusiasm to prove whether the job can be done, or whether it cannot.

I have seen the reports in connection with what has already been tried, and I was impressed with the very good results which were achieved without much effort at Mingenew. Although some reports said that the plants which were examined there did not give a satisfactory result, Anderson was quite happy with what the plants had shown at Mingenew, and he so reported to the people in the United States. This was not a half-baked scheme; this was not some proposition put up by somebody who did not know what he was about. This was prepared by somebody who had spent a lot of time and money in going into the question. But what has held it back has been the fact that we have not yet been able to demonstrate that the plant will grow well in Western Australia.

I have insufficient knowledge of its requirements to be able to make a pronouncement on that, but Anderson says that he is satisfied that it will grow here, and grow well if a proper attempt is made to establish it. He has stated that more than once, and he is firmly convinced it will grow well in Western Australia. If that be so I think it is up to us to do our utmost to see that it is tested out properly.

In this brochure which was prepared—"Proposed Project for Production of Guayule Rubber in Australia"—a full coverage is given of the various steps that have been taken, the history of the initial experimentation, and of the project proposal, the general plan, the pilot plan, and

the various steps they were to take in the establishment of what, in my opinion, would have been a very worth-while industry. If I may I should like to quote just a small section to emphasise what I am saying, and I refer to what he calls "The Australian Project Development" which reads—

Following satisfactory demonstration of the feasibility of the pilot-plant operation in Spain together with establishment of product acceptability, the final and major stage would be set for development of guayule on a large-scale commercial basis in Australia.

Further on he states—

Quite apparently the compelling reason for support of a guayule rubber project by the Australian Government relates to substantial savings in foreign exchange which could be so generated. For example, assuming an output of 30,000 tons, the annual savings to the country in terms of foreign exchange would amount to between 15,000,000 to 20,000,000 dollars, depending entirely on world prices for rubber. While it is not believed that tariff protection would be required in order to make guayule rubber competitive with the imported product, the Australian Government has indicated that such assistance would be granted if necessary.

Quite evidently if, as is hoped, the cost of growing and processing guayule rubber on a large-scale basis can be brought to a figure as low as 10 cents a pound or less, the product will enjoy a world market with a much greater ultimate potential than that projected in this report. However, for purposes of initial project evaluation, it has been proper to confine the project to a size whose output could be entirely absorbed by the Australian economy.

It was indeed an ambitious plan. In my view it was soundly based, but dependent, of course, on being able to grow the plant in Western Australia. I hope the Government will display more enthusiasm for it than it has to date, and put forward a real effort in an endeavour to see if this industry can become established in the State. It may be that we have lost our chance, but I hope we have not. Nevertheless, I think the Government should do its utmost to retrieve the position if it is at all possible.

**MR. NORTON** (Gascoyne) [12.36 a.m.]: I was extremely interested in the remarks made by the Minister when he introduced his estimates, although he did not say a great deal concerning them. What interested me particularly was his description of the salaried technical personnel who were entering the department. About 10 days ago I attended a field day at Gascoyne Junction. I do not think one has been held there before. It was surprising to me

to find that an officer stationed at Wiluna had to be obtained to assist with the lectures given by an officer from Perth and two officers from the North-West Branch. All of those men from the Department of Agriculture were experts in their own field and they conducted an exceptionally fine field day.

The function was attended by many pastoralists from stations scattered over a wide area, some of them travelled up to a distance of 180 miles to attend the field day. It was also extremely interesting to note that most of them were accompanied by their overseers, jackeroos, or one of their staff who took a keen interest in the lectures and demonstrations which were conducted. One point that was emphasised very clearly by the holding of the field day was the great shortage of agricultural advisers and technicians in the North-West Department. In Carnarvon there is only one agricultural technician to serve all the surrounding pastoral area. From the information I was given I do not believe there is any officer stationed at Pilbara. In Carnarvon one agricultural technician is stationed, but he does not operate in Carnarvon but in the West Kimberleys.

So the Gascoyne district is virtually left without any technical advisers to assist those engaged in the pastoral industry. At the field day quite a number of pastoralists made requests of Mr. Suijdroop to obtain some advice on the rehabilitation of their pastures and their eroded areas. Quite a number of them have their own ploughs and tractors to get on with the job. However, in making a tour of the area before the elections I received four requests for assistance to be handed to the Department of Agriculture to prevent land being eroded in the area. So far, owing to the lack of advisers or technicians, nothing has been done.

I would point out that every station has its own peculiar difficulties. Each station has its own particular type of herbage and it is only by a study of the herbage that agricultural advisers can extend to each station the advice that is sought. At this field day the lectures on the rehabilitation of pastures had to be given in general terms. It was surprising to me to see these officers working in the field prior to the holding of the field day. They went around searching for indigenous plants which had practically disappeared from the area. They were looking for saltbush, but they found only one or two species here and there in that area where originally saltbush species were prolific. It is saltbush and other herbage that have to be rehabilitated.

Erosion in the river areas is becoming worse as each year passes. If water conservation is to be effected in the Gascoyne area the rehabilitation of pastures must take place. I point out to the Minister that the sheep population in those areas has

markedly decreased over the years. However, I would also point out to him that the wool clip is extremely high. When introducing his Estimates the Minister said that the average wool clip for the State was 9.2 lb. per grown sheep. I asked him particularly if he were referring to grown sheep because I want to quote the figures from the abstract of statistics for local government in respect of wool clips for the Gascoyne-Minilya, and Upper Gascoyne areas.

It is interesting to learn that the Gascoyne-Minilya area has the second largest clip per sheep in the State. This clip is exceeded only by that obtained from the sheep in the Kalgoorlie district which, in 1960, averaged 11.2 lb. per sheep. However in that district there were only 77,800 sheep, whereas in the Gascoyne-Minilya area, for the same year, the average clip was 10.4 lb. per shorn sheep. That is not per grown sheep but for every sheep shorn. That is a different proposition from the clip obtained from a grown sheep. The number of sheep shorn that year was 466,212.

The Upper Gascoyne area is not far behind with an average of 10.1 lb. of wool per shorn sheep, the number of sheep shorn that year being 158,526. So the Minister can see that the industry is well worth further study and investigation so that assistance can be given to the pastoralists. This is a district which can produce wool considerably more than the average throughout the State. Its production is exceeded by practically only one other district; namely, the Kalgoorlie district. If the sheep population can be increased the wealth of the district will be increased accordingly. Everything is available and waiting for the word "go". What is urgently required is the services of technicians and advisers to assist and advise pastoralists to do the job in a proper manner as is being done in the Kimberleys.

Dingoes are another problem in those areas. With the vermin tax being increased, I think it is only right that doggers should be made available to assist and advise pastoralists to get rid of the dingo menace. These dogs are gradually creeping in further towards the coast; and, in fact, in one or two areas they are encroaching right on to the coast. Several requests have been made for a dogger to be allocated to perhaps seven or eight stations for a short period to effect a certain amount of organised trapping in that area to rid it of dingoes.

These dogs are now getting in and around the station homesteads and to a certain extent are cross-breeding. They are not cross-breeding with Alsations because there are none in the area. But the crosses that could result would be far worse than the Alsatian cross; because they are crossing in a number of cases

with the kangaroo dog. The dingo-kelpie cross is also very bad, because the pups then inherit the cunning of the dingo, and the brains of the sheep dog. These dogs are becoming a particular problem. Everything that can be done should now be done to control this pest, with a view to maintaining the numbers of sheep within the area.

When speaking on the Noxious Weeds Act Amendment Bill earlier this evening I mentioned that weeds were being spread to quite an extent through chaff and fodder. It is my opinion that properties carrying noxious weeds should not cut crops for chaff or fodder. If they do these commodities should not be allowed to leave the district; because bags will spill over when they are being transported by road, and the various weeds which are foreign to particular districts can be scattered over a large area, and even now can be seen growing along the roads throughout the electorate.

One that has caused me a great deal of concern is the saffron, or star thistle, which was found north of the Murchison River. While the patch in question is only a small one, it could develop very quickly. On the other hand, who is to say there is not a considerable number of other patches already within the electorate; or even in the Pilbara district, in whatever area the fodder is transported? It would probably be hard to locate such a patch. But if one lot of seeds of saffron or star thistle have been shed, then I have no doubt that other seeds have also been carried to other parts of the electorate.

I would like to support the member for Melville, and the member for Victoria Park, in what they had to say about guayule rubber. There are two areas in my electorate which would be eminently suitable for the growing of guayule rubber. One of these areas has a rainfall equal to Geraldton with a growing period of just over four months. The rainfall would be in the vicinity of 12 inches and the area has a climate recommended for the growing of the plant. By that I mean it has its cold weather, its drought conditions, and good drainage.

The other area to which I refer had a blanket thrown over the country for the production of cotton, but nothing was ever done about that, and it is still lying there idle. It is in a good rainfall district; it is well drained, and completely suitable for the production of guayule rubber.

As the member for Melville said, one can grow any plant if one perseveres long enough. That has been proved in the north-west with the kapok bush. This plant originally started growing from a pillow that was left in an old bed. It grew in a particular spot for many years, and did not spread. Then all of a sudden it spread throughout the area, and went mad—as the saying goes. Since then the kapok

seed has been sown in other parts of the North. It has been tried throughout the Gascoyne electorate, and nearly everybody who has tried to grow kapok has been successful with one or two plants. It is peculiar that only one or two plants will grow for years and years; the plant will then become acclimatised and spread like a pest. On one station that I have in mind there were only two or three plants growing a few years ago. Today, however, there are acres of kapok growing.

Only the other day I noticed one or two plants growing at the Lyons River Station. I was told that these plants had been growing there for several years, but they could not be induced to spread. I have seen many odd plants throughout the district, and I have no doubt that once they become acclimatised they will go ahead and spread all over the place.

I think the same can be said for the guayule plant. One must persevere with it until it becomes acclimatised to the surrounding district. I think that the main trouble in the introduction of this plant is that no one person in the Department of Agriculture has been made wholly responsible for its propagation. It has been left to various officers throughout Western Australia, in different experimental stations, to carry out the experiments. Had it been placed in the charge of one man, and had he carried out the research into it, and ensured that the experimental areas that were planned, were planted properly, and kept the records himself, we might have got somewhere. One man should have been responsible for the development of the industry.

He would probably have come up with the idea put forward by the member for Melville, and suggested a visit to other countries to see how it was grown there. He would then have come back with a great deal more knowledge about the growing of this plant, and I have no doubt that we would have seen this valuable industry develop in Western Australia.

A few years ago I persuaded the Minister for Agriculture to introduce bean-growing regulations in Carnarvon, particularly for the export of beans to South Australia. That proved to be a very successful move. Inspectors were appointed at Carnarvon, where they are still operating. They inspect every bag of beans that goes to the Eastern States to ensure that it is of No. 1 grade. But these inspections are falling down very badly in Perth; and I blame the Department of Agriculture entirely for the fact that the regulations here have broken down.

The regulation states that every bag of beans which is exported from the West shall bear the name of the owner. The name of the owner, after the beans have passed through the market, is not the grower. Therefore, any beans exported from Perth markets must be repacked in

clean bags so that they do not bear the name and brand of the grower. But what is happening is that the Adelaide market is held 1½ hours ahead of the Perth market. The agents in Adelaide know what beans are available, and they ring through to the various agents here and ask them to forward by plane or train certain quantities of Carnarvon beans. What takes place is that these beans which come to the local market, are mostly second-grade beans. The agents send a certain number of these bags over, and only attach a cardboard label to the ears of the bag, so that when the beans arrive in Adelaide they cannot be distinguished from those sent direct by the growers.

I believe the reason for this is that there are an insufficient number of inspectors. It would not take long for the market inspectors to find out whether beans were being sent by plane or by rail. If they are being sent by rail they are practically being sent off the market floor. Not only are these beans a reflection on the quality of the Carnarvon beans, but they are also a definite reflection on the price. If the merchants in question had to repack the beans according to regulations and pass an inspection, very few of them would get through to Adelaide. In fact, it would not be worth while to re-bag them in new bags, to stencil them, and then have them checked by an inspector.

I would appeal to the Minister to see this regulation is properly policed for the next year so far as this end is concerned, because the growers at Carnarvon are policing it and sending away the best of beans. It does not give them much encouragement if they find that second grade beans are being sent away, as that builds up a bad name. We cannot reject any beans from the market because they are all good for human consumption; and some people want to pay less while others are prepared to pay more. However, when we are exporting a commodity we are entitled to demand that a top-grade bean be sent.

I would now like to mention a point which I raised last year when an amendment to the Fruit Cases Act was brought down. I have since watched this position and find that the supermarkets are buying bulk fruit in secondhand cases in the roll in pack and are buying direct from the grower. This sort of thing happened in America some years ago, and because of it the supermarkets very quickly killed the ordinary fruit markets which controlled the buying and selling of fruit in many areas.

The trouble is that supermarkets put out cellophane packets containing five, seven, or 12 lb. of fruit at certain prices and call them a special. But, believe me, when one buys that fruit it is no special. Those packets contain all the rubbish in the world. Whilst one may think he is getting

a lot for his money, he is actually being taken down as regards the quality he is buying. I have seen this position lately in respect of oranges. I purchased a bag to see what the fruit was like, and six oranges were rotten. The position is somewhat similar with regard to apples, and probably many other lines of fruit.

I think the fruit growers would be well advised to try to stop this direct selling in bulk packs to the supermarkets because, if the growers can keep the supermarkets buying on the open markets they will get more of a standard price for their produce. This will mean the public purchasing the fruit from a retailer will be able to buy better quality fruit even though the price may be a little higher. If the public do not want the better fruit they can purchase second-grade fruit at cheaper prices. This position should be looked into. I would like to see people buying good quality fruit at a reasonable price; but this is not the position when one buys fruit in bags from the supermarkets, as mentioned earlier.

**MR. NALDER** (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [12.58 a.m.]: Although I will not be able to provide tonight all the information members have sought I will see that it is given to them at a later date by letter from my office. The member for Beeloo mentioned fruit-fly control. It was also mentioned by the member for Boulder-Eyre and, I think, one or two other members.

There has been a determined effort on the part of the Government to at least try to control the spread of fruit fly. We have taken very active measures to see if that position can be brought about; and we have conducted experiments which have proved successful. In several country towns a successful fruit-fly baiting scheme has been introduced. First of all a vote is taken of the ratepayers in the district concerned; and provided over 50 per cent. of the ratepayers vote in favour of a compulsory scheme it is introduced.

A compulsory scheme is being introduced in Albany this year. A vote was taken and the majority of the ratepayers supported it. We have also had a communication from the Kalgoorlie and Boulder areas to see whether or not some scheme could be introduced there next year. We have supplied the necessary information and I understand a poll will be taken.

The experiments that have been carried out have proved 100 per cent. control. I think the member for Narrogin might be prepared to indicate the success of the scheme that was introduced to Narrogin last year. I understand it was 100 per cent. effective. Information in regard to these schemes is available to any district; and we are trying to see if it is not possible to introduce a similar scheme in the metropolitan area as we are desirous of knowing whether the same measures could be

introduced and what effect they would have. Members will realise the difficulty that could be encountered, but we are going to make an effort to see whether or not a compulsory scheme—similar to those conducted in the country—can be introduced in the metropolitan area.

We will have to look for suitable districts so far as geographical lay-out is concerned; and this is being done to see whether a compulsory scheme would be successful in the metropolitan area.

Mr. W. A. Manning: It is certainly successful in the country.

Mr. NALDER: Yes; that is so. The member for Beeloos also referred to problems experienced by poultry farmers. We certainly appreciate that position; but I would point out that as far as Western Australian producers are concerned they are receiving a better price per dozen for their eggs than any other producer in any State in the Commonwealth. These figures are available in the last report that has just been published, and if the honourable member would like that information I would be pleased to get it for him.

As members are aware, the Egg Board in Western Australia has on it three producers. The board has done an excellent job; and those members who recently attended the opening of the new Egg Board premises in John Street, West Perth, will no doubt be satisfied that the board is a great asset to the industry in Western Australia. The export of surplus eggs has been a matter which the board has watched closely. The manager has been overseas on a number of occasions recently and this has paid dividends. Not only has the number of markets been increased, but the quality of the product produced and exported from this State has been raised.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn mentioned the Argentine ant. In my opening remarks I stated that for Argentine ant control there is an allowed increase of £6,000 to bring the amount to £26,000. For the past two years the difference between the £20,000 allocated and the actual cost has been obtained from the credit balance remaining in the fund of the old Act. This source is now exhausted and provision is made for the anticipated cost for the year.

The Argentine Ant Control Board has been continuing its efforts very satisfactorily. It has been able to continue to contain the Argentine ant in the areas to which the honourable member referred. There have been several reports of outbreaks which have occurred in various country towns, but these have been dealt with and the position is well under control. The chairman of the board reported to me recently that he was quite satisfied with the efforts which have been made to control the Argentine ant. I feel sure the problem is well under control.

Reference was made by several speakers to the apple industry. The Government proposes to introduce an amending Bill to the Agricultural Products Act in the next day or two. This Bill has been requested by the fruit growers of Western Australia. The Royal Commissioner who investigated the conditions and problems of the apple and pear industry in this State suggested the proposals in the Bill were necessary, in order to assist the industry by controlling the sale of understandard and undergrade apples. No doubt there will be general support for such a move, the idea of which is to ensure that the consumer gets a reasonable product at a reasonable price.

The proposal is to appoint inspectors whose duty it will be to ensure that the grade of apples placed on the local market will be the grade that is sold to the consumer in the shops. At the present time some supermarkets purchase the whole crop of an orchard at a price which is attractive to the grower, and under which the grower is not required to pack or to grade the fruit. The suggestion is that undersized and undergrade apples should not reach the local market. At the request of the fruit growers the Government is endeavouring to stabilise the industry.

Mr. Kelly: Would that not automatically raise the price of apples?

Mr. NALDER: The consumer would be paying for a quality apple. This scheme will bring about the stabilisation of prices and will place apples on the local market in a reasonable condition. If one were to purchase apples in a shop one would be given apples of a different quality from what one wanted to purchase, unless one knew the storekeeper. Speaking from a personal experience, I asked for a certain weight of fruit in a shop and the storekeeper brought the fruit from under the counter. When it was placed on the scale I noticed it was not of the same quality as the fruit offered at the price shown in the window. I asked to see the fruit and found it was understandard. I told the shopkeeper I was purchasing the quality of fruit that was displayed and I would have none of poorer quality.

Mr. H. May: What quality did you get?

Mr. NALDER: I got the quality displayed in the window. The idea of appointing inspectors is to ensure that the grade of fruit which is permitted to be sold on the local market reaches the customer. Details of the scheme will be made known when the Bill is introduced.

Mr. Hawke: Would not that interfere with free enterprise?

Mr. NALDER: The Government did agree to a Royal Commission being appointed, at the request of the fruit-growing industry. The Royal Commissioner came from South Australia, investigated the problems in the industry, and

made recommendations. They were accepted by the fruit-growing industry, as a result of which the fruitgrowers requested the Government to take the necessary steps. The Government agreed to accede to the request of the fruitgrowers, and that is the reason for the introduction of the measure.

Mr. Cornell: What happens to all the good quality apples now?

Mr. NALDER: The majority are exported. In recent weeks a very good quality apple was placed on the market.

Mr. Hawke: Including very poor ones also.

Mr. NALDER: The Bill will overcome the position.

Mr. Hawke: What will happen to the poor quality apples under the new set-up?

Mr. NALDER: They will not go on the market—the same as happens to poor quality potatoes and eggs. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn referred to the dairying industry and to the dairy farm improvement scheme. This matter comes under the Minister for Lands who will comment on it when he speaks to the relevant vote.

Another point raised by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn concerns the availability of reports on research stations. One field day, and in some cases two field days are organised by the Department of Agriculture in almost every research station, and on those occasions a pamphlet or booklet is made available to those in attendance. In the pamphlet is a complete resume of the activities for the year, showing the experimental work, the production, and the type of work on which the station has concentrated.

I have one such pamphlet before me relating to the field day held at the Boddington centre in 1962. There is not a research station at that centre but several of the farmers, in conjunction with the local authority, requested that experimental work be carried out there. This year the department embarked on a project which has received much publicity in the Press, and much enthusiasm from the growers. This booklet is available to any member who is interested. I have also here the pamphlet issued during the pasture field day at the Merredin research station. I understand a grain field day is also held at that centre. I shall be only too pleased to furnish members with copies if they desire the booklet. We are receiving requests from other State for these booklets from people who are interested in the work being carried out.

Copper supplies were mentioned by the same honourable member. He was quite right when he said that a committee had been set up to investigate the position. A committee of departmental officers was appointed to look into the availability of copper for superphosphate production

and, in consultation with the superphosphate manufacturers, a satisfactory arrangement has been made for this year's supply. Also, encouragement is being given to those engaged in the mining of copper to produce a more highly-concentrated product, a higher price being paid for such product. This arrangement has been well received by those concerned and has even encouraged some of them to install machinery to upgrade the copper.

We are investigating other supplies, and I have just received information that 20 tons of ore have been sent from a mine north of Norseman—I cannot think of the name of the place—for testing, and it has been stated that that ore has a very high percentage of copper. However, we are not yet in a position to comment in this regard.

The honourable member stated that dairy production in this State had dropped. As you know, Mr. Chairman, this year the dairy areas of the State suffered one of the worst seasons on record. It was one of the longest and hottest summers and one of the driest autumns. The honourable member will recall that this season started very late and this factor also contributed to the lower production in the dairying industry in this State.

Mr. May: It is going to be worse under the E.C.M. too.

Mr. NALDER: The member for Boulder-Eyre made reference to the position in Kalgoorlie of the sheep arriving in this State having to be sent to Fremantle to be shorn. I am glad the honourable member mentioned that, because I want to say that we have been giving this matter as much publicity as possible. It has been made very clear in this State and in the Eastern States that sheep coming to Western Australia must have no more than half an inch of wool; or, in other words, no more than six weeks must have elapsed since they were last shorn. As I have said, this fact has been advertised; and if those in the Eastern States will insist on ignoring the requirements of this State, then they must be prepared to put up with the consequences when the sheep get here.

Many sheep have arrived in this State with much more than half an inch of wool on them, and consequently they have had to be sent to Fremantle to be shorn. We are investigating this matter in an effort to make a reasonable approach to the problem; but we do not want to encourage people to think that it is all right to send the sheep to Western Australia because when they arrive at Kalgoorlie they will be sent for shearing. We want to impress upon those in the Eastern States that they have a responsibility in this regard.

They have a responsibility also in connection with cattle. Recently a number of cattle were brought over here, but when

they arrived they were found to be covered in Bathurst burr. This is a problem we have to face, and I do not think that anyone will disagree with the work being done by our officers at Kalgoorlie.

The member for Boulder-Eyre also stated that we do not have very many plant geneticists here. That may be so, but we are making a very determined and successful effort in cultivating wheat, barley, and oat plants, because they have been successfully grown on a large scale. I refer particularly in this regard to the introduction of the Avon oats. Much publicity has been given to this plant, which has been a very heavy producer, particularly in the wetter parts of the State. Reference should also be made to the Ballidu variety which has found a market overseas which no other country or State can take away. We are producing this quality oats which is being sought after by European buyers.

The question of veterinary officers was raised. I did make special mention of this subject when I introduced the estimates, but for the information of those who did not hear me at the time I reiterate that there are 45 cadets in training, comprising 27 agricultural students and 18 veterinary scientists, of whom 12 are training in the Eastern States and six are completing their first-year study in Western Australia. Three of those training in the Eastern States are expected to finish their course this year and will be available for work in the department.

We have offered every encouragement to anybody interested in this course of veterinary science, and the results of our efforts in this regard are encouraging. However, we are still not satisfied. We want more trained; and we are making a determined effort to make up the leeway and fulfill the need of so many of our stock-producing areas.

The member for Stirling mentioned the desirability of the establishment of a research station in the lower Great Southern. This matter has been brought to the notice of the Government during the last year or so, but I think the decision of the Government not to proceed with the establishment of a research station there at this stage is a wise one, and I will give the reasons for this contention.

As members know, the setting up of a research station involves a considerable amount of money. I was privileged last Friday to journey to the lower part of the Great Southern to attend a field day at Kojaneerup. Quite a number of members might not know where that is. The easiest way to describe it is to indicate that it is bordered by the Gnowangerup Shire Council and the Plantagenet district. It is just east of the Stirling Ranges and is an area in which the Government has recently thrown open quite a

lot of land. I would say that all the properties there, with the exception of one, are new properties in the early stages of production.

The department has now readily available a lot of information on the problems associated with that particular area and it is our task to get that information over to those settlers, many of whom are new to the State. Not only is it necessary to get the information over to them but to get it over to them as quickly as possible to assist them in the initial stages of the development of their properties. And that is the biggest problem I would say—to get the information over quickly so that they will be able to overcome a number of the problems we know will be associated with the early development of those areas.

Therefore it is our earnest desire to make available personnel to interview these people to help them with the problems not only of development but also of stocking the areas. I think all members would agree that money spent in this way will be money well spent; and it is important to do this work now rather than wait for several years to set up a research station which would provide that information.

There was particular interest in the field day which was conducted by the local pasture improvement group. There were approximately 250 people present. It clearly indicated the interest which the general farming public take in the work which has been done by our officers. The member for Stirling mentioned a matter which is a problem affecting not only that area but some of the war service land settlement area of Jerramungup and Gardner River—namely, fire weed. This is a problem for which we are trying to find a solution. Recent information indicates that we are proceeding along lines which will help us overcome that difficulty. It is a weed which seems to develop immediately land is cleared, but after a certain number of years have passed and the fertility of the soil increases, the fire weed disappears. Up to this stage we have no definite information with reference to it.

The members for Victoria Park and Melville spoke at length on the position of guayule rubber in this State. When I took over the office of Minister for Agriculture, a considerable amount of experimental work had been conducted to see whether or not guayule could be grown in Western Australia. In 1959 I travelled many miles to check up on and to inspect plots of guayule which had been planted and grown for two years prior to that time. In every case, without exception—and I emphasise the words "without exception"; although I did not see the Mingenew plots, I was at Carnarvon, Kalgoorlie, Esperance, Gardner River, and Jerramungup—the plots were a very poor type. They had not responded to all types of treatment. Anyone who did not know anything about

the plant at first sight, would have said that they were a very poor product. There was no indication that guayule could be grown successfully here. However, we continued and we are continuing our efforts.

Mention has been made of a Mr. Anderson, an interested person from America, who came here and said he was not satisfied with the experimental work which had been carried out. The work which had been carried out by the department had been done under the instructions of Mr. Anderson. He came here with a bookful of ideas and said, "This is the way I want this experiment carried out"; and it was carried out on his instructions.

The department went further than that. It carried out other experiments, using various trace elements and superphosphate under varying conditions in all areas of the State, but without success. Thousands and thousands of pounds were spent by the department. We had men who had nothing else to do but attend these plants to see whether or not it was possible to grow them. I honestly felt last year, after that long period of four to five years' experimental work, in an endeavour to cultivate these plants to a point where they could be successfully grown, that it was a complete failure—that they could not be grown. We have tried everything possible to grow this plant successfully. Information has been made available from other countries, and we honestly believe it will not grow, especially on a basis which would be economical.

If we could find any further information, I am sure we would be prepared to continue. We are continuing with a limited number of experiments, but even at this stage I cannot honestly say they will prove successful. It is no good trying to establish an industry—even though we are offered \$1,000,000—if we cannot grow the raw material successfully. We have made every effort to see whether we can grow guayule successfully.

The member for Gascoyne mentioned that the field day which was held in the Gascoyne area was a success. That illustrates the point I made that very much interest is being displayed by pastoralists and farmers generally in the experimental work which is being carried out on the field days which are conducted in the various areas of the State. He made reference to bean inspections. I know that inspections are being carried out at Carnarvon, but I am not fully aware of the position to which he referred—namely, the packing of the beans here and in the metropolitan area and sending them to Adelaide. However, I will have that matter investigated, and I will seek his advice at a later stage on other matters to which he referred. I thank members for their support.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: College of Agriculture, £69,654; Agriculture Protection Board, £42,531—put and passed.

### Progress

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development).

### BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance Surcharge) Bill.
2. Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier): I move—

That the House, at its rising, adjourn until 2.15 p.m. today (Wednesday)

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.35 a.m.  
(Wednesday)

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 7th November, 1962

### CONTENTS

	Page
MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE SURCHARGE) BILL—	
Inaccurate Press Report of Debate ....	2410
QUESTION ON NOTICE—	
Bunbury Technical School: Instruction for Collie Apprentices ....	2413
MOTION—	
State Forests: Revocation of Dedication	2417
BILLS—	
Acts Amendment (Superannuation and Pensions) Bill—	
Receipt; 1r. ....	2418
2r. ....	2434
Fisheries Act Amendment Bill—	
Receipt; 1r.; 2r. ....	2438
Inspection of Scaffolding Act Amendment Bill—	
Receipt; 1r. ....	2432
Licensing Act Amendment Bill—	
2r. ....	2432
Com. ....	2434
Report; 3r. ....	2434
Licensing Act Amendment Bill (No. 3)—	
Recom. ....	2415
Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act Amendment Bill (No. 2)—	
Intro.; 1r.; 2r. ....	2414