The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I think the copy you have is the one from the Table.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It may well be.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I think Mr. Robinson may have the cover.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Robinson handed me this and I read some of it while listening to the debate. I am advised that that is the cover and I will place the report in it and put it back on the Table.

I respect the various expressions here this evening by members and would ask them to have regard for the fact that the Government has not done this hastily, as was charged in one particular direction. It is an easy source of accusation if one does not like something to say, "You considered this hurriedly." I can assure members this matter has been carefully looked at by the department for a long time. The people concerned have made a study of the cause of accidents and all associated factors.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would you say that they had medical assistance with it?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I could not accurately answer that question.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I think they should have had.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I cannot answer the honourable member's question, but I can tell him that alcohol tests are taken by the Government doctor (Dr. Pearson) who has had over 13 years' experience in carrying out tests for the presence of alcohol. In regard to 568 persons killed in road accidents, alcohol was found to be present in 252 cases; and in 204 cases the alcohol concentration was above .1 per cent., while in 95 cases it was above .2 per cent. These results support the theory that alcohol is an important factor in road accident causes.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: What about all of the others?

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Do not keep on. If the honourable member must persist with this interjection I will say that the other accidents have occurred and I cannot alter that situation. Those accidents reported under other headings are not related to the measure on which I am speaking, which is in relation to the consumption of alcohol.

In conclusion I would thank members for their contributions to this debate. I repeat: I have great regard for the points of view that have been put forward by the various speakers who addressed themselves to the debate, but I do ask these same people to have regard for the intentions of the Government and the sincere desire in the mind of the Government in regard to this measure. The passing of this legislation and the introduction of breathalyser tests will, it is hoped by the Government, prove satisfactory and be a reliable source of evidence.

Before sitting down might I say that if the Bill passes the second reading—and I hope it does—I do not propose to ask the House to proceed to the Committee stage tonight because there is an amendment I wish to place on the notice paper which corrects a drafting error which was inadvertently inserted in another place.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I wish to put one on, too.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This will apparently cause no inconvenience.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 10.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 17th November, 1965

CONTENTS

CONTENTS—*continued*

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

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Land Tax Assessment Act Amendment Bill.

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

2. Artificial Breeding of Stock Bill.

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

QUESTIONS (17): ON NOTICE

1. *This question was postponed.*

CATTLE FROM THE NORTH-WEST

Shipments

2. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

   (1) What number of cattle were shipped from north-west centres—

   (a) overseas;

   (b) to Fremantle,

   during each year 1960 to 1965?

Number Slaughtered in North-West Meatworks.

   (2) What number were slaughtered at Wyndham, Broome, Derby, and Glenroy meatworks in each year 1960 to 1965?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1)

(a)	1960	5,288
	1961	nil
	1962	nil
	1963	1,012
	1964	4,228
	1965	5,956
(b)	1960	15,684
	1961	12,558
	1962	13,797
	1963	16,537
	1964	7,614
	1965	6,940

(2)

	Wyndham	Broome	Derby	Glenroy
1960	33,708	8,613	*nil*	4,292
1961	30,139	10,220	*nil*	5,695
1962	31,861	10,432	2,215	5,154
1963	34,647	13,114	7,120	4,541
1964	30,966	7,744	*nil*	4,511
1965	23,523	24,057	*nil*	9,816

SWAN RIVER

Dredging at Maylands

3. Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Works:

   (1) Is it intended to dredge the Swan River upstream from East Street jetty to the Maylands Peninsula?

   (2) If the answer is "Yes," will this widen the river and also build up the low lying area in this locality?

   (3) Will an early start be made on this project?

   (4) How long will it take to complete this work?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) to (4) Proposals for river improvement work upstream of East Street jetty are only in the preliminary investigation stage.
The detailed information sought is therefore not available at this stage.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DISTRICTS: ENROLMENTS

Figures as at the 31st October, 1965

4. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

(1) What were the enrolment figures for each of the Legislative Assembly districts as at the 31st October, 1965?

(2) What were the aggregate enrolment figures for the three areas as at the 31st October, 1965?

Redistribution: Closure of Rolls

(3) On what date will the rolls close in connection with the current redistribution of electoral boundaries?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) The undermentioned are the enrolment figures for each of the Legislative Assembly Districts as at the 31st October, 1965.

Balcatta	15,139
Bayswater	15,027
Beeloo	12,201
Belmont	12,818
Canning	12,022
Claremont	10,489
Cockburn	12,719
Cottesloe	10,691
East Melville	13,248
Fremantle	11,338
Karrinyup	13,697
Maylands	10,810
Melville	12,280
Mount Hawthorn	10,960
Mount Lawley	11,056
Nedlands	10,826
Perth	10,560
South Perth	11,928
Subiaco	11,083
Swan	11,680
Victoria Park	10,710
Wembley	13,874
Albany	6,755
Avon	4,922
Blackwood	5,026
Boulder-Eyre	6,041
Bunbury	6,165
Collie	5,379
Dale	6,694
Darling Range	7,295
Geraldton	6,157
Greenough	5,149
Kalgoorlie	5,449
Katanning	5,233
Merredin-Yilgarn	4,694
Moore	5,603
Mount Marshall	5,179
Murchison	5,107
Murray	5,603
Narrogin	5,461
Northam	5,778
Roe	6,159
Stirling	5,504
Toodyay	5,745
Vasse	5,462
Warren	5,093
Wellington	6,275
Gascoyne	2,027
Kimberley	2,761
Pilbara	1,867

The figures for the majority of the districts outside the Metropolitan Area are extracted from "copy rolls" kept in Perth and are therefore subject to some variations.

(2) On these 31st October, 1965 figures, the estimated aggregate enrolment figures for the three new areas would be:—

(a) Metropolitan Area	265,156
(b) North - West - Murchison - Eyre Area	8,770
(c) Agricultural, Mining and Pastoral Area	139,813
Total	413,739

(3) The rolls will not close in connection with the current redistribution of electoral boundaries. The enrolment figures will be ascertained as at the 12th November, 1965, the date upon which the "Electoral Districts Act Amendment Act 1965" came into operation.

TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS: FATALITIES

Pedestrians Over 60 Years of Age: Number in City and Country

5. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

(1) How many pedestrians over the age of 60 years met with a fatal traffic accident in the metropolitan area for the years 1964 and 1965?

(2) How many pedestrians over the age of 60 years met with a fatal traffic accident in the country areas for the years 1964 and 1965?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) 1964	20
1965 to the 30th June	5
(2) 1964	Nil
1965 to the 30th June	Nil

6. *This question was postponed.*

SCHOOLS AT MIDLAND AND GUILDFORD

Playing Ovals: Provision

7. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Education:

In view of the restricted playing areas for students at the Governor Stirling High School, the Guildford Primary School, and the

Morrison Road Primary School, will he take action to see urgent attention is given by his department to arrange suitable playing areas at the above three schools?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

In conjunction with the Midland Council the department is developing a sports ground for the Governor Stirling High School on an area of land adjacent to the river. This is a long-range project however which will take some years to complete. The school has its own tennis and basketball courts but for the time being is making use of ovals elsewhere for football. At the Guildford Primary School the department is in the process of acquiring an additional area on the river flats from the Metropolitan Regional Planning Authority. It is expected that this will be finalised in the near future.

At the Midland Primary School in Morrison Road the site is being extended by the purchase of adjacent houses as they come on the market. Already the tennis courts area has been purchased as well as a shop and two of the houses.

8. *This question was postponed.*

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY: WEST MIDLAND AND EAST GUILDFORD

Dust and Noise Nuisance

9. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware the residents of West Midland and East Guildford adjacent to the railway line are being greatly inconvenienced by the dust and noise emanating from the Euclid and other machines working on the standard gauge project?

(2) Will he take steps to see sprinklers are used to reduce dust menace and silencers are attached to earth-moving machines?

(3) Is it necessary for machines to work on Saturdays and Sundays in addition to the normal working week? Cannot the work be reduced to a five-day week?

(4) How long is the present unsatisfactory state of affairs to be continued?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) In the execution of major earthworks dust and noise do create an unavoidable nuisance. Every effort is made to minimise any nuisance but the dust was accentuated in the unusual weather conditions of last weekend.

(2) Sprinklers have been, and continue to be, employed on haul roads and dry filling and such action is effective in normal weather conditions.

It is not practicable to fit additional silencers to the earth moving machines necessary for this work.

(3) To maintain the programme demanded by the standard gauge project, it is necessary for the contractor to work Monday to Saturday inclusive.

Approval to work on Sunday is granted only in special circumstances. Approval was granted on Sunday, the 14th November, 1965, to enable the contractor to regain time lost due to the prolonged rainy season.

(4) The bulk of the earthworks in this locality should be completed by late December, 1965, and the final grading by March, 1966.

MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY LAND AT MIDLAND

Future Use: Decision by Government

10. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) When is it expected the planning for activities on the Midland Railway land at Midland will be finalised?

(2) Is the Government endeavouring to interest any local or overseas organisations to build multiple flats or home units in the vicinity of the Midland station?

(3) Does the Government favour a particular type of development; if so, what is the type?

Mr. COURT replied:

(1) to (3) As far as the rapid transit terminal is concerned the preliminary planning has been completed and final plans and specifications are well advanced.

In respect of the remainder of the area the matter is at present receiving consideration from all appropriate departments.

WATER SUPPLIES AT KOONGAMIA

Water Pressures and Adequacy of Supplies

11. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is the Water Supply Department satisfied with the water pressures in the Koongamia area?

(2) Is the reservoir at Greenmount sufficient to meet the extra draw on same due to additional housing at Koongamia and Greenmount areas?

(3) Is planning for the area such as to have adequate water supplies for all essential purposes?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

Payment on Betting Tickets

12. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Is it the general practice of the T.A.B. to pay out acording to the ticket presented?

(2) Are there any exceptions to this rule which are in favour of the bettor?

(3) If "Yes," will he give examples?

(4) In any cases where the bettor is disadvantaged, is it possible for the agent to benefit?

(5) In any cases where the bettor is advantaged, is it possible for the agent to bear the loss?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) When it is clear beyond any doubt that the backer is entitled to payment as a result of a mistake on the part of an agent or an employee of an agent or an employee of the board.

(4) Yes, possible but not likely.

(5) Yes.

13. *This question was postponed.*

WORKERS' COMPENSATION: PNEUMOCONIOSIS CLAIMS

Social Service Pensions: Effect on Compensation Payments

14. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Labour:

(1) Is he aware that the S.G.I.O. has refused weekly payments of workers' compensation to the widow of an ex-miner who was in receipt of weekly payments for pneumoconiosis at the time of his death, on the ground that she was in receipt of a Commonwealth social service pension during the lifetime of her late husband, and was therefore not fully maintained by him?

(2) Is he further aware that disabled or partially disabled workers and their dependants, if also entitled to payment under the Commonwealth Social Service Act, receive reduced weekly payments of compensation in order to remain eligible for social service payments and conserve their workers' compensation payments?

(3) Will he instruct that this widow be paid the weekly payments of compensation to which she is entitled?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

(1) Assuming that I have identified the case referred to, I am aware that the State Government Insurance Office has declined to make payments to the widow of an ex-miner who died subsequent to being determined as eligible for workers' compensation payments but prior to payments being, in fact, made.

There is a rather unusual and intricate set of circumstances involved in this case. The officers of Crown Law Department who have advised the General Manager of the State Government Insurance Office to refuse payment of the claim, have been conferring with the legal firm representing the widow. As the claim is most likely to be litigated before the Workers' Compensation Board, it is considered that it would not be proper to provide more comment pending the determination of the matters by the board. An endeavour has been made by the State Government Insurance Office to have the facts agreed between the parties to obviate the necessity for the appearance of the widow before the board, and the State Government Insurance Office has agreed to pay the widow's taxed costs, irrespective of the decision of the board.

(2) Yes.

(3) No; in view of (1) above.

TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD EMPLOYEES

Wages: Hourly Rate

15. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

(1) What is the hourly rate paid to cashiers and machine receivers employed by the T.A.B.?

(2) Is there a difference in the rate as between mid-week and Saturday fixtures?

(3) What is the hourly rate paid to boardmen?

(4) Is the boardman's rate the same as was paid when the T.A.B. commenced to operate?

(5) What recompense is made to employees in recognition of their having to work through the lunch hour?

(6) Is the cost of the increase of 1s. 6d. per hour this year granted to cashiers and machine receivers borne by the board's agents or by the T.A.B.?

Long Service and Annual Leave

(7) Are there any long service leave or annual leave provisions for employees?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

(1) 13s. 6d.

(2) No.

(3) 12s.

(4) No. It is believed that a boardman was initially paid 11s. per hour.

(5) An additional 15 minutes' pay.

(6) By the agent when the agent is the employer and by the board when the board is the employer.

(7) Yes, for those employees normally entitled to such benefits.

16. *This question was postponed.*

MEATWORKS IN THE NORTH-WEST

Cows in Calf: Numbers Slaughtered

17. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Premier:

(1) Is there any Government department or semi-Government authority or any employee of either in possession of figures of the number of cows in calf slaughtered at the Wyndham, Broome, or Glenroy meatworks?

(2) If the answer is "Yes," what are these figures?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) and (2) No official figures are available at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Primary Industry.

TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 4)

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Craig (Minister for Traffic), and transmitted to the Council.

CHILD WELFARE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [2.26 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill was introduced in another place by the Minister for Child Welfare, and from what I understand it had the wholehearted support of the members there.

The Child Welfare Department in the last 10 years has been attempting to modernise and improve the service which it offers to the deprived and delinquent children of the State. To do that it has in that period sent three of its senior officers (Messrs. McCall, Director; Hitchen, Welfare Superintendent; and Maine, Senior Psychologist) overseas to study modern practices and modern facilities for the care and reformation of children.

It is also building progressively those institutions which are necessary for the care and reformation of deprived and delinquent children. The Riverbank and Hillston reformatories for boys, the Longmore Remand and Assessment Centre, and the Stuart House and Tudor Lodge Hostels are already established. Within the next few weeks work will commence at Pt. Heathcote on the building of a series of cottages to replace the outdated reception home at Mt. Lawley. When that is finished, the department will still need a secure home for the rehabilitation of the most difficult girls and a juvenile gaol for the most difficult boys who need very long-term control.

Parallel with the development of these buildings there have been increases and improvements in the numbers and the qualifications of staff, for it is by the impact of individual staff members on individual children and individual parents that the real work of the Child Welfare Department proceeds. Here I think I might interpose to say that this particular point made by the Minister is most obvious to members in this House who have had contact with officers of the Child Welfare Department.

That work of care and rehabilitation of children is always conducted within the framework of the law. That original framework was really developed in 1907 at a time when it was thought that all children not with their parents should be in orphanages and when every boy not destined for a profession should be apprenticed to a master in whose house he lived. The Child Welfare Act of 1907 reflects those ideas and it is necessary now to modernise it in some aspects.

It is now considered that the majority of deprived children should be in foster homes or should be returned to their own parents under departmental supervision. While apprenticeship still remains a valuable road to a large number of occupations, there is now a far wider range of occupations open to young people than there was in 1907.

It is proposed, therefore, to remove from the Act those references to the direct "placement of children in institutions" by court orders and to substitute for that power the committal of children to the care of the Child Welfare Department. It will

then be the responsibility of the department to place its wards in whatever accommodation and in whatever employment best meets the needs of each child.

A second feature of the present Bill is the transfer from the Children's Court of its jurisdiction in custody, affiliation, and maintenance matters to the Married Persons (Summary Relief) Court. This change is in line with present-day thinking that all legal matters concerned with the frictions inseparable from marriage should be dealt with by one court; that is, the Married Persons Court.

This transfer will free the children's courts from a volume of work foreign to their essential purpose and free them to consider more closely the juvenile cases that come before them. So far as maintenance is concerned, however, children's courts will still retain authority to decide the maintenance to be paid on behalf of a child at the time of its committal to departmental care. They will also retain authority to hear charges against persons who leave their children without adequate maintenance. These powers will be retained by the children's courts for the convenience of parents in the first case and for the protection of children in the second. The third purpose in the present Bill is to give effect to the findings of the committee established by the Government to inquire into the conditions of the imprisonment of juveniles and other matters.

That committee, under Mr. R. Wilson, Q.C., concluded that sections 23 and 126 of the present Child Welfare Act interfere with the proper administration of justice by overprotecting young offenders, from the publication of their offences in the Press, by denying the relevant records of past offences to adult courts prescribing punishment and probation for hardened offenders.

The Child Welfare Department agrees that with the establishment of the adult parole and probation service, magistrates and judges and all those legally concerned with the welfare of offenders, are entitled to proper information of past offences. At the same time, the department believes that immature children should be protected from harmful Press, radio, or T.V. publicity. Amendments to sections 23 and 126 of the Child Welfare Act are designed to protect children from publicity but to facilitate the course of justice and the rehabilitation of offenders.

Amendments to section 34A of the Act prescribe, as recommended by Mr. Wilson's committee, the terms of imprisonment to which children under 14 years and under 16 years can be sentenced by children's courts, and at the same time remove a curious anomaly by which, at present, the Supreme Court cannot imprison a child even for the crime of murder. A corresponding amendment of the Criminal Code will also be necessary to give the Supreme Court this power.

While the main purposes of the present Bill are as I have described, the opportunity has been taken also to improve a number of sections in such a way as to give the Minister for Child Welfare greater flexibility in the management of wards and of children on probation.

In concluding these introductory remarks, I ask the House to view the Bill as the latest of a series of legislative improvements in child welfare which parallels the developments that have taken place in that department and which are made necessary by the changing size and nature of our community and by better and more enlightened thinking about the management of children.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Evans.

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BOARD BILL

Introduction and First Reading

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

GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [2.35 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill is complementary to the previous one and was introduced in another place by the Minister for Child Welfare.

Because the Government believes that all those matters arising from domestic disharmony should be centred in the Married Persons (Summary Relief) Court, it has been necessary to amend the Child Welfare Act by transferring jurisdiction hitherto held by children's courts in maintenance, affiliation, and custody matters to the Married Persons Court, and it is necessary, at the same time, to amend the Guardianship of Infants Act in two respects.

In introducing the Guardianship of Infants Act Amendment Bill it is necessary to realise that "guardianship" implies an appointment that carries with it not only the custody of the child's person but also a power over that child's estate, whatever it may be. On the other hand, the term "custody" refers only to an authority over the person of the child. At present, in fact, there are in existence two Guardianship of Infants Acts; namely, the Guardianship of Infants Act, 1920, which gives the Supreme Court jurisdiction over the guardianship and custody of infants in the

fullest sense, and the Guardianship of Infants Act, 1926, which gives courts of summary jurisdiction authority to deal with the custody only of children under 16 years of age.

In 1941 an amendment to the Child Welfare Act appointed children's courts to be the appropriate courts of summary jurisdiction in this regard. It is now considered that the Supreme Court is the proper court to deal with guardianship of infants in the fullest sense, whereas custody applications should continue to be dealt with in the courts of summary jurisdiction and the appropriate court is the Married Persons (Summary Relief) Court

The present Bill, in clause 3, makes it clear that in matters of guardianship the Supreme Court is the appropriate authority, while clause 4 makes it clear that in matters of custody, the Married Persons (Summary Relief) Court is the appropriate tribunal.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Evans.

PIG INDUSTRY COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 16th November, on the following motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [2.37 p.m.]: The amendments which have been introduced by the Minister in connection with the Pig Industry Compensation Act become necessary because of the decimal currency change which will take place in the near future. The several amendments outlined by the Minister are mainly consequential and I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and transmitted to the Council.

OFFENDERS PROBATION AND PAROLE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 16th November, on the following motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [2.40 p.m.]: It appears I have arrived just in time to resume the second reading debate on this measure. Unfortunately I was called downstairs rather unexpectedly by a constituent so if I am a bit short of breath members will understand it is as a consequence of my haste in getting back to the Chamber.

In view of the short period of adjournment of the debate I regret I have not had adequate time to give proper consideration to the Bill; but as it was passed in another place, and was favourably received in that House, I assume a similar passage will be afforded the measure in this Chamber. I also regret that the *Hansard* which might have reported the debate in the other House is not yet available to us. So, as a consequence, I have not had an opportunity to study any comments made by members in the Legislative Council.

This Bill amends the Offenders Probation and Parole Act which was introduced to this Chamber in 1963. It was progressive legislation and was long overdue; other States and other countries have enjoyed this type of legislation for many years. Part III of the principal Act deals with the parole of prisoners, and this has operated since the 1st October, 1964. Another part affects convicted persons who may be placed on probation, and this has been operating with advantage since the 1st January, 1965.

Members might ask who constitute the board. A list is to be found in Statute No. 1 of 1963. Mr. Justice Negus is the chairman and other worth-while personnel are the members of it. It might be recalled, also, that during the passage of the Bill in 1963 I attempted to include among those worth-while personnel trade union representation from the Gaol Officers' Union on the ground that I believe, with their close association with prisoners, they would be well equipped to have personal knowledge of the nature and temperament of the people they were looking after and, as a consequence, any such representative on the board would be well equipped to give first-hand information as to whether or not a prisoner justified consideration for parole. However, although my efforts on that occasion were, I regret to say, without success the Parole Board is functioning very well.

The thought also occurs to me that Mr. Justice Negus, as chairman of the board, could meet a person for a second time—the first time in the court, where the law is applied and, later, as chairman of the board where humanitarianism is shown and human frailties are considered and understood, and possible redemption is attempted under the supervision envisaged by the legislation. To that extent the measure is a very worth-while one.

Minimum terms of imprisonment were arrived at for those serving specified terms. This took considerable time and study of individual files at the inception of the implementation of the legislation. As a result, many people are outside the walls of detention and are more gainfully employed, to the advantage of the State rather than at the expense of the taxpayer.

According to the Minister's comments when introducing the Bill, 144 are on parole. This was to the end of June of this year, and I assume many more would have been paroled since that date. The Minister also said that the report of the Parole Board would be in print and I inferred from his remarks "in print soon," and that it would possibly be tabled. The report of the chief probation officer, for the period January to June, 1965, is to be printed and made available; but in the brief time at my disposal I have not had an opportunity to discover whether those reports are in existence, apart altogether from studying them.

This Bill implements some suggestions made by a special committee appointed in May, 1965. The report of that committee was recently tabled, and I have had an opportunity to have a superficial glance at many of its recommendations. It is a very worth-while report and I commend it to members.

The measure relates in part to recent amendments sought to the Criminal Code. It also touches on the Child Welfare Act in a manner I will later mention. Section six of the parent Act is amended in two respects. Firstly, subsection (3) of this section insists that an honorary probation officer should be a clerk of petty sessions or an officer consistent with those appointed under the Child Welfare Act. The Bill envisages the use of honorary probation officers for other than juvenile offenders. I would point out that Victoria has such voluntary officers and no doubt similar dedicated people in Western Australia will assume that responsibility on a voluntary basis. Splendid voluntary work is done by people in the community who assist the Child Welfare Department.

I have personal knowledge of the splendid work performed by these voluntary probation officers and, without usurping the prerogative of the Minister, I would like to take the opportunity of thanking those people who do community work of this nature. I also wish to thank the departmental officers who co-operate with them in doing such good work among the less fortunate children of our State—less fortunate in respect of the type of temperament that perhaps has been bestowed upon them by nature or as a consequence of turmoil within their homes.

The second amendment to section 6 repeals subsection (4) of the parent Act thus permitting State-wide application of honorary probation officers. Members will see the purpose of this—it will make honorary probation officers available in areas other than the metropolitan area. Section 9 of the principal Act is amended to permit adjourned hearings, matters of appeal, and submission of a prepared report by the chief probation officer before a person is sentenced.

The Bill seeks further to amend section 9 in order to release a probationer from the onerous duty of having to report personally to the probation officer within 24 hours. The amendment will prove of great benefit to people on probation who are working, for example, as far distant as Exmouth Gulf or in any country district. Even with ordinary means of transport it would cause considerable inconvenience and expense to a probationer to have to report within 24 hours and so in the Bill provision is made for such a person to be able to report by letter or telephone, if necessary.

Clause 5 of the Bill seeks to insert a new section which is based on the Victorian provision giving power to make certain allegations or averments associated with a breach of the probation order. Under this proposed new section the court should be given custody of, or release on bail during an adjournment, the person charged. Another provision in clause 6 seeks to amend section 34 in various ways, the first relating to an amendment to the Criminal Code. This amendment seeks to make provision to distinguish between strict and safe custody. When a person is acquitted because of insanity the court is required to order that the person be kept in strict custody initially until Her Majesty's pleasure is known, and thereafter in safe custody during the pleasure of the Governor.

The second amendment sought to section 34 originated as a result of a recommendation of a special committee which was appointed by the Governor in May of this year. As I have said, this report was recently tabled and is worth reading. I could quote its contents, but I have returned the report to the Table of the House. On page 19 there is reference to this particular section. The committee has recommended that each prisoner who has been sentenced to life imprisonment shall be reported on not less than once every five years, or at any time when requested by the Minister. The Bill seeks to implement this recommendation except in regard to a person whose sentence has been commuted from death to life imprisonment. The member for Beeloo referred to this type of prisoner yesterday evening when he was speaking to the debate on the estimates.

However, when the sentence of death has been commuted to life imprisonment the prisoner concerned cannot be reprieved until he has served a sentence of not less than 10 years. That period must be served before a parole can be granted. After having served 10 years' imprisonment and he is still confined to prison a report must be made on that prisoner every five years thereafter. The third amendment to section 34 merely requires the Parole Board to report to the Minister whenever the board orders a return to custody of a person released by the Governor under the section. I hope that such a situation will never arise; that is, that a person shall have to be returned to custody.

There are other provisions upon which I could speak and dwell, but explanatory comments upon them can be found in the Minister's speech. I find nothing wrong with the Bill. I was pleased to take the adjournment because, as member for Fremantle, I have had occasion to visit the Fremantle gaol and I have been successful in having at least one prisoner who had been sentenced to life imprisonment released from that establishment. He is now working and corresponds with me, but I will not mention from which address.

Mr. Dunn: Don't mention it!

Mr. FLETCHER: No; I do not intend to. However, it is pleasing to think that this man is back in society, is employed, and has redeemed himself. That is a practical example of what can also be achieved under the provisions of this Bill, and I am quite convinced the measure will facilitate the redemption of many such prisoners.

I have here a copy of a letter to a prisoner who has been in gaol for 18 years. I forwarded the original to the Minister. I met this man and I was impressed by his demeanour. I think this measure will make it possible for him to be released so that he may rejoin society and I hope, within the terms of this legislation, he will be equally successful in rehabilitating himself like the other prisoner to whom I have referred. I support the measure with enthusiasm and hope it will achieve a better deal for those inside prison and also will prove of benefit to the community in general.

MR. HALL (Albany) [2.57 p.m.]: The measure before the House is quite commendable. It seeks to amend the legislation that was introduced in 1963, and having spoken then at some length on the subject of probation, I feel I should say something on this occasion. After witnessing the type of legislation that has been introduced in this House recently I think it must have disturbed us all when we thought what would be the ultimate effect of such amendments on the Traffic Act when the legislation is put into operation and the subsequent fines and gaol sentences imposed when a person fails to pay a fine.

At the moment I have here some information on a case which has occurred even before the amending legislation has been enacted. This person, who was involved in a traffic accident, has now commenced to serve a sentence of 200 days in gaol. The sentence was imposed upon him overnight and as a result his family life has been disrupted. I feel sure he will still be a worthy citizen when he recommences his employment, but his attitude to society will be completely changed.

One of the disadvantages of not being able to have people released on probation is the cost that is borne by the Crown in two ways. In the first instance there is the cost of maintaining the prisoner within the gaol for a certain period, and then there is the other imposition that is placed on the Crown to finance the members of the prisoner's family who have been deprived of their breadwinner after he has been convicted of committing a traffic offence, and imprisoned.

When the new legislation is proclaimed it will be quite evident that the overnight effect will be that people who have no thought of committing any criminal action will suddenly find that they are committed to gaol and forced to mix with hardened criminals and other unsavoury types. If this parole system can be introduced and put into operation almost immediately it will prove to be of great benefit to the traffic offender who is imprisoned. I notice the legislation provides that there is power under a summary court of jurisdiction to have a probation officer report on the character of the convicted person and the circumstances pertaining to his case.

If those things can be looked at before a person is put in gaol in order that he might not suffer the stigma and humiliation of association with hardened criminals, I feel the Parole Board will be working in the best interests of the State by reducing costs to the Treasury and by not taking away anything from the person convicted. The penalty would remain, but the confinement of the person would be suspended, or put on one side If he then did not play ball the probation officer would make his report and the sentence would be carried out, which would mean that he would suffer humiliation, as would his family.

That fact must be borne in mind, because overnight we might have the circumstances that occurred in a case on which I made an approach to the Minister for Justice for a reduction of sentence. As members know, these people must serve at least half the sentence, unless the Minister feels that there is some good reason for him to intervene. As a rule Ministers

for Justice and Attorneys-General endeavour to obtain some form of penalty against the person concerned.

The trend in overseas legislation is of a similar character, and the attitude to the Parole Board system is to try to invite such people back into a natural field of habitation. I think it could work well if they were being usefully employed, and if they were doing the right thing, and the probation officer felt they were doing the right thing, were they allowed to mix with their families for certain periods. I do not think they shoud be put in with hardened criminals, because this could change the character of a person overnight.

The fear that a person might have of being placed in prison would disappear, and his attitude to imprisonment and police action generally would become hardened. I do not think there is any doubt that one of the great deterrents in preventing crime is the fear of going to gaol and the possible humiliation which one's family might have to suffer. But when we associate the type of person concerned with hardened criminals it will, in turn, increase his criminal outlook. I believe the purpose of this legislation should be to ease that aspect. There should be an easement before the stigma is imposed and the person is confined to prison. If the Parole Board is able to operate in the manner I suggest I am sure it will be taking a step forward.

I have checked the South Australian legislation; and Mr. Playford, the Premier of the day, insisted that the conviction be delayed and legislation was formulated along those lines. The sentence was to be suspended, and if the person concerned continued to be of good behaviour he could move into normal life and the stigma would be wiped away.

I am sure the Parole Board system and the probation system will be used far more than has been the case. As I mentioned in my speech on the traffic Bill the other night, it is not possible for the man in the street to find an amount of £100 overnight, and it is wellnigh impossible to find £200 which might be imposed as a fine. There is no doubt that we have all become wedded to the mechanical genius, the Frankenstein monster: the motorcar. We purchase a motorcar and overnight it is possible for us to become criminals, because of the offences that might be associated with it.

The probation idea is a good one, and it would be a success if it were carried out in its entirety, and the probation officers were able to reduce the cost factor. It might be possible for those who are able to assess the character and the family life of the man concerned to instil some enthusiasm in the judge of the summary court, so that the person concerned will not be confined to gaol although convicted of an offence.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [3.7 p.m.]: I thank the two members who have spoken for their comments on this Bill, and for their support of it. To the member for Fremantle I would like to say that there was no desire to pressurise the handling of this measure, and had I known he needed a little extra time to consider any of the clauses, I am sure the Premier would have agreed to this. However, in the meantime I have had a talk with the Premier, and if the honourable member would like to have a further look at some of the clauses, when we get into Committee we can report progress until a later stage of the sitting.

If, however, he is satisfied, the Bill could proceed through the Committee stage in the normal course. I make that offer to the honourable member on behalf of the Premier, if he feels that he would like to give further consideration to some of the clauses. The Bill was dealt with in another place and most of us have a good working knowledge of it as a result of the deliberations in that House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

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

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 9 amended—

Mr. HALL: Could the Minister clarify the provision contained in proposed new subsection (1a)? Do we call on the Chief Probation Officer for a report after the person is convicted, or do we call on him for a report on the character of the person before he is convicted?

Mr. COURT: I think the clause is quite clear. Where the court has convicted a person of an offence there are reasons why it is desirable that the court should have the benefit of a report from the Chief Probation Officer. I think this is clear if one reads clause 4 of the Bill and the new subsection (1a) which is to be added.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 12 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [3.11 p.m.]: I move—

> That the Bill be now read a third time.

I want to make sure that I have answered satisfactorily the query of the member for Albany. As I understand it, he wanted to know whether the report was called for before or after the prisoner was convicted. I have checked my notes, and I think it is quite clear that the report is called for after the prisoner has been convicted, but before he is sentenced. There are very good reasons for this report being called for at that time, and it could prove to be in the prisoner's favour.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [3.12 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

It was announced in the Press earlier in the year that the Government had appointed a special committee to examine the Criminal Code, the Offenders Probation and Parole Act, and the Child Welfare Act, with a view to recommending legislative amendments on certain specific matters of capital or corporal punishment, the conviction and imprisonment of juveniles, and also on any other apparent anomalies in the Criminal Code which may need urgent amendment.

The committee comprised Mr. R. D. Wilson, Q.C., LL.M, (Crown Counsel), Professor E. K. Braybrooke, LL.M, (Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of W.A.), and Miss Shirley Offer, B.A., LL.B. (an officer of the Crown Law Department engaged in Statue law revision).

The committee's terms of reference were limited, largely because our Criminal Code is modelled on the Queensland Code and, for about two years now, an expert committee has been working in Queensland on new model uniform Codes for those States which now have a Criminal Code and also for the Territories of the Commonwealth. Consequently, it is desired to await the results of this committee's work before dealing with matters other than those included in the terms of reference to the local committee.

In view of the appearance of some rather misleading headlines in the Press concerning the Government's policy as regards capital punishment, I think it would be desirable at this point in the introduction of this measure, to dwell for a few minutes on the quite restricted terms of reference under which the committee pursued its examination of the Criminal Code and submitted its subsequent report.

The committee was empowered to examine and make recommendations for amendments to the Criminal Code in regard to the present procedure in respect of the sentence to be pronounced under section 657. Members will accordingly appreciate that the committee was empowered in this respect to give consideration only to the actual procedure in the pronouncement of a sentence under that section. I emphasise it was only the procedure.

The committee was empowered to examine the anomaly that a person convicted of wilful murder may have his sentence commuted to imprisonment for a term less than 15 years, whilst a person convicted of the lesser offence of murder must be sentenced to imprisonment for life and must serve at least 15 years of the sentence, excepting in certain stated circumstances.

The committee was further empowered to examine the jurisdiction which the Parole Board, established under the Offenders Probation and Parole Act of 1963, should have in respect of a prisoner serving a commuted sentence both before and after his release, and as to whether the Governor should retain the final decision as to any such release.

Furthermore, the committee was empowered to examine the instrument with which a sentence involving corporal punishment, under section 659 of the Criminal Code, should be carried out; and finally, the committee was given discretionary power in the examination of any other apparent anomalies which, in its opinion, called for urgent amendment.

As regards the Child Welfare Act, the committee was authorised to consider in what place or places, and for how long and under what conditions, a child under the age of—

(a) 14 years;

(b) 16 years and;

(c) 18 years

should serve a sentence of imprisonment—whether a commuted sentence or not—and what consequential amendments, if any, should be made to the Child Welfare Act of 1947 or to any other affected Act. Lastly, the committee was called upon to consider the implications of section 126 of the Child Welfare Act and to recommend any desirable amendments.

The committee devoted much time to its terms of reference and submitted its report on the 10th September and, as members are aware, copies have since been laid on the Table of the Legislative Council and of the Legislative Assembly. The report was regarded by the Government as being well considered and soundly based, and this Bill adopts practically all the recommendations made by the committee for amendments to the Criminal Code, except one which the committee itself made with hesitancy. I will make further reference to that shortly.

The first item considered by the committee was the pronouncement of sentence on prisoners liable to capital punishment. Section 657 of the Code, in its present form, first requires that the sentence to be pronounced upon a person who is convicted of a crime punishable by death, is that he be returned to his former custody and that, at a time and place to be appointed by the Governor, he be hanged by the neck until he is dead.

The committee, at page 3 of its report, regards the detailed pronouncement of the sentence as unnecessary, since section 678 of the Code prescribes the manner in which a sentence of death is to be carried out. Clause 5 of the Bill adopts the committee's suggestion that the sentence to be pronounced should be to "suffer death in the manner prescribed by law."

I should perhaps mention here that the rest of section 657 consists of a proviso which relates to the recording of a sentence of death in lieu of pronouncing that sentence on conviction for a crime punishable by death, except treason and wilful murder. The committee has pointed out that, since 1961, the only crimes punishable by death are treason and wilful murder and that, in consequence, the proviso to the section is inoperative. However, the proviso is not repealed by this Bill since a policy decision is involved as to whether or not the recording of a sentence of death should be allowed in the case of a conviction for either treason or wilful murder. The committee made no specific recommendation in this regard, and it has been thought better to leave the matter of tidying up the proviso to a latter stage after receipt of the report of the Queensland committee.

In further regard to the question of sentencing of prisoners liable to capital punishment, the committee points out that, in some cases of convictions for wilful murder, the circumstances are such that it is obviously a case for the exercise of mercy. Although, at page 10 of the report, the committee formally recommends the appointment of a new tribunal to pronounce sentence in capital cases, it is apparent from page 4 of the report that the committee prefers the present system of a mandatory sentence by the presiding judge, and the leaving of discretion as to commutation with the Governor-in-Council. The only reason for the committee's recommendation at page 10 is that assigned at page 4; namely, that the committee interpreted its task as one of proposing some amendment to the law.

However, at page 8 of the report, the committee recommends that the flexibility which the justice of a particular case may require is best intoduced at the level of the Parole Board established under the Offenders Probation and Parole Act. The committee therefore thought that every prisoner convicted of wilful murder who is not sentenced to death should be sentenced uniformly to imprisonment for life, but, thereafter, should be subject to classification and assessment from time to time by the Parole Board, which should submit reports for consideration by the Governor.

The Bill adopts these recommendations, but even with the passing of the Bill, it would still be competent for the ordinary Royal prerogative of mercy to be exercised at any time in any particular case.

The second matter dealt with by the committee in its report is the present anomaly in punishment as between murder and wilful murder. At pages 11 to 14 of the report, the committee points out that since the amendments made in 1961, a person convicted of wilful murder may have his sentence commuted to imprisonment for a term less than 15 years, while a person convicted of the lesser offence of murder must be sentenced to imprisonment for life and must serve at least 15 years of the sentence, except in certain stated circumstances. Sections 282, 679, and 706A are examined in this regard.

In order to remove the anomalies and to permit of flexibility in the treatment and reformation of prisoners, the committee recommended the repeal of section 706A and the amendment of section 679 so as to empower the Governor to extend mercy on condition of the offender being imprisoned for life. These recommendations are followed in the Bill.

The third matter dealt with by the committee is the parole of prisoners under life sentences—pages 14 to 20 of the report. As the law stands at present, there is no way in which a prisoner undergoing a sentence of life imprisonment commuted from a sentence of death, or, a prisoner sentenced to life imprisonment following his conviction for murder, can be released on parole. At present he can be released, but not on parole.

At page 16 of the report, the committee refers to the advantages of the parole system, which have already become apparent in regard to the supervision and guidance that the system provides to a prisoner upon his release and also the preparation for his release. The committee recommends the extension of the system to prisoners serving a sentence of life imprisonment commuted from a sentence of death and to prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment following conviction for murder. This would follow the system in three other States. The Bill adopts the recommendations of the committee in this regard and also its recommendation that the decision to release on such parole should be made by the Governor-in-Council and not by the Parole Board.

The only departure from the recommendations of the committee at pages 19 and 20 of its report is that, in the case of a prisoner convicted of wilful murder

whose sentence is commuted to one of life, the Government considered that the first report of the Parole Board should not be made after five years as suggested by the committee, but only after the first 10 years of the sentence has been served. This aspect, however, is not the subject of the present Bill, but of a Bill to amend the Offenders Probation and Parole Act. That Bill was dealt with earlier this afternoon.

The fourth matter dealt with is the instrument of corporal punishment. Section 659 of the Criminal Code requires that the instrument used must be either a birch rod, a cane, a leather strap, or the instrument commonly called a cat, which shall be made of leather or cane without any metallic substance interwoven therewith. The committee states that the cat would now be universally regarded as archaic and outmoded and that the birch rod is an instrument which is not readily available under Australian conditions.

The Bill adopts the recommendation that section 659 should be amended to provide that the instrument shall be either a cane or a leather strap. The Bill further takes advantage of the opportunity to repeal the one remaining section of the Regulation of Whipping Act, 1884, which deals with a matter which should more properly be dealt with by the prison regulations.

Under the heading of "Any other apparent anomalies in need of urgent amendment", the committee makes only one recommendation; namely, that section 328 of the Code, which relates to indecent assaults on females, should be amended to increase the sentence from two to four years. The Bill adopts this recommendation. I understand this will bring us more in line with other States of Australia. I think the member for Albany asked some questions in respect of this earlier this session.

At pages 24 to 38 of its report, the committee carefully examines the subject matter of juvenile detention, and the main amendments recommended under this heading relate to the Child Welfare Act, amendments to which, as recommended by the committee, are at present before this Parliament in a Bill to amend the Child Welfare Act. However, consequential amendments are necessary to the Criminal Code; namely, the repeal of Chapters LXX (70) and LXXI (71) of the Code relating to the trial of children and young persons, and amendments to sections 18, 19, and 679.

They have the effect of allowing the Supreme Court or a Court of Session, in lieu of sentencing a child to imprisonment, to commit him to the care of the Child Welfare Department, or, alternatively, to require detention during the Governor's pleasure with power to release under parole supervision for any period not exceeding five years. Complementary provisions are included in a Bill to amend the Offenders Probation and Parole Act.

The final matter dealt with by the committee at pages 38 to 48 of its report relates to the Child Welfare Act, and is outside the scope of the present Bill, and the subject of a separate piece of legislation introduced by the Minister for Child Welfare in another place.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Graham.

BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. State Tender Board Act Amendment Bill.

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

2. Licensing Act Amendment Bill (No. 4).

3. Tourist Act Amendment Bill.

   Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Brand (Minister for Tourists), and read a first time.

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [3.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a fairly short Bill, the substance of which was introduced into this House as part of another piece of legislation during, I think the period of the Hawke Government. It was dropped in the latter stage of the session, I think, because of the loss of a proposed agricultural land tax. The purpose of this Bill is to make two amendments to the Land Tax Assessment Act to encourage investments in buildings in this State and to clarify and bring up to date other sections of the Act.

Subsection (3) of section 8 of the Land Tax Assessment Act imposes a 50 per cent. surcharge on certain absentee landowners. This surcharge applies only to individuals. The surcharge on companies and corporations was removed by legislative action in 1960, although in practice the State Commissioner of Taxation had not raised it against any company or corporation for many years. Only two other States impose additional land tax on absentee landowners. They are Victoria and Queensland.

In Victoria 20 per cent. is imposed and then only if the land is not used for industrial purposes or primary production. In Queensland the statutory exemptions available to land-tax payers are denied to absentee landowners. The provisions in Victoria and Queensland are not as severe as those in our Act. I am advised by the

Commissioner of Taxation that the surcharge on absentee owners is difficult to administer and yields only approximately £1,000 per annum.

Estate agents have drawn my attention to the fact that the surcharge on absentee owners is reacting against the investment of overseas funds by individuals in this State. There is no sound reason why the absentee surcharge should be retained, particularly as Western Australia already imposes a surcharge on unimproved land and the absentee provision is apparently discouraging overseas investment.

Under this Bill it is proposed to repeal the provision imposing the 50 per cent. surcharge on absentee owners as from the 1st July, this year. Section 73 of the Land Tax Assessment Act provides that any contract affecting the incidence of land tax is wholly void and inoperative in so far as it purports to change the incidence of the tax.

An insurance society which is interested in investing funds in new buildings in this State under long-term lease conditions, has pointed out that under the existing law, if a lease provides that the lessee shall pay land tax any action by the lessor to recover the non-payment of this tax could be avoided by the lessee pleading the section dealing with the incidence of the tax.

Under these circumstances the society claims that it is impossible to enter into long-term leases with any certainty that outgoings in the form of land tax will be recovered. As a result the society advises that it would be hesitant to enter into arrangements in this State to finance the construction of premises for industry which are leased over long periods. Thus Western Australia may be deprived of private funds for development.

The State Commissioner of Taxation advises that although he has no knowledge of any case where the present section of the Land Tax Assessment Act dealing with the incidence of land tax has been used to avoid obligations as between the lessor and lessee, nevertheless in order to remove any difficulties which could arise he suggests that the provision should follow the form used in the New South Wales Land Tax Assessment Act.

The proposed amendment will allow the burden of land tax to be legally placed on the lessee, but will be void against the commissioner thus preserving his right to recover the tax against the land if this should be necessary. As there can be no effect on State revenue and the amendment will facilitate arrangements to finance the construction of buildings for industry and commerce in this State, the Bill contains a proposal to repeal section 73 and substitute provisions similar to those operating in New South Wales.

Sections 9 and 10 of the Land Tax Assessment Act require some minor amendments to bring the references in them up to date and to clarify the Land Tax Assessment Act legislation.

It is proposed to amend section 9 by removing the reference to the now repealed Municipal Corporations Act of 1906 and substituting a reference to the Local Government Act of 1960. The Bill also provides for the removal of unnecessary words from subsection (1) of paragraph (g) of section 10 of the Land Tax Assessment Act. These words relate to a previous suspension of exemption for land used for agricultural purposes, the period of which has long since passed; and also refer to another section of the Act which has been repealed and re-enacted in a different form. The reference to this section is to be brought up to date.

The proposed amendments to sections 9 and 10 which have been requested by the State Commissioner of Taxation are purely for clarity and do not alter the present operation of the law in any way. I commend the Bill to members.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1965-66

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 16th November, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after Division 36 (Harbour and Light and Jetties) had been agreed to.

Votes: Local Government, £70,397; Town Planning, £113,070; Child Welfare, and Outdoor Relief, £973,133—

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [3.38 p.m.] It might seem inconsistent of me to imply some criticism after having commended the Child Welfare Department and its officers, but there are a few words of comment I would like to make in regard to this portfolio.

Too much thinking, I believe, is done for children under the care of the Child Welfare Department. I will admit that is inevitable to some extent. However, I believe that as a consequence they lose their initiative. I have seen this demonstrated in their inability in later life to handle money.

This point was brought home to me recently in relation to a young married couple. The young man had been a ward of the State and had subsequently been in the Army. When he returned to civilian life from the Army he had difficulty in managing his affairs. Members might say that this could apply to any young person, but I quote it as an example of a person who was previously a ward of the State not having the ability to look

after that aspect of his life. He had been used to having his life looked after for so long that when he found himself on his own it was most difficult for him to cope. He was cared for in the Army; decisions were made for him. But, as a civilian, he was in desperate need. He was borrowing from one person to pay back another.

I know the department cannot act as a parent, but I would suggest that ways and means be sought to encourage the independence of individuals and that some avenue be explored in relation to the training of young people whilst under the care of the department. This is not criticism of the department; it is just comment which I hope somebody in the department will read and as a consequence endeavour to see that some training is given to young people in the care of the department. Training is particularly required in the handling of money so that when those young people go out into the world and assume the responsibilities of adults they are better equipped to do so. That is the extent of my comment on this portfolio.

Vote (Local Government) put and passed.

Mr. TOMS: In regard to town planning, I want to take this opportunity once again of registering my protest—

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): You can only speak to an item. We have passed the first item when general discussion should have taken place.

Mr. TOMS: I want to deal with the metropolitan regional plan.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): You can only ask a question.

Mr. TOMS: I will take an opportunity of speaking later on.

Vote (Town Planning) put and passed.

Mr. CRAIG (Chief Secretary): I would ask for your direction, Mr. Chairman. Is this the appropriate time to introduce some notes on Division 39 which have been handed to me by the Minister for Child Welfare?

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): You should have done it on Division 37. We have passed the point where general discussion could take place.

Vote (Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief) put and passed.

Vote: Chief Secretary, £189,611—

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [3.44 p.m.]: I assume this is the appropriate time to make my comments. This is the first occasion on which I have introduced the estimates for the Chief Secretary's Department. The activities of this department involve the supervision of charitable collections, including the Lotteries Commission; film censorship and the like; prisons; Correspondence Despatch Office; the Registrar-General's office; and the Observatory. Fire brigades—which are not provided for in the estimates—come under the Chief Secretary's Department also.

A constant watch is kept on film censorship classifications, and the onus is on the parents to see that children do not attend films classified as unsuitable for children. One member asked a number of questions in this connection during this session, but I think members will realise how difficult it would be to place on the proprietors of the theatres the responsibility for seeing that children under a certain age do not attend the theatres.

As members are probably aware, State legislation exists in the various States; but, to maintain uniformity of censorship, the States have delegated their power to the Commonwealth Film Censor. He classifies various films, and the responsibility rests with the States to supervise advertising in respect of such classifications.

This censorship is also extended to television and comes under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Film Censor.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.4 p.m.

Mr. CRAIG: The censorship of literature and the like is subject mainly to Commonwealth laws because most printed matter comes into the country under the Customs Act. No doubt members will recall an instance a few months ago with a book called, "The Trial of Lady Chatterley." It was found that the customs' laws and the Commonwealth laws on censorship could be overcome by sending out to Australia certain pages of this book and they were then published within a particular State and the Commonwealth had no power to suppress the publication.

This gave rise to conferences that have been held recently by Chief Secretaries and the Commonwealth in order to tighten up the laws on the censorship of literature. In this State, of course, we have the Indecent Publications Act under which the police can take immediate action.

On the question of street appeals, no fewer than 55 organisations participated on 35 appeal days during the year ended the 30th June, 1965. The gross collections by all organisations was £60,000, and this was nearly £3,000 less than was collected in the previous year. Supervision of these appeals has been continued by the department.

The Registrar-General's Office is concerned with the administration of the Commonwealth Marriage Act, 1961; the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Act, 1961; and the relevant sections of the Adoption of Children and Cremation Acts.

Mr. Gayfer: Before you leave the subject of censorship, do you have control over some of these lurid advertisements and pictures that we see published?

Mr. CRAIG: If the honourable member cares to produce some for my censorship I will give him an opinion. It is rather surprising, to Americans particularly, that we in Australia spend more money advertising corsetwear and the like, for womenfolk, than we do on the advertising of other items of clothing. To them it seems rather unusual.

Mr. Rowberry: They know who spends the money.

Mr. CRAIG: As from the 1st January, 1966, all registrations of births, deaths, and marriages, occurring in the State will be done in Perth by automatic data processing machines. Legislation to this end was passed during the current session and the change is with the co-operation of and in agreement with the Commonwealth Government. It will expedite the flow of data for statistical purposes, and will more satisfactorily process documents for State purposes.

Since the decision was made to re-establish the Perth Observatory at Bickley the existing organisation has been continuing under rather difficult conditions. I am pleased to advise that work at Bickley has advanced to the stage where it is anticipated that the new observatory will be available for occupation in January, 1966. In preparation for this, the staff has been increased towards a reasonable level for the resumption of full activities, both in the provision of public services and in the conduct of scientific research; and provision has been made in the current estimates for two more appointments to complete this process.

In anticipation of the increased demand for information from the public, the Observatory has commenced publication of an annual booklet of astronomical data relevant to Western Australia, and a series of leaflets each dealing with a special subject about which inquiries are often received. Preparations have also been started for providing a more satisfactory service for general visitors to the new Observatory by way of education or interest.

I had the opportunity of visiting the new site recently, and it is certainly an outstanding building which I think will command a great deal of interest from those who have a leaning towards this particular field of science; and I recommend a similar visit be undertaken by other members.

The total number of prisoners in custody as at the 30th June, 1965, was 858, an increase of 33 over the previous year. These are spread over our prison systems throughout the State. Only a few days ago, at the Fremantle gaol, the numbers were 420 males and 26 females. The figures have been around this mark for about a month and they are a reduction on the figures for previous months.

As a matter of fact, I believe the numbers have been something like 580. Another interesting feature about the numbers in the Fremantle gaol is that approximately one quarter of them are natives.

Progress is being made in the Government's plan for decentralising our present prison system by the construction of gaols in a number of country centres. A new gaol to accommodate 70 prisoners is being constructed at Albany at an estimated cost of £362,000, and is expected to be ready for occupation in March, 1966. When it is occupied the need to send all prisoners to Perth will be obviated.

A site is being considered for a new gaol at Geraldton, and dependent upon the availability of loan funds, a commencement will be made during the financial year. So far there is no finality on the selection of a site for a gaol at Bunbury, but a choice will be made shortly.

Industrial development in the north-west has accentuated a necessity to provide a gaol in the Port Hedland-Roebourne area, and the selection of a site is receiving attention. It would appear that the former will ultimately be the chosen site. On this matter I have gone to the extent of seeking the advice of the member for that district.

Mr. Bickerton: Which was the "former" town in the area?

Mr. CRAIG: Originally the site selected was Port Hedland, and then it was Roebourne, and now Port Hedland is the choice.

Mr. Bickerton: Port Hedland?

Mr. CRAIG: Yes; but Roebourne has better facilities for occupational treatment of prisoners.

Mr. Bickerton: It would be better at Roebourne.

Mr. CRAIG: Yes; I think eventually it will be at Roebourne. Funds have been allocated for the building of additional cell blocks and staff quarters at the Broome gaol and work will commence at an early date. Considerable funds have been provided for repairs and improvements at the main security prison at Fremantle, Bartons Mill prison, Karnet Rehabilitation Centre, and Pardelup Prison Farm. Among these are—

1. Office accommodation for the Parole and Probation Board at Fremantle Prison.
2. New bakehouse at Bartons Mill prison.
3. Amenities hall, new ablution block and laundry, and clearing of land at Pardelup Prison Farm.

4. A new hobbies hall, establishment of pastures and an oval at Karnet Rehabilitation Centre.

In connection with Karnet Rehabilitation Centre, members will recall that this centre was opened early in 1963, and a part of the establishment is set aside for the rehabilitation of convicted alcoholics. The other part of the institution is concerned with the rehabilitation of the better type of prisoner transferred from Fremantle Prison. These are mostly the younger type of prisoner, with whom it is felt the board can achieve some good, because the prospects of their rehabilitation is much better than with the older and more hardened type of criminal.

The development of that side of the institution concerned with alcoholics has been watched with a great deal of interest throughout the Commonwealth. I have some interesting figures given to me by the Inebriates Advisory Board, which consists of two eminent psychiatrists and a qualified social worker, who visits Karnet twice weekly to counsel and treat the inmates. This board is a statutory body. I might here also say that a person is committed by the court, the judge, or magistrate being satisfied that the person is suffering from inebriety or that his offence has been contributed to on those grounds.

Early in 1965 figures were taken out as to the success rate of men released from the alcoholics' section. To the 31st December, 1964, there had been 48 men released; 21 had not had a drink to that date, 16 had been drinking, and there were 11 men with whom it had not been possible to make contact.

Since December, 1964, there have been approximately a further 50 men released. Twelve of these have definitely been drinking, 38 have not appeared in court, or come under the notice of the law. Out of this 38, 26 are working, and attending meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous and seem to be well on the road to recovery. It would now appear that out of approximately 100 men released to date there are a definite 47 who are well on the way to being rehabilitated. These figures show that to date there has been a 47 per cent. success. Undoubtetly, as time goes on, this percentage will drop, because some of them will fall by the wayside. It is interesting to note that most other similar institutions throughout the world work on a 10 to 15 per cent. recovery rate. The authorities must indeed be very gratified with their success at Karnet.

Here I must pay a tribute to the Minister for Works who, as Chief Secretary at the time, was responsible for the establishment of this farm and the commencement of treatment at Karnet. I visited the institution recently and was very impressed by the arrangements that are made there for the treatment of prisoners, and I have only the highest praise for the work done by the board and those responsible for the conduct of men at Karnet. I would suggest to members that they should pay a visit to this rehabilitation centre also should they be interested in this form of treatment for prisoners.

Mr. Bickerton: Reverting to the new gaol in the north-west, will that be air-conditioned?

Mr. Burt: It will have air-conditioned bars.

Mr. CRAIG: I would not know, offhand.

Mr. Bickerton: It would need to be.

Mr. CRAIG: There are many places in that north-west that are not air-conditioned. If the honourable member feels that prisoners are justified in having the prison air-conditioned in preference to, say, hospitals, consideration may be given to his request.

Dealing generally with the Police Department Estimates, it is estimated the total expenditure for the department will show a very slight increase over the expenditure for the previous year. With the rapid development in the State, it is essential that police protection, and other work pertaining to the maintenance of law and order, should not fall behind, and therefore provision has been made for a small increase in the clerical staff, and the provision of staff to classify and record the fingerprints of civilians who have voluntarily had their fingerprints taken.

Considerable public support has been shown to the voluntary fingerprinting section, and the co-operation of public-spirited organisations has greatly assisted the police with this work. The number of fingerprints that have now been taken are in excess of 40,000. This work has also been the means of making available employment for a paraplegic, and if more men of this type can be found who can adapt themselves to the work, we will engage their services for the recording of fingerprints.

The basic wage in July, together with the introduction of service pay for some members of the ancillary staff, will add £10,664 to the wages bill, and this amount has been included in the Estimates. Additional police have been stationed at Dampier, Mt. Tom Price, Port Hedland, Geraldton, Mullewa, and Albany, while in the metropolitan area additional men have been placed at Scarborough, Belmont, Nollamara, Mt. Hawthorn, and Subiaco traffic office. An extra night patrol squad is being formed among the members of the Criminal Investigation Branch, and three men are to be provided for this purpose.

During the year it is anticipated that new stations will be opened at Mt. Newman, Mt. Goldsworthy, Gosnells, Brentwood, and Morley Park.

Provision has been made for an increase in the number of motor vehicles consequent on moving the police transport section to Maylands. Sergeant Styants, whom the department sent to Victoria for instruction at the police driving wing in Melbourne, has been relieved of all patrol duties to take charge of the driving wing as chief instructor, and it is intended not only to instruct new trainees, but also to conduct refresher courses for older personnel from time to time.

At present two men on day-shift patrol are giving attention to the flow of traffic in the city, and two men are similarly engaged on afternoon shift. This applies from Monday to Thursday, and on Friday and Saturday afternoons three men work on city traffic patrol.

The police radio network has been the subject of close examination for the past year and it has been found that much of the equipment has become obsolete and, in all, the State-wide police radio network leaves much to be desired. Provision has been made for the installation, at base stations at all district offices, of mobile transceivers in attached police vehicles.

One of the services which the department proposes to improve is in connection with the policy over the years to have a telephone installed at the residence of only one police constable. I am referring to places where there may be two or three police constables stationed. At times communication with the police has been difficult because of the absence of the particular constable from his residence where the telephone is installed. It has now been decided that the residences of other police constables shall also be provided with telephones.

The particular difficulties of police communication in the north-west have been the subject of a special investigation, and provision has been made for the installation of modern, single, side-band transmitters and receivers and high-frequency transceivers to provide extensive radio coverage. This will, of course, also assist in the work of civil defence. During the year a Telex link with the Police Departments in the Eastern States was provided, and provision has been made for the rental of the necessary equipment.

A new additional van, together with equipment, is to be provided for vehicle examination, and as a result of this, together with the proclamation of the Used Car Dealers Act, 1964, which will grant power to inspect vehicles in dealers' yards, it is anticipated that progress will be made towards the elimination of unroadworthy vehicles from the roads.

This subject has been the matter of discussion time and again in this chamber. The requisite vehicle examination yards at Midland, Victoria Park, Subiaco, Fremantle, and Rockingham are expected to be completed this year to enable compulsory examination of vehicles, if such is invoked ultimately. We have something like 80,000 transfers of vehicles a year. At present there is no compulsory mechanical check on them, but with these additional facilities it may be possible to make compulsory an official examination of all vehicles subject to transfer.

It has been considered that, in view of the anticipated increase in vehicles and the complexities of traffic control that will result, it is necessary to step up the standard of training of police examiners. This training will be directed towards better driving methods, and equipment will be provided for a school for training in the examination of vehicles by all officers entering the traffic branch.

As a result of investigation into the New Zealand traffic set-up, considerable attention has been given to adoption of some of the procedure. Currently the Government Printer is printing a new type of application form and a *Police Instruction Manual* is to be printed which will supply uniform advice and instruction to all police throughout the State on the testing of drivers.

This is a most important move, because there have been times when people have been critical of the examination methods followed by police in some sections of the State. In other words, it is implied that in some centres the examination is nowhere near as severe as it should be. It is felt that this additional training, and so on, will go a long way towards overcoming this criticism; and the applicant for a license for the first time will be subjected to a very severe test indeed, so that he can prove he is qualified to drive a vehicle in the manner we are most anxious that he should.

A new booklet to replace "Over to You" is being prepared for distribution to the public. When the new driving wing is inaugurated, under the control of Sergeant Styants, both he and Constable Pevicic of the examiners' section of the traffic branch, who has also been to the Victorian school, will give instruction to all examining police officers, both for testing drivers and for vehicle examination.

I am pleased to report that the policy of replacing police vehicles systematically over the past few years has greatly increased the standard of police vehicles, and provision has been made for the replacement of 66 cars and motorcycles during this year.

The member for Darling Range asked some weeks ago whether we could be more active in identifying police vehicles, so that the general motoring public could see that there are more police vehicles on the road checking the behaviour of motorists than appeared to be the case. So it

is intended that all new police vehicles will be painted a distinguishing colour which will identify them to the general public.

Following demonstrations, and investigations into their use in Victoria, it has been decided to purchase three amphometers for use in speed detection. These sets cost approximately £120 each and will supplement the effective work being carried out by the present radar equipment.

During the year, and in the past few years, the Government has instituted various legislation which it is felt will be conducive towards reducing the alarming road toll about which the public and members of this House, without exception, have expressed concern.

The member for Balcatta and the member for Darling Range recently referred to some statistical information they had which tried to sheet home to the public the seriousness of this offence. In other words there are too many people who look upon road fatalities and accidents as just a natural consequence of motoring which does not concern them anyhow; but the figures I supplied to the member for Balcatta to which he has referred from time to time do produce some alarming evidence. The question referred to the number of accidents that had occurred for the 12 months' period to the 30th June, 1965.

In reply I stated that the number of casual accidents was 4,028, and the number of non-casual accidents was 11,416, making a total of 15,444 accidents. The first reaction is that this is a large number, but the question is how does it affect all of us. On a rough calculation, and according to our population figures it would represent one in 50 people who were involved in an accident whether it was a casual one or not.

I could go further and say that in a normal family of five consisting of a mother, father, and three children—and some families seem to have more than one car—it would mean that one family in 10 would have one of its members involved in such an accident. This possibly makes us realise the seriousness of the position.

We then come down to the finer points and take only the fatal or serious casual accidents, and we find the ratio is one in 150. These are indeed very short odds when we know that one in 150 people could be involved in a fatal or a very serious accident.

I was reminded again of this point by a news item in this evening's paper which refers to the road toll. It is headed "Death Toll Appals Duke". I think his remarks are very appropriate indeed. They sum up an attitude which I share, and which, I feel, honourable members themselves share. I will take the liberty to read this article as I would like it to be included in *Hansard*, whether members themselves have read it or not. The article reads as follows:—

> The Duke of Edinburgh has called for punitive legislation to combat the death toll on Britain's roads.
>
> After being elected president of the Royal Society For The Prevention Of Accidents, the Duke said last night:
>
> "The accident statistics are a standing mockery of any claim we may make to have a civilised nation.
>
> "Whether some people like it or not, there has got to be an element of compulsion, of punitive legislation.
>
> "Unless other methods show spectacular results I can see no alternative to very much stricter legislation in the future.

This is a point which the member for Pilbara made the other night with regard to education. He felt this was a possible solution. I agree that education is the basic method by which we can get the message over to the people to prevent accidents occurring, and we are endeavouring to do just this. Unfortunately this message is not being absorbed by the type of people we would like to impress with it. The article continues:—

> "It is inescapable that all road users will have to accept increasing restriction because of the totally inexcusable behaviour of the minority.

This is the point that was made by the Government when introducing some of the legislation towards increasing penalties. I think I recall stating that 85 per cent. or more of the drivers on our roads are good drivers who observe the laws; but, unfortunately, because of the misbehaviour of the other 15 per cent some legislative action must be taken. This is the point made by the Duke of Edinburgh.

To continue—

> "We have a great tradition of the liberty of the subject in this country. But I do not think anyone believes that this liberty should be extended to killing and maiming."
>
> He said he did not always understand the protests that those restrictions were unfair or the means to enforce them were unethical, or that they gave rise to a bad feeling between police and motorists.
>
> He could not see why any law-abiding road user had the least cause to feel anything but thankful to the police for carrying out their duties so well.

I endorse his sentiments.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.31 p.m.]: I wish to make a few remarks regarding the Police Department under the Minister's control.

I was very interested to read the report for 1965 of the Commissioner of Police. I read this section with very great interest—

> A matter of vital concern to the Police Force in a democratic country in its endeavours to bring criminals to justice is the steady erosion of police powers. There is a body of opinion, not numerically strong, but certainly influential, which seems to place the "rights" of the suspected criminal above the rights of society, against whom he is suspected of having offended. Surely the society which guarantees the rights of the individual is entitled to protection. In theory that protection is provided by the Police Force but the usefulness of the Police Force is being undermined by "Court" practices and decisions restricting the powers of the policeman in the interrogation of suspects; in the field of arrest and in regard to search and seizure. The Press and literature on the subject of crime detection seem to be directed to incidents that tend to discredit the police.
>
> To me, it is axiomatic that as society expects the policeman to perform the main functions of his appointment, namely the preservation of law and order, of which the bringing of the offender to justice is paramount, then as Lord Shawcross of England is reported to have said, "Society cannot tie one hand behind its back in fighting crime."

Mr. Chairman, as you would imagine, I read that a second time, because I could not make it square with the Government's attitude, and the Minister's attitude, and with the commissioner's attitude with regard to common gaming houses in Western Australia—the preservation of law and order.

For some considerable time we, on this side of the House, have been telling the Premier, telling the Minister, and telling the commissioner that considerable illegal betting is being carried on in Western Australia. On one occasion I went to see the Commissioner of Police, and he made the astonishing statement to me that he would take no action in this regard unless directed to do so by the Minister for Police or the Totalisator Agency Board; and it is against the board that our complaints are being made. The Leader of the Opposition wrote to the Premier in March last year and received a reply from the Premier that he had been given to understand that all clients of the T.A.B. agents have established proper accounts and procedures laid down in the regulations are being properly carried out. Been given to understand! That makes one suspect the answer straightaway.

The Leader of the Opposition was not satisfied with that and he wrote again and said to the Premier—

> It is known all clients of the T.A.B. agents have not established proper accounts as required by the Act and the regulations.

The Leader of the Opposition made the definite assertion that it was known that all clients had not established the proper accounts, to which the Premier replied—

> The Chairman of the Totalisator Agency Board has again reported in writing that to the best of his knowledge and belief all of the board's telephone clients have established credit accounts in accordance with the regulations as amended with effect from the 7th October, 1963, and that the procedures laid down in regulations 21, 22, and 23 are being properly carried out.

That reply was in answer to the definite assertion by the Leader of the Opposition that it was known that credit betting was being carried on without deposit accounts. We knew, but the chairman of the Totalisator Agency Board, according to him, did not know.

Recently, the chairman was called upon to make a reply to certain statements of claim. Of course, in giving this reply he could not say, "To the best of his knowledge and belief" or that, "he had been given to understand." He had to tell the truth. So he then admitted that there was a certain person who had been betting with the board without having established a credit account.

When I brought this to the notice of the Premier by question on the 7th October, I questioned him as follows:—

> Is he aware that in papers available for scrutiny at the Supreme Court it has been admitted on behalf of the Totalisator Agency Board that a client of a T.A.B. agent (a plaintiff in an action against that agent and the board), at no time established a credit account with the board of the kind provided for in section 33 (b) of the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act?

The Premier replied—

> Yes, but the information referred to in the question was not known to the board until 1965 and was therefore not known on the dates mentioned in the previous question.

So it was occurring at the time the Leader of the Opposition alleged that we were aware of this kind of thing and were assured by the Premier, speaking on behalf of the chairman of the board, that all the procedures were being properly observed.

The other evening, when I was making passing reference to this subject, I saw the Minister for Police smiling, and I said to him, "No wonder the Minister smiles!"

His reply was, "I am merely smiling at your interpretation of 'credit' ". My interpretation of credit! The Minister's interpretation is that one can bet in cash without the cash! One can ring up an agent of the T.A.B. and make a cash bet without having any cash! According to him, that is not credit betting at all. Several years ago I tried unsuccessfully for a long time to get the then Minister for Police to table a copy of the legal advice which had been given to him by the firm of Parker & Parker on this very question, and the Minister resisted my request for this advice.

Subsequently, by a very fortuitous circumstance, I became possessed of a copy of this advice and it did not take me long to realise why the then Minister would not make it available. The Minister smiles at my interpretation of "credit" betting. Let us see if he will smile at this legal opinion.

Mr. Craig: I was smiling at the manner in which you got the information.

Mr. TONKIN: Quite honestly, I assure the Minister—perfectly honestly.

Mr. Craig: I do not doubt that at all for one moment.

Mr. TONKIN: If I can get it honestly, I am entitled to get it.

Mr. Craig: It is the way you go about getting it honestly.

Mr. TONKIN: I did not hear the Minister. If I had I would have replied to it. I suggest he call for the file and read this because this is an authenticated copy. It is as follows:—

> Parker & Parker,
> Barristers and Solicitors,
> 21 Howard Street, Perth.
> May 24, 1961.
>
> The Chairman,
> Totalisator Agency Board,
> 918 Hay Street, Perth.
>
> Dear Sir,
>
> re — Appointment of Agents and Establishment of Credits.
>
> After a consideration of sections 17, 33 and 34 of the Act, and regulations 13, 20, 21 and 23, we have reached the following conclusion.
>
> There does not appear to be anything in the Act or any of the regulations to prevent an agent for the Board lending money to a bettor for the purpose of establishing or maintaining his credit account; but the money would have to be lent in cash or by cheque "paid by the Bank" before the bet is accepted;

I interpolate here by saying that definitely is not being done. The chairman knows it is not being done; and the Minister knows it is not being done. Continuing—

> and before accepting the bet the agent would have to perform some overt act, which amounts to a recording of the deposit in the trust account he keeps on behalf of the Board and an acknowledgment of receipt of the money, i.e., the making out of a receipt in the name and on behalf of the Board.
>
> Mr. Maher asked if it would be sufficient for the agent to make out a cheque in favour of the Board. The answer is no, for reasons which appear above.

Yet, that is what is being done. To continue—

> If the agent lends the money to the bettor to open a deposit account he must ensure that an application in writing signed by the applicant has been received by him on behalf of the Board before he accepts any bet.

That is not being observed either. There is widespread evasion of that requirement. A bettor could not do more than maintain his credit account with money borrowed from an agent.

So according to Parker & Parker's interpretation of the law—and I agree with it—a person who wants to bet on credit by telephone must first of all make written application and sign his application and lodge a deposit. Then the agent can lend money to the bettor to maintain that deposit but not increase it. But we have the admission of the chairman that a certain person has been betting by telephone without having established a deposit account at all, and we know that is by no means an isolated case. The Leader of the Opposition said so in 1964. The letter goes on—

> In view of the need for the agent to perform the overt acts mentioned above, we doubt if it would be practicable for the transaction of the loan to be arranged and the bet to be made and accepted by the agent in the same telephone conversation.

But that is being done! People who bet on credit ring up the agent without having established a deposit account and wager so much money on a horse. The agent pays a cheque into the T.A.B. on the Monday morning, and subsequently collects from the bettor if he can. In some cases he cannot.

The Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act is very clear. Section 20 provides that betting with the board is not an infringement of the Criminal Code so long as the Act is being observed. But if the Act is not being observed then an infringement of the Criminal Code occurs and the T.A.B.

is a common gaming house. Subsection (3) of section 20 of the Act reads as follows:—

> A person shall not be prosecuted or convicted, or be liable to prosecution or conviction, or subject to penal consequence under the provisions of the Criminal Code, 1913, or of the Police Act, 1892, by reason of anything done by him under and in accordance with this Act; but subject to this Act, the provisions of that Code and of that Act, relating to common gaming houses and common betting houses, or unlawful betting, are of full force and effect, and as affected by this Act, the Code and the Act are amended and may be cited in accordance with the Schedule to this Act.

Could anything be clearer? So long as the terms of this Statute are being observed when betting is being done, there is no infringement of the Criminal Code. But when a departure does occur and betting is allowed which is contrary to this Act, the protection of that section is removed and the place becomes a common gaming house. How can the Commissioner of Police complain that his men cannot carry out their duties because of actions by the court, when here is a wide field open to him to enforce the law? His answer is that he will not take any action unless directed by the T.A.B. or the Minister for Police.

Of course, that is an impossible situation. We have a law which has to be observed by some persons, and the police will go ahead and enforce that law. But with regard to other laws, the enforcement of which is just as important, the police will take no action unless directed to do so by the Minister or the T.A.B.—the very body which is responsible for flouting the law. The situation is indefensible and is not excused in any way by the answer that to the best of his knowledge and belief this is not being done. We know, and the man in the street knows, hundreds of people who are betting this way know that according to the law they should not be permitted to carry on this type of betting.

The Minister smiles at my interpretation of "credit." My interpretation is that when one is able to complete a transaction without having the cash, then it is on a credit basis. It may be three days or 30 days, three months or six months, but if the cash has not been put up beforehand, then the trading is on credit: If not the person's own credit, then somebody else's credit. Although we were told, when this legislation went through the House, that henceforth credit betting would no longer be legal except against a deposit, that does not mean a thing now. I know one bettor who has bet in excess of £10,000 over the telephone.

Mr. Craig: Is it not your duty and your responsibility to name him?

Mr. TONKIN: The name is known to the Minister.

Mr. Craig: I want you to give me the name.

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier also knows the person's name, and when inquiries were made the answer given was that although this man did not make an application for a deposit, his wife did.

Mr. Craig: The name of the man would be known if you would tell us.

Mr. TONKIN: The name is known to the Minister. Why should I bandy it around the State?

Mr. Craig: Why are you hiding it?

Mr. TONKIN: I am not hiding it; I am doing the decent thing.

Mr. Craig: You would be doing the decent thing to name the man.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister knows the name.

Mr. Hawke: Of course he knows it!

Mr. TONKIN: And the Premier knows it; he saw the report.

Mr. Hawke: I think the Premier has forgotten the name; he has been very busy.

Mr. Brand: I honestly cannot recall the name.

Mr. TONKIN: That does not alter the fact that this type of betting is rife, and it is known to a number of members, too.

Mr. Hawke: I think the Minister for Transport would know the name.

Mr. O'Connor: Tell me the name and I might know the person.

Mr. Brand: If we all know the name, why can't the Deputy Leader of the Opposition mention it?

Mr. TONKIN: My complaint is that it is not for the Government to make a distinction in regard to the enforcement of the law.

I hold no brief for teenage drinking or beer parties, but I do ask myself why the police did not demonstrate some of that alacrity with regard to this breach of the law which they have done in regard to a teenage beer party at Albany. If it is a breach of the law—a breach of the Criminal Code—the police should act and not complain that they cannot act because of decisions of the court. Let me read a reference to this action from the commissioner's report to his Minister. It is as follows:—

> A matter of vital concern to the Police Force in a democratic country in its endeavours to bring criminals to justice, is the steady erosion of police powers.

Yet I am quoting a case where the police have the power and will not exercise it. The reason they will not exercise it is that they are waiting for a direction from the Minister and he will not give it because he has a very strange conception of the meaning of the word "credit."

Mr. Hawke: I do not think he wants to face the T.A.B. people.

Mr. TONKIN: For how long is this to be tolerated? We increase penalties on motorists; we tighten up the Police Force in certain directions and enforce the laws; but in a flagrant breach like this—which is a breach of an undertaking given to Parliament—nothing is done. We were given a very definite assurance by the Government of the time, that this was to be one of the improvements with the T.A.B. inasmuch as individuals would not be able to run into debt by betting on credit and they would therefore not be obliged to make the baker and the butcher go without their money. If I can recall the Minister's words correctly, they were that—

> Henceforth money could be used for the payment for goods instead of for the settlement of credit bets.

That has not been altered at all. We have the situation now where a writ has been issued—I do not know whether it will get to the court or not—on behalf of a man who lost thousands of pounds betting over the telephone.

I cited a case here on a previous occasion where a man wagered £980 by telephone on a horse, and he never had 980 pence. Fortunately the horse won and so no money changed hands. But that man was able to lodge a bet for £980 and he did not possess 980 pence. What is more, his wife had previously gone down to the agency and so informed the agent. That did not make any difference. Could there be a clearer breach of the law? Yet the commissioner complains that he is not able to do his duty for the preservation of the law because he is inhibited by certain actions of other people.

It just amazes me how he could write such stuff in view of his knowledge of the existing situation. I think it is time the Minister for Police smartened up his ideas about the requirements of the law with regard to this matter and whether the law is being observed, and not be satisfied with answers by the chairman "to the best of his knowledge and belief."

I can recall the occasion when a horse won in the Eastern States and paid a very large dividend. I suspect that on that particular race nobody in Western Australia had made a wager on the winner. This was the time when the T.A.B. was illegally running a so-called pool—and I say "illegally" because it was subsequently established by the courts that that was so. *The West Australian* sent a reporter to Mr. Maher and asked him were there any occasions on which no-one had picked the winner of the pool and the T.A.B. had kept all the money. Mr. Chairman, do you know what his answer was? He said he did not know. I ask you, Sir: If you were in charge of an organisation like that, holding some tens of thousands of pounds, and you had a substantial pool going, and you were going to cop the lot if no-one picked it, would you know after the race whether anyone had picked it or not?

Mr. J. Hegney: As simple as that.

Mr. TONKIN: As simple as that! But when the chairman was interrogated several days later his answer was that he did not know. So I have to accept with considerable reservation answers from that source which say, "to the best of my knowledge and belief". This is a scandalous situation which the Government continues to defend, and which the Minister continues to defend without taking positive action to see that the law is observed.

If the Government feels that it would substantially cut the revenue if the law were to be properly observed, it should do the decent thing: come out in the open and say, "We cannot offord to lose this money. We want to cater for this betting, although we told Parliament previously we wanted to stop it. We want to cater for it and so we are going to amend the law to make this possible." If it is done it will be the only place in Australia and New Zealand where this type of betting will be possible.

Mr. Hawke: Legally.

Mr. TONKIN: Yes, legally. But if the Government feels it is essential then it has the numbers to induce Parliament to alter the law to allow to be done lawfully what is now being done unlawfully without any action whatever from the Minister for Police, or the police themselves.

History has shown that instances of contempt for the law lead to more widespread contempt for the law, and ultimately to anarchy. So this situation should not be allowed to continue because it is absolutely indefensible, and I expect the Government to come out and say next session—there is no time now, unfortunately—one of two things: "We are going to enforce the law and ensure that there can be no credit betting without the cash being lodged beforehand, and the bets made against deposits; or we are going to alter the law to permit of credit betting at the discretion of the agent and at the agent's expense, as it is now." Because the Totalisator Agency Board takes up the remarkable attitude that so far as it is concerned all bets are for cash and so the agent puts a chit in the machine to say that he owes the machine a certain amount of money, which he pays by cheque on the following Monday

out of his own pocket if he has not collected from the bettor. That is quite contrary to the law; there is not the slightest doubt about that.

That situation ought to be rectified one way or the other, and I promise the Government that so long as the situation remains as it is I will take advantage, when opportunity offers, to point it out. I remember reading on one occasion of a half-caste whose name was Yappa getting three months' gaol for stealing a stick of chocolate. That trivial offence cannot be compared with this flagrant breach of the law which is occurring every race day, and which makes these agencies common gaming houses under the law, but without any action at all from the Minister. All he does is to defend what is going on and smile at my interpretation of the word "credit".

According to the Minister the word "cash" takes on a new meaning— one can bet for cash without having any cash, because that is what is occurring every race day to the extent of tens of thousands of pounds. There are personally known to me men who ring up and wager £50 each way, or £20 each way without paying money in beforehand; and they go along on settling day and they pay the agent the amount that is due. In some cases in order to get this business, the agent pays the tax.

The punter who goes into the betting shop and has five shillings each way, cash, pays the investment tax himself—and pays at the rate of threepence on a five shillings bet, which is a very substantial rate of tax —but the big bettor who rings up on the telephone, in a number of instances, does not have to pay in the cash beforehand and pays no investment tax because the agent pays it for him. When I say that I am saying what I know and not what I suspect.

Well, I hope that I have said enough to convince some Ministers in the Government, anyway, that this situation cannot be allowed to continue. The law must be observed or else it must be altered to meet the situation, to say nothing of the broken assurance which was given to Parliament when the legislation was first introduced. I regret I have to keep on complaining about this, but I have a responsibility, and I will discharge it without fear or favour.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [5.10 p.m.]: While we are dealing with these estimates I would like to refer to a few matters which I believe may interest the Minister, but I do not want him to think that what I am putting forward is in a critical vein— it is more in the sense of being constructive.

Firstly, I would like to draw the Minister's attention to the fact that in recent times I have had a number of inquiries from policemen who have been trying to get homes in my electorate. They are having difficulty in this connection because, according to the view of the State Housing Commission, they are in a salary bracket which excludes them from being considered for commission homes.

I would like the Minister to give consideration to the building of homes for policemen in various areas, and particularly in my electorate, because there are a number of policemen there who are forced to live outside the district. It does not make for efficiency if the sergeant or inspector has to go 15 or 20 miles to get a policeman to do a local job, and I know some of the policemen not in my area live as far as 10 or 20 miles from their station. To have an efficient police force I think it desirable that the policemen live within a mile or two of their station, if not on the station premises.

I can remember years ago, as a lad, living in Geraldton. In those days—and this is going back quite a number of years now —the Police Department built houses for policemen in that town. I recollect a sergeant named Thomas, and half a dozen other policemen, living in the quarters which were near the drill hall in Geraldton. Just as that was possible over 30 years ago I think it could be done now; and I ask the Minister to look at the possibilities of having residences for policemen built in areas adjacent to where they are working.

There is another matter to which I would like to refer briefly. Recently I have been alarmed at the amount of vandalism around the metropolitan area, particularly at beach and riverside resorts where lifesaving equipment has been destroyed by vandals. I would like to see the Police Department take a greater interest in these matters and keep a closer watch for vandals, not only at seaside resorts but also at river resorts, to reduce vandalism. Not only do vandals destroy lifesaving equipment but they also smash various facilities that are provided at bathing sites for public use.

I cannot see why we could not have a plainclothes section moving around the beaches and river resorts to try to prevent vandalism, just as we have a plainclothes section moving around the metropolitan area on traffic business. I think if such a section could be established it would have a great effect and would reduce vandalism to a minimum. Therefore I hope the Minister will discuss the matter with the commissioner to see whether it is possible to provide a plainclothes squad for this purpose.

I have also noticed that as the youth clubs have become stronger in various parts of my district there has been a reduction in the amount of vandalism, and I would commend the Minister and the police boys' clubs on the work that is

being done to help young people. I congratulate all those associated with these clubs for the help they are giving.

The Minister commented this evening on the vehicle examination equipment that is being provided at various traffic offices around the metropolitan area, and I understood him to say there are 80,000 vehicle transfers each year. That is a lot of cars for us to have to take notice of.

I would like to point out, however, that the traffic office is not well situated in my electorate. Indeed, I have heard people complaining that if one car is parked in front of the traffic office at Midland anybody who parks on either side of the car is committing a breach of the Traffic Act, because motorists are not supposed to park within 20 ft. of the building alignment. As I have said, if anybody parks in front of the traffic office, or on either side of a car which happens to be parked there, he is committing a breach of the Traffic Act.

That is something which the Minister should look at; because if we are to build up equipment to check vehicles in the traffic yards we will find there will be more than three or four vehicles to be looked at. It may be opportune, therefore, to have an entirely new location for the traffic office. This should be so for two reasons. It should be so not only because the present traffic office is not suitable, but also because there is a tremendous build-up of traffic in the eastern districts—in Midland and the surrounding areas, going out as far as Bullsbrook, Mundaring, Wundowie, and places like that. The Minister will be well advised to have a look at the position with regard to the traffic office at Midland, particularly when a person commits a breach of the Act if he parks in front of the office or alongside a car which is already parked there.

I do not think I need draw the attention of the Minister to any great extent to the question of the traffic going through Midland on Friday evening and Saturday morning. I do think, however, that a better method should be adopted to handle the traffic in this area. On Friday evening, when there is a holdup at Helena Street the traffic banks up almost half a mile. I would emphasise that invariably there is no policeman on duty to control the traffic except for about an hour on Saturday morning. Something should be done to handle this traffic more effectively than is the case at present.

I see traffic lights going up all over the place in the metropolitan area. At least 20 or 30 traffic lights must have been erected in the metropolitan area since I first started to draw attention to the requirements of the Midland area. We find that east of Bayswater there are no traffic lights at all. It would appear that in the matter of traffic lights we are getting the same scant consideration that we have received in relation to many other essential requirements in the eastern districts.

As one who has resided in the area for some years, and as one who is responsible to some extent to electors who come in and out of Midland, I would like the Minister to have a look at the possibility of installing traffic signals on the highway between Bayswater and the hills district. I see no reason why there should be traffic lights in half a dozen places around the metropolitan area while there are none at all in the area I have mentioned.

The fact may be overlooked by some people, but there are between 10,000 and 15,000 new vehicles coming on the road each year, and these create traffic problems which never existed 10 years ago. I know that for many years I could come to Parliament House with safety. I could cross over Havelock Street, down into Parliament Place and continue to Parliament House without any difficulty. I find it safer now, nine times out of 10, to come up Havelock Street, go with the traffic down Hay Street, and then turn up Harvest Terrace. The point I am trying to make is that in certain areas around Midland there is only one lane marked out.

I would draw the Minister's attention to a particular area which is well known on the corner of Morrison Road and Great Northern Highway. This is a very busy intersection. Situated on it there are two service stations; a convent school with 500 or 600 children on the other corner, and a tyre retreading establishment on another corner. There are vehicles and pedestrians moving in all directions, but in spite of this there is only one pedestrian way marked out.

In my opinion there should be four pedestrian ways provided at that corner together with traffic signals. If the Minister cannot see his way clear to placing a pedestrian way on the corner of Helena Street and the Great Eastern Highway near the Midland Post Office, he might consider placing one at the corner to which I have referred.

No doubt we will hear the old cry that nothing can be done at the corner of the town hall because of the town planning which is still under consideration. That has been the answer for the last 10 years. Nevertheless, I would like the Minister to consider providing some safety ways for the pedestrians on the corner of Great Eastern Highway and Morrison Road.

Some members this evening referred to the fact that the Minister ought to adopt a system—which has been adopted in other

places—of having police cars painted a particular colour. I think the member for Darling Range was given credit for having raised this matter in the House. I read, in the Guildford-Bassendean news sheet three months ago that this particular innovation had been adopted in America.

I have already suggested to the Minister, and I will do so again, that the more effective way to overcome the difficulties in regard to speeding and other traffic breaches is to have what I have referred to as "semi-silent cops", distributed all over the metropolitan area, and throughout the country districts, where a policeman is occasionally situated in the flesh on his motorcycle at the various "silent cop" signs. I think that would be more effective than a yellow or a pink car moving around the metropolitan area. I leave the thought with the Minister as being something which is worth while trying.

I have advocated in this House for many years, and I will continue to advocate it until it is an accomplished fact, that there should be overhead bridges for the public to use at various points in the metropolitan area where the density of traffic causes concern. I have already mentioned that the *Daily News* or *The West Australian* newspapers have advocated that this be done in the vicinity and at the back of the office of *The West Australian*, for the safety of their employees. The latest advocate for an overhead bridge, or underway, is the brewery. I understand the brewery authorities want to build underways and overways in the vicinity of the brewery, for the safety of the brewery employees.

I think they are on sound ground, and I will do all I can to encourage them and help them achieve their objective. As I have said before, however, I feel some of these overways should be established to protect the public approaching and leaving various metropolitan railway stations. This is particularly necessary in the case of school children who have to cross over highways. There are times of a morning when I hold my breath when I see 600 or 700 children moving across the traffic at West Midland station, very often behind the bus which brings them into school. It is necessary to have these overways because of the continued growth in motor vehicle traffic. I feel that we are our brother's keepers, whether we like it or not. I know there are some who think otherwise, and they are entitled to their opinion.

The Minister drew attention to an item in the *Daily News* this evening which pointed out that the Duke of Edinburgh was greatly distressed at the number of accidents on the highways. I give the Minister full marks for drawing attention to that news item. I also wish to draw attention to an item which appeared in this evening's *Daily News* and which, under the heading, "Stupidity At Gaol, Doctor Says," reads as follows:—

> A Perth eye specialist in Perth Police Court today criticised the Fremantle Gaol authorities.
>
> Dr. Frederick William Simpson described as "ridiculous" and "stupid" the prison's action in turning an alcoholic on to the streets after three months' gaol with only 18/-.

The news item went on to say that in American parlance that particular man would be referred to as a bum. That might be one way of putting it, and one way of taking away sympathy from the unfortunate person concerned. I would like to say, however, that not all such people come within the category of bum when they leave Fremantle gaol. I have had to stand bail for people in Fremantle gaol who should never have been there in the first place; they were possibly committed for a simple breach of the Traffic Act—like pulling an unlicensed vehicle behind their own. We should try to institute something through the Prison Gates Reform Committee, the Prisons Department, or the Chief Secretary's Department, to give these men a second chance.

When they leave Fremantle gaol they do so with a slur on their characters, and it is hard for them to find employment. I remember sitting behind two men who had just come out of Fremantle gaol while they were debating at which station they should get off to make a fresh start. Eventually they got out at Subiaco.

Something should be done along the lines followed overseas. On the TV recently there was a screening which showed that certain gaols were permitting prisoners to take up employment and carry out manufacturing work within the precincts of the gaol. These days, when we are striving to rehabilitate people, I feel that something should be done by one or other of the Government departments to rehabilitate the people to whom I have referred.

In this evening's *Daily News* Dr. Simpson advocated that a certain prisoner should be sent to Karnet Rehabilitation Centre for three to six months. We in this Parliament should do everything possible to enable prisoners who are released to obtain immediate employment. They should be sent to jobs immediately on release, and be rehabilitated from the start. Many of these people have something to live down, and if they are not given a helping hand they will fall to pieces again. We should not wait until prominent people, like Dr. Simpson, refer to the conditions of Fremantle gaol before advocating that something be done for the inmates. Many a man who in his earlier years had been in gaol has made his mark in life. I can point to several

in this city. I hope the Minister will do everything possible to rehabilitate the people who are released from gaol.

As this is the opportune time, I thought I would draw attention to the various matters which affect my electorate—housing for the police, traffic safety, crosswalks, overhead bridges, the treatment of inmates in prisons, and the finding of employment for them on their release. This is the opportune time for members to speak on the matters which affect their electorates, and to bring them to the attention of the Government. As far as I am concerned not one of these is a minor matter.

I also draw attention to the appalling accidents which take place on our roads day after day, particularly during the winter. An old person might leave his house to purchase a bottle of milk; but owing to the darkness and the wet conditions he might be run down by a motor vehicle and be killed: and many an old person has been injured in such circumstances and taken to Royal Perth Hospital.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [5.32 p.m.]: At the outset let me congratulate the Minister on the excellent way he introduced his estimates covering the various fields embraced by his portfolios. I did not intend to take part in the debate, but the member for Swan, who has just resumed his seat, drew my attention to one subject on which I wish to make some comments. I am particularly interested in the work that is done at the Fremantle gaol to rehabilitate the inmates.

At various shops certain trades are taught. These shops are well conducted, and it is an eye-opener to see the different facets of the work which the inmates are given an opportunity to learn. I refer in particular to the shoe section; the clothing shop, where complete and beautiful suits are turned out; the woodwork section; the bakery; the cookhouse; the art section; the psychological section, where most delicate work is performed in expressing the inner sentiments of the inmates; and the education section, where all facets of education for higher examinations are taught. I might have missed one or two sections; but lastly I draw the attention of members to the metal shop.

This shop intrigues me. It is quite noticeable that the products which it turns out are of a high standard, and they include pans for latrines, wheelbarrows, and a great number of other articles. Those responsible for turning out these goods should be complimented. In my view this section could be extended. I was a little surprised to learn that in certain of the Eastern States vehicle number plates, street name plates, and house number plates are turned out by the inmates of prisons.

I understand that to install a press in Fremantle gaol, which is suitable to turn out number plates, would cost approximately £6,600. I am told such a press is driven by steam, and the power used there is steam, so there is no difficulty in obtaining steam as a source of power. This press could be installed in a building adjacent to the metal shop, because at that spot there is quite a lot of room.

Mr. Jamieson: Do you not think it is a waste of money to erect more buildings there?

Mr. GAYFER: I do not think that in that particular spot any harm would be done in erecting an additional building to house the press. There is enough room.

Mr. Jamieson: Would it not be better to build another gaol at another site?

Mr. GAYFER: I shall deal with that aspect shortly. I am now dealing with the security gaol at Fremantle. The installation of a press would not necessarily make money for the Government by having the number plates produced in that institution; but it would certainly save the Government a lot of money and give the inmates a chance to try out their skills, because the products which they now turn out are of a high standard. There is no reason why number plates should be produced by private institutions in the State, and they could quite easily be made in the Fremantle Prison.

I am told that through the adoption of this method in Victoria the Government saves about £40,000 a year. I bring this matter to the attention of the Minister and urge him to consider the proposition I have put forward. It seems to me that a press could be installed in the Fremantle gaol quite easily. This is the only piece of machinery that is needed for the production of number plates, because there is already in that prison a very good guillotine machine for cutting steel plates.

Referring to the interjection of the member for Beeloo that it would be better to build another gaol, I agree that possibly it would be better; but there is still room for the Fremantle institution to be retained as the No. 1 security gaol. I am speaking as a layman, because I have no knowledge except that gained from personal observation; but I believe that it is unsavoury to have a gaol within a built-up area. However, it seems to me that a gaol must be established near to the homes of the warders.

People do not clamour for jobs as warders in prisons, and these jobs would be applied for only if they did not entail much travelling, and if the institutions were near to the homes of the applicants. If a gaol were to be built some miles out of town, then the cost of transport of the lawyers from their offices to the gaol would be exorbitant. Furthermore, hardship

would be imposed on the wives and children of the inmates during visiting days. If a new gaol were to be built out in the bush it would not be as accessible to visitors and others, as Fremantle gaol.

Mr. Jamieson: Hardship is now caused with weekend visiting.

Mr. GAYFER: That is true. I am now talking about the proximity of the gaol to the population, and not the hours of visiting, which is a different subject. The Fremantle gaol is handy to transport, and there are other good reasons why it should be retained as a security institution for a long time to come. Another prison might have to be built, but the No. 1 security gaol will be at Fremantle.

When I visited the gaol there were 420 male inmates and 25 female inmates. This was a most interesting experience for me, and I found that the inmates who were working in the metal shop and other shops were very keen on their work. The products which they turn out are of a high standard, and their record is a good one. I would ask the Minister to install a press in this prison, because if the savings were as high as they are in Victoria, then it would soon pay for itself. Further, it would give some industry to those who are serving sentences behind the walls.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.44 p.m.]: At the risk of starting a chain reaction I wish to comment on the matter raised by the member for Avon, who said he had not intended to speak until the member for Swan made some remark about the Fremantle gaol. I would not like anyone to think, from the tenor of the debate, that the Fremantle Prison should be retained any longer than is necessary. It is a disgrace to the community, and the system of penology adopted there is years behind modern systems. To expect the Fremantle gaol to be retained with its rotten sanitary and other unsatisfactory conditions is beyond a joke.

No matter how much any member might be impressed by the conditions of the metal shop in Fremantle gaol, he should bear in mind that as long as this institution remains there is no way of improving the accommodation except by pulling the gaol down. Surely the building of a new prison on the same site would not be countenanced under any town planning scheme!

Successive Governments of this State have taken too long to make a decision to build a new gaol. There is no need for it to be miles away to cause lawyers inconvenience. I think a site was set aside at Coogee, an area that is not very closely inhabited, but is quite suitable for a new gaol. There is always, of course, a reaction from the public as there was in the case of Karnet, although I believe that the situation there has settled down fairly well now. When the proposal to establish Karnet was first made known, there was a reaction from the public in that area. Those concerned said that they would be unduly involved with escapees, and the undesirable customers in that area.

I think the same reaction was voiced at Pardelup many years ago when that settlement was established. But in the main in recent times, with a few exceptions, the local farmers have come to accept Pardelup as a farm in the district. Often by arrangement, neighbouring farmers obtain the assistance of prisoners and, generally, they are accepted in the community. I think they even exhibit a considerable amount in the local agricultural show and are well respected for their efforts in propagating efficient herds, particularly the poll Hereford variety of stock.

This is all very encouraging, but presents a shocking comparison with the people incarcerated in Fremantle. If the honourable member has seen the tailor's shop and the printer's shop, he must have noticed the great number of men doing nothing because there is nothing for them to do. There are about 12 men trying to operate a printing machine which, in the trade, would be operated by one man. That is not good enough. We will never rehabilitate these people by adopting such methods.

The suggestion that Fremantle gaol should remain or that any additions should be made is a bad one. A move should be made, and very soon, to at least commence building a new major security prison in this State.

Mr. Gayfer interjected.

Mr. JAMIESON: It is; and that could be one of the first things put in the new gaol to save it being shifted. We are getting a little tired of seeing things shifted, and a lot of money is spent on such work. This is, of course, sidetracking a little; but if we look at the top of St. George's Terrace to see the activities concerning the Barracks building, we need not wonder at the cry of the Government that it has no money with which to do anything. I referred previously to the block of latrines being built on the same site. We have always been told the problem is the lack of money. There must be enough money. The way the Government is going this year it looks as though it will more than balance the budget because of the increase in various taxes.

The vital need in the community is for a modern security prison of which we can be proud. Half the time when overseas penologists seek permission to inspect the gaol at Fremantle they are refused admission. This is only because we are ashamed of the state of affairs there. Members of

the Press are often refused admission for the same reason. It is certainly nothing of which we can be proud. It is a gaol which was built in convict days when no-one thought of reformation. I say it is antiquated and has outlived its usefulness. We should establish another security section before many years have passed. If it is possible, of course, we should make provision for the prisoners to be usefully occupied in work such as the making of number plates. I would be the first one to go along with such a scheme.

We are, however, faced with far greater problems than that. I interjected when the honourable member was speaking to say that he was obviously not a shareholder of Sheridan's or he would be aware of the considerable reaction there would be from the trade. When at an earlier stage the suggestion was made that some of the prisoners from Fremantle could be gainfully employed building their own prison, there was a vast reaction from all those concerned in the building trade. They thought it was not the prerogative of those people to engage in such work. Exactly what is the prerogative of the prisoners, I would not like to say.

I would remind members that the first Government printing works in this State was established in the Fremantle gaol. Probably the machines the prisoners are using now are the original ones installed for this purpose.

We must give a lot more thought to the development of a modern form of penal retention instead of dealing piecemeal with the problem. The prisoners can naturally turn out a good quality product because they have plenty of time in which to do so. Most of those who desire to rehabilitate themselves will concentrate on turning out a good product. Whether or not this can be done economically, is a different proposition, and whether or not a gaol can ultimately be made an economic concern, paying for itself, is doubtful.

This is a problem with which the community will always be faced. However, I believe many avenues of work exist in which prisoners could be usefully engaged instead of, as I mentioned during a previous debate, spending their time sweeping floors, cleaning doorknobs, chopping wood, and attending to the very compact and confined garden, which is all that is done at present. It is high time that we provided work which would keep the minds of the prisoners occupied. If we considered for a moment the days of the chain gangs and that sort of thing, we would realise that, although we would not for one moment advocate a return to such conditions, the prisoners were occupied, which is not the case today.

Instead of going forwards we have slipped backwards, and the situation needs to be improved, and this cannot be done by the piecemeal addition of facilities at Fremantle. It is essential that a fresh start be made to provide new security detention barracks.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [5.53 p.m.]: I do not want to unnecessarily prolong this debate, but I would like to make one or two comments as the result of the speech just made by the member for Beeloo. I agree with much of what the honourable member said. However, he stated that he did not think we would be able to establish a gaol which would pay for itself. I believe we have a glorious opportunity in Western Australia at the moment to do precisely that. The State Government over the last few days through the Press has indicated that it is experiencing some difficulty with Wundowie. It has been suggested that this is a millstone around the neck of the State Government and the Government is looking for ways and means of removing this burden from the taxpayers of Western Australia.

Mr. Tonkin: Given away the subsidy idea?

Mr. GRAYDEN: There is doubt about Wundowie's future. That is the first point that emerges. Here is a glorious opportunity to turn an existing business into a prison. As the member for Beeloo has pointed out, the present system of incarceration we have in Western Australia went out in some countries, such as the United States, in the 1880s. Yet we continue with it here. That is an extraordinary situation. Other countries in the world, notably America, are going out of their way to build, at considerable expense to the taxpayers of the countries concerned, huge clothing and other factories in which prisoners can be gainfully employed.

In Wundowie we have a big industry where the labour would be of an arduous nature thus being eminently suitable for people who have committed various offences and therefore been confined to prison. It is situated in an area away from towns, so there could be no objection on that score. Instead of being a liability to the State, and instead of the Government having to spend the £500,000 which is included in these estimates to incarcerate prisoners and maintain them in the prisons, such as the one at Fremantle, together with the necessary expenditure of huge amounts to build alternative accommodation for the prisoners, we would transform Wundowie undoubtedly into a paying concern.

Mr. J. Hegney: You want to restore State socialism?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I say: Let us do something useful with Wundowie. Use it to rehabilitate prisoners instead of confining them in the Fremantle gaol.

The member for Beeloo said that we should establish in Western Australia a modern prison, and of course we should provide a place where prisoners can be gainfully employed and employed to the advantage of the State. What better place to do this than at Wundowie? It would be the perfect solution to the problem which has been outlined, and I submit it hoping that the Government will take it into consideration when it is investigating ways of making Wundowie a useful concern.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [5.57 p.m.]: I thank all members who contributed to the debate concerning the various departments referred to in the introduction of these estimates. I am sorry I smiled at the Deputy Leader of the Opposition some weeks ago, because it must have registered with him. I will have to be very hesitant in the future.

Mr. Brand: Don't you ever smile again!

Mr. CRAIG: I did not say anything. I merely smiled at his interpretation and he interpreted my smile in the right way. We have heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition speak on credit betting several times over the years. He has a very firm opinion on the subject, the board has one, I have one, and the Government has one. The Government's and mine coincide, of course, with the board's. I recall that either last year or the year before the Deputy Leader of the Opposition submitted a very strong argument in support of his point of view. This was towards the end of the session, and I gave him an undertaking then that if it was felt by the Government that the board was breaking the law on the lines suggested by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition we would not hesitate for one moment to amend the law.

As a result of this undertaking an extensive and exhaustive investigation was made and we were assured we were not breaking the law; and that is still our opinion. I cannot go any further than that, and I do not want to say much more on this particular matter. I will say, in fairness to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that I appreciate his persistence on this particular point. Who knows?—We may come together on this at some time in the future!

The points made by the member for Swan will all be referred to the Commissioner of Police for investigation. These points concern vandalism, Midland traffic, and so on and so forth, and the problem of housing for police. This question of housing for Government employees, of course, presents some problems, not only with police, but with other departments; and the Government is doing its best to overcome the situation.

I know the member for Swan has gone to considerable trouble to make inquiries into the matter of overways for the safety of pedestrians. I have had correspondence with him during the year as a result of an exhaustive inquiry made by the Main Roads Department. I am hopeful it will not be long before some overways—more than one, anyhow—will be constructed in parts of the metropolitan area.

The honourable member referred to an item in this evening's paper concerning an alcoholic who was discharged from the Fremantle gaol. I read this item with some concern, and I can assure the honourable member, and the Committee, that an inquiry will be made into the circumstances of this particular incident; because I am sure we all agree with the opinion expressed by the honourable member. After all, despite this man's faults, he is still a human and he is entitled to humane treatment. Such treatment might have been offered to him, or attempts might have been made to give it to him, but he might not have accepted it. However, I will inquire into the circumstances. We have various boards, associations, and committees, that look after the welfare of such types of people as the honourable member referred to.

The member for Avon dealt with trade activity at the Fremantle gaol. I am pleased to learn of his opinion of that particular centre, despite the fact that the member for Beeloo disagrees with it. The question of occupation for the inmates of the gaol does present some problems. I feel sure the authorities are doing all they possibly can towards maintaining the interests of the prisoners in occupations of some form or other—occupations that will be of benefit to them when they are discharged.

I feel we all agree that the system of penal servitude that we employ at Karnet is the answer to the problem as seen by the member for Beeloo and other members. But here we have to hasten slowly, as the Government is restricted by finance. We are however, doing our utmost to provide this new form of treatment for the prisoners, and I am sure that in time the numbers in Fremantle will be considerably reduced because of the planning that is now in hand. In addition to Karnet, the new gaol at Albany will help to relieve the position considerably; and here, of course, the prisoners will be housed in a new building costing something like £350,000.

We have the site selected for a new gaol: I think it is at Lake Thompson, or somewhere else near Coogee Beach, where the new gaol will be constructed. I would like to see fairly immediate action taken to this end, particularly as far as the women's section is concerned, although their conditions are quite all right at Fremantle. I have inspected them myself, their section

is clean and tidy, and they are provided with certain amenities which are helpful to them. Nevertheless, I feel they should be divorced entirely from the present Fremantle Prison.

The thought has gone through my mind that here is an opportunity to make a commencement on the new women's section at Lake Thompson by using prison labour on it. If we could do that, it would give some occupation to the prisoners and, at the same time, assist the Government towards providing new quarters much more quickly than if it proceeded in the normal way, bearing in mind, of course, the acute labour position at present.

This also applies to the suggestion put forward by the member for Avon in regard to number plates. I had inquiries made several months ago into the question of using reflectorised number plates. Some members felt this would be an additional safety precaution if it was made compulsory for such plates to be used on motor vehicles. In going into the matter I found they would cost something like 15s. to 17s. as compared with the normal 7s. 6d. that a number plate costs today. It was felt that this extra impost would not be received too favourably by the motorist.

Mr. Graham: You have done far better than that!

Mr. CRAIG: I thought, "Well, here is an opportunity with regard to these reflectorised number plates. They can be turned out at Fremantle Prison and the eventual cost to the motorist will be no more than the cost of the normal type of number plates now in use." But here again we would be up against a certain problem. Nevertheless, all these manual training matters are being studied by the department; and the prisoners themselves are contributing greatly towards reducing the cost of running certain institutions in the metropolitan area and in the country as a result of the articles they manufacture for those institutions.

The member for Beeloo painted a very grim situation so far as conditions at Fremantle are concerned. Here I must disagree with him. After all it is a security prison and prisoners expect a certain form of treatment. Nevertheless the treatment they do receive is very humane. Anyone who goes to Fremantle gaol must be impressed with its cleanliness, and also by the food that is supplied to the prisoners. No-one could complain about it in any way at all. I have even tried it myself; and I think the member for Fremantle will agree with me when I say that the conditions applying to the prisoners there are beyond criticism. Some of the long-term prisoners, in fact, make themselves very comfortable in their cells; and the warders, for their part, do all they possibly can towards assisting the inmates.

Here I would like to offer a word of praise to all those organisations and committees that do such wonderful work in rehabilitating prisoners on their discharge. I thank members for their contributions to the debate on these Estimates.

Vote (Chief Secretary) put and passed.

Votes: Registry and Friendly Societies, £55,281; Observatory, £18,415; Prisons, £471,901; Police, £2,626,976—put and passed.

Votes: State Housing Commission, £5; Labour, £41,930; Industrial Commission, £53,796; Scaffolding £25,344; Factories, £47,918; Weights and Measures, £28,171; State Insurance Office, £5—

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Housing) [6.8 p.m.]: The last time the Housing Commission estimates were introduced into this Chamber by a Minister for Housing was in 1958. I have had a look at the speech made then by the present member for Balcatta, who was the Minister for Housing at the time, and I appreciate that with an amount of £5 at his disposal he would talk mainly in generalities.

I have some statistical figures which I think should be recorded so that members may consider them later, but I would like to make some initial comments on the functions of the State Housing Commission as it has been operating over the years and on some of the problems that face it, and on the ways and means by which it endeavours to overcome the very great problem of the provision of housing in a State the size of Western Australia.

The commission has at its disposal an amount of approximately £11,000,000 for the provision of housing throughout Western Australia, and this money is available to it from a number of sources. The first source, of course, is the Commonwealth Government, and the money comes in the way of a loan of about £3,600,000 per annum. This money is granted to the State at a reduced interest rate—1 per cent. below the long-term bond rate—and is used for the purpose of providing mainly rental accommodation.

The commission does not have complete control of the £3,600,000. As part of the scheme to encourage home ownership, the Commonwealth Government requires that 30 per cent. of this money be made available to prospective home buyers via the agency of building societies, and the like. Approximately £1,250,000 per annum is distributed through building societies for this purpose.

Mr. Davies: What do they charge?

Mr. O'NEIL: They are limited to a charge of ¼ per cent. for administration. The method of encouraging additional finance for home ownership is by requesting the building societies to attract capital from other sources in order to increase the total amount available.

The building societies' advisory committee determines that in the initial establishment of a terminating building society a grant will be made of approximately £30,000 to £40,000 in the first year; and it will continue to give a similar amount in the second year. Providing the building society has indicated its ability to obtain money from other sources, assistance continues. Where these societies fail to attract money from other sources, then second thoughts are given to the matter of making this money available from the State Housing Commission.

The money that the building societies can borrow is covered by other legislation —the Housing Loan Guarantee Act, and the like. So the principal lenders to the building societies are well covered, and the building societies themselves are well covered provided they lend the money in accordance with the rules and regulations laid down.

We did have legislation before the House this year to enable money through the building societies to be made available to a much larger range of people, including people who were possibly a little outside the area which the commission has a franchise to assist.

Reverting to the £3,600,000 of Commonwealth loan moneys, I point out that the State Government is required to have approximately 5 per cent. at call for housing members of the Armed Forces, if so required. It is with some satisfaction that we can report there is little difficulty in getting rid of this money to house people who many members of the public imagine do not live here.

The second source of finance, of course, is from State loan funds, and this money is spent under what is known as the State Housing Agreement.

Mr. Graham: The State Housing Act.

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes; and it is principally allocated in the field of home purchase. This money is made available at a slightly higher rate of interest. A great deal of it, of course, is spent in the metropolitan region where building costs are not quite as high as they are in the country. This to some extent offsets the higher interest rate. There are a considerable number of State Housing houses built for purchase in country areas; and most of the rental activity in the country is carried out with Commonwealth funds because the lower interest rate allows for the higher building cost.

The commission, too, has funds available from its own resources—the revolving fund. The commission makes a little surplus; and on occasions when land cannot economically be used for commission purposes it endeavours to sell the land and use the funds to provide more houses in the field for which it is normally required to cater.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. O'NEIL: Before the tea suspension I was referring to the source of money available to the State Housing Commission to enable it to carry out its activities, and I think I was referring to the money that was made available from the Commonwealth to the State so that the work of the commission could be carried out, and I think, too, in answer to an interjection by a member who asked me what building societies were permitted to charge for administration charges, I said it was one-quarter per cent. This should have been three-quarters per cent.

Mr. Fletcher: That is over and above other charges?

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes. The third source of finance for the activities of the State Housing Commission is, I suppose, strictly speaking, not directly related to the Housing Commission inasmuch as, and peculiarly to this State in regard to war service homes finance, the State Housing Commission acts as agent for the Director of the War Service Homes Division. However, for the erection of war service homes in this State, approximately £3,000,000 per year has been allocated, and the State Housing Commission administers the War Service Homes Act under the directions of the Director of the War Service Homes Division.

At this point it may be as well to indicate the degree of activity that has been going on in country areas. Quite often the commission is criticised for not taking sufficient interest in housing in country areas, but I think, when I have related the facts, members will realise that the commission is doing more than its share in providing houses for people in the country.

Firstly, through the medium of building societies for the erection of purchase homes, the commission has encouraged the establishment of terminating building societies in the country. It has, this year, requested metropolitan based building societies to allocate a further 5 per cent. of their finances for the building of houses in the country in areas where country building societies do not exist. So I feel that something approximating 24 per cent. to 26 per cent. of money available to building societies could be used in the country.

The allocation of money for country housing, too, through the R. & I. Bank has been increased. Previously the commission allocated £50,000 per annum to country housing through the R. & I. Bank, but this year the amount has been increased to £100,000. I think I can risk the wrath of metropolitan members by saying that the activity in country housing in this financial year has been increased from 450 units to 550 units of housing. Something in excess of 30 per cent. of the commission's funds is spent in country areas, and when it is recognised that approximately one quarter of the demand

comes from country areas, it is evident that the commission is doing its best to stabilise country communities and so assist the Government in its aim to achieve decentralisation.

The commission also undertakes the construction of buildings for other Government instrumentalities; for projects such as housing at Exmouth and Koolyanobbing, and for the fulfilment of special agreements entered into by the Government such as the Laporte agreement and the like. So the commission generally acts as the major building agency in this State; and, in fact, undertakes, through its various activities, some 25 per cent. of all the home-building activity in Western Australia. When this is compared with the national average of 17 per cent. for Government activity in housing, it can be seen that the Western Australian State Housing Commission can hold its head high among all other State housing authorities. This is not to say that we are meeting the demand by a long way, but the commission is certainly playing as large a part—if not a greater part—in housing activity in Western Australia as a commission in any other State.

Perhaps the greatest degree of criticism comes from local authorities and private members when a request is made for the erection of more houses in one town than in another country area. This is perfectly understandable, but I think if members will take a look at the programme that is laid down for the erection of homes in several areas, they will appreciate that there is little chance of any private member getting an extra house erected in his district unless he can persuade another member to forgo the erection of a house in his electorate.

The usual procedure is to list all houses to be built in country areas where a demand exists, and often places where no applications are forthcoming. The commission has regard for the housing in the town concerned and the vacancy rate and, having some knowledge of the developmental projects of the local authority, developmental projects occasioned by Government activity, and other projects in the private sector, a fair estimate can be made of the actual housing requirements of every town in every district.

This is listed in the first column against the list of country towns which could perhaps be called the demand column for want of a better name, and allow me to assure members of the Committee that this total in the demand column well exceeds the capacity to build homes from the funds available. It then becomes a straightout exercise in arithmetical proportion to determine how equitably an allocation can be made of the total capacity to build over the whole range of districts. There are, of course, times when changes are required to be made to the programme, and so it is reviewed half way through the financial year in order to determine the rate of building, the rate of dissipation of funds, and, on some occasions, if it is found to be impracticable to carry out the programme in a certain area because of labour and material difficulties and so on, the money is not saved until the next financial year but diverted to erect houses in other areas.

Before concluding my general remarks I want to say that in the last several months I have spent a considerable number of weekends touring State Housing Commission estates, together with housing officers and representatives of local authorities, assessing the type of house that is being erected, the requirements of various areas, and getting a general and overall picture of housing in this State. Whilst I can say it is in a healthy condition, I must say there are some aspects which I consider deserve some comment. One of them is that there appears to be, to my mind, at any rate, insufficient ex-servicemen applying for finance for war service homes to be built in country towns. I have made this comment in many country areas, and it is usual for a representative of the R.S.L. to be present in each of those areas. These men have shown a great interest in my remarks, and there has been some indication in the Press that there are certain difficulties associated with the obtaining of this finance.

I would point out to members that finance for war service homes is a repatriation benefit, and some people who criticise their ineligibility to obtain finance through the State Housing Commission for this purpose are, in fact, people who, in strict terms, are not eligible for war service financial assistance. Further, in many other instances such people require finance for improving, enlarging, and renovating their houses which, in fact, is not the true function of the War Service Homes Division.

Funds cannot be allocated by the War Service Homes Division for such purposes. The funds that are made available represent a repatriation benefit to ex-servicemen. The principal was to provide a fair and reasonable loan over a long term for the provision of prime houses. It is surprising the criticism that is coming from people who complain that they are unable to obtain finance for improvement work associated with their own houses, but which is well and truly outside the scope and the function of the War Service Homes Division.

Mr. Davies: Are you having any trouble getting rid of your war service allocation?

Mr. O'NEIL: No, not really. We have a standing rule at the State Housing Commission that anyone who sends a pound back to Canberra at the conclusion of the

financial year goes with it. So honourable members can be sure that we dispose of all the funds that are made available to us.

Mr. Bickerton: It would be a good way of getting a trip.

Mr. O'NEIL: We do our best to expend all the money that is allocated to us.

Mr. J. Hegney: The director of the War Service Homes Division has some say in the matter.

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes; we are subject to direction from the Director of the War Service Homes Division. We do exercise some minor discretionary powers in certain areas provided the commissioner can be satisfied that the equity in the home to be purchased with the money made available from this fund does exist. We do enter the picture at times on such occasions and act, virtually, as sub-guarantor for the Director of the War Service Homes Division for the building of some houses which may not be acceptable to him according to the strict letter of the law.

Mr. Davies: Why is there a nine-months' wait for a secondhand house?

Mr. O'NEIL: I was coming to that point. There has been an artificial delay in financing secondhand houses. In making available funds for housing, Governments have a responsibility as part of the commission's activities—and, in fact, the activities of any Housing Commission—to maintain a steady flow of capital into the building industry. One can imagine what would happen immediately when the 1st July arrived if all available funds were released. The building industry would be operating at full capacity, and the only way a person would have any chance of obtaining a house would be to pay a little more and then, towards the last four or five months of the year there could be a falling-off of building activity.

This is also due to financial stocktaking on the part of the industry at the end of the financial year. The commission undertakes what I believe is a true responsibility of government to maintain a steady flow of capital into the building industry and to ensure that the economy of the industry remains stable throughout the year.

I was successful in making an approach to the Commonwealth Minister for Housing so that Western Australia could be given some consideration in this matter; that is, the making available of finance for secondhand homes from the allocation of war service homes finance, and I am pleased to announce that as from the 1st November this year, because we have a little extra money, there is no waiting time for such houses other than the time it takes to enter into the necessary arrangements. There is now no waiting time for the purchase of secondhand homes for ex-servicemen provided the home meets the requirements of the standard set for the equity in that home.

It is very dangerous for an ex-serviceman to enter into an agreement to purchase a home and then expect to get war service finance at 3¾ per cent. interest without making prior arrangements with the Director of the War Service Homes Division, through the State Housing Commission as his agent. A number of people have been entering into agreements for the purchase of existing homes and then, when making application for finance to purchase the home through the War Service Homes Division, they find they are ineligible for assistance because the division will not finance a loan for the purpose of discharging an existing mortgage on a second hand house. Whilst there is a provision in the War Service Homes Act to advance money to people for this purpose, it has not been in operation since 1951.

Again, for the same reason, the money was used for two purposes: the repatriation benefit to ex-servicemen and to stimulate the building industry. By using finance for the discharge of existing mortgages nothing more is achieved by way of additional houses. Members will recall that in the Housing Loan Guarantee Act we have made provision that the Treasurer, on the recommendation of the Minister for Housing may, from time to time allow building societies to lend money for the purchase of secondhand houses—if we may use that term—but this will have to be watched carefully, because there is a secondary function of a community housing authority to ensure a steady flow of finance into the building industry.

There is one point I must make and that is to pay a tribute to the officers of the Housing Commission for the way they have carried out their work. Public housing has come into being basically since the end of World War II. The commission grew up out of the old Workers' Homes Board and it had a difficult function to perform in organising moneys and materials—which were very short at the time—for housing at a time when things were extremely difficult.

There have been occasions when the commission has placed people in tents and in disused Army huts; and there were cases where it used what are now called "the miseries" for evictees. All sorts of temporary expediencies have been undertaken to provide housing, but I think we have now reached a point in time where we are at least meeting the need for housing. I think there is a difference between need and demand. Provided nobody lives under a tree, building authorities, in fact, do meet the urgent need; but demand is a different kettle of fish. This includes the demand from people who want better housing or houses in different areas. So need and demand are not necessarily one and the same thing.

It could be that the commission, at this point of time, could start to do something to get away from—I think it is being done—the monotony of the housing estate. I think if one looks at the new estates being developed by the commission, one cannot but help have regard for the genuine effort to break the ordinary monotony in housing by variation in design; variation in roofs; by colour; and by actually designing the estates on a different system from the old grid system; and also by leaving certain blocks available for back-filling with different designs, and by private purchasers.

At the moment there is also a programme of regeneration. If one looks at some of the older homes in Belmont—the old tradesmen's flats—they will find they are being removed and replaced with better accommodation. Quite frankly I am rather pleased with the standards of commission homes. They have minimum essentials such as hot water service, copper pipes, stainless steel sinks, and low-level cisterns; and all in all they are of a good standard.

I have had an opportunity of seeing some of the housing in Tasmania and in New South Wales and I am agreeably surprised at the standards that have been achieved in Western Australia and also at a relatively low cost. I was complimenting the commission's officers and I suppose this is treating them in the broad. With a small technical section of architects these achievements have been obtained. We were unfortunate to lose our senior architect (Mr. Bill Tracey) who has been forced to resign because of ill-health. He is extremely highly regarded throughout Australia as an expert on low cost designs; but operating as we do, the terrific pressure has caused him to fall by the wayside. I would like to pay a sincere tribute to him.

I think it would be remiss of me if I did not record the appreciation that members of Parliament must have had for the parliamentary liaison officer.

Several members: Hear, hear!

Mr. O'NEIL: In the time I have been a member, there has been Mr. Nelson Burton and Mr. Fitzpatrick, who is now secretary to the Minister for Health. There was also Mr. Bill Lewis, who is now my private secretary, and Mr. McKee, who is secretary to the Government Employees' Housing Authority, and our latest ombudsman—if I may call him that—Mr. Alan Johnson.

Mr. Moir: An exceptionally good man.

Mr. O'NEIL: I have been pleased to observe the good work of Mr. Johnson and Mr. McKee; and I think members have been agreeably surprised at the service they have been getting.

Mr. Norton: Mr. Johnson is one of the oldest members.

Mr. O'NEIL: That is right; he was originally employed by the old Workers' Home Board. I am extremely grateful for the service these men have rendered to the members of Parliament.

Mr. Brady: Can the Minister tell us anything about McNess homes and single-unit homes?

Mr. O'NEIL: Yes; the trust is still operating. It is building duplex buildings rather than single-unit houses. I have some statistical information on those aspects which will probably give the honourable member more detail than I can off the cuff.

Mr. Bickerton: What is the position with the packaged type of dwelling for country towns where urgent housing is required?

Mr. O'NEIL: The commission has had this before it—I refer to transportable houses, prefabricated houses, and the like. I think the experience in the past with regard to prefabricated houses has not been particularly good. I refer to one that is built in sections, transported, bolted together, and re-erected. There is a transportable type of house which can be built in a factory yard, and completely finished other than being coupled to a sewerage system. It is loaded onto the back of a truck and removed to some distant point in the country and, I think, it is established as a house available for occupation within three days. I have looked at these houses as a building company in my electorate has erected them.

I have seen these houses as far afield as Esperance and in the north-west. They are well designed and very attractive cottages. Under the main roof they comprise 6.8 squares; and they are excellent in the case of emergency and can be again transported to some other point. However, I doubt very much whether they would be regarded as acceptable for an ordinary permanent dwelling. These buildings are 14 feet wide—for road transport that would be the maximum width permitted—and they are 14 feet high. They consist of two small bedrooms, a living-kitchen area, and toilet and laundry facilities at the other end of the building. They are relatively expensive for our purposes. I think the figure runs into something like £2,050 per unit, plus 15s. per mile after the first 50 miles. We have a need of them for the north-west in this time of great pressure for housing, but there would have to be certain modifications by way of insulation—I think they are a bit hot—and they would need to be securely bolted to the ground. Therefore they appear to be a bit impractical from this point of view.

We have been interested in developments in Victoria where they are building what we nickname "plastic sandwich houses". These are of modular construction, where

wall sections are of material covered with plastic on the inside and they are clad on the outside with zincanneal.

Mr. Hawke: Did the Minister say Zinc O'Neil?

Mr. O'NEIL: No; it is zincanneal. Once again, it is the price factor that deters us, but they are things well worth looking into. If one could go into mass production of this type of housing then the price must come down. In this plastic sandwich type of house, maintenance costs are reduced to a minimum because the wall sections are already treated.

Mr. Bickerton: With the shortage of tradesmen, particularly in the north-west, something like that will happen eventually.

Mr. O'NEIL: We are certainly watching the position with interest. But once again there appear to be two conflicting factors in housing requirements of local authorities. Firstly, they want more houses: and, secondly, they want them built of better materials and to be larger. If we follow the latter course we produce fewer houses. I usually find that if I ask whether they want more houses or better looking houses the answer is on the side of more houses. I think, too, that whilst there may be some criticism of the standard of the houses built by the housing commission, a little drive around a town will show that the commission need not bow its head in shame when its houses are compared with others already in a town.

I suppose we must come to this very dull matter of statistics which I mentioned earlier, but I felt it was necessary to record this subject in some more accurate detail in order that members might have an opportunity of seeing the activities of the commission.

It will be noted that the item for salaries for the previous financial year, amounted to £543,744, whilst the item for 1965-66 is £532,770. Contingencies for the same period show an increase from £166,000 to £285,500. There is a decrease in salaries between the two years of £9,974 and an increase in the amount for contingencies of £119,500.

The increase in the amount for contingencies is due to expenditure incurred in purchase and installation of the new IBM accounting machine, expanding commission activities, and provisions made for two years' supply of printing and stationery.

Mr. Davies: Did you buy the accounting machine or hire it?

Mr. O'NEIL: Ultimately four machines will be bought at a cost of £80,000. I understand that in the first place the arrangement is to hire and then ultimately buy.

Loan funds and building activities: Building operations, generally, may be divided into two broad sections as follows:—

Completions—

By the close of the financial year 1964-65, 2,131 units of accommodation were completed as compared with 2,320 in the previous year. These results were obtained under these housing schemes—

	Units
War service	174
Commonwealth-State	692
State housing	887
Housing of Government employees scheme	31
Housing for other departments (including Exmouth housing)	212
Charitable organisations	97

I think I might say here that the commission does render a service to charitable organisations in the provision of homes for the aged. We undertake the design for these homes, together with the architectural supervision work associated with them. This, I think, costs the commission somewhere between £30,000 and £40,000 per year. It is a service which we give quite freely and extremely willingly, because of the effort being put into the housing of the aged by charitable and other organisations. Continuing with the housing schemes—

Laporte housing scheme—8 units.
McNess Housing Trust—Nil.

I will speak of the McNess Housing Trust activities a little later. Finally—

B.H.P. Company, Koolyanobbing—30 units.

Under construction: The incomplete housing units at the 30th June, 1965, totalled 1,371 against 1,030 as at June, 1964. The incomplete units at the 30th June, 1965, included 77 flats at Carlisle for elderly female pensioners. Regarding the progressive total, the post-war completions now amount to 40,367 home units which have been erected under the following schemes:—

	Units
War service	11,174
State housing	6,967
Commonwealth-State	19,878
Government employees	138
McNess Trust	282
Kwinana	653
Laporte housing	68
Government departments—including Exmouth housing	753
Charitable organisations—finance arranged by organisations	424
B.H.P. Co. Koolyanobbing	30

Under the heading of financial aid, funds provided since 1944 have resulted in these additional homes being provided as follows:— War service—purchase of completed dwellings, 10,655 units; State Housing second mortgages—new houses—enabled occupancy of a further 1,325 units; Advances to building societies under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement Act, 1956-61, helped private citizens to erect 3,151 units—This gives a total of 15,131 units.

In the building programme for the current financial year, the funds allocated for 1965-66 will enable the State Housing Commission to complete the erection of the 1,371 homes under construction as at the 30th June, 1965, and finance from State and Commonwealth funds and on behalf of other organisations, the erection of a further 2,500 new dwelling units.

The distribution of the building effort has been planned according to the following table:—

	To be Completed	New Contracts	Total
Commonwealth-State. (This includes finance of home building through building societies)	585	1,268	1,854
State Housing. (This includes Carlisle flats)	458	804	1,262
War Service Homes	67	100	167
McNess Trust. (There were no activities under the McNess Housing Trust)	....	....	....
Laporte housing	4	3	7
Government Departments. (This includes Exmouth housing)	116	100	216
Government employee housing authority (As members will recall, this authority recently came into being. The Commission acts as building agent and State manager for the authority.)	16	37	52
Charitable organisations. (Finance arranged by organisations)	125	163	288
B.H.P., Koolyanobbing	....	25	25
	1,371	2,500	3,871

The demand for State Housing Commission assistance by way of purchase and rental homes continued at the intake rate of 767 applications per month. Last year, 4,515 families were aided with 2,623 new dwellings and 1,892 vacated rental homes, and reverted purchase homes.

Capital expenditure for 1964-65 totalled £11,145,000. The avenues for expenditure were—

	£
(a) Provisions for building activities under—	
(i) State Housing Act	3,124,000
(ii) Government employees scheme	129,000
(iii) McNess Trust	Nil
(b) Commonwealth - State Housing Agreement Act, 1956-61	3,775,000
(c) Commonwealth funds under the War Service Homes Act	3,250,000
(d) Other Government Departments	867,000

The capital expenditure for 1965-66 is to be utilised as follows:—

(a) State Housing Act: The total expenditure under the State Housing Act in 1965-66 is expected to be £2,799,000 excluding the amount set aside for Exmouth housing. Expenditure will be financed from a number of sources. The estimates provide an allocation of £250,000 from the General Loan Fund. Of this amount £100,000 is for the construction of homes under the State Housing Act and the balance of £150,000 has been allocated for housing at Exmouth.

Arrangements have been made for the commission to borrow £750,000 by way of subscribed loans. The balance of the programme will be provided by proceeds from sales of land, principal repayments in advance, unspent portion of 1964-65 appropriation —£500,000—and the credit balance available in the commission's account at the Treasury.

A further Commonwealth employment grant has been allocated for housing in the 1965-66 financial year. Members will recall that last year the commission had available to it a special grant —unrepayable grant—from the Commonwealth to overcome the unemployment situation.

The commission completed 887 homes during the year ended the 30th June, 1965, and a further 458 homes were in varying stages of construction. It is anticipated that some 900 homes will be occupied during this financial year and there will also be another 350 homes under construction in 1966.

The Government is continuing its policy of encouraging home ownership and has allocated £150,000 by way of assistance under the State Housing Commission's second mortgage scheme.

The cost of land acquisition and development is estimated at £500,000. A sum of £22,000 has been allocated for the housing of employees of the Laporte Titanium Company and £10,000 for loans to local authorities. The loans to local authorities are usually to assist them in major drainage problems which have, to some degree, been occasioned by the commission's activities in the development of the area. A further contract for 25 houses for employees of the B.H.P. Co. Ltd. is to be arranged later in the year.

(b) Commonwealth - State Housing Agreement 1956-61: Loan funds for the erection of purchase and rental houses, including housing for service personnel of the forces, additions, sewerage, etc., and advances to building societies amount to £3,726,000. Principal repayments received in advance and reserves reinvested amount to £520,000; and the run-down cash balance is £521,000. The total capital expenditure will be £4,767,000.

(c) War Service Homes Act: New house building and purchase and discharge of prearranged mortgages, etc. amount to £2,750,000.

I stress the word, "prearranged", because I did indicate that the division will make finance available to discharge a prearranged mortgage, but not to discharge a mortgage on an existing property.

(d) Other State Government departments: £700,000.

(e) Government employees' housing authority: Members will recall that this authority has only recently come into being. This sum includes £233,000 available from the previous year and the sum of £100,000 which it is expected the authority will borrow under the semi-Government programme.

Summary of activities: In regard to revenue for 1964-65, receipts amounted to £10,271,000. Administration costs for the year amounted to £693,108, compared with £673,001 in 1963-64, an increase of £20,107.

The Government will continue with its policy of encouragement of home ownership; of providing housing for decentralisation of industry; and housing in country districts, particularly in small towns.

Assistance will be provided under the State Housing Act and the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement for purchases of group homes erected by the commission in one of its estates, or to build to the applicant's own design on his own or commission land. The State Housing Act funds will allow for the completion of 450 homes and the letting of a further 800 contracts.

Under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement of 1956-61, building societies will continue to be assisted to the extent of £1,250,000. To date, 3,151 homes have been erected under this scheme, of which 382 were erected in the past year.

At the end of June, 1965, 355 houses had been completed for personnel of the armed forces. A further 26 were under construction, and during 1965-66 contracts will be let for 54 more.

A total of 1,018 ex-servicemen were assisted under war service home conditions during 1964-65 by the completion of 174 houses, the purchase of 544 houses, the discharge of 179 prearranged mortgages and settlement of 121 transfers on resale of properties.

Maintenance of rental homes involved an expenditure of £478,809. During the year, 1,883 homes were repaired and renovated, and a further 1,913 vacated homes received essential maintenance attention prior to reoccupation by new tenants. Attention was also given to 79,061 cases of minor repairs.

For the year ended the 30th June, 1965, a total of 1,198 country rental applicants were accommodated in new and vacated homes. The total number of houses erected in the country by the commission is now 8,961 spread over 205 rural towns.

During this financial year, 566 Commonwealth-State group homes will be erected in country centres, and of this figure, 72 will be erected in the area north of the 26th parallel. In addition to these, 56 houses will be erected in country areas financed by State Housing Act funds.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [8.11 p.m.]: I welcome this further opportunity to speak on the matter of housing. Despite the figures which the Minister quoted, I am not satisfied with the housing situation in this State. Many other people are not satisfied also. This problem is not related only to my constituents, but also, I know, to the constituents of other representatives in this House.

Mr. O'Neil: I do not think you heard me say that I was satisfied.

Mr. FLETCHER: I distinctly heard the Minister say that. I dealt with this to some extent on the general Estimates and quoted some election talking points related to housing. That material was made available to our party at the last Federal general election. I will admit that what I said was related to a Federal matter but I would like to quote to the House the following point:—

> Liberal Complacency: The Liberal-Country Party's complacent attitude towards housing was expressed in Mr. Bury's somewhat pious observation which was: "In housing we should always fall short of the ideal".

That was in Federal *Hansard* of the 5th May, 1964.

> Why this should be so he failed to explain. It is clear, however, from the fact that when Sir Robert Menzies made the election pledge of a £250 subsidy, it was designed to catch votes. Criticising the complexity of the Bill, an editorial writer commented:
>
> > This is not a reflection on the idea but an indication of the haste with which the election promise was made.

This was in the *Canberra Times* of the 8th May, 1964.

In effect, this was an election gimmick and I suggest to the House that the gimmick paid off. The promise of £250 subsidy about which most electors are still in doubt, was a contributing factor in the election of the Federal Government. The present State Liberal Government is as vague as the Federal Government in regard to this housing assistance as are we on this side of the House, and those we collectively represent. I would like to show to the House my large housing file. These are the tissue duplicates of housing commission replies to my requests on behalf of constituents. Here I have neatly filed for each month, right up to the present time, replies I have received from the State Housing Commission. When I spoke on this matter on the general debate on the Estimates, I stated that I had 76 pieces of correspondence on the file for this year, and that number has increased considerably since I spoke on that occasion.

I will admit that some of the replies are satisfactory, I am pleased to say; but in the main, unfortunately, they are not replies satisfactory either to myself or to my constituents. I am aware of the Minister's difficulty regarding a shortage of finance. This is probably because of the runaway inflation that has been mentioned as recently as today in the paper by an illustration of what has happened to the value of the pound since the present Federal Government has been in office—since 1949. By way of questions I demonstrated in this Chamber what has happened to the value of the pound in this State since this Government has been in office—since 1959.

If less money is available, it is obvious fewer houses will be built and, furthermore, if the Federal Government did not indulge in gimmicks in relation to housing the Minister and the Premier would not be the victims of an economic policy dictated by the actions of the Commonwealth. While money is being wasted on unnecessary expenditure on alleged defence in somebody else's country housing in this State will remain in short supply.

The Minister said, I will admit, that the commission meets the need rather than the demand. I think the Minister will admit that was the statement he made but it is rather a fine distinction to draw —meets need rather than demand. When I came here in 1959 I was able to obtain emergent housing for those I represented in one or two days, or within a fortnight; but now, even with the assistance of a very capable parliamentary liaison officer, I am lucky if I can get consideration in regard to emergent housing in that many weeks or, on occasions, that many months. The Minister must admit that things have deteriorated.

This evening he quoted certain statistics which no doubt were supplied to him by the very efficient management at the State Housing Commission. I can only rely on statistics I obtain through the medium of the Press and I should like to refer to an article in *The West Australian* of the 27th October, 1965—which is of recent date—under the heading of "W.A. Needs More Housing for Migrants." There is a graph with the article and it is based on the figures provided by the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics in regard to new houses completed in Western Australia since 1950.

I am sure the Minister regrets I have found this article. I read the Press very carefully because since I am not in a position to obtain my own statistics I have to get them from some other source. The article was written by Jack Edmonds and I shall read only a couple of paragraphs to demonstrate the variance between the figures compiled by the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics and those quoted by the Minister. It reads—

> Western Australia needs a vigorous housing programme if it is to meet the challenge of the present development projects.
>
> We cannot increase the flow of skilled migrant tradesmen we need till we provide more houses for them and their families.

and for our own Australian families. To continue—

> Lack of housing is restricting the migration flow into this State.
>
> Migrants receive no preference in the allocation of State Housing Commission homes.

At one stage a certain Mr. Darling received a quota of houses for allocation to migrants, as I ascertained by way of questions asked last session. The article continues—

> If they apply to the S.H.C. for a house on the day they land in W.A. they can expect to wait—judging by present delays—for 20 months before they can rent a State house in the metropolitan area, or from 14 to 17 months before they can buy one.
>
> Yet the key building industry is running well below its production capacity in both private and government home-building. The current rate of construction is more than 1,000 houses a year less than it was ten years ago.

I ask members: Which Government was in office 10 years ago? The article continues—

> The government housing programme is little more than half what it was ten years ago. Private enterprise is being hampered by credit restrictions.

Mr. O'Neil: I think he has read that graph incorrectly. If you look at the base figure on the graph you will see it is not zero but about 4,000.

Mr. FLETCHER: Irrespective of the base figure, I think I have read sufficient from the article to illustrate my point, and the figures are in conflict with those quoted by the Minister and the situation which he outlined. I will admit the Minister was not satisfied with it, but the graph shows—

Mr. O'Neil: In one year.

Mr. FLETCHER: —a peak to demonstrate the disparity between the situation that exists now and that which existed under a previous very capable Minister, The Hon. H. E. Graham. It shows that between 1954 and 1956, there was a peak of 8,500 houses—that was the number of houses Labor was building for the benefit of the State—but there has been a steep decline since then.

Mr. O'Neil: That was in the last year.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not get any satisfaction out of what I am saying; I regret it. I regret that the housing situation is not to my satisfaction or of those whom I represent.

Mr. O'Connor: You did not state that your Government was in power during part of the decline in the number built.

Mr. O'Neil: What was the year of the lowest number on the graph?

Mr. FLETCHER: I have quoted sufficient from that, I think. There is no need for members opposite to laugh. What does it matter what the situation was in 1959? I have shown what has happened since this Government has been in office and the disparity between the situation which exists now and that which existed when a Labor Government was in office. I shall read again a portion of this article—

> The current rate of construction is more than 1,000 houses less than it was 10 years ago.

That is the point I am making and anything else which the Minister tries to introduce is quite irrelevant and has nothing to do with the position. Whatever the Minister says will not destroy my argument that at the present time the rate of construction is 1,000 houses less than it was during the Labor Government's term of office.

Mr. O'Neil: For one year.

Mr. FLETCHER: The electors will shortly have an opportunity to be made aware of that point.

Mr. O'Connor: You have just had an opportunity.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will not give my opponents an opportunity for further interjection.

Mr. J. Hegney: Hear, hear!

Mr. FLETCHER: However, I do not mind members of my own party doing so. The article makes reference to the fact that there are not sufficient skilled tradesmen to build the houses we need. You, Mr. Chairman, might argue that I am getting on to item 46, but the article makes reference to the fact that there are not sufficient skilled tradesmen to build the houses and I will now, with your indulgence, Sir, show members why. On the 28th October, 1965, I asked the Minister a question and in it I made a suggestion to overcome the shortage of skilled tradesmen. The question reads as follows:—

> Adverting to my question 24 of the 26th October, 1965—
>
> (1) Does any legal or other impediment prevent the Government from granting by administrative action a percentage of the tradesman's rate annually to apprentices in Government workshops?
>
> (2) If not, and as an additional incentive to recruitment as mentioned in the reply to part (2) of my previous question, will he, with a view to alleviating the publicised drastic shortage of tradesmen, and as an inducement to private employers to emulate, pay to Government employed apprentices the tradesman's percentage mentioned?

The Minister replied as follows:—

> (1) No. But as previously advised it is the policy of the Government to leave decisions regarding rates of pay to the Industrial Commission.
>
> (2) Answered by (1).

Here I held out to the Government an opportunity to recruit more apprentices for the building industry; and if there were more apprentices conceivably more houses could be built. But again the Government has baldly answered, "No." Also, as I illustrated on the general debate on the Estimates, to further aggravate the housing position the Government imports tradesmen from overseas at the taxpayers' expense—I suppose at anything up to £1,000 a head—instead of paying an infinitesimal portion of that amount to recruit Western Australian tradesmen and assist our own people to have larger families by making more houses available to them.

As I said, if we had more tradesmen we could conceivably have more houses built. However, I appreciate that the State Housing Commission officers do a good job with the limited finance made available to them; and like the Minister and other members I am grateful to the management and liaison officer who have such a humanitarian attitude towards our problems. Their job would be much easier if the Government would listen to those on this side, and the policies we have in regard to housing. As I have already said, the people of this State were much better off during the period of our administration.

Even as recently as today I rang the Housing Commission regarding an old lady who is a pioneer of the Fremantle area. She wants single-unit accommodation but just cannot obtain it. I was not brave enough to tell this dear old lady that I could not get the accommodation for her, and that she would have to get in the queue, so I hid behind the State Housing Commission and I asked the commission to write to me giving me the information so that I could forward to her the bad news. That sort of thing is going on repeatedly.

I know that the Minister and the department are currently negotiating in regard to single-unit accommodation and housing accommodation generally for the Fremantle area, and I am grateful that something is being done at last. However, I do not take the credit for it. I doubt that it is my verbosity in this Chamber, or my powers of persuasion which have stirred the Government into action on this occasion.

I sincerely hope that very soon a large block of flats will be built in that area to provide single-unit accommodation for aged people and houses for young married couples who suffer as a consequence, after being married, of not having a home; and this being so young wives have to go out to work through sheer economic necessity to try to place roofs over their heads. As a result, the State suffers, Australia suffers, and the young couples suffer. The Minister might ask what the solution is, and without indulging in any political stunts I would say that our Government had the answer, whereas this Government presumably has not. I very much regret to say.

MR. ROWBERRY (Warren) [8.31 p.m.]: There is just one little matter I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister. I listened to the Minister telling the House that he visited the country districts during the last few months, and investigated the problems of housing. No doubt, as Minister, and as a former resident of Manjimup, he has become acquainted with the Dunreath Cottage Project which exists to provide flats for pensioners. This was a brainchild of a former member for the district when it was incorporated with Nelson. I refer to Mr. C. I. Doust. He started this fund and it has since received the benediction of the Commonwealth Social Services Department.

These people have a problem at the present time. They have been given approximately £3,933 from the Commonwealth Social Services to build further flats. They have supplied the State Housing Commission with the plans, but the commission will not issue the necessary plans and specifications to enable the building to proceed. The building contractor has even been allowed to view the plans at the State Housing Commission, and he has drawn up specifications of his own from the plans he has viewed. Now the commission says, in reply to the Dunreath Cottage Inc. people, that work on the design of the aged persons' homes project has been temporarily suspended by the State Housing Commission because of the need to give attention to other types of projects.

This project has the blessing of the Commonwealth Social Services, but because the Commonwealth Social Service Department must work through the State Housing Commission, the commission must verify and authenticate the plan.

Mr. O'Neil: I did say during my remarks that we are very short-staffed and there is a bottleneck in the preparation of designs.

Mr. ROWBERRY: I am quite interested in what the Minister tells me, but I would point out that these plans have been approved in days gone by. There are numerous types of these flats in existence, and what the people want to do is to expend this amount of nearly £4,000 on further flats.

Mr. O'Neil: You have made representations to the commission, I suppose?

Mr. ROWBERRY: I must apologise to the Minister, because I have only just received this letter. I will follow it up with the State Housing Commission tomorrow, but I would like the Minister to back me up on this. Anyway, we have it on record that this has been brought before the House. I must again apologise to the Minister, because it was my intention to ring the State Housing Commission and place the matter before it. No doubt the commission will view it with sympathy and the problem will be solved; but if the Minister lends his weight to it it will be solved much quicker.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [8.35 p.m.]: Like the Minister I would like to compliment the staff of the State Housing Commission on the attention they give, not only to members of Parliament but also to the public. I think most people regard this staff as a very loyal and conscientious band. If I were to make one suggestion to the Minister in regard to

housing matters it would be to place additional staff on the front counter. This is the only complaint I have heard; that people have to wait sometimes half an hour before they can get attention. I feel this is so because the people behind the counter give such detailed attention to those whom they are serving at the particular time. When making housing inquiries everyone feels that theirs is the only problem at the time, and they want specialised attention.

If something can be done to lessen the waiting period at the front counter there would be nothing to complain about so far as the State Housing Commission is concerned except, possibly, that more houses should be built and single-unit flats provided for pensioners. This is a tremendous problem and it would seem that we can do nothing about it. The State Housing Commission has nothing to offer, and some aged pensioners are living in deplorable conditions, because it is the only accommodation they can obtain.

I deplore the fact that some people allow their parents to live in such conditions while they, the children, live under more favourable conditions. This puts me in mind of the position in the State of Ohio in America where children are responsible for the upkeep of their parents. When I find our pensioners living in the deplorable conditions they do I am in favour of incorporating the American provision here.

I particularly wanted to hear what the Minister had to say on the Department of Labour, but he never uttered one word on that aspect. Unfortunately I was called out of the Chamber for a few minutes, and I did not hear the Minister finish his speech, but my information is that he said nothing on a portfolio which is far more important than the portfolio of housing.

There are only two things in this connection which I am going to mention tonight and one deals with amendments to the Arbitration Act. I asked the previous Minister for Labour whether some doubts had arisen as to the legality of some of the procedures followed under the Arbitration Act. He said they had, but the Government did not propose to do anything about it during the last session of Parliament.

I foolishly thought that if the Government was not going to do anything about it last session, it would certainly do something about it this session, and on the 5th October, 1965, I asked the Minister the following question:—

> When does the Government propose action to overcome doubts regarding legality of some procedures under the Industrial Arbitration Act, as raised in my question 25 of the 5th November, 1964?

The Minister replied—

> This matter will receive attention when consideration is given to other amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act.

I do not believe that it is necessary to review the Act completely before the Government brings in amending legislation. We only have to consider the Traffic Act which has been amended four times this session. When it is made quite clear to the Department of Labour that some amendments are necessary to put beyond doubt the legality of the procedures taken under the Act, it is the duty of the Government to bring in the legislation at the first possible opportunity.

I appreciate that the present Minister only took over early this year, but I still feel that on the advice of his officers he could have taken action to bring down amending legislation on matters which have already been brought to his attention. So I think the Government must take the entire blame if at any time any of the procedures followed under the Act are challenged in court and are found to be wanting.

I hope even at this stage we may see something done in regard to the amendments of which I hake spoken and which, I am sure, the Minister understands. The other matter to which I wish to refer is the double standard set on the question of equal pay. If ever a population has been duped it has been duped by this Government on this very question. We have spoken about this question of equal pay on many occasions in this House and we have always been told that this is a matter for the Industrial Commission to decide. So what has happened? The trade union movement, finding it could not get anywhere with the Government, took a case to the Industrial Commission to establish the question of equal pay. The Miscellaneous Union of Workers took a case with regard to the dairymen's union seeking equal pay for some 60 of its members. This was earlier in the year.

I think the decision was given at the end of September, or the beginning of October, and Commissioner Kelly when giving his decision said that the Industrial Arbitration Act gave him no power, sitting as a single commissioner, to grant equal pay for work of equal value. The Minister said at that time it was a matter for the commission to decide. I am sure the Minister could have found out from the Department of Labour, or from his colleagues, just what was the intention of the Act at the time it was amended several years ago.

He must have known then whether the intention was written into the Act, whether specifically or by intent, that the commission had the right to grant equal pay. It would not have been difficult at all for him to find this out.

Mr. O'Neil: Is not this before the commission?

Mr. DAVIES: I have already said that Commissioner Kelly, when giving his decision, said that the Industrial Arbitration Act gave him no power sitting as a single commissioner to grant equal pay for work of equal value. This was arguable, and there is some question as to whether or not this principle is contained in the Act.

As I have said before, surely the intent could have been found out, because if the Act had been deliberately worded that way it would have been obvious to the Department of Labour, and to Mr. Kelly who was instrumental in framing the Act when it was rewritten. He should have known what the intention was. Commissioner Kelly said that in his opinion it was clearly intended that women should be paid less than men, and he claimed that sitting as a single commissioner he had no right to grant the principle of equal pay.

The Trades and Labour Council wanted to know where the Government stood on this matter, and it took a deputation to the Minister for Labour asking if he would intervene and explain the Government's attitude. Surely if the Government believed in the principle of equal pay this was the opportunity for it to stand up in court and say that it believed in that principle, and that it would like to see it granted; that it would not grant it as a Government, and that it would have to ask the commission to do it. Because of the excuses we have heard before in regard to the State being penalised by the Grants Commission if it extended privileges to sections of the community which did not come under the laws of the State, the Minister said at the time he would not intervene on the grounds of public interest. Accordingly Mr. Coleman, secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, had this to say in *The West Australian* of the 7th October, 1965—

> Mr. Coleman said Mr. O'Neil should intervene in the public interest in view of Mr. Kelly's far-reaching decision.
>
> "If he does not agree to our request, then we believe the statements he has made about the government not opposing the principle of equal pay are hollow ones," he said.
>
> The executive felt that Mr. Kelly's decision prevented the union from taking the case any further.

I am pleased to report that the trade union movement did not lie down on this very important matter. It took the matter before the commission sitting as a body some time late in October, and the decision is still awaited. Even at that time the Department of Labour representing the Government did not take any action to express the Government's attitude.

Here we get back to the position where the Government is not being honest on the question of equal pay for the sexes. It has recited platitudes, and said that if the commission granted equal pay it would agree. When the court was sitting the Government could have assisted by expressing its attitude on the question, but it failed miserably to do so. The Government stands condemned, because of the action it took at that time.

Whether it was a decision of the Minister for Labour, or as a result of the information conveyed by the Department of Labour, I do not know; but it was a further expression of the Government's double stand on this important question. The position is that an appeal has been made to the commission, and its decision is awaited. The Minister has said that if the commission is unable to grant equal pay he will take the matter to Cabinet, with a view to having the Act amended.

My whole purpose in speaking tonight is to seek an assurance from the Minister —if the member for Warren will stop talking to him—that he will take the matter to Cabinet with a view to having the Act amended if the commission gives an adverse decision.

Mr. O'Neil: You make those demands when you are the Premier of the State!

Mr. DAVIES: The Government has nothing to lose. It has said a lot of claptrap on the question of equal pay; it has adopted a double stand; it has received deputations; and it has spoken with one voice, but its actions were completely different. If the Industrial Commission rejects the application which has been made, I want an assurance from the Minister that he will take the matter to Cabinet with a view to having the Act amended so that the commission will have the authority to grant equal pay for the sexes, in which event everyone will be happy.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [8.48 p.m.]: I hope the Minister will take the proposition of the member for Victoria Park to Cabinet, but whether Cabinet agrees to the amendment of the Act is a different matter. The Minister should be prepared to take the case to Cabinet, but in twisting the lion's tail by submitting the case his hand might be bitten.

In answer to a question I asked about the accommodation which the Government had at Vapech House it seems the Department of Labour, the Industrial Commission, and the Weights and Measures Branch occupy a good portion of the accommodation. While I am not opposed to the Weights and Measures Branch occupying such accommodation, the Industrial Commission should be situated in a building which is more private; because from time to time cases of considerable

public interest are dealt with by the commission, and a large number of people attend to hear the proceedings. Their attendance at Vapech House would inconvenience the other tenants.

Mr. O'Neil: I doubt whether there are any private tenants in Vapech House.

Mr. JAMIESON: I would not like to think the Government was paying the rental for all the accommodation in Vapch House. It is now paying £44,369 a year in rentals, and this amount would amortise the cost of a fairly big Government building. I doubt whether the Government is justified in paying such a high amount in rental, especially when it is so short of finance. It would be better for the Government to pay this money to one of the instrumentalities under its control, and prevail upon it to erect a block of offices in Mill Street for Government use. The present owners by having the premises built would be getting them eventually for nothing, because they can use the rental from the Government to offset the cost. The Commonwealth Government does not adopt this practice of paying high rentals for a long period, because as soon as it is practicable it erects its own accommodation. The State Government is not justified in paying for this accommodation at the rate of 26s. 6d. per square foot per annum.

The money that is being paid in rentals for the accommodation at Vapech House is being thrown down the drain. It could be used in other directions from which a return could be obtained. According to the answer I received from the Premier there are no plans at present for the construction of Government buildings to accommodate the branches I have referred to. The Government should have prevailed on one of its trust instrumentalities to provide reasonable office accommodation, and thereby obtain a return from the Government for its investment.

I now turn to the State Insurance Office. I hope the time is not too distant when the Minister will introduce a Bill to widen the scope of the classes of insurance business which this office can handle. In this State there is the Rural and Industries Bank which engages in all types of banking business, with the exception of business in second mortgages. It acts as the Government's agent; it provides housing loans and rural advances; and it handled about one-third of the wheat crop of the State a few years ago, so probably it is handling a larger proportion now. I realise that the Minister for Labour is not responsible for the activities of the Rural and Industries Bank, but I am concerned with the increase of the scope of its activities, to enable it to cater for more remunerative classes of insurance.

It is only reasonable that when clients of the State Insurance Office take out policies for their motorcars, for storm and tempest damage, for plate glass damage, for personal accident risk, and for travel by air risk, they should not have to go to other companies to take out life or other general insurance policies. All types of insurance should be available to the clients of the State Government Insurance Office.

We should adopt the lead of New South Wales and Queensland. If the Minister were to examine the accounts of the instrumentalities in those two States he would see there is a great surplus in the life section. Despite the fact that a non-Labor Government has been in office in Queensland for a number of years, nothing has been done to restrict the activities of its insurance office, because the Government realises the benefits which accrue from these activities.

In the report of the Queensland State Insurance Office the funds are shown to be invested in sound propositions, and include £30,000 odd in Commonwealth stock; £187,650 in loans to local authorities; £240,000 in Government and semi-Government loans; £115,000 in loans to private industry; and £133,000 in housing loans. All these loans are important to the welfare of the State. There is no reason why the amount should be limited, if the funds are available.

I do not know why the funds should be channelled unnecessarily into private insurance societies which are non-profit organisations, but the boards of management have the power to manipulate the finance by investing the funds in this or that scheme. Despite the protests of the actuaries, the insurance companies will not go broke if they stick to insurance and to sound investment.

The only insurance companies which in recent years have failed were those engaged in hire-purchase business. Recently one of the big insurance companies in Australia burnt its fingers when it entered the electric appliances field, and it failed because of the competition. Another insurance company in New Zealand failed several years ago, because of its investments in hire-purchase agreements in New South Wales, which were not securely covered. So long as the security is covered the insurance business is sound.

The Minister should set an example. We have heard a lot of claptrap and advice from various people to the young people of this country that they should engage in useful activities instead of being a nuisance to other sections of the community. The Minister is wondering what I am getting at. There are untold thousands who play sport every Saturday, both in the winter and in the summer. One type of business of the State Insurance Office is the provision of pool insurance for local governing authorities. This has proved to be very successful. If this business is assessed

on actuarial soundness it might not be regarded as safe, but it is passing strange that each year that office is able to return a considerable amount to the local authorities by way of refunds on premiums, to the extent that in the No. 1 pool it refunded £79,157, and in the second, the bushfire pool, £7,548 because it was a smaller pool.

The State Insurance Office should give thought to providing some form of pool insurance to cover people who are actively engaged in sporting organisations. To obtain this kind of policy with the ordinary insurance company is almost impossible, without the payment of very high premiums. The fear of young people of 17 to 18 years of age—who often have hire-purchase commitments—of being injured and being out of work for a few weeks is great, and these people will guard against injury to themselves. They are subject to hire-purchase commitments, and there are many factors to discourage them from injury in sporting activities.

It might be said that this is not a Government responsibility, but I feel it is a very definite responsibility. If this scheme were established on a pool basis, the only expenditure, if any, which would have to be borne by the State Government Insurance Office would be the administration expenses.

With a vast number paying their small premiums into such a scheme throughout the State, there is no doubt it would be a success. It would need a multitude of people paying, in much the same way as with the system that prevails for school children's insurance. I believe we could establish a very good scheme to cover people who are injured in sporting activities.

We should encourage folk to take part in sport because in this way we will have less trouble in the community. If one person pulls out of a club because he has been injured and he does not want to run the risk of being involved in another accident and thus incur more expenses because of the lack of income, then he will take two or three of his cobbers with him. It is quite possible that those same folk could be smashed up in a motor vehicle accident two or three weeks later thus involving the State in more costs in the repair of the wrecked and broken bodies. Therefore it is far better that encouragement be given by the State Government Insurance Office so that all these sporting bodies will contribute to a scheme.

I have had a long association with amateur football in this State and I know there are now in the vicinity of 2,000 players a week competing in that sport. Goodness knows how many girls play basketball each week during the season. Every now and then, because of bad luck—and accidents will occur in body contact sports—someone breaks a leg whether it be on the football field, basketball field, or somewhere else. If all the players could be covered by an overall pool scheme established by the State Government Insurance Office at least there would be some semblance of an income for them while they were unable to pursue their normal employment. In that way they would be reasonably well looked after.

Most of these players are in some form of hospital benefit scheme and are therefore covered for their medical expenses; but the problem is not a medical one so much as a lack of income during the period they are recuperating from their injuries.

There would be difficulties associated with such a terrific scheme, I will agree, and probably the State Government Insurance Office, on whatever floor was allocated for this scheme, would probably look a little like a casualty clearing station on a Monday morning because of the 40,000 or 50,000 playing sport on the Saturday. Nevertheless, these bodies would all be protected if a scheme were established. It would have to be a large scheme, not a small one, because a small one would not work out.

I am sure that even bowlers could come under such a scheme. I well remember passing myself off as a first aid man for a parliamentary bowling team which visited New South Wales. One of those from that State said I had a cheek because he could not imagine a bowling group requiring the services of a first aid man. However, the Minister for Police will back me up because before very long my services were required. The Minister was unfortunate enough to catch his finger in a machine and I had to put a band aid on it. I am sure he can well recall that incident.

Accidents do happen, and we should have some form of coverage for these body contact sports. There is the occasional player who gets badly hurt on a cricket field for no reason of his own. For a few shillings a week the multitude of cricketers could be covered, and if one received a broken thumb or a fractured skull which necessitated his absence from work for several weeks he would be covered by insurance and thus receive income while he was away.

None of the insurance companies will tackle this scheme, because it is too big and it is too actuarially complex. However, by establishing a pool scheme the Government could amply cope with it, and I am sure that after one or two years' experience the office might be able to offer rebates to the various clubs or individuals associated with the scheme, as have the local authorities through their pool insurance.

I would now like to briefly comment on the Housing Commission. In the main I have the same view as other members who have patted the officers on the back. They know they do a reasonable job and they appreciate the sentiments expressed by

members both here and to them personally. However, there is one problem to which I wish to refer.

I understand that the commission has had staff problems, particularly in connection with national service and the voluntary service. It seems that many young men are joining the voluntary service for the period of six years to avoid the compulsory service. This is quite a good scheme, of course, and the Government has played along with it. However, it has been rather disastrous at the times of the year when camps are held. I understand that not long ago the commission was badly affected because of one of these camps which extended over a fortnight. It created quite a delay in the processing of some of the applications received by the commission.

I refer particularly to the applications of those who desire to build a home on their own blocks. They make an application to the commission which it should be possible to agree to almost immediately. However, processing takes quite a bit longer than that and I have found quite a delay has been experienced in connection with war service homes applications. We must bear in mind, of course, that the State Housing Commission is the local agent for this scheme.

Several of these applications have been delayed unnecessarily because certain qualifications have not been complied with. Usually it involves only some small feature, but the file is shelved because no-one is prepared to deal with the matter. I had drawn to my attention a case where the commission could not make up its mind whether the local authority would require limestone or concrete foundations. Instead of merely making a phone call to ascertain the information, which apparently the commission did not think was good enough, an officer from the commission had to personally visit the local authority concerned and, together with the building inspector, visit the site to make a determination. Despite the fact that the builder was waiting to proceed on his own finance basis, 12 weeks elapsed between the time the application was made and the time the approval was received.

This is not good enough. I feel that several advisory officers should be appointed to deal with the applications for State Housing Commission homes and war service homes in order that the processing might be dealt with as rapidly as possible and thus allow an applicant to speedily know the decision. Then, if there were any other delay on the part of contractors and that sort of thing, the commission could not be blamed for that.

In the main the commission does endeavour to do a good job and the matter to which I have referred is the only fault I have encountered in recent times. I do admit that it is not always entirely the fault of the commission that a delay occurs. The files are delayed in other departments, and this is often the case in connection with valuations. Some system should be adopted to overcome these delays also.

I would again urge the Minister to make provision in the near future for the establishment by the State Government Insurance Office of a scheme to cover all forms and varieties of insurance.

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [9.12 p.m.]: The subject I desire to air is in relation to the State Government Insurance Office. I am rather surprised the Minister dealt only with housing and with none of the other departments under his control, particularly the State Government Insurance Office which last year involved an expenditure of £269,592 and for which there is this year an estimated expenditure of £290,508. I think a department like that merits some word from the Minister, particularly as he knows there is considerable trouble in the industry that employs a large number of the people I represent.

I asked him questions recently and the information he obtained from the department must have indicated to him that there is very serious trouble in the offing if a radical change is not made in certain activities taking place.

During the years I have been a member in this Chamber, long and repeated endeavours have been made to obtain a measure of justice for the miners who are unfortunate enough to contract the occupational disease of pneumoconiosis. These endeavours have met with varying degrees of success and with quite a number of disappointments, and a lot of injustice has been done to quite a number of people.

Last year or the year before, through the efforts of a member in another place, Parliament appointed a committee to inquire into various aspects of compensation for this disability. After hearing quite a lot of evidence from people qualified to give it, the committee submitted certain recommendations which the Government has adopted in part. I say, "in part" because apparently it adopted some of those recommendations without divulging to the House that some recommendations had not been adopted—and some important ones, too.

All in all, I think those in this Chamber and another place came to the conclusion that the passing of the legislation removed a lot of the injustice suffered and that people in future would be able to obtain the amounts of compensation to which they were entitled. When that legislation came into operation on the 14th December last, naturally it took a while for it to settle down and, as a matter of fact, some alarming delays took place. For instance, the medical committee that was set up to assess these cases did not

sit until the 22nd March and, in the meantime, there were people requiring assessments. Under the peculiar set-up of the Act, had one of these persons died from some cause other than silicosis or pneumoconiosis his dependants would have received no compensation whatever; and I will have more to say about that aspect as I go along, because it is very important.

However, the Government took a commonsense attitude, perhaps as a result of representations that were made by doctors, legal men, and laymen who were concerned with these people; and it pushed the Act aside in this regard and allowed the assessments to be made by the mines medical officer, who had assessed previously, instead of waiting for the medical committee to be convened. It was illegal; but, of course, this Government is used to doing illegal things and this was one instance where it was very necessary to do it in order that justice would be given to these people.

I understand that in the process some people were not assessed and in the meantime they died from causes other than silicosis. Their dependants have not been able to obtain compensation and I do not know that they ever will. As I have already said, the position was a little obscure for quite a while and naturally it will take some time to shake down. However, to my astonishment, as time has gone on we have found that requests for the payment of compensation have been refused in cases where previously applicants have had no trouble in obtaining it, and later it became apparent to me why these people were being refused compensation on the flimsiest of grounds.

We had been led to believe that injustices would be wiped out; but we find, under the present set-up, that more injustices are being created, some far worse than any that we have had before. As a matter of fact today it is far harder for people entitled to compensation to receive it owing to the attitude adopted by the State Government Insurance Office. I want to make it clear that I do not wish to speak disparagingly of the officers of the State Government Insurance Office. I have great admiration for those people, and for the job they have done; but they are being forced into a position by the inactivity of this Government, and the Minister must take his share of blame for not seeing that there is sufficient money in the fund to pay for the various cases that occur.

Mr. O'Neil: What would you suggest I do?

Mr. MOIR: I will offer the Minister suggestions as I go along. I think the Minister will have to take drastic action; he must take the matter right away from the Premium Rates Committee. The fund has been allowed to run down over the years—seriously run down—until it has reached the stage where the people administering the fund cannot pay compensation to people who are entitled to it. Those in charge of the fund raise all the legal quibbles imaginable, and I do not altogether blame them for doing that. We had the position of the general manager of the State Government Insurance Office making repeated approaches to the Premium Rates Committee to have premiums increased, and on each occasion he has met with a refusal. Only recently, when the position was becoming desperate, the committee agreed to a measure of increase, and I understand that another increase is to be made.

As a matter of fact, the history of the committee is rather interesting. The State Government Insurance Office has a monopoly of this type of insurance. Indeed, it is because of complaints similar to those being made that the State Government Insurance Office came into being. The private insurance offices would not insure miners and so a Labor Government brought the State Government Insurance Office into being, illegally at the the time, and for many years it was not legalised.

Mr. O'Neil: The risk and the liability were unknown and that is why there were fluctations in the premium rates in the first place.

Mr. MOIR: The Labor Government of the day decided that that important class of people, the workers, had to be covered and so the State Government Insurance Office was brought into being.

On reading *Hansard* I find that the premium rate on silicosis risk was increased from 80s. to 90s. per cent. in 1927, and it remained at 90s. per cent. until June 1939 when it was reduced to 80s. per cent. It remained at that figure for 14 years, until 1953, when it was reduced—

Mr. O'Neil: To 60s.

Mr. MOIR: Yes, on the 1st July 1953 it was reduced to 60s.; on the 1st January, 1954, it was reduced to 30s. and on the 1st January, 1955 it was reduced to 20s. per cent. The Government must have had some doubts about the matter at that time because in 1955 it asked the Government Actuary's opinion on the fund and he said it was most difficult to give an opinion on it owing to the nature of the risk, but he advised that the position would have to be watched closely, and the existing position at least maintained.

That was in 1955; but over the years we find there have been many increases in the total amounts payable. I have a table here showing the disablement payments. I shall not enumerate them; but suffice it to say that from the 8th April, 1949, when the total and permanent disability payment was a maximum £1,250, until the 14th

December 1964, when it was increased to £3,500, there were 12 increases. So we have a position that would be rather awkward to follow because during that time we had a decrease in the number of men employed in the industry. In 1939 there were over 15,000 employees in the goldmining industry, but I suppose at present there would be only 4,500.

According to answers I have received from the Minister, representations have been made to the Premium Rates Committee for increases in premiums, and those requests have been refused—with the exception of the two very tardy increases to which I made reference. So the people in the State Government Insurance Office are being forced into the position of being parsimonious with their payments, and wherever they can they have raised legal quibbles in order to deprive men of their just rights.

Let us take the case which started all this inquiry into the position. It was the case of a man who was refused weekly payments of compensation on the ground that he was drawing the invalid pension. It was said that if he was entitled to the invalid pension he was disabled from causes other than silicosis. There is a provision in the Act which is applied to pneumoconiosis cases and to no other type —which means it applies only to goldminers. It is to the effect that if a man is suffering from some non-industrial complaint the percentage is assessed and that percentage is taken away from his overall allowable percentage. In other words, if he has a 50 per cent. disability, and it is ascertained he has a disability of 25 per cent. caused by some non-industrial disease, he is paid only 25 per cent. for his silicotic disability. These are the only cases where this sort of thing is done.

If a man loses a leg he gets the total amount for that leg. No inquiry is made as to whether he has a bad heart, a kidney complaint, or some other complaint. Take dermatitis, which is not assessed on a percentage basis. No questions are asked about the percentage of any other non-industrial disease applying in those cases. If a man is unable to work because of dermatitis he is paid the weekly payments and they will continue to be paid until the total amount of compensation is exhausted. But in regard to pneumoconiosis a different set of rules applies and there is a great deal of alarm among miners because of this fact.

I do not blame them for taking the view that they do—that the whole of the Government is against them. There is the State Government Insurance Office and the Workers' Compensation Board. The board is made up of an employees' representative, an employers' representative, and the chairman; and, naturally, the chairman has the balance of power and he is a Government appointee. The board of doctors which makes decisions and assesses a worker's disability is composed of Government employees. However, I do not want to be disparaging about these medical men because I believe they do their best.

I think this Parliament made a bad mistake when it did not agree to the amendment which we tried to make to the effect that the worker who was being assessed should be permitted to have a doctor of his own choosing appointed to the board. We even went so far as to suggest a chest specialist of the worker's choosing, but that was not agreed to. In all things justice not only has to be done, but it also has to appear to be done, and the workers argue that where there is a committee of three men appointed from a Government department the senior Government employee will influence his two colleagues. I do not know whether that is right or wrong, but that is what is being said.

I know that other medical men are not happy about the constitution of this committee either. I have been informed by a chest specialist in this city that representations have been made to the Commissioner of Health along the lines that the medical men are not happy about it; but, as I said, I am not sufficiently informed about it to be able to comment any further on that aspect.

From the Government-appointed medical board we go to the Crown Law Department, and here we have a situation which is absolutely extraordinary. Here we have an employer in an industry, insuring with a Government department, and where any dispute arises it has at its beck and call the Crown Law Department. I do not know of any employer anywhere in Australia or anywhere else who has a free call on officers of the Crown Law Department. I asked a question about the remuneration these people received from the State Government Insurance Office and I found it was only a token payment.

So, in effect, the employer, through the State Government Insurance Office, has the free use of the full legal resources of the Crown Law Department. On the other hand, the employee who is deprived of compensation goes to the organisation —and I am now talking about the union— to which he belongs, and if that union does not fight legal cases of that description for its members he must engage a lawyer at his own expense to fight the full resources of the Crown Law Department.

The organisation to which I have belonged for many years, and to which I am proud to belong—the Australian Workers' Union—has taken many cases on behalf of workers before the Workers' Compensation Board. It has, indeed, taken them to the High Court of Australia, and the legal men of the Crown Law Department have been ranged on the other side. There is no cost to the employer, but there is a

big cost to the organisation of the employee. This is wrong. So it is little wonder, when a worker runs up against this sort of thing, he feels that he has the entire might of the Government ranged against him.

Mr. O'Neil: You think the State Government Insurance Office should have its own legal practitioner?

Mr. MOIR: It certainly should. What other insurance company is able to call on the Crown Law Department?

Mr. O'Neil: One of the reasons could be that it pays less for service than others.

Mr. MOIR: Perhaps the State Government Insurance Office would not be so litigation happy as it is; because it refers every move to the Crown Law Department, whether it be the case of a widow who thinks she is entitled to compensation, or to which other people think she is entitled; or whether it be anybody else, they all have the Crown Law Department ranged against them.

The State Government Insurance Office is placed in a very awkward position. Here we have a fund which must pay out a lot of money every year being deprived of its funds, and seeing its reserves cut down all the time, while the Premium Rates Committee will not agree, or has only latterly agreed, to an increase, despite the fact that representations have been made for some time.

Mr. O'Neil: Has there been a recent approach?

Mr. MOIR: I think I should read some of the answers to questions that have been asked, because they should be put on record. My first intimation about the hold-up of these cases—and I have quite a number of them after the case where the man did not receive compensation on the ground that he was also receiving an invalid pension—was when I aired the matter here and the Minister intervened, and I was notified from the General Manager of the State Insurance Office that it had agreed to pay this man right back to the time when he made his application, although I was informed in the answer I got here that it was not legally compelled to do so. So it appears that the State Government Insurance Office did this grudgingly. That would be a case that could be legally contested, because in my opinion these people are entitled to be paid under the Act.

On the 7th September, 1965, I asked the following questions:—

(1) With reference to the reply to my question on the 17th August, how many claimants listed in the third category are not yet receiving payment?

(2) What are the reasons in each case?

The Minister replied—

(1) 11.

(2) In these cases, the present earnings of the claimants are such that the provisions of clause 3 of the first schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act preclude them from receiving payments. These cases are eligible for review if their economic position changes as a result of enforced retirement from present employment or necessity for change of occupation to one of lesser remuneration, brought about by incapacity due to industrial disease.

I might say that clause 3 of the first schedule had never been in operation in this case at all. That evidence was given before the Pneumoconiosis Committee, by an officer from the State Government Insurance Office and by the General Manager of that office.

This no doubt influenced the committee in its findings and recommendations. The chairman did point out that it was not in conformity with the Act, but the point was made that several things were done which were not in strict conformity with the Act, and which had been decided after agreement with the union concerned. One of these was, of course, to regard 65 per cent. disability as total disability.

I notice at times the State Government Insurance Office claims it was responsible for initiating that provision. This, of course, is not true, because it was due to the representations made by a previous member for Boulder (Mr. C. T. D. Oliver) to the Attorney-General of the day (Mr. Watts) who issued a ministerial direction to the State Government Insurance Office that 65 per cent. disability was to be regarded as total disability in the case of silicosis, or asbestosis. This is rather important when we notice that this evidence was given before the Pneumoconiosis Committee, because clause 3 was reimposed in very peculiar circumstances. I will quote some of these cases.

Here is the case of a man who was refused, and I will read the letter, because it is rather significant in my opinion that the man was informed to a certain extent of his rights; whereas the later cases which I have were not informed of their rights at all. I wonder why.

This letter was addressed to the man concerned, dated the 24th June, 1965—

Claim MP/2675.

I confirm the verbal advice given to you that although as a result of your examination by the Pneumoconiosis Medical Board it has been established that you are partially disabled by silicosis to the extent of 30%, you have no entitlement to compensation as you are not regarded

as suffering any economic loss. Whilst you continue in your present employment your claim will remain in abeyance. Should you, however, find it necessary on medical grounds to cease your present employment or to seek alternative employment your claim will be further considered on production of supporting medical evidence.

I would like to point out to the Minister the different wording from the other claims. Here is claim MP/2688. The letter was written on the 10th August, and reads—

Claim MP/2688.

Although the report received from the Pneumoconiosis Medical Board indicates that you are partially incapacitated to the extent of 30% due to the industrial disease of silicosis, you are not entitled to payments under the Workers' Compensation Act, as on the information available to me you are suffering no economic loss. At the time of lodging your application you were employed by the Commonwealth Department of Works at a weekly rate of £19 11s. 10d. and this is in excess of the average Award rate for miners as at 26/7/65 which calculates at £19 10s. per week. Whilst you are able to continue in your present employment no compensation is payable to you.

That has a different wording altogether. He is not told that the matter is held in abeyance or anything like that. A man who did not have a good education could quite easily think he was turned down flat. I would also draw attention to the fact that on my figures this man has 1s. 10d. too much on the State Government Insurance Office figures. I do not admit they are right and I will prove why they are not right. The State Government Insurance Office quibbled over the amount of 1s. 10d. When it pointed out in the first case that the man had no economic loss, he was earning £20 a week, which, in round figures, would be £1,000 a year.

I have obtained duplicates of the man's tax stamps for the period he worked in the mines; and for the year ended June, 1953, his earnings were £1,891 8s. 1d. The following year his earnings were reduced to £1,570. The effect of silicosis was taking its toll. He told me he was not feeling well and decided to leave the industry. He was examined to see whether his condition was due to silicosis and he was told he had no silicosis. Subsequently this man was found to be 30 per cent. incapacitated with silicosis. He certainly suffered an economic loss when he left the industry, because his earnings dropped £300 in one year because he was not physically fit to earn the money.

We find that clause 3 does not confine the computation of a man's earnings to the award. It refers to his average weekly earnings. That clause lays down what should be done where economic loss has taken place. It states—

In fixing the amount of the weekly payment, regard shall be had to any payment allowance, or benefit which the worker may receive from the employer during the period of his incapacity, and in the case of partial incapacity the weekly payment shall in no case exceed sixty-six and two-thirds per centum of the difference between the amount of the wages or of the average weekly earnings of the worker before the accident and the average weekly amount which he is earning or able to earn in some suitable employment or business after the accident, but shall bear no relation to the amount of that difference as under the circumstances of the case may appear proper and, in assessing weekly payments, the wages or average weekly earnings of the worker shall be deemed to have been varied in accordance with any basic wage fluctuation, or any amendment of a relevant industrial award, which would have affected those wages or average weekly earnings.

That makes the position entirely different. Without going into the question of what is laid down about fluctuations of awards or earnings, this man is undoubtedly suffering an economic loss which will have to be made up by the State Government Insurance Office to the extent of £7 a week; and he is told in those terms that he has no claim.

I asked the Minister questions about claims being rejected and he pointed out they were not rejected at all. That is rather extraordinary. The Minister said that the cases were just set aside and they were not being paid for the time being, but would eventually be paid and paid in full. I do not suppose the Minister was aware, or his adviser who informed him was aware of a provision in the Act which would preclude them, in certain circumstances, from getting any payment at all. The following provision is in the first schedule of the Act:—

Provided that if a worker dies leaving dependants and his death does not result from the injury, and at the time of his death he had been receiving compensation in respect of silicosis, pneumoconiosis or miner's phthisis, by weekly payments, but for less than six months, then nevertheless, the preceding provisions of this paragraph shall apply in all respects as if, in fact, he had been receiving compensation by weekly payments for not less than six months.

One might say there is a preceding paragraph that qualifies his dependants to receive compensation if he had been receiving weekly compensation payments for six months; but with pneumoconiosis, if

a man dies and leaves dependants and his death was not the result of the injury, so long as he is receiving compensation in respect of pneumoconiosis by way of weekly payments his dependants would receive compensation payments. They would receive nothing in the event of his death being caused by some other reason if he was not in receipt of weekly payments. So the State Insurance Office gets the odds going for it, if it can refuse or fob off enough people. There must be a percentage who die from other causes, such as motor accidents and natural causes. In those cases the dependants are not the liability of the State Insurance Office. That is the position.

The position is becoming so bad that some workers are leaving the industry for this reason. They say, "I am not going to stay here until I get pneumoconiosis because I will not be compensated." A man who contracts pneumoconiosis decides to get out and looks around for another job. He probably gets far less remuneration, but he applies for compensation and gets it. That has been the general practice over the years. He is paid the compensation. There is no question about it at all. I have handled many of these cases and the State Insurance Office has not been at all interested in what amounts these people receive; it just pays the compensation which they are entitled to get; and this enables them to rehabilitate themselves and their families probably right away from the goldfields and in an entirely different occupation.

That is a good thing as it may conserve their health; but now we have the position where if a man goes out of the mining industry and takes a job, he will not receive any compensation; and if he gets to the stage where he is no longer able to work he is liable to meet the position where the State Insurance Office will say, "You are not entitled to any compensation because you qualified for the invalid pension." I ask members to listen to the question which I asked of the Minister today. It is as follows:—

(1) Is he aware that the S.G.I.O. has refused weekly payments of workers' compensation to the widow of an ex-miner who was in receipt of weekly payments for pneumoconiosis at the time of his death, on the ground that she was in receipt of a Commonwealth social service pension during the lifetime of her late husband, and was therefore not fully maintained by him?

(2) Is he further aware that disabled or partially disabled workers and their dependants, if also entitled to payment under the Commonwealth Social Service Act, receive reduced weekly payments of compensation in order to remain eligible for social service payments and conserve their workers' compensation payments?

(3) Will he instruct that this widow be paid the weekly payments of compensation to which she is entitled?

The Minister could not pick up the case from the description I gave. I did not want to mention the name of the person; and I did not want to give the address of the person, but it is in Boulder. The Minister gave me an answer to an entirely different case, but to a case that amplifies what I am saying is correct, because the worker died and although he was entitled to payments, he died before they commenced and the State Insurance Office refused to pay his widow. As a result, she is taking legal action.

There must be several of these cases. The Minister produced this case; and I know of another in Kalgoorlie where legal action is pending. So we have proof positive. If one of these men dies after being refused compensation, although being entitled to it—having been assessed as being disabled as a result of silicosis—then his dependants are compensated; but if he dies for any other reason, the State Insurance Office will argue. I say it was not honest for the Minister to say the cases were held in abeyance and that they would all be eventually paid. The Minister may have been honest in his action, but the reply was not honest, because a lot of these people could miss out.

I asked some questions about reserves in the fund and what would happen to this fund if the amount had not been reduced. We find there is £956,362 in the fund at the present time. I think, from memory, over £300,000 was paid out and the total loss over nine years was £502,645. That is the loss from the fund over and above income by way of premium rates and interest. Unfortunately I have not time to read all of these questions, but they are interesting. However, I did ask if the rate of premium had been 80s. per cent. what would have been the state of the fund now and the Minister replied, "Approximately £2,612,000." So there would have been ample money in the fund to meet these liabilities. At the same time I asked if it had been kept at 60s. per cent. what amount would have been in the fund, and that amount would have been £1,980,000 which, again, would have been ample. I have added the £502,645 deficiency on to the amount of £956,362 in the fund now and we get £1,459,007, which, again, would have been ample. It would have required something less than 60 per cent. to have been kept on. Since 1953 the fund would have met all liabilities and would have been in a healthy position. I am not going to quote all these cases. I have quite a number of them, but time is against me.

There is a matter I do wish to mention in regard to how the decision was arrived at to bring in the provisions of clause 3 of the first schedule. I have had some very funny answers to a series of questions which I asked. On the 7th September, I asked the following question of the Minister for Labour:—

> On what date did the Government or the S.G.I.O. make the decision to depart from the previous method of paying workers' compensation to claimants assessed as having a degree of disability due to silicosis, i.e., payment of compensation for the disease as such, to the present practice of only paying compensation where the incapacity to earn full wages in some occupation is proved?

Here let me interpolate and say that one of the recommendations of the committee was that compensation should be paid for the disease. Recommendation nine reads as follows:—

> Owing to the difficulty of applying the ordinary provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act to pneumoconiosis the Act be amended to provide an alternate scheme for compensation of workers affected on the following lines:—
>
> (a) Compensation shall be payable proportionately to degree of loss of lung function caused by the disease, and it shall not be necessary to demonstrate incapacity in the sense of loss of earnings as is otherwise necessary under the Workers' Compensation Act.

There is quite a lot more; but that was the opinion of the committee and the Government did not see fit to adopt it. When I asked the question which I just read out, I received a rather amazing reply, as follows:—

> There has been no departure from the previous method of paying workers' compensation to claimants assessed as having a degree of disability due to silicosis. Liability is assessed now on the same basis as previously; —

Of course, that was perfectly wrong. We know that liability is assessed, but it was the payment I was concerned about. Continuing—

> —namely, as a percentage of total liability. The General Manager of the S.G.I.O. did decide to apply the provisions of clause 3 of the first schedule to the Act to new claims accepted for the first time after the 1st April, 1965. This did not affect the amount of the liability, but, in those cases where it applied, it reduced the amount of the weekly payment or suspended it completely temporarily. These claims are reveiwed if the economic position of the claimant changes as a result of enforced retirement from present employment or necessity for change of employment to one of lesser remuneration, brought about by incapacity due to industrial disease.

Of course, they have already retired from their more remunerative occupation, so that type of answer just did not make sense.

Then I asked another question on the 7th September in regard to the same matter, as follows:—

> What is the reason for this change of policy by the S.G.I.O.?

The Minister replied as follows:—

> The provisions of clause 3 of the first schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act have been applied to new applications only, which were made on or after the 1st April, 1965. All other claimants, including claimants who have previously received compensation and have successfully reapplied with an established increase in the degree of their disablement are being paid at full weekly rates regardless of present employment and earnings.

Then he went on and supplied me with information that absolutely rocked me. He said—

> In March, 1965, it became obvious to the General Manager of the S.G.I.O. that many more applications were being received than had been anticipated. He became so concerned at the large drain on the financial resources that were available for the payment of future claims that he considered it was desirable to apply the provisions of clause 3 of the first schedule of the Act to future claims. Before deciding upon this action, he conferred with the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union (Mining Division) at Boulder and the secretary of the Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie. Both agreed that the proposed course of action was desirable to preserve funds for future claimants. By arrangement with these two gentlemen, it was agreed that the new provision should apply as from the 1st April, 1965, and would apply only to new claims lodged after that date.

Then he went on to say how the reserve had been reduced; and further on he said—

> The Government must ensure that ample funds are available in 15 or 20 years' time when miners commencing in the industry today may become disabled by industrial disease and lodge their claims with the S.G.I.O.

Members can imagine my feelings when I was informed that the secretary of the miners' union had agreed to this departure and this new idea. I immediately wired him and I received a telegram and a

letter of denial from the secretary of the mining division of the Australian Workers' Union. The letter was dated the 13th September, 1965, and reads as follows:—

> In confirmation of a telegram I forwarded to you on Thursday, 9th September, I wish to refute the statement contained in the reply to your question on Pneumoconiosis claims on 7th September. The statement claims that the General Manager of the State Government Insurance Office had conferred with me at Boulder in March, 1965, regarding the advisability of applying Clause 3 of the first schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act to future claims for compensation for Industrial disease.
>
> The statement also claims that I as well as the secretary of the Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie had agreed that the proposed course of action was desirable to preserve funds for future claimants.
>
> The Minister then further stated that "by arrangement with these two gentlemen it was agreed that the new provision should apply as from the 1st April, 1965, and would apply only to new claims lodged after that date".
>
> I wish to deny that I have ever met the General Manager of the State Government Insurance Office and conferred over Workers' Compensation either at Boulder or anywhere else. I further deny that I entered into any arrangement with any officer of the State Government Insurance Office on this question at any time.
>
> Mr. W. Barnett, Branch Manager of the State Government Insurance Office visited the Boulder Office and informed me in the presence of the Union Organiser Mr. A. Barwick that the State Government Insurance Office wished to apply Clause 3 of the first Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. I pointed out to him that in my opinion it would cause hardship to men who were receiving compensation and who could claim compensation for Pneumoconiosis, in the future. I further informed him that any decision on matters such as that would have to be made by the Management Committee. The Management Committee discussed the matter and decided the State Government Insurance Office must submit the proposal in writing.
>
> This decision was conveyed to the Branch Manager of the S.G.I.O. per telephone. These proposals were never received by the union in writing and therefore have never been decided.
>
> Never at any stage during discussions with the Branch Manager of the S.G.I.O. was the date of the 1st of April ever mentioned. Never at any stage of the discussions was there any mention of preserving funds of the State Government Insurance Office for future claimants.
>
> I consider that the erroneous statement made by the Minister for Labour could be seriously damaging to my standing and position in the Union. I now ask you, Mr. Moir, to request the Minister to completely withdraw the statement he has made. I am writing to the General Manager of the State Goverment Insurance Office in similar terms.
>
> Yours faithfully,
> F. L. LITHGOW,
> Secretary.

I also received a letter from the secretary which the management directed him to write to me, saying that they had complete faith in the secretary. In their opinion, he had conveyed their decision to the branch manager.

I saw the Minister and explained the position to him and he said that the general manager meant that he had an officer visit the union. That is entirely different from what he said. The Minister said the general manager informed him that he had interviewed those people when he had done nothing of the sort. I tried very hard, by question, to get a withdrawal of the statement, but I was unsuccessful.

Then it was stated that the secretary of the union had conveyed the information over the telephone, approving of the step to be taken. That information was supposed to have been conveyed over the telephone to the branch manager at Kalgoorlie. The Minister, in his reply to me, stated that documentary evidence of that was available. Of course I asked for the papers to be tabled. The papers were tabled and I am not satisfied with the documentary evidence, but the papers which were tabled are rather enlightening. From the group of papers it was evident that the action was commenced by something dated the 18th March, 1965, which had some initials on it. It was not addressed to anybody but headed "Industrial Disease Claims". It reads as follows:—

> Mr. Hogg advises he is seriously considering the application of Clause 3 of the First Schedule to claimants receiving compensation for silicosis, as he feels that any application for an increased industrial disease premium would be resisted in certain quarters if it was revealed that he had not taken advantage of this provision under the Act.

That shows that the general manager considered he was being coerced to take advantage of all provisions of the Act notwithstanding any agreement which had been entered into over the years. They must have been of long standing because there were none in my time.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): The honourable member has only another five minutes.

Mr. MOIR: The paper goes on to say—

> He was desirous of obtaining your comments and the local viewpoint on the proposition but thought it should be restricted to those cases where the earnings resulted from personal exertion and should not include income from investments on property.

How typical of this Government! If a disabled miner had investments bringing in money they had to be disregarded, but if he earned money by sweat of brow he was to be deprived of workers' compensation.

Mr. O'Neil: Who sent that letter?

Mr. MOIR: It is not signed at all. As I say, it is a mystery at the moment. It went on to say—

> He requested that an approach be made to Mr. Jennings for the views of the Chamber of Mines on the subject and suggested also that the A.W.U's. reaction be sounded out if considered advisable.

What a beaut! The union was only to be sounded out to see if it considered it advisable. To continue—

> If the Chamber of Mines favour the proposition they should be asked to advise whether it should apply only to new cases since the amendment of the Act or to all cases alike.
>
> Requests that you report back to him as early as possible next week.

There is quite a lot of material available. I have had photostat copies made of the papers laid on the Table. The only record of any documentary evidence that we have that Mr. Lithgow agreed was a piece of paper containing notes which were supposed to be a record of the telephone conversation. It is dated the 26th March, 1965, and reads as follows:—

> Note: Mr. Lithgow rang me on another matter and I questioned him on the application of clause 3. He said his management committee had discussed the matter at a special meeting the union had no objection to clause 3 being applied. As to new cases from 14/12/64, but did not agree to its operation to existing cases prior to that date.
>
> 23/3/65, 4.45 p.m.

What a way of doing business: Jot it down over the phone! There is a complete denial that he ever said anything at all. It seems amazing to me that if the management itself made a decision it would not put the proposition in writing. It does not make sense. I have had sufficiently long a connection with unions to know that they do not operate that way. Also, I have yet to hear of a union giving something away which the members have enjoyed for years. Perhaps there have been some compromises but the unions have received something. Of course, in this instance the union has a lot of cases in the hands of solicitors fighting to try to win them for the union.

So I say it is a very unsatisfactory position as far as I am concerned. There is only one thing the Minister can do and that is to take this question right away from the hands of the Premium Rates Committee, and allow it to have nothing to do with the matter. That committee has nothing to do with this type of insurance. None of the private companies take this risk; it is left to the State Government Insurance Office.

The Premium Rates Committee is made up of the Auditor-General, three members of the Workers' Compensation Board; a representative of the tariff companies; a representative of the non-tariff companies; and the general manager of the State Government Insurance Office. Why would those gentlemen refuse a rise in premiums? It must be the people representing the insurance companies—the employers' representatives—and they have also persuaded somebody else. The pressure must have come from the Chamber of Mines.

Either the Government has to take a different stand to see that this fund is brought back to the position where it should be, or else the men, through their unions, will have to bring action against the Chamber of Mines. They will have to negotiate with the Chamber of Mines and tell it that there will be considerable industrial trouble unless it agrees to justice being done to those workers who are suffering from this disability of pneumoconiosis.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [10.10 p.m.]: I cannot let this opportunity pass without indicating that in my opinion the member for Boulder-Eyre has very truly conveyed to this House the pulse of the mining community at Kalgoorlie. I would strongly indicate my agreement with him when he complains that ostensibly on the face of the record it would be that the employer—being the goldmining employer—whose franchise for insurance is covered by the State Government Insurance Office, appears to have as its backing the full legal resources of the Crown Law Department.

I qualify my remarks by saying this appears to be the case on the record, and this is a question about which the Law Society of Western Australia has repeatedly complained to the Government.

This fault, of course, is not one brought about by the present Government; it is one which has been tolerated by Governments in the past. But that does not justify a situation which cannot be justified at all. Furthermore, I support the member for

Boulder-Eyre in the very strong advocacy he has put forward tonight in asking for a change of attitude; for a less parsimonious attitude to be adopted by the State Government Insurance Office in honouring its obligations under the Workers' Compensation Act.

My contribution to this debate will be extremely brief but I do wish the brevity will emphasise the support that I have tried to indicate for the member for Boulder-Eyre.

Votes put and passed.

Vote: Medical, £8,133,816—

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [10.15 p.m.]: I do not intend to speak for long on this vote.

Mr. Brand: Are you going to be any length of time? Because, if you are, we will report progress.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will only be five minutes.

Mr. Brand: Good! Let us have it, then!

Mr. Hawke: What about the interjections?

Mr. Brand: That is a point well taken.

Mr. FLETCHER: On the debate on this vote there is one matter which is causing concern to the people in my electorate which I would like to mention. I asked a lengthy question of the Minister on this matter, but despite the importance of the subject, I will not read the question in its entirety. However, on the 3rd November, 1965, I asked the following question of the Minister representing the Minister for Health:—

(1) Has he been made aware—

(a) of Fremantle area doctors' alarm associated with the imminent closure of Hillcrest Maternity Hospital to other than unmarried mothers;

(b) that the alternative Woodside Maternity Hospital is overtaxed to the extent that expectant mothers cannot obtain a reservation after 3½ months pregnancy?

(2) Am I correctly informed:

(a) that this hospital has neither an operating theatre nor preparation room?

A little further down in my series of questions, I asked—

(3) Is he further aware that Devonleigh Maternity Hospital, Swanbourne area, is considered too remote from doctors, patients and relatives of the 48,141 constituents living within the State electorates of Fremantle, Cockburn, Melville, and East Melville area?

The Minister's reply was to the effect that I was not correctly informed. Further, the Minister's reply to my first question was—

> I am not aware of any alarm but my department advises that doctors have expressed concern on the subject matter.

Also, in reply to my second question the Minister said that there was a minor theatre and surgical facilities available, and that caesarian sections are being performed.

In a further reply the Minister also said he was aware that caesarian sections, in an emergency, had been sent to King Edward Memorial Hospital from Fremantle. However, what causes me real concern is that the Minister said that there are a minor theatre and surgical facilities available and that caesarian sections were being performed. The members of this Chamber will realise that I am not easily fobbed off when I am aware of the true facts, so on Tuesday, the 9th November, I asked a further question of the Minister, which reads as follows:—

(1) Adverting to my question on the closure of the Hillcrest Maternity Hospital, wherein he informs me that there is an operating theatre at Woodside Maternity Hospital, East Fremantle, does he allude to the labour ward which on occasion is used in emergency as a theatre for caesarian section, since the matron states that there is no operating theatre as such at the address mentioned?

(2) Am I correctly informed—

(a) by the matron, or

(b) the Minister's informant?

It can be seen from the question that I deliberately avoided suggesting that the Minister was misrepresenting the truth. I deliberately used the words, "the Minister's informant." On the one hand, the matron says there is no operating theatre and no preparation room at the hospital, and yet the Minister informs me that there is. I submit to the Chamber that there is a drastic shortage of maternity beds in the Fremantle area, and yet here there is a maternity hospital being closed in the North Fremantle district. This is causing great concern among the people who reside there and in the Fremantle area generally.

I would point out that a labour ward is not a theatre, irrespective of what the Minister has said; nor is a preparation room a theatre; and I think the member for Wembley will agree with me on that. Having regard to asepsis and the concern of young mothers with babies, this is not a proper place at which caesarian sections should be performed. Doctors and their patients are concerned about the lack of proper facilities in my electorate.

Some months ago a mother wrote me a letter which I forwarded to the Minister for Health, and he informed me that the maternity hospital mentioned in the letter was closed. The only alternative hospital is Devonleigh, which is extremely remote from the district in which reside the 45,000 people mentioned. It is not good enough for relatives of young mothers to be forced to visit a hospital several miles distant from where they live. In making such a visit they would be obliged to catch two buses. I hope members on the other side of the Chamber will not tell me that everyone has a motorcar with which to drive to such places. Everyone in my electorate does not own a motorcar. They do not reside in the more fortunate suburbs.

The Minister told me that the maternity hospital in question was closed and this is not good enough. Perhaps the Government works on the assumption that the pill is eliminating the need for maternity needs in my area. However, this is not the consensus of opinion of the people or the medical profession who reside in my electorate. I have their assurance that families are being properly spaced and the decline in the birth rate which temporarily existed is now flattening out.

I draw the attention of members of the Chamber to the reply which the Minister gave to the effect that people, after three and a half months' pregnancy, were being turned away from Woodside Maternity Hospital. To me that would appear to encourage subterfuge on the part of young couples by stating that the wife was pregnant and then making a decision to start a family. The Fremantle district is not well served with maternity hospitals, and I ask the Premier, on behalf of the Minister for Health, to ensure that more hospitals are provided in that district.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Homes, £675,919; Public Health, £983,792; Mental Health Services, £1,817,931; Fisheries, £183,903; State Abattoirs and Sale Yards, £235,416; Railways, £19,653,000; State Batteries, £220,740; Country Water Supplies, Sewerage, Drainage and Irrigation, £2,432,739—put and passed.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Report

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means

The House resolved into a Committee of Ways and Means for raising the supplies granted to Her Majesty, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [10.25 p.m.]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1966, a sum not exceeding £79,431,044 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Question put and passed.

Report

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

STATE TRADING CONCERNS ESTIMATES, 1965-66

Tabling of Estimates

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [10.27 p.m.]: I present a copy of the State Trading Concerns Estimates for the year ending the 30th June, 1966, and move—

That this paper be laid on the Table of the House.

Question put and passed.

In Committee

Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the State Trading Concerns for the year ending the 30th June, 1966, now considered, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

Votes: The West Australian Meat Export Works, £1,125,000; Wyndham Freezing, Canning and Meat Export Works, £1,053,020; State Shipping Service, £3,427,607; State Engineering Works, £709,042—put and passed.

Report

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

This concluded the Estimates of the State Trading Concerns for the year.

ARCHITECTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), read a first time.

Second Reading

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [10.31 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is a Legislative Council Bill, and the copies being distributed contain the amended provisions. Though this Bill contains numerous clauses, many of them

are of a purely machinery character. I shall make some brief reference to these and shall speak at greater length on others of greater consequence.

Some of the brief machinery measures introduce, nevertheless, the important principle of applying to limited hotel licensees obligations at present placed only on general licensees and wayside house licensees. When the parent Act was first passed, the limited hotel license was not in existence but this type of license has been gaining in importance. There have been three issued in the past two years and further applications are likely to be made on an increasing scale.

The Bill permits the issue of a provisional certificate to facilitate the erection of suitable premises for conducting this type of license in order to give an assurance to the prospective licensee that the license will be issued upon the erection of a building to specifications acceptable to the court.

It is considered unfair to prevent the construction of children's playgrounds appurtenant to ordinary hotels while permitting them at limited hotel establishments. The Bill brings this into line.

Section 58 of the Act contains certain restrictions in respect of females holding licenses, and these provisions are in future to be applied to limited hotel licenses. Similarly, limited hotel licensees will be required to set up their names for public information on their buildings and to provide outside lights at night, the same as applies to normal hotels, and there are provisions concerning change of name to be applied also to limited hotel licenses.

The Act contains no general definition of "bar" or "bar room" but both terms are used. A wide definition has now been inserted in the Bill to cover the many varied types of bars in vogue these days. While the Act, by inference, exempts dining-rooms, it is thought that an express exception should be made so that there is no doubt that children can be admitted to dining-rooms at all times when meals are being taken, even though liquor is being served in such rooms at the tables.

At present where the licensee is absent from his premises for 28 days in the aggregate, any further absence must be approved by the court. It is considered unreasonable that casual absences from licensed premises should be added together to make up the period of absence. It is thought that by following the method used in New South Wales, permission should be required only for continuous absence. On the other hand, a growing number of licensees go on overseas holidays for fairly long periods, and, as the Act now stands, they are not required to appoint a suitable person to manage and superintend the business. It is considered the appointment of a manager for any period of absence longer than 21 days is necessary and it is made clear that, during the absence of the licensee, such person is fully responsible.

The Bill provides that the holders of canteen licenses may obtain an occasional license on Anzac Day but only by individual application.

The Bill also extends the time in which an owner can pay overdue license fees before the license in respect of premises owned by him is cancelled. Under the Act at present, the owner of premises, where the licensee fails to pay the license dues, may himself pay the fees within seven days, and if he does not the Act provides for a mandatory cancellation of license. It can happen that where a licensee, who does not own the premises, fails to pay his license dues the owners of the premises may not become aware of this in time to avoid the cancellation of the license. The court therefore asks for the power to extend the period for such time as it thinks fit.

The business of the court has greatly increased and applicants are finding it difficult to lodge their applications in the prescribed time before the beginning of the quarterly sittings. It is proposed that the court and not the Minister may fix sitting days. There is an amendment also which will enable applications for canteen licenses to be expedited due to rapid development in isolated areas. It is proposed that these applications can be heard at such time as the chairman of the court may appoint.

It is intended to tidy up to some extent the provisions covering applications for temporary licenses. This decision arose out of the grant of a temporary license on school grounds to a parents and citizens' association for school sports by a country stipendiary magistrate.

Section 53 is to be repealed, because a temporary boarding or eating house license has never been granted under this section. In fact, there are no licenses for eating or boarding houses under the Licensing Act. All have lapsed years ago.

In future, when clubs are applying for renewal, it will not be necessary for them to supply the detailed list of the names of members and their addresses. The existing provision entails quite an unnecessary amount of detailed work, and the court is agreable to the lists in future containing the numbers and classes of members and the number of unfinancial members.

Persons very often attend voluntarily as witnesses at hearings. Yet many of these object to answering questions, and the court has no power to demand an answer. The Bill accordingly contains a provision obligating a voluntary witness to respond to questions asked.

There are amendments also contained in this measure with a view to confining the drinking of liquor to passengers on vessels, except when north of the 26th parallel.

Important amendments covering underage drinking are proposed. An amendment to section 149, for instance, has been inserted with a view to preventing collusion between adults and juveniles. Cases have occurred of adults having liquor delivered to iceworks, later to be picked up by juveniles and consumed by them. It is considered necessary to tighten the control on liquor so that it will be unlawful for such persons to pick up liquor where it is for the time being stored; that is, well away from licensed premises.

As members no doubt are aware, the chief inspector of licensed premises submitted some little time ago to the court a report containing serious allegations in respect of a number of premises in the metropolitan district, which are unlicensed but which, as they purport to serve meals, are able under the existing law to allow consumers to bring in their own liquor from outside and to consume it on the premises. It is desirable to emphasise at this point that as long as liquor is not sold on such premises and so long as the serving of it is restricted to persons of 21 years and over, and the premises are conducted in an orderly manner, there is no infringement of the law.

Arising, however, from the disclosures contained in the report to which I have just referred, it is intended, by the introduction of this measure, to provide the Licensing Court, the police, and local authorities with greater powers to enable abuses involving underage drinking at such establishments to be stopped.

The report was made on the 30th March last and since that time a great deal of thought has been given to the means by which the abuses, which are occuring at many of these establishments throughout the metropolitan area, might be stopped.

Furthermore, members will be very concerned when I inform them that a further report by the Liquor Inspection Branch, under date of the 5th October last, indicated that there had been no change or very little change at most in the conduct of these premises, even though, in some instances, the premises during the intervening period have changed hands.

In order that the proposals which the Government is putting before the House should be well understood, it is pointed out that cafes and other places where food can be obtained and is usually served, including nightclubs, can under the existing law and without the necessity for obtaining any license of any kind under the licensing Act, allow customers to bring in their own liquor and consume it on the premises without any restrictions as to hours. The fact that, in some instances, liquor is sold in such establishments, though no license is held for this purpose, is quite another matter which constitutes an offence under the Licensing Act, and this Bill does not deal with that aspect.

Usually these places of entertainment make a charge to the customer for providing glasses and opening bottles—known as "corkage"—and the charge for corkage varies very much.

The report of Sergeant Brown already publicised has illustrated the situations that have more recently arisen in such places, particularly in respect of the consumption of liquor by teenagers. It is accordingly proposed in clause 24 of the Bill that objections as to the bringing of liquor onto any unlicensed premises and the consumption of liquor on such premises may at any time be made to the Licensing Court by—

(a) an inspector of licensed premises;
(b) any police officer stationed in the licensing district wherein the unlicensed premises are situated;
(c) any person authorised in that behalf by the council of the municipal district wherein the unlicensed premises are situated;

and every such objection will be required to be in writing and signed by the objector setting forth the grounds of the objection.

At this point it is explained that "unlicensed premises" is defined in this section as any premises where meals or refreshments are ordinarily sold, disposed of, or served to the public for consumption on the premises, including, without affecting the generality of that interpretation, any cafe, restaurant or other eating house whatever, which premises are not licensed premises under the Act, and any premises that the occupier of such unlicensed premises is permitted to use, or uses for or in connection with his business. It will accordingly be appreciated that the consumption of liquor by adults in such unlicensed premises will continue to be permitted by law. In effect, we are maintaining the *status quo*.

However, as previously mentioned, objections may now be taken to premises not being conducted in an orderly manner. The grounds for objections are as follows:—

(a) That the occupier of the unlicensed premises is of drunken or dissolute habits, or otherwise of bad repute;
(b) that the occupier of the unlicensed premises has within 12 months immediately preceding the lodging of the objection been

convicted of selling liquor without a license or of selling adulterated liquor;

(c) that the unlicensed premises in question are out of repair or are not suitable for use as unlicensed premises;

(d) that the unlicensed premises are conducted in a disorderly or unseemly manner; or in a manner that disturbs the quiet of the locality or the comfort of the residents thereof;

(e) that the unlicensed premises are frequented by persons under the age of 21 years for the purpose of obtaining liquor or of consuming liquor on those premises;

(f) that the occupier of the unlicensed premises has within six months immediately preceding the lodging of the objection been convicted of an offence against section 134D of this Act;

(g) any other ground that appears to the licensing court to be sufficient.

Upon an objection being lodged pursuant to the new section 134B introduced by clause 24, the Licensing Court will be required to appoint a time and place for the hearing of the objection and notify the objector of the arrangements made and also the occupier of the unlicensed premises specified in the objection. This written notice will be given no less than seven days before the time appointed.

After hearing the objection, the licensing court may make an order prohibiting the bringing of liquor onto the unlicensed premises, the subject of the objection. Upon the issuance of such an order, the consumption of liquor either absolutely or except in accordance with the conditions laid down by the court will be illegal. There is provision for the court to issue a permit in that regard.

The form of the permit is set out in the second schedule under clause 38. Permits may be issued to authorise the occupier of the unlicensed premises to permit liquor to be brought on to those premises and consumed there during such hours and subject to such conditions and restrictions as the court may impose and specify in that permit. Members will understand that a permit is issuable only after the grounds of an objection have been established before the court.

It is required that permits shall, in addition to any particular and specific conditions and restrictions which the court may apply in an individual case, contain also the following general provisions:—

(a) that no person shall consume, or permit to be consumed, any liquor on the unlicensed premises after the hour of three o'clock in the morning and before noon on the same day;

(b) that no person shall consume, or permit to be consumed, any liquor on the unlicensed premises (except the occupier and members of his family residing on those premises, or any *bona fide* guest of any of them) after the hour of three o'clock in the morning on any Sunday or Good Friday, or between the hour of three o'clock in the morning and the hour of one o'clock in the afternoon on Anzac Day when not falling on a Sunday;

(c) that where the permit is granted in respect of a room or rooms in any premises, all doors (including the outer door of the premises) by which access is had to that room or rooms are kept unlocked.

The Licensing Court will be competent, upon the application of any inspector of licensed premises or of its own volition, to vary or suspend for such period as it thinks fit, or cancel any permit granted under this section of the Act subject to the holder being given notice in writing of this intention and of the date appointed for the hearing of the application or motion by the court.

There is provision for a penalty of a fine of not less than £100 and not more than £200 for the offence of bringing on to or causing or permitting to be brought on to or consuming or permitting to be consumed on any unlicensed premises, in respect of which the Licensing Court has made an order of prohibition and a similar penalty in respect of the person consuming any liquor under those circumstances.

It needs to be borne in mind in this regard, however, that the permit may allow the consumption of liquor in such room or rooms in the premises as are specified in it and provide certain conditions and restrictions as to consumption of liquor.

It is further provided in respect of the consumption of liquor contrary to the provisions of a permit which has been issued, that the court may, in addition to imposing such penalty, suspend for such period as it thinks fit, or cancel, the permit.

The Bill further provides that section 56, dealing with the transfer of licenses and section 57, which sets out the law in general in respect of licenses, shall apply as far as applicable to permits issued under this section.

Clause 25 of the Bill authorises an inspector of licensed premises to enter unlicensed premises as defined in clause 24 and makes it an offence punishable with a penalty of £50 for the holder of a permit under section 134B or other person in charge of unlicensed premises to refuse admittance to an inspector or to obstruct him in carrying out his duties.

Clause 26 adds a new section 134D providing a penalty of a fine not exceeding £50 for a first offence and up to £100 for any subsequent offence as constituted by supplying or permitting liquor to be supplied to any person on unlicensed premises under the age of 21 years. A similar penalty is provided as against the minor consuming liquor in unlicensed premises.

In this respect it is pointed out that it will be a defence to any charge of supplying an underage person with liquor or allowing such a person to consume liquor on premises, the subject of a permit, to prove that the person charged had reasonable cause to believe that the person supplied was over 21 years.

In conclusion, I would remind members that the rights of persons over 21 everywhere remain exactly as they are now. But unless some remedial action is taken in respect of consumption of liquor by adolescents in night clubs and other rendezvous of the nature which have come under police notice, worse results than those already occurring may well occur.

I should add for the benefit of members who have not followed the progress of this Bill in another place that there has been a complete change in the approach to this question of unlicensed premises. Those who conduct the premises in an orderly and proper manner will not have to obtain these permits. It virtually makes it necessary for only those who are objected to, to come under these provisions.

Mr. Graham: Who was the author of the original document, then?

Mr. COURT: It is a Government measure.

Mr. Graham: The Government did not give much thought to it before presenting it to Parliament.

Mr. COURT: Yes it did. This is a matter of great public urgency.

Mr. Graham: There have been drastic changes made since it first saw the light of day.

Mr. COURT: Surely this is desirable in a measure of this nature which is of such public importance! Having heard the discussion on the matter, the Minister concerned, after conferring with the Government, arranged for the approach to be altered.

Mr. Graham: The Government could not have thought about it very much first, then.

Mr. COURT: The Government did think, and if the honourable member is suggesting we should not have introduced legislation of this kind as a matter of urgency, I am amazed. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Brady.

TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Receipt and First Reading

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

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BOARD BILL

Second Reading

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [10.55 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to establish an artificial breeding board to conduct artificial breeding services in Western Australia. The artificial breeding of cattle in Western Australia was first proposed in 1952 and a pilot scheme commenced at the Wokalup Research Station in 1955, with the establishment of a laboratory and bull yards. During that season the whole of the research station's herd—130 in all—were inseminated artificially. The success obtained was equal to that elsewhere and to natural breeding.

In 1956, operations were extended to commercial farms in the Harvey, Coolup, and Mundijong districts, which were in the whole-milk area. Artificial insemination was further expanded to Margaret River the next year, and in 1959 to the butterfat areas of Busselton, Boyanup, Greenbushes, and Manjimup.

The main justification for commencing an artificial breeding scheme in Western Australia was that the farmer could get the service of a better bull for his cattle than he could purchase himself. The purpose of this scheme was to find the good bulls and when that was achieved to spread their services around to the best advantage of the dairy farmer. The farmer makes the decision as to what breed of bull he wants for his cows, and there is no compulsion on any farmer as to how he should breed his herd.

Although proven bulls were not available, it was accepted that the quality of those which could be purchased on the basis of performance of the near ancestry would be higher than the average bull then in use in natural mating. In practice many of those purchased have been or are sons of proven bulls and all are from very high production strains. Specially selected stud bulls are kept and apart from the four dairy breeds, both Angus and Polled Hereford beef bulls are held for those dairy farms requiring beef semen.

Since the commencement of the service there has been a very great improvement in the conception rate of the majority of the herds. In the early years it quickly became evident that disease was interfering with

fertility of the cows to a far greater extent than previously thought, and when artificial insemination was used this type of venereal disease disappeared from a herd. It is clear that as a means of breeding dairy herds, artificial insemination has been accepted by farmers, as currently approximately 18 per cent. of the cows in the dairying districts are being bred in this way.

From the inception of the scheme, there have been repeated requests for a nominated service; i.e., farmers have wished to nominate an individual bull. This however is possible only by using a deep freeze technique instead of the chilled method now in use. With the latter the semen is available for use, in a practical sense, for a maximum of four days. If deep frozen, its use can be extended indefinitely. Over the past few months the use of deep freeze using liquid nitrogen, as the refrigerant, has been under test and this work is being conducted at the Denmark Research Station in co-operation with the Artificial Breeding Centre.

The work of testing with deep freeze has the object of:—

(1) bringing more areas, at a greater distance from the centre, into the scheme; i.e., Albany, Denmark, Walpole, Northcliffe;

(2) operating nominated bull service;

(3) making it possible to obtain deep frozen semen from centres in other States—this semen would be from proven bulls of dairy herds;

(4) allowing semen to be held at subcentres and eliminating the necessity for daily delivery;

(5) making it practical to store semen indefinitely;

(6) eliminating the need to conduct daily early morning collections from bulls.

The artificial breeding service provided by the Department of Agriculture since 1957 has continued to grow and the non-return ratios achieved are the highest in Australia. In 1957 the non-return ratio from 1,562 first inseminations was 61.7 per cent. This refers to cows not returned to insemination within 30 days of the first insemination. The ratio for the past year of operations was 74.8 per cent. when 14,717 first inseminations were carried out. This indicates the growth and success of this scheme over the short period of its operations.

The artificial breeding service is now firmly established and has developed to a stage where it should no longer continue as a Government enterprise but should become an industry responsibility. The possibility of the service being taken over by dairy produce manufacturing companies was explored. Commercial concerns, however, showed no interest in this proposal, but strongly urged that the artificial breeding service should continue and indicated they were in favour of the establishment of a board. The dairy and whole-milk sections of the Farmers' Union also discussed this question and agreed in favour of the management of the artificial breeding service by a board.

To give effect to this requirement, this Bill proposes to establish and regulate what will be known as an artificial breeding board, to operate and maintain the semen collection centre at Wokalup to provide an artificial insemination service to farmers.

Mr. Bickerton: Have the cattle been consulted on this matter?

Mr. NALDER: Yes; they accepted the proposal. The members of the board will be five in number. The chairman will be appointed by the Governor and will be a person of considerable business and commercial experience, not necessarily in the stock breeding industry. One member will be a veterinary surgeon. Two members will be selected from a panel of five names submitted by the Farmers' Union. The remaining member will be selected from a panel of three names submitted by the Royal Agricultural Society.

To assist in the preparation of the Bill, the South Australian Act of 1961, which established an artificial breeding board in that State and which is functioning satisfactorily was studied and the legislation to establish a board in this State is very similar in many respects.

This legislation will provide for the transfer of the artificial breeding centre at Wokalup, with buildings, stock, plant, and equipment, to the artificial breeding board. It will also provide for a Treasury advance to meet the initial expenditure of the board during the first year of operation. It seems unlikely that the amount required for this purpose would exceed £10,000, and it will be repayable as moneys become available to the board.

It is expected that in the near future the board will be enabled to expand its activities into areas not at present served by artificial insemination, with improvement in techniques and the importation of semen from other States.

Assistance in this regard has been promised by the Government of Victoria, and Western Australia will receive the advantage which they have in that State of a pool of semen from proven bulls. Provision is contained in the Bill for it to come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation to enable a smooth takeover of the present service to take place.

Before I conclude I would like to take this opportunity to say how much the Government appreciates the efforts of all those who have been connected with the artificial breeding centre. The service has

expanded and been brought to an efficient level where the establishment of a board, as I have outlined, becomes a possibility. The Chief of the Division of Dairying in the Department of Agriculture, Mr. M. Cullity, who originated the scheme in this State following a visit he made to such establishments overseas, is to be congratulated on the guidance and direction he has given to the Artificial Breeding Centre through its period of operation.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Rowberry.

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING BOARD BILL

Message: Appropriations

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

ARTIFICIAL BREEDING OF STOCK BILL

Second Reading

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture [11.7 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

In May 1957, in Perth, at the 22nd meeting of the Animal Production Committee, it was agreed that there should be uniform legislation throughout Australia for the control of artificial breeding of animals. It was considered that the legislation should be such as to cover the operations of commercial semen collection and distribution centres, and the practice of artificial breeding, whether developed by governmental or semi-governmental bodies, farmers' co-operatives, or private firms.

Although artificial breeding at that time was concerned mainly with dairy cattle, it was considered that the extension of the practice to other kinds of livestock might be a development of the relatively near future. For this reason it was considered desirable that appropriate legislation should cover livestock in general, leaving the application to cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, etc., to be covered by appropriate regulations.

It is considered that now, with the proposal to establish an artificial breeding board, it is necessary to have this legislation to control and regulate the artificial insemination of stock to which the activities and operations of the board will be subject.

These controls will be administered by the Department of Agriculture, subject to the Minister, and will relate to such matters as the licensing of premises used for the collection, storage, or package of semen and the manner in which they shall be equipped; the terms or conditions of licenses; the movement of stock onto, upon, and off licensed premises; the conditions and eligibility of stock for use in the collection of semen for sale; the manner of collecting, storing, and packing semen from licensed premises, and the qualifications of persons employed for that purpose, and the qualifications of persons who may perform the operation of artificial insemination of stock.

Similar legislation is now in operation in New South Wales where the artificial breeding service is provided by the Milk Board, and in Victoria where it is provided by co-operative concerns.

There is provision in this Bill also for it to come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation similar to the Bill to establish an artificial breeding board.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Rowberry.

PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Amendment

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Graham in charge of the Bill.

The amendment made by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 3 page 2, lines 10-15—Delete proposed new subsection (1a) and substitute the following:—

Charges of unregistered painter in excess of £50 not recoverable.

(1a) Where painting is carried out by a person who is not a registered painter, no part in excess of fifty pounds of the charge, fee or reward in respect of the undertaking shall be recoverable by action or otherwise.

Mr. GRAHAM: Members may recall that when the measure was before this Chamber it was agreed that where a person unlawfully undertook work in excess of the value of £50, including materials, he would not be permitted to recover the charges in a court of law. The Legislative Council has felt that this could perhaps encourage unscrupulous people to engage an unregistered painter to do work to the value of, say, £60, and then shrug their shoulders and, in effect, have the work done for nothing.

The Legislative Council felt that the contracting painter, even if he were unregistered, was at least entitled to recover the sum or £50, the value of which work he is permitted to do without being a qualified and registered painter. I have no objection to the amendment, because the principle which I set out to achieve is retained. For that reason, I move—

That the amendment made by the Council be agreed to.

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

Report

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

House adjourned at 11.14 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 18th November, 1965

CONTENTS

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

TAPING OF COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

Experimental Recordings

THE PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) [2.33 p.m.]: In connection with the tape recording made last week, I would advise members that the test proved to be quite successful.

To enable the officers to gain experience, it is hoped to continue with the experiments, and I trust that members will give their general approval to this scheme.

It is fully appreciated, of course, that the recordings made could not be used for official reference.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [2.34 p.m.]: I am interested in the remarks you just made, Mr. President. I think perhaps it is not a bad idea to have an experiment of this nature as long as members can regard it as an experiment and that it is not intended to usurp, and cannot in any way usurp, the formal practice we have in relation to the official record of the House, the official record of the House, of course, being regarded as *Hansard*.

I would not like to see this experiment used on the basis of saying, "Let's turn back the machine to find out what he really did say." Once again, *Hansard* must be the formal method of recording what is said in the House.

As an individual I now appreciate your approach in consulting the members of the House because I believe I can say to you, with respect, that we are all part of the Legislative Council and that our concurrence to an experiment of this nature I feel sure would give a much better approach to the whole proceedings.

I think it would be proper for me to put this in order by moving a motion which would give members an opportunity to discuss this little experiment if they so