

I think Mr. Syd Thompson would like to say a few words on behalf of members of the Country Party.

THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON (Lower Central) [1.44 a.m.]: There is little for me to say other than endorse the remarks of the previous speakers. The Minister very thoroughly covered the ground in his list of appreciation. However, we backbenchers have appreciated the tolerance of the Ministers during the session. We have also appreciated the manner in which members of the Opposition have examined Bills and debated them. This is quite educational, particularly for those of us who are not prepared to do the amount of work some members of the Opposition have done in regard to Bills.

To the officers of Parliament we say a very hearty thanks for the help given to us throughout this session; and we particularly say thanks for the little book which, as Mr. Willesee has said, has now become traditional. The Upper House has a great advantage over the Assembly, because I notice no-one in that House seems to have his notebook.

I feel you, Sir, must look back on this year as another well-spent. Despite—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Interjections.

The Hon. S. T. J. THOMPSON: —the discussions and arguments we have here, we finish up on this present note at the end of each session. Other than extending on behalf of the backbenchers of the Country Party seasonal greetings to all members and to you, Sir, and your good wife, there is little more that I can say.

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [1.47 a.m.]: To you, Mr. President, to the Ministers, and to all of my colleagues and their families, I express the hope that they will have a very happy Christmas. I do not intend to speak for long as the hour is getting on but I would like to offer thanks to the officers of the House who have extended to me such courtesy and provided me with every co-operation I could wish for, not only during the actual session, but also in the preparation of the Bill I presented to the House. I cannot imagine any organisation having staff members who are more efficient than they are; and they readily and agreeably give their knowledge and experience when one is searching for it.

To the rest of the staff, to *Hansard* and, in fact, to everyone who has any position within this household, as it were, I can do no more than say thank you for the courtesy and kindness that has been extended to me in this Chamber and in the Parliament. It makes one feel so humble when individuals are prepared to go so far out of their way to give one assistance. This is an example of real living associated with work; and it results from the co-operation one would not find elsewhere. I wish everyone well.

THE PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) [1.49 a.m.]: To Mr. Griffith, who spoke on behalf of himself and his fellow Ministers, to Mr. Willesee, to Mr. Baxter, who spoke on his own behalf as Chairman of Committees and his co-chairmen, to Mr. Syd Thompson, and members all, I thank you most sincerely for the co-operation you have extended to me during this session. My experience in this House has been wonderful as, time and time again, I have experienced the goodwill of all members. From time to time it is well known that some members become a little agitated, but the moment they leave the Chamber, they invariably apologise; and I think it is all to the good when they realise they have overstepped the mark. They appreciate it without their attention being drawn to the fact. I am grateful to those members for adopting such an attitude.

To those speakers who have wished seasonal greetings to myself and my wife, I thank you, and I will convey those greetings to Mrs. Diver. I would also like to endorse the remarks of testimony of service given by our officers; by the *Hansard* staff; and by Mr. Burton and his staff. It is by their efforts and their endeavours that our Legislative Council functions as a House of Parliament should.

I hope and trust that you will all, with your wives and friends, enjoy the best of health during the next year; and that God will spare us and next year one and all will return to carry on another session in similar tempo to that which we have experienced on this occasion.

The session has been tranquil, as far as parliamentary sessions go, and a lot of legislation has been passed which will leave its mark on this State. With those comments I thank you one and all, and I put the motion which is before the Chair, that the House, at its rising, adjourn until called together by the President.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.53 a.m. (Wednesday).

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 29th November, 1966

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 2.55 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT NOTICE

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES' SUPERANNUATION SCHEME

Completion of Review

1. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

With reference to the report published in *The Sunday Times* on the 7th. October, 1966, to the effect that he had stated the Government was reviewing benefits under its contributory superannuation scheme for Government employees and he hoped to introduce any necessary legislation before the end of this session of Parliament, has the review been completed; and, if so, what improvements are proposed, and when?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for notice of this question. However, some little time ago, the Leader of the Opposition asked a similar question, the answer to which can be found in one of the recent copies of *Hansard*. Further to that answer I would like to say it has not been possible to complete the survey.

The actuary employed by the Western Australian State Government is a Victorian actuary who is employed on a similar exercise for the Victorian Government. Because of this, and for other reasons, we were not able to come to any conclusions, and therefore we will not be able to introduce any legislation this session. But I will undertake to introduce any necessary legislation early in the next session when it is hoped we can make some amendments to the existing legislation.

HAMERSLEY IRON

Discrepancies in Geological Information

2. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for the North-West:

I regret I was unable to give the Minister any notice of this question beforehand. In *The West Australian* of the 26th November, 1966, under the heading of "Public Notices," there appeared a notice signed by H. T. Stables, Notary Public. This notice refers to a pamphlet which was issued in connection with the recent function associated with Hamersley Iron. I was wondering whether the Minister has had this brought to his notice, and whether he is aware of the reasons why a geologist has been actuated in drawing attention to some discrepancies which apparently exist between the information supplied by the company and the information supplied by the geologist in question?

Mr. COURT replied:

In answer to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I must confess I have not seen the public notice, but I will, during the course of the sitting, seek out the newspaper. I gather the date was—

Mr. Tonkin: The 26th November, 1966.

Mr. COURT: I can make some inquiries, and seek some opportunity, during the course of the sitting, to give some information to the honourable member.

WHEAT

Bulk Installation at South-East Hyden

3. Mr. O'CONNOR (Minister for Transport): On the 16th November I answered a question asked by the member for Avon in connection with the cartage of wheat from the bulk bin at South-East Hyden. The figures which I gave were in-

correct, and I now wish to give the following corrected figures:—

Via Hyden:	\$
Bin to Hyden, 26 miles	
@ 4.7 cents per ton	1.22
Rail freight Hyden to	
Bunbury, 259 miles	6.50
	<hr/>
	\$7.72

Via Pingaring:	\$
Bin to Pingaring, 33	
miles @ 4.7 cents per	
ton	1.55
Rail freight Pingaring	
to Bunbury, 228 miles	6.10
	<hr/>
	\$7.65

MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Conference Managers' Report

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [3.1 p.m.]: I have to report that the managers appointed by the Council met the managers appointed by the Assembly, and reached the following agreement:—

The managers have agreed to accept the Bill as amended in the Legislative Assembly with the following addition:—

Clause 17, page 15, line 19—Insert the following after the word "to": "the Full Court of".

The marginal note to be adjusted to read, "Right of appeal".

If the report of the managers is adopted new section 16G will read—

Right of Appeal.

Any party dissatisfied with any decision, determination or judgment of the Tribunal in any action or proceedings under this Act may appeal to the Full Court of the Supreme Court in the manner and within the time prescribed by Rules of Court, and on any such appeal the Court may make such order as appears to the Court to be just, including any order for the payment of costs.

I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BILL

Council's Amendments

Amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair; Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education) in charge of the Bill.

The amendments made by the Council were as follows:—

No. 1.

Clause 7, page 4, line 25—Delete the word "associateships".

No. 2.

Clause 18, page 10, line 3—Delete the word "associateships".

No. 3.

Clause 38, page 20—Insert after subsection (1) a subsection as follows—

(2) When ten persons or more have been appointed to the full-time academic staff of the Institute, one of those persons elected by the members of that staff shall be a member of the Interim Council.

No. 4.

Clause 38, page 21, line 3—Insert after the subsection designation "(1)" the passage "or (2)".

Mr. LEWIS: I move—

That amendment No. 1 made by the Council be agreed to.

The term "associateships" was inserted as a result of a compromise with the member for Victoria Park, but on further examination it was found that this term would restrict the council in its deliberations to bring about uniformity between the terminology used and the value of these awards as between the States. It is considered that the term "associateships" should not be specified.

Mr. DAVIES: On the understanding that the amendment of the Council has been made so that the W.A. Institute of Technology can confer with similar institutes in the Eastern States to arrive at some standard degree, I will not oppose the amendment. I hope the council of the institute will press either for a diploma of technology, or, preferably, a bachelor of technology degree. That would enhance the status of the institute.

Although the Commonwealth Government is not very happy with degrees being awarded by institutes of this kind, I would point out that the Martin committee suggested that such institutes should award degrees. The institute in Victoria has decided to award degrees, but the Commonwealth Government has threatened that if Victoria does award degrees it will not receive any moneys from the Commonwealth. I hope the institute in Western Australia will award some kind of degree to reflect the study that has to be undertaken in obtaining it.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr. LEWIS: I move—

That amendment No. 2 made by the Council be agreed to.

This is merely consequential to amendment No. 1.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr. LEWIS: I move—

That amendment No. 3 made by the Council be agreed to.

This is consistent with the promise I made that the new staff will have representation on the council as soon as it numbers 10 or more.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr. LEWIS: I move—

That amendment No. 4 made by the Council be agreed to.

This is merely consequential to amendment No. 3.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Report

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

MARKETABLE SECURITIES TRANSFER BILL

Council's Amendments

Amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development) in charge of the Bill.

The amendments made by the Council were as follows:—

No. 1.

Clause 3, page 2, line 34—Substitute for the word "an" the words "a proper".

No. 2.

Clause 9, page 8—Substitute for the passage commencing with the word "has" in line 22 to and including the word "thereof" in line 25 the passage—"in the case of a fully paid marketable security pursuant to an instrument of transfer thereof that has been executed by an authorised nominee corporation."

Mr. COURT: I move—

That amendment No. 1 made by the Council be agreed to.

This is really a drafting amendment and merely describes an instrument as a "proper instrument."

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr. COURT: I move—

That amendment No. 2 made by the Council be agreed to.

Here again this is purely a drafting amendment. If members will study the amendment they will see that it represents

an inversion of words and reads much better than the provision as it stands.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Report

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Further Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the conference managers' report.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Council's Amendment

The amendment made by the Council was as follows:—

Clause 23, page 14, line 5—Delete the word "and", and insert a new paragraph (f) as follows—

(f) by inserting after the word "DEBENTURE" in the item, "MORTGAGE (legal or equitable), BOND, DEBENTURE, COVENANT, WARRANT OF ATTORNEY to confess and enter up judgment and FOREIGN SECURITY of any kind", the words, "(not being an unsecured deposit receipt, or unsecured note); and".

Speaker's Ruling

THE SPEAKER: With the indulgence of the House I would like to have a little to say on this message. I feel that in actual practice there is an important difference between this proposed amendment to the Stamp Act Amendment Bill (No. 3) and the amendment to the Stamp Act Amendment Bill on which amendment the Deputy Leader of the Opposition raised a point of order last week.

Last week the Legislative Council's amendment gave the Treasurer discriminatory power to impose, or not to impose a certain taxation. It did not necessarily insist that he need forgo a single cent of taxation revenue. I ruled this amendment in order although some members would no doubt think that was a somewhat generous ruling so far as the Legislative Council was concerned. I might even agree with them.

This amendment exempts without discrimination certain securities from tax and as such clearly is in conflict with the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, section 46, subsection (2). Accordingly, I rule this amendment from the Legislative Council as being beyond the powers of the Legislative Council to make, and therefore it cannot be considered by the Legislative Assembly.

Motion

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [3.15 p.m.]: I move—

That a message be forwarded to the Legislative Council as follows:—

Mr. Tonkin: Tell them we regret the somersault!

Mr. COURT: That is a reflection on the Speaker. The message is as follows:—

With reference to Message No. 108 from the Legislative Council dealing with the Stamp Act Amendment Bill (No. 3), the Hon. the Speaker has ruled that the amendment contained therein is beyond the powers of the Legislative Council to make and for that reason was not considered by the Legislative Assembly.

The Bill is therefore returned herewith and the concurrence of the Legislative Council desired therein.

Mr. HAWKE: Would it be in order for an amendment to be made to that motion?

The SPEAKER: Do you want to amend the motion?

Mr. HAWKE: No; I want to know whether it would be in order for it to be amended.

The SPEAKER: The present motion before the House?

Mr. HAWKE: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Yes, it would be in order.

Mr. HAWKE: Thank you.

Question put and passed.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1966-67

In Committee of Supply

Resumed from the 25th November, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair.

Vote: Public Works and Buildings, \$5,574,000—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after the vote had been partly considered.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.18 p.m.]: I have a question which requires some explanation. It is in connection with country water supplies. I have here a Government advertisement in connection with the imposition of water rates, and I am very interested in some discrimination which appears. It reads—

COUNTRY AREAS WATER SUPPLY ACT, 1947-1964

Striking of Rates for the six months ended 30th June, 1966

PWWS 46/66

NOTICE is hereby given that the rate books for the land in the Country Water Areas and administered by the Water Supply Offices shown in the Schedule hereunder, liable to be rated

under the abovementioned Acts for the six months ended on the 30th day of June, 1968, have been made up and are open to inspection by any ratepayer at all reasonable times.

What interests me is this: The schedule shows the country water area as Exmouth, and as being administered by the water supply office in Carnarvon, and it goes on to give these details: Classification of purposes, class 1 "domestic" at the rate of 7.5c per annum in the dollar on estimated net annual value; class 2 "commercial" at the rate of 10c per annum in the dollar on estimated net value. That is for Exmouth. We come lower down on this notice and it refers to a schedule of the Country Areas Water Supply Act. Exmouth is administered by Carnarvon. The classification of purposes, class 1 "domestic" is shown at 7.5c in the dollar on estimated annual value; and class 2 "commercial" is shown at 10c in the dollar. The minimum rate is shown at \$2 in each case. Further, there is a schedule headed "Country Towns Sewerage Act." The sewerage area of Exmouth-Carnarvon is shown at 15c in the dollar on the estimated net annual value.

That looks to me to be about half the ordinary rate which everybody else has to pay. Because this will be reflected in the rentals charged at Exmouth, I ask, "Is this a special provision for the Americans?" Because they are paying less sewerage rates and less water rates, they will be able to charge less rental, whereas our own inhabitants in other centres in the north will be paying approximately double this rate with double the effect. Is there some special arrangement under which the Government is obligated to make this concession? What is the explanation for it?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I cannot tell you off the cuff, but if you let me know the information you require I will try to find it out for you.

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [3.23 p.m.]: There are one or two matters I would like to draw to the notice of the Minister and of the Government in connection with the provision of additional water storage in the electorate of Wellington. I would like first to refer to a possible new irrigation district located between Dardanup and Boyanup. The department has been having a very close look at this and has been gauging the potential of Joshua Brook, near Boyanup, for the past six years. I believe the department is satisfied that in this area there is an adequate source of supply. The area between Dardanup and Boyanup has been surveyed and it is possible to provide water for an area of 3,000 acres of land.

I do not know to what extent the department has progressed in its surveys as far as a channel route from the damsite to

the land in question is concerned. I do not know how far its surveying has gone or to what extent progress has been made in the general surveying of the channel system to that area.

The particular point I would like to make is that this seems to me to be a most suitable area of land to constitute an irrigation district based on water supply from Joshua Brook. The area would link up with the existing Collie irrigation district which terminates at Crooked Brook, which is south of Dardanup. The area from Dardanup to Joshua Brook at Boyanup would, I should think, make a very excellent irrigation district. If this were done, some first-class country would be brought into greater production.

The point on which I would like to lay emphasis is the need to provide money to go ahead with the construction of a dam at Joshua Brook, because this area is close to existing markets. There are the milk factories at Boyanup, Brunswick, and Harvey, and there are abattoirs at Waroona, Harvey, Boyanup, and Bunbury. Greater production from this area, close to Bunbury, would give a wonderful boost to all those points of manufacture and would make a wonderful contribution to the district generally.

I would remind the Minister that the town of Bunbury is a very rapidly growing one and it draws its main food supplies from the hinterland, which is mainly in the Wellington electorate. The additional provision of water supply and irrigation would go a long way towards matching the growth rate of the Bunbury region. This is a most important region and anything that can be done to step up production of the hinterland of Bunbury is something to which very close attention indeed should be given.

The other point I would like to make is in connection with the provision of additional water storage at Harvey, itself. For some time it has been planned that a new weir should be constructed on the Harvey River to provide a greater supply of water for the Harvey irrigation district, and to provide sufficient water for safe drawing on the water supply. As members know, sufficient water does not now exist.

I would remind the Minister that several years ago when we had a succession of light rainfall seasons, the water supply to the Harvey irrigation district was very severely rationed. Although since that time the Logue Brook Dam has been constructed and is now a source of supply to this particular district, it is still not considered an adequate supply, nor is there a reliable safe drawing from the existing storage. All in all, here again exists a tremendous potential for stepping up production in a highly productive area.

I remind the Minister that the area in Western Australia which can be irrigated is very limited indeed and, particularly

so, in the south-west. Along this frontage between the Darling Range and the coastal sand belt, extending from just north of Waroona to Boyanup, is about the only area in the south-west that does provide soil types, contour, and country that would permit of being readily irrigated.

Therefore, I think we ought to give the closest attention possible to the damming of all the streams along this frontage I have mentioned; that is, between the Darling Range and the coastal sand belt. Our purpose should be to irrigate as much land as we can in order to obtain the greatest possible production from it.

I do not want to labour this point, but I want to stress again that an early decision to construct a dam at Joshua Brook, in particular, would be a well-merited decision, because it would have the result of bringing into production—as irrigated country—some first-class land. This, in itself, would very readily justify the amount of expenditure which might be incurred.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [3.29 p.m.]: I would like to comment on three items which are of interest. The first one is a State matter and is particularly interesting to the metropolitan area.

During the last few months, I have endeavoured to clear my own thoughts on the future of freeways and the problems which might arise on this issue. I consider that the comment made by the Commissioner of Main Roads, which was published in the daily paper on the 5th November, was very pertinent, and one in which I find much merit.

With reference to the many suggestions which have been made in regard to placing these freeways in the middle of communities, the commissioner says that this will be prohibitive in its economics in the future, because 150 homes will need to be demolished for every mile of freeway which is constructed. Where freeways are necessary—and this is something which needs to be checked very thoroughly—I would come down on the side of those who say the more these freeway projects can be kept to a minimum, the better.

The commissioner believes it possible to have a change from what has been done in the past by the establishment of access ways, be they subways or service roads, and this will do much to protect our freeway extensions in the future. Broadly speaking, I think that idea has a great deal of merit. As a backbencher I have endeavoured to research this matter and I believe that in the future, as has been the case in the past, the question of freeways will have to be exhaustively researched so that we can ensure the public's activities are interfered with as little as possible.

I have read some old copies of *Hansard* containing debates which took place some years ago—I think it might have been shortly after the present Minister for Works entered this Chamber—and from what he said on those occasions regarding the river, and its future, I am sure we could have no greater protector of the river than the present Minister.

The next item I wish to discuss concerns the interchange at the junction of the Albany and Bunbury highways near Neerigen Brook. Most of us know this point because it is directly opposite Ye Olde Narrogin Inne. This question is of tremendous interest to me in that the dual carriageway has now been extended as far as Armadale, and it will provide a greatly improved access way in the immediate future. However, something will have to be planned for the interchange at this intersection; and, not having all the economics of the various designs before me, I can only place before the Government and the Minister what I believe would be advantageous so far as the area is concerned.

Because of the terrain, and the rather steep descents on both sides of this junction, it would be rather hazardous to have a roundabout as an interchange. I would come down in favour of a ramp system or grade separation. I know the matter is under discussion at present, and probably plans have already been drawn up for the proposal. However, I have made these comments in the hope that grade separation or a ramp style of interchange will be given serious consideration by the planners.

The last matter I wish to bring forward is a hardy annual of mine and it concerns the water supply at Jarrahdale. The Minister has this matter before him and I am sure he is giving it every consideration. I am simply restating the position in view of what the Minister for Industrial Development has had to say in recent times about increased bauxite development and the Forests Department's activities in this area. A new mill is being erected in the Jarrahdale district by one of the sawmilling companies; and, in addition, the forestry operations are being consolidated and new milling plants are being provided by the milling companies. These operations, in turn, will mean the provision of extra homes.

This will provide a grand opportunity for an integrated community to be established; and a reticulated water supply would do much to improve family life in this district. Jarrahdale is a permanent town; it has a good future, and a reticulated water supply would certainly enable many of the new homes being built to be provided with amenities which are available in the city. The question of funds must be taken into consideration. However, I close with the comment that I

hope the Minister in the not too distant future will be able to give a reasonable priority to this cause.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [3.36 p.m.]: I wish to refer to the provision of passing bays on that section of the Great Eastern Highway between Greenmount and the York turnoff, where the main road continues on to York and the subsidiary road proceeds to Northam. My main concern is with the congestion on the first 30 miles of the highway. It is absolutely impossible for a motorist to pass the slow-moving heavy haulage trucks which are coming not only from the Eastern States but also from the country districts, particularly on market days—Tuesdays and Wednesdays. It is impossible for a motorist to get past these big trucks which are making their way to or from the city.

This matter has been raised by the York Shire Council and in a letter sent to that council from the divisional engineer at Northam the following appeared:—

... although it is known that some delays are caused and accident risks taken by the impetuous driver, it is not generally considered that at this stage these are not great enough to warrant the provision of passing bays.

However, neither the York Shire Council nor myself agree with those remarks. Only last Tuesday, when I was driving to Perth, I was the eighteenth car in a line behind two of these trucks. We had to wait until we reached the crest at Greenmount before there was a 4-lane road which enabled us to pass these vehicles. This sort of thing will cause accidents, as was admitted by the divisional engineer at Northam. He referred to the impetuous driver; and there is no doubt that such a driver will come up behind these trucks, which travel as slowly as 15 to 20 miles an hour up a hill, to try to pass.

The remarks of the divisional engineer, however, seem to be at variance with some remarks which were made in a letter from the Premier to the Chairman of the Avon Valley Zone Development Committee. The Premier said—

For some time now the difficulty of executing passing manoeuvres over sections of the Perth-Northam road, caused by slow moving trucks has been recognised. Generally the traffic densities have not reached a stage where the widening of the complete length of the road can be justified. Planning studies are being conducted to devise the best possible alternative solution to the problem.

The recommendation of your Committee that passing bays be provided at strategic points was referred to the Commissioner for Main Roads. The Commissioner has found the suggestion put forward worthy of merit and it will be considered by the planners.

That is exactly what the York Shire Council, which is responsible for the control of traffic within and approaching the shire boundaries, said to the divisional engineer at Northam. Apparently the Premier, at least, has been able to get more recognition of the problem from the Commissioner of Main Roads than the shire council was able to get from the divisional engineer. However, that is only by the by. I am trying to point out the necessity for the provision of passing bays on the road, and I would like to see something done about the problem as soon as possible, because the congestion on this road will become greater as more trucks use it. Unless something is done I feel sure there will be a serious accident, or accidents, before long.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Works) [3.40 p.m.]: In reply—

The **DEPUTY CHAIRMAN** (Mr. Crommelin): Pity!

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: —I believe it incumbent on me to say a few words.

Mr. J. Hegney: Hear, hear!

Mr. Graham: What does the Deputy Chairman think?

Mr. Jamieson: You stand up for your rights.

Mr. Hawke: Would you put the member for Avon right on that subsidiary road business?

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Several members have spoken on this division, and I do not think there is much necessity for me to say a great deal about what has been said, except to mention that the points raised by them will, where necessary, be given further research and investigation, and I will reply to them in due course.

I have already told one or two members that if they submit the necessary information to me I will endeavour to find out the answers to the questions they have raised. I refer particularly to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, who has already supplied me with some information, and to the member for South Perth.

The member for Wellington spoke about the necessity to increase the irrigation areas in the south-west, and he also referred to some of these regions. I think the honourable member is aware that work has already been done, and that the design, investigation, and planning department is having a look at these things. There is no certainty that this matter will be conducted along the lines he suggests, but there is a possibility that it will.

I had hoped to begin fairly early on the construction of a new dam at Harvey, in order to make a safe draw possible in the Harvey irrigation district. Unfortunately, the availability of loan funds is such that it was not possible to allocate the necessary finance for this project, which would,

indeed, be an expensive one. I have no doubt, however, that this will be high on the list of priorities on some future occasion.

The member for Dale mentioned matters concerning freeways, and he hoped that all factors would be exhaustively researched before road planners, designers, and the town planning people arrived at conclusions. He also hoped that freeways would interfere as little as possible with people; that they would inconvenience them as little as possible.

On this and other road matters he has raised, the honourable member can be assured that all factors are taken into consideration—factors such as safety, practical efficiency of the work, and, not the least, the factor of finance.

The honourable member also mentioned Jarrahdale. He has been in communication with me about the town of Jarrahdale and has indicated that it is the desire of some of the people in the town to have a reticulated town water supply over and above what is there at present. The department and I are giving the fullest consideration as to how best we can serve the interests of the town in this respect. This is not an easy problem and I cannot offer any quick or easy solution to it.

The member for Avon made particular mention of that section of the road from Greenmount to the Lakes turnoff, but he seemed to disregard in quite a cavalier fashion the rest of the road to Northam. I can understand the Leader of the Opposition being upset at this treatment of his road. I think, however, that the problems mentioned by the honourable member are of equal importance on that section of the road to Northam as they are on the road leading to York.

Mr. Gayfer: The congestion is mainly from the Halfway House to Perth.

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON: I appreciate that, but the problem also exists on the other two legs. This problem does not only face us here but also in other sections of roads; and I think we are still far from perfection in regard to these matters. Although tremendous improvements have been effected to the entire road system, there is no doubt that much work has still to be done. The road systems of the State cover great areas, but I am sure the situation will improve in the not too distant future.

Vote put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.5 p.m.

Vote: Harbour and Light and Jetties, \$1,534,600—put and passed.

Vote: Local Government, \$159,000—

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.5 p.m.]: There is one matter I wish to raise under this department; that is, in connection with the

plight of the unfortunate people who happen to own property when information has become public that resumption is likely to take place some time in the future because of town planning requirements. Although the Government does not disclose its plans, even to the extent of withholding copies of plans from members of Parliament, nevertheless the information does, from time to time, go before the public through the newspapers and then a situation arises which is most unfair to the individual.

As an illustration, take the situation in Stock Road, Melville. On the Stephenson Plan, Stock Road is shown as a blue coloured road, which requires the local authority to advise the Town Planning Department of any proposals for major building along that road. This does not necessarily mean that the Town Planning Department does anything about it, because I have information that approval has been given for the construction in Stock Road of very substantial buildings, and they are in the course of construction now, whereas it is contemplated that some time in the future this will be a controlled-access road and the properties will have to be acquired.

What I am suggesting to the Government, in fairness to the people concerned, is this: That sufficient loan money be utilised to enable the Government to purchase from those who wish to sell their homes so they can get out and establish themselves elsewhere. Everybody may not wish to sell, but they should at least have the opportunity, because the immediate result of publication of the proposals is a depreciation in values. Very few people who want to establish themselves in a home are prepared to go into an area where there are proposals for resumption. The result is that those who are obliged to sell have the greatest difficulty in selling; and, if they are able to sell, it is at a greatly reduced value. So they lose.

I suggest that the Government, or the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, which has power to borrow, should use loan funds to buy those properties where people are anxious to sell. The authority can then put tenants in the properties and let them. That is what happens where properties are resumed. I know of many instances in the Fremantle district where the Government has resumed properties, has then allowed the people to remain in them, and has charged them rent for remaining until such time as the Government wants to demolish the properties.

In these cases, where information becomes public with the result it is almost impossible for landowners to sell, why not say to those landowners, "We are prepared to buy your properties now at the existing valuation so that you can go out and establish yourself elsewhere in the hope

you will not be disturbed again"? If the Government then finds itself with a lot of properties on its hands, and it is not ready at the time to proceed, it will have no difficulty whatever in letting those properties, and at satisfactory rentals.

No money would be lost, and the amount received by way of rental could be utilised to pay interest and sinking fund on the loan funds employed. That seems to me to be fair to the general public, and fair to the individual who is involved. However, nothing like that is done at present and the result is that in Stock Road there is a number of people who are very disturbed. Those people do not want to spend money installing sewerage; they would far rather make a fresh start somewhere else. However, they cannot sell their properties.

There are those who are transferred in their jobs and who are obliged to sell. When their properties are placed on the market, no buyers can be found. If a buyer does come along, he is a speculator who is taking advantage of the depreciated value, and he will hold the property until it is resumed and will then receive the price paid for the property on the basis of the then value.

What I am suggesting would not impose any undue burden on the taxpayers at all, because loan funds could be utilised, and the rental obtained from the properties would meet interest and sinking fund payments. In the meantime, people would be able to get value for their properties and would be able to buy new homes. But to do nothing and just let those people stay there means we are imposing hardship on the unfortunate individuals in the interests of the community, generally, and hardship which can be avoided at no cost to anyone.

I make that suggestion to the Government for its consideration, and I hope that some action might be taken in this direction. Such action would relieve a lot of the difficulty, and it would help a lot of people.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [4.13 p.m.]: I have one point to mention in regard to division 36, and it deals with the finances of local government. I think that local government faces the same challenges as does the Government, and I mention the item because I feel that in the future months and years the relationship between the Government's finances and local government finance will have to be recast. I will limit myself to this one point in this speech.

At the present time we have a tremendous contribution made from traffic funds to local shires, and this plays a very important part in the shire and local government programmes. The point which interests me is the relationship of the

amount allowed to be expended in the upkeep of the shire office and all the related expenditure of running the shire, to traffic funds. I believe it should be generally accepted that a percentage of the funds—be they traffic or otherwise—should be allowed to provide for the various items of internal expenditure.

The three shires which I represent have brought this issue to me, and I do think that in time the problem will be recognised. I mention it now because it should be on record that there needs to be a constant review of the financial affairs of local government. Local government finance is just as challenging as State finances, and, although it is a minor matter at the moment, it will grow and grow as we have greater road programmes.

I believe it is the responsibility of the Local Government Association to present its case, which it does from time to time, and it does receive considerable consideration. This is an item which local government needs to present to its association, and to the Minister, and full regard should be had for it.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie) [4.16 p.m.]: I desire to direct a few remarks to the Minister representing the Minister for Child Welfare, and I refer to the provision of clerical assistance for child welfare officers. I speak in particular—and I do not apologise for being parochial in this regard—about assistance for the district officer in Kalgoorlie.

This subject has been raised on many occasions, and represented to the Minister and to the department. Finally, satisfaction has been gained to the extent that provision is included in this year's Estimates for the provision of such assistance. Therefore it is appropriate for me to speak on this matter. I emphasise that this has been a burning question in the town I represent, because the officer representing the Child Welfare Department in Kalgoorlie has easily the most far-flung district to cover in the State.

The Child Welfare Department has been criticised by certain agencies in the gold-fields, because the officer has frequently to be away when travelling long distances. The child welfare office is situated in the centre of the most populated area of the district, and the officer cannot carry out his function as a child welfare officer as well as would be expected, because he frequently has to travel away from Kalgoorlie.

I am not speaking disparagingly of the officer. Only in the last week this matter was raised by the Kalgoorlie Shire, and I understand it expressed strong views to the department in the hope that no time would be lost in providing a girl to give clerical assistance to the officer. More particularly, the girl would be available as a receptionist and would be in attendance so that when the duties of the officer

required him to travel to outer areas, she could make appointments for his return, or could supply information which would satisfy a lot of queries.

So I trust these estimates will be passed and the Minister for Child Welfare will lose no time in making this clerical assistant available to the officer in Kalgoorlie, and that it will make similar assistants available to other district officers in the State.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [4.19 p.m.]: I speak only because I am desperate to get reasonable justice for very many people in my district. So strongly do I feel about this matter, that I have taken the very unusual step of writing a letter to the Premier. I suppose that such action could be construed as going over the head of the appropriate Minister. There are very many extraordinary events taking place to the disadvantage of decent citizens who have done no wrong whatsoever.

It would appear that some of the trouble arises from the fact that there is a grave shortage of town planners and town planning officials. Therefore, because of the fact that certain paper work has not been completed, these injustices occur. I want to give several examples to show just what is happening, because some members in this Chamber have had no experience of this sort of thing. I want to say immediately that there is no element of party politics in anything I will say. However, no-one can gainsay the fact that people are suffering because we are being overwhelmed by most deserving objectives. I say "most deserving" because surely nobody would argue against town planning. However, it is what is transpiring during the process of town planning that is the problem.

Members will recall, for instance, that some three years ago this Parliament adopted a metropolitan region scheme. A large plan was laid upon the Table of both Houses; it was studied by members where it affected the interests of their districts; and it was accepted with comparatively minor modifications.

For the purpose of my first illustration, I would mention that in the northern portion of Balcatta, quite a large area was set aside for industrial purposes. I repeat this was approved by this Parliament in 1963 as an area for industrial purposes. Because detailed planning has not yet caught up with the situation, that land is still described in the zoning of the local authority as either rural land, or deferred urban land.

Therefore, we have an extraordinary position whereby a person who was engaged in primary production has, on his block of land, a large shed to which he has made some minor adjustments to make it conform to the normal requirements of a building. He desires to use the

adjusted shed as a small furniture factory in an area which is completely isolated, but he is told by the local authority, "No, your land is zoned as deferred urban land." Therefore, this person has this building in respect of which there is no agricultural use whatsoever; and it is not intended that this area shall become an urban estate with dwellings erected upon it.

As I have said, this area has been accepted by Parliament as an industrial area, yet this man is refused the use of his property for the purposes he desires—that is, for industrial purposes—because the planning of the local authority has not caught up with the position.

I would like to give an example of another case, about which there is a degree of urgency. The person in question owned land in Scarborough Beach Road and he sold it at a considerable figure. He, too, is engaged in the furniture business and he purchased an area of, I think, some 22 acres right in the heart of this industrial area, after having sold his property in Scarborough Beach Road.

The new owners, of course, are anxious to take over and develop the land, and this they have done in the greater part of what was previously his property. However, certain of his improvements must be removed completely and set down where they are to be used in the future. But, this person is unable to do that, because he is informed that his factory—that his industrial activity—is in an area which under local authority zoning at the present moment is not classified as "industrial." Consequently, this person who is in business today has nowhere to go.

He owns 22 acres of land in an industrial area and he has said to the authorities, "If I can use half an acre only for the time being, tell me the portion of my 22 acres from which I can have half an acre of my own to use for industrial purposes in an industrial area; tell me how far I have to set back, and whether I face north, south, east or west; tell me anything at all so that I can conform with town planning requirements. I must be given this information because there is a degree of urgency. Otherwise, I am out of business."

This matter has been submitted to the Minister for Town Planning, who has been reasonably co-operative in connection with the problem. He invited a representative of the local authority to join with a representative of the Town Planning Department and the affected owner to see if they could work out some sort of solution or compromise. This was duly effected and it was quite acceptable to the owner and to the Minister for Town Planning. The problem was referred to the local authority which, I understand, decided to defer a decision for a period of 28 days. But surely it is a matter of urgency, and surely it is of the greatest concern that the mat-

ter should be finalised at the earliest possible moment. I received a cable when I was overseas in Europe in connection with this case, because of the urgency of it.

I was told to go to a certain post office to pick up a letter. I did not know whether there had been some tragedy at home or not, and I was exceedingly perturbed for a period of some 48 hours until I received the communication which pointed out the situation. That was in the month of June, and here we are on the eve of December and there is still no solution in connection with it.

Mr. Lewis: How many of the 28 days have gone? Has that period passed?

Mr. GRAHAM: No; I think about 14 of the 28 days have gone. However, the point is that for a period of some months, the person who owns this land in an area which Parliament decided was industrial is unable to keep even a fraction of the land he purchased in order to use it for the purposes which Parliament declared. I do not know what is going to happen in the ultimate, but this has gone on month after month.

I suppose, too, there would be very many other similar cases; indeed, I know there are a number in the same locality. When discussing the matter with the local authority, I suggested that cases such as this should be allowed to proceed immediately; because surely a rough outline plan could be prepared and the details worked out later. But, no! I was told it was desirous of having certain talks with the Minister for Industrial Development to find out what types of industry might be going to this place.

I was informed of the various procedures, of waiting times, and all the rest of it. It was indicated to me that a period from another year to two years could transpire before detailed planning was effected, the requisite notice was given, and so on. I say this is a shocking state of affairs. I am not blaming anyone for this, because the various people concerned seem to have been caught up with the system. However, if planning is unable to keep in step, I am afraid we will have to accept the situation that certain industries will become established in a way which we would not like to see.

We want to see them established in accordance with a complete plan. However, because of what I have said, there will have to be some slight modification in the way they do proceed from what might otherwise have been planned, so that progress can fit in with what has already taken place on the site.

I pass now from the industrial aspect to a more personal problem and I would mention that I do not like doing this. However, the case in question is one in respect of which I have written to the Premier. I wrote to him on the 4th

November last, which is quite a little while ago. Let me say—not in anger, nor even perhaps in sorrow—that up to date I have not received even an acknowledgment of my letter. However, that has not much to do with the matter. It is probably one of those little clerical oversights that occur in a busy office. I am not complaining about that.

Mr. Brand: Which case is this?

Mr. GRAHAM: This is the case of Mr. Putrino. This man owns 5½ acres in the vicinity of the Shire of Perth chambers. He owns an old dwelling situated on this land, which was used as a market garden. This person is a humble employee in the Government service, and he is an ex-serviceman. The comparatively humble house which he owns requires some attention and, accordingly, this man received notification from the Shire of Perth informing him that within a certain period some improvements must be effected.

It has been estimated that these improvements would cost \$1,000 or more, and this man does not feel disposed towards effecting them; but, at the same time, he has no desire to demolish the house. Therefore, being an ex-serviceman, he decided to avail himself of the conditions set out under the war service homes scheme.

As one would expect, he has been told he is not allowed to have two houses on the one block of land. He then applied for permission to excise half an acre of his land, leaving 5½ acres to be held in abeyance. He made this application so that he could build a decent home for himself on the half acre, and take out a mortgage under the war service homes scheme. He has already had a discussion with a bank, and apparently it has agreed to lend money on the remaining 5½ acres to provide that portion of the amount he must find to erect his home under the war service homes scheme.

However, his application has been refused with the explanation that under some municipal decree, the land cannot be subdivided if the subdivision results in any portion of the land being less than 5 acres. Even if he had 9½ acres, he could not divide it into one lot of 5 acres and another of 4½ acres, because that would be unacceptable under the order. I will be fair and point out that, from time to time, the Minister for Town Planning has agreed to a small area being excised for the purpose, usually, of erecting a home to accommodate some other member of the family.

The application of this ex-serviceman, however, has been refused. Representations on his behalf were again made during my absence overseas by The Hon. W. F. Willesee, M.L.C., and I continued with those representations when I returned. The Minister seems to adopt a rather callous attitude, because in a letter he sent to Mr. Willesee on the 26th July,

he says, "The grounds of appeal are purely financial hardship." In other words, the Minister could not care twopence. This man is probably worth many thousands of pounds but he has not the cash with which to buy a home for himself, or to provide the deposit required for a war service home.

It is impossible for him to raise money on his property, because, quite rightly, the conditions laid down by the War Service Homes Board provide that, being a working man, if he cannot meet his commitments and pay the extortionate amount required under a second mortgage, his application could not be approved. However, if he were permitted to make this small subdivision on which to build a home for himself, he could take out a first mortgage with the Rural and Industries Bank. That is the bank he nominated and it is agreeable to the transaction.

When I objected to the Minister for Town Planning, he came forward with the delightful suggestion that this man could easily dispose of the property as a whole and acquire a house lot in a zoned residential area. Surely, in the name of all that is reasonable, this man is entitled to build a home for himself on his own block of land! I repeat that this is land within a stone's throw of the council chambers of the Shire of Perth. It is land which Parliament has decreed is residential land, but because the detailed planning has not kept abreast of requirements it is still zoned as deferred urban land.

So what this luckless person has in store for him, if he accepts the suggestion of the Minister for Town Planning, is to sell his 5½ acres of land on a broad acre basis, thus enabling a speculator to step in and purchase it, and then, within two years or so, when a subdivision is approved, sell the land for five or 10 times the value Mr. Putrino can get for it at the moment. That is a nice way to treat an ex-serviceman! I repeat that I admit the Minister for Town Planning has, on previous occasions, agreed to a quarter-acre block being excised in order to accommodate a member of some person's family, but in this case, for some unaccountable reason, he is adamant that the subdivision shall not take place; and, of course, his decision is final.

I am sorry I have mentioned this person's name, because all sorts of repercussions are taking place. The War Service Homes Board firstly deferred his application for a month, and then extended it for another month, so it would appear that unless the board relents and takes some action, this man will have to re-apply and be again subjected to the usual waiting period. However, there have been other repercussions, because the refusal of his application has caused an unfor-

tunate domestic situation. I repeat that I regret I mentioned this person's name, but now that I have, it is obvious he is of foreign extraction. His wife is an Australian and the reason she puts forward for his application being refused is that he is a foreigner.

So, because an ex-serviceman wants to build a home for himself on his own block of land, there is a domestic upheaval.

This person is prepared to meet the wishes of authority by agreeing to the proposition that he shall not build a house on the same property; but, for heaven's sake, why not allow him to excise half an acre of it so that he can erect a home for himself and let the remainder of the land go! In fact, this man's bank manager has advised him against spending money on repairs to this old home to bring it to a reasonable standard, the reason being that it is several chains back from the road; that is, more or less in the centre of a market garden estate, and completely out of position with the new subdivisions which will take place within a short time.

Mr. O'Neill: Has the old house been condemned by the local authority?

Mr. GRAHAM: No, it has not; but he has been told that, within six months, or whatever the period is, certain works must be effected. I will say, incidentally, that the Shire of Perth is only doing its job, because this man admits the house requires some attention; but, if the town planning procedure had kept up with the requirements of the district, the whole of the 5½ acres could be subdivided into quarter-acre or one-fifth-acre lots; and, judging by current values in that locality, each block could be sold for approximately \$4,000. As there would be about 25 lots altogether in this tract of land, this man would become extremely wealthy. He would be worth approximately \$100,000, and yet he cannot find sufficient money for a deposit to build a war service home for himself, because of what constituted authority has decreed.

That is not good enough! I will admit, together with anybody else, that the desirable state of affairs is that everything should be planned and subdivided in accordance with a master plan. We cannot afford this luxury. It is grossly unfair that people should have their domestic lives, their business lives, and the whole of everything for which they have worked completely demolished because of authority somewhere down the line. I repeat, if it is impossible to dot every "i" and cross every "t" immediately, these people should be allowed to proceed; and sufficient adjustment should be made to the plans in order to meet the situation that might develop between now and a couple of years hence, when the plans are ready for final determination.

After all, a whole lot of planning is taking place in the heart of the City of Perth, and

there are many hundreds, indeed thousands, of buildings in certain places that ultimately will have to be moved back or demolished altogether; and, instead of operating from 1963 backwards from when those places were built, I say we should operate from say, 1968 backwards in those localities where planning has not kept pace with the requirements of the people.

There is the other case also that I have submitted to the Premier, which is somewhat different; but it is one which imposes a rank injustice upon people who have done nothing wrong whatever. Perhaps I can do no better than quote from a letter I addressed to the Minister for Local Government on the 29th September last. I will camouflage the name of this person by calling him Mr. X. The letter reads—

Dear Mr. Logan,

Some 40 years ago Mr. X, Lot 10, Bryan Road, Balcatta, as virtually one of the pioneers of the district, erected a dwelling for himself and his family in which they lived for some 25 years and presumably without let or hindrance from any quarter. Subsequently, in 1950, Mr. X built a brick house on his 2½ acre block, some distance from the original structure, and he has continued to live in this place ever since, letting the older house at a modest rental.

The first house did not have a septic sewerage system, it being serviced (as were many in the district), by a pan system. When this service was discontinued some years ago there was no alternative but for the occupants to use the toilet facilities of the newer place, as the local authority would not grant a building license for a water closet and septic sewerage system on the ground that there can be one dwelling only on a block of land.

Here we have a fellow who goes and pioneers in the district and with his own hands erects a house, and presumably, as he lived in it for a quarter of a century, there was no complaint from the local authority. After he had battled, and saved, he was able to afford a new house for himself which he built on his block of land, presumably, with a building permit, because this was only 16 years ago, and the house is not very far from the Shire of Perth offices.

As a matter of fact, new arrivals from a certain European country, have been domiciled in the original house, and have been helped over the hurdles by this other person who also came from a certain European country, and they lived there at a very modest rental which, until recently, was only \$4 a week. This is exceedingly cheap. But the people in the original house came to be without toilet facilities, because the Shire of Perth discontinued the pan system. When the owner wanted to put in a separate sewerage system, the local authorities said, "No, you cannot do

this, because that would be giving a blessing to two houses on one block of land"; something which had been in existence for 16 years. Then, because there is no toilet, the house is condemned. In other words, somebody might say they will not allow me to put a roof on my house and immediately proceed to condemn the house because, as there is no roof on it, they say it is unsuitable for human habitation.

True, there are other faults, some structural, and some comparatively detailed. The ceiling in a certain part may be only 7 ft. 9 in. high, but it has been that height for the last 40 years. Accordingly, what is the reason for attacking some of the basic structural features of a house that has been there for so long? The matter of uniform building by-laws was mentioned, but surely if the building by-laws were altered tomorrow, so as to raise the minimum ceiling height in our homes from the standard 9 ft. to 9 ft. 2 in., it is not expected that we will have to partly demolish our houses in order to raise the wall the extra 2 in. set down in the building by-laws.

So it is completely fatuous that a house should be condemned not because of any weakness in the structure, but because its requirements differ from the requirements that were necessary when the house was first erected. I could give many instances where that has occurred, but I do not intend to do so this evening. I would continue to quote from the letter as follows:—

Several months ago following an inspection a number of defects and shortcomings in the old place were listed resulting in the local authority serving an order that the house should not be inhabited after the 7th August, 1966, and it was further resolved that the house should be demolished and removed within six months from the 7th July last. A formal appeal, without the submission of any argument or supporting evidence, was made to the Commissioner of Health, but this was dismissed on the 15th August last.

Mr. X is greatly distressed and has approached me in his predicament and I feel strongly that his case is deserving of more reasonable treatment for reasons I will endeavour to outline—

- (1) First of all, he and his wife came to Australia as immigrants many years ago and in contra-distinction to now, had to face his new life of language difficulty, different customs and unfamiliar laws at a time when employment was scarce, when compatriots were much fewer and when the local population was not as receptive to foreigners as they now are. Nevertheless he struggled hard, saved what he could and bought a comparatively remote piece of

land the hard way and built a dwelling on it—by his own hands and in it he reared his family and developed his property. To use his own words —“Mr. Graham, I cannot pull the building down; that place is part of me.”

One can imagine the struggle this person had; the blood, sweat, tears and sacrifice he expended in order to provide a roof for himself. Now it would appear that the standards he accepted and which were accepted at that time and over the years are different; and, because of the refusal to allow a septic system to be placed there, all that is to go for nought and the place is to be bulldozed. To continue—

- (2) The house presumably was erected and occupied with the permission of the local authority and obviously complied with their requirements when built.

I understand that in those days in rural properties it was not fashionable to apply for building permits and, therefore, this man probably built to his own specifications and requirements; but the building has remained there during that period and no objection has been taken to its architectural features.

- (3) The second house was built on the block with a building licence some sixteen years ago, therefore it, or the original, or both, surely have non-conforming rights.
- (4) The fact of there being no septic sewerage for the original house (the principal complaint) is because of the refusal of the Local Authority to allow Mr. X to build one.
- (5) That there are two dwellings on the one block and that this situation has not been resolved is due to a Governmental Decree forbidding subdivision.
- (6) No opportunity has been given Mr. X to renovate or repair the original dwelling in order to bring it to a state of repair and standard comparable with what it was when no exception was taken by authorities for building or health regulation reasons.
- (7) It is submitted that even if he were given an opportunity of so doing, it would be unfair to require the owner of a dwelling to undertake alterations to conform with by-laws that have changed many times since the place was built and which by-laws will no doubt constantly change again in the future. Person-

ally, I am horrified to contemplate that if tomorrow the minimum ceiling height was increased then every householder would have to modify his building accordingly. Surely, therefore, there should be tolerance where the owner of a place has not transgressed any public authority requirement during any of his operations. It will be seen that this decent and industrious citizen has at no time acted to offend against the law; on the contrary, he has always sought to conform.

I suggest there should be an appreciation of the difficulties, particularly of older people and original settlers who developed small farmlets on the fringe of the city area but now find that the Metropolitan residential zones are rapidly creeping onto them, more especially as these people are, in so many cases, forbidden the right to sub-divide their properties for sale as residential lots. This is a case, and no doubt there are others, where a good citizen has done nothing wrong but finds himself the hapless victim of authority. Such, surely, was never intended, for which reason I am urging you, a Minister of the Crown, to intervene on compassionate and common sense grounds in order to rectify what I consider to be a palpable wrong.

Perhaps I should read the Minister's reply dated the 17th October, 1966, which is as follows:—

In response to your letter of the 29th of September, 1966, I advise that I have had enquiries made concerning the Health Order on premises, Lot 10 Bryan Road, Balcatta, and have ascertained that Mr. X exercised his right of appeal to the Commissioner of Public Health who advised him that the Shire Council's action was justified and dismissed the appeal.

Mr. X was also made aware of the provisions of Section 36 of the Health Act by the Council's Chief Health Inspector.

It is understood that the old house must have been constructed over 30 years ago and there are no records of a building licence ever having been issued for its construction. The house has the appearance of an out-building and very little maintenance has been carried out on it.

Here let me say that it has the appearance of an out-building, because it is back from the road, as it were—a home on land that is worked as a market garden—and it is true that it has had very little maintenance carried out on it. But I repeat: This man has not been given a chance to carry out any maintenance on it, but has been

told it must be demolished, and within six months. The letter goes on—

The council has indicated that no local authority would attempt to enforce new by-law requirements where premises were being maintained to a standard that previously applied.

I think the council might well have given this person a notice that unless he carried out certain maintenance requirements within a prescribed period he could expect strong action to be taken; but he was given no such information. The letter continues—

It is stated that there are quite a number of non-conforming land uses and premises located in the Shire which are being maintained to a satisfactory standard and are not required to be moved to satisfy the Local Government Act or the Health Act.

My comment here is that it is a pity it did not apply to this as well. Continuing—

However, in the instance the subject of this inquiry, it appears that the dwelling, the subject of the Order, is undoubtedly unfit for human habitation.

I regret, therefore, that I cannot intervene in this matter.

I have been in this place which Mr. X was required to cease using as a place for residential purposes, and which now he has been asked to demolish. The house I was born and reared in as a child was not up to the standard of this place; and that goes for many more of us. We cannot expect that those who went out into the backblocks and built houses would have erected the structures to conform with modern requirements.

Why not leave these people to enjoy their declining years in peace? The Minister and the Government could easily resolve this position if they would allow this man to subdivide his property, but again the town planners are not ready with detailed plans. I could weary the House with example after example.

There is the case semi-quoted the other evening. I forgot to bring the papers in with me. This man's rates were \$28 last year and this year they are several hundred dollars. He and his neighbour desire to subdivide their land and sell it. One of them has now reached pensionable age and is negotiating for a pension. These broad acres of his consist, I think, of 24 acres of land. Again, I should say, about a mile and a half only from the headquarters of the Shire of Perth, but the answer is always a lemon—they are not permitted to subdivide, notwithstanding that in 1963 Parliament approved this land for urban residential purposes. At the present moment it is rural or deferred urban. Even if the land could be subdivided, it would be into five-acre lots, and that would not be particularly satisfactory.

This land, I repeat, is some of the finest residential land in the metropolitan area within half a dozen miles of Parliament Houses; it is halfway between the city and the northern beaches.

I have already indicated the case of Mr. Putrino onto whose property one could physically throw a stone from the Shire of Perth offices. On these broad acres of land—acre after acre—there is grass 3 feet and 4 feet high creating fire hazards; and that is because people are unable to do anything with their land except quit it at bargain prices to speculators. There is a rumour, which I refuse to accept, but which is rife in the district, that this action by constituted authority, including the Government, of refusing to allow people to subdivide their land is because the Government is favourably disposed to some of these large estate developers. If not all, practically all, of the land has passed, on a broad-acre basis, from those people who were pioneers—the small people in the district—to the speculators to whom approval will be given for subdivision into building lots and, of course these speculators will be in the centre of a bonanza.

Mr. Lewis: I am glad you refuse to believe it.

Mr. GRAHAM: I refuse to believe it, but the fact remains that speculators are gradually purchasing these properties at a discount price compared with what land is bringing at the present moment. This brings me back to what I have been discussing: Thousands of blocks could be thrown onto the market if restrictions were withdrawn. As soon as the land was subdivided it would have a marked effect upon the spiralling movement of land prices, particularly for residential purposes. At the present moment, how in the name of fortune ordinary people can be expected to pay for these blocks and after that incur the expenditure of building homes for themselves, I do not know!

In the days before we had town planning in excelsis, landowners were permitted to subdivide when they felt like it, and they could dispose of blocks for any purpose they desired. Now, because there is some control—the outline of a plan for radial roads, together with contour plans—plans for subdivisional roads in these estates could be drawn in a matter of a few hours. Therefore I suggest these people should be permitted to subdivide as was permitted before, but within the framework of what I have just outlined, with the important proviso that zoning shall apply as was the intention of Parliament so we will not have factories in the middle of what is destined to become residential areas.

I promised these people I would raise the matter in Parliament, and that is why I am doing it now. These people are distressed, and some have been driven to distraction. I have indicated the financial embarrassment of some, and the worries that have been brought on the heads of

old people who have offended against no law whatsoever; of people being unable to do what they want to do for their families in the way of giving away portions of land; of development generally being held up; and of young people being forced to pay extortionate prices for land whilst this land is locked up. I have spoken of the unfairness in allowing those who have the ability, to wait for a few years and make countless hundreds of dollars representing hundreds or thousands per cent. profit, whereas the owners of the land, who showed the pioneering spirit by going out into these far-flung areas, are not permitted to subdivide.

I have submitted this matter to the Minister; I have taken it up with the town planning authorities; I have written to the Premier as head of the Government; and now I am speaking in this Parliament. If the Government has any finer feelings it must resolve this matter, and urgently, because of the intense hardship and unfairness which is being visited upon these hapless people who reside, not only in my electorate, but in other electorates as well. We must not overlook the fact that these people in the great majority of cases went on to what we might term "farming ventures," but because of the rapid spread and growth of the city, the city, itself, has now caught up with them. The suburban areas are catching up with them and enveloping their properties.

It is in the interests of these suburban areas that permission is refused to allow these people to develop and subdivide as they would desire—but in conformity with the overall plan. I do not know many of them who would buck against the conception of these properly ordered and zoned areas. Despite the terrific deal of hardship that is occurring, whatever step is taken, it is not suggested that conception can be thrown overboard. However, the Government must devise some scheme to resolve the matter and put finish to the worries, to the extreme hardship, and to the mental suffering these people are enduring at the moment.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.5 p.m.]: I see the Minister is anxious to culminate this discussion, but I think another person is looking for the call besides the Minister. I have only a few words to say in reference to local government.

A recent Federal conference was held in this State and during the course of the conference great support was given to the proposal of a *per capita* tax on people resident within local authority areas. Along with this, little consideration was given to the voting rights of the individuals in the area. Surely, if consideration is to be given to a *per capita* tax, some consideration should be given to applying adult franchise to local government elections. To me, this is a fundamental move and one that deserves early consideration.

We had a similar situation where this principle was applied to the Legislative Council.

It is always said in local government circles that only the taxpayers or rate-payers, or perhaps the occupiers, should be given the right to vote in local government elections because they are the ones who pay the bills. That is wrong, and will not stand up to examination at all. I believe that a small child who buys an ice-cream in a shop pays a small percentage of the rates, because the rates are paid by everybody in the community. Everybody living in a district pays some portion of the rates, because of their activities within that district. Everyone subscribes to the situation, and that creates the valuations on which the rates are paid to the local authorities.

All in all, there is very little justification for not allowing any person of sound mind a vote in local government affairs. Indeed, people should be encouraged to take an active part in local government. Earlier this year, I asked some questions relating to this matter of local government. I was somewhat appalled at the huge number of people—about 80 per cent.—who were returned unopposed at the last shire elections. Those members were returned, not because they were the best available in the district, but possibly because they were the only ones who would be bothered to take an interest.

I have referred to this matter before and I do not again want to be misquoted in the Press, or have headlines made of the affairs of local government to the extent that they are more or less “three per cent. clubs.” The report got out of all proportion last year and, indeed, I was taken to task by the Local Government Association. The association was very hot under the collar, and various local authorities which should not have had any worry about the situation were seriously approaching me and asking if I meant their particular authority. Of course, I got to the stage where I felt like saying to them: If the cap fits wear it.

We all know that is not the situation with many of the local governing authorities; rather they do a very good job. However, I still maintain that not enough interest is shown by people, and until such time as the situation is improved to encourage local people to vote—as they are all entitled to be on the electors' roll—and until they know exactly where they stand, these conditions will prevail.

If one starts to talk about Federal elections, State elections, or shire council elections, and the different conditions which prevail, the normal everyday person in the street is not able to keep up with the situation. He does not know the exact type of election which is about to take place. Of course, the stage is reached where those with the most finance and the

most force behind them can usually attract enough supporters to the poll to win an election. One has to get hold of people by the eye teeth and drag them along to vote. Very often, this has to be done to individual persons two or three times a day before one eventually succeeds in having a candidate elected.

That situation is not good enough. We live in a fairly enlightened age and surely it should be an age when we are able to get a democratically elected local government—the same as we elect the State and Federal Governments—on adult franchise. If we had adult franchise, a lot more interest would be shown in the first place, and probably a lot more nominations would be received.

We find the situation in various wards where in the main, it is residential, but with a fair stretch of industrial and commercial activities where people are nominee holders, or holders in their own right. Those people can live outside the district altogether, and a large postal vote is received from them. Their decision can govern who represents the people in a particular ward, despite the fact that the person elected might not be a desirable choice. This could be referred to as a form of roll-stuffing, because it is stuffed to the extent that people who are not residents, but who are interested in an area have a say as to who shall represent those who do reside there.

I feel very keenly about the fact that only a small percentage of people vote in the various elections. The Minister did supply some rather enlightening figures, and in the area of the member for Gascoyne there have been some 95 per cent. polls. In the Babbage Island ward, I think one poll showed that 100 per cent. voted. This is rather unusual and it must have been some campaign to effect a vote like that. Even in a compulsory vote we do not get anywhere near that percentage. On the other hand, we get down to as low as 5 per cent. and less in various wards. I was rather impressed to note, the day after the elections, that the Payne's Find ward of the Yalgoo Shire Council had a 98 per cent. vote.

Mr. Burt: How many votes?

Mr. JAMIESON: There were 28 votes: one candidate received 25 votes, and the other fellow three votes. Even in an area like Payne's Find, I suppose, it would be an effort for one man to get 25 voters to travel in his vehicle during the day in order to be assured of being elected before the poll was actually counted.

Mr. Burt: Was it a 100 per cent. poll?

Mr. JAMIESON: It was a 98 per cent. poll, and *The Sunday Times* featured it. Because of that feature, I made inquiries. I thought there must have been a major dust-up in the area over some issue, that an extraordinary interest was taken in local government affairs.

We have to look at the possibility of introducing some new attitude towards local government elections. The other night the member for Bayswater suggested that we had almost reached the stage where we needed a complete redraft and reprint of the local government legislation, despite the fact that it is only a few years since the present legislation was introduced, and a brand-new Act was placed on the Statute book.

I say this because we have many problems associated with local government and I would like some clarification on suggestions that have been made regarding the elimination of some local authorities. A commission is now inquiring into the situation and I would hope a report will be made to the Minister in charge of the department before very long. Maybe the Minister, when replying to the debate, will be able to make some comment on that aspect. The longer the present situation continues the worse it becomes.

Many shire council areas are growing too large for those authorities to handle; whereas in other areas the population is becoming so small as to render the districts uneconomic to handle; and in still other areas, because of the geographical situation, the shires have no right to exist, either from an economic or a good local government point of view.

I hope this commission will not be over-long in developing its ideas and making some sort of report to the Minister. Having in mind the fact that it is a fairly long way from Wyndham to Esperance, and east of Esperance, and also that the commission would have to look at this large area, I would suggest that if it is going to take rather a long time to supply a report, perhaps it should break the total area into two distinct sections. Then it could concentrate either on the country section or on the metropolitan section in the first instance, and subsequently it could concentrate on the other. If that were done, the Minister could act on the initial report.

As I have pointed out on a number of occasions, the two situations are entirely different in my opinion. One is a suburban, or urban, type of local government which is very much different from the country type of local government. The problems the urban type of local authority encounters are entirely different from those encountered by country local authorities which cover very broad areas. The things which are of prime concern to the country local authorities are roads and lines of communication.

As I have said before, I hope it will not be very long before the report is drawn up. If in conjunction with this we could receive some major proposition to amend the situation to encourage, by adult franchise, more people to take an interest in local affairs, I suggest there would be nothing wrong with the proposal that

people in local government should be paid some recompense in the form of an honorarium.

Despite the fact that there are a lot of people who would howl this suggestion down, in this day and age I do not see anything wrong with it. I know of no other society or organisation that handles as much finance where an honorarium is not paid. Whether the organisation is a sporting club, or a club of any other type, some form of honorarium is paid to those responsible for administration.

In many cases, I imagine it would cost a man as much money to contest an election in respect of a ward of the City of Perth as it would cost a member of the Legislative Assembly to conduct his election campaign. Indeed, possibly it would cost more because of the non-compulsory voting aspect; and, in addition, there would be no return from it.

While I am not suggesting that anyone should be made a millionaire through being a member of a local government, I suggest that the Government could perhaps amend the section of the Act which provides for 3 per cent. to cover certain contingencies in a council and extend this to a maximum of 5 per cent. of income for the purpose of making allocations to councils for honorarium purposes by a majority decision of the council. I think this is most desirable. I do not think that any person should, because of his financial position in the community, have an advantage over another person who is able to serve effectively on the council. I consider that wrong will continue until the situation is obviated whereby one person is able to afford to indulge regularly in an expressed type of advertising which includes newspapers, posters, pamphlets, and that sort of thing, and another person is not.

It should be borne in mind that, unlike the expenses incurred by members of Parliament, this does not represent a taxation exemption to the individual under normal circumstances—although, if a person were in business, no doubt he would find some way around that problem. However, the ordinary "John Blow" type of citizen is obliged to meet the same bills, and he receives nothing out of it, despite the fact that he has spent long hours and many nights on ratepayers' business and has dealt with budgets. These budgets are, no doubt, prepared by the officers and, in some cases, they run into millions of dollars. Yet, this person receives a cigar and a glass of ale for his efforts—that is approximately his recompense.

If we are going to expect worth-while people to look after these matters, we have to look after those people. While I do not believe an extraordinary amount should be paid, which would only be a further encum-

brance upon the ratepayers, I think it is not good enough for the present situation to continue. A nominal amount could be allowed for the councils to look after this matter and, in addition, this amount would defray some of the councils' expenses. This has long been my attitude on this subject. I hope the Government will view this in a generous light, because not much progress has been made right from the early days with regard to the setting up of local authorities in this State in connection with the franchise.

I suggest, too, that progress has not been made towards interesting people to take part in local government affairs. It would be unthinkable if the position arose when more than 80 per cent. of the parliamentary seats were left unchallenged at any time. Even if we had voluntary franchise, it would be unthinkable that only 5 per cent. of the people would vote in any election that was held to elect representatives for any form of Parliament.

Many people will deride the fact that any form of politics should enter into local government affairs, but despite their derision and despite what many people think in this connection, the facts are very clear that this is solid ground for party-political action, which does in fact take place. Anyone with half an eye could see that this is so. Of course, potential candidates for local government authorities will deny that they are particularly associated with political parties. I have even seen members of the Labor Party, who have been strong members of the State Executive, stand for election and deny on their pamphlet that they were in any way connected with party politics. It is thoroughly dishonest to have to adopt an attitude such as that for the purpose of entering local government and giving a service to the people.

I think we should be honest with ourselves. If there is no harm in party politics in one arm of Government, there is no harm in the other arm of Government. If there is harm, we should wipe it out altogether. Nobody would be brave enough to manage that in this day and age. Whether the people are Labor, or Liberal, or C.M.O.—or whatever it is called in the Eastern States—if they are standing for election, they still have to go in on some particular policy.

As it is now, a man is elected because he has advocated some particular policy, and yet he might be completely offside with all the other members of the council, and he has no way of implementing his ideas. He can put them forward, but he cannot do any more.

Every now and again one finds that a local authority has abandoned some particular project which had been demanded by the ratepayers, following which a group is formed to nominate a candidate for each ward with the express purpose of implementing the ratepayers' policy. When the

objective has been reached the group falls apart and is completely disbanded. It is unthinkable that this position should be allowed to exist indefinitely.

There is a great deal of merit in having an Opposition in Government, even in local government, because the opposition has a duty to seek out all the faults of the ruling party and ultimately bring some good results. I do not say that a candidate should specifically state he is a member of the Labor Party, the Country Party, or some other party; but it has been found that whilst a Labor man may stand for election under the Labor Party banner, others are inclined to stand under the C.M.O. banner, or something like that. Invariably such men emerge as Liberal candidates in the future for other elections. That is all I have to say on that.

I now wish to make some brief comments on child welfare. I hope it will not be long before the Government is in a position to build more detention homes for juvenile offenders. I have noticed there has been a great deal of agitation in the Press concerning this subject, and, indeed, among those organisations which appreciate the necessity to keep juvenile delinquents away from hardened criminals who are confined in the ordinary penal institutions. I express the hope that before long we will have more institutions similar to the Riverbank establishment, because from the information given to us it would appear that that centre is too small to accommodate the number of cases coming forward. In fact, it was built more as a reformatory than as a place of detention.

Another centre similar to Riverbank could be built, and, similarly, an institution could be provided to house delinquent girls. This is an urgent requirement, and I trust next year we will see a vote set aside for this necessary purpose of improving the facilities for handling juvenile delinquents; because, unfortunately, these cases seem to be on the increase despite the money being spent on education and, indeed, on all types of assistance to foster national fitness and youth welfare. The Minister has been giving a great deal of lip service to this youth work and the fact that as much financial assistance as possible is being given.

I suggest we look to the future and try to establish some further institutions to house juvenile offenders so that they can be more adequately handled in the future.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [5.28 p.m.]: I know there are two or three Ministers straining at the leash to reply to the debate. Briefly, I wish to add to the comments made by the member for Beeloo on local government. He touched on quite a few points, and when the Minister reads his speech I am sure it will give him food for thought. The only other point I wish to make concerns the hours for polling at elections. As indicated by the member for

Beeloo, at one polling booth only 28 votes were cast, and yet the hours of polling were from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. In my opinion that is far too long a period in which to cast votes for any election, and consideration should be given to amending the voting period so that the hours for voting can be from, say, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. I am sure that period would be ample in which to cast votes for any election.

The other matter I wish to touch on is that dealt with by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in relation to town planning. Members know that for some time I have been emphasising the unsatisfactory state in which people are placed when they become affected by town planning schemes or subject to resumption orders, when such resumptions are to take place in 15 or 20 years' time.

Just recently we did pass certain amendments which went through the other Chamber in connection with the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act, which, I hope, as the Minister indicated, will give a fairer valuation to people whose properties have been resumed. Out my way there is a classic example of a person who has a house situated on one acre of land. Twelve months ago he was offered \$7,500 for the house and the acre of land. The man in question is about 60 years of age. He found that his health was being affected a little, and he was anxious to settle in another area.

Members will appreciate, however, what will be involved in his purchasing of another block of land and building a house on it. Under normal circumstances a block of land will cost him anything from \$3,000 upwards, which will mean that he will be faced once again with having to raise money to finance his home.

Strange as it may seem, however—and I might say here that the acre of land in question is highly elevated—just recently a quarter-acre block was sold on the other side of the road for \$2,400. The man I first referred to would, with his block, have the equivalent of four times \$2,400, which would take the amount far above that offered him by the department for his land and house.

I am pleased the amendment to the town planning Act went through, because three members from the Real Estate Institute will decide the issue as valuers. Not only will these people be able to assess the values, but they will be able to value quite a number of properties very soon. Unfortunately I believe the metropolitan region tax which was meant to apply to holders of land throughout the metropolitan area, is being used for resumptions in relation to the Mitchell Freeway, and very little attention is given to the small fellow who is vitally affected. The member for Balcatia instanced certain cases this evening, and these are not isolated cases by any means.

Mr. Jamieson: The main road funds are being used for the Mitchell Freeway.

Mr. TOMS: I believe the funds from the metropolitan region tax are also used for resumptions for the Mitchell Freeway, and not much thought is given to the small fellows—the people who have lived in areas for many years, and who want to settle down; they do not want to have to re-establish themselves on blocks of land in years to come. They want the benefit now.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition said there may be a shortage of officers. I wonder, however, whether we are getting value from the number of officers we have in the Town Planning Department at the moment. From the Estimates this year I notice the number of town planning officers and planning assistants in the department is to be raised from 21 to 34. An additional 13 officers will be appointed to the department.

I have been very critical of some of the decisions made by the officers of the department, and particularly have I instanced a decision made in connection with the Beechboro-Gosnells Highway. Originally it was intended that this should be a three-chain highway. When one considers that at the moment the Kwinana Freeway is 152 feet wide—which is just under 2½ chains—one will appreciate how ridiculous the suggestion is to construct a six-chain highway from Beechboro to Gosnells. I have been critical of this, because our population in the metropolitan area, and indeed in our close country areas, will be very limited by water supply problems; and we have been told that the population in the metropolitan area cannot exceed 1,250,000. When one considers these aspects one can see how ridiculous it is to have this proposed six-chain strip of land going right through the district.

I have already asked questions concerning the Kwinana Freeway. I asked about its width, the width of the verges, the median strip, and so on. I have been told there is a 40-foot strip each side with a 20-foot strip in the middle. Once again I say that when one considers the Kwinana Freeway one sees just how ridiculous the proposal is to build a six-chain highway from Beechboro to Gosnells. This extra three chains of land will mean a loss of about \$60,000 to the Shire of Bayswater each year; because that is the value of the rates which the department proposes to take.

Heaven knows, there was enough upset in this area when the Stephenson Plan envisaged that the highway should be one of three chains. The problem now, of course, has doubled, because more land is involved. The position has, however, been made somewhat easier because people under the blanket can sell their land, and the Government can offer them the present value and offset the figure later when

the sale is made. I cannot help but feel that the engineers have gone a little too far in this matter of a six-chain highway, and I ask the Minister here to refer the position to the Minister for Town Planning in another place, and request him to give some honest reason why there should be a six-chain highway through this district.

I have ridiculed this proposition, and I will continue to do so until I am given cogent reasons why it is necessary to have such a vast tract of land for a highway to go through this area. I understand that overways and underways are envisaged, but anyone knowing particular sections of this land will appreciate that boats will be necessary in some areas, because the land through which this highway will pass is pretty low-lying.

I will take every opportunity to express my opposition to the Government in relation to this type of town planning. Quite a lot of it is unreasonable, and I only hope that the 13 extra officers to be appointed to the Town Planning Department will have a bit more vision. I hope they will be more reasonable in their approach, because I do not think the State has reached the stage where it requires such a vast tract of land for a highway running from one locality to another.

Accordingly, I hope the Minister will convey my remarks to the Minister for Town Planning, and, earnestly ask that I be given some reasonable answer why such a huge tract of land is needed from Beechboro to Gosnells.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Town Planning, \$239,500; Child Welfare and Outdoor Relief, \$2,052,000—put and passed.

Vote: Chief Secretary, \$420,900—

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [5.41 p.m.]: Some time ago we dealt with a motion in this House concerning "L" plates attached to motor vehicles, and the need to remove them when the vehicles were not used by learner-drivers. To remind members what took place during this debate I draw attention to the following dialogue which appears on page 608 of this year's *Hansard*:—

Mr. Craig: That is the full text of the particular regulation.

Mr. Jamieson: If I find this is not a fact, will the Minister be prepared to amend this regulation?

Mr. Craig: You carry on with your debate, and I will think about it.

Mr. Jamieson: I knew the Minister would not agree, because I had more than a passing suspicion about it.

Mr. Craig: You find out first.

Mr. Jamieson: I will do so and make the information available to the Min-

ister, because he has not fully availed himself of such information.

Mr. Craig: I beg your pardon.

Mr. Jamieson: Is it part and parcel of the provision in every other State?

Mr. Craig: Yes.

Mr. O'Connor: There were many interjections.

Mr. JAMIESON: When I asked the Minister whether it was part and parcel of the regulations in every other State, he replied in the affirmative. I have since obtained a good deal of information concerning the traffic regulations of the other States, and I find what he said is incorrect. He was correct in referring to Tasmania, Queensland, and Victoria.

Mr. Craig: That is three out of the six States, or 50 per cent. accurate.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Minister was very sure of the position when he made the comments I have just read out. I have here the Capital Territory Traffic Ordinance, and it does not contain a provision requiring the owners of vehicles to remove "L" plates while the vehicles are not being used by learner-drivers.

Mr. Gayfer: The Capital Territory must be two years behind the rest of the States.

Mr. JAMIESON: The Motor Traffic Act of New South Wales and the regulations made thereunder clearly indicate that "L" plates are required to be affixed to vehicles when the drivers are under instruction, but no provision is made to require their removal when the vehicles are not so used. In South Australia a similar position exists, and has existed for many years.

All the information I have obtained was made available by various secretaries of the Parliamentary Labor Parties in the States to which I have referred. Attached to the letter from the secretary of the South Australian Parliamentary Labor Party is a copy of a letter from the Premier of that State which reads as follows:—

Dear Mr. Broomhill,

I refer to your letter of the 7th September, 1966, addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Roads, requesting on behalf of Mr. C. J. Jamieson, M.L.A., of Western Australia, information in relation to "L" plates on vehicles in this State.

I enclose herewith a copy of the regulations under the Motor Vehicles Act which refer to learner's permits and "L" plates, together with a form of application and permit. Mr. Jamieson should be advised that there is no requirement in the regulations to remove an "L" plate from a vehicle when it is not being driven by a learner.

When the Minister makes statements in this Chamber on traffic matters, such as

the one I raised, he should give accurate information; and if he has been incorrectly advised it is up to him to admonish those who had advised him. This is the first opportunity I have had to correct the Minister's statements, and he should acknowledge the fact that he had been misinformed on this matter. As there was not a large number of private members' items on the notice paper, the particular motion I am referring to was dealt with much quicker than I had anticipated, and before I had been able to obtain the information from the Eastern States.

There should be no doubt as to the actual position, and that can be borne out by the reams of material I have. The position is not as the Minister outlined to us previously. I suggest that, even at this late stage, consideration be given to the proposal I made previously. It is very unfair that drivers of motor vehicles should be taken to task for having "L" plates on the vehicles when they are not being used by learner-drivers. It is unfair both to the driving schools and to those who use their cars to teach members of their family to drive.

The existing regulation requires amendment, and it is apparent that some authorities which handle traffic control think it should be retained, but I am not sure it is necessary in Western Australia to have a regulation as stringent as the one the Minister promulgated.

MR. DUNN (Darling Range) [5.47 p.m.]: I want to address myself to a traffic matter, and this concerns the checking of vehicles for road-worthiness and for general use. At the outset I want to make it quite clear that if I appear to give the impression I am on a witch-hunt in making the remarks which I propose to make, it is not my intention to do that.

I wish to bring to the notice of members some of the discrepancies which exist and which have a direct bearing on the use of vehicles and the problems associated with the checks on vehicles. An article on this subject appeared in the Press recently. In the United States of America the authorities are taking active and positive steps in respect of this matter, because it has been revealed that they are studying the problem of vehicle safety, not only in respect of secondhand vehicles but also new vehicles.

In the *Daily News* of the 25th November, 1966, an article headed "Yearly vehicle checks wanted" appeared. It contains the result of a Gallup poll which had been conducted. The article reveals that nine out of 10 people in every State favour the compulsory annual inspection of all cars and trucks, preferably at Government testing stations. It goes on to say that the same questions were asked in the poll conducted a year ago; and the following comparison of answers given then and

now shows increased support for Government testing stations:—

	1965 %	Today %
Inspection by:		
Government	43	49
Garages	34	31
Either	13	10
Total "Compel"	90	90
Don't compel	6	6
No opinion	4	4

Those figures indicate the attitude of the people of Australia, including those of Western Australia. Provision has been made in the Local Government Act and the Traffic Act for vehicle checks to be instituted throughout the State, but unfortunately one finds on analysis that in certain parts of the State this subject is not being treated with the urgency, directness, and positiveness that it deserves.

In the metropolitan area 15 men are employed by the Police Department on vehicle inspection, and six of those are members of the Australian Institute of Automotive Engineers. They are, in fact, fully qualified personnel. They inspect something like 7,500 vehicles per month and these include used cars, vehicles in accidents, and vehicles transferred from the country. Last year they paid 435 visits to various car yards and rejected 1,030 vehicles as being unfit, and 150 of those were sent to the motor wreckers.

I understand they have one fully-equipped station at which they can make thorough and proper checks, and there are certain other stations which are not fully equipped but which do, to a large extent, provide facilities to enable reasonable control and checks to be made.

Earlier in the session I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government if he would advise me the names, ages, and qualifications of the respective personnel in the local shires who were responsible for these vehicle checks before a vehicle was licensed. This information was, in due course, made available; and, in order to refresh the minds of members and give information to those who did not have the opportunity of studying the report that was tabled, I will repeat some of the information it contained.

Of some 230 persons inspecting vehicles for country local authorities, 80 were under 21; one was a 17-year-old boy doing his second year apprenticeship in mechanics; 45 were qualified to do the work; 72 had no qualifications; and others were variously described. One was described as having been an owner-driver for 20 years; another as having had two years with the Royal Military Police; and another as having had two years' garage experience.

I realise that this subject is not an easy one for the local authorities to tackle,

especially if they take into consideration the convenience of the many people involved. I feel that we should approach the problem with the idea of giving the local authorities every assistance. We should provide specially-trained personnel to train employees of the local authorities to do this work, and then at least we would have taken a step towards adequately tackling this problem.

I do not feel we should merely give lip service. It is incumbent upon me to make it clear that some of the local authorities take this matter very seriously indeed and endeavour to fulfil to the utmost their obligations under the Act.

I have here a very excellent booklet entitled *A Guide to the Road Traffic Code*, issued by the Commissioner of Police in W.A. This booklet contains a list of requirements concerning these vehicles and if it is not possible to have a fully-qualified person checking these vehicles in accordance with that list, then at least someone with a good mechanical knowledge should be responsible. For the benefit of those members who may not have this booklet, I will read the list of items which it advises motorists to have checked before presenting their cars for licensing. They read as follows:—

Your car must have—

Safe tyres.

Good brakes to stop promptly and hold securely.

Efficient headlights properly adjusted.

Good rear lights and reflectors. At least one red rear light, a light to illuminate your rear number plate, and two red reflectors. A trailer also requires a tail light and reflectors.

Safe steering.

Bodywork and guards in good condition.

A clear, clean windscreen. New windscreens must be of safety glass.

A windscreen wiper.

A rear vision mirror to give you a clear view of the road behind.

An effective horn; but not a bell, siren, or whistle.

An efficient silencer.

Ready means of entrance and exit for both driver and passengers.

Door catches which can be readily operated from both the inside and the outside.

Having just bought a new car, I feel quietly confident about it, but I am still not sure that it conforms to that standard. Nevertheless, if any one is presenting a vehicle for licensing, it is absolutely necessary that these matters be properly investigated.

The report by the interdepartmental committee appointed to inquire into the control of traffic and motor vehicle licensing in country areas, had the follow-

ing to say in regard to the question of inspection of vehicles:—

The survey shows that there is considerable inconsistency in the extent and thoroughness of vehicle inspection prior to licensing in country areas. The most disquieting feature is that in 18 local authority areas few or no vehicles are inspected prior to licensing and in 19 others, only vehicles 10 years old or older receive any attention. In 62 areas new vehicles are not checked. Discussion with local authorities revealed that in a number of cases where inspections are made these are cursory and are designed to identify the vehicle in question rather than test its mechanical condition. In other cases little attempt was made to check engine numbers, leaving a loophole for the registration of stolen vehicles. The inspection of new vehicles would, at first sight, appear to be unnecessary and this view was expressed by several local authorities. However, information obtained from the police licensing branch indicates that many new vehicles require correction of faults before licensing. Typical faults include incorrectly set and glaring headlights and badly adjusted brakes. Heavy commercial vehicles need to be checked for width, lighting, axle loading, braking on trailers and a number of other points. It is very doubtful whether sufficient attention is paid to these aspects of new vehicle licensing in most parts of the country.

The importance of keeping unsafe vehicles off the roads is emphasised by the legislation passed in the last session of Parliament. The amended Used Car Dealers Act empowers a police officer or inspector to enter any premises occupied by a dealer and examine vehicles therein. They are given power to ban any vehicle considered unroadworthy. The police traffic office has taken full advantage of this power and several hundred unsafe vehicles have been banned from sale until the faults are corrected. Fears have been expressed that this type of vehicle will find an outlet in country districts and for the purpose of the legislation to be realised it will be necessary for country licensing authorities to take similar action coupled with rigorous inspection of all vehicles on first registration.

At the outset, I stated I did not want it thought I was on a witch-hunt. I do not think there is anyone in this Chamber who would not acknowledge that the problem of the increasing number of deaths on the roads has to be tackled in every quarter and by every possible means at our disposal. To give the mem-

bers of the House some indication of where we stand in this matter, I will quote some figures which were supplied to me by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics in Western Australia.

These figures show that in the three months ended the 30th June, 1966, there were 3,519 accidents in the metropolitan area which were attributed to the motor vehicle drivers. There were 14 attributable to motorcycle riders; 13 to motor scooter drivers and 43 to pedal cycle riders.

One accident was attributable to the driver of an animal-drawn vehicle; 146 were attributable to pedestrians; and six to passengers. There were 72 attributable to motor vehicle defects, and that is what I want to draw the attention of the House to.

For the rest of the State, motor vehicle drivers contributed to 875 motor vehicle accidents, motor cycle riders to three, and motor scooter riders contributed to none. Pedal cycle riders contributed to 11 accidents; drivers of animal-drawn vehicles to none; pedestrians, 17; passengers, four; and motor vehicle defects to 69.

I repeat, the number of motor vehicle drivers who contributed to accidents in the metropolitan area was 3,519; and motor vehicle defects contributed to 72 accidents. In the country areas, motor vehicle drivers contributed to 875 accidents; and the number of accidents attributable to motor vehicle defects was 69. That is a considerably higher percentage.

The number of persons killed in the metropolitan area was 23, and there were 808 persons injured. For the rest of the State, as a result of motor vehicle defects, three were killed and 31 were injured. I know it could be argued that a lot of vehicles involved in the country accidents came from the metropolitan area, and that is probably quite correct. However, I draw attention to the fact that there were 875 accidents where motor vehicle drivers were responsible; and 69 motor vehicles had defects which were responsible for accidents.

Now the percentage outside the metropolitan area is considerably higher; and, this being so, one is tempted to believe that some of the blame could be attributed to vehicle inspection throughout the country areas, where inspections in some cases are not as thorough as they should be.

I draw this matter to the attention of the House in the hope that a stronger, more forcible, and more positive approach will be made by the local shires to ensure that this problem is tackled so that the number of deaths and the number of accidents due to defective vehicles will be considerably reduced in the ensuing years.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [6.4 p.m.]: The matter I want to bring forward relates to illegal S.P. betting in Western Australia.

Mr. Craig: I did not know there was any taking place.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I refer to the efforts made by the Police Department to apprehend anybody who might be engaged in this nefarious practice. On the front page of the *Daily News*, of Friday, the 11th November of this year, there appeared the following article under the heading, "Police Swoop on Secret Bookie":—

Police who raided the home of former licensed S.P. bookmaker Henry Alfred Solley on Melbourne Cup morning found a secret wall panel and took calls from people using code names.

The callers, using names such as B.U., Cray and Radar gave details of bets they wanted to place, Perth Police Court was told today.

Mr. Craig: What was that second name you mentioned?

Mr. GRAYDEN: The name was "Cray".

Mr. Craig: Thank you; I was a bit alarmed.

Mr. GRAYDEN: To continue the newspaper report—

Solley (58), occupation investor, admitted having carried on business as a bookmaker at his home in Webster Street, Nedlands, on November 1, was fined \$600.

Evidence was given that police raided Solley's home on a warrant.

They found the false wall panel, two telephones, betting material, a desk and a filing cabinet in a room over a car port to the side and rear of the house.

In 35 minutes from 11.25 a.m. the raiding party answered 13 telephone calls, all of which came in on one phone.

Constable J. V. O'Dea gave details of the calls. Some code names given in a first call were repeated in following calls.

O'Dea said the police later interviewed a number of people they believed they had identified.

Counsel L. Wood for Solley, said that Solley had no previous convictions. He had held a licence as a bookmaker between 1955 and 1960 and had committed no breaches.

He was engaged in various business activities—he ran a mine and was interested in two farming properties.

Solley was a professional punter and had submitted tax returns giving details of this interest.

Said Magistrate Alan G. Smith: "I think he's been carrying on a business."

"The betting was of considerable magnitude and the set-up was elaborate. It was not all got up for Melbourne Cup day."

As I have said, this article appeared in the *Daily News* on the 11th November, 1966. I also have another cutting from an article which appeared in either the *Daily News* or *The Sunday Times* on the 1st October, 1961—five years ago. A picture is shown of a house on stilts and, as it happens, it is the same house on stilts. It has the caption, "Meet Man in House on Stilts." Under the photograph of the very same outbuilding is the little caption, "Mr. Solley's spare room on stilts. Inside the room is a desk, phone, filing cabinets . . . and a picture of a race-horse on the wall." Then the article goes on—

"That's Mr. Grayden's house on stilts—and Mr. Grayden has been reading too many Dick Tracy stories," Mr. Harry Solley said at his Nedlands home yesterday.

The article goes on to say—

"Since Mr. Grayden made his wild statement in the Legislative Assembly last Tuesday, I have been the butt of jokes."

I am not going to read the entire article, but one or two extracts from it are of interest. Later on the article reads—

"Mr. Grayden should retract his remarks or name me specifically," Mr. Solley said.

"Everyone knows he was referring to the office above the carport at my home—

I would mention that when I spoke on this subject I referred to this house on stilts, but I did not mention anyone in particular. However, Mr. Solley came out and said his was the place to which I was referring. The article continues—

"But it certainly is not used for illegal telephone betting."

"I was amused at first but it is a nuisance now."

"Some callers have jokingly asked if I kept machineguns there and how many telephones I have."

Later on the article reads—

Mr. Solley said: "My farm manager comes down with stock every fortnight or so and he sleeps here. It saves me paying hotel bills.

That was all right, but I emphasise this was a statement made by Mr. Solley subsequent to my bringing this matter up in the Legislative Assembly, as I have said, slightly over five years ago.

On that occasion—and I only intend to quote this very briefly—I had this to say—

I put it to the House that it might not always be possible to so easily effect entry into some of the places where illegal S.P. bookmaking is carried on. I will relate my remarks to

the Bill in this manner: If we were engaged in illegal telephone betting, and we wanted to build a police-proof shelter or room from which we could conduct our illegal operations, what would we do? I would suggest that, first of all, we would site that building in a place where it had a commanding view. We would fit that building with landscape windows so that it would command views of all approaches.

I suggest that we would build a house of steel in order to make entry more difficult. To make it even more difficult I suggest we would put the building on stilts. We could then have a ladder which we could pull up; and an incinerator where we could burn the evidence. That sounds extraordinarily far-fetched.

But I want to suggest that it is an extraordinary coincidence that such places do exist in Western Australia; and they exist in the homes of the licensed premises bookmakers.

The other day I went to have a look at one of these police-proof shelters. It may be purely a coincidence that such buildings have been constructed on their own dwelling-places—on the dwellings of licensed premises bookmakers—but to my astonishment, I found that such an extraordinary structure was being built. I found it was built of steel or aluminium; that it was built on stilts; and that it had commanding views of the only approaches.

That was the basis of what I had to say on that occasion. I continued on against all kinds of interjections. I mention that I am only quoting this now to indicate I did not say betting was being carried on in this particular place. In that speech, I simply said that a great deal of illegal S.P. betting was being carried on at that particular time. All members knew of instances of people who had been canvassed with code names, and given telephone numbers to ring, and that kind of thing.

When I brought this subject out into the open, it aroused a tremendous amount of criticism mainly, of course, from Mr. Solley, but subsequently the *Daily News* published a cartoon which depicted machineguns poking out of windows. The *Daily News* even carried an editorial on the subject; but the editorial was very kind, because at least it recognised that my speech was largely hyperbole. Subsequently, however, I was castigated from all quarters. What I resented was that I had brought this matter up because I knew that, at the time, the police were perturbed about this particular structure.

I brought it up after I had gone out to have a look at the building for myself, and had found it was constructed exactly in accordance with all the reports I had

heard. When I spoke in the House, I did not mention the owner's name, but the man in question came later on and said, "This must be the building referred to." After he had made this statement, I did identify it as the one to which I had referred.

I would like to refer to a further article from *The West Australian* which is dated the 2nd October, 1961. Under the heading of "Grayden Identifies Stilt Structure" the article reads—

Liberal M.L.A., W. L. A. Grayden yesterday confirmed that a structure on stilts at bookmaker H. A. Solley's home in Webster-street, Nedlands, was the one to which he had referred in the Legislative Assembly last week.

He had seen the structure from the street about three weeks ago after he had been told that the police had also seen it.

(Mr. Grayden had claimed that former licensed premises bookmakers in W.A. had built steel-stilt look-outs with commanding views of the approaches. He said it was a coincidence that bookmakers should build that type of home because it was the type for any one who wanted a police-proof shelter from which to conduct illegal telephone betting.)

He could not say for certain, but it appears to be of steel construction.

So the article continues, but I am not going to keep on quoting. I bring this matter up to point out, first of all, that this is the same structure. We see what has happened now after five years. The second reason why I bring this matter up is to emphasise how members can be left out on a limb on occasions because of what they bring up in this House.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Prior to the tea suspension I said that members are often left out on a limb in respect of matters which they raise in this House. As far as I am concerned the case I quoted was typical of this; it was a classic case. At the time about which I am talking, illegal S.P. betting was rife in Western Australia. Most members had instances of this brought to their notice.

I had made statements in the House that it was a coincidence that a structure like this was being built. This was sarcastically denied by the owner; and in addition I was castigated from many quarters. I brought this matter up, because I heard the police were perturbed about this very structure. After I heard this I had a look at the building and made some reference to it here. I admit that what I had to say sounded rather far-fetched, but often truth is stranger than fiction. But when the criticism became, as I thought, too severe, I went to the Minister for Police and requested that he make pub-

lic the information which the police possessed in respect of Mr. Solley, and also their fears concerning this structure.

The then Minister for Police said there was no need to deny this because the dogs were barking it in the street. That was little comfort to me. The Minister then went on to say—and this struck me as being common sense—that if the police disclosed the information in their possession in respect of this case it would prejudice their chance of obtaining a conviction. All I can say is, that was five years ago, and I have had to wait a long time before seeing this conviction eventuate.

I have already made reference to the article published in the *Daily News* on the 11th November headed, "Police Swoop on Secret Bookie." We know this is exactly the same building to which I referred; we know it contains the same furniture it did at the time—a roll-top desk and a filing cabinet—and we know the same man is involved. The only thing different is that at the time one telephone was installed, whereas today there are two telephones installed. Also, apart from this, the police have proved the existence of a secret panel, about which we were also informed at that time.

That brings me to the second point I want to make, which is in respect of illegal S.P. betting in Western Australia. I ask the Minister: How widespread in Western Australia is illegal S.P. betting, and what efforts are being made to stamp it out?

My final point relates to the building on stilts about which I have been talking. I ask the Minister: When was the second phone installed in this building; were the police aware at the time it was being installed; and at that stage what was done to bring the matter to a head in view of the suspicion the police harboured, and the information they had in their possession since 1961 and before?

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [7.34 p.m.]: I wish to mention a visit I made recently to the Karnet Rehabilitation Centre with a number of justices who visit this centre quarterly with a view to inspecting it. I would like to leave a word of tribute with the Minister in regard to what is being done at this centre. Many would not have seen the progress that has been made at Karnet since it was established; but the progress has been quite impressive, and I felt quite a glow of pride when I considered what had been done to create such a worthwhile measure of rehabilitation for the people who were housed there.

The vocational training—certainly in the woodworking section—is of the highest standard; and it was interesting to pay a visit to the farm and see the stock being established, and the buildings erected. The work being done in horticulture and in the growing of vegetables is really tremendous, the main improvement being in

the agricultural section where those concerned are concentrating on increasing the stock numbers, and in the establishment of first-class housing conditions for the pigs and cattle.

The reason I have risen to speak on this matter is to make the Committee aware that the Karnet Rehabilitation Centre is most impressive. I feel it is attaining the purpose for which it was established. The only real requirement at the moment is a recreational hall for the community to use; and, in addition, I think the tennis courts need resurfacing.

These are minor matters, although they are of importance to the people living there. All in all, I have recorded the fact that Karnet is attaining the goal set for it, and all those attached to it are entitled to feel some pride in the work they are doing.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Registry and Friendly Societies, \$131,500; Observatory, \$50,500; Prisons, \$1,081,000; Police, \$5,895,000—put and passed.

Vote: State Housing Commission, \$10—

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.40 p.m.]: It is obvious the Ministers have no story to tell, or they would be telling it. Department after department has gone through without the Ministers saying anything at all. I wonder whether we will have a repetition of this next session; or whether every Minister will suddenly become articulate and have a lot to tell the country. We will see whether that turns out to be the case.

I had hoped that the Minister for Housing would make some attempt to explain to the people why it became necessary to increase rents so steeply, seeing that the State Housing Commission had made the largest profit that has been made since its inception.

Up till last year the accumulated profit over all the years of the State Housing Commission—right from its inception—was \$4,312,930. Last year, it made, in that year alone, \$2,162,169. So in one year it made half the amount of profit which has been made by the State Housing Commission since its inception. Its total profit has been increased from \$4,312,930 to \$6,475,099; and that was the year the Government chose to make substantial increases in rents. I do not know how such action can be defended.

If it were necessary to increase rents during the last financial year, when the largest profit ever was made, why was it not necessary to increase rents the previous year? The increase in profit for last year was \$1,229,287 greater than the profit for the year before. It was not necessary, apparently, to increase rents the year before, but it was necessary to do so in the last financial year.

The State Housing Commission's earning increased in the last financial year by \$1,505,978; and its expenditure over the previous year increased by only \$276,691. Yet the Government found it necessary to put up rents. In endeavouring to give an explanation for this, the Minister said his increased expenditure was attributable to management expenses going up. The management expenses went up to \$151,228, but that did not absorb all the extra profit, because profit was made over and above that expenditure. So I ask: What possible justification can there be for the action the Government took in this connection?

One can understand that if a concern is losing money—if it is slipping back—some action must be taken to arrest the drift; but here was a situation completely unprecedented where the concern in a single year made half as much profit as in all the previous years put together. To endeavour to establish that an increase in rent is necessary in these circumstances is indeed a pretty difficult task. The Minister came here with a report which he said was hot off the press, but it would not have made any difference, because all the information to which I have referred is contained in the Auditor-General's report.

It stood out very clearly that there was no justification at all for these steep increases in rent which, in some cases, involved real hardship upon the people who were called upon to pay them. I agree that the Minister put the increases up in steps—he did not impose them all at once—but, nevertheless, eventually all these increases will have to be carried and there is no justification for that unless the Government proposes to take advantage of the opportunity to take more money away from the people generally in accordance with its policy.

I have yet to learn that any business establishment which succeeded in making in one year half as much profit as the total profit made in all the previous years would be justified in putting up its prices. The State Housing Commission has not been established for the purpose of making huge profits and paying them into general revenue.

Mr. O'Neil: It does not do that.

Mr. TONKIN: Its purpose is to provide housing for the people—for as many people as possible and as cheaply as possible. If a house is very old, is there any justification for increasing the rent to a level which will be comparable with that of a new house built at the present time? Take some of these Thermabau houses erected at Willagee—softwood houses that have been up for many years. Is there any justification for raising the level of rents of those houses to a position which would be comparable with that of houses built at the present time? If people were fortunate enough to become tenants of houses

when rentals were comparatively low, and those rents are sufficient now to meet the charges in accordance with the Commonwealth-State rental housing agreement and meet the charges involved in the establishment of the houses, what is the necessity to put up the rent?

The principle upon which we ought to work in these cases is that when a new lot of houses are built the Government should charge a rental which will enable it to recover the capital investment and meet interest and sinking fund on those houses over a reasonable period of years.

Mr. O'Neill: You imply then that if houses are built with non-repayable cash grants they should be rent free?

Mr. TONKIN: No, I am not implying that any house should be rent free. That is being ridiculous.

Mr. O'Neill: Your argument taken to its extreme—

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister's argument is that the Government should seek to fix the rent irrespective of the capital invested in the house being rented.

Mr. O'Neill: You are saying if it is a non-repayable cash grant it should be rent free.

Mr. TONKIN: If it does not cost the Government anything to build a house, what is wrong with making it rent free? Now the ball is in your court.

Mr. Bovell: You would never do that.

Mr. TONKIN: Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Mitchell) anyone knows that unless there is a bequest from some source, it will cost money to build houses.

Mr. O'Neill: What about when the Commonwealth makes a cash grant non-repayable for the purpose of overcoming unemployment and the Government builds houses; should those houses be rent free?

Mr. TONKIN: I have already said that they should not be rent free, because real money has been used to build them. Money has been spent, and I would calculate the rent on the amount of capital invested in the houses, having regard to the length of time that would be required to recoup the capital expenditure and meet interest and sinking fund on the money. That is what is normally done with regard to private housing.

If one goes to a finance company or builds through an insurance company, then one is required to put in a certain amount of money as a deposit and is then charged a rental which is sufficient to enable the person going into the home to become the owner of that home after a certain period; but these people will never become the owners of the homes in spite of the fact that they have had the rent put up on them.

Some are still living in the same houses in which they have lived for more than 20 years and they cannot even remain on the

same rent. The rent is put up on them. If the Government's argument is that they got into these houses when rents were low and they are not entitled to remain in them now rents are higher, then that is an argument I cannot go along with. This concern made that tremendous profit—half a much profit in one single year as was made in all the previous years of its existence—and the year in which it was made is the one in which the Government chooses to put the rent up on the pretext that maintenance costs have been greater. That is just pure subterfuge.

Mr. Hawke: Not very pure, either.

Mr. TONKIN: An examination of the Housing Commission's report will indicate just what the situation really is. On page 32 of the current report under the heading, "Profit and Loss Account," the net profit for the year was \$2,162,169; and this was \$1,229,287 greater than that for the previous year. Earnings increased by \$1,505,978 and expenditure by \$276,691. The earnings were about \$1,250,000 above expenditure, so it was not necessary for the Government to put the rents up.

Mr. May: I wonder what the Grants Commission would say about that!

Mr. O'Neill: It is not out of the Consolidate Revenue Account.

Mr. TONKIN: I notice that in connection with the Government's new scheme of granting relief from payment where the breadwinner is deceased, 19 accounts had been credited varying amounts aggregating \$21,000, which was charged to the profit and loss account. That gesture did not cost the Government very much.

My complaint in this question—I made it when the Minister's announcement was first made about these increases in rent, and I repeat it now—is that there is no justification for the increases in any shape or form. Why on earth the Government did it, I just do not know. It cannot excuse it or explain it. If the Government were short of money, or if it were struggling for funds, it would be an entirely different matter, but a profit of \$2,000,000 was made.

The Minister had the effrontery to say there was no real objection from the tenants. I asked a question so that I could obtain an answer and check it. But of course I was not given the information which would enable me to do that. I had in mind that I would go out into these areas and find out if the people had made any protests to the collectors, but the question I asked was neatly dodged, as I expected it would be. People complained to me about it and wanted to know just what was the justification for the increase. I said, "Absolutely none"; and there could not possibly be by the figures disclosed in the commission's report.

I suppose it is another one of those things which is done in the middle of the session by the Government, when it expects to get away with it, believing that the

memories of people are pretty short. The people will have no option but to accept these increased rentals and go on paying them. Following upon the increased imposition of these rentals, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Mitchell), you will have noticed that the Government took action to peg the basic wage. These imposts have to be carried—increases in rent and the like—yet action has been taken by the Government to see that no increase in wages shall follow because of the resultant increase in the cost of living.

I make the strongest protest on behalf of those people in State rental homes. The Government gives subsidies in some places. I worked it out that the Government is calling upon the people who are paying the increased rents, and who have been occupying houses for many years, to provide money to rebuild the houses they are in and to make a contribution towards the subsidy being paid in those districts where the rents are being subsidised. That is being done by a commission which is already making a handsome profit and is in a position to carry the subsidy itself and keep rentals down.

But the Government was not interested in keeping rentals down; what it wanted to do was bump them up as far as it could. I complain about it as strongly as possible and I think the people ought to understand the position in regard to it.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [7.59 p.m.]: I endorse every word on this subject which has been uttered by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. In my view it is fantastic that the Government, without any reason or justification, should increase the rents of the people who are living in State Housing Commission homes. After all, the purpose of the State Housing Commission is to provide accommodation for persons of moderate means; yet these are the people from whom the Government seeks to exact a toll over and above all the general imposts that have been applied to the public, again, I say, without any reason or justification whatsoever.

This increased revenue can be used, I suggest, for only one purpose and that is for the building of additional houses. To me it is inconceivable that in addition to paying the rent which embodies all the factors, the costs—past, present, and future—administration expenses, and the rest of it, these people—the workers—shall be charged a higher rental in order to provide further housing. There would be complaint if a special impost was put on people in the higher income bracket to provide revenue for the erection of more homes. The Minister pretended that these charges were necessary because of increased maintenance costs. He used that excuse with regard to Wandana.

The position regarding Wandana is that since those flats were erected they have provided somewhere in the vicinity of

\$15,000 over and above every single contingency. That is clear profit; and on top of that the Government increases rents to bring in a further \$18,350 a year. The result is that every tenant in Wandana will be paying more than \$2 a week in excess of what he should be paying.

The purpose of building those flats was to provide rental accommodation in order to offset some of the ridiculous rents being asked in that neighbourhood, and it did have that effect. Now, instead of the flats acting as a brake on high rentals, the Minister is increasing the rents and is going along with the tide. And what a tide it is! The Minister uses the pretext that the additional rentals are necessary in order to meet higher maintenance charges.

We find that over \$121,000 has been paid into the account, and only \$69,000 has been spent, leaving a credit balance in excess of \$50,000. The Minister cannot justify this. I hope that the Minister will stand up and give us some reason why this has been done, and that he will not be like other Ministers when criticism is levelled at them. This is a confidence trick on those unfortunate people who complain to us, even though they might not complain to the Minister for Housing or his department. In some cases, they are scared to complain.

I have a woman in mind whose rent will be increased from \$6.60 to \$9. The Minister salves his conscience by putting the rent up in stages. The woman I have mentioned has been told that the first rise will be on the 4th July, when the rent will be \$7.60. The next rise will be to \$8.60; and eventually the rent will go to \$9.

The State Housing Commission is making a considerable profit at the moment after providing for the costs of administration; repayments of capital costs; interest charges; rates and taxes; insurance; gardening; cleaning; lighting of public areas; vacancies; defaults; and everything else. The Minister would be better engaged in bringing some pressure to bear on the Treasurer to get more funds to build houses.

I read in *The West Australian* this morning the number of houses completed in Western Australia over the last two months for which the figures are available, and if members care to multiply those figures by six, they will find that the total should be 2,100 houses a year, approximately. That represents 50 per cent.—or one-half—of the number built in 1955. No wonder we see, from the annual report of the State Housing Commission, that the applications received and on hand have increased by more than 2,600 in the last 12 months. As I have indicated previously, I now have more persons on my waiting list in my office than I have had at any other time in the 23 years I have been in this Parliament.

The position is critical and yet the Government is apparently satisfied with limiting the number of houses it is building. The money is being comparatively wasted in other quarters. Surely housing the people is basic in the activities of a Government. I find that during the period of the Hawke Labor Government the average number of houses built by the Housing Commission was 2,850 a year. During the period of this Government, the average has been 1,980. In other words, 870 fewer per annum for each year this Government has been in office. If we multiply that figure by the period the Government has been in office, it has built 6,100 fewer than would have been the case had it maintained the same rate as was achieved by the Labor Government. Of course, if those extra 6,100 homes were in existence then the housing crisis certainly would not be what it is now.

The Government has definitely fallen down on the job in the matter of constructing houses. The Minister, and Government members, can click their tongues and say what a terrible thing it is, and adopt attitudes along those lines, but many people are living in the poorest accommodation and paying extortionate rents. Many of them have been waiting for a couple of years, and the period extends all the time. For every two months that elapse, only one month's progress is made in the allocation of houses to those on the waiting list. Yet the Government apparently cares nought about it.

The other evening I had a few words with the Minister for Works on the matter of the acquisition of land. Land, of course, is essential for the building of houses. It might appear that there is a boom in the electorate of Balcatta, or more precisely, in the new district of Balga, because a large number of houses is being built there. However, this illusion is brought about because nearly all the houses being built in the north-west quadrant are being built in the most popular residential area.

Mr. Fletcher: It could be popular because of the local member.

Mr. GRAHAM: That could be a contributing factor and I thank the member for Fremantle for his interjection. Instead of being spread over a number of suburbs, the houses are being built in that one locality; and, understandably, there is a longer waiting period in Balga than in an area represented by the member for Fremantle—an area such as Coolbellup.

I was interested in this land matter because I used a reckless term, I suppose, when I said that this Government had, for housing and other purposes, resumed more than 1,000 per cent. more land than was resumed during the period of the Hawke Labor Government.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Yes; but I said over 90 per cent. was resumed by negotiation, and you said that was untrue.

Mr. GRAHAM: Precisely. If I am allowed to, I will proceed from point one to point two. The Minister may deal with the area established in a moment.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I have never denied the area of land.

Mr. GRAHAM: We had better check *Hansard* with regard to that.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: My whole point was that 90 per cent. of resumption was done by negotiation.

Mr. GRAHAM: Which I am still denying.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: And I am denying your denial. I have had the figures checked.

Mr. GRAHAM: This could go on indefinitely; I thought the objective of the Government was to complete the session this evening.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are telling untruths.

Mr. GRAHAM: I think the Minister is getting a little extravagant in his statements.

Mr. Court: You said he was untruthful.

Mr. GRAHAM: I hear some hysterical laughter from the back benches on the Government side. Those members do not know the first thing about the matter, and all I can do is to quote the figures given to me by Ministers of this Government. If my statement that there has been an increase in excess of 1,000 per cent. is wrong, then it is based on lies given to me by the Minister the members from the back benches support.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I have never queried the amount resumed.

Mr. GRAHAM: But I am querying the amount, and I am making the speech under all sorts of difficulties. If I can mention this—and it will only take a couple of minutes to express myself—during the six years of the Hawke Labor Government, there was a total of 19,608 acres resumed. Members can see that this is slightly in excess of 3,000 acres a year. What is the story of the Brand Government? Unfortunately I have only the figures for its first 4½ years of office, and I find that it resumed 165,864 acres; that is, land compulsorily acquired from the owners, and land that was resumed by this Government. The average, as members will see, is in excess of 30,000 acres a year.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It was resumed to provide services.

Mr. GRAHAM: It was acquired for services! What did the Hawke Labor Government resume land for if it was not for services of one sort or another—housing amongst them?

If I were the owner of land and the Government compulsorily acquired it whether for metropolitan region highways or for anything else, the fact remains that my

land would have been compulsorily taken from me and I would have had no alternative in the matter. I say that this Government has resumed in excess of 10 times the land resumed by the Hawke Labor Government.

Mr. O'Neil: No land has been resumed for housing by this Government.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mitchell): Order! The member for Balcatta.

Mr. GRAHAM: I was wondering who was the Chairman: Whether you, Sir, or the Minister for Housing. I think the Minister would be right in that final statement of his. Members may recall that under the State Housing Act there was power to resume land, which the Hawke Labor Government allowed to lapse. It is because of that fact that the present Government is unable to resume land for housing. Nevertheless, it is resuming land at a rate 10 times greater than the rate at which the Hawke Labor Government resumed land.

I will not, of course, hear that raucous laughter from the back benches now that I have quoted those figures. Previously, it sounded as though a donkey was braying, and I suppose that would be appropriate.

Mr. Hawke: It has become verbally tame now.

Mr. Nalder: The noise came from the back benches of the Opposition.

Mr. GRAHAM: The Deputy Premier appears to be getting rude. I thank the Minister for Housing for his indulgence; he was good enough not to speak out of turn—not until after I had made the point I desired.

The Government is, I should say, defeating the spirit and intention of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement by increasing rents when there is no rhyme or reason for it: by imposing a burden on those who are of moderate means and whom the State Housing Commission was established to assist.

The Government is doing a disservice, too, because it is building at approximately half the rate at which it should be building, and because of that, the private landlords are having a picnic and are able to charge what they like. Let me give an example: As recently as this afternoon a person who will be on the pension next week—he has been working but now he has reached the age of 65—is paying \$14 a week for a house for himself and his wife. This house is in Tuart Hill and, of course, that man finds it impossible to meet his commitments. It is quite an ordinary home in which he is living; but it is possible for the landlord, because of the general shortage of accommodation to-day, to charge that rental.

The shortage of housing would not exist had the Government built the quota that it should have been building over the

years—in other words, had it been building some of the 870 a year below the average output of houses during the term of the Hawke Labor Government. The present Minister, overall, is not doing a bad job; I have found him to be quite sympathetic when exceptional cases are drawn to his notice. However, whether he has failed or whether his advances have fallen on deaf ears, so far as the Treasurer is concerned, I do not know; but the number of houses that were being built 10 years or so ago should have been improved upon because of a larger population, the number of immigrants who are coming into the country, the boom about which the Government prates so much, and the change of zoning and the use of land—in other words, buildings that were used for residential purposes are being converted to offices and business premises.

The Government should get on with the job of building houses and leave the people who are already occupying houses alone. It should not tamper with their rents by adjusting them upwards. It is responsible for looking after those in the community who are in humble circumstances. Therefore I hope and trust the Minister will have a second look at this terrible rental position and, in addition, that he will put his foot on the accelerator to produce far more houses than are being built at the moment.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [8.18 p.m.]: Like other Fremantle members I am harassed by State Housing Commission homeseekers and therefore I believe it is my duty to let the Government know about this matter as well as the question of increased rents, which has been so capably dealt with by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Balcatta.

I have received the usual stereotyped reply from a very efficient but frustrated liaison officer. He is harassed not only by the member for Fremantle but also by every other member in this Chamber and another place. I do not know what salary this officer is paid, but I am sure it is not half enough, because he has a very onerous and difficult and frustrating job. In this regard I wish to refer to certain correspondence dated the 23rd November, 1966. It refers to File No. 5430/65. The letter is addressed to me and it reads as follows:—

I refer to your representations on behalf of Mr. James William . . . c/o 60 Stephen Street, White Gum Valley, regarding his applications for housing assistance.

Following your approach the circumstances of the case were investigated and the resultant report received full consideration, but I regret to state that it is considered the Commission would not be justified in granting approval for the housing of this three unit family on an Emergent basis at present.

Mr. . . 's applications for both rental and purchase accommodation are recorded on the Priority Lists as from the 20th July, 1965, on an "await turn" basis, and you have my assurance that when his turn is reached and the Commission is in a position to make an offer, he will be promptly contacted.

That is the important part of the correspondence. It continues—

On present day indications it would appear that the waiting period could still be considerable, as instanced by the following:—

Let me interpolate here to say I get no satisfaction from reading that sort of letter to the Committee; and no doubt the Minister does not receive any satisfaction from it either.

Mr. O'Neil: You must have asked a question about it.

Mr. FLETCHER: This information was volunteered to me by the very capable liaison officer whom I mentioned. The letter continues—

Applicants who applied (Perth Area) for RENTAL accommodation in January, 1964, are currently being assisted, whilst those persons whose applications for PURCHASE assistance were recorded in October 1964, are at present being requested to call at the Commission with a view to selecting a home.

Let me break off at this point. The letter refers to rental accommodation applied for in January, 1964. Those applications are currently being considered. But now it is November of the year 1966. As regards other housing, it is October, 1964, applications which are now being dealt with.

Mr. Graham: You mean purchase housing?

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes. As a result of that I believe there is an obligation on us to express our dissatisfaction of the Government. I would not like to have the portfolio of the Minister for Housing under this Government. I will be frank enough to say that.

Mr. Graham: I do not think the Government will offer it to you, either.

Mr. FLETCHER: I think when Cabinet was handing out portfolios the Minister for Housing received the booby prize. I cannot think of anything more important than housing the people, but apparently the Government can because the Minister does not get the money he needs for housing, despite all the measures that have been introduced this session by the Government to increase State taxation.

I need to give only one example of poor housing facilities: I instance the case of a young couple with two children. The father is a carpenter and that family is paying £9, or \$18 a week for a house built on a spec-building basis in the

Spearwood-Hamilton Hill area. The family recently occupied this house and had to find \$50 to cover any damages which may be done to the property. Those who occupied comparable accommodation some months previous were paying £8 a week, and prior to that time the rental was £7 a week. It is evident that the speculators who built these houses are exploiting the market to the extent it will stand, and this is hurting some people whom I know personally. They are a fine young couple with children and they are paying an extortionate rent. As a result I feel I have an obligation to let the Government know about these problems.

I know the Premier and other members of the Government are humane men but, apparently, those in the Eastern States who are supposed to make the money available for this State are not doing so. I hope the Premier takes a copy of *Hansard* with him the next time he goes to Canberra so that he can show the Federal people what the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Balcatta, and the member for Fremantle had to say about the housing situation in Western Australia. We should then have a better apportionment of money for such a worth-while purpose as housing.

There was an article in *The West Australian* of the 24th November, 1966, headed, "Teachers Need Houses: Union." The article reads as follows:—

The State government was not providing nearly enough money to build houses for schoolteachers, Teachers' Union secretary R. Darragh said yesterday.

This year's allocation to the Government Employees' Housing Authority was \$200,000, enough to build about 20 houses.

"Schoolteachers need at least 300 houses now, and 78 duplex units for a further 200 single teachers," he said.

I need not read any further; I think I have read sufficient. I now refer to an editorial of the *Daily News*, of the 15th March, 1966. This sort of thing will not appear in the *Daily News* in March, 1968, on the eve of the election. The first three paragraphs of this editorial read—

The State Government is still doing no better than scratching around the housing problem.

It seems more interested in maintaining an unsatisfactory status quo than in taking effective action.

The problems of housing in W.A. are simply explained—building blocks cost too much and young couples find it hard to save a deposit and get additional finance.

I need not read any more because the member for Balcatta has dealt with that aspect. He has his finger right on the pulse of the situation, and this Government is to blame. The Government be-

lieves in freedom for private enterprise; but private enterprise is charging what it likes for land rent and various other commodities which were referred to by the member for Balcatta.

I now quote from *The West Australian* of the 24th May, 1966, under the heading "Slump In Home Building"—

Home building slumped again last month after a brief recovery in March.

The number of new dwellings this financial year is likely to be well below the level of 122,791 last financial year.

With two months to go, only 89,822 approvals have been given.

Mr. O'Neill: They are Australian figures.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is so, but they cover Western Australia, too. To continue—

Figures issued by the Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics show that 8,615 approvals were given last month, compared with 10,354 in March and 9,596 in April last year. The private sector was responsible for the drop.

They are the important words, and the ones I wanted to emphasise to the Government and to the people of Western Australia.

I wanted to protest emphatically about the length of time people in the Fremantle area have to wait before homes are allocated to them, homes to which they are justly entitled. Those applications would be satisfied if we had a more capable Federal Government and a more capable State Government. Applications such as those to which I have referred were satisfied when we had a very capable Minister for Housing in a Labor Government who, unfortunately, lost his portfolio in a change of Government in 1959.

MR. O'NEIL (East Melville—Minister for Housing) [8.27 p.m.]: I feel constrained to reply to the debate and I apologise to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for not introducing my Estimates. The Estimate of Revenue Expenditure for the State Housing Commission is \$10 and it would not have taken me long to describe to the Committee how that figure is disposed of.

Mr. Graham: Especially as you do not spend any of it.

Mr. O'NEIL: That is very true. I realise the annual report of the State Housing Commission was not placed before Parliament until a couple of days ago, but those who were interested, I am sure, would have taken the opportunity to read the salient features of it, and my introduction of the Estimates would have simply been a brief summary of the extensive information contained in the report.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition disappointed me somewhat because I expected him to tackle me on another subject. I was interested in another matter relating to housing and in the comment he made on TV relative to the action of the Government in increasing rents at the request of the State Housing Commission. On that occasion the honourable member said the Government's action was unconscionable because of the cash reserves held by the Housing Commission at the Treasury. This rather interested me because he indicated that at the 30th June of the previous year it had reserves amounting to some £3,000,000-odd.

I have to advise the Committee that the honourable member was wrong; because at that time we had cash reserves at the Treasury amounting to £4,800,000. Unfortunately I did not get the opportunity to explain what these reserves amounted to, but I wish to take that opportunity now and indicate that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is quite often off the beam in respect of the arguments he raises. As at the 30th June, 1965, the Housing Commission had funds held against works under construction, at tender, and in final preparation—including the buildings at Koolyanobbing and for the Laporte project at Bunbury—of £3,115,000.

Funds were held in trust for other Government departments and authorities as prepayments on works at final preparation, on tender, or under construction. These funds amounted to \$984,230. There were funds held by the Government Employees' Housing Authority; and I would interpolate here that up to this point of time there used to be a Government Employees' Housing Committee and the funds for it were found by the Treasury and the State Housing Commission; but with the coming into being of the Government Employees' Housing Authority approximately \$365,240 was on deposit in the commission's account which was transferred to the Government Employees' Housing Authority account in July, 1965.

The balance of the money held at the Treasury was some £90,000 which was used to purchase some electronic accounting equipment; £250,000 for land acquisition in prospect, and land development in progress; £40,000 for commitments in respect of contracts outstanding in regard to maintenance, and an uncommitted amount of £133,680. Therefore, to put forward the argument that the commission had no right to increase rents because it had £3,000,000, £4,000,000, or £5,000,000 at the Treasury is easily discounted when one looks for the reason why these moneys were held.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also referred to the profits made by the State Housing Commission. On page 25 of the Annual Report of the State Housing Commission for 1965-66, under the

heading of "Finance," reference is made to this aspect. I might say the commission does not refer to these amounts as profits, but rather as surpluses derived from operations during 1965-66. Under the subheading of "Surpluses" on page 25 of the report, the following appears:—

Surpluses derived from operations during 1965-66 amounted to \$2,659,239 and represents an increase of \$1,101,435 when compared to the previous financial year.

The surplus for the year on transactions under the State Housing Act increased by \$1,229,287. This increase was mainly attributable to profits on the sale of land which increased by \$1,066,749 and was caused by bringing to account profits which had accrued in two major areas, i.e. Nollamara and Karrinyup, which were finalised during the period under review.

I will interpolate here to indicate that members will realise the operations of the State Housing Commission in these two areas extended over a much longer period than 12 months. It was during this period of time that the profits were transferred to this particular account. I will continue to quote from the report—

There was also an increase of \$332,725 in interest earned owing to the increase in the number of purchasers' accounts.

This is a very significant point, and I think most members should have regard to it. Continuing—

This amount is however not available for immediate use as in almost all cases the property is sold on long terms and is only received over a period of up to 45 years.

So when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition says the commission made some \$2,000,000-odd profit in one year I want members to be assured that it is not a cash profit, but profit in anticipation.

Some reference was made to the fact that under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement, rents are required to be assessed on a formula containing a certain number of components. I want to put members clear on this point. It is true that under the 1945 Commonwealth and State Agreement—or, as we refer to it, the No. 1 agreement—there was a formula laid down for the calculation of the economic rent.

This formula existed because the Commonwealth was prepared to meet part of the losses incurred under the scheme provided the housing authorities in the various States charged rents according to the formula. For example, if the commission incurred a loss in respect of its operations under this agreement by granting rebates to people who could not afford to pay the economic rent, the Commonwealth shared the loss.

I might also say that when this practice was in vogue there were no houses for sale under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement. They were all rental houses. When the Commonwealth decided that the State could sell houses under this agreement it also gave to the various housing authorities in the States—that is, the State housing commissions and housing trusts—the right to determine the rents, but it is still only under the No. 1 agreement with the Commonwealth that the State may recover any losses due to allowing rebates to people who cannot afford to pay an economic rent.

Mr. Graham: That has been the case for the past 10 years.

Mr. O'NEIL: I interjected when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated it was not right or proper to charge rent based on other than this formula, that if his argument were taken to the extreme it would mean that any houses built which cost the State nothing should be given to the people for nothing. If one followed his argument to the extreme this would be the net result and therefore he must accept that his statement is not soundly based. Recognising that the State Housing Commission has to be conducted on a businesslike basis, it is true we should charge for accommodation in accordance with what it is worth; there are no two ways about that.

To me, it is patently unfair that, in regard to two families occupying houses which are in the same street, with both houses containing the same amenities and relatively the same size, and each the same distance from services, one should be paying, say, \$4 a week rental and the other \$8 a week. I am certain that the man paying \$8 a week would express no sympathy for the man whose rent had been increased from \$4 to a more realistic figure. In my opinion people pay rent for the facilities that are provided. If these people want to be on a different basis, they have the opportunity to purchase these dwellings.

It is true, I think, that one of the reasons people purchase houses is so that they can obtain them more cheaply than they can rent them if it is possible for them to raise the deposit. I am sure the State Housing Commission, both under the regime of this Government and that of the previous Government, has given people every opportunity to purchase their homes if they are occupying them on a rental basis.

Mr. J. Hegney: There are many people who do not have the money to put up as a deposit on a home; there are many in my electorate alone.

Mr. O'NEIL: They can still pay their rents, and whatever is paid off the capital cost is credited to them as part of the deposit. Anyone can take steps to transfer his rental home to a purchase home simply by calling at the State Housing Commission and making application. If people desire to

purchase the homes they are renting, the component of the rent which is capital repayment is credited to them as part of the deposit. Anyone who has been a tenant in a commission home for a period of between five and seven years could become the purchaser of a home without making any further capital outlay.

Mr. Fletcher: Sometimes the amount they have paid in rental means very little so far as making a deposit on a purchase home is concerned.

Mr. O'NEIL: I have been occupying a war service home for approximately eight years, and I do not know whether I have paid more than £80 off the capital cost to date. However, whatever amount is paid is credited to them as part payment of the capital cost.

Mr. Graham: It will be on the assessed value of the land at current values, and the assessed value of the house at current values.

Mr. O'NEIL: Within 12 months of occupancy, a tenant is given the opportunity to purchase the house at cost. Beyond that time, of course, the value of the property is reassessed. This has always been the case; it was the case under the previous Government.

Mr. Norton: Is it six months or 12 months?

Mr. O'NEIL: It is 12 months.

Mr. J. Hegney: When the Labor Government was in office it did not have the money to implement such a scheme.

Mr. O'NEIL: Under this Government we have the money which is found for this purpose. We have been told frequently by the member for Fremantle what a wonderful job his colleague the ex-Minister for Housing did in 1956. The ex-Minister also referred to this to-day. There is a graph on page 22 of the commission's report which indicates that it is a fact that in the year 1954-55 the State Housing Commission built slightly over 4,000 houses in a total of 9,000. In 1955-56 this figure had dropped somewhat to 3,600 houses in a total of something over 8,000 houses—probably 8,300.

I want to remind members, however, that these two years were pre-election years, and I would like to point out what happened in 1956-57, when the total number of houses built by the State Housing Commission dropped to half what it was the year before—to 1,750 houses. I also want to point out that if one looks at the figures for 1964-65 one will find that this was the year when the greatest number of houses were built in Western Australia in all years.

Mr. Graham: Not by the commission though.

Mr. O'NEIL: I am quite prepared to agree the number built by the commission was slightly in excess of 2,000; but in the next year, 1965-66, when the total number of houses was slightly in excess of 9,000

the commission's figures were just slightly under 2,500.

Mr. Graham: I would also remind the Minister that of the total houses built in the State, in excess of 1,500 of them were flats and not houses.

Mr. O'NEIL: That is very true; they were units of accommodation.

Mr. Fletcher: There is a difference between a waiting period of three days and one of three weeks.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mitchell): Order! The member for Fremantle has already spoken once.

Mr. O'NEIL: In indicating there has been a downturn in housing the member for Fremantle did finally get to the paragraph which said that the private sector was most to blame. There is, however, a table at page 14 which indicates the percentage of houses undertaken by the State Housing Commission, as distinct from that undertaken by the private sector. I think members will see that the total number of houses built by the State Housing Commission under all the various schemes amounted to 27.9 per cent., or nearly 28 per cent., as against the private sector's 72.1 per cent.

In the commission's report it does say that the commission erects 25 per cent. of the houses in Western Australia as against the national figure of 18 per cent. So it will be seen that the Government is more than playing its part in the provision of housing. My aim is principally to do all I can to encourage the private sector to take upon itself a greater part of this responsibility.

Mr. Graham: If it does not you should take up the slack.

Mr. O'NEIL: We appreciate this; and the honourable member can rest assured I am well aware of the situation that exists in so far as housing is concerned—I am well aware of the problem—and whatever I can do will certainly be done. In this regard, and I have already mentioned this before, the Government has taken a realistic view in that there has been an additional allocation of funds to the State Housing Commission for its operations.

In my view it is, however, unfortunate that at the moment, because of increased costs of construction, perhaps this additional amount of money will not produce as many houses as I would like. We are aware of these problems. I felt it was necessary that I should raise these points, and I would ask members to read the report of the State Housing Commission, because it is factual and shows the problem, and endeavours to outline the methods used to overcome that problem.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Labour, \$95,000; Industrial Commission, \$150,400; Scaffolding, \$57,700; Factories, \$93,400; Weights and Measures, \$54,200; State Insurance Office, \$10—put and passed.

Vote: Medical, \$17,990,650—

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [8.47 p.m.]: I desire to make a few remarks in connection with the Health Department. Recently Parliament decided to approve legislation for the fluoridation of water supplies. During the debate it was said quite clearly that the efficacy of this had been established in the United States; that many communities in the United States had been using fluoridated water all their life, and so on.

Then we were led to believe that if expectant mothers took fluoride tablets prior to the birth of their children it would have a beneficial effect upon the teeth of the children. I asked some questions to establish this position, and these questions and answers can be found on page 2436 of the current *Hansard*. I asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health—

Does the Public Health Department in Western Australia recognise that the taking of fluoride by expectant mothers will impart stronger teeth or prevent decay in their offspring?

The Minister replied, "Yes." The next question I asked was—

Is the department taking any part in the promotion of the taking of prenatal prescription drugs containing fluoride for prevention of tooth decay in children?

To which the Minister replied—

The department recommends the taking of fluoride tablets.

The next question I asked was—

Has he knowledge of any institutions (Government or non-Government), where expectant mothers are encouraged to take prenatal prescription drugs containing fluoride?

And the Minister replied—

Fluoride tablets recommended to expectant mothers by infant health clinics, King Edward Memorial Hospital clinics, private medical practitioners.

Members may not know it, but we have advice that in the United States these prescribed drugs for expectant mothers have been banned by the Food and Drug Administration, and the manufacturers have been prohibited from selling them. They are to be withdrawn from sale; if not, they will be confiscated.

I have here a cutting from *The New York Times* of the 20th October, 1966, which states—

Fluorides Banned for Prenatal Use

Washington, Oct., 19 (AP)—The Government banned from the market today certain prenatal prescription drugs containing fluoride that have been promoted for prevention of tooth decay in children when taken by expectant mothers.

Dr. James L. Goddard, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, said there was insufficient evidence to support claims that the vitamin-mineral preparations containing fluoride prevented tooth decay in children when the drugs were taken by expectant mothers.

"We have consulted a number of leading dental authorities and their opinions are in accord with ours," Dr. Goddard said.

Under usual dosages, Dr. Goddard said, these prenatal preparations present no safety problem.

A policy statement to be published in the Federal Register tomorrow says the prenatal fluoride preparations are misbranded and subject to regulatory proceedings if offered for prenatal tooth strengthening and decay prevention.

Drugs for which such claims are made may be sold only when evidence of their effectiveness is shown in an approved new drug application.

For years in various places Government departments have been advocating the use of these prescription prenatal drugs, and have been advising expectant mothers that these drugs are effective in improving the teeth of their offspring.

This Government has admitted it recommends the taking of these drugs by expectant mothers, and there is evidence to show that in a number of institutions suggestions are made to the mothers that they should take these prescription drugs containing fluoride because, by taking them they will be strengthening the teeth of their offspring.

Now we find that the Food and Drug Administration of America, which has been behind the promotion of the fluoridation of water supplies for many years, has discovered that these prenatal drugs are of no value whatever in strengthening the teeth of the offspring of those who take them. So apparently all that promotion has been wrongly based. It makes one wonder whether there are the same fallacies with regard to other promotions. This is most important, because we find Government departments encouraging people to take these drugs, but now the authorities in America say they are useless for the purpose for which they are sold.

Mr. Grayden: Did they say that, or did they not say the effectiveness of those drugs has not been proven?

Mr. TONKIN: What is the reason for their being withdrawn from the market compulsorily? If the manufacturers and retailers do not take those drugs off the market they will be confiscated. I asked the Minister some questions whether there were any instances in Western Australia

where drugs had been compulsorily taken off the market because they were not effective, and his answer was "No."

I asked whether he was aware of any case in Australia where drugs had been compulsorily removed from the market because they would not do what was claimed: his answer was also "No." I further asked whether he knew of any case in the world where drugs have been compulsorily withdrawn from the market on the ground that they were not effective for the purposes for which they were sold; and again his answer was "No."

I think his answers were correct, but is it not extraordinary with regard to these drugs the American Government should take action to withdraw them from sale because they are not effective, when the same thing has not been done with any other drug anywhere in the world? That suggests there is more behind it than the claim that they are not effective.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are taking one of your long shots when you say no other drugs have been taken off the market.

Mr. TONKIN: That was in the Minister's reply.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I am not at all sure that all the negative replies mentioned were, in fact, given.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us look at what the Minister did say in reply.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I will do so later.

Mr. TONKIN: It is best that we establish the point, because his answers are recorded in the current *Hansard*. These questions were asked deliberately in order to establish the position, because I had the information in my possession when I asked them. I did not want to be told subsequently that these drugs were taken off the market because the department felt there was not sufficient evidence to establish they were useful for the purpose for which they were sold. That might be the answer, but personally I do not think it is.

It is very significant that so far as we can ascertain, and so far as the Minister knew, there has been no instance in Western Australia, in Australia, or in any other part of the world, where any drug has been taken off the market because it would not do what was claimed. I know quite a number of drugs have been taken off the market because they were unsafe and dangerous; but I was not aware of any, and neither was the Minister, which had been compulsorily withdrawn from sale because they were not effective for the purposes for which they had been advertised. On reflection, does the Minister believe such action is likely? One can go into the chemists' shops and see all sorts of preparations displayed—some to cure colds, and others to cure wooden legs! These preparations are not withdrawn from the market, and if people want to buy them they can do so.

Mr. O'Connor: Was legislation not introduced in America in respect of the advertising of these preparations?

Mr. TONKIN: There might be. I think the Food and Drug Administration of America has the power to withdraw drugs from sale. I am wondering whether there is any connection between the action by the American Government and the fact that Ionel Rapaport issued a report on the prevalence of mongolism in fluoridated areas.

When he was taken to task on his first report for having used the wrong figures, and for not taking notice of certain controls, he subsequently sought official advice with regard to these special controls which he should exercise, and obtained from Government sources the figures which he proposed to use.

When the second report came out, the same conclusion was reached as was reached in the first report; it indicated the presence of mongolism in areas where the water was fluoridated. I do not know whether at long last the people in authority in the U.S.A. are appreciating there might be dangers in the use of fluoride, because it is very significant that this action should now be taken to remove the prescription prenatal drugs I referred to from the market, when so far as we are aware no such action has been taken in the world in respect of any other drug.

The important part about this is that we still have institutions here recommending to expectant mothers that they should take these tablets, when apparently the Food and Drug Administration in the United States has come to the conclusion they are worthless.

Mr. Grayden: If they had a greater concentration of fluoride they might say they are effective.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Would you read the newspaper extract?

Mr. TONKIN: The heading is "Fluorides Banned for Prenatal Use."

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What is the paper again?

Mr. TONKIN: *The New York Times*. It was also published in *The Boston Herald* and put over the radio in the various States in the United States, and in Canada. This is a cutting from *The New York Times* of the 20th October. I have asked the United States Consul to give me any literature he can obtain from the United States on this question, and when I phoned him this afternoon he said he had not yet received any information. Immediately this information came into my possession several weeks ago, I telephoned the consul to get confirmation of it and I have no doubt that it is completely authentic. It reads as follows:—

The Government banned from the market today certain prenatal prescription drugs containing fluoride

that have been promoted for prevention of tooth decay in children when taken by expectant mothers.

Dr. James L. Goddard, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, said there was insufficient evidence to support claims that the vitamin-mineral preparations containing fluoride prevented tooth decay in children when the drugs were taken by expectant mothers.

"We have consulted a number of leading dental authorities and their opinions are in accord with ours," Dr. Goddard said.

Under usual dosages, Dr. Goddard said, these prenatal preparations present no safety problem.

A policy statement to be published in The Federal Register tomorrow says the prenatal fluoride preparations are misbranded and subject to regulatory proceedings if offered for prenatal tooth strengthening and decay prevention.

Drugs for which claims are made may be sold only when evidence of their effectiveness is shown in an approved new drug application.

Apparently it is not possible for these people to produce evidence of the effectiveness of these drugs for the purpose for which they are being sold.

Mr. Dunn: It does not say all, just certain drugs.

Mr. TONKIN: By the way this reads, it is my view that it is any drug now on the market containing fluoride.

Mr. Grayden: And vitamins.

Mr. TONKIN: Never mind vitamins; so long as it contains fluoride, irrespective of what else it contains, it is being sold on the assurance that it will be effective in strengthening the teeth of the offspring of the expectant mothers who take it. The Food and Drug Administration has taken the view that there is no proof that such drugs will be effective and, in fact, they are being sold under false pretences and have been compulsorily ordered off the market. One cannot come to any other conclusion.

One can see one hundred and one things being sold in chemists' shops which we know quite well will not do what is claimed for them. But they are being sold; and if people are foolish enough to pay for them, they will continue to be sold. So why take this off the market if that is the only thing wrong with it—that it will not do what is claimed for it? That may be the only reason, but it suggests to me there is more in this than meets the eye.

We were told that fluoridation of water is the most effective method of dealing with tooth decay, so I thought New Zealand, as it has had fluoridation of water supplies for a long time, and over extensive areas, would be a place where the results

ought to be showing up. The best way to find that out was to get a copy of the latest report of the Health Department of New Zealand, which I did. I quote from page 31 to start with, as follows:—

The Department continues to provide dental health services to children between the ages of two and a half to 16 years and to the patients of hospitals administered by the Division of Mental Health.

School dental nurses have provided in the year systematic treatment for 488,411 pre-school and primary school children. A further 174,244 children have received regular treatment until 16 years of age from private dentists under the Social Security (Dental Benefits) Scheme and from two salaried dental officers.

The following is on page 32:—

School Dental Service

As shown by the statistics relating to the work of the School Dental Nurse Service, in the year under review there has been an increase in the number of treatment centres and in the number of children enrolled at school dental clinics. The number of school dental nurses has shown an appreciable increase. This is the result of the expanded training programme commenced in 1963 and of the re-employment of more married nurses.

There are some figures here concerning the treatment of pre-school children. I would emphasise that all of these children should be benefiting from fluoridation, because they are pre-school children.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Why are you saying that?

Mr. TONKIN: Because the figures support it.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: These are treatments. Explain what you mean.

Mr. TONKIN: One does not go for treatment unless there is something wrong with one's teeth.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Are these for fluoridated water areas?

Mr. TONKIN: About 80 per cent. of the areas in New Zealand have been fluoridated.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You cannot tell me whether this is from an area where the water is fluoridated.

Mr. TONKIN: This is for the whole of New Zealand.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The whole of New Zealand is not fluoridated.

Mr. TONKIN: Eighty per cent. is.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Where does it say that there?

Mr. TONKIN: In the report.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That could possibly be for the 20 per cent. area.

Mr. TONKIN: So they are not treating the other 80 per cent. at all! Let me proceed.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: So long as we know whether they are in fluoridated areas or not.

Mr. TONKIN: I quote in regard to the treatment of pre-school children in New Zealand, where 80 per cent. of the total area is fluoridated—

The number of pre-school children presenting for treatment continues to follow an upward trend.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is right.

Mr. TONKIN: I thought fluoridation was effective.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: It is up to 60 per cent. It reduces dental decay up to about 60 per cent.

Mr. TONKIN: How does the Minister account for an upward trend?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Because there is so much work to be done.

Mr. Graham: Dental work!

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I think you are leading the Committee astray.

Mr. TONKIN: I desire to proceed—

The number receiving treatment in School Dental Service over the past 17 years is shown in the table below—

Year	Number of Pre-school Children Treated	Approximate Percentage of Total Pre-school Population 2½ to 5 Years of Age
1950	22,514	19
1955	44,076	35
1960	63,012	44
1965	82,600	53
1966	87,499	63

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: They have introduced all new dental services.

Mr. TONKIN: Could we not expect that the effect of fluoridation would be that there would be no children to treat?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: We are introducing increased dental services, despite the fact that we are going to introduce fluoridation.

Mr. TONKIN: What has that to do with the effectiveness of fluoridation?

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Because there is always a certain amount of dental decay to treat. It is not 100 per cent. perfect.

Mr. TONKIN: We are told that fluoridation will decrease dental decay by 50 per cent.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is right.

Mr. TONKIN: Surely, therefore, one would expect a falling-off in the number of children requiring treatment.

Mr. Williams: When was fluoridation introduced into New Zealand?

Mr. TONKIN: Fifteen years ago.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Not all over New Zealand.

Mr. I. W. Manning: In how many towns?

Mr. TONKIN: I am making headway because members who previously showed no interest in this subject are becoming

a little inquisitive. I suggest they get hold of this report and read it for themselves because I would emphasise that despite fluoridation in New Zealand, which is held up as being one of the countries in the world which has the finest dental health services, apart from fluoridation, dental treatment is increasing. The following is on page 33:—

Dental Health Education

Educating children and parents in the principles of dental health continues as an important activity. In addition to chairside instruction to every child patient, 16,596 lectures and addresses to adults and 236 health exhibitions and health stalls were arranged. A major effort was undertaken at the Waikato Winter Show where a most striking display was exhibited. The material will be reused as a permanent exhibit for other districts.

The four dental tutor sisters for health education are making a valuable contribution through their personal contacts with field school dental nurses. Assistance is also rendered through the columns of the *School Dental Service Gazette* produced bi-monthly.

Could we not expect that with this widespread fluoridation and parent education there would be some appreciable diminution in the number of children requiring dental attention? However, instead of that we are told the number of pre-school children presenting themselves for treatment continues to follow an upward trend. There does not appear to be much evidence here of the effectiveness of fluoridation. It ought to be most marked if the claims made for it are anywhere near the truth.

Mr. Williams: Have you the section of the report which states that 80 per cent. or thereabouts of the New Zealand water supplies are fluoridated?

Mr. TONKIN: Yes. On page 13 is the following:—

Fluoridation

During the year the point was reached where over half the population on public water supplies were receiving fluoridated water. Local authorities are operating their fluoridation plants well and tests show that they are maintaining the rate of application within the limits set by the Department.

Eleven town supply schemes are supplying fluoridated water to 923,490 people and 16 more local authorities serving an additional 136,420 people have resolved to fluoridate.

I understand that that represents 80 per cent. of the area of New Zealand.

Mr. Williams: That represents only a little over half of the population.

Mr. TONKIN: But 80 per cent. of New Zealand is fluoridated.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: But it is only half the people.

Mr. Brand: People are not acres.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister wants to make a point of that, I am prepared to forget it—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: I should think so.

Mr. TONKIN: —and come down to 30 per cent. I will not claim 50 per cent. If only 30 per cent. of the population has been drinking fluoridated water—and we must remember that some of them have been drinking it for 15 years; Hastings has been fluoridated for 15 years—

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Very small areas. There is a great deal of work to be done in dentistry to tackle jobs which it has not been possible to tackle before because of a shortage of dentists.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister cannot get out of it that way.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You are the one who had to come down.

Mr. TONKIN: Surely there should be some indication of a reduction in the actual costs and a reduction in the amount of work to be done if fluoridation was at all effective.

Mr. Williams: It does not give any indication in that report when those other 11 towns and 16 local authority areas were fluoridated?

Mr. Brand: No.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us have a look at this. It would be obvious, I think, that the more fillings that are done the fewer extractions would be required. That seems to me to be a logical conclusion. If more attention is paid to dental caries, and so more teeth are filled in time, then fewer extractions would be required. We know from our own experience that if we have a hollow tooth and neglect it, it gets beyond the stage where it can be filled, and it has to be extracted. But if it can be filled in time it can be preserved.

As a matter of fact I have several teeth in my mouth which have been filled, and some for more than 40 years; but I have not lost any. I have not been taking fluoride either. However, had I neglected to make regular visits to the dentist, then it is almost a certainty that some of those teeth would have been beyond filling and would have had to be extracted. That is the point I want to make in connection with this matter. The following is to be found on page 32 of the report:—

Year	Fillings	Extractions	Ratio of Extractions per 100 Fillings
1925	50,322	43,181	72.6
1935	399,560	70,207	17.5
1945	1,017,290	76,335	7.6
1955	1,440,245	83,247	5.8
1965	2,324,017	81,030	3.4
1966	2,443,727	80,320	3.3

It looks as though a figure has been reached beyond which the ratio of the number of extractions compared with fillings cannot fall. But this does not suggest any appreciable improvement in the condition in the teeth of children. When all this treatment for fillings and extractions is required, it suggests that the costs of services is rising, instead of falling.

Let us have a look at the employment of personnel. The report supplies the following information:—

	1966	1965
Number of school dental nurses	1,118	(1,045)
Number of treatment centres (including sub-bases)	1,176	(1,116)
Number of schools	2,520	(2,502)
Number of children	488,411	(450,040)
Operative dental treatment—		
Total number of fillings	2,443,727	(2,324,017)
Number of carious permanent teeth extracted	558	(617)
Number of carious deciduous teeth extracted	72,827	(74,209)
Total number of carious teeth extracted	73,385	(74,826)
Total number of operations	3,863,071	(3,603,888)

All the indications are that the demand on the services for attention to the teeth of children is increasing and not diminishing. Surely with some towns in New Zealand having been fluoridated for years—and now more than half the population receiving fluoridated water—there should be some indication in the latest health report about the effectiveness of fluoridation. However, there is not a line. There is not a line in this report to suggest that there is any beneficial effect at all from the widespread fluoridation which has taken place in that country. However, there is emphasis upon the extensive dental health programme, consisting of lectures to the parents and children and demonstrations of what is required in order to improve the dental health of the community.

I would have thought that if this was such an effective prophylactic method of dealing with dental caries, there would be some reference in the New Zealand Health Department's report to the improvement obtained from this source. But I emphasise again, there is not a single line or a word with regard to this aspect, and what emphasis there is is placed on dental health generally.

The local department here proposes to extend its services, and I applaud that move. It is very necessary to educate the parents and children with a view to improving the condition of their teeth. But to advocate a proposal, at tremendous expense to the community, that the Government should fluoridate compulsorily all the public water supplies, is in my view not supported by the experience in those countries where it is already being done quite extensively.

I have mentioned the New Zealand experience, and I particularly mention what is now being done in the United States to debunk the idea that prescribed drugs taken by expectant mothers will improve the teeth of the offspring. Apparently the drugs will do nothing of the sort

in the view of the American Government, and so it has taken action to prevent the sale of those useless tablets.

I suggest the Government here should show some common sense and immediately ascertain from the United States Government why this action has been taken and then stop people from wasting their money on something which will do the children no good at all.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [9.27 p.m.]: The argument relating to fluoride seems to have been covered pretty well by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I have some criticism to level against the Government in regard to hospital charges. The announcement by the Premier regarding the recent increases in rates and fares—railways and other transport—and particularly hospital charges quite staggered the majority of the community at the time.

The arguments regarding fluoride seemed to overpower the announcement, particularly within this Chamber. The time has arrived, particularly because of the many complaints I have recently received, when I must raise my voice in protest against the impost which has been put on the sick people of our State by the Government. The increased charge was not just 5 per cent., 10 per cent., or 15 per cent.—which, in themselves, would have been large increases—it was a 50 per cent. increase by the Government for treatment in all public hospitals throughout the State.

At the time, the Premier indicated this was necessary because of the difficult position of the finances of the State. Of course, we have already had something to say about the finances and the handling of them by the Government. However, I do not think the financial position is sufficient excuse for such a steep impost.

The Premier seemed to think this would not put a great hardship on the community because the people who would possibly need hospitalisation or medical treatment in the near future could adequately insure themselves to cover the increased charges. The Government required some extra income, so the people can pay more money to insure themselves and then somebody else will pay for the hospital charges.

Just recently, yesterday or today—one forgets which day it is with the suspension of sittings and the holding of two sittings on one day—I noticed in a paper that a hospital benefit fund was warning people that they should increase their hospital cover so that if they were unfortunate enough to go to hospital before a qualifying period expired, they would be automatically covered for the new rates.

Regarding the new rates, the charge for a bed in a public ward—and no doubt there would be a dozen beds or more in such a ward—is \$10 per day. The charge for an intermediate ward is \$13.50; and for

a private patient in a general ward the charge is \$15 per day. In private wings, the rates are \$17 and \$18 per day.

In order to obtain coverage in a private wing, the family man, who is a new contributor to the Hospital Benefit Fund, would have to pay 16s. 6d. per week. That is just astounding. Not only were the hospital charges raised by 50 per cent., but in order to obtain the necessary coverage under the hospital benefit scheme, the amount of contribution has been raised by 50 per cent. As I say, it is astounding to think a family man is required to pay 16s. 6d. a week in order to obtain coverage in a private room at the Royal Perth Hospital. Even to obtain coverage in the private patients' general ward, where the charge is \$15 per day, the family man is required to pay 15s. 6d. per week. This is as much as some people were paying out in rent per week for a house before the war.

However, the Premier says, "We are putting the fees up because the Government is in financial difficulties. Of course, you must insure yourself so that your hospitalisation will be covered in case you become sick." The Government has completely ignored the effect of this impost on the family man, and the fact that the quarterly adjustments to the basic wage have been stopped is of little concern to the Government. I understand that one of the dearest hospitals in the metropolitan area is the South Perth Community Centre Hospital. Yet the rate which is charged there for a bed in a four-bed ward is only \$10.25 per day, and for a private room the charge is \$12.25 per person per day. This is cheaper than the intermediate ward at the Royal Perth Hospital. I believe the dearest ward at the St. John of God Hospital at Subiaco is \$15 per day. Without giving any consideration to the effect of these charges on the public, the Government has merely raised all charges for hospitalisation at Government hospitals by the huge amount of 50 per cent. This is quite disgusting.

I notice the Government announced the charges, but it was up to the board of the Royal Perth Hospital to consider whether they would be applied. Naturally, the board applied them, because it had the nod from the Government and it knew that if these charges were not imposed, the hospital would be in serious financial difficulties. The same thing happened to the Fremantle Hospital and, doubtless, it happened to other hospitals throughout the State.

We are in a peculiar position with regard to the running of some of our hospitals in this State. As I understand it, with particular reference to those hospitals in the north, the Grants Commission always makes an allowance for the difficulty from which we suffer with regard to the maintenance not only of the hospitals but, in

addition, the flying doctor service in the outback. Therefore, I must raise a very strong protest at the Government's action.

The charge for hospitalisation is not the only charge which has been raised. Earlier in the year, the Government raised the charges for outpatients—not by 50 per cent. but by the nice round figure of 100 per cent. The amount was increased from \$1 to \$2 per attendance. I would mention that the casual fee was increased from \$1 to \$3, which represents a 200 per cent. increase. These are the little increased charges which the Government is putting on all the time without having the slightest regard for their effect upon the community.

Mr. Fletcher: Or any increase in the basic wage!

Mr. DAVIES: Of course, these charges are not taken into account when the basic wage is considered. As I said before, the basic wage quarterly adjustments are now a thing of the past. I have quoted the amount of 16s. 6d. per week which a family man must contribute to the Hospital Benefit Fund in order to cover himself for hospitalisation and to obtain full medical coverage. Of course, this coverage does not include expenses incurred for optical or dental treatment.

The amount of 16s. 6d. a week is more than some people are paying in Britain for a complete national health coverage. I would refer members to *The Official Handbook on Great Britain* which has been supplied to every member of the Chamber. On page 134 of this handbook, a table is shown which deals with the weekly national insurance and national health service contributions. Members will see that the contributions which must be paid range from 13s. 9d. to 21s. 4d. per week. Apparently the amount which is paid depends on the contributor's wage, but the maximum which can be paid by any man—irrespective of his earnings—is 21s. 4d. a week. It must be appreciated that this amount covers complete national insurance and affords complete health coverage.

I understand the people in Britain pay a flat rate of 30s. for any optical consultation and also, to my knowledge, the dispensing fee for prescriptions is 1s., whereas in Australia a dispensing fee of 5s. is paid. In England, dental treatment for all children up to the age of 16 years—and, indeed, for full-time students after that age—is free. Unfortunately I am not able to say just what the cost for dental treatment is to the individual. I do not know whether it is included under the national insurance scheme or not. However, the fact remains that, to go into a public hospital in Western Australia, the individual has to insure himself at the amount of 16s. 6d. a week for a private ward, whereas in Britain the maximum amount which can be paid is 21s. 4d. I stress that this is the maximum amount which can be paid as a weekly contribution and it is the amount for which the individual receives complete

national insurance and the full facilities of the national health service.

I just ask: Where are we going with these hospitalisation charges? I also ask: Is it not time we had a look at the administration of hospitals generally if the public hospitals are forced to charge the same amount for intermediate wards as private hospitals are charging for private accommodation? If the charge for an intermediate ward at the Royal Perth Hospital is equal to the amount paid for the best private accommodation which is available at the St. John of God Hospital at Subiaco, and is more than the daily cost of private accommodation at South Perth Community Hospital, I consider it is high time an investigation into the administration of the Public Health Department was carried out.

We in this Parliament have seen a lot of kite-flying on the part of the Government and we have passed some fairly wide legislation with regard to medical centres and the future of medicine in this State. However, I consider it is time a general stocktaking took place, because if charges continue to rise, as they have risen, we will be in a very serious position. The way things are going, not only will people be unable to insure themselves but probably they will be unable to obtain accommodation at hospitals.

Incidentally, I was looking for some information on the Public Health Department earlier in the session and I found that the annual report for 1965 had not then been tabled. The annual report for the year ended June 1965 was tabled only a couple of weeks ago. If I wish to seek any up-to-date information on the position in 1966, I suppose I shall have to wait until this time next year.

If this is an indication of how the department is being run, I think the Minister should stop chasing the illegal crayfishermen and have a look at the administration of his other department, because it is going from bad to worse.

The position in regard to frail aged persons is quite laughable. Earlier this year, I remember reading in the stop press of the *Daily News* a comment that the Government was going to subsidise what it termed, "Frail aged people" by \$1 a day. That was back in April, if I remember correctly. When the session started I asked what the Government anticipated doing in that regard. I found out that the dollar-a-day subsidy was going to be paid to institutions in respect of patients approved by the geriatric service of the department and, in addition, to non-profit-making institutions providing accommodation facilities approved by the department. Of course, we cannot cavil at that information, because it represents a reasonable classification of persons who may be helped. However, I would mention that this information was given to me on the 22nd September.

Two months later I thought I would make some investigation in regard to who was receiving this subsidy of \$1 a day. On the 23rd November I asked in this Chamber which institutions or hospitals were eligible to receive this benefit and I was told that the institutions to receive the benefit were still under consideration. I would emphasise that the words used were, "to receive the benefit." At that time they were not, in fact, receiving it. I then asked what requirements had to be met before approval was granted and I was told that what was requested included structural design and the provision of suitable care; and it was also requested that the institution should be run by a non-profit making organisation. That is nothing new, because I had already been told that in reply to a question I had asked earlier.

I then asked how many people were receiving the subsidy each week and of course the answer I received was, "At present, nil." I then asked what would be the estimated cost of paying the subsidy during the current financial year. In an earlier newspaper report it was stated that \$40,000 was to be set aside for this excellent purpose, but in reply to my question I was told that the estimated cost for the current financial year would be between \$20,000 and \$30,000—a reduction of nearly 30 per cent. That was the substance of the answers to my questions about this fanfare to help the frail aged which I had applauded. I now find that nothing has been done for the frail aged. The matter is still under consideration, and the people to be assisted are non-profit organisations.

I do not know in which category non-profit organisations are to be placed. I do not know whether non-profit organisations will include church homes, certain "C"-class hospitals, or even the Government institutions. Possibly this will finish up as a case of the Government subsidising the Government, and I wonder how that will be explained to the Grants Commission. I suppose those in authority will use double-talk to talk their way out of it just as the Premier used double-talk when he introduced the Budget and told us it was unfortunate the Government had to impose increased charges when the State was enjoying such wonderful prosperity.

I wonder what is being done for the frail aged, because when the Labor Government was in power—unfortunately too long ago now—it established the very fine Mt. Henry Home for aged women. This home was accepted as one of the finest in Australia for the indigent aged, and it set a standard throughout the Commonwealth. It was one of which all Western Australians were particularly proud, and one which anyone would have expected to be extended. At one time the administra-

tion had plans to extend it but, of course, this Government had different plans.

It appears that, from the answers to the questions I asked on the 22nd September, the status of the Mt. Henry Home has changed from a benevolent home to a public hospital as from July, 1966, and I understand the people who are placed in the home will be subject to charges which amount to a minimum of \$25 a week. That includes the Commonwealth subsidy of \$2 a day and \$1.60 a day from the pensioner. This changes the whole concept of the Mt. Henry Home and it now becomes just an ordinary hospital.

Such a move is a great disappointment to me because there was a place for the Mt. Henry Home in the metropolitan area. One would have hoped that it would be a type of institution—I call it that for want of a better word—that could be extended. When one sees the appalling standard of "C"-class hospitals to which the aged are sent these days it almost breaks one's heart to realise that apparently no-one cares very much what happens to them. The aged people in these homes follow the same set routine every day. They get up out of bed to eat their meal; they lie down and then get up to eat their next meal; they lie down again and rise to eat their evening meal and then finally they go to bed in the evening. They follow this routine day after day. Further, some of the conditions in these hospitals leave much to be desired. I will say that Dr. Lefroy of the geriatric section of the Public Health Department is keeping a close watch on these "C"-class hospitals.

However, the sad feature is that at present the frail aged are generally sent to these "C"-class hospitals to die. The Home of Peace is able to accept and accommodate incurable persons of any age. It performs excellent work, but no Government institution now exists which can render assistance to an aged person of limited means, or give such a person assistance free of charge. I understand the aged people in the Sunset Home are in a similar position to those in the Mt. Henry Home—that is, charges are now made—and, in consequence, the Sunset Home has been changed from a home occupied solely by aged men to one which accommodates both men and women. No doubt this is more suitable to the persons concerned and I would not argue about the wisdom of that move. However, I understand that increased charges have been made at this home.

I believe every Government has a responsibility to look after the aged, and to do something more than this Government is doing for them. I thought it was only right that someone should take the Government to task for what is taking place in view of the fanfare about what is being done for the frail aged in this State.

Having made my complaint about hospital charges, which are appalling and may

have the effect of making people shop around before they finally decide on which hospital they can afford to select as the one in which they will be hospitalised, I realise this will possibly ease the burden on the Royal Perth Hospital, because, goodness knows, it is endeavouring to carry on under a huge burden at present.

I am sure the Minister for Works, when he was Minister for Health, visited that hospital on various occasions and witnessed magnificent equipment being used in rooms which were not properly designed to house such equipment. I am sure he also saw offices set up in corridors; I am sure he appreciated the adverse conditions at that hospital, and the fact that the wards were grossly overcrowded.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: You want us to add to the cost of hospital accommodation by building better places to house patients?

Mr. DAVIES: I do not think it is the responsibility of the hospital patients to pay for all administration services, and the costs of running a Government hospital as a whole.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Of course it is.

Mr. DAVIES: This is what I feel is happening. What the Minister now says is that there is every reason to request that the Royal Perth Hospital should increase its charges. If, in fact, the Royal Perth Hospital has to charge \$15 a day, as against a charge of \$12.50 a day by the South Perth Community Centre Hospital, and \$15 a day by the St. John of God Hospital, we should find the reason for the extra charge imposed by the Royal Perth Hospital. I hope the Minister will be able to tell me the reason when he replies to the debate.

I do not take the Minister for Works to task on this matter, because he is merely handling the vote for the Minister for Health in another place, but because he has had considerable experience as a health Minister he may be able to answer these queries on matters which are causing considerable concern not only to me, but also to other people.

I did omit to mention the fact that the Australian Medical Association, W.A. Branch, had failed to interest itself in hospital charges, but the Premier shocked its members out of their lethargy on this occasion by increasing the charges by 50 per cent. I recall, from a Press report which was made earlier in the year, that the association is going to ask that not only should hospital charges in Western Australia be investigated, but also that its Federal body should look at hospital charges made throughout Australia, because it appears we are rapidly reaching the stage where people will be unable to afford to become patients in a hospital. This may be quite correct, of course, although I understand that the period during which a person remains in hospital as a patient has been considerably shortened

these days. Unfortunately people are not encouraged to enter hospital for a rest, and I am sorry for those who require to be hospitalised for a long period during these times.

The last point to which I want to make reference in regard to this department relates to the Clean Air Act. The year 1964 was the year of the Clean Air Act; it was the year to be concerned about smoke, about soot; it was the time to set up machinery to eliminate any gaseous vapours, dust, or other nuisance which might be emitted into the air. I think everybody applauded the measures being taken to prevent this nuisance. I know I certainly applauded those measures, because on the edge of my electorate and on the border of the electorate of the member for Belmont there is a plywood factory which emits the vilest of smells: it is the closest smell to vomit I have known, without actually being vomit. At the same time it produces a fine ash and fine sawdust particles.

This factory has been a source of annoyance to many people; and when the Clean Air Act was introduced we thought our troubles were over. The factory in question—Westralian Plywoods Pty. Ltd.—did take steps to eliminate the smoke nuisance by installing new boilers and burners. But the trouble has not been completely overcome. From my office window it is possible to see this chimney, and other chimneys around the metropolitan area, emitting large clouds of smoke and soot.

In 1964 we thought our troubles in this regard were over; but although Parliament passed the Act in that year we find it has not yet been proclaimed. In answer to a question from the member for Balcatta the Minister claimed there has been no inordinate delay in proclaiming the Act. I do not know what the Minister considers an inordinate delay—whether he thinks two years is an inordinate delay—but in my opinion it is a considerable period in which to get this legislation under way.

There have been only two meetings of the clean air council, and a number of meetings of the Scientific Advisory Committee which advises the council. Up to the time the question was answered on the 9th August, the Scientific Advisory Committee had had seven meetings. Incidentally, I notice that this committee was formed on the 12th May, 1966, though it had already met on four occasions before it was formed. I do not know how this came about, but perhaps there is a discrepancy in the answers.

I think the Government should make its position perfectly clear with regard to this legislation. I strongly agreed with the sentiments expressed by the Minister when he introduced the legislation, and took the history of clean air back to the 16th century: when he told us of the action taken in London at that time. It

was all very interesting. As I have said on several occasions, we applauded the Government for the actions taken; but two years later we have become a little dispirited and disheartened to know that nothing is being done.

As I have said, from my office it is possible to see several prominent chimneys in the industrial area which regularly emit dense clouds of dust and soot. This would be the time to take some action to prevent air pollution. But, as I have said, two years have passed, and nothing has been done; the Act has not yet been proclaimed.

I imagine the Minister will tell us when he replies that members of the Scientific Advisory Committee have investigated several complaints. This may be so, but no remedial action has been taken, because neither the council nor the Scientific Advisory Committee has authority to take any action since the Act has not yet been proclaimed.

I think the full powers given to the various bodies to be appointed under the Act should be given to these committees and councils as was intended, and the Act should be proclaimed without delay. If it is not possible to proclaim the Act we must know the reasons why; they must be real and genuine reasons; we do not want any cooked-up reasons to hide the real issue.

There have been all kinds of reports as to why the Act has not yet been proclaimed. There has even been talk about pressures on the Government. I do not know whether this is so, but I wish the Minister, when he replies, would let us know, because the member for Belmont, the member for Beeloo, and myself, are heartily sick of the nuisance from the particular factory I have mentioned especially when we have to tell our electors that nothing can be done because the Act has not yet been proclaimed.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: Public Health, \$2,186,000; Mental Health Services, \$3,950,000; Fisheries, \$415,000; State Abattoirs and Sale Yards, \$484,000—put and passed.

Vote: Railways, \$43,398,000—

MR. MAY (Collie) [9.57 p.m.]: I desire to make a few comments in regard to a matter concerning the railways. I have been requested to bring this question before Parliament, and I do so in the hope that the Minister will give the case some recognition.

The case to which I want to make reference is that of a very old gentleman, Cyril William Bridgeman, who is 85 years of age. He was injured in March, 1961, when travelling from Perth to Loch Street railway station. He is a retired Government railways employee, and at the time of the accident he was 81 years of age. The details connected with this case are most regrettable, and I do not

think I could do better than give the Committee a few of the details which are as follows:—

I am a retired Government Railways employee, aged 85 years. In March 1961 I was travelling by diesel train from Perth to visit my son in Claremont.

The train stopped at the Loch-st. station and I got out of the front compartment door. I did not realise until too late that the diesel had stopped with the front door past the platform. I stepped out and fell heavily three feet to the ground, breaking my right hip.

I suffered considerable pain and had to pay about \$1300 hospital and medical expenses. I left hospital with a discharging wound, which eventually required a second operation before it finally healed about two years later.

However, I was forced to withdraw my claims when confronted with a section of the Government Railways Act which releases the Department from liability to damage or injury to passengers or their property sustained at an unattended station—such as the Loch-st. station.

The case was dismissed, though my solicitors maintained that morally I should have won and that had the case been in the Eastern States or in England, I most certainly would have won.

I appealed to my local member who asked the Railways Minister in Parliament to give consideration to amending the section of the Act which blocked my claim.

The Minister replied that the overall reasons for the section of the Act had to be considered in the operation of the railways, that no good case seemed to have been put forward for an amendment, and that he would further discuss the matter with the Railways Commissioner on his return from the Commissioners' conference then being held.

Despite letters to the Minister, I was never told the outcome of this discussion.

I believe that any section of the Act depriving the individual of his right to claim compensation for injuries which are no fault of his own is autocratic, arbitrary and unjust.

I don't think you can do much to help me with this problem now except to give it the fullest possible publicity.—C. W. Bridgeman, North Collie.

The case was sent to the *Daily News* Ombudsman, and on the 1st April, 1966, the representations made by the Ombudsman to the Commissioner of Railways

were published. The Ombudsman had this to say—

The present acting Railways Commissioner says that the matter was discussed by the Railways Minister with the Railways Commissioner at the time, as promised.

It was decided that no further action would be taken on the possible alteration of the regulation in question—section 40, subsection one of the Government Railways Act.

The acting Commissioner told me that section 40 served a useful purpose in protecting the Railways from accidents beyond its control at unattended sidings.

I suggested that perhaps an insurance scheme, subscribed to by the department, would ensure that individuals involved in accidents—also through no fault of their own—could be paid compensation for their injuries or damages.

The acting Commissioner told me that the Railways does have a public liability scheme under which it insures itself for damages to passengers.

Under this scheme, however, insurance is not paid to an injured person unless the Railways admits liability. And, because of section 40 of the Act, the Railways in your case did not have to admit liability.

Legally, I am told you have little chance of appealing against the 1963 decision, as you are no doubt aware. This is because the judge dismissed the case on the application of your own counsel—on the understanding that it was futile to continue in the light of section 40.

Only in the event of the law being changed, may some future victim be able to claim damages, in similar circumstances.

This gentleman was 81 years of age when the accident occurred. It occurred, because when he turned around to step out of the carriage he did not realise it had gone past the platform. As a consequence he fell to the ground and broke his hip. This very worthy citizen has been caused a great deal of suffering and hardship. I can understand the Railways Department covering itself against accidents of this kind, but this case should be treated on its merits. As the department decided that the case could not be dealt with, in view of section 40 of the Railways Act, there is no earthly reason why it should not grant an *ex gratia* payment to the injured man to cover at least the medical and hospital expenses.

In this case the department was entitled to say that it could not accept liability under the Act, but would be prepared to grant an *ex gratia* payment. The son of this old gentleman took him into his home,

because he was too frail to look after himself; but the son was called upon to pay the money to meet the hospital expenses.

I have known of one case where a Railways Department employee had both legs amputated as a result of an accident, and he was covered by the Railways Department to an amount of £6,000. After representations had been made to the Minister this man eventually received £11,500, although the department could have got out of its liability by paying £6,000.

Surely in the case I am submitting, the department could have adopted the same attitude and taken a humane view of the circumstances; it should have at least met the medical and hospital expenses which were incurred. I was asked to bring this case before Parliament in the hope—it might be too late for this gentleman to receive any benefit—that in the future the attention of the Railways Department will be drawn to the humane side of accident cases, and that it will be the means of enabling others to receive fair compensation.

This old gentleman was not to blame for the carriage passing beyond the platform. Most elderly people turn around to step off railway carriages, and this man did the same, but discovered too late there was no platform beneath him. He fell and was injured; but in the case he proposed to take he found that section 40 of the Railways Act absolved the department from liability.

I hope that in the future, with such accidents, and where circumstances are similar to the ones I have described tonight, responsibility will, to some extent, be accepted by the department—that there will at least be some recognition of the suffering that old gentleman went through as a result of an accident which had nothing to do with his own actions. It was simply a matter of circumstances. In spite of the section of the Railways Act which absolves the department from any blame, I hope the department will give some consideration to meeting the costs of any hospital and medical treatment that may be incurred by anyone in similar circumstances in the future.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [10.11 p.m.]: At this stage of the session I think it would be futile to enter into any long debate with the Minister for Railways on various matters that come to our notice from time to time, particularly in regard to the financing of the standard gauge.

Mr. Jamieson: Not futile; it might be hostile!

Mr. DAVIES: There is one point about which I wish to complain and I will take only three or four minutes. In regard to this matter I do not think the railways are being given a fair go. I believe the Gov-

ernment has once again succumbed to the pressures of a strong private group, which I do not think is justified on this occasion. I refer to a package tour which the railways arranged to Albany and return. This tour has been discontinued as from the middle of November. This was a five-day package or "sceni-tour" to Albany and return; and all the railways got out of it were the bus fares. The railways used good buses and the journey was to Albany and back through king karri country. The railways arranged for the people to go down on the regular services and be accommodated at Albany for five days. They came back through the king karri country and then from Bunbury on the regular service.

The Railways Department did not obtain any commission for booking hotel accommodation, nor did it get any extras out of running these tours to Albany. Private enterprise looked after the tourists once they were at Albany. All the railways did was to arrange for the people to go from Perth to Albany and return. The only additional service was to book the people in at a hotel at Albany. One would not think that this would interfere very much with the regular chartered organised tours which go at a hell of a bat—stopping at places for an hour or two and then moving on. This tour was for the person who wanted to spend a full five days at Albany and use the facilities there in regard to hotel accommodation and private tours which had been long-established in Albany.

Apparently Pioneer Tours—which are Ansett Pioneer Tours—and another Eastern States body—Parlour Car Tours—put pressure on the Government to stop the Railways Department running this service. It was not a tour of the Great Southern; it was simply a trip from Perth to Albany and return. No service was being provided other than booking hotel accommodation for the travellers. These tours were not interfering in any way with the organised tours. I understand the tours provided for a maximum of eight people per week and that on some occasions only one or two people took advantage of the tours. Yet, because pressure was obviously brought on the Government by Ansett Pioneer Tours and Parlour Car Tours the Government was forced to drop out of this field into which it had entered.

I ask the Minister whether he is genuine in trying to get patrons for the railway road services when he succumbs to pressure groups in this way. I ask the Premier whether he is sincere in trying to provide the widest possible fields for tourists. I believe that if the railways are to be allowed to compete, they must compete in every possible way.

Mr. O'Connor: Do you believe in letting the railways compete and the other people compete against the railways?

Mr. DAVIES: They are doing it.

Mr. O'Connor: In many cases they are not.

Mr. DAVIES: In many cases they are. The Minister for Transport has only to look at some of the brochures available from the Tourist Bureau to see where Pioneer Tours are running alongside railway lines, and to places which can be served by railway buses. However, this tour was not in competition with any other tour. People were taken to Albany and left there for five days during which time they would use the private services available at Albany. At the conclusion of the five days the railways would bring the people back on a regular bus service through the king karri country, through Bunbury, and on to Perth. There is nothing at all wrong with that.

It is disgusting that once again Mr. Reg Ansett has been able to influence the Government to such a degree that the simple tour which I have mentioned has had to be abandoned and revenue lost to the railways.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [10.17 p.m.]: I have a few comments to make with which the Minister for Railways and the Minister assisting the Minister for Railways are familiar. To make my presentation as concise as possible, I will read a letter which I received from the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce. It reads as follows:—

Re Railway Bridge west of Fremantle Railway Station.

At a meeting held in the Town Hall, Fremantle, at 3 p.m. on Tuesday 15th February, 1966, it was unanimously decided to request you to endeavour to arrange for a deputation to be received by the Minister for Railways. the Hon. Charles Court, M.L.A., in regard to the proposed demolition of this bridge.

I need not read any further. Subsequently a deputation was formed composed of distinguished personnel. I wish to thank the Minister for giving me a copy of the notes taken when the deputation waited on the Minister for Railways at 12 noon on the 9th March of this year. Those present were Mr. R. Porter, Senior Vice President, Fremantle Chamber of Commerce (Inc.)—this is an organisation that cannot be lightly fobbed-off—Mr. J. Andrews, President, Waterside Workers' Federation, and representative of the waterfront unions. He is another person of considerable importance in Fremantle. Then there was Councillor R. Higham, Fremantle City Council, past President, Fremantle Chamber of Commerce, and representative of the local authority; Mr. J. Tippet, representative of the local trade and the Australian Hotels' Association, Fremantle; Mr. A. L. Sampson, representative, local trade; Mr. Turner, President, Fremantle Chamber of Com-

merce; Mr. L. Oxbrow, local trade and General Manager, Pellews; and Mr. H. A. Fletcher, M.L.A., Fremantle. Also in attendance was Mr. J. M. Horrigan, Deputy Commissioner of Railways, together with the Minister for Railways.

On page 2 of the deputation notes, we find this—

Mr. Porter drew attention to The Eastern Railway Act, 1878, paragraph 2:

It shall be lawful to construct and maintain a Railway from Fremantle to Guildford, with all necessary, proper and usual works and conveniences in connection therewith, in the line, and upon the lands described in the Schedule to this Act.

Mr. Porter drew attention to paragraph 2 of the Eastern Railway Act, 1878: and the same situation prevails today. We maintain that there is an obligation on the Railways Department to erect that footbridge in that position. On page 3 of the minutes is the following:—

Mr. Porter conceded that The Fremantle Port Authority had some responsibility, in that they are expected to provide access ways and maintain access ways on to the bridges, wharfs, docks and piers, etc., and quoted an extract from the Fremantle Harbour Trust Act of 1902, paragraph 26:—

- (1) The Commissioners may make and maintain Roads and approaches to all wharves, docks, piers, etc.
- (2) Shall cause such wharves, docks, piers, etc., including roads and approaches thereto in good repair and wise and sufficiently lighted, watched and cleansed.

I think the Minister assisting the Minister for Railways can see that there is a case in regard to the responsibility of both the Railways Department and the Fremantle Port Authority to assist in the maintenance of approaches to wharves, piers, roads, etc. If a footbridge across a railway line is not an approach to a wharf, what is? Still, I have been over that ground before on the deputation and have had some correspondence in connection with it. However, I want to draw attention to the matter again with a view to further consideration being given to it. The minutes continue—

Mr. Porter went on to say that the deputation was of the opinion that the removal of this bridge would have a detrimental effect on the business people of Fremantle and the people within the Fremantle area who have access to and use the Phillimore Street footbridge.

On page 4 of the minutes is the following:—

Mr. Andrews also put forward the following points:—

*Loss of trade to the Cafeteria near the Phillimore Street footbridge, which is leased to the Australian Stevedoring Industry. This Cafeteria has been rather a big undertaking and the non-existence of the bridge could well leave it isolated.

*During boisterous weather, which sometimes extended over a couple of months or more, the Ferry Terminal is not available to the Unions' members, as it gets under water and a temporary landing is made between B. and C. Sheds which are located directly opposite the Phillimore Street footbridge.

This is another important point—

*If it is the Railway Department's intention to erect boom gates in Cliff Street in the near future it will cause more delay to commerce and stevedoring than is already the case.

With regard to the loss of trade, the following paragraphs appear on page 5:—

*Result in a loss of trade in the area West of Fremantle Town Hall.

*Disadvantage the old established and advantage the newly established.

I might point out that there is a section of Fremantle that has recently been occupied by a huge emporium which has a multi-storey building. It was argued that if the footbridge were removed, the locality west of this point could become a dying area in Fremantle.

Mr. J. Hegney: What was the Minister's answer to the deputation?

Mr. FLETCHER: I will come to that directly.

Mr. Court: The member for Belmont tried hard.

Mr. FLETCHER: The minutes continue on page 5 as follows:—

Mr. Sampson, also representing local trade, quoted the following figures to cover the volume or number of users of the Phillimore Street footbridge:—

9th June, 1965	901
18th December, 1965	748
January, 1966 (unconfirmed)	1,100

The large number in June was because of the winter months when the personnel and workmen on the wharves and those catching the ferries would race across the footbridge for quick access to the wharf. Further down on the same page is the following:—

Mr. Higham went on to say that the Council had accepted some liability although, admittedly, it had only con-

tributed 10% toward improvements to the Phillimore Street footbridge in 1960 but wished to stress that they were now very keen on the retention of the footbridge

Mr. Oxhrow asked the Minister to visualise Fremantle from Market Street West as "down town" Fremantle. He remarked that the Minister possibly had seen such "down towns" in America rot away and ultimately close down.

The member for Fremantle also saw areas in America which had previously been thriving business centres, but had, to use an expression, rotted away and become downtown areas. Mr. Higham claimed—

With the removal of the Phillimore Street footbridge and the difficulty of access to Fremantle by vehicle, he thought that this could well happen in this case.

At this stage the Minister was apparently not sympathetic because the following is to be found on page 7 of the minutes:—

In summing up after the various speakers, Mr. Fletcher said the delegates had shown, in his opinion, that a good case for the retention of the footbridge existed. He also mentioned the fact of trespass on the railway and said that if trespass did take place, in consequence of the removal of the Phillimore Street footbridge, it would be a very dangerous trespass.

I had in mind that people would cross the railway line in contravention of the Act. The minutes continue—

Mr. Fletcher said the delegates had pointed out that a joint venture would be the proper approach if the Railways Department do not accept full responsibility.

In reply to the deputation the Minister for Railways said that he appreciated that after having had the Phillimore Street footbridge in use for some time, the public would wish to retain this facility, but there must come a time when revision was needed.

He said that whilst the deputation might feel strongly about the removal of the footbridge because there are people who use it—and the Railways did not deny this fact—the Minister did not personally see how a case had been made out for this to be a Railways responsibility.

The Minister explained that the Phillimore Street footbridge would have to be lifted in any case, by approximately 1 ft. 6 in., to permit the passage of standard gauge wagons to Leighton, if it was left in its present position. With implementation of standard gauge, different spacing of piers was also needed.

I subsequently pointed out that if it merely had to be lifted by 18 in. I could not see any difficulty in having those 18 in.

sections prefabricated at the Midland Workshops as inserts to the existing piers. The bridge could be mounted on those new inserts. That was the suggestion I made after which considerable discussion of a general nature followed. There was more correspondence and the following was addressed to me by the City of Fremantle.

Dear Sir,

Further to your recent communications with Council on the matter of retention of the Phillimore Street footbridge, I am enclosing a copy of letter forwarded to the Secretary of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce, which sets out Council's reaction to advice of the attitude of the Port Authority and the W.A. Government Railways.

I think you will find it self-explanatory, but please contact me if any point requires clarification.

The following is a letter addressed to the Secretary of the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce by the town clerk:—

I refer to your letter of 9th June, enclosing copy of letter forwarded by you to the Hon. the Minister for Railways.

Council is equally disappointed by the decision of the Port Authority and the W.A. Government Railways not to contribute to the costs of the footbridge retention project.

I will not read any more of that letter. However, it was obvious that the Railways Department and the Fremantle Port Authority would not combine in a joint venture, and that was confirmed in a letter from the Minister assisting the Minister for Railways. I will not weary the House by reading it. Subsequently, on the 10th November, I asked the following questions of the Minister for Railways:—

- (1) Am I correctly informed that a 13-acre area of land is being excised from railway reserve between James Street and Cliff Street Fremantle for reallocation?
- (2) If so, will such, or any, excision reduce the width of railway property between Phillimore Street and Port Authority property opposite?

In both instances, the replies were "Yes." To me it seemed elementary and consequential that there would be reduced costs associated with the footbridge in that locality. Consequently, it was worthy of further consideration. In my absence overseas, the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce held a meeting on the 1st November, 1966. The minutes deal with those who were present, and record apologies, and then Sir Frederick Samson took the chair. The minutes read as follows:—

Sir Frederick Samson took the Chair, and in declaring the meeting open, said the purpose of holding the meeting as convened by the Convenors

of the joint Committees, was to see what could be done to ensure that the pedestrian bridge over the railway line at Phillimore Street, Fremantle, was replaced.

Sir Frederick Samson said that he had made enquiries and he had learned that Mr. Hutchinson, Minister responsible for the activities of the Port Authority, had indicated there was a possibility of the Port Authority reconsidering its earlier decision not to be interested in the bridge.

I repeat, Sir Frederick Samson said that he had made inquiries and he had learned that the Minister responsible (Mr. Ross Hutchinson) had indicated there was a possibility of reconsideration. To continue—

Sir Frederick reported having contacted Councillor Hughes of the Fremantle City Council, who was also a Commissioner of the Fremantle Port Authority, in the matter. It was understood that an area would be resumed from the Railways in favour of the Port Authority.

I have expressed my thoughts that the new lesser width would entail a cheaper footbridge. Further down the minutes read as follows:—

The area of the resumption would lessen the area of rail space to be covered by a bridge, consequently, it would be a lot shorter than the previous bridge.

I regret it was necessary to read at length correspondence and minutes, but I do ask the Minister for Railways, and the Minister assisting him, and the Minister dealing with matters that include the Fremantle Port Authority, to get together and discuss this matter with the Fremantle City Council. The Fremantle City Council, I understand, subject to assistance from both Government authorities, will assist proportionately in financing the retention of this bridge. The bridge is important to many of my constituents, and it is important to the commercial and trading interests also. I leave it with the respective Ministers in the hope that further consideration will be given to this matter.

Vote put and passed.

Vote: State Batteries, \$435,000—put and passed.

Vote: Country Water Supplies, Sewerage, Drainage and Irrigation, \$5,290,000—

MR. ROSS HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe—Minister for Water Supplies) [10.35 p.m.]: I regret seeing the look of dismay on your face, Mr. Chairman, but I feel it is necessary for me to correct an impression which the Committee may have gained when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, earlier in this debate, said it appeared there was some discrimination being shown in the matter of water rating at Exmouth. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition queried

whether this was to favour American interests. He quoted certain figures from a country areas water supply advertisement. To get the record straight, I would like to say there was no discrimination and no favouritism. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition informed me he had been mistaken in his interpretation of the figures he quoted from this advertisement.

I think he was mentally comparing decimal currency with pounds, shillings, and pence, and had not equated the currencies, and so the mistake occurred. There is a uniform rate charged for water, and there is no discrimination at Exmouth.

Vote 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 Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Mitchell) in the Chair.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [10.37 p.m.]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1967, a sum not exceeding \$173,258,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Question put and passed.

Report

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

LAND TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Request for Conference

Message from the Council received and read requesting a conference on the amendment requested by the Council and notifying that at such conference the Council would be represented by three managers.

Speaker's Ruling

THE SPEAKER: I draw members' attention to the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, section 46, subsection (4), on page 182 of Standing Orders.

On the 8th November, 1927, the then Speaker, The Hon. Thomas Walker, made an interesting ruling in connection with this part of the Constitution Act. It is to be found in *Hansard* of 1927, at page 1677, and he quotes various authorities.

In substance, his ruling states that in the case of a Bill which the Legislative Council cannot amend but in respect of which it can make a request to the Legislative Assembly that the Bill be amended, the Legislative Council has no constitutional authority to go further than make

this request. Having once made the request and that request having been refused by the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Council has exhausted its powers under the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, section 46 (4).

I concur in this viewpoint and feel that any further approach in these circumstances by the Legislative Council to the Legislative Assembly must be in some form stronger than a request which is not allowed by the relevant section of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act.

I consider that these further approaches by the Legislative Council, after the initial request was made, are out of order and that the only course now open to the Legislative Council is either to agree to the Bill as it stands, or to reject the Bill. Consequently, in my opinion this message should not be accepted by this House.

Motion

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [10.40 p.m.]: I agree, Mr. Speaker, and I move—

That a Message be forwarded to the Legislative Council as follows:—

Mr. President,

With reference to Message No. 111 from the Legislative Council dealing with the Land Tax Act Amendment Bill, the Hon. the Speaker has ruled that the powers of the Legislative Council under Subsection 4 of Section 46 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899 were exhausted when the Legislative Assembly continued to decline to make the amendment requested. Therefore we cannot consider your Message No. 111.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 3)

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1966-67

In Committee

Resumed from the 21st September, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Mitchell) in the Chair.

Vote: Railways, \$11,476,000—

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [10.42 p.m.]: There are a few subjects about which I would like to say a few words in connection with these General Loan Estimates. I was interested to learn from the speech which the Treasurer delivered, when introducing these Estimates, of the total amount received from the Commonwealth Government up to the 30th June last in connection with the construction of the standard gauge railway line from Kal-

goorlie to Kwinana. The total amount involved was \$40,000,000. It is estimated a further \$18,000,000 will be received during this financial year from the Commonwealth Government for the same purpose. No doubt, these very large amounts of money from the Commonwealth have been of considerable benefit to Western Australia. This would apply not only to the actual construction work associated with this standard gauge railway line but also to the many indirect benefits which would be conferred upon industry, trade, and commerce generally within Western Australia.

I know the construction work has put a lot of additional money into the town of Northam. No doubt the same applies to all of the other more or less larger towns between Kalgoorlie and Midland Junction. However, it would be quite wrong to believe the whole of this money has been circulated within Western Australia. A great amount of it would doubtless be expended in the purchase of steel rails and the many other steel products which are required in the construction of a railway line, and particularly in connection with the construction of such a great length of railway line as is involved in building this standard gauge railway from Kalgoorlie to Kwinana. Clearly, the main beneficiary in the sale of all these steel products would be the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited.

I notice, too, from the speech made by the Treasurer the action of the Commonwealth Government in agreeing to make \$10,500,000 available for the purpose of assisting the State Government in Western Australia to carry out further work in relation to the comprehensive water supply scheme. Unfortunately, this money is to be made available on an interest and repayable basis as far as the Commonwealth Government is concerned. I consider this policy of the Commonwealth Government cannot be too severely condemned.

The comprehensive water supply scheme is a developmental scheme which will add very considerably to the wealth producing capacity of the farming lands which the extended scheme will serve. Therefore, it will make quite a big contribution to Australia's exportable surplus of primary commodities. The Commonwealth Treasury will benefit, directly and indirectly, from the additional taxation which will be gathered by the Commonwealth authority. We know for several years in the early stages of the construction of this scheme, Commonwealth Governments made a pound for pound contribution by way of free grants to the State of Western Australia.

Therefore, it is a backward step of considerable magnitude taken firstly by the Menzies Federal Government and, more recently, by the Holt Federal Government, in deciding to break away com-

pletely from the free grant system in relation to this scheme by imposing upon Western Australia the necessity to repay in total the amount now being advanced and, in addition, to pay interest upon it to the Commonwealth Government.

The repayment of the money and the payment of interest is made all the worse when one considers the Federal Government obtains this money for nothing from the taxpayers of Australia. The Commonwealth Government does not have to borrow the money. Consequently, it does not have to repay it to anyone and it does not have to pay any interest upon it. It imposes taxation, either direct or indirect; it gathers the money up that way and then has the effrontery to lend it to the State Government for this valuable developmental work on a repayable basis, and with interest payments also imposed upon the State Government.

I was very interested in one small section of the Treasurer's speech when he introduced these estimates to the Committee. I will quote it, and it is as follows:—

The increased efficiency of modern power stations and the greater use of electricity by existing consumers are assisting the commission to maintain profits which are wholly used by the commission to help finance its capital works programme.

I should have thought the customers of the commission would have been entitled to some practical consideration from the commission in relation to the use and distribution of these profits. After all is said and done, it is the commissioner's consumers who provide the profits. The fact that substantial profits are being earned would indicate a strong possibility of charges to all, or some, consumers being too high.

I have no objection to the commission making reasonable profits. However, I think there is some ground for reasonable objection when all the profits are used by the commission to carry out capital works. Even if the profits went into Consolidated Revenue there might be some justification for action along those lines, because one result of such action would be a lessening of the necessity upon the Government to impose some of the very severe increases in taxation which some of the legislation brought to Parliament this session has had the effect of doing.

So I think some explanation is due to Parliament, and especially to the consumers of electric current, as to why the whole of the profits now being earned by the commission are used by the commission to assist in financing the commission's capital work programme. Because of the stage at which the session is, and because of reasonable anxiety on the part of members, and especially the Treasurer himself,

I have only one other subject to mention, and my mention of that will be quite brief.

It has to do with the use of loan funds by the Department of Agriculture. I have no doubt Country Party members would be very interested in the situation—

Mr. Kelly: Where are they?

Mr. HAWKE: —which developed in relation to the expenditure of loan funds last financial year by this department and the comparative figure for the current financial year. The Leader of the Country Party is present, and his deputy is present. I am sorry the member for Mt. Marshall and the member for Avon are not present, because I think they would be very interested in this subject and might even support the criticism or suggestion I shall put forward.

Last year the total amount of loan funds expended on behalf of the Department of Agriculture reached a figure of £501,000. The estimated expenditure for the current financial year is only \$350,000. Clearly this shows a reduction for the current financial year, as against the last financial year, of \$151,000. That is, in anybody's language, a substantial reduction. It is all the more without justification when we take into consideration the vast expanding activities in the field of agriculture in Western Australia. I know an explanation could be offered which would indicate substantial capital works were carried out last year and there is no need to carry out comparable works this year. Even so, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Mitchell)—and I am sorry you are not in your place as the Country Party member for Stirling—there appears to me to be a lack of imagination and action on the part of the Ministers in the Government—and especially on the part of the Country Party Ministers—in the fact that a very substantial reduction is being made in this year's Loan Estimates for this very important department, and in relation to all the many vital activities it is carrying out within the State.

I cannot believe the Ministers concerned would not have been capable of devising ways and means of usefully expending at least the same amount of loan funds on agriculture this financial year as was expended last financial year. Indeed, I think there would have been every justification for substantially increasing this year's vote as against the expenditure of last financial year. I would hope the figures set down in the Estimates for this financial year will not be fixed and incapable of upward adjustment. I feel confident the Minister for Agriculture, together with his advisers, would be able, within a day or two, to work out proposals for loan expenditure which would, at least, raise this year's total expenditure to the figure which was reached last year.

I am not suggesting there should be a special meeting of all Country Party mem-

bers to go thoroughly into this situation. I am not even trying to sow any seeds of discord between the coalition partners. I am sure the Treasurer himself, representing a very important agricultural area, would be sympathetically disposed towards additional proposals which the Minister for Agriculture and his officers would be able, without difficulty, to put forward within the next few weeks for his favourable consideration. I feel confident, too, all other Ministers of the Government would be prepared to give away a little of what has been apportioned to them this financial year in order that the vitally important and highly valuable field of agriculture might be developed and extended to the greatest possible extent during the next several months.

MR. RHATIGAN (Kimberley) [10.59 p.m.]: It was not my intention to speak any further in the Chamber this session, but what has brought me to my feet for a few minutes is the fact that the Minister for the North-West will be visiting my electorate of Kimberley and the town of Broome on the 14th December next. I also understand that the official opening of the new hospital at Broome is to be performed by the Minister for Health (The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, M.L.C.).

I rang today to make a booking with M.M.A. and I was told there was no plane to Broome on Tuesday, but there was one departing at 11 p.m. on Monday, though I could not be assured of a booking on that because of excess freight that had been held over. I was told, however, that I could get on Sunday's plane, Mr. Wayne, in his report, says that there is no necessity for competition with M.M.A.; that it is able to provide an adequate service. It seems to me that it will be necessary for influence to be used if I am to get on that plane.

After all is said and done today is the 29th November, and I am asking for a booking on the 12th December, and I am told that I cannot get a booking because of excess freight; and yet M.M.A. maintains it can provide a service. It is quite obvious that it cannot provide this service.

The point is that I have given a week's notice previously and I have been able to get on a plane. Mr. Wayne should consider this matter when he says that M.M.A. is providing an adequate service. I am not here to attack M.M.A. I give its staff and its pilots full credit. However, there seems to be something wrong when seats are removed from a Fokker Friendship to enable freight to be carried. Surely that could be carried on the D.C.3s. I ask the Minister for the North-West: Is that just?

Mr. Court: I will be amazed if you do not get there at your request.

Mr. RHATIGAN: That may be so, but I would have to ring the Minister. He

should not be running M.M.A.; he is the Minister for the North-West. I think this is disgusting.

Mr. Court: We will let you grizzle if you want to do it yourself, but I will still be amazed if you do not get on that plane.

Mr. RHATIGAN: My name has been put on the waiting list. I will get on Sunday's plane.

Mr. Court: It is this great prosperity we are generating.

Mr. Graham: It is always prosperity when something goes wrong.

Mr. RHATIGAN: All the Minister's Government has ever done is to raise taxes. The purpose of my rising is to voice my objection in this matter. I would like the Minister to convey my remarks to Mr. Wayne, particularly as he thinks that M.M.A. is doing a good job.

Mr. Court: They won't get any loan funds out of the Treasurer.

Mr. RHATIGAN: The Minister for the North-West rudely interrupted and said he was sure I would get a seat on the plane; but this will be so because he will use his influence with M.M.A.

Mr. Court: My word he will not.

Mr. RHATIGAN: While condemning M.M.A. on this point, I want to say I have the highest regard for the ground staff and everybody else associated with the company; but there must be something wrong with the organisation for this to happen. I know Reg Ansett controls the lot.

Mr. Lewis: Perhaps you are praising at the wrong end; you want to start at the office.

Mr. RHATIGAN: That could be so. I am praising all those who control things up north—the pilots and everybody else. Normally I book a week ahead and I get a seat; but here I am booking a fortnight ahead and I am told I will not be able to get a seat because of excess freight. The Minister for the North-West will be in Broome with his consultative committee, and the Minister for Health is opening the Broome hospital on the 14th December. This will be the first time my name has been put on the waiting list. I am not going to pull any strings to get there. If I cannot be in Broome at the time the Minister is there it will be the fault of M.M.A.

I disagree with that portion of Mr. Wayne's report which says that M.M.A. is providing an adequate service, because in my humble opinion that is not the case.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [11.6 p.m.]: I do not propose to keep the Committee for long; as long as I can have one extension of time I will be happy! I want to say a few words concerning the lack of a drilling programme which, at one time, was financed from loan availability. During the Hawke Government's regime we

installed three drilling plants with very up-to-date and modern drilling machinery, which drilled some thousands of feet in an endeavour to find not only gold but other minerals as well.

I think the member for Murchison will recall that we did a considerable amount of drilling for a company in which he was interested, and we did the drilling with some success. The hydrological section of the Mines Department at that time—when Labor went out of office—had three complete drilling rigs, and the present Government saw fit to add a further two; but now he find the programme, so far as the mining industry is concerned, is practically defunct.

I understand that a certain amount of drilling is done in rural areas, and this is a good thing; but it is not altogether satisfying, because it is not fulfilling the purpose for which these plants were originally purchased. That section of the department seems to have become dormant, and I wonder whether this is so because of the affluence of the companies interested in iron ore development and the development of other minerals, and because of the amount of overseas capital available for the development of these various sections of the mining industry.

Surely the Government can see that dispensing with the activities of the hydrological section must eventually have a detrimental effect on both the State batteries and the prospectors of Western Australia. Apparently the Government is not concerned at the moment, nor has it been so for some time.

I feel it is urgent that we get to the position where we think a little less of overseas capital and what it can bring to the country, and do a little more for the people who are in Western Australia, and who are deserving of better treatment than they are receiving. I think the State should review urgently its drilling outlook, if it ever had one under the present regime. I doubt whether it ever had a drilling programme, because the prospectors seem to be getting fewer and fewer, and the State batteries will naturally suffer wherever they are situated.

I bring this matter to the Treasurer's notice, because I think it is worthy of more consideration than it has received.

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [11.10 p.m.]: I am wondering why the Midland Junction Abattoir gets a mention in the Loan Estimates. There have been some very disturbing and persistent rumours that the Midland Junction Abattoir Board is to request the Government to place a tax upon country-killed meat, or that meat hall facilities be established at the Midland Junction Abattoir, and all country-killed meat be required to pass through this hall and be liable to a charge.

I understand the idea behind these proposals is to afford protection to the Midland Junction Abattoir and saleyards against outside competition, mainly from country abattoirs. I do not doubt that there are many problems facing the Midland Junction Abattoir Board. Like all industries today it is faced with rising costs brought about by increases in award payments, wages, and marginal increases, but I hope the suggestions emanating from the Midland Junction Abattoir Board are not to render the operations of the country abattoirs uneconomical and so force them out of business.

The country abattoirs, like the Midland Junction Abattoir, have been required to modify their establishments and bring them to a high standard of hygiene and efficiency to meet the exacting standards required by the Department of Primary Industry, especially in cases where the abattoir has an export license.

Country-killed meat is one of the most obvious examples of decentralisation to which it is possible to point; and I cannot think that any Government, particularly this one, would want to put obstacles in the way of country industries. I sincerely hope that if there is any substance in these proposals they will not be proceeded with, because I cannot think of a more short-sighted proposal than this one. As I have said, this is an example of what can be done by way of decentralisation. There is no doubt that when stock is killed in the country and the meat is brought to the metropolitan area there are some advantages over the position that obtains when stock passes through Midland.

But I want to indicate to the Minister and to the Government that there would be great hostility to any move which was made to impose a tax upon stock killed in the country, or upon meat which does not pass through the Midland abattoir.

Mr. Nalder: Questions on this have already been refuted.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I know the member for Albany did ask questions earlier in the session along these lines; but my purpose is to point out to the Minister that these rumours are persistent, and apparently a very definite move is to be made by the Midland Junction Abattoir Board to ask for some restriction on country-killed meat.

We have had experience of this in the past, and it has been debated in this Chamber—and I am referring to the fact that the Midland Junction Abattoir Board has tried to gain control of country abattoirs by having the metropolitan abattoir district extended to include a very large portion of the State. That has been successfully resisted in the past, and I hope proposals of this nature will also be resisted strenuously now and in the future; because, as I said earlier, there would be great hostility throughout the

country districts to these suggestions. I would like the Government to bear that in mind.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [11.15 p.m.]: The problem of obtaining more money for any one department is to be found in the fact that in this financial year the loan allocation to the State is very little greater than last year; and that increase was absorbed by higher costs for materials and increased charges. Therefore the Treasury found it difficult to allocate money to maintain the programme of works which had been proceeding for some years. The Education Department was one department which was very closely watched.

It so happened that the Department of Agriculture received something less than last year simply because the programme of works for South Perth and the north-west had been completed and it was decided by the Treasury that new works would not be permitted, at least this year. It was only a matter of priority. The Minister, himself, and the Director of Agriculture made repeated approaches and laid their claims, but the fact was the availability and distribution of money was such that we could not add any more to their vote.

I think perhaps the point raised by the member for Kimberley might well have been raised under another heading. Nevertheless, I think he made his point. The matter raised by the member for Wellington is one which has been discussed in this Parliament; questions have been answered; and the Minister has stated that whilst there may be a rumour, it is not well based and the Government has not approved in any way the suggested taking over of areas or the placing of any difficulties in the way of the existing district abattoirs. This is the policy of the Government and it will be maintained. I do not propose to delay the Committee on the Loan Estimates. I wish to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his kindly treatment of them, and apologise for not having given him a better opportunity to speak to them. At the same time, however, I would point out that the programme as set out is the best that could have been achieved with the limited amount of money made available to this State, as compared with other States, for this particular financial year.

Mr. Hawke: Before the Treasurer sits down, could he tell us about the State Electricity Commission's surplus.

MR. BRAND: The question of using some of the surplus, or profits, of the State Electricity Commission was clearly stated in the speech I made on the Estimates. I firmly believe we will require, for some years, to use the surplus of the S.E.C. to help meet the capital works programme. Anyone reading the speech will realise that a huge amount of money is involved in the

capital works programme facing the S.E.C. for the next few years. In fact, the Treasury is alarmed at the situation which may be faced by this State in endeavouring to maintain the supply of power throughout Western Australia.

It must be remembered that huge generators have to be ordered some two or three years ahead in order that they may be delivered on time. The maximum amount of capital was made available to the S.E.C., bearing in mind what I have already said of the other departments; and I think it will have to be accepted that some of the profits of the S.E.C. will, for some time anyhow, go towards offsetting some of the capital works we face at the present time. I do not think there is any alternative to what is being done at the moment. It would be intolerable if we were unable to meet the demands for power in this State, as that would be the greatest bottleneck that we could have in the State; it would be of the greatest detriment to industry; and it would be detrimental to increasing the population of the State at this time in our history.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: State Electricity Commission, \$2,150,000; Public Works, \$23,056,616; North-West, \$5,089,384; Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, \$6,114,000; Mines \$262,000; Housing, \$2,540,000; Agriculture, \$350,000; Forests, \$400,000; Fisheries, \$100,000; Industrial Development, \$400,000; Other State Undertakings, \$2,256,000; Sundries, \$1,276,000—put and passed.

This concluded the Loan Estimates for the year.

Report

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

STATE TRADING CONCERNS ESTIMATES, 1966-67

Tabling of Estimates

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [11.23 p.m.]: I present a copy of the State Trading Concerns Estimates for the year ending the 30th June, 1967, 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, 1967, now considered, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Mitchell) in the Chair.

Votes: The West Australian Meat Export Works, \$2,441,000; Wyndham Freezing, Canning and Meat Export Works, \$2,719,548; Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission, \$7,144,418; State Engineering Works, \$1,545,949—put and passed.

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

Report

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Message: Appropriations

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

Second Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [11.27 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is the final Bill to be passed in respect of the finances required by the Government over the year. It provides the necessary money following consideration of the General Revenue Estimates, the Loan Estimates, and the State Trading Concerns Estimates.

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. Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 25th November.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.35 p.m.]: I approve of the majority of the provisions contained in this Bill but I very strongly object to that provision under which exemption from rates will be granted to Co-operative Bulk Handling. I have great admiration for this company. I believe it has done an excellent job for the development of the State, and it is entitled to encouragement and assistance. However, I do not believe that a basic principle of legislation should be departed from in order to grant a special subsidy to this trading company at the expense of the ratepayers of Fremantle.

If the Government desires to give this company a special subsidy because it believes the State, generally, ought to make such contribution, then it should do so out of general revenue. But to make a good fellow of itself at the expense of the Fremantle ratepayers cannot successfully be defended.

A simple illustration of the departure from the principle is to be found if one refers to the Local Government Act. I will

quote from section 532, subsection (7) as follows:—

Land in a district of a municipality is not rateable property while it is owned by the municipality and is used for the purposes of that municipality other than for purposes of a trading concern.

If the Legislature intended that when a municipal authority was levying rates, it would be exempt from rates on land which it owned itself while that land was being used for any purpose other than for trading purposes, then I fail to see how we are justified in making an exception to a trading concern, no matter what that trading concern is, by putting it in a class different from the municipality itself. The principle here is that we exempt land in a number of cases from rates providing such land is not used for trading. Properties exempted from rates are provided for in section 532 of the Act, and I will quote as follows:—

(1) Except where this section provides otherwise land is rateable property under this Act.

(2) Land is not rateable property if it is the property of the Crown,

(a) and is being used for a public purpose; or

(b) is unoccupied, except where and to the extent and manner in which a person mentioned in paragraph (e), (f), or (g), of the interpretation, "owner" in section six occupies, or makes use of the land.

(3) Land is not rateable property—

(a) if it is land belonging to a religious body, and is used or held exclusively as a place of public worship, a Sunday school, a place of residence of a minister of religion, a convent, nunnery, or monastery, or is occupied exclusively by a religious brotherhood or sisterhood;

If any of those organisations used any of the land under their trust for trading purposes, that land would be rateable if, in general principle, they were not entitled to pay rates unless they were using it for trading. How are we justified in singling out Co-operative Bulk Handling—which is a trading concern—and saying we will rate churches, nunneries, monasteries, religious brotherhoods, and others, if the land is used for trading purposes, but we will not rate Co-operative Bulk Handling? How on earth can we justify that attitude?

Mr. Gayfer: Would you say that C.B.H. is a trading concern?

Mr. TONKIN: Certainty; and a very successful one.

Mr. Gayfer: A trading concern sells, does it not?

Mr. TONKIN: Well, C.B.H. sells.

Mr. Gayfer: No, it does not. It handles but it does not sell.

Mr. Nalder: It is a handling authority.

Mr. TONKIN: What is the difference? Its purpose is to trade. It is not a philanthropic institution. It is in business for the specific purpose of earning profits for producers.

Mr. Gayfer: What profits does it earn?

Mr. TONKIN: What profits? Surely the honourable member will not suggest that the organisation does not obtain any revenue. It is a concern which operates on behalf of the growers and handles the produce of the country which is delivered to certain places because of statutory provisions. It is difficult to draw the line and say this organisation is in a class apart from any other organisation or body which may use land other than for the specific purpose for which the body is established. If a religious organisation owns land which it is using for a religious purpose, then the land shall be free from rates. But if it uses the land for any other purposes, the land shall not be free from rates. If a municipality owns land, and uses the land for the purposes of a trading concern, then that land is ratable.

Land is not ratable if it is used exclusively for a public hospital, a benevolent asylum, or a public school or a private school, being operated by a religious body, public library, museum, art gallery, or mechanics institute. Would any member suggest that the activities of Co-operative Bulk Handling could be placed in the same category as the activities of any of those organisations?

Mr. Gayfer: C.B.H. is not a trading concern.

Mr. TONKIN: Is its land used for charitable purposes? The situation boils down to this: If it is considered that C.B.H. should be put into the same classification as the other organisations which are exempt from rates, it should not be at the expense of the ratepayers of Fremantle. Unless rates are available from such concerns to provide the revenue for the municipality, the rates have to be increased in respect of other owners of ratable properties in the area.

The exemption for C.B.H. is at the expense of the Fremantle ratepayers, and they are entitled to object. Not only the private ratepayers, but also businesses which are already substantially rated, will have their rates increased because of this exemption. If it is considered that the organisation is carrying out an activity which is beneficial to the State, and because of that it should not be obligated to pay rates, then the State, generally, should relieve it of that cost.

That is my objection to this proposition: that is, it is unfair. It is all very well to give a handout to somebody, or to make

a present to somebody if one does it at somebody else's expense. The only fair thing to do is to do it at one's own expense. If the Government believes the special nature of this organisation entitles it to be exempted from rates, it should be exempted at the expense of the Government, and not at the expense of a section of ratepayers in a district where an installation happens to be situated. That is the great objection to this proposal.

What justification can one offer to ratepayers in the Fremantle Municipality who are already paying very substantial rates? What justification can one give to the Fremantle business people when the Government says to them, "We are going to ask you to pay a little more so that Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd., need not pay anything"? Surely they would be entitled to say, "If the Government wants to do that for C.B.H., let the Government carry the burden of it and spread it evenly throughout the State; because if this company is of such importance that it is conferring a benefit upon the State, all the people of the State should assist to carry the cost." Surely there is no argument against that! We should not say, "The special nature of this organisation entitles it to be free from rates, but so that it can be free from rates we will ask the ratepayers of Fremantle to pay the cost whilst the State, generally, gets the benefit." That is the principle which finds no favour with me, and because of the view I hold I oppose that section of the Bill.

MR. GAYFER (Avon) [11.47 p.m.]: I have listened with great interest to the speeches that have been made on the Local Government Act Amendment Bill and I quite agree with the member for Bayswater, the member for Fremantle, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the first items in the amendment which have been referred to are only machinery items and I am in agreement with them in the same way as the member for Bayswater is in agreement with them. That honourable member dealt with them very thoroughly, although I think he omitted clause 11 when dealing with the provisions in the Bill.

It would appear that the bone of contention revolves around clause 17 which seeks to exempt Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. from the payment of rates.

Mr. Graham: So it ought to be a bone of contention!

Mr. GAYFER: It is rather surprising that this clause should be debated in the manner it has been, because Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. has rendered a service to this State which should have been the responsibility of the State itself. Under the wheat stabilisation legislation, the ownership of all wheat in Australia is vested in the Australian Wheat Board,

and in the various States the wheat is delivered to the board's licensed receivers. In New South Wales there is the Grain Elevator Board; in Victoria there is the Grain Elevator Board; and in South Australia there is Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd—a company similar to the one operating in Western Australia—but none of these boards or handling agencies in the Eastern States pay any municipal rates whatsoever.

In Western Australia the licensed receiver is Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. It would appear that the crux of this matter is that at the Port of Fremantle, as at other ports, the port authority provides transit sheds on the wharves for the storage of all exportable merchandise awaiting shipment to overseas markets. The sites on which these sheds are erected on the wharves are not rated by any municipality in any form whatsoever. Prior to the formation of Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. the transit sheds which were used to handle bags of wheat on North Wharf were not subject to the payment of rates, either.

It was in 1933, I think, that it was decided to handle wheat in bulk in a big way in this State. The reasons which actuated this move were quite apparent from the experiments which had been made in this State and in the Eastern States. A transit shed on the North Wharf was converted into a temporary bulkhead for the receipt of bulk grain for shipment, and this shed was free of any rating charges by the council. Obviously, this transit shed represented just a phase of bulk handling. Exportable merchandise was awaiting shipment, and it was agreed that it could be handled with greater facility in bulk and that the saving effected would be of benefit to everybody when the exportable merchandise was handled in bulk for shipment overseas.

Today, at Fremantle, it is obvious that the huge grain installation erected in that area is, in fact, just another transit shed which has been provided entirely by the grain growers of Western Australia, because the Government and the Fremantle Port Authority have not been able to allocate any funds for this purpose. It might be of interest to members to know that last year 63,000,000 bushels of wheat were exported from the Fremantle zone through the Fremantle port, and it would have been impossible to store that quantity of wheat on the whole of the North Wharf and many acres of land behind it. That quantity of wheat definitely could not have been accommodated.

When bulk handling of grain was first introduced to Western Australia, it was intended that the Government and the port authority would provide facilities for the handling of grain at the port terminal. This is very obvious from The Bulk Hand-

making a quotation from that report I will ask members to listen to what The Hon. M. F. Troy, the Minister for Lands at that time, had to say when introducing the Bulk Handling Bill in December, 1935. His remarks are as follows:—

In compliance with the terms of this reference, the Royal Commission reported that had it not been for the fact that Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. was already established and had expended moneys on the instalment and equipment of plant, the Commission would have recommended a board similar to the Victorian Grain Elevators Board . . .

That board is a Government instrumentality. The Minister for Lands went on to say:—

The Government have decided to adopt the recommendations of the Royal Commission, and this measure is in compliance with such recommendations.

The report of the Royal Commission simply conveyed these words:—

The Government would construct at the ports the terminals for the discharge of the wheat and the grain growers would equip sidings. It was estimated that the cost at the ports would be in the vicinity of £300,000 and that the cost of the orthodox concrete or composite scheme would be financed by the Government at 4 per cent. interest.

It is obvious that this was to be an established fact. Further on in the debate on the Bulk Handling Bill, in December, 1935, the Chief Secretary, who then occupied a seat in the Legislative Council, is reported, at page 2146 of volume 2 of the 1935 *Parliamentary Debates*, to have said this:—

Whereas, in the past, the company have framed all their own conditions in regard to handling and delivery of wheat they will, in future, carry on as a public utility . . .

So, today, Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. is performing the duty of a public utility. That an endeavour was made to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission is evidenced by the fact that the Government built, and still owns, the original 300,000-bushel silo at Bunbury—and all the facilities on the wharf that go with it—from which all the wheat is conveyed from the wharf into the ships.

This silo has proved to be entirely inadequate and Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. at its own expense, has built another 1,000,000-bushel storage bin at that site. At the Fremantle port the Government owns the original silo and gallery to which C.B.H. has added another 4,000,000-bushel storage bin which cost the grain growers of Western Australia \$6,500,000.

Again, the Government had already arranged to stockpile all the materials required for the new grain terminal at the Port of Albany but it then approached Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. to purchase the materials and build the facilities at its own expense, thus enabling port authority funds to be channelled into the development of the harbour at Fremantle and so enabling a curtailment of expenditure for use in other directions at great saving to the State.

Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. previously held a license from the Government to operate its Fremantle grain installation and this is the legal technicality which was referred to by the member for Fremantle. As a holder of a license from the Government, the company was exempt from the payment of rates and it could still have operated on that license, but in view of the fact that the company has expended \$6,500,000 at Fremantle, it was necessary that the company should at least have some security over the land for its expenditure of such a large sum of money.

Originally, the Railways Department owned portion of this land; the Commonwealth Government owned portion of it, and it was necessary, to facilitate the workings of the Fremantle Port Authority, that the operations in regard to grain be co-ordinated so that the Railways Department, the Commonwealth Government authorities, and Co-operative Bulk Handling Pty. Ltd. could work together in complete co-ordination. As a consequence the land was combined into one entire lot and vested in the Fremantle Port Authority.

We must consider the position that has arisen under which C.B.H. has been compelled to build huge facilities at the ports. It could have gone into the construction of these facilities at Fremantle much earlier, if it had not had to wait for certain agreements to be signed or wait for the decision to enable it to build at Kwinana. It could have built in Fremantle much earlier than it built at Geraldton.

Over the years the grain buyers have steadily become more selective of the wheat. They were not so selective when scarce wheat was required to feed the hungry peoples of the world, but as supply overtook demand it was absolutely essential to get rid of the commodity, and to turn it out of Western Australia in the most attractive manner possible to the buyers; and these buyers are nominated by the Australian Wheat Board.

In the interests of the State and the Commonwealth, the grain growers found it was absolutely necessary to upgrade the port facilities, so that the wheat could be shipped in what might be termed a buyer-acceptable condition. To enable this to be done it was necessary to build silos

capable of segregating the wheat into its different compartments to enable it to be fumigated ready for shipment.

On top of this the order of the day in respect of shipping requirements brought along ships of 65,000 tons to 90,000 tons. Instead of the original ships of 9,000 tons which were used in the immediate post-war years. Furthermore, it was necessary for elevators to be provided to load the grain onto ships capable of loading at the rate of 1,600 tons an hour.

Wheat production in this State has increased rapidly in the last 10 years. In fact, it has increased by over 50 per cent., and in the last five years the bulk handling facilities have grown out of all recognition. All this has been achieved at a huge cost. Did the Government have to pay this cost, as it has done in New South Wales and Victoria? Did it have to provide the port authority with huge sums of money, as the Governments in other States have provided? Or was it content to allow the farmers to carry on and build the port facilities which they were not expected to build, as well as the sidings in the country areas?

In the last six years the farmers of Western Australia have spent \$30,616,142 in providing in the country areas and at the ports the facilities for the outloading of grain. They have had to provide those facilities from tolls imposed on all those who grew grain. The farmers receive no interest on the money that is raised, and all this money is lent interest free. It is more or less a gift to the company for a certain period of time to enable the installations to be built so that the company and the farmers can provide something which originally the State was intended to provide.

In New South Wales it is a Government instrumentality, and at the present moment in that State there is something like 104,000,000 bushels of storage; in Victoria there is also a Government instrumentality which provides 97,000,000 bushels of storage; in South Australia there is 39,000,000 bushels of storage; but in Western Australia there is 131,000,000 bushels of storage. So we in Western Australia are keeping up with the times and, in fact, we are ahead of all the other States. Co-operative Bulk Handling in Western Australia is performing a service to the State which no other instrumentality in the other States performs.

In New South Wales the taxpayers as a whole have paid for the storage facilities in the country and at the ports, but they are quite inadequate. The Western Australian facilities are really glorified goods sheds at railway sidings or transit sheds at the wharves. They are the same as the railways goods sheds in our country districts and at Fremantle.

In Western Australia C.B.H. has provided the required service at the receiving point, and has sent the grain with the help of the railways to other points to have the grain available for shipment. It is a handling company, and not a trading concern.

Reference has been made in this debate to a surplus of over \$1,000,000 held by C.B.H., but the word used in this House and in another place was "profit." There is no such thing as a profit in this company; the money is really the excess of actual charges over costs.

Mr. Tonkin: What happens to the money?

Mr. GAYFER: It is rebated to the farmers proportionately.

Mr. Graham: As is the case in other co-operative concerns.

Mr. GAYFER: Last year a toll of 5c a bushel was imposed, and although the amount returned to the farmers as excess over what was required worked out at 2.1c a bushel, the farmers still paid 2.9c a bushel toll for the handling of their grain.

The money which the farmers have brought into the concern has enabled it to build huge installations free of interest. Where else in Australia could we find a concern that is big-hearted enough to lend the Government the money and to save the taxpayers from having to meet the cost of these installations? Yet this company of growers started in the depression.

It should be placed on record that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, when speaking on a measure relating to C.B.H. in 1935—it is recorded on page 2075 of *Hansard* of that year—said: "In fact, I believe in the long run they will be possibly worse off." In those days it was not thought by some that the company would succeed.

C.B.H. has become a benefactor of the State, and it is a company of which we can all be very proud. This fact has not been belittled by members on the other side, but they do not seem to understand that it is not a trading concern. This Government measure before us will bring consistency into the field, and it will confirm the intentions of Parliament expressed in the Local Government Act, under which C.B.H. is given a specific exemption from the payment of rates on storage facilities erected on Government land.

I refer to the provision in the Local Government Act which appears on page 196 of *The Statutes of Western Australia*, 1962. It states that exemption is to apply to any land whilst it is leased to Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited under section 63. This brings consistency into the field. Firstly, C.B.H. did not want to establish the installations at Fremantle. Secondly, it was directed by the Government to establish those installations at Fremantle.

It is not a trading concern which can choose where to establish its installations. It was directed where to establish them.

In the country areas this very legislation which we are debating will also exempt from municipal rating land on which C.B.H. installations are built, so it does not apply only to the City of Fremantle. In the country areas it is generally the desire of the shires that this be done. The company can build on railway land and still work under the same arrangements that are at present contained in the Statutes.

When C.B.H. goes into a country town the first thing it is told by the shire is to keep the installations away from the centre of the town. The shires want the installations to be well away from the centre of the town, because usually the town is built around the installations. When the installations are built outside the towns the shire councils have often discovered that they have to use up a little of the land they own to tie it up with the railway land. Generally the position has been in a mess, wherever C.B.H. has had to build new installations.

The company has not been able to wait for complete land ratification, and it has had to go ahead with its plans. At the present time it is spending \$2,000,000 a year in country areas in providing facilities for this great industry in order that the grain might be sent through the ports to other countries. There is nothing more certain than that if C.B.H. does not provide the huge bulk facilities that are required, then in three or four years' time when the wheat production reaches 150,000,000 bushels a year we will not be able to get rid of it, regardless of whether the Australian Wheat Board sells it overseas, unless our lines of transport are modern; unless the wheat can be shifted quickly; unless the Railways Department, which is doing an excellent job, can keep up with at least 200,000 tons a month, which is equivalent to 7,500,000 bushels; and unless ships can come into the ports and load the grain at 1,600 tons an hour and take it out of the State. If not we could be left with the grain in the State.

The SPEAKER: I must draw the attention of the honourable member to the fact that what he is saying can hardly be related to the Bill. This is not a question of shipping wheat.

Mr. GAYFER: With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that I am trying to prove that C.B.H. is a public utility or facility that is taking the place of a Government instrumentality. I think my explanation of the total usage of the bulk handling facilities will prove the point that the company has gone a long way to providing the very facilities which are required to dispose of our grain production. If I am wrong I will have to continue on a different line.

The **SPEAKER**: The honourable member must relate his remarks to the Bill.

Mr. **GAYFER**: I trust that I have so related them up to the present. C.B.H. is being rated, because it has had to build its facilities on private land to meet local circumstances as there was not sufficient land available on railway land at Fremantle to build the huge facilities. That remark also applies to the facilities in the country, as I pointed out previously. There was not always sufficient land at the railway sidings to build these installations.

I now come to the question of trading. The company is not a profit-making concern. It does not trade, and it is purely a service organisation. It has been established to move grain from the country sidings to the port for export and it is not a private concern in the sense of a trading organisation. There is no profit motive. The growers have banded themselves together co-operatively to render themselves a service which should have been provided by the Government. C.B.H. has not derived any real civil rights out of the land at Fremantle. It has provided its own fire services, street lighting, drainage system, and even the railway system within the boundary of the installation. The street lighting is provided entirely by C.B.H., whilst the Fremantle Port Authority is responsible completely for all the services rendered within its boundaries.

It is not denied that Fremantle is an attractive area to industry and commerce, but I want to emphasise the fact that the location of the Fremantle terminal was in no way influenced by these services provided by the municipality. The location was entirely determined by the Government and is related to port facilities provided by the port authority.

The fact that the Government railway system provides transport for grain from the country to this point is a further reason why this facility in itself should be termed a terminal transit facility. As a grain farmer, I would like to think we were not arguing on this very point. I would like to think the Government in its wisdom had charged every taxpayer in Western Australia sufficient money to enable it to erect all the facilities that have been erected over the past few years at the ports, because it would have saved the growers a lot of loan money, because that is what it is—loan money, interest-free.

The wheat growing area in this State is equivalent to the area from Brisbane to Melbourne, through three States. This is the biggest grain-growing area to cover in the whole of Australia. In the other three States, which are highly populated, Government-owned companies have been established to provide the same facilities which this one company and one group of growers is trying to do in this State.

In the three States I have mentioned, there are five ports and C.B.H. has equip-

ped five ports in this State. Certainly in two of them—in Bunbury and Fremantle—the Government has owned portion of the facilities, but C.B.H. has had to make these facilities usable and on a parallel with the finest facilities in the whole of the world.

If the ratepayers had been charged to establish these facilities, and the cost was spread over 700,000 people, I hate to think what the Treasury would have said about that. The cost would have been out of all proportion. No-one would have been worrying about extra rates because they would not have received them in any case if the Government owned the land and erected the facilities. Furthermore, the citizens of Western Australia would have had to pay a tremendous amount in taxes in order that these facilities might be provided. On the other hand, the facilities might never have been commenced.

In South Australia it was only a few years ago that the Government turned down for the last time the request to provide these facilities, and so C.B.H. erected its own with certain Government assistance.

Therefore in all fairness, I can only present the case as I see it. This is a public utility. The terminal facilities are concrete transit sheds on the wharf, not sheets of iron and pieces of timber. The facilities entail complex electronically-controlled silos for the despatch of grain to all parts of the world. These facilities are essential because we must get rid of the grain which brings so much export-earning into this State. Without these facilities it would be almost impossible to contemplate handling the grain.

I might add that there is no other State in the Commonwealth which handles the three grains in bulk from the ports.

Therefore, I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill because I feel it is not giving C.B.H. anything to which anyone else is entitled. It is merely giving C.B.H. that to which it is entitled as a public utility erected on any land in Western Australia.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [12.22 a.m.]: I do not intend to enter into a long debate on this matter because it has been well and truly covered by the honourable member who has just resumed his seat. However, I do want to say the matter was considered by the Government and a decision was made to introduce this legislation.

The honourable member has already pointed out the service which C.B.H. has rendered by making available the whole of the handling facilities at very little cost to the State. I make this point because by arrangement in years gone by all bulk handling facilities were provided on railway property. Assistance was given to C.B.H. to erect the buildings, but by far the majority of them were erected on rail-

way property as a convenience to the Government and also for the handling of the grain. The member for Avon has just outlined the facilities that have been made available for both wheat and coarse grains. I might point out that if C.B.H. had to pay rates on its buildings throughout the State, it would have to pay over \$200,000 for just one year. Members can realise that, using that as a basis, the amount involved over the years that C.B.H. has been in operation would be a very sizeable figure.

We appreciate the value that this organisation has been to the Government of this State since it was established in the 1930s. We can express our appreciation to any organisation that has rendered such a service to the community. C.B.H. has made money available for the erection of these facilities at no cost to the Government, and this situation has been recognised from the beginning, as has been pointed out.

For the convenience of the Railways Department, these facilities were erected on railway land. Recently the authorities expressed the wish that these facilities be established away from the centre of the towns. Because of this it has been necessary for the buildings to be erected on land not owned by the Railways Department. After considering all aspects of the matter it was felt the best way to deal with the matter was under the Local Government Act, and this is the reason for this Bill. The member for Avon gave detailed reasons why it was necessary to encourage C.B.H. to continue to spend its money on improving facilities and erecting modern facilities. I think it will be agreed that this is a commendable suggestion because today with the increasing volume of grain that is being handled—and the volume will continue to increase—it is necessary to have the very latest handling facilities available to cope with the receiving and delivery of grain to the port.

I think every member has seen the modern trucks being used to convey grain from the various handling points in Merredin, Northam, and Midland Junction to the Port of Fremantle.

I appreciate the acceptance of the other amendments introduced in this Bill. Such amendments have been necessary since the original Act was enacted, and it will no doubt be necessary to introduce further amendments from time to time to assist local authorities to carry out their work in the various fields of the department. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Davies) in the Chair; Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 16 put and passed.

Clause 17: Section 532 amended—

Mr. TOMS: Members will recall that, during the second reading debate on this Bill, I indicated that I did not think this was the kind of legislation in which to include a clause such as this one. I still take strong exception to a matter of this sort being introduced into the Local Government Act. As I indicated in my earlier remarks on this measure, I believe that the right thing for the Government to have done was to introduce the provisions of this clause in separate legislation, which could be dealt with on its merits.

I listened with close interest to the remarks made by the member for Avon and I agree almost 100 per cent. with everything he said. No doubt, this State owes a good deal to Co-operative Bulk Handling. However, I consider it should also be pointed out that, possibly, necessity was the mother of invention in the establishment of Co-operative Bulk Handling initially.

The member for Avon pointed out that the Government of the day could not find the capital necessary to build these silos, nor the money necessary to shift the wheat, as it were. I suggest that with the natural progress in the development of farms in this State, surely what concerned the farmers at the time they found it necessary to take some action in connection with the disposal and storage of their wheat was that it was in their interests to do something about the matter; because it was realised that the Government of the day did not have the finance available.

I take off my hat to the farmers who banded together in this particular way and who formed themselves into a very efficient organisation. However, probably we would find if we looked a little deeper into this subject that the farmers, themselves, possibly, would be among the first to admit that not only have they saved the State a great deal of money, but, in the words of the member for Avon, the cost in respect of putting wheat through the port of Fremantle has been reduced from 5.1c per bushel to the 2.9c per bushel which applied last year.

This, in itself, is surely a saving to the farmer and represents a fairly good return for private investment. I also point out that the member for Avon indicated that 63,000,000 bushels of wheat were exported through the port last year. Therefore, I consider it is only reasonable to say that the local authority has to be concerned with more than just the maintenance of roads in this area and, also, that the contribution it is seeking is very important. The sum of approximately \$20,000 in rates is involved. I suggest one should work it out on the 63,000,000 bushels of wheat which went through the port last year. It works out that 3,150 bushels of wheat could have been exported for the cost of \$1 or, in other words, 1/33c per bushel would

have been the contribution to the local authority.

Therefore, I do not think it can be said that any great hardship will be put upon Co-operative Bulk Handling if it is asked, as an organisation, to meet this charge at the point of export. I would perhaps go a little bit of the way in regard to the gathering of the grain at certain places throughout the country, but I believe that when it comes to the point of export, this is something entirely different. Possibly on another occasion we will discuss this matter.

Apart from the relief which would be given to Co-operative Bulk Handling and which represents a very small fraction of the amount received, one of my main concerns is: Is this to be the first and only such handout? Is the Local Government Act to finish up cluttered with lists of firms right through it? I indicated in my second reading address that during the whole of the time the Road Districts Act and the Municipal Corporations Act were in operation, no firm or company was ever mentioned in them. The only time mention has been made since the Local Government Act was passed in 1960 was in 1962 when an amendment was moved which gave certain concessions. Then, for the first time in the history of local government, the name of a firm appeared in the Act.

I would ask the Government to give a fair amount of consideration to the remarks I am making with reference to the inclusion of this clause in the Local Government Act. It could have been very easily introduced as a separate Bill and, had the votes of the majority of Parliament carried it, then it could have exempted whatever companies it liked under the provisions of section 532 of the Local Government Act. However, I take strong exception to this clause being included in this measure. As I have indicated by the figures I have worked out, I consider no great hardship would be suffered by Co-operative Bulk Handling if the Government omitted the clause as it appears at the present time. Accordingly I wish to move to delete clause 17 from the Bill.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Davies): Order! If the member for Bayswater wishes to have clause 17 defeated, he must ask the Committee to vote against the clause.

Mr. TOMS: Very well, Sir. For that reason, I ask the Committee to vote against the clause.

Mr. NALDER: I cannot support the suggestion which has been made by the member for Bayswater. As I have said, this matter was discussed extensively and a decision was reached by the Government to include this amendment in the Local Government Act.

Mr. Graham: A wrong decision!

Mr. NALDER: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. Graham: No, it is not. You cannot load this onto the workers of Fremantle.

Mr. NALDER: Consideration was given by the Government to the best means of reaching a decision on the subject of Co-operative Bulk Handling and it was agreed that the inclusion of it in this clause was the most suitable way of going about it. I do not intend to go over the ground that has already been covered by members. However, I would just like to make the point that the situation has been acknowledged in other States where the handling authority has been exempted from rates. We are not cutting any new ground at all with this legislation. Therefore I oppose the suggestion made by the member for Bayswater.

Mr. FLETCHER: I must speak on this clause because I do not think it should be disposed of so briefly by the Minister on behalf of the Government. This matter is far too important to the ratepayers in the Fremantle area—the electorate which I represent.

The member for Avon is on a very sticky wicket in regard to the comments he has made on this matter. I have already said that his reactions would be different if this were to happen to any shire within his area with the result that it was denied rates.

Mr. Gayfer: It is happening; I told you that before.

Mr. FLETCHER: He would be more voluble in his opposition to the clause.

Mr. Gayfer: It has happened.

Mr. FLETCHER: In view of his interjection, I will admit it is possible that it is happening in some of the little one-horse country towns. I do not say that in any derogatory manner, but in all sincerity.

Mr. Brand: Cut out the one-horse qualification.

Mr. Craig: Call it Corrigin!

Mr. FLETCHER: Perhaps I should amend my statement to say in a small farming community. However, that term certainly cannot apply to Fremantle. Millions of tons of wheat are being exported from Fremantle, whereas only a very small quantity is being handled in the country areas. I would refer the Committee to subsection (15) (c) of section 32 of the principal Act. If this section is studied and understood, I am sure it will be agreed that that amendment was not included so as to deliberately affect Fremantle. I consider the Government is deliberately taking advantage of a provision which was included and which was concerned with small country towns. However, now it has been found convenient to use that section for this purpose.

As I have said, I do not blame the member for Avon. I mention, incidentally, that he is a director of Co-operative Bulk Handling, because this information is contained in the report which is now before me.

Mr. Graham: Self-interest!

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not want to drag in that aspect. However, I say he is quite justified in submitting his case as a member of Co-operative Bulk Handling.

Mr. Gayfer: I presented it on behalf of the wheat growers and the whole of the State in general.

Mr. FLETCHER: I accept that statement, but the honourable member's case was not a very good one. He quoted the Eastern States and the situation which prevails there. Quite frankly, I do not care what the situation is in the Eastern States; I am interested in the situation which prevails in Western Australia. The situation in the Eastern States is not denying rates to the City of Fremantle, but this measure is an attempt to do so. This fact is basically and fundamentally important because the City of Fremantle stands or falls on this issue.

I will stay here until I have voiced my opposition to this clause.

Mr. Gayfer: How do you arrive at your \$20,000 a year as being a fair rate for that installation?

Mr. FLETCHER: The honourable member should ask the town clerk and the councillors that question. I do not strike the rate, they do.

Mr. Gayfer: How do they strike the rate?

Mr. FLETCHER: That is their problem. Co-operative Bulk Handling did pay rates until it saw it could avoid doing so under this provision. Now the Country Party section of the coalition can see this opportunity, and I suspect the Liberal Party section of the coalition has gone along with it to keep it happy and make a concession to the Country Party. I would expect similar treatment if I were in the Country Party; but I belong to the Opposition, and I submit that the Fremantle City Council is entitled to rates. Every farmer who is a shareholder obtains financial benefit as a result of the handling of his grain through Fremantle territory. I would like to quote from the report of the directors of C.B.H. for the year 1965 as follows:—

During the 1964-65 season, 1,940 growers qualified to be Shareholders and 2,250 Shareholders ceased to be active growers. The shareholding remains at 14,562 with 310 shares held by the Company. To qualify for membership, a grower must have a toll credit of £1 (\$2) whereupon a £1 (\$2) share is issued to him.

Those shareholders will be better off to the extent that the City of Fremantle is de-

nied the rates; and every humble householder in Fremantle will have to pay.

Mr. Graham: While this Government pegs their basic wage.

Mr. FLETCHER: To continue to quote—

The year ended with a surplus of £658,700 (\$1,317,400), which resulted from the handling and storing of all three grains and from investments.

The Directors continued the policy of distributing portion of any surplus amongst Shareholders pro rata to the business done by them with the Company during the year. £658,700 (\$1,317,400) is being distributed on this basis.

There will be a greater distribution if rates are denied. If the Perth City Council were involved there would be a furore from the member for Perth. The member for Avon and the Minister were pre-occupied when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition referred to section 532 (7); and I would again refer members to that subsection. The municipality even rates itself; yet here is an organisation claiming immunity in the municipality area. Co-operative Bulk Handling is a very healthy organisation, and I take exception to its trying to advantage its membership at the expense of the Fremantle City Council.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Davies): The honourable member has only two minutes left, if he wishes to proceed with his amendment.

Mr. FLETCHER: I understood this clause had to be defeated, and then I would move the amendment standing in my name. Was not there a motion from the member for Bayswater?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Davies): The member for Bayswater was told he could not delete the clause; he could only vote against it. The honourable member has only one minute left if he wishes to move his amendment.

Mr. FLETCHER: I move an amendment—

Page 10, line 18—Delete all words after the word "make" to the end of the clause with a view to substituting the following:—

"an annual contribution to Municipal Rates based on unimproved value."

Amendment put and a division called for.

Remarks during Division

Mr. TOMS: In order to protect one of our members I would like to draw your attention, Sir, to Standing Order 194 which debars a member who has a pecuniary interest from speaking on certain questions. I raise the point to protect the member for Avon, because as a director he has a pecuniary interest in this matter.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Davies): I understand the procedure is for the

division to be taken and for an objection as to whether or not any member has a pecuniary interest, under Standing Order 194, to be raised when I report to the Speaker.

Result of Division

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes—15

Mr. Brady
Mr. Evans
Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Graham
Mr. Hall
Mr. Hawke
Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Jamieson

Mr. Kelly
Mr. Moir
Mr. Norton
Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Toms
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May

(Teller)

Noes—23

Mr. Bovell
Mr. Brand
Mr. Burt
Mr. Court
Mr. Craig
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Durack
Mr. Elliott
Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Grayden
Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Hutchinson

Mr. Lewis
Mr. Marshall
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Nalder
Mr. Nimmo
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Runciman
Mr. Rushton
Mr. Williams
Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Curran
Mr. Bickerton
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. Sewell

Noes

Mr. Hart
Mr. Cornell
Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Crommelin
Dr. Henn

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. TOMS: In view of the decision of the Committee in regard to the amendment moved by the member for Fremantle it leaves me no alternative but to vote against this particular clause.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Davies): If the honourable member continues his objection under Standing Order 194, his objection must be taken by substantive motion.

Mr. TOMS: I do not think there is any point in proceeding.

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

Ayes—23

Mr. Bovell
Mr. Brand
Mr. Burt
Mr. Court
Mr. Craig
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Durack
Mr. Elliott
Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Grayden
Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Hutchinson

Mr. Lewis
Mr. Marshall
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Nalder
Mr. Nimmo
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Runciman
Mr. Rushton
Mr. Williams
Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Noes—13

Mr. Brady
Mr. Evans
Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Graham
Mr. Hall
Mr. Hawke
Mr. Jamieson

Mr. Kelly
Mr. Moir
Mr. Norton
Mr. Toms
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr. Hart
Mr. Cornell
Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Crommelin
Dr. Henn

Noes

Mr. Curran
Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Bickerton
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. Sewell

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 18 to 21 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [1.8 a.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [1.9 a.m.]: I do not wish to incur the wrath of the House, but I was denied, as a consequence of the effluxion of time, an opportunity of making the worth-while point that it is not only the member for Fremantle who took exception to clause 17.

The Minister for Local Government, in another place, said that this Bill contained 21 clauses and was designed to provide amendments which have been found necessary during the course of the year and, in most cases, these have been referred to the three associations concerned with local government and have their support. I want this House to know that this Bill does not have the support of the Local Government Association.

Just before the House sat, I rang the assistant town clerk of Fremantle and he read me certain correspondence over the phone to the effect that at the meeting of the 21st October, 1966, the Local Government Association discussed correspondence of the 17th of that month from the Town Clerk of the Fremantle City Council. The Local Government Association wrote back to the City of Fremantle that a meeting of the 17th October resolved to emphatically oppose exemption of rates by legislation and wrote to the Minister accordingly. The letter was signed "White, Secretary."

A letter dated the 19th September was written to the Fremantle City Council as follows:—

Rating of C.B.H.

Advise that on behalf of the Association having written to the Minister informing after consideration of the exchange of letters between your Council and the Minister, the Association is more fully convinced that the exemption of C.B.H. from rating is contrary to the best interests of Local Government—

Mr. Gayfer: Did they hear the case put forward by C.B.H.?

MR. FLETCHER: Continuing—

—and would be a considerable step towards creating an undesirable precedent and therefore should be opposed.

Signed, White,
Secretary,

Local Government Association.

I am not saying the Minister was not aware of this, or that he did not speak in full sincerity on this matter, but I wanted to make the point that the Local Government Association sees danger in this measure. So it is not only the member for Fremantle, but also the Local Government Association of Western Australia, that takes exception to this measure.

I hope I have made my point; and I hope that if this Bill reaches another place, the Government will take cognisance of the fact it has incurred the wrath of not only the ratepayers of Fremantle, but also of the Local Government Association of Western Australia.

Point of Order

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Mr. Speaker, in the division which took place I understand, according to the Whip, there were 13 on this side of the House.

Mr. I. W. Manning: I said 15.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I was advised that only 13 members on this side of the House voted. The member for Kimberley and myself took our seats on this side of the House before the tellers were appointed.

The SPEAKER: I do not think we can deal with a point of order on a division that has already been concluded. We are now at the third reading stage.

Mr. Kelly: At what stage could we have dealt with it?

The SPEAKER: At the time the division was taken. I am informed the counting on the sheet of the teller shows 13.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

The SPEAKER: The question before the Chair is that this Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading: Defeated

Debate resumed from the 24th November.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay—Chief Secretary) [1.15 a.m.]: This Bill was introduced by the member for Balcatta last week, and he sought to amend the Adoption of Children Act. I might say at the outset that personally I was impressed with the case he put forward as to the necessity for amending the Act on the lines he suggested. I also feel that other members appreciated the views expressed by him. I naturally sought the views of the Minister for Child Welfare in another place and he too, from the brief opportunity he had to study the remarks of the honourable member, thought that

something could possibly develop from the suggestions made. Nevertheless, at this stage he felt it correct to oppose the Bill introduced by the honourable member.

I think this point of view can be appreciated because of the implications involved in so many ways, particularly from a legal point of view. The Bill suggested that to preserve the secrecy surrounding an adoption order, the adopted child's emotional and legal status shall be identical with the status of a natural child of the adopting family. That is the crux of the Bill; but it also seeks to secure for the adopted child complete equality in rights of inheritance with his adoptive brothers and sisters.

If I recall correctly I interjected when the honourable member was introducing his Bill and he was emphasising a case known to him personally where, if his suggestion could be adopted, it would benefit the adopting parents considerably. My interjection was to the effect, "How would other people react who wanted to know the names of the children being adopted?" The honourable member said he was not aware of that attitude.

The Minister for Child Welfare said that so far as the preservation of secrecy is concerned, it has to be remembered that the fact of adoption is one which may be of importance in future dealings, either civil or criminal. It may also be of importance in another country if the family moves overseas.

It is necessary, therefore, that the basic documents recording an adoption contain the essential facts for the identification of the adopted child, not only in Western Australia but overseas.

The total effect of clauses 3 and 5 in the Bill is to withhold from the adopting parents—and later from the adopted person—any document which would permit them, or him, to establish his original identity or his adopted status.

Members may know that the States are at present moving toward a form of adoption order which will be recognised by foreign countries. The present proposals are very likely to make overseas recognition of Western Australian orders much more difficult.

While superficially it may appear that the fact of adoption should be known to as small a circle of persons as possible, it must be remembered that the principal Act makes it necessary for a child over the age of 12 years to be consulted and his consent authorised prior to his adoption. The amendments seem to ignore this necessity.

Whereas a minority of persons adopting a child are not interested in the original name of the child or its parents, the experience of the Child Welfare Department indicates that the majority of adopters do wish to know—and for a good reason: They wish to protect their adopted

child from accidental contact with his own siblings and the possible formation of embarrassing and even prohibited relationships with them.

It would be unwise to legislate for the sentimental wishes of a minority and against the reasonable wishes of the majority of adopting parents in this regard.

That is the crux of the objection by the Minister at this stage. Therefore I would suggest that the honourable member, and the House, accept the reasoning advanced as to why no support will be forthcoming from the Government side at this stage. However, I do give an undertaking that this matter will be the subject of further discussion with the Minister for Child Welfare, who will no doubt seek further clarification from the member for Balcatta regarding certain features of the proposals. Therefore, I oppose the Bill.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [1.21 a.m.]: Needless to say, I am disappointed at the attitude of the Government in respect of this matter. It is not as though I have suddenly thrown a new idea into the ring, because I was informed by the Director of Child Welfare more than 12 months ago that he was investigating this matter, and was making inquiries in all the other States of the Commonwealth.

Indeed, in February of this year, I received from him a letter indicating that he was moving in the direction which I now seek. I would like to quote from a letter dated the 15th February last in which he says—

So far as this Department is concerned, the Regulations under the amended Adoption of Children Act are, at present, being revised. An arrangement similar to that in Tasmania will be made so that, in general, the name of the child will not be revealed to the adopting parents, but it may be made known to them if they have adequate reasons for wishing to know it.

That is the essence of my Bill; namely, but it may be made available if the able to the adopting parents automatically, but it may be made available if the adopting parents feel they have good cause, or reason, and make application to a court which, if satisfied, will make the information available. I am not blaming the Chief Secretary. What the Chief Secretary has been told by the Minister for Child Welfare is all poppycock. This is something which has been concocted in the hope that it will go down amongst members and in the hope that the person responsible for introducing the Bill would not have a suitable answer.

All this talk about the difficulties in other parts, and so on, will not hold water, because of the remarks made by the responsible Minister in Queensland; but first the words of our own director in Western Australia. I quote his exact words—

In Queensland, the adopters are not made aware of the surname of the child.

And the Minister in the State of Queensland in a letter to me says—

The form of application to adopt a child is on the basis of "being desirous of being authorised to adopt a child" and neither the name of the child nor its parents' is contained in this application. The only document on which both the names of the child, the natural parents and the adopting parents are shown is the Adoption Order, and this document is not available to any of the parties but is filed in the Register of Adoptions held by the Director of State Children. Access to this Register may only be obtained on order of the Supreme Court of Queensland.

Yet, we are led to believe that, on the advice of the Child Welfare Department, the Government has all sorts of objections which are presumed to be valid. The experience in the State of Queensland is to the contrary. I repeat that the Child Welfare Department in this State has indicated to me in a communication that it is moving in the direction of what I seek.

There has been no answer given—and I suggest no answer has been attempted—to the request contained in my Bill that after this Bill becomes law—if that be the pleasure of Parliament—the provision of a parent leaving his estate to his children will include children who have been adopted.

I would like to quote from the Adoption of Children Act of 1964 in Queensland which says on page 5—

Welfare and interests of child to be paramount: For all purposes of this Part, the welfare and interests of the child concerned shall be regarded as the paramount consideration.

It goes on to say on page 11—

... upon the making of an adoption order—

- (a) the adopted child becomes a child of the adopter or adopters, and the adopter or adopters become the parent or parents of the child, as if the child had been born to the adopter or adopters in lawful wedlock;
- (b) the adopted child ceases to be a child of any person who was a parent (whether natural or adoptive) of the child before the making of the adoption order, and any such person ceases to be a parent of the child.

So, there is the Statute which lays down that those who adopt shall become

in effect, so far as the law is concerned, the parents and the only parents of the child. I would like to make one more quote from page 12—

Effect of orders as regards dispositions of property, etc: (1) The provisions of subsection (1) of section twenty-eight . . .

which is the one I have just quoted; to continue—

. . . of this Act have effect in relation to dispositions of property whether by will or otherwise, and whether made before or after the commencement of this Act,—

In this respect, it is going further than I intended; to continue—

. . . except that—

- (a) those provisions do not affect a disposition of property by a person who, or by persons any of whom, died before the commencement of this Act; and
- (b) those provisions do not affect a disposition of property that has taken effect in possession before the commencement of this Act.

It will be seen from the quotations I have made from the Queensland Adoption of Children Act that what I have sought to do in my Bill in the matter of inheritance is on all fours with what is being done in Queensland and which, on the word of their Minister, has operated quite satisfactorily.

In respect of the matter of withholding the names and addresses of the parents I repeat, Mr. Speaker, the parents could be my young son and your young daughter, and I do not know why either of them should have it recorded on a document for other people to read and to circulate the news far and wide if they care. It is a different matter, of course, where the kiddie is older; but nobody seeking to adopt a young child is entitled to all of the information in respect of the child. Whether its father be Smith, and its mother be Jones, does not make that child any better or any worse; nor does the fact of whether the child was born in wedlock or out of wedlock. But, with regard to whether the parents were tall, or short, or athletic, or studious, or intellectual, or had some health factor, or anything at all of that nature, the adopting parents are entitled to that information. However, the provision of the other information is only throwing the door open to persons who seek to adopt children in respect of matters which should be retained as absolutely private.

I have already indicated—when I introduced the Bill—the shattering effect it has had in the suburb of Nedlands where

somebody who had access to these documents found out the circumstances with regard to the daughter of a next-door neighbour. Surely the Minister and this Government do not seek to justify a continuance of that sort of thing! It is completely inhuman to give to a person who is thinking of adopting a child the name and address of some luckless girl to whom the child was born out of wedlock.

If there were no other way the present procedure would have to be adopted; but it is done in another way in one State, where it appears to operate quite satisfactorily. It operates not only in Queensland but also in the Northern Territory.

For the last time during this session, with particular application to this measure, I make the strongest possible protest against the attitude of members of the Government who in their arrogance will give false information, and will seek to pull the wool over our eyes for the purpose of defeating or rejecting a proposal. I am not blaming the Minister in this Chamber, because he represents the Minister in charge of child welfare administration.

If there were good, substantial, and valid reasons in opposition to the measure before us, and if they were submitted, not only I but other members would be prepared to acknowledge them. But the reasons given are not valid; they are fabrications, and they will not stand analysis. Apart from the effect upon me, members on both sides of the House are entitled to better treatment.

Originally when I learned of the attitude of this Government to the Bill I thought it would perhaps receive a kinder fate than appears to be inevitable, but because of the shabby treatment I have received it is my intention to call for a division and to place it on record that the Government defeated the measure. I hazard a guess that before many years have passed, what I have proposed in the Bill will become the law of the State. It is only because of the pettiness of the Minister and the Government that my proposition will not be agreed to.

I hope and trust there are some members on the Government side who have some regard for facts and truths; I hope there are a number who have consciences and will not allow this sort of thing to continue. With these words, I leave the decision of the matter to the House.

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

Ayes—15

Mr. Brady
Mr. Davies
Mr. Evans
Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Graham
Mr. Hall
Mr. Hawke
Mr. W. Hegney

Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Kelly
Mr. Moir
Mr. Norton
Mr. Toms
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May

(Teller)

Noes—22

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Brand	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Burt	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Court	Mr. Nelder
Mr. Craig	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Dunn	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Durack	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Elliott	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Williams
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Noes

Mr. Curran	Mr. Hart
Mr. Rowberry	Mr. Cornell
Mr. Rhatigan	Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Crommelin
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Sewell	Dr. Henn

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE

Establishment of Industries in Country Centres: Motion

Debate resumed from the 24th November, on the following motion by Mr. Kelly:—

That in the opinion of this House, in order to achieve a better planned development of the State, more emphasis must be placed upon the establishment of industries in country centres.

In order to stimulate and encourage industry to develop in appropriate districts, the State must be prepared to offer special inducements by way of—

- (a) railway freight concessions;
- (b) lower charges to cover the supply of water and power;
- (c) subsidies.

To this end, it is imperative that a portfolio of decentralisation be established, and a Minister appointed to give special attention to this phase of Government.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [1.37 a.m.]: The member for Merredin-Yilgarn moved this motion which deals with decentralisation, and I will endeavour to reply—as briefly as I can—in view of the undertaking given by the Premier that this matter and some others will be dealt with during the currency of this Parliament.

I was rather surprised that the honourable member moved this motion. When he first placed it on the notice paper and until he moved it, I thought he was intending to deal with the general question of decentralisation, but it became apparent in the course of his remarks that the motion was directed purely at a parochial issue so far as he was concerned.

In considering the question of decentralisation in Western Australia we have to have regard for the fact that we are dealing with an area which is nearly the

size of India—nearly 1,000,000 square miles in extent. It is more appropriate that we should ask what are our objectives and horizons in regard to decentralisation. Are we to think in terms of a town, a district, a region, or a number of regions which go to make up the tremendous area of this State? So far as the Government is concerned we think in a series of regions which make up Western Australia. Geographically it is divided into logical regions—the Esperance, the great southern, the south-west, the metropolitan, and the area based around Geraldton. Then we go on to the Gascoyne, Ashburton, Pilbara, and into the Kimberleys.

In spite of what the member for Merredin-Yilgarn claims, the greatest regional developmental programme in the history of Australia is, in fact, being undertaken in this State at the present time. Wherever one goes, from Esperance in the extreme south, to Wyndham in the far north, some development of an important character is taking place. We as a Government do not look at decentralisation, or regional development, which is a better term to use, as purely a matter of attracting industry. When we think of regional development, we think in terms of all the things that go with it, including the infrastructure which is vital to this development; and whether an area is predominantly agricultural or mining, or a combination of agricultural, mining, and manufacturing, it matters not. We have to have regard for the facilities, the services, and the industries that are necessary to make up a proper developmental programme.

The honourable member did not put forward anything that could really be classed as a constructive idea. I was prompted to check on his ministerial record and found he was the Minister for Industrial Development for three years, from 1954 to 1957, to be precise. I could not recall, and neither could I find in *Hansard* and the Estimate records, any great achievement by the honourable member during his period as Minister for Industrial Development. It is in this portfolio we would expect him to show his initiative, imagination, and creative thought to which he referred during his remarks.

We should be able to look back and see some lead from his own performance as to where we could improve on what we are doing today. But I am afraid I could not find any, and those with whom I talked on this particular issue could not make any suggestions, either.

One of the points on which the honourable member laid emphasis was the question of railway freight concessions, amongst other inducements to the establishment of industry in the country. I invite the attention of the honourable member to the fact that traditionally with all Governments the railway freights in

this State have been very heavily telescoped in favour of longer distances—more than in any other State. This is part of a deliberate programme.

Also there is discrimination—again part of a deliberate programme by succeeding Governments—in favour of certain products which are very competitive internationally in the export field, and for other reasons. We have discriminated against these different products so they receive lower freight rates than others to assist them in this great task of development. This has been quite a successful programme. It is not peculiar to this Government but it is one that has been basic to our railway transport system.

The honourable member then went on to deal with power and water. I invite his attention to the fact that in the field of water the State has, as a matter of policy—and again not peculiar to this Government—subsidised the country water supplies to the tune of some \$55,387,250 since the inception of the scheme. Last year there was a loss on the scheme of \$5,541,890 and the previous year the loss was \$4,565,378.

Mr. Kelly: What period are you covering with that statement?

Mr. COURT: This surely is an indication of Government policy. Efforts are made to keep down costs on water in rural areas. We cannot consider the policy of operating country water supplies on the basis of very heavy losses, and increasingly heavy losses, in any other way than as a form of subsidy to keep the costs down to assist rural and general decentralised development.

On the question of power, wherever S.E.C. power is reticulated, we find industrial power is the same as in the metropolitan area, and surely this in itself is an indication of the Government's endeavours to provide the service on as attractive a basis as could reasonably be expected. If we are not to charge the rates operating in the metropolitan area, what rates are we going to charge? If we charge lower rates, who is going to subsidise those rates? Are we going to do it on a straightout subsidy basis from the Treasury, or by increasing the rates in the metropolitan area to reduce the prices in rural areas?

The honourable member asked what the Government had done generally to develop industry outside the metropolitan area. In regard to inland and seaside towns, to which he referred, obviously he is not very well up to date with what is going on because, contrary to what he says, some of the local committees have been very effective indeed. It is true some of them have been very inactive and have dropped by the wayside, but in most cases this has been because there has been a complete lack of local interest and the committees have had no great drive to

keep them functioning. The Government has, nevertheless, been anxious to assist any which have shown a spark of enthusiasm. I do not know of any committee that would deny this. In fact, most of them are very enthusiastic about the amount of assistance that is available to them and, in many cases, has been used by them.

I do not suggest that every time an investigation is made in one of these areas, a success story results, because some ideas submitted are completely impractical; but the officers concerned who are very experienced and capable and have now accumulated a lot of knowledge in this sort of thing, do their utmost to demonstrate whether or not an industry is practical. Usually—and by that I mean almost without exception—they are able to obtain the agreement of the local people to the viewpoint they submit.

Apparently the honourable member overlooks a lot of the industries that have been established in these areas. I refer, for instance, to the progress made in the engineering industry, to encourage some of these districts to develop an engineering service which is very essential to the local community. This is stretching to towns like Esperance, Albany, Busselton, Harvey, and Wagin, to name but a few of the places where we have had considerable success in explaining to the local people just what advances can be made in the engineering services which provide an industry and at the same time provide a better service to the local community.

I have in mind the success in getting the Kalgoorlie Industry renegotiated so as to provide a more efficient and effective foundry and engineering service for the goldmining industry. I refer to the reorganisation taking place in connection with the Warman industry.

This does not end with the southern part of the State. We have had considerable success in some parts of the north. For instance at one stage there was not a single panel beater in the north. This might seem a comparatively small industry but it does indicate the fact that no industry is too small to attract the attention of the Government and the efforts of the department. We were able to negotiate to establish a panel beater in the north. This is an industry which has commenced in a small way but could expand. He is a tremendous advantage to the people in the north who carry insurance on motor vehicles. I think most, if not all, the motor vehicle insurance for that area is carried by the State Government Insurance Office and that office joined with the department in assisting to establish someone up there.

We have had some success in establishing a little laundryman in Port Hedland. He started in a small way with a little local service. He is a disabled person, but at least he has had the enterprise to want

to render a service and he has now expanded in a most commendable way and has quite a sizeable industry. I give these as examples of what can be and is being done to try to select industries suitable for the locations.

Mr. Jamieson: What was the last industry to which you referred?

Mr. COURT: It was a man giving a laundry service in Port Hedland.

Mr. Jamieson: I thought you said a small laundromat.

Mr. COURT: No. I do not want to get into that one at the moment. I might be getting prosecuted. That was another case where we endeavoured to seek out an industry that could succeed. We would not under any circumstances assist such an industry in the metropolitan area because plenty of people have established such industries on their own initiative. We would not help a panel beater in the metropolitan area either. However, it is Government policy to be prepared to give this sort of assistance to people in areas outside the metropolitan area.

In fact, we do relax the rule completely in respect of assistance in various forms where industries are outside the metropolitan area. We have a rule that we do not assist an industry within the metropolitan area where somebody else has established a similar one on their own initiative. That rule applies to the metropolitan area, but when it comes to the rural areas and the northern areas, we do relax this rule, because the whole situation is entirely different.

In running very quickly through the list, I just mention these points to indicate that, quite apart from the more spectacular and more obvious industries, this probe is going on all the time; and I defy any member in this Chamber to quote a case where the Department of Industrial Development—or the Government, generally—has been asked to assist any one of these small industries and that assistance has not been given if it has been considered worthy; or alternatively, it has been demonstrated to the applicant or to the local community that such assistance was not desirable. There are times when the Government is doing the person concerned a kindness in demonstrating the impracticability of not agreeing.

Mr. Kelly: You have done a lot of kindnesses in your time.

Mr. Williams: We have given a lot of help, too.

Mr. COURT: I would not like to feel the Government was sufficiently irresponsible to encourage someone to come into a business for the sake of satisfying a local whim. I know of no community which has not been satisfied in the way this is handled.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn referred at some length to the question of

iron ore and was inclined to play down what is happening. I am not here tonight to discuss this development beyond saying that, if he knew then of these great quantities of iron ore to which he referred—and he referred right back to the days when he was managing a station in the north—it occurs to me that, as Minister for Industrial Development—and as Minister for Mines for a considerable period of time—he did not do sufficient about it: because if he knew of these prodigious quantities of ore, that, in itself, would be sufficient for him to have made effective representations to have this embargo lifted. The Commonwealth kept this embargo on the basis of approximately 340,000,000 tons of high-grade iron ore, but the tonnage we are talking about now is running into prodigious figures.

The way the honourable member spoke about it, this fact was known during the period of his employment in the northern parts when a person called on him and brought him all of those samples from the property to which he referred.

I do not want to dwell on this subject beyond the fact that this industry is off the ground, except to make one point. Although what has happened up to date in getting the towns, railways, and ports developed might be described as spectacular, the most vital part of our work and the part to which we are devoting most of our energy is in connection with the metallising of these ores.

I am quite certain that in the years that lie ahead—and much sooner than most people realise—we will be undertaking metallising of these ores in the north at a rate that would currently be thought impossible by many people. The technical advances that are taking place and the negotiations which are current will see not only a stepping up of the pelletising over the next few years, but I am quite confident that, by the year 1978 at the latest, we will have a complete metallising programme in the north, particularly at Dampier.

Surely this, in itself, is a tremendous objective because once a break-through is made in this field, the number of industries that grow up around—service industries and support industries—are tremendous.

The honourable member then referred to his question of superphosphate and the potential works at Merredin. He did not give a fair statement of the position. I suppose his criticism of me is all part of the political game, but I do not like people of his experience criticising very conscientious officers in the way he did. I believe the team who did this job were very conscientious and capable. Just because they did not come out with the finding which the local people wanted does not condemn their work.

He said too much emphasis was being placed on the economics of the proposition, but what other emphasis can be placed where money is involved and capital has to be raised? It is true the team did place emphasis on the economics of the proposition, because it was the only natural point on which to place emphasis. This committee was quite prepared to sit down to discuss the matter with local representatives, and it did. The report I received from Merredin was that there was complete harmony, understanding, and appreciation after the discussions that took place between the officers and the local people. The departmental officers explained their point of view and their reasons, and the local people, in turn, gave their reasons.

Mr. Kelly: You are deluding yourself.

Mr. COURT: No I am not.

Mr. Kelly: Yes, you are.

Mr. COURT: Well then, somebody has been speaking to me in one voice and to the honourable member in another. I am quite prepared to place on record the names of the people concerned who, I am sure, did not deceive the Minister for Agriculture as well as myself on this point. One thing was made very clear to us following these discussions between the selected representatives of the Merredin people and this committee: the representatives said they had an entirely different viewpoint and appreciated better the reason why certain finding had been made.

This is not the end of the matter. If the people want to confer with this committee and if they want to make use of these officers, they are readily available. However, no-one seems to want to make use of them. These are competent people; one is a specialist in agricultural economics and the other is a specialist in ordinary economics. These men are available to the local community to assist them with their study of this project. If some of the people in Merredin would get it into their heads that the Government is trying to help and is trying to find an economic proposition, instead of their saying the Government is opposed to what they are suggesting, they would get a long way further.

On this question of superphosphate production, let us look at the situation in this State. We have the most decentralised production of superphosphate of anywhere in Australia. Production is carried out at Esperance, the metropolitan area, Bunbury, Albany and Geraldton. Surely, this is a logical dispersion at this point of time. This does not mean to say that it is the end, but at this stage of negotiation I consider the Government has done a very good job in attracting superphosphate works to these five distinct places which I have mentioned; namely,

Geraldton, the metropolitan area, Bunbury, Albany, and Esperance.

From this start, I think the production of superphosphate will develop in a logical way. In these areas, ports have been developed by the Government and all of them now have land-backed wharves to facilitate both the receipt and the despatch of the requirements of an area. The phosphate rock and the sulphur from overseas can be brought in, and the distribution of the manufactured superphosphate is effected in an arc around these ports.

In view of the lateness of the hour and, in fact, of the session, I do not want to take up any more time on this matter. However, I do think the honourable member would have been on stronger ground if he had presented his motion on a State-wide basis and put forward some constructive ideas, instead of putting forward his carping criticism of what the Government has, or has not, allegedly done.

The final point in his motion was in respect of a minister for decentralisation. Just as the Opposition made it very clear in its policy speech that it would appoint a minister for decentralisation, the Premier made it very clear in his policy speech that he would not have a bar of the suggestion for the very good reason that any Government which has to have one minister devoted to this portfolio is failing in its duty. It is failing in its duty, because no Government that is worth its salt in a State as big as ours can afford to isolate this one aspect. Surely, every Minister has to have as his objective the development of the whole of the State.

I consider the adoption of this attitude has been, in effect, the success of this Government. The simple fact is that during the period of this Government, the amount of road expenditure allocated to the decentralised areas of the north has gone up from something like 12 per cent., or 13 per cent. of the State's total to something over 26 per cent. The amount of loan funds has gone from about 6 per cent. to about 9.8 per cent. and at one stage I believe it was 10 per cent.

Mr. Tonkin: And taxation about 100 per cent.!

Mr. COURT: I suggest that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wait a moment. The proportion of consolidated revenue is approximately 50 per cent. greater *per capita* in the northern part of the State than the State average.

Surely this is an indication of a whole Government at work trying to achieve decentralisation, instead of one Minister running around in his own way trying to create interest in decentralisation. I think the way this Government is trying to achieve the objective is the only way in a State as vast as Western Australia. I oppose the motion.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [2.1 a.m.]: In replying to the debate on the motion, the Minister for Industrial Development made an attempt to prove that the motion which I have submitted to this House was local and parochial. I think those are the words he used. Of course the Minister is not very convincing once he becomes sarcastic on matters such as this. I think he failed dismally to get his ideas over, because we are accustomed to the egotism of the Minister and his method of handling these matters.

So I think he started off on the left foot, as against his normal practice of putting his right foot forward first. He referred to superphosphate as being one of the matters discussed parochially during the debate on this motion. Of course, there had to be some examples, but a little later on the Minister said nothing had been indicated in regard to a particular instance where decentralisation could have occurred, but did not.

Mr. Court: I did not say your motion was parochial; I said that your presentation of it became parochial.

MR. KELLY: No, the Minister said the motion was parochial.

Mr. Court: I said your presentation was parochial.

MR. KELLY: Anyway, the Minister proceeded to use the motion to boost the prestige of the Government, if that is possible. I do not know how this Government, which attempts to harness the people of the State to the degree it has by imposing increased taxes and charges and to which the Minister for Industrial Development is prepared to contribute, can have the effrontery to proceed to boost the Government's shares and advance the Government's claims for what it has done. As a matter of fact, on several occasions during the course of my remarks I gave the Government full credit for what it is doing and the Minister himself was mentioned by me at least on one occasion.

However, I did temper those remarks with a comment that the Government was most fortunate it had iron ore at its disposal on taking office. The iron ore deposits of this State were in existence not only at the turn of the century when most discoveries of the deposits were made, but have been in existence for all time. I indicated that because of this fortuitous circumstance, the Government was able to accomplish greater development of the State, and I did not wish to detract any credit for what it had done.

However, I do want the Minister to know that it was not because of the work of the Government or the work of the Minister that this mineral wealth has been developed. The Government found itself in very fortunate circumstances when taking office not only in regard to

the development of iron ore deposits, but also in regard to other development.

In his concluding remarks the Minister tried to indicate to this House that iron ore production had opened avenues for many other forms of production. Of course it has. That was the point of my remarks, and the reason why I had so much to say on iron ore production. The Minister attempted to belittle the motion, but it is a motion that calls for greater progress and development of industry in country centres, instead of placing all our eggs in one basket as the Government is doing at present.

If agreed to, the implementation of the motion will represent some attempt to achieve a form of balance with decentralisation in every progressive district throughout the State. The Minister talked a lot of drivel about developing laundries and industries of that kind. I indicated we had cement works and some odd joinery works already established, but these are only pettifogging compared to the progress that has been going on over a period of years. All the development achieved by the Government has been made possible because of the lifting of the ban on iron ore production.

Mr. Court: Many of these things had been in progress before the development of iron ore.

MR. KELLY: The Minister said I had a period of time when I could have done something about the industrial development of the State. Of course, the Government of which I was a member could have done that if the ban on the export of iron ore had been lifted.

Mr. Court: Many things were done before the lifting of the ban.

MR. KELLY: A band of 28 or 30 men who could not make something out of iron ore once the ban was lifted would have been a poor old lot.

Mr. Court: That was not all that was done.

MR. KELLY: That was when the Minister spoke about a laundry. There are all sort of twopenny-halfpenny laundries established in many parts of Western Australia, but they have always managed to be established when people have been in sufficient numbers to require a laundry. The same applies to the provision of water supplies and the general development of the State. That all comes under the heading of natural development. The Minister cannot claim any credit for instituting those things.

The Minister referred to the small amount of development that had been done by the Labor Government. I will tell the Minister that during our term of office, two of the people who are interested today received brochures and all the information available we had here in an endeavour to bring an integrated steel

industry to this State. I am speaking of the Kaiser and Rio Tinto groups.

Mr. Court: You did not get very far.

Mr. KELLY: No; again because of the ban on the export of iron ore. I have never heard the Minister, from the beginning to the end of his speech, so unconvincing as he was on this particular occasion. He started off by saying that he did not want to keep the House too long, or to do anything that would upset the equilibrium of the people who were in this State today. I do not want to do that either, but I want to refute those statements which the Minister made in a feeble way.

The Minister dealt with water reticulation. However, he went back 30 or 40 years for the purpose of quoting figures to indicate what the Government had spent to promote interest in country centres by supplying those centres with a water supply or whatever else was possible.

That was not the point I was making in my motion. The point I raised in the motion was that to encourage industrial development projects in the country, the provision of water and cheap power were the two main items to which the Government should give consideration in an endeavour to lower costs, because many industries which people had endeavoured to establish in country districts had met with frustration because of the high cost of water and power when they made their initial efforts.

Mr. Court: The Premier is all ears to learn how you can get cheap water to the country.

Mr. KELLY: If the Premier continues to increase the taxes as he has in the last few weeks he will have no difficulty in supplying water to the country, because no one else will have any money—he will have the lot.

Mr. Court: Prosperous State and low unemployment: these are the important things.

Mr. KELLY: The Minister makes *sotto voce* remarks which are only heard by the *Hansard* reporters; and nine times out of 10 the member who is making the speech does not know of the wisecrack made by the Minister until he sees a copy of *Hansard*. The Minister spoke of the local committees and endeavoured to gloss over the business by saying they did a great job except in some cases where they had not been over enthusiastic. The Minister raised a Frankenstein monster, and because it went sour on him he made disparaging remarks about these particular sections. I asked him what he had achieved and he referred to the matter of a laundry. If that is the only reference he could make it is certainly a poor look-out.

I think the Minister did the best side-stepping we have seen from him this ses-

sion. He has been pretty good at side-stepping on one or two other occasions, but never as good as this. What the Minister indicated was mere chicken-feed progress; nothing better than that.

Mr. Court: We happen to have the proud record of the fastest growth rate and the lowest unemployment; and, to my mind, they are important to the workers of this State.

Mr. KELLY: Is the Minister allowed to make two speeches, Mr. Speaker? The Minister tried to make out that what I said about iron ore was criticism; but nothing was further from my mind. I think I am able to realise the progress we are making in that regard and, as I have indicated on previous occasions, all of us know the reason why we are making this progress. So there is no necessity to go any further into that.

Finally, when referring to the question of super and the people of Merredin, the Minister dragged in the Minister for Agriculture, which was unfair of him; because the people of Merredin and those within a radius of 70 miles of the town do not think very much of the Minister's decision not to establish a super works at Merredin. They are not very satisfied with the findings of the Government in this matter. It is not, as the Minister tried to make out, purely a political outlook. The district is suffering from a frustrated outlook. I do not care what the Minister says so far as the people of Merredin are concerned, because it is not only the people but the farmers of the district who will benefit. But all they have been offered by way of red herrings are depots.

So when the Minister for Industrial Development says that the people are satisfied and that the Minister for Agriculture can back him up in this, it is just so much drivel, and I am not prepared to accept that statement from the Minister because it is not true.

Mr. Court: You are distorting what I said.

Mr. KELLY: I am not; that is what the Minister said by implication.

Mr. Court: Not by implication at all.

Mr. KELLY: I am not prepared to accept that, when I have the evidence in writing from the people concerned. I did not expect the Minister to fall around my neck and wholeheartedly support what I said; though I did think he might amend my motion. There are a number of matters which the Minister skipped and made light of so far as the general motion was concerned.

The Minister said I spoke at length on the iron ore industry, which had nothing to do with the motion at all. That, of course, is just nonsense, which I told the Minister when he made the statement. It

My thanks also go to the backbenchers and private members who have supported us right through; we appreciate their loyalty and their support in the difficult measures which have been passed.

Tonight I wish to make special mention of the Leader of the Opposition. Today he announced his retirement from the leadership of the Labor Party in this State. He has a very fine record of achievement—33½ years in this Parliament, 30 of which were spent in executive positions of one kind or another. Irrespective of the side of the House we sit on we all recognise the great leadership of the Leader of the Opposition, his capacity for work, and his ability to overcome difficulties. I am sure it is recognised by all that his administration in every capacity—as Premier or in a ministerial position—has been discharged with credit to himself and with satisfaction to all concerned.

He has represented Northam over a long period. This is a closely settled town, yet it is in a rural district. He has been able to preserve the balance between the different sections of the community in that electorate. I am glad he will continue as a private member after the 31st December next. We have the opportunity to place on record our appreciation, and I am sure we all want to express the wish that not only will Christmas and New Year be a happy experience for him, but that the decision which he made today will turn out to be all that he hopes and plans, and that he will enjoy good health and relaxation in the years that lie ahead.

To the Deputy Leader of the Opposition who is ever onwards, and is another untiring worker, and to the members on the front and back benches of the Opposition, go our very good wishes for a happy Christmas and New Year.

To the Whips, to the Press, to Mr. and Mrs. Burton, and to all the staff of Parliament House, I extend very special thanks for the way in which they have served members so well. We hope their Christmas will be what all Christmasses ought to be, and that 1967 will hold only happiness, contentment, and prosperity for them.

I must not forget to pay a tribute to the leader of the Government and the Ministers in the other House. They have had a very heavy session, and my thanks go to them for the work they have done. A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to one and all.

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [2.30 a.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I would join with the Premier in conveying appreciation and thanks to you, to the Chairman of Committees, to the Deputy Chairmen, to the officers of the House, and to all employees round and about Parliament House for the wonderful service which we have received during this ses-

sion. I would like to say a special word of congratulations to *Hansard* upon the miracle they have achieved this session in getting the *Hansards* to us on Tuesdays of each week.

Mr. Brand: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAWKE: That is a remarkably good performance on their part and it is very much appreciated by every member of each House of the Parliament.

You, Sir, have become a bit controversial in spots. From a purely party-political point of view I could wish you would write more letters; but on the personal friendship basis, which has developed between us and which I think has broadly developed between you and all members, I thank you for your work as Speaker. I think you have nothing to lose by comparison with all the Speakers of the past.

I notice today you brought up a ruling made in 1927 by Thomas Walker, as he was then. There have been great Speakers in this Parliament. I have served under quite a few of them and I am sure, Sir, you have done a great job—an impartial job—on practically all occasions and I can even forgive you for the ruling you gave against my deputy leader a few days ago, a ruling which you described today as generous. I think it was generous in the extreme; and when a thing becomes generous in the extreme, it reaches the borderline of being dangerous.

I am naturally very grateful to my deputy leader, to the Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party and all members of the party on this side who have been so loyal and so generous to me over a long period of time. I am particularly grateful to the member for Collie and to the member for Merredin-Yilgarn for having given me so many hours of relaxation in the billiard room in the process of which, mind you, they have taken many 2s. pieces away from me.

I am also grateful to the Controller of Parliament House, not so much in his capacity as Controller of the House, but in his capacity as my main tennis opponent on the green tennis court yonder; and to a lesser degree to the member for Dale who, until he ran a little nail into his big toe, was also one of my opponents on the tennis court.

I also thank my colleagues in the other House of Parliament for their loyalty and work. Naturally I am very grateful to the Premier for the generous remarks he has made towards me this morning. After 33½ years in Parliament, with 30½ of those years being spent in executive office, I have some feelings of regret at the decision which has been made by me to retire from the leadership of the Parliamentary Labor Party and, of course, from the position of Leader of the Opposition. But those regrets although deep, do not overshadow the decision which I have made, because I

feel the decision is a proper one in all the circumstances.

When this session ends I will feel a heavy load of responsibility has gone from my shoulders and when I come here next session to take a seat over yonder with the friendly member for Albany, I am sure I will feel great burdens have gone from my shoulders and great responsibility from my mind. I will watch the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly rather than participate in them; and, as a spectator, I am certain there will come to me great satisfaction and, I hope, some entertainment.

I suppose the people I should be most grateful to at this time—and I am indeed—are the people at Northam who, over a period of 33 years, have been most generous to me. They have made my public life possible and, of course, have given me an opportunity of making such progress in public life as I have been able to achieve. I have never sought preferment and certainly have never organised or schemed to get it. Because of that, I am naturally most grateful to my parliamentary colleagues during the whole of that time who have seen much more in me than I have been able to see in myself.

Again, Mr. Speaker, to you, to all of those in this Assembly, and to all of those in Parliament House who have assisted in any way to make this session move the way it has moved, I express the grateful thanks of my colleagues and myself.

I now join with the Premier in wishing all members of both Houses and others to whom we have made reference, including our friends in the Press Gallery, a cheerful Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Deputy Premier) [2.37 a.m.]: I do not intend to take up a lot of time, but first of all I would like to support the remarks that have been made by the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to you, Sir, to all members of the staff of Parliament, and to members of the House, both on the Government and Opposition sides, for their support and understanding on all the matters dealing with Parliament. Having been in charge of the House on a few occasions, I appreciate this. To all of those who have assisted me in my position as Deputy Premier and as Leader of the Country Party I express my appreciation for their support during the last 12 months.

To every member of the *Hansard* staff, to members of the Opposition, and to all those who in any way have assisted in carrying out the important duties of Parliament, I would like to express my appreciation and also wish them the very best for Christmas and the New Year. I would like to say that as far as the Leader of the Opposition is concerned—the member for Northam—I think the public of

this State would join me in expressing their appreciation for the great work he has done, first of all as a local member and then as a Minister of the Crown and a Premier of this State.

We appreciate the work he has done in helping to develop the interests of Western Australia. I join with the Premier and members of this House in wishing him the best of health in his retirement as Leader of the Opposition. I trust he will have many happy days in this House as a private member.

Mr. Speaker, I thank all those who have assisted me in this House, but before I sit down I would like to thank the Premier for the opportunity he has given me to take part in the considerations of importance which have all helped to promote the interests of the State. I thank him also for the many opportunities I have had to take part as Leader of the House. I take this responsibility as an honour, because on many occasions he has not been able to be present. I wish you, Mr. Speaker, a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.42 a.m.]: Ordinarily it would not be necessary or desirable for me to participate in these valedictory speeches, but for us this is no ordinary occasion. It is a sitting on which the Leader of the Opposition will occupy his position for the last time as leader. Therefore I felt it necessary and desirable on behalf of the members on this side of the House to place on record the appreciation of the members of our party to the Leader of the Opposition of the sterling service he has rendered the party during the period he has been a member of it. He has been a sagacious leader, a man of very wise judgment, and he has led us in a way which has earned for him the esteem of the members with whom he has been associated.

He has gained very high prestige in the community and by so doing has served us with great honour to himself and credit to the party he leads. It is very hard for me—and I have been associated with the Leader of the Opposition for more than 30 years—to realise that he finds it necessary to relinquish the leadership.

We have served very closely together in Government and out, and there has never been a cross word between us during the whole of that time, and one can appreciate what affection has grown up between us and how very highly I regard him in the service he has rendered this party.

May I say to the Premier that it warmed my heart to hear him—and he was under no obligation to do so—express praise for the service which the Leader of the Opposition has rendered; and I very much appreciate his action in so doing. It is an

action which will be appreciated by all the members on this side of the House.

We will have another opportunity, of course, as the Premier has indicated, to say something further in this connection, but I did want, without unduly delaying the House, to take advantage of this opportunity to say how we feel about the Leader of the Opposition and how much regret we have at the decision he has felt incumbent upon himself to make.

May I join with the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Leader of the Country Party and Deputy Premier, in expressing to you, Mr. Speaker, to the Chairman of Committees, the Deputy Chairmen, and officers of the House, members of the *Hansard* staff, and the constable the very best wishes for the festive season. The constable regularly looks after us and protects us from any untoward incidents. I wish to express all good wishes to all members of the House also and trust that we shall see them all back here with their loins properly girded for the struggle ahead.

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) [2.45 a.m.]: The Premier, Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Premier, and Deputy Leader of the Opposition: Firstly, I think I should thank you, on behalf of all members of the staff of Parliament House, for the very kind remarks you have seen fit to make about them. Reference has been made to the work of *Hansard* which, I think, has been very good this session. I think it also fair to mention that the prompt and regular publication of *Hansard* has been rendered possible only by the good work of the Government Printing Office, the Government Printer, and all those associated with him. After all, they are a very important part of *Hansard* production and I would personally like to record the fact that we do appreciate the work not only of the *Hansard* staff, but also of the Government Printing Office.

On a personal note I feel I should also like to associate myself with the appreciative remarks made about the staff. As I have said before in this House we are very fortunate in our staff—all members of it. They are a pretty happy staff and do a very good job. I would, of course, like to particularly thank the Clerks for the very great assistance they have been to me.

I would like to thank the Premier for the kind remarks he has seen fit to make, and also the Leader of the Opposition. Again I would like to be associated with those who expressed some regret at the decision of the Leader of the Opposition to retire; but, on the other hand, I think we can perhaps take some comfort from the fact that he will still be with us, and even if we do not have the full benefit of his debating strength from the front

bench, I have no doubt we will get it from the cross bench, as he has indicated.

I would personally like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for the many courtesies and kindnesses he has extended to me both since I have been Speaker and before I was Speaker.

Both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition made reference to a decision I made which, it has been suggested, might even be regarded as being controversial. Of course I could not imagine why; but, on the other hand, I would not like to make any further comment on this, other than to say that I do not normally have anything to do with horoscopes or anything like that. However I did have quite a long period at my disposal when the Deputy Chairman of Committees was in the Chair and I got around to reading my horoscope. I am a Scorpio and the following is what appears in tonight's paper under that heading—

Stand off and view questions, problems, situations from afar. If you maintain somewhat of a detached attitude, you avoid emotional pitfalls. Permit logic to hold sway.

I do not think I need comment further on that.

In conclusion I would like particularly to thank the Chairman of Committees and the Deputy Chairmen. I did not intend to place any of them in a position in which they might run into trouble. That apparently occurred tonight; but, if so, it was quite unintentional.

I would like to thank them for the help given to me. After all, they do make a Speaker's job much easier. I also thank the Deputy Premier and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for their assistance.

I wish everybody the compliments of the season and hope that we will find everybody back here next year, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition suggested, "fighting fit," whatever he meant by that.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [2.49 a.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date to be fixed by the Speaker.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 2.50 a.m. (Wednesday).