

To continue—

- (5) The Authority will make available to the export trade all lamb slaughtered which are in excess of local trade requirements.

We know that lamb requirements are exceeded at the peak of the season, perhaps beyond that which can be stored by the local trade. This is always detrimental to the price of lamb. However, one of the objectives of the scheme is to syphon off—if I might use that expression—a quantity of lamb which is sold at a very low price. That lamb is not wanted because it is beyond the capacity of the wholesalers to handle, so they buy it at a heavily discounted premium. It is expected that this situation will be overcome. The next point is—

- (7) The Authority to be given the power to trade.

That is necessary, of course, to trade with the wholesalers and so on. To continue—

- (8) The Authority to be given the right to make the private selling of lamb for slaughter illegal, except under special licence issued by the Authority.

- (9) The Authority to be given the power to make whatever arrangements are considered necessary from time to time to control the flow of lamb onto the market for slaughter.

Again, a very necessary provision because it will be essential to advise the killing works of the number of lambs which are to be slaughtered in order that time may be allocated to them, thus ensuring a smooth flow of stock to the market. The last point is—

- (10) The Authority under its term of Statute to be able to raise such loans as may be necessary for the efficient conduct of its business.

This matter is under consideration by the Government at the request of the Farmers' Union. I do not know whether a decision has been made or whether or not a referendum is to be held. I sincerely hope that the Minister for Agriculture will make an announcement in this regard in the not-too-distant future, because the proposal provides an opportunity to place under a marketing authority a section of the meat trade which is suffering great fluctuations. In my view those fluctuations are unnecessary and could be ironed out. In the future, action should, and must, be taken to overcome this very real disability in this rural industry.

I feel certain that the Government and bodies charged with fostering the interests of farmers will, by their united efforts, find means to overcome the problems facing the

farmings industry, generally. Such means must be found because the foundation of the prosperity of Australia has been laid on the efforts of rural industries. We are not so dependent on those industries now, but I am sure that everybody who gives any thought to the subject will recognise that there is a need.

I do not think subsidies are of any real consequence in sorting out these problems. I think we have to create situations in which fair prices will be paid for products. Of course, in the future producers will have to face the fact that, if marketing schemes are introduced, some means of limiting production may have to be imposed. It is futile and useless to export any product which places a brake on the market and which does not bring a fair price overseas, and therefore depresses the average returns received by farmers in Australia. On that note I conclude by supporting the motion moved by Mr. Syd Thompson, and I express the hope that the matters I have raised will receive some consideration.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. D. Willmott.

House adjourned at 6.08 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 18th August, 1970

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

QUESTIONS (46): ON NOTICE

1. KANGAROO SHOOTERS

Number

Mr. HARMAN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna:

- (1) How many professional kangaroo shooters were operating in Western Australia prior to May, 1970?
- (2) How many persons have applied for permission to shoot kangaroos?
- (3) How many such persons operate as—
 - (a) part-time shooters;
 - (b) full-time shooters?
- (4) How many persons have received permission to shoot kangaroos?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Estimated between 600 and 700 persons, of whom 262 were licensed to take grey kangaroos.
- (2) 371.

- (3) (a) 257.
(b) 114.
- (4) 82 applications are still being considered. 289 applications so far have been rejected.

2. ROADS

New Coastal Highway

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Minister for Works:

Considering the heavy traffic hazards and, in fact, recurring accidents resulting from the diversion of the coastal traffic through sharp corners and intersections in the Mount Claremont, Graylands, and Swanbourne area, would he consider the construction of a main road on the coast—following roughly the coastline—connecting Marine Parade and West Coast Highway, even if it necessitates the acquiring of Commonwealth and other land not being Crown land in the right of the State?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The Main Roads Department has collaborated with the Nedlands City Council in investigating a number of possible alternative routes for a road linking West Coast Highway with the road system to the south.

The department will continue this collaboration and assist the local authorities to finalise and implement a satisfactory scheme.

3. EDUCATION

Textbooks

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Have the social studies activity books, for the first year topic "The Ancient World" for this year's study to permit achievement at basic level and to extend students at advanced level, been as yet delivered to the schools?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) When, during the year, were the basic mathematics texts—Basic Arithmetic Topic 1, Basic Algebra Topic 1 and Basic Geometry Topics 3 and 4—made available to schools for their study?
- (4) On what date during the year were the textbooks, Basic Mathematics Topics 5 to 7, delivered to schools for study by second-year students?
- (5) Why cannot these textbooks and other textbooks be available for students' use at the beginning of the school year?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Deliveries commenced on the 7th August, 1970.
- (3) Basic Arithmetic 1—deliveries commenced on the 11th May, 1970. Basic Algebra 1—not printed. Basic Geometry 3-4—not printed.
- (4) Basic Mathematics, Topics 5-7—deliveries commenced on the 23rd June, 1970.
- (5) The first-year texts written for the various levels cannot be distributed until the levels at which students are to work are established. Materials to cater for all levels are being produced continuously and are distributed to schools immediately they become available.

4. DROUGHT RELIEF

Water Cartage

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) During the recent drought how many gallons of water were carted by the Government for all purposes under the drought relief measures?
- (2) What did this cost?
- (3) What figure approximates the value of the water allowed to farmers from comprehensive water supply mains into farmers' own containers during the recent drought period?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) 16,227,210 gallons.
- (2) \$149,458.
- (3) \$9,355 representing 37,420,000 gallons from metered standpipes only.

5. DROUGHT RELIEF

Exploratory Water Drilling Programme

Mr. GAYFER, to the Minister for Works:

Under the exploratory water drilling programme instituted by the drought relief committee during the last year—

- (1) How many bores were sunk—
 - (a) on farms;
 - (b) off farms?
- (2) How many of these bores were successful?
- (3) Within which draw limits did the successful bores lie both for gallonage and salinity?

- (4) What was the total footage drilled?
- (5) How many contractors were employed?
- (6) How many Government departmental men were assigned to the project?
- (7) What was the total cost of the drilling programme—
 - (a) contributed by farmers;
 - (b) contributed by Government?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) 2198
 (b) 441

 2639
- (2) 250 presently counted as successful.
- (3) Quantity 1,000 g.p.d. to 43,300 g.p.d.
 Salinity 200 p.p.m. to 11,000 p.p.m. of total soluble salts. (11,000 p.p.m. = 770 grains per gallon).
- (4) 221,779 feet.
- (5) Five.
- (6) (i) Geological Surveys of W.A. Three to eight geologists and one to six technicians over a period of 10 months.
 (ii) Department of Agriculture. Two to 12 men over a period of 10 months.
 (iii) Rural and Industries Bank. Two to six men over a period of 10 months.
- (7) (a) \$45,742.
 (b) \$206,831,
 by way of direct payments to drillers, plus the cost of departmental labour and incidentals involved.

6. BREATHALYSER TESTS

Accuracy

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is he aware of comments in *The West Australian* of the 13th August by Professor of Analytical Chemistry, L. E. Smythe—
 - (a) that the breathalyser used by the police had a 20 per cent. margin of accuracy either way;

- (b) that in New South Wales a three weeks training period was inadequate to give police knowledge of whether the equipment was functioning properly when used;
- (c) that the operator could manipulate the controls to get any reading he wanted, without the knowledge of the tested person?
- (2) Is the Western Australian breathalyser unit the same type as that in use in New South Wales?
- (3) If so—
 - (a) is it not possible that people have been wrongly convicted of drunken driving in this State; and
 - (b) what steps are being taken to remove the alleged 20 per cent. margin of error?
- (4) What period of training have police using the breathalyser unit in this State?
- (5) Is the training confined to the traffic branch or all police?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) (a) No.
 (b) The alleged 20 per cent. margin of error is not accepted.
- (4) One week.
- (5) No—training is confined to selected police personnel.

7.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Allocations to Shire Councils

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Tourists:

- (1) What is the total sum of money made available to—
 - (a) Albany Town Council;
 - (b) Albany Shire Council;
 - (c) Plantagenet Shire Council;
 - (d) Denmark Shire Council;
 - (e) Bunbury Town Council;
 - (f) Geraldton Town Council.
 from the Tourist Development Authority since its inception?
- (2) What is the total sum made available in each year to each of the above councils since the inception of the Tourist Development Authority?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

(1) and (2)

	(a) Albany Town \$	(b) Albany Shire \$	(c) Plantagenet Shire \$	(d) Denmark Shire \$	(e) Bunbury Town \$	(f) Geraldton Town \$
1960-61	16,062	.....	.....	1,198	.....	.....
1961-62	15,068	1,286	.....	816	196	9,390
1962-63	.....	2,872	.....	7,610	1,068	1,934
1963-64	.....	.....	.....	3,934	16,934	400
1964-65	94	1,472	.....	532	2,154	.....
1965-66	800	4,291	4,000	.....	11,842	.....
1966-67	867	276	.....	4,597	14,934	10,447
1967-68	.....	.....	433	3,642	6,732	.....
1968-69	15,473	2,612	.....	152	.....	.....
1969-70	3,406	.....	.....	5,923	9,597	10,325
Total	\$51,770	\$12,809	\$4,433	\$28,404	\$63,457	\$32,496

8. NURSES

Albany Hospital: Training

Mr. COOK, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

What are the reasons for not training nurses at the Albany Regional Hospital?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Albany Regional Hospital is a nursing aide training school. It could not yet provide the experience necessary to meet the curriculum of general nurse training.

9. *This question was postponed.*

10. PORT OF ALBANY

Slipway

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Works:

- (1) When will construction commence on the 300-ton slipway for Albany?
- (2) Where will it be located?
- (3) What will be the final construction cost?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Subject to funds being available, it is expected work will commence in the 1971-72 financial year.
- (2) The slipway will be located between the No. 1 concrete wharf and the town jetty approximately 600 feet east of the latter. At this location the necessary dredging and reclamation works have already been carried out.
- (3) It is proposed to carry out this work in two stages—
 - (a) Construction of slipway to 300-ton capacity and transfer cradle and winch of 130-ton capacity from existing slip, and
 - (b) upgrade cradle and winch to 300-ton capacity.

Plans and specifications for both stages have not been finalised, but estimated cost of stage (a) is \$140,000.

11.

EDUCATION

Mt. Barker High School

Mr. MITCHELL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is he aware that a very successful wool classing course has been established at the Mt. Barker High School for fourth-year boys?
- (2) Is he also aware that the Farm Advisory Committee spent about \$5,000 to provide accommodation for the class?
- (3) In view of the success of the above class, would he advise if it is possible to start a fourth-year commercial class for girls in 1971?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Fourth-year commercial classes in small high schools have not been uniformly successful in the past. Usually it has proved difficult to maintain reasonable class numbers for the full year. However, the situation at Mt. Barker will be closely examined before a decision is made.

12.

EDUCATION

Spencer Park School

Mr. MITCHELL, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Would it be considered departmental policy to provide at least the basis of playgrounds at all schools?
- (2) What is the number of children attending Spencer Park Primary School?
- (3) What area of playground is provided for these children?

- (4) Is he aware that a large part of the school ground is uncleared and thereby unusable?
- (5) Will he take some action to have the ground cleared and prepared to a basic standard so that the children might be able to use it?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Present departmental policy provides for—
 - (a) High schools—full ground development.
 - (b) Existing primary schools—bituminised areas for assemblies and physical education.
 - (c) New primary schools—landscaping within 50 feet of the building.

(2) 706.

- (3) Of the total site area of 12 acres 29 perches approximately 7½ acres has been developed either as grassed or sealed playground area. This is a greater area than is normally provided in schools of this size and is considered entirely adequate.

- (4) Approximately 2½ acres are as yet uncleared.

- (5) The department's policy is to continue to work towards the provision of full site development but such a policy must be considered in relation to the availability of funds. While progress has been made in this direction over recent years it is not at present possible to develop fully the grounds of every primary school in the State.

13. MILK BOARD

Whole Milk Treatment License: Capel

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) On what grounds did he uphold the appeal of Wesmith Pty. Ltd. against the refusal of the Milk Board to grant a whole milk treatment license for its Capel plant?
- (2) Prior to the making of the decision, had a cost-benefit analysis been undertaken to establish—
 - (a) whether overcapitalisation of the industry by processing firms could occur;
 - (b) whether increased off-farm costs to the producers could result,

through the rejection of the Milk Board recommendation?

- (3) Will he table the findings of any such analysis?
- (4) If no analysis was made, why not?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) to (4) Although I am not obliged to divulge reasons for upholding or dismissing an appeal under the Act, in this instance I have considered it necessary to do so.

The full information relating to the upholding of the appeal in favour of the company of Wesmilk Pty. Ltd. was given in a Press statement by me on the 22nd July, 1970, and widely publicised, and I table a copy of that statement.

The statement was tabled.

14. STATE BUILDING SUPPLIES

Discharge of Debt by Purchaser

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has the debt incurred through the buying of State Building Supplies from the Western Australian Government been discharged by the company which made the purchase?
- (2) If not, what amount is still outstanding?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) \$1,959,383 is still outstanding. The company is meeting its obligations for repayment of the debt in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

15. STATE FORESTS

Bauxite Mining: Replanting

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) What area of previously forest land but mined for bauxite in the Jarrahdale region has been replanted with trees?
- (2) What is the age of the oldest stand?
- (3) How many planted trees have been blown over by prevailing winds in the last two years?
- (4) As personal observation and the number of wind-fallen trees indicate that planted trees are not establishing in these sites but merely spreading roots laterally, what is the official prognosis expressed by Forests Department experts for the establishment of commercial forests in these areas?
- (5) If Forests Department authorities consider such prognostications optimistically, what species of trees are expected to reach commercial forest proportions?
- (6) For how long is it expected such forests will grow?

- (7) What is the total area of State forest expected to be mined annually to provide bauxite for both Kwinana and Pinjarra plants when both are fully operative?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Two hundred and forty acres for bauxite. 234 acres have also been replanted on areas cleared for mining, but not subsequently excavated.
- (2) Four years.
- (3) Approximately 15.
- (4) to (6) It is too early at this stage to make any reliable prognosis as to the future development of commercial forests on these areas.
- (7) Approximately 720 acres per year.

16. RAILWAY STATION

Maylands: Goods Service

Mr. TOMS, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is it the intention of the department to cease receiving goods, parcels, etc., at Maylands railway station?
- (2) If so, and as many small industries in Maylands and Bayswater extensively use this service, and would be inconvenienced by such closure, will reconsideration be given?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) and (2) It was intended to cease receiving goods and parcels at Maylands station but the matter is now being further examined.

17. HOSPITAL

Northam

Mr. McIVER, to the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has a date been set for the official opening of the Northam Hospital?
- (2) If so, what is the date?
- (3) Will the preparation of food for meals on wheels service be undertaken by the hospital staff when the regional hospital becomes operational?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes. The 23rd October, 1970, is the tentative date.
- (3) Yes.

18. MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVERS

Demerit Points

Mr. JAMIESON, to the Minister for Police:

With the object of finding out and illustrating factually a relationship between general good driving

and occasional bad or careless driving amongst motorists, will he supply figures for demerit points accumulated by drivers relative to numbers of drivers penalised in this way, providing sufficient detail for plotting curves of demerit points against penalised drivers, if possible, for the standard of each four-year age group of census returns?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

Yes. The information requested by the honourable member is rather extensive. However, if this is not sufficient for him I will supply further information if he cares to discuss the matter with me. I ask permission for the details to be tabled.

The information was tabled.

19. FLUORIDATION OF WATER SUPPLIES

Towns Not Connected to Schemes

Mr. JAMIESON, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) How many towns not provided with fluoridated drinking water from the goldfields or great southern water supply schemes are fluoridating their own water supplies?
- (2) If any, will he supply a list of those towns, with the capital cost and operating costs of each installation?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) There are no such towns in these categories; however, four departmental supplies, not connected to either Mundaring or Wellington, are being fluoridated.

These are—

Town	Capital Cost	Estimated Annual
		Operating Cost
Geraldton	\$30,314	\$3,700
Albany	\$29,742	\$4,000
Manjimup	\$10,589	\$3,000
Esperance	\$10,000	\$3,000

20.

HOUSING

Balga: Flats

Mr. BURKE, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many separate blocks of State Housing Commission flats are proposed for the area bounded by Balga Avenue, Redcliffe Avenue, Beach Road, and Mirrabooka Avenue?
- (2) What is the location, or proposed location, of each block?

- (3) How many flats will be contained in each block, respectively?
- (4) What is the respective area of land on which each block of flats is to be situated?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) to (4) A consolidated site plan is being prepared and will be made available to the honourable member when completed.

21. VETERINARY SURGEONS ACT

Amendment

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has the Veterinary Surgeons' Board submitted proposals to him for amendments to the Veterinary Surgeons Act?
- (2) If so, does he intend to amend the Act during this session of Parliament?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) and (2) No.

22. INCOME TAX

Zone Allowances

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) Has he made any representations to the Federal Government to ensure that the income tax zone allowances conceded to residents of the north will not be lost?
- (2) If "No" why?
- (3) If "Yes" when, and with what result?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) I am not aware of any action which contemplates the income tax zone allowances conceded to residents in the north being lost and therefore no representations for retention have been necessary.
- (2) and (3) Answered by (1).

23. "WOOL VILLAGE"

Kwinana

Mr. TAYLOR, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

At what stage of progress are plans for a proposed "wool village" in the Kwinana industrial area?

Mr. COURT replied:

Investigations regarding a site for a proposed "wool village" are being conducted by the Australian Wool Board. A decision has not yet been made with respect to any one of several sites under consideration.

HOUSING

Hamilton Hill

Mr. TAYLOR, to the Minister for Housing:

With regard to that area of State Housing Commission land lying roughly between Phoenix and Forrest Roads, Hamilton Hill—

- (a) at what stage are developmental plans for this land;
- (b) approximately how many residential units is it hoped to construct;
- (c) when does the commission hope that construction of the first dwellings will begin;
- (d) does the commission's current thinking with regard to this area include plans for construction of rental houses as distinct from rental flats?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (a) Several subdivisional proposals have been prepared for examination and consideration by the commission.
- (b) The various proposals have a potential of the order of 1,000 plus dwelling units being single houses, duplex and terrace type housing and walk-up flats of two and three storeys.
- (c) As the commission has agreed that this estate must be sewered, and the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Board forecasts sewers being available in latter half of 1971, it is not anticipated initial construction programmes would commence before July, 1971.
- (d) See answer to (b).

25.

HOUSING

Group Developments

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Are any private group housing developments within 20 miles of the G.P.O. scheduled for completion and occupation during the current financial year?
- (2) If "Yes" will he identify each of them indicating in each case the approximate date and the number becoming available for occupation?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) and (2) This information is not available to me.

26.

HOUSING*Bentley*

Mr. MAY, to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) On what date did the first tenants occupy accommodation at the new Bentley high density Housing Commission project?
- (2) Will he indicate the individual types of accommodation currently occupied?
- (3) How many families have been accommodated?
- (4) What is the present population insofar as this scheme is concerned?
- (5) What is the anticipated date of completion of the scheme?
- (6) When will the shopping facilities be completed?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

- (1) The 20th April, 1970.
- (2) Three and four-bedroom houses and three-bedroom terrace houses.
- (3) One hundred and nine as at the 14th August, 1970.
- (4) Six hundred and thirty-nine.
- (5) Mid-December, 1970.
- (6) Mid-November, 1970.

27.

TRANSPORT*Additional Ferry Service*

Mr. MAY, to the Minister for Transport:

What type of license is held by the private company operating the ferry service between South Perth and Barrack Street?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

No license is required to operate a ferry service; only a certificate of survey for the vessel and a certificate of competency for its master.

These are issued by the Harbour and Light Department.

28.

NATURAL GAS*Pipeline: Route*

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Can he state the proposed plans for bringing gas supplies from the Dongara-Yardarino area?
- (2) Has a firm decision been made regarding the route of the pipeline?
- (3) Is it anticipated an industrial area based on alumina will be using gas in the Upper Swan district?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) to (3) Negotiations are currently in progress and, until completed, information cannot be given.

29.

WATER SUPPLIES*Midland*

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is it a fact that builders of high rise flats and similar types of buildings in the Midland area are being discouraged because water mains are not able to cope?
- (2) What is the planned position regarding improvements to overall water supplies to cope with residential and industrial expansion?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Water supplies in the Midland area are adequate to cope with normal residential and industrial expansion.

A new 500,000 gallon storage tank and an associated pumping station are almost complete at Greenmount. A new 21-inch steel inlet main to Greenmount reservoir has just been completed. Subfeeder mains into the Ashfield area are to be constructed shortly.

General improvement and additions to the reticulation mains are proceeding continuously.

30.

SEWERAGE*Bellevue and East Midland*

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is the Sewerage Department planning any extensions to deep sewerage in the Bellevue area where considerable industrial expansion is taking place?
- (2) Is it permitted to install septic tanks in a clay area?
- (3) Is the sewerage scheme operating at present up to its maximum intake; if not, what is the present position?
- (4) Will he state the planned arrangements for Bellevue and East Midland areas?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (4) Substantial extensions of the sewerage system in these areas are dependent on the completion of the northern main sewer and proposals for extensions to the system have therefore been tentative. The construction of the northern main sewer is in progress, but the diversion of the Midland sewage to this sewer, which will provide the necessary relief to the whole area, is not expected to take place until 1974.
- (2) This is a matter for the Public Health Department and the local health authority and depends upon

the nature of the ground for soakage. Tests for soakage may be carried out in accordance with the procedure suggested by the Public Health Department.

- (3) In peak winter conditions the present scheme is fully loaded.

31. MILK BOARD

Allegation of Victimisation

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware of the allegation made on T.V.W. Channel 7 on the 7th August, 1970, by a certain man that he—the man—had been victimised by the Milk Board?

- (2) If so, has he any comment?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
(2) The allegation is without foundation.

32. MINING

Nickel: Wingellina

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is it his department's belief that the nickel deposits at Wingellina are not economic for development?
(2) If "Yes" why?
(3) If "No" why, and what does it propose to do to ensure the prompt and efficient development thereof?

Mr BOVELL replied:

- (1) The company concerned has carried out a thorough field and feasibility study of the nickel deposits at Wingellina. The results show that it is not economic for development under the assumptions used in the study and the present economic conditions.
(2) The principal reason for the deposit being uneconomic for development is its low grade. Another important factor is the extremely costly infrastructure required for the operation due to the remote locality. A third reason is that the ore is a low grade lateritic silicate rock which presents greater extraction problems than the sulphide ores being mined and sought in the eastern gold-fields.
(3) Answered by (2).

33. WOOD CHIP INDUSTRY

Export Agreement: Negotiations

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister for Industrial Development:

Will he state the actual date to which the right of the W.A. Pulp and Chip Company to negotiate

for the right to establish a wood chip export agreement has been extended, as asked in question 18 (2) on the 13th July, 1970?

Mr. COURT replied:

Under an extension of time granted to the W.A. Chip and Pulp Co. Pty. Ltd., it has until the 31st December, 1970, to establish to the reasonable satisfaction of the Minister that it has entered into or intends to enter into contracts for the sale of wood chips.

34. MINING

Fitzgerald River Reserve No. 24048

Mr. COOK, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) In view of its scenic and scientific interest, will he exercise his ministerial power under the Act and announce forthwith that no further mineral tenements will be granted in the Fitzgerald River reserve No. 24048?
(2) If not, will he indicate the reasons for declining this request?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) There is a warden's court hearing part heard in respect of applications for prospecting areas for coal on the Fitzgerald River Flora and Fauna Reserve No. 24048 at which evidence is being given by several parties interested in conservation. In these circumstances it is not intended to exercise the ministerial powers contained in section 267A of the Act.
(2) When the hearing is concluded and the warden's recommendation is received the Minister will deal with the applications under section 30 and make a recommendation to the Governor.

35.

LAND

Fitzgerald River Reserve No. 24048

Mr. COOK, to the Minister for Lands:

Would the Government give an undertaking to forthwith declare the Fitzgerald River Reserve No. 24048 "A" class, in view of its established scenic and scientific interest, and in view of the recommendation of the Australian Academy of Science made in 1962?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

The future use of this area is under current review and consideration is being given to all aspects.

36. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Improvements

Mr. BERTRAM, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What action, and at what cost, has been taken to reduce vehicular traffic by improving public transport in each of the last five statistical years?
- (2) What is proposed by way of improvements in public transport for each of the next five statistical years?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

(1) By the M.T.T.—

- (a) A progressive upgrading of the quality of the M.T.T. fleet, on which \$4,310,000 has been spent in the last five years with particular emphasis on mechanical efficiency and increased riding comfort. In addition, progressive changes in body design have resulted in improved passenger entrance and exit, lower steps, better ventilation, and better lighting.
- (b) A programme of shelter shed erection. \$83,000 has been spent by the Government on a 50/50 basis with local authorities to provide 593 shelters. An arrangement with an advertising company has resulted in an additional 48 shelters.
- (c) A deliberate public relations programme to improve the image of the M.T.T. The programme has a number of aspects, such as liaison with the Town Planning Department and the Housing Commission and developers, with the objective of providing services to new housing areas at the earliest possible moment so that residents have an immediate alternative to their own car; to create the opportunity to expand M.T.T. services, canvassing by trust staff of new residential areas, new blocks of flats, and, periodically, hotels, motels, hospitals, and rest homes; the provision of much more information about M.T.T. services in verbal and written form to the public; arrangements to quickly and carefully investigate every complaint with the objective of eliminating the cause if possible.
- (d) The introduction of concession fares of various kinds, and particularly the introduc-

tion of family travel over all routes (except Mandurah) for a total cost of 50c on Sunday. This concession is aimed specifically at trying to offset the residual or leisure time value of the private car.

- (e) The introduction of through routed services, that is services operating to, through and beyond the central business district.
- (f) Improved arrangements whereby surveillance is constantly kept upon demand so that timetables, routes, and the number of buses operating more closely reflect the public requirement.
- (g) Close liaison with the W.A.G.R. so that where possible M.T.T. and W.A.G.R. services interlock. The bus/rail interchange station at Midland is a good example of this.

By the W.A.G.R.—

- (a) The erection of the Midland rail/bus interchange and the integration of W.A.G.R. and M.T.T. services in that area. In the five years to the 30th June, 1970, \$776,700 has been spent on that project.
- (b) The provision of new higher quality suburban rail cars. These new cars are faster and quieter, and give a more comfortable ride than the old ones. \$1,976,700 has been spent in the last five years.
- (c) The park-and-ride concept has been encouraged by developing or expanding parking areas at Mt. Lawley, Maylands, Meltham, Bayswater, Bassendean, Guildford, and Midland.
- (d) A major change in suburban timetables more closely related to travel demand. This timetable exploited the higher speeds possible with the new rail cars and introduced additional express services. The ability of rail to run express through a congested urban region is well illustrated by the Midland-Perth service, 10 miles in 16 minutes.
- (e) An advertising campaign in the Press and on TV designed to promote the concept of commuting by train. This campaign seeks to draw the attention of commuters, particularly, to the superiority which train travel has over that by car in a large urban region.

- (2) The programme for the next five years will largely depend upon what action the Government takes on the recommendations of the Perth regional transportation study which we expect will define the size and nature of the public transport task in the future, and suggest a variety of alternative ways in which it can be carried out.

The Minister for Transport is chairman of the steering committee of this study. From the work so far it is obvious that Perth will need a steadily improving public transport system. Improvement must come not only in the system's ability to meet the demand for transport but also in its ability to compete for custom with the private car.

Pending the outcome of the transportation study—due in December this year—we intend to continue enlarging and upgrading rail park and ride facilities; continue expanding the M.T.T. fleet and upgrading the quality of the existing fleet; continue spreading M.T.T. services into developing areas and adjusting routes and timetables to demand. In this respect the M.T.T. is now experimenting with cross region services; that is, services not running radially to and from the central business district.

Coincidental to the foregoing the Main Roads Department and local authorities are improving road systems; e.g., the Narrows Interchange. These improvements will assist M.T.T. bus movements as well as general vehicular traffic.

37.

RAILWAYS

Surplus Steam Engines: Collie

Mr. JONES, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) How many steam engines are stored at Collie?
- (2) What are the classes of engines stored?
- (3) What mileage has each engine travelled?
- (4) What was the purchase price of each engine and date of purchase?
- (5) What is the estimated value of each engine?
- (6) Is it intended to use the engines again?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) Forty-two.
- (2) Classes PM, PMR, S, V, and W.

- (3) PM 702—426,000 miles.
 703—439,000 miles.
 704—422,000 miles.
 707—415,000 miles.
 709—417,000 miles.
 712—426,000 miles.
 717—435,000 miles.
 719—375,000 miles.

- PMR 724—471,000 miles.
 726—434,000 miles.
 727—470,000 miles.
 728—464,000 miles.
 729—446,000 miles.
 731—365,000 miles.
 732—484,000 miles.
 733—455,000 miles.
 734—454,000 miles.

S 541—487,000 miles.

- V 1201—395,000 miles.
 1205—370,000 miles.
 1210—386,000 miles.
 1211—367,000 miles.
 1214—366,000 miles.
 1221—363,000 miles.
 1223—337,000 miles.
 1224—340,000 miles.

- W 901—378,000 miles.
 905—418,000 miles.
 910—369,000 miles.
 914—380,000 miles.
 916—401,000 miles.
 922—356,000 miles.
 925—358,000 miles.
 926—368,000 miles.
 932—349,000 miles.
 936—391,000 miles.
 939—350,000 miles.
 946—354,000 miles.
 948—365,000 miles.
 950—343,000 miles.
 954—359,000 miles.
 957—364,000 miles.

- (4) Class PM: Purchase price (i.e. total cost) \$55,564 each. Order placed in June, 1947; locomotives placed in service between February and September, 1950.

Class PMR: Purchase price \$56,074 each. Order placed in June, 1947; locomotives placed in service between June and September, 1950.

Class S: Cost \$30,610 (constructed in Midland Workshops); placed in service February, 1943.

Class V: Purchase price \$110,038 each. Order placed in December, 1951; locomotives placed in service between April, 1955, and November, 1956.

Class W: Purchase price \$70,760 each. Order placed December, 1947; locomotives placed in service between April, 1951, and May, 1952.

- (5) Book values at the 30th June, 1970 were—

Class PM—Range from \$18,983 to \$20,836 each.

Class PMR—Range from \$19,162 to \$21,050 each.

Class S—\$7,198.

Class V—Range from \$55,570 to \$62,857 each.

Class W—Range from \$26,399 to \$28,746 each.

- (6) No; except in the case of an upsurge in traffic or national emergency.

38. WATER SUPPLIES

Yanchep

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is he aware that the Shire of Wanneroo is in difficulty with some subdivided lots at Yanchep unless reticulated water can be supplied?
- (2) Is he further aware that a water scheme is proposed to be installed at Yanchep by Taylor Woodrow Bond Pty. Ltd., and that such scheme on completion would adequately serve the lots as in (1) if the Country Water Board would take over the system as a basis for a water supply for Yanchep beach area when installed by Taylor Woodrow Bond Pty. Ltd.?
- (3) If he is aware of the problem as in (1) and the installation as in (2), will he take steps to alleviate the difficulty of the shire by sympathetically re-examining the problem especially as the Government has already contributed \$50,000 towards the cost of the proposed water scheme referred to above?
- (4) If he is not aware of the circumstances as set out above, will he investigate the matter with the object of assisting the shire?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) to (4) The department has declined a request from the Shire of Wanneroo on behalf of Taylor Woodrow Bond Pty. Ltd. to take over and operate a proposed reticulated scheme to a new private subdivision at South Yanchep Beach estate.

The request was declined because it is understood that the majority of the homes would initially have been for part-time occupation and the proposal at this juncture would in all probability result in a financial loss to the department beyond present acceptable standards. This is unlike the Wanneroo town water supply where the department has agreed to contribute financially towards a composite scheme with Taylor Woodrow Corser Pty. Ltd. for supplying long established permanently occupied dwellings.

39. NORTH METROPOLITAN BEACHES

Renaming

Mr. LAPHAM, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) For what period of time have the following areas been so named—
 - (a) Trigg Island;
 - (b) North Beach;
 - (c) Watermans Bay;
 - (d) Marmion;
 - (e) Sorrento?
- (2) Has any difficulty been experienced by any authority by such namings?
- (3) For what reason is it proposed to change the names of any or all of such areas?
- (4) Is he aware that the residents of such areas are incensed with the proposed change of names and will he consequently take steps to ensure that no name changing takes place?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) (a) The 7th February, 1964 (as Trigg Townsite);
 (b) The 7th February, 1964;
 (c) The 7th February, 1964 (as Waterman Townsite);
 (d) The 5th April, 1940;
 (e) The 25th October, 1957.
- (2) Shire councils and other authorities—e.g., Postmaster General's Department—were appropriately advised and none have complained. Some initial difficulty may have been encountered while the public adjusted.
- (3) There are no existing proposals to change the area names.
- (4) No.

40. KING'S PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

Research Programmes

Mr. BURKE, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is it a fact that the botanic garden in King's Park was established with the intention that it should become "a centre for botanical and horticultural research" as quoted in the King's Park Board's 1962 development plan?
- (2) Is it also a fact that Dr. Beard was recruited on the understanding that the garden was to be a scientific institution which was to incorporate the State herbarium, and that he would be in a position to direct a co-ordinated botanical programme for the State?

- (3) When, and why, was it decided that the State herbarium would not be amalgamated?
- (4) What research programmes has the botanic garden had since its inception?
- (5) How many academically qualified members of staff did the King's Park Board ask for—
 - (a) in 1964;
 - (b) in its second five-year plan 1967-72,
 and how many posts were granted?
- (6) Has the Government supported Dr. Beard's personal research in ecological surveys?
- (7) Has publication of any of the results been refused; if so, why?
- (8) Is he aware that Dr. Beard will direct both the Royal Botanic Gardens and the National Herbarium of N.S.W., and also ecological surveys in that State?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) It was the intention of the King's Park Board for the garden to be a centre for botanical and horticultural research of native plants for horticultural uses.
- (2) No.
- (3) After the visit to Western Australia of the Curator of Kew Gardens in March, 1965, duplication was considered undesirable.
- (4) Principal projects include—
 - (a) Control of veldt grass and other invasions.
 - (b) Problems of reforestation.
 - (c) Biological studies in the breeding and requirements of native plants with a view to overcoming difficulties in propagation.
 - (d) Effect of fire control on plant associations.
- (5) (a) and (b) In 1964 a specialist in plant identification was asked for but not approved because these services were already available at the State Herbarium. In 1968 a plant breeder was appointed. The provision for a field ecologist and plant biologist is being included in proposals for consideration in plan for 1970 and 1971.
- (6) The King's Park Board authorised the initiation of a vegetation survey. This was found to cover at least a seven-year programme. The project was deferred by the board pending clarification ensuring continuity of the project. During the 10-year period to 1960 the total of \$186,234 of Governmental funds was made available

to the King's Park Board. For the 10-year period to 1970 a total of \$1,605,651 has been made available by the Government.

So the Government has had some part in the progress made at King's Park.

- (7) No publications have, as far as I am aware, been refused, but there is deferment of publication as in (6).
- (8) The authorities have not informed me of the conditions of Dr. Beard's appointment.

41.

ROAD TRANSPORT

Coal and Ilmenite

Mr. JONES, to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What have been the weekly tonnages of coal transported by road from Collie to Capel during 1970?
- (2) What have been the weekly tonnages of ilmenite transported by road from Capel to Bunbury during 1970?

Mr. COURT (for Mr. O'Connor) replied:

- (1) Exact weekly figures are not readily available, but the records show a total of 13,348 tons for the twelve months ended the 31st January, 1970, which gives an average of 257 tons per week. The average has now increased to approximately 300 tons per week.
- (2) For the year ended the 30th June, 1970, a total of 163,856 tons of ilmenite was transported by railways road services from Capel to Bunbury for shipment and a further 33,626 tons to the Laporte plant at Eaton.

42.

KING'S PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

State Herbarium: Location

Mr. BURKE, to the Minister for Lands:

In view of the fact that the King's Park Board's proposals for the establishment of a botanical garden, which were based on a report by Dr. W. S. Stewart of California, and accepted in principle by the Government in 1959, provided that the State herbarium was to be located at King's Park, will he state when, and why, this policy was changed?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

The development of the botanical gardens in King's Park was the subject of Dr. W. S. Stewart's report. The recommendation of the King's Park Board based on this

report, was "as an ultimate objective the State Herbarium and the curator should be located at the botanic gardens". On the advice of the curator of the Kew Gardens it was later decided against duplication.

43. KING'S PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

State Herbarium: Amalgamation

Mr. BURKE, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) (a) Is he aware that in the three other Australian States which support both a State herbarium and a State botanic garden these two institutions form part of a single organisation under one director?
- (b) Why was it considered desirable to separate them in Western Australia?
- (2) Is he aware that a herbarium and a botanic garden are two complementary botanical institutions whose work is interrelated; that the work of the herbarium would be improved by access to horticultural facilities at the garden and that the botanic garden has constant need of reference to herbarium specimens?
- (3) Is the opportunity of Dr. Beard's resignation being taken to arrange the amalgamation of the W.A. herbarium and the King's Park botanic garden under a single head; if not, why not?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) (a) Yes. However, I am informed that in Queensland they have recently been separated.
- (b) The herbarium has been established since 1928. The garden has been established since 1959. It was considered that the facilities of the existing herbarium would be immediately available for the botanic garden.
- (2) and (3) This could be accomplished by liaison between the two authorities.

44. DRYANDRA STATE FOREST

Army Base

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has an approach been made for the use of the Dryandra forest area as an army base?
- (2) Would he have any objections to its use for such a purpose if it were deemed suitable?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes.

45.

MINING

State Forests and Timber Reserves

Mr. H. D. EVANS, to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Of the 4,460,117 acres of State forests and 175,526 acres of timber reserves in the south-west, what area is now held under mineral lease, mineral claim, or temporary reserve?
- (2) What percentage of the State jarrah forest is held under mineral lease, claim, or reserve?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Mineral leases—1,664,000 acres approximately.
Mineral claims—190,000 acres approximately.
Temporary reserves—450,000 acres approximately.
- (2) Mineral leases—37.4 per cent. approximately.
Mineral claims—5 per cent. approximately.
Temporary reserves—10 per cent. approximately.

As at the 12th August, 1970.

The area held under mineral titles is 212,000 acres less than at the 24th March, 1970, when this question was last asked. Furthermore, when this question was asked on the 24th March, 1970, the area held under mineral lease was given as 1,650,000 acres. A recheck of the figure discloses that the area is actually 1,664,000 acres. The whole of this area is mineral lease ISA.

46. MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

Claims, Damages, and Costs

Mr. COOK, to the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) For each of the last three years, what were the totals of claims, damages, and costs paid by the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust?
- (2) Of the total claims paid in each year, how many were for damages and costs totalling—
 - (a) up to \$1,000;
 - (b) from \$1,001-\$5,000;
 - (c) from \$5,001-\$10,000;
 - (d) from \$10,001-\$20,000;
 - (e) from \$20,001-\$30,000;
 - (f) from \$30,001-\$40,000;
 - (g) from \$40,001-\$50,000;
 - (h) over \$50,000?

- (3) Of the total amounts in each of the years mentioned, how much was for—
 (a) general damages;
 (b) special damages;
 (c) costs?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The total paid by the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust on account of claims, damages and costs for the last three years was—

1967-68—\$5,008,068.

1968-69—\$5,655,115.

1969-70—\$6,239,002.

- (2) The information in the form required is not available, but the following information is available as from the 1st July, 1968—

Total Claims	Under \$3,000	\$3-5,000	\$5-10,000	Over \$10,000
1/7/68-30/6/69 5,780	5,278	247	158	97
1/7/69-30/6/70 5,960	5,426	255	176	103

- (3) For each of the years mentioned in (1), the following was paid—

	(a) General Damages \$	(b) Special Damages \$
1967-68	3,653,506	1,354,562
1968-69	3,762,572	1,892,543
1969-70	4,342,834	1,896,168

- (c) Costs—these are included in
 (b) Special damages.

QUESTIONS (2): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Formation

Mr. BICKERTON, to the Premier:

Is it his intention to introduce legislation during this current session of Parliament to form a public accounts committee? If not, why not?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

Yes.

2. AUSTRALIAN WINE

Price Rise

Mr. DAVIES, to the Premier:

Has the Government received any protests at all from interested parties regarding the strongly-rumoured action of the Federal Government to impose a 15c rise in price on bottles of Australian wine? If so, did the Government pass on any of these protests to the Federal Government; or did the State Government initiate any protest on its own behalf?

Sir DAVID BRAND replied:

This is only a rumour. In any case, a telegram was sent; but we did not take any action, simply because it was a rumour that this impost was to be placed on bottled Australian wine.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FOURTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 13th August, on the following motion by Mr. Cash:—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

May it please Your Excellency: We the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren) [5.07 p.m.]: Firstly I wish to extend my congratulations to the member for Albany on his election to the Legislative Assembly. I feel he certainly has the capacity to fulfil a long and useful role in this House.

I would now like to take the opportunity the debate on the Address-in-Reply affords me, to make reference to the proposed S.P.C. cannery venture that was scheduled to eventuate in the lower south-west.

Several speakers during the second reading debate on the legislation in question drew attention to the fact that the history of the canning industry in Western Australia had been rather on the gloomy and dismal side. A succession of misfortunes seem to have dogged the industry and it would appear that the prognosis of the fate of the industry at the present stage has not altered very significantly at all.

The position at the moment is that S.P.C. has announced debts amounting to \$19,000,000. This is as it appeared in the Press; but, of course, no real significance can be placed on this figure until such time as a proper financial analysis has been obtained.

One definite result, however, that has already been announced by the company is that there will be no further expansion of S.P.C. activity; and this includes the Manjimup project. The company did have a commitment at Manjimup and it was to have established by the next canning season a plant capable of processing 2,000 tons of fruit. That was to be its capacity, not necessarily the amount of through put.

By 1973 the plant was to be extended at a scheduled cost of \$500,000, to a capacity of 5,000 tons. It is my understanding, which has been gained through several

meetings attended by S.P.C. officials, that the company intends to seek a deferment of one or two years in connection with the building of this plant.

I would like a little clarification as to what the company's approaches have been in this matter and also the precise nature of its intention, because I feel it could be well adopting an over-optimistic view.

My reasons for feeling like this lie in the economics that are required in the processing of fruit; economics to ensure the viability of a company of this kind. It must be economic eventually and the company must be able to show it can become viable within a certain given period. If this is not definite it could hardly be expected to commence operations at all.

In the 1969-70 season, 760 tons of peaches were canned in Western Australia. Before a cannery can be said to be an economic proposition, 10,000 to 12,000 tons are required. The 760 tons of this year's crop of peaches came from 137 acres. It will require 1,300 acres of orchard to supply the necessary 10,000 or 12,000 tons of peaches to ensure that the economics of the venture are sound.

The cannery would need a working season of something like 12 to 15 weeks, whereas at the moment the season runs to about four weeks. So without there being a minimum acreage of fruit trees planted and available for canning and processing, S.P.C. could hardly be expected to go ahead with the venture in this manner.

The company would be prepared to carry a loss for some four, five, or six years, but it must be borne in mind that what would happen in reality is that the plant in Victoria would have to subsidise the Western Australian plant; I am sure the shareholders would not stand for this for an indefinite period.

At this stage we find that on the one hand the growers are reluctant to plant orchards unless they can see some activity connected with the establishment of a factory in the fairly foreseeable future. On the other hand the company is reluctant to start building until such time as there is a target acreage in the offing.

Accordingly an impasse has been reached and there is, I feel, a need for some Government action in the matter at this stage. The reasons for this are not far to seek. In the first place Government action could restore confidence in the growers. The growers have never been over-imbued with confidence in connection with processing schemes in Western Australia, largely because the predecessors of S.P.C. have engendered a decline of confidence.

I am not saying this has been the fault of the companies involved, but this is the way circumstances have occurred and the reaction of the growers is understandable—well and truly so. The latest action by

S.P.C. has well-nigh obliterated the little remaining confidence the growers had. This is a pity, especially after such an enthusiastic beginning was made.

I do not think the growers are largely to blame. They kept faith over a period of years and if they have shown a reversal of thinking at this stage it is not altogether their fault.

A considerable amount of capital is involved in the planting of an orchard; the amount is in excess of \$500 per acre. Furthermore, this capital has to be outlaid for a period of four or five years before a return can be expected. This is a considerable amount which the individual growers have to bear, particularly in these times. There is not a great deal of capital available in the area, and the money is something which they cannot find themselves.

The figure I have suggested has proper regard to irrigation, without which the chances of establishing a successful orchard is pretty remote. I do not think there would be a great number of farmers who could undertake to plant any large acreage of orchard on their own. The company has been conducting a canvass of the growers, and it has received a promise for the planting of about an additional 300 acres; that makes 430 acres as the ultimate acreage that could be hoped for at this stage, and this is hopelessly insignificant.

I did write to the Minister for Agriculture, suggesting that an investigation be made into establishing a financial aid scheme under which funds could be made available for the planting of canning fruit. This would require a deferment of interest payments for four or five years; in other words, the repayments would commence about the time that the orchard became productive. The Minister has rejected this suggestion, but at this juncture I hope that he and his Government will have a second look at the proposal. I will explain why Government action of this kind can be fully justified on a number of grounds.

First and foremost, I think the practical support of the Government, coming in at this stage, will stabilise the industry. It will engender some of the confidence that has been shattered. Without the stability of the backing by the Government, I cannot see that the growers will be prepared to enter into the field in any great numbers.

Secondly, such a scheme would provide the opportunity for diversification on the part of a number of the small growers. This could well be a natural corollary to the marginal dairy farm scheme that is expected to become effective within a short period. This means that the farmers, particularly the dairy farmers, will have access to another source of income which they badly need.

I made a rough estimate of the number of primary producers who are working outside their farms, and it runs into some hundreds. This is only an estimate, but it is as reliable as any that it is possible to obtain. These are the types of farmers who could benefit from the establishment of a cannery and the growing of fruit and vegetables for processing.

Mr. Nalder: Are all those people in the Warren area?

Mr. H. D. EVANS: Yes; and the area extends to the lower south-west. The ones I am referring to are for the most part working in the mills.

As a measure of decentralisation, I think any Government could point to the establishment of a cannery in this area as a classic instance. In itself it would provide a considerable amount of activity in a rural area; but emanating from such a venture we would find a spread of activity into the Port of Bunbury, into the railways, and into all the tertiary industries and services that would accompany its establishment. So, from the point of view of decentralisation alone I think the Government could well become involved, and it should reconsider the whole situation.

The growth which a cannery would bring to the lower south-west area should not be underestimated. The ultimate future of the whole region is bound up very closely with intense agriculture; and if we have regard to climate, soil, water supply, the smallness of the blocks, and the very remote chance of additional land being thrown open for agriculture, then everything points to the development of intense agriculture. The whole future of this area is bound up with this aspect, and with the production of the fruit and vegetables required by a cannery of the size envisaged; that is, if we can get it off the ground.

Whilst we are on the subject of finance we should not be unmindful of the fact that in each of the last two years the Government has, in regard to the canning of peaches, given assistance to the extent of a cash value of \$40,389 and \$40,098 in the respective years. This brings me back to several very important considerations, not the least of which is this question: Does the Government intend to continue this assistance for the 1970-71 crop? It could also be asked: Does the Government visualise continuing this assistance indefinitely, particularly in regard to the acreage that has already been planted, that is to be planted, and that will be established as the ultimate target? Is it the Government's intention to maintain assistance at the present level? A pertinent question is: What happens if this assistance is withdrawn? Does it mean the industry will be allowed to collapse overnight?

A number of these points could be elucidated, and I would like the Premier or the Minister concerned to give some indication of the Government's intention on these matters. I feel it would be a much more practical approach to give aid in the form of servicing a debt which could be made available to the growers as a special loan or grant; but of course this money would be recovered ultimately. At least in this way the interest would be deferred by the Government for four or five years; but there is the ultimate hope that the Government will introduce a long-term solution, which at this stage does not appear to be very evident.

The appointment of a co-ordinator would be a very valuable adjunct at present from the industry's point of view. As I have mentioned, the operating period of the cannery needs to be extended to over 12 weeks. This season could be extended a little by resorting to cool storage, but not to any great degree. Effective extension of the season can be achieved only through the planting of different varieties of peaches and other fruits. The planting of early varieties of peaches is probably the most urgent requirement, but plums and apricots will have to be considered as they are acceptable to the company.

What is needed, firstly, is for the entire industry to ascertain the possible requirements of the varieties and the types of fruit; and then for the acreages to be apportioned to the farmers who are prepared to participate in the scheme. I am sure that a great number of them would be prepared to participate if financial aid was available. There would also be a need for the information to be passed on to the nurseries. This year it is too late to do that; because when the needs of 1,000 acres of orchard are contemplated, the number of trees that are involved is very considerable. This year the nurseries could not fulfil this requirement; of course, they need some time to do that. They have not the stock of trees this year; and even if they did, time has run out. So, next year will be a loss for a considerable number of growers; but nurseries certainly will not be able to meet any great and heavy demand right now.

The co-ordinator would need to be not only a specialist with a background in agriculture—and the Department of Agriculture could provide such a person—but one with such personality qualifications as would enable him to act as a catalyst between the two sections of the industry. The Minister for Industrial Development made reference to this point when he indicated that harmony was necessary in the establishment of a canning industry. He also suggested that lack of harmony might have been a reason why, in the past, the canning ventures in this State have not been successful. That is

all the more reason why an expert person should be appointed to operate in the field in the manner I have indicated.

Of course, the demand for research falls back on the Department of Agriculture, and a start in this direction has been made in the Manjimup area. The research station in that locality is ideally situated; and it has the right soil type, the water supply, and the expert staff. A commencement on research has been made, but at this juncture it is rather belated to be of any true value to the industry. Dependence now rests on the Hills Research Station for furnishing the results of research; but, of course, as conditions—particularly those applying to stone fruit—vary between districts, it is most desirable that the research be undertaken in the area where the results will be applied.

The functions of a co-ordinator would revolve around the cannery itself. This involves the growers, the nurseries, and the research work. I feel there is a wide scope for the appointment of a person of this kind. If nothing is done at this juncture it is doubtful whether the required acreage to make this industry a viable proposition will ever be established. I have mentioned that the growers have promised to plant something in excess of 300 acres, but this is still well below the required target. It is on those grounds that I ask the Government to re-examine seriously the whole situation, having full regard to the situation as it exists at the moment and to the possibility of seeing a canning industry established in this State.

I would also like to say how pleased I am to see the Minister for Industrial Development back with us, if for no other reason than to point out to him the disparity which appears in one or two remarks he made in October last. If we turn to page 1316 of *Hansard* of 1969 we will find the remarks made by the Minister in the debate on the Alumina Refinery (Pinjarra) Agreement Bill. I would like to quote one small paragraph which is indicative of the feelings of the Minister towards reforestation of the areas that will be affected by the mining of bauxite. From the information given in answer to a question this evening, it is expected that ultimately 720 acres will be involved, mostly in the jarrah forests of the State.

In the debate on the alumina refinery Bill the Minister for Industrial Development said—

The officers of the Forests Department are jumping for joy because they will have their forests thinned and, in some instances, cleared. They are getting something for nothing. It also means that they can plant with other species, such as pines.

The true situation is this: If the Minister wants a Christmas tree he can go to the area, and pluck one out of the ground; and this is simple because the roots are lateral and growing outwards and not downwards in the ground. They cannot grow in pure clay. The officers of the Forests Department are not jumping with joy; they are jumping up and down and they are frothing.

This subject is more appropriately left until the ministry of conservation is ultimately set up, when we can examine the full details of this situation as they apply at that stage. However, the situation should not be disregarded at this moment.

In conclusion, I implore the Minister and the Government, to seriously reconsider the state of the fruit-canning industry in Western Australia, and the fact that assistance is needed. If the industry does not receive assistance, then many years will elapse before the occasion again arises when a canning industry might be established.

MR. McIVER (Northam) [5.31 p.m.]: I join with my colleague, the member for Warren, in welcoming the new member for Albany to the Legislative Assembly. I sincerely trust he has a long and successful career in this Parliament.

I participate in the debate on the Address-in-Reply not just to be recorded as taking part, but to place before this Government a genuine plea in relation to matters requiring attention in the electorate of Northam. Firstly, I shall deal with the facilities available for the police, and I shall commence with the town of Cunderdin. For several years the local shire has been pressing for additional police facilities in the area. For some years the problem was where to build additional facilities, but this problem has been rectified by the transfer of land from the Public Works Department to the Police Department. As a consequence, any amount of land is available for the construction of a modern police complex.

The present situation at Cunderdin can only be described as deplorable. Because of the small size of the police station in that town, if a court is in session, no other business can be transacted. I do not have to emphasise to members in this Chamber the frustration felt by people who go to the police station—sometimes after having driven quite a considerable distance—only to find that a court is in session and no business can be transacted.

As the member for the district I have represented this situation on several occasions, not only in correspondence to the Minister and the Commissioner of Police, but also by personal representation to the Under-Secretary for Law at the Crown Law Department, and the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Mr. Sims. I must say, in fairness, that on each occasion that

I made a personal approach I received a very cordial welcome and a very sympathetic hearing. However, the two gentlemen to whom I have referred do not allocate the funds.

I have no hesitation in saying that, regarding this particular department, my electorate has been starved for funds—and for far too long—and I sincerely trust that in the 1970-71 financial year my requests will be seriously considered, and that a modern police station will be placed on the agenda. Irrespective of how we look at the situation, and irrespective of the opposition to the scheme over the years, I have clearly indicated that the town of Cunderdin is justified in seeking to have modern police facilities and a modern courthouse.

At Wundowie the same situation exists, because when a court is in session no daily business transactions can be carried out. What a ridiculous situation to apply in an industrial centre such as Wundowie. The Government should be ashamed of itself for allowing this situation to continue year after year. Admittedly, one receives replies that the matter is under review, or receiving consideration, but that is as far as it goes. It is frustrating when one sees other areas with nowhere near the same population receiving new police complexes.

Mr. Craig: The station at Wundowie is comparatively new.

Mr. McIVER: I agree, and there is nothing wrong with the police station, but it definitely needs additions for the conducting of courts. As I have already stated, when a court is in session the police station has to be closed and no business can be transacted. I think it will be agreed that that is a ridiculous situation to exist in a community such as Wundowie.

Mr. Craig: That situation applies right throughout the State, really.

Mr. McIVER: I shall now deal with the police complex in the town of Northam itself. I shall refer to a letter I wrote to the Minister in 1969. I pointed out to the Minister the inadequacies of the police station itself, and that no amenities were provided for the personnel stationed in Northam. I feel that the last two paragraphs of the Minister's reply are the most important parts of the letter which he wrote to me on the 4th March. The paragraphs read as follows:—

The building is in good condition but it is admitted lack of space does prevent the supply of staff lockers and amenities.

However, consideration is currently in hand to enclose the back verandah and provide an amenities room for the staff. This proposition will receive attention as funds become available.

It would not take a great sum of money to enclose a back verandah when one considers the modern materials which are

available today. However, I emphasise again, nothing has been done in this regard. As a consequence, there are no amenities whatsoever at the police station in Northam.

To give a clearer picture, I will read my letter of the 14th April to the Commissioner of Police, as follows:—

I wish to bring to your attention the inadequacy of the Police Station building and its facilities at Northam.

The Northam Police Station carries a complement of 21 men, comprising—1 Inspector, 1 Detective Sergeant, 1 Senior Sergeant, 3 Sergeants and 15 Constables.

It seems difficult to understand why a town the size of Northam does not have a modern efficient Police Station, with up-to-date lock-up facilities equal to those provided in towns with far less population and less administrative duties than the Northam staff have to contend with.

It is very disheartening for the staff at Northam to maintain efficiency when the shortage of space is so acute that they must utilise the report room as their locker room, amenities room etc. There is no staff room provided for these men.

I wish to point out that lack of land would not impede a new Police Station at Northam, as there is extra land available as a result of the closure of the railway line behind the present Police Station.

At this stage I would point out that in the last three years modern police stations have been erected in towns where there is nowhere near the same administrative responsibility as that applying at Northam. That makes one wonder just what is going on. The area under the jurisdiction of the district inspector at Northam is very large indeed and the present police station is entirely inadequate.

The Commissioner of Police replied to my letter, on the 16th April, as follows:—

Your interest and correspondence regarding Police accommodation at Northam is acknowledged. The matter of buildings and facilities for Police is one constantly under review, part of which review fully considers the complement at each place.

The allocation of funds and the erection of buildings are carried out on a priority basis assessed through research and studied Departmentally.

It is acknowledged that at some stations accommodation is far from satisfactory, but it must also be acknowledged, great improvements have been made of recent years, and this will continue. Full consideration has been given to Northam and an overall plan evolved.

For your information, it is intended to endeavour to retain the outward characteristics of the Police Buildings at Northam, as it is considered they are a fine example of their particular type of architecture and yet at the same time, provide ample modern facilities for the use of staff.

To this end, it is intended progressively that the Superintendent-in-Charge of the district move from the residential quarters he now occupies, into a new house. These quarters in turn, to be occupied by the Sergeant-in-Charge and the vacated Sergeant's quarters modified into office accommodation. Any further additions, alterations or renovations necessary would be done at this time.

A request has been made to the Government Employees Housing Authority for a house to be provided for the District Superintendent during their building year of 1970-1971, to enable the overall plan to be subsequently implemented.

I have no hesitation in saying that if that is the only thing which can be done to improve the facilities then it would be far better to leave the matter until the following year when further funds will be made available and a completely new complex can be constructed. The present proposal is only a piecemeal approach to the problem. In fact, the approach is just not good enough for a town the size of Northam.

I fully agree with what the Commissioner of Police said in relation to a new residence for the district inspector. Although his present house has been renovated recently, it is very old. As the district inspector at Northam has been recently upgraded, I strongly believe he is entitled to a modern residence. However, to make it do—if I might use that expression—by converting the sergeant's quarters into offices is, I feel, absolutely ridiculous, and is false economy.

The police station is situated in Wellington Street on a corner directly opposite the new \$4,000,000 regional hospital. The situation is laughable. The modern hospital complex has cost in the region of \$4,000,000, and yet the police station facilities will be tackled in a piecemeal fashion. I feel that is not good enough, and I am sure it is not too late to put the situation in its correct perspective. Funds should be allocated to correct the situation during the 1970-71 financial year.

I sincerely hope that every consideration will be given to the points I have raised today, and that those points will be analysed so that a further allocation of funds will be made for police facilities at Northam.

Whenever the opportunity has arisen in this House I have mentioned the Great Eastern Highway. Again, I must stress

my disappointment on finding that no funds are to be allocated for the widening of the Great Eastern Highway between Clackline and Northam. Each year it is deferred the number of road accidents increases on this section of the highway. I have received correspondence from the Northam Shire requesting me to emphasise to the Minister for Works at every opportunity the necessity to have this portion of the road widened and the curves eliminated, and a dual carriage highway constructed between Midland and Northam in the near future.

I am quite aware that money does not float down from heaven, but when I see money being spent in the metropolitan area and in other country centres on roads of less significance, I think it should be remembered that the Great Eastern Highway is the main east-west highway; it is the road that carries the greatest volume of traffic. Although we have a standard gauge railway which cost \$120,000,000, no-one is permitted to use it extensively and all the traffic has to go by road. Each month the traffic increases on the section I have mentioned, as does the number of accidents and fatalities. Surely the Government can see quite clearly that money must be spent to eliminate the curves on this horror stretch of 11 miles. Every year it is passed over and funds are allocated to other areas.

It is very pleasing to know that, since my submissions in the House last year in relation to the floodway between Northam and Meckering, plans have been put into operation to eliminate this hazard. The people of the Meckering, Cunderdin, and Northam areas are very grateful for that. Nevertheless, there must be a more positive approach, and an allocation of funds, to do the work on this section of road as quickly as possible.

It is surely the object of any Government to provide modern highways and, wherever possible, to eliminate the road accidents which are increasing daily. If the Government is genuine, as it claims to be in the Governor's Speech, here is an opportunity to prove it. Not a week goes by that one does not see at some point, when traversing this road, a semi-trailer which has run off the road, perhaps because its load has been dislodged, or because of a minor accident of some kind. From inquiries I have made, I know that over the years surveys have been made of this section of road. No doubt it will cost a lot of money to eliminate the curves but it is a necessity.

I can only emphasise in this Chamber that I think, for the reasons I have already stated, it is a No. 1 priority and necessity to have these curves taken out and construct a wider road. Once again I ask the Minister—although he does not seem

to be interested, as he has left the Chamber—to press strongly this request from the Northam Shire for an allocation of funds in order that these improvements may be made and the accidents that are now occurring in this region may be obviated.

I hasten to say that this section of road would be one of the most picturesque stretches of highway in Australia. I have traversed this road for years and, irrespective of the season, I never tire of the scenery. One would expect the Government to do everything possible to attract people to the area. Some of the rarest wildflowers in Western Australia are to be found in this locality, and the University of Western Australia employs someone on a full-time basis to catalogue these varieties. One would think the Government would be pleased to make it a No. 1 priority.

I must also say that the Midland-Northam section of the Great Eastern Highway is one of the worst roads in Western Australia as far as litter is concerned. I certainly do not know the answer to this problem. In fairness I must say the Government is making a genuine effort to clean up the litter on all highways. I do not think the motorists who live in Northam would be responsible for the litter in the area; the motorists responsible are those who pass through the area and those who are Sunday drivers. The people in Northam are better trained.

When passing through the Shire of Kwinana recently, I was impressed with the signs I saw in that area. I may not have the exact wording of the signs, but they read something like this—

Don't throw it away—a bin $\frac{1}{4}$ mile up the road.

I think that is a sign that should be standardised throughout the State. It attracts the motorist and cautions him not to throw the litter away but to keep it and place it in the receptacle provided by the shire. I cannot suggest anything other than that to endeavour to meet the litter problem on our highways. Something of this kind would certainly make an improvement.

Mr. Jamieson: What is your main litter problem? Is it mostly cans?

Mr. McIVER: Cans, bottles, papers. It is one of the worst sections of highway in the State for litter. I commend the Shire of Kwinana for the signs it has erected in its area.

I have strongly emphasised the need for Government funds for this section of road. I trust the matter will not be cast aside but will be considered in depth, and that at least a start will be made in this financial year, even if all of the work is not done.

From time to time I have been critical of the Railways Department but I have always endeavoured to make my criticism constructive. I have strongly criticised the spending of money on matters which I thought were unnecessary and of no consequence in various departments. In the time now afforded me I cannot pass up the opportunity to bring before the House a request I made on behalf of the chaff merchants in Northam to have a loading ramp constructed at the Avon yards.

It is interesting to note that the freight revenue received from the Northam area—which encompasses Grass Valley, Noggojerring, and the Avon yards—is \$28,000 a year. More chaff is loaded in Northam than in any other centre in Western Australia and the quality of that chaff is renowned throughout the world. It is exported to Asian markets—to India and to various places in Malaysia. The tonnages loaded at the various sidings in the last 12 months are: Avon yards 70 tons; Grass Valley 1,500 tons; Noggojerring 1,700 tons. The respective freight rates are: Avon yards \$600; Grass Valley \$10,000; Noggojerring \$12,000; a total of \$28,000 for the year.

The existing ramp at the Avon yards is absolutely useless for the loading of chaff. For that reason only 70 tons was loaded there. The chaff merchants would prefer to drive five miles to the siding in Noggojerring, where 1,700 tons per annum is loaded, because they cannot use the existing ramp at the Avon yards. I wrote to the Minister for Railways seeking his assistance in having a new ramp constructed. As a result, the officers in the district were asked to report their views. They strongly supported it and said it was warranted. I was very disappointed to receive from the Minister a letter, dated the 7th August, which reads—

This is to advise you that further consideration has been given to the request for a loading ramp to be provided in Avon Yard for loading chaff.

The proposal involves \$4,300 to duplicate a facility which is available some seven miles distant. No additional traffic could be anticipated.

The Commissioner fully appreciates the fact that the application is based on customer convenience and this aspect is always considered. However, this factor cannot override other more pressing calls on funds and the Commissioner has not recommended construction of the ramp.

The Commissioner has not recommended the construction of the ramp, but it was recommended by the officers—the District Traffic Superintendent, the District Engineer, and the Chief Traffic Manager—because they do not want to lose revenue of \$28,000 a year from freights.

When the 3ft. 6in. railway line closes

in October, it will not be available to farmers. People such as Mr. O'Driscoll, the biggest exporter of chaff in Western Australia, will then have to take their chaff to the Avon yards or Noggojerring siding for loading. There are two commodities that cannot be carted by road; chaff is one and wool is the other. With the situation that will develop in October, what is to prevent them from pressing for road transport to deliver the chaff to a destination that is on the narrow gauge line?

The Railways Department cannot afford to lose \$28,000 in freight charges annually. This traffic is too important to lose. I will now read to the House a copy of a letter addressed to the Acting Secretary for Railways from the Chief Traffic Manager. It reads as follows:—

The enquiry by the District Officers concerned has now been completed as a result of which they have recommended that a loading ramp be provided in Avon Yard.

Two sites have been selected, Site "A" on the delivery road where a suitable ramp can be provided at a cost of \$4300 or Site "B" an additional small ramp on the existing narrow gauge L shaped ramp at a cost of \$1700.

Of the two sited Site "A", despite the additional cost, is favoured, if a ramp is to be provided, because in this position there is adequate room for wagon drift. Shunting of this site would also be a simple movement. Considerably less room would be available at Site "B" and shunting would not be a simple movement, although not difficult.

It is expected that if a ramp is provided in Avon Yard the existing chaff traffic from Noggojerring would be transferred to Avon.

Here we have the Chief Traffic Manager of Western Australia and his district officers—men who are responsible for making the decisions—strongly recommending to the Commissioner of Railways the construction of a chaff ramp at a cost of only \$4,300 so that revenue amounting to \$28,000 a year may be maintained.

Mr. Tonkin: The Government cannot afford it. It wants the money to sink the railway in Perth.

Mr. McIVER: I do not want to labour the point, but the position becomes absolutely ridiculous when one considers that the Government spent \$40,000 on the construction of barracks for train crews at Tammin. These barracks provide accommodation for 32 men, but only three of the rooms are used and the rest remain empty. Yet the Commissioner of Railways refuses to construct a ramp costing only \$4,300 which would ensure that the department would enjoy an income of

\$28,000 annually. It is hard for me to believe that anybody in a responsible position should object to a constructive recommendation such as this.

Could any member visualise a private company which was receiving \$28,000 a year in transport charges refusing to erect a chaff ramp at a cost of under \$5,000 to ensure that the traffic was retained? I feel quite sure that any private company would be only too eager to construct such a ramp and so provide better facilities for its customers. If the Railways Department intends to insist that primary producers cannot transport chaff or wool by road, then there is an obligation on the department to provide better facilities for the cartage of such commodities by rail. In a letter written by the Commissioner of Railways, the following appears:—

The loading ramp at Avon Yard is in keeping with those at other locations throughout the system and is of the type considered by the department to provide more versatility for handling of the various types of traffic offering for transport in these times.

That statement is quite correct, but the ramp is absolutely useless for the handling of chaff.

Unfortunately, the Minister for Railways is not present in the Chamber this evening. I understand he has undergone an operation and is in hospital at the moment. I am sorry to hear that. However, I sincerely hope that when he is well and returns to his duties he will have a further look at this matter and discuss it with the Chief Traffic Manager and other officers of his department. If he does, I feel certain they will clearly indicate to him that what I have said in the House this evening is absolutely correct.

Last session I also brought to the attention of the House the need for first aid facilities to be provided in the Avon Valley section of the standard gauge railway in the event of a derailment or accident on the Avon Valley route. Following that suggestion the department has seen fit to equip a coach with all the necessary equipment to handle such a situation. I sincerely trust, however, that this ambulance coach will never have to be used. The department is to be commended for the way the coach has been fitted out. A great deal of thought has gone into its construction and it should certainly fill the bill should any emergency arise.

I am greatly relieved that this coach has been put into operation, and I am also pleased to note that helicopters can be called upon should an accident occur on the Avon Valley route, and that arrangements have also been made with the civil defence authority in Western Australia to handle any emergent situation in this locality. The ambulance

coach has been constructed not only for the specific purpose of being used on the standard gauge railway, but also for use on lines in other parts of the State. Those who planned the coach should certainly be commended for their efforts.

During the last 12 months dreadful accidents have occurred at level crossings. These have resulted in many reports appearing in the Press and suggestions being made that lights should be fitted along the full length of the trains. I have put forward a proposal to the Railways Department that flashing lights—similar to those that are now used on the roofs of ambulances and police vehicles—should be placed at both ends of diesel locomotives; although I emphasise that this would certainly not eliminate level crossing smashes altogether. Whilst these crossings exist there will always be accidents occurring on them no matter what proposals may be put forward in an endeavour to prevent them. The responsibility lies entirely in the hands of the motorists.

The Railways Department has spent thousands of dollars on an extremely modern system of safety devices at level crossings. I refer to the boom gates that are now erected at level crossings in the metropolitan area and in some country districts. Those systems are as efficient as any that are installed anywhere in Australia, and they are certainly a very efficient and most expensive piece of apparatus. Nevertheless, on many occasions we hear reports of vehicles being driven into the boom gates because insufficient caution has been exercised by the motorists.

I have heard those members who represent rural electorates complain about the erection of "Stop" signs at country level crossings. I can only commend those who were responsible for introducing the law under which these signs are erected. It may be frustrating to a motorist to stop for a few minutes at a level crossing, but in doing so he may save not only his own life, but also the lives of the occupants of his vehicle. This is a very sound law and it should be rigidly observed. Those motorists who breach it should automatically be fined \$40 in the same way as motorists are fined in South Australia for committing such a breach.

Motorists seem to be under the misapprehension that a train driver can stop a train in a distance of only a few feet. I do not wish to enumerate the facts and figures relating to this, but such a feat is absolutely impossible. To give an example, I point out that a train of a capacity of 4,000 tons, travelling at 45 miles per hour, and with the brake fully applied in the emergency position, takes only a chain less than a mile to stop. Therefore, it can be seen that a train driver

needs a great distance in which to bring his train to a halt. The trains that are operating between Koolyanobbing and Kwinana, because of their length, are very difficult to stop, and motorists should be made aware of this fact.

Locomotives should be fitted with flashing lights on the roof of the cabin, and, after trials are made, the reports should be analysed. The level crossings committee should be requested to study these reports.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has five more minutes.

Mr. Gayfer: Do you think there should be a "Stop" sign at every level crossing?

Mr. McIVER: Where no boom gates are erected, yes.

Mr. Young: At every crossing?

Mr. McIVER: Where there are no boom gates or flashing lights, it should be compulsory for motorists to stop. Instructions have been issued to the drivers of Pioneer buses that they must stop at every level crossing. This would not be a complete answer, of course, because there must be 100 per cent. co-operation from the motorists, but at least it would be a step in the right direction in an endeavour to eliminate level crossing smashes.

I did mention that revolving lights should be fitted on diesel locomotives, and once again I emphasise that the Government should have a close look at the reports that will be made by the drivers in charge of those locomotives, and, if it is considered that the lights are of some value, steps should be taken to fit all locomotives with them.

Mr. Davies: Are these lights fitted to locomotives anywhere else?

Mr. McIVER: In this State experiments have been made with many types of locomotive headlights. Locomotives have been fitted with headlights that are both vertical and circular in shape. However, on all occasions the drivers of locomotives found that they proved to be too distracting. A driver was inclined to concentrate on the revolving headlight or on the spot upon which it was focused instead of on the line in front of him. Oscillating lights have also been fitted to locomotives, but to date no headlamp has been found that will meet the satisfaction of the level crossings committee. However, at least we can fit revolving lights on the roof of the locomotive cabin and give them a trial in a genuine attempt to eliminate accidents at level crossings and avoid the tragedy which follows in their wake.

Mr. Fletcher: What colour would you suggest?

Mr. McIVER: I would advocate an amber colour; the same colour as those that are fitted on the top of ambulances and police vehicles.

Mr. O'Neil: Do you think that accidents at level crossing are caused by the motorist not seeing the train, or is he prepared to take a risk by beating it across the line?

Mr. McIVER: In nine cases out of 10 the motorist tries to beat the train across the line, although in some instances it has been proven that the motorist did not see the train approaching. However, in the main, motorists do not exercise sufficient caution at level crossings.

I have covered a variety of subjects, and once again I appeal to the Ministers for the respective departments to which I have referred to have a look at the points I have made, and I sincerely trust that the Northam electorate will obtain a greater allocation of funds this financial year than it has received to this point of time.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [7.30 p.m.]: Before addressing myself to His Excellency's remarks I would like to congratulate the member for Albany on his win in the recent by-election, particularly in view of the extravagant promises made by Ministers on the other side of the House—and I do not wish to be unkind about this—in support of their candidate. Quite frankly I do not blame them for making such promises. I spent a few days in the district helping our candidate and I was very happy that he won the by-election. I feel sure the House will be more than satisfied with any contribution he might make in the future, and I wish him every success.

Early in His Excellency's Speech reference was made to the population growth in Australia. His Excellency said that the State's growth is almost twice the national average; that the population now exceeds 975,000 and that it is expected to reach 1,000,000 before the end of the year or early in 1971.

I find that these figures are a contradiction of those given by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics to which I will make a brief reference. In *The Sunday Times* of the 16th August we find the following under the heading "Australia loses 36,000 in year":—

More than 36,000 Australian residents left to live abroad permanently in the 12 months ended last June.

They included large numbers of professional and skilled workers.

The Bureau of Statistics in Canberra yesterday released a breakdown of arrivals and departures for the year.

These show that 26,082 migrants returned home and 10,000 Australians left to live permanently overseas.

The total figure was an increase of about 4,400 on the previous 12-month period.

In the year ended June, 1969, 23,537 migrants returned home and 8,141 others departed permanently. In the year ended June, 1968, 23,520 migrants returned home and 7,196 others departed permanently.

The article goes on to deplore the fact that people leaving in large numbers included engineers, administrative, executive, and managerial workers, together with clerical and sales workers, and teachers.

All this makes me wonder whether Western Australia is the Utopia we are encouraged to believe it is, particularly when we find people with the qualifications I have mentioned leaving these shores to go overseas.

Mr. Court: Are you talking about people leaving Western Australia or Australia?

Mr. FLETCHER: I have just read out the figures, which, of course, can be related to Western Australia. We find that 36,000 people left Australia and no doubt a large proportion of these left Western Australia. It makes me wonder how we will achieve the population figure of 1,000,000 by the end of the year when we find that such large numbers of our people are leaving our shores.

Mr. O'Neil: The population growth in Western Australia in 1969 was 3.3 per cent. while the national population growth rate was 1.8 per cent.

Mr. Court: How many people came into Australia?

Mr. FLETCHER: We are still losing numbers of people from this State; and I have a suspicion that it is for that reason, together with the down-turn in the building rate and the difficulty of obtaining finance, that there is such a high rate of unemployment.

The West Australian of the 18th August, 1970, states that Western Australia had the highest unemployment rate of any State during July, and it gives the relevant figures. The article states that Western Australia had 1.28 per cent. of its estimated work force unemployed in that period. The paper then goes on to give the figures relating to the other States.

It would seem, therefore, that my previous remark about Western Australia not being the Utopia it is alleged to be, is more than justified by the figures I have just given, as these relate to unemployment and the number of people who leave Australia to return overseas.

Mr. Court: Are you going to give us the figure in relation to the number of people who came into Australia last year? This is rather an impressive figure.

Mr. FLETCHER: As I have said, 36,000 people have left Australia and that is sufficient for me.

Mr. Court: People are going and coming all the time.

Mr. FLETCHER: That may be so, but the figure—which was infinitesimal—was given by the Minister for Housing by way of interjection.

I would now like to get on to another subject contained in His Excellency's Speech. I find members opposite laughing, and I hope they do not imagine they won the previous argument.

Mr. Cash: I'll say we did.

Mr. FLETCHER: If they do I would ask them to try to justify the unemployment figure I have just read out.

Mr. Court: What is the figure?

Mr. O'Neill: It is 1.28 per cent.

Mr. Court: That is exactly half the figure that Mr. Chifley considered was full employment.

Mr. FLETCHER: In His Excellency's Speech we find the following:—

However, the State's economy has been affected by drought, lower wool prices and the need to impose wheat quotas. The combination of all three has lowered the State's farm income by at least \$80,000,000, with consequent adverse effects upon industries geared to service the agricultural sector.

I am concerned with that aspect, not only as it affects the farming community but also as it affects the industries dependent on farming. As a result of this we find there are repercussions right down the line both in respect of industry and agricultural equipment. If the farmers are not able to buy machinery there is certainly no purpose in manufacturing it.

We find that the staffs connected with these industries are being put off and are finding themselves out of employment and, as a result, the entire economy is affected. The economy of the country has been hit very hard and it is running down simply because farmers are unable to spend as much as they did previously in country towns. This causes me considerable concern. What causes me greater concern, however, is that in spite of this detrimental impact on our economy—and as if this were not sufficient—we find the shipping rates are to rise by 12½ per cent. I admit, however, that this figure relates to goods which are brought from Britain to Australia.

In *The West Australian* of the 18th June, 1970, however, we find the following:—

However, new freight rates for cargoes leaving Australia for Europe are expected to be considered later.

Agricultural representatives will be aware, as I am, that negotiations are taking place at the moment for an increase of 6 per

cent. in rates from Western Australia to the United Kingdom and other countries overseas.

If a wages employee desires an increased return for the commodity he can sell—which is his labour—it is necessary for him to approach the Industrial Commission, but overseas shipping lines can put up their freights overnight and thus break the back of the economy of the State.

As I have already said, the rural community is already labouring under a tremendous burden without this additional impost being placed on it. It would appear that shipping companies can put up their prices overnight without any trouble at all. I would point out that the unions are frank enough to make their books available to all who might wish to scrutinise them, including the Industrial Commission.

Mr. Bovell: The waterside workers of Britain did not show much regard for our primary producers.

Mr. FLETCHER: When the waterside workers of Western Australia were asked to make their books available they did so, but what reply did they receive when they asked the shipping companies to do the same? The Minister must admit that the shipping companies will not make their books or figures of profit available. When the oil companies were asked recently to make their books and figures available, so that a comparison could be made between the figures supplied in the union's claim and the figures given by the industry as to what it could afford to pay, they refused to comply.

Mr. Bovell: Nor would the waterside workers in Great Britain unload the perishable goods from the ships.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Conference Line would not make available its books for investigation by any authority which wanted to bring about equity in regard to shipping rates. The Conference Line simply said overnight that shipping rates would be increased by 12½ per cent. I think that is a greater sin than any sin which the waterside worker is alleged to have committed in respect of what he charges for his labour.

Further on in the Governor's Speech the following appears:—

During the past year the upward trend in land prices in the metropolitan area has been checked and the Government will continue to seek means to maintain the stable situation that has been reached.

Yet in this evening's newspaper we see that land in the City Beach area which last year was sold for \$7,500 a block is being offered by the Perth City Council which hopes to receive \$10,000 a block this year. That means an increase of \$2,500 a block in a period of 12 months.

In the Governor's Speech the following also appears:—

While there has been some downturn in the private sector of the home building industry, the State Housing Commission is planning to lift its rate of completions from 2,360 units in 1969-70 to 3,000 units by the end of the current financial year.

Some honourable member interjected a while ago, by referring to figures for 1959. The figure of house completions by the previous Labor Government far surpasses—I would say by at least 50 per cent.—the figure I have just quoted: the 3,000 units expected to be completed by this Government by the end of the current financial year. I would ask members to compare the record of the previous Labor Government in respect of housing, and the record of this Government which in this current financial year will complete only 3,000 units.

I admit that speculators have provided accommodation in the private sector; but there is no comparison between that type of accommodation and the type that is provided by the State Housing Commission, because the speculators provide multi-floor units with inadequate areas for the children to play in. Many of those providing accommodation in the private sector are disinclined to let their premises to people with children, because of the alleged damage that the children do.

The Minister for the North-West will be pleased to see this in the Governor's Speech—

To enable Members of both Houses to see at first hand the full extent of the dramatic developments taking place in the north of the State, a special tour was arranged since we last met, and was undertaken by most Members.

I, personally, appreciated the opportunity to make the trip; I found it enjoyable and educational. I think this was money well spent by the Treasury. Further on in the Governor's Speech the following appears:—

The value of minerals produced in this State during the last calendar year rose by 50%—to \$342,570,000.

This does not afford me a great deal of satisfaction, when I notice the \$80,000,000 lost by the rural industry during the financial year.

Reference is made in the Governor's Speech to capital expenditure on education, and I will deal with this matter later. In regard to roads, the following appears in the Speech:—

A record \$54,793,000 will be spent this year on roads throughout the State.

Whilst it is a commendable figure, I do think that as more and more vehicles are thrust onto the roads by the motor companies, which are vying with each other to bring out more and more models, the taxpayers have to provide the roads to cope with the great influx of motor vehicles.

I notice that the Governor's Speech contains a reference to the establishment of a conservation ministry. The following appears:—

Appropriate action is being taken to establish a Conservation Ministry with the main objective, wherever practicable, of preserving the natural environment.

The words "wherever practicable" are significant. I hope we will not have to wait long for some announcement in this respect, or a Labor Government will be making the announcement early in the new year.

Mr. Williams: Which new year?

Mr. FLETCHER: Early next year. In respect of a better standard of living to which I made reference earlier, a recent advertisement by the Government contained the following:—

It's the better standard of living we enjoy and the opportunities around us today.

It's good that our kids are enjoying a better standard of living than we did at their age. It's good that we can enjoy it as well. Our little girl here has never known what it is like to see a country suppressed by Labor Socialist Controls, she has never known the situation where young people had to leave Western Australia to find opportunities.

But I did read earlier that many thousands of people are leaving Australia, including Western Australia, because of the lack of opportunities. Do not let anyone argue that the school teachers are not leaving our shores.

Mr. Court: And they are coming back.

Mr. Williams: If they go to Canada now, they will be scratching to find a job.

Mr. FLETCHER: The advertisement I mentioned goes on to say—

(Yet all this was so when she was born!)

I assume this alludes to 1959. The advertisement continues—

We have a better standard of living. This is what growth and development means to people. This is Free Enterprise! This is the Australian way of life!

The advertisement shows a little girl fingering a pair of brassieres; but I suggest that a girl of 12 years of age needs a pair of brassieres as much as I do.

Mr. Williams: There is still hope for you!

Mr. FLETCHER: This is the sort of puerile nonsense we read about in respect of the achievements of this Government! What a great achievement it is for the Government to provide a girl of 12 years of age with a pair of brassieres! It does not matter whether or not she is getting adequate education or opportunities. I can assure members that little girls belonging to parents on the lower income bracket would not be interested in such superficialities.

Mr. Williams: This is becoming a well-developed country.

Mr. FLETCHER: Some of the families I have alluded to have joined in the exodus, and one of the reasons is lack of housing. Mention has been made in the Governor's Speech of the housing position; and, earlier, I made reference to the people who are leaving our shores. Some of them can afford to leave and others cannot. To illustrate the position I refer to one example, and this concerns the Minister for Housing who appears to be busy at the moment, but I hope he will listen to what I have to say. This case is of recent application. Let me make known some of the circumstances of this particular applicant.

He lives at 11 Sydney Street, South Fremantle. He has a wife, who would be a prerequisite to his having six children, all of tender years. His file number is 2056/70. He is receiving \$48 in wages per week working with the Shell Oil Co., and he is paying \$23 a week in rent. I am sure that all members, irrespective of the side on which they sit, will agree that is a disproportionate amount to be spent on rent. Naturally, I made approaches to the State Housing Commission on this man's behalf to which I received a polite reply about which I will inform the House presently.

I have some correspondence from a relative of his who lives at 23 Wood Street, Fremantle. I will not read it in its entirety, but will give the salient points. This man admits to sponsoring the person to whom I have been referring and he says—

I sponsored his family here and I'm sorry I did.

Listen to these figures—

He had over \$1,000 when he came, now he has nothing. He hasn't wasted a penny. You'll find he has no hire purchase and has all second hand furniture. It's just impossible for him to live on the money he earns. It takes no working out \$23 rent out of \$48 and six children and a wife to keep. I've tried to help him, but I have my own family to think of.

Further on he says—

I know he's getting desperate now, as he hasn't the rent to pay . . . it's ridiculous to encourage large

families here if they receive no advice or help. It's alright to say you've only got to ask if you need help from various organisations. Well that is what they tell you in England. He's tried everywhere and he isn't lazy and deserves to be listened to. I have enclosed some adverts from an English paper.

That makes very interesting reading. It implies that if people come to this State they will find a Utopia. This unfortunate fellow has not found any Utopia. His relatives are sorry, as mentioned in the letter, that they sponsored him, he is sorry he came, and so am I, and so is his family. But apparently the Government is not. It has obtained another wage slave and potential wage slaves as those kiddies grow up. I cannot see that they will ever be able to get out of the rut they are in or obtain an adequate education while their father is on a pay such as I have mentioned. There is no prospect of his ever joining the exodus I referred to earlier. He is trapped here on an inadequate income, but with a large family.

Mr. O'Neil: I do not want to indicate a lack of sympathy for the fellow, but the man who sponsored him made some contradictory statements. He said that he sponsored him and then he complained that he was encouraged to come. It seems to me there is a little contradiction there. Who encouraged him? The sponsor, I would say.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Minister can look at it that way if he wishes but, as I mentioned earlier, he was preoccupied when I was speaking about the subject a moment ago. I said that this fellow had also sent copies of advertisements from English newspapers and that they contained exaggerated opinions of the conditions which were alleged to exist here. I know the Minister is not unsympathetic in regard to this case. He is as big a victim of the Government's policy as I am. He is in the hot seat. He has already done something for me with regard to other people in Fremantle, and I am very grateful, but what he has done is totally inadequate and the overflow has to seek help for housing accommodation from the private sector. If a person has six kiddies he has very little chance of receiving accommodation from the private sector.

I asserted earlier that I was concerned for the lower-income group and the fact that their condition is self-perpetuated because they cannot get ahead of it. In support of that I will quote not my own opinion, but that of an expert. The following is from *The West Australian* of the 12th August this year:—

There was now enough evidence to establish a clear relationship between nutrition and intelligence, Dr. John

Hobday, senior lecturer in child health at the W.A. University, told child health sisters yesterday.

That is not Harry Fletcher—the member for Fremantle—speaking, but a child health expert. He continues—

“Malnutrition produces reduced brain growth and intelligence if it occurs during the period of rapid brain development,” he said.

“In the human this period is from a few months before birth to the end of the first year.”

Can members realise the position these people are in? On such a low wage they cannot give their kiddies the proper nutrition. I ask anyone in this House how he would manage the household economy if he were earning \$48 a week, paying \$23 rent, and had six kiddies. Further on, the article continues—

“Individuals with intellectual impairment as a result of early malnutrition will become inadequate members of our society,” Dr. Hobday said.

That is not my opinion, but the opinion of a child specialist.

Mr. Bickerton: A number of Ministers must have suffered from malnutrition earlier on!

Mr. FLETCHER: That is possible, but I do not want to introduce any air of levity—

Mr. Bickerton: I was serious!

Mr. FLETCHER: —into a matter which causes me real concern.

On the other hand, in today's paper the employers are reported as having said that \$36 is enough for basic needs. They are stipulating a figure lower than the \$48 I mentioned as being inadequate. The article reads—

Employers told the W.A. Industrial Commission yesterday that the State basic wage of \$36.45 was already in excess of basic needs.

Mr. W. J. Brown, for the W.A. Employers' Federation, said that employers would show that there was no ground on economic capacity to increase the wage.

I hope I am indicating clearly to the House that there is an absolute need to do so. Earlier I stated that if companies want to increase their prices overnight, they can do so. If shipping companies, oil companies, or any others in the private sector want to increase their prices they can do so overnight but, on the other hand, the unfortunate wages man has to go to some industrial tribunal, through his union, to

be told at what price he can sell his labour. On the 11th February this year, the following appeared in the paper:—

Investor increases profit by
2,400 p.c.

The impressive results reported by subsidiaries of Mineral Securities Australia Ltd. in recent weeks have been dwarfed by yesterday's profit announcement from the parent company.

The article then goes on to give details. On the same date the following appeared:—

Finance Corp. lifts
group net profit

The directors said that the profit represents an earning rate of 20 per cent. on average paid-up capital for the half-year.

The profit is 15.1 per cent. higher than that earned for the corresponding period of the previous year.

Can members see the unfairness of it all and the disparity that exists between the 2,400 per cent. increase in profit and the figures I have given regarding wages? Employers are satisfied that \$36 is enough for the basic needs of a family.

I think the member for Bunbury understands the situation because he has similar cases in an area like the one I represent and I am sure he agrees it is unfair, on the one hand, that the sky is the limit while, on the other hand, all sorts of controls are in force.

Mr. Williams: The Industrial Commission sets a minimum wage, not a maximum wage and a person can sell his labour for a greater figure than the minimum set by the commission.

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes, but I have quoted a wage of \$48, but the employers say that \$36 is enough. I think I have made my point.

Mr. Williams: Not very many are on that figure; in fact, very few.

Mr. FLETCHER: I have another article here, portion of which reads—

Hooker Corp.
Lifts Profit

Hooker Corporation Ltd. lifted its half-year pre-tax profit to December 31 by more than \$500,000 to \$1,569,000—an increase of 54 per cent.

The unions have asked for something like a 50 per cent. increase in the living wage, and figures in the Press recently have indicated that at least \$62 is necessary for the basic requirements of a family. I have given an example of one family which is struggling to live on two-thirds of \$62.

The other night the Minister for Housing was having an argument, by way of interjection, with the Leader of the Opposition, when the Leader of the Opposition referred to the exorbitant interest rates

being charged on loans. If I understood the Minister correctly he was arguing that the exorbitant interest rates were not for housing loans to individuals, the implication being that they were to speculators who were building houses for the purpose of selling them.

Mr. O'Neill: Technically, unsecured construction finance.

Mr. FLETCHER: I think the Minister has invented that expression to try to defeat the argument. The Leader of the Opposition was referring to a question asked in another place and the Minister, in reply, did admit that 14 per cent. was being charged. I have a cutting from a paper which reads as follows:—

More and more WA couples are having to borrow housing finance at high interest rates.

Some are paying mortgage brokers up to 12½ per cent.

Let me relate an experience of my own to show that exorbitant rates of interest are being asked for loans. What I am about to relate happened to a member of my own family but, fortunately, through the Civil Service Association co-operative credit union we were able to obtain finance at 5½ per cent. flat. However, the Western Farmers Co-operative Ltd., of Wellington Street, Perth offered finance at 16 per cent.

I do not know whether that organisation offered the finance on its own behalf, or whether it was undertaking to obtain the finance from some source unknown to me. However, such a rate of interest is absolute usury. It gave me considerable satisfaction to be able to say that I was able to get the money for my son at 5½ per cent. flat. I think the particular firm was rather sad because I had accompanied my son. He was just over 21 years of age and wanted to build a modest home at Jurien Bay. The firm I have mentioned offered the money at 16 per cent., and what a fool my son would have been to accept it.

Mr. Rushton: So you borrowed it at 11 per cent!

Mr. FLETCHER: While on the subject of loans, I will mention that during last year this Government increased the stamp duty on borrowings from credit unions. The Civil Service Association credit union, which I have already mentioned, was forced to increase its stamp duty by 1,200 per cent. Fortunately, I was able to obtain a few thousand dollars loan just before this present Government got its cotton-picking fingers onto the credit unions.

Mr. O'Neill: Were not credit union loans exempt?

Mr. FLETCHER: I was charged \$2 stamp duty for my loan, but the same loan would now cost \$30, thanks to the action of this Government. I hope that the credit unions,

early next year, do not overlook the effect of this unfair impost which was inflicted on them merely because they were becoming too successful at the expense of the private investors. The private investors objected to the granting of loans at 5½ per cent. flat by the credit union I have mentioned. Another article which appeared in the Press reads as follows:—

One Perth mortgage broker told the Daily News today that he had been inundated with home-loan applications since the flow of finance from societies and banks had been halted last April.

Members of this House know how that situation came about; they know that unemployment was created in the building industry. I have no doubt that the Government is concerned because in *The Sunday Times* of last week it is offering a promise of 13,000 vacancies in the future to offset the existing unemployment situation. I see the Minister is shaking his head.

Mr. O'Neill: Offering a promise of 13,000 vacancies; what do you mean?

Mr. FLETCHER: The headline is there; 13,000 vacancies. I can see the Minister for Industrial Development waiting to interject to tell us about Alcoa at Pinjarra and what will occur at the Barkly Tableland. I do not deny that those ventures will need labour but, at the moment, there is unemployment. I think the Government is concerned and it is letting the private sector know that there will be a pool of unemployed from which to draw. The Government is saying that after it is re-elected next year, it will have 13,000 jobs to offer. I think that is what has prompted the headlines in *The Sunday Times*. The paper is attempting to look after the Government in that respect.

Mr. Lewis: Nothing like being optimistic.

Mr. Court: How many people do you know who are unemployed?

Mr. FLETCHER: Whilst watching Today Tonight on television I saw an interview with a young fellow at the Department of Labour and National Service. Other members may have seen the particular item; a considerable number of young people were unable to get a job.

The particular television show, Today Tonight, is very reliable; it is worth-while entertainment and a source of information. I do not doubt the sincerity of the case which was presented.

Mr. O'Neill: The question was, "How many people do you know who are unemployed?"

Mr. Court: As I said, how many people do you know who are unemployed and who cannot get a job? I refer to those who really want to work.

Mr. FLETCHER: That is a natural question to come from the other side of the House. I cannot specifically point to anybody, but I could go to the unemployment office to see the people I have already mentioned. The television show which I have referred to showed strong healthy people who were being asked why they were out of work. They could not get a job. I cannot name anybody in particular, because I am busy looking after my electoral problems and answering correspondence. However, if I were to mix with the trade unionists with whom I previously worked I would be able to give some names.

Mr. Court: You would be battling.

Mr. Bovell: In your situation, do people, when unemployed, come to you to ask you to get them a job?

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes.

Mr. Bovell: Has anybody come to you recently?

Mr. FLETCHER: The Minister thinks he is presenting a splendid case because I am not inundated with requests to find jobs.

Mr. Williams: Is it so long since you received such a request?

Mr. FLETCHER: At any rate, and attempting to get on to education, we are all inundated with correspondence from all parts of the State with respect to this matter. A total of 3,500 members of the Teachers Union are of the opinion that sufficient funds should be provided by both the Federal and State Governments to remove educational inequalities.

The Governor indicated in his Speech that capital expenditure on education increased last year by \$3,240,000 to \$13,993,000. I think that is quite creditable, but funds are still inadequate. We still have instances of, "Please sir, where can we sit?" There is inadequate accommodation for school children in some schools, particularly those located in Cockburn and other areas. The Teachers Union has this to say—

Twenty per cent. of Western Australian school children will be crammed into makeshift or overcrowded rooms, sometimes in unbearable conditions. We're 1,000 classrooms short.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has five more minutes.

Mr. FLETCHER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It goes on to say—

Get up and do something about it! It then lists the various members of Parliament and gives their addresses.

I received this correspondence. I did not wish to be discourteous, but I could not reply to all the letters. Consequently, I replied to the Teachers Union. I acknowledged the correspondence and told the union that I had received letters from

Kimberley to Esperance expressing dissatisfaction on behalf of 3,500 teachers who were concerned regarding the present order—or, as I put it, "disorder"—relating to education in this State. I told the union that I regretted I did not have time to reply to all who had written to me and said I would be pleased if the union would express through its journal that I was grateful to its members for the endeavours to alert Parliament and the community to the existing shortcomings in education.

I also told the union that I was aware the taxpayers' money is dissipated in many less worth-while directions than education and that our nation will be great or otherwise in direct proportion to wise expenditure in this direction. I further told the union that our future is in our youth, and our youth is in the hands of teachers for perhaps a greater period of their waking hours than they are in the hands of their parents.

Mr. Gayfer: Did you write that all by yourself?

Mr. FLETCHER: In short, I told the union that teachers play a major role in moulding the quality of our future citizens. Finally, I said that it is needless to point out that a State can only spend to the extent of finance made available from a Federal source, and that *Hansard* will reveal that I have, since my election in 1959, spoken in this manner and deplored the inadequacy of finance for education. I said that I shall continue to do so. I am now honouring that promise I gave the teachers in that correspondence.

I repeat that any Government, irrespective of colour, can only spend what is made available from a Federal source. I told the teachers that. I am not letting the Minister off the hook with that statement. If my party were in office, I would be just as critical of the Federal Government for wasting money on the F111 and other inconsequential matters compared with something so essential as education.

Mr. May: A 50c rise in the pension.

Mr. FLETCHER: Yes, a 50c rise in the pension. My time has expired, and that is my contribution to the Address-in-Reply.

MR. BERTRAM (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.13 p.m.]: Pursuant to the Hire-Purchase Act, 1959, a hire-purchase agreement in Western Australia includes—

a letting of goods with an option to purchase and an agreement for the purchase of goods by instalments (whether the agreement describes the instalments as rent or hire or otherwise) but does not include any agreement—

(a) whereby the property in the goods comprised therein passes at the time of the agreement or upon or at any time before delivery of the goods; or

- (b) under which the person by whom the goods are being hired or purchased is a person who is engaged in the trade or business of selling goods of the same nature or description as the goods comprised in the agreement;

In short, a hire-purchase agreement can be said to be one where the owner parts with the possession of goods to a person whom I shall call the hirer. The hirer retains the goods and if he performs the hire-purchase agreement—most importantly, if he pays the instalments of hire—at the end of a space of time he exercises an option to buy. Only when he exercises the option and, for example, pays the last instalment does the hirer cease to be a hirer and become a purchaser. Only at the last moment and not before does the ownership of the goods pass from the owner to the hire-purchaser.

I understand that hire-purchase transactions are not particularly new and I believe this type of business was being transacted some centuries ago, although I do not make that statement authoritatively. At any rate, it was not until 1931 that hire-purchase agreements received the attention of this Parliament. This type of agreement and business transaction received the attention of the Parliament at that time, because the State was in the throes of a depression. Parliament is obliged to spend quite a lot of its time, even up to the present day, in protecting the weaker vessels against the strong and greedy exploiters, who are normally people who possess the real power of our society, which happens to be money.

The position in 1931, and prior thereto, in the hire-purchase field was that people were purchasing chattels in the way I have indicated. These people included farmers who were purchasing implements for use on their properties. They had valiantly attempted to perform their agreements and, where it was possible, they had complied with their covenants and had paid the instalments on the due dates. However, as the depression became tighter and tighter eventually many of them reached a stage where they simply could not pay. It might have been that the chattel—whether machinery, a motor vehicle, or plant for use on a farm—was worth, say, \$2,000. The farmer could have paid, say, \$1,900 but then exhausted his capacity to pay. As the chattel was merely on hire the owner would come in and say, "Give this back. You have breached the agreement and I am taking it back." All the payments were forfeited and the hirer was left with no rights at all.

This was happening in 1930 in Western Australia and in other places, believe it or not. In consequence of this the Hire-Purchase Act of 1931 came into being. It provided that a routine be followed in the case of a breach on the part of the hirer.

If repossession came about, the owner had to make an account and give some monetary adjustment which was fair and equitable. The content of the account was set out in the Act so that there could be no misunderstanding of the obligation.

It will be seen, and it is important to note, that the 1931 Act was passed initially to protect the hirer. It was amended in 1937, but I do not think it is important to discuss what happened in that year. In 1958 another piece of legislation connected with hire purchase was brought down but, whilst it passed through the House, I do not think it ever became law. The current legislation is the Hire-Purchase Act, 1959, from which I earlier quoted the definition of a hire-purchase agreement. *Prima facie*, the intention of the 1959 Act was to fairly look after the interests as between the owners and the hirers. I think most, if not all, members of the House considered the measure on that basis.

The 1931 Act contained something like 10 sections and the 1959 Act contains 40 sections, I think. Incidentally, the 1959 Act enumerates quite a few offences for which people may be prosecuted, and whilst it is probably common knowledge that there are literally millions of hire-purchase transactions in the State I do not think there have been any prosecutions to date. The suggestion that there have been no offences committed seems to be highly improbable—there must have been many—so it must clearly indicate to anyone who has a reasonable viewpoint that while we have an Act that seems to be doing a job there is no interest in enforcing it or desire to do so. That is a bad thing.

One result of the additional 30 sections in the Act is that these days one receives a hire-purchase agreement with a lot of small print on it. It is laid down in the Act that the print shall be of a certain size and no smaller. On the back of the agreement are the covenants, in small print. I venture to say that very few people read the small print, and even if they did few would understand what it means. That seems to be a singularly unsatisfactory state of affairs because the majority of people who deal in hire-purchase agreements are not lawyers and are not very well versed in law, and they are not in a position to cope with a hire-purchase agreement, or with this type of agreement either.

When the 1959 Act was before Parliament there was debate on various aspects of it but, as I understand it, there was little, if any, debate concerning section 12, which is in a division headed, "Voluntary Return of Goods." I have already described what a hire-purchase transaction is. Until a hirer exercises his option to buy, he has merely got possession of the chattel; in fact it is not his property and he is not the owner of it.

As I understand the position, even after the 1931 Act came into being a hirer could at any time return his chattels to the owner without suffering any disability or disadvantage. Let us take a motorcar, for example. Suppose a young fellow buys a motorcar and signs his hire-purchase agreement. Subsequently a time comes when he is perhaps allocated a vehicle in his employment and he no longer requires one of his own. Alternatively, he might strike some vicissitude and be no longer able to afford a motorcar.

Prior to 1959, for argument's sake, he could return the car and, provided he returned it in a condition commensurate with proper wear and tear, and provided his instalments were paid up, that was the end of it. He was treated in an entirely different way from the hirer who for whatever reason—mischief, perhaps—breaks down on his hire-purchase agreement, in which case the owner has the right to say he cannot keep the chattel any longer and it will be repossessed. The owner then repossesses the vehicle, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, by way of certain procedures and by way of notice; but, more importantly for my argument, an account is to be given, one of the ingredients of which is the value of the chattel repossessed. The owner says to the hirer, "If you look at this account you will see that you owe me a further sum, and I want that." It is usually a sizeable sum.

There is a clear line of distinction between the person who is doing the right thing and has a right to return the chattel, and the fellow who defaults, in which case there is repossession of the chattel. This distinction has been almost universally lost in this State. When section 12 (6) of the 1959 Act was enacted, very few people realised that this would happen, and those who perhaps did realise it remained mute and did not inform the House precisely what would happen.

Remember that section 12 is in the division dealing with the voluntary return of goods. It sets out what happens when a hirer of his own volition, and not by reason of any default on his part, elects to return goods. He does not own the goods; he has a right to return them to the owner if he does not want them any longer. Section 12 (6) reads as follows:—

Where a hire-purchase agreement is determined pursuant to this section the owner is entitled to recover from the hirer—

- (a) the amount (if any) required to be paid in the circumstances under the agreement; or
- (b) the amount (if any) which the owner would have been entitled to recover if he had

taken possession of the goods at the date of the termination of the hiring,

whichever is the lesser amount.

Almost invariably, one now finds in a hire-purchase agreement a clause, which is a covenant by the hirer, which reads something like this—

I may at any time terminate the hiring by returning the goods in accordance with Section 12 of the Act. I agree in that event to pay you forthwith and you shall be entitled to recover from me an amount equal to that referred to in Section 12(6) (b) of the Act.

I suggest that when this Bill was before the House members took this section at its face value, which is that if a person returned goods voluntarily he could get out under paragraph (a) on the basis that he had returned the goods and that all he was liable for was such instalments of hire as were unpaid plus excess wear and tear on the goods.

If a person sought to return a television set that was only six months old, and that television set had a broken face, clearly that would not be fair wear and tear, and the owner would be entitled to say, "As it happens, you are a month behind in your instalments and this damage will have to be paid for; that is another few dollars to be added to your account."

Now, if the amount of instalments continuing as outstanding, plus any excess of depreciation made good, was less than the amount arrived at by the account that would be rendered had the goods not been voluntarily returned but repossessed, then I would think the first of those sums would be the one payable. I think whichever is the lesser of those two figures is the figure which members in this House thought the hirer would have to pay. There are two clear calculations to be made: Firstly, the simple one I have indicated; or, secondly, the somewhat more complex account which inevitably puts a defaulting hirer at a distinct disadvantage and leaves him with a pretty sizeable bill to pay after he has lost his chattel.

In other words, it was understood that a defaulter was at a distinct disadvantage, as compared with the fellow who did not default but, simply because he had the right at law to do so, returned the chattels. As a matter of fact, that distinction or calculation of the lesser of the two sums according to this formula simply does not apply for the reason I have stated; namely, unexpectedly to this House there is to be found in hire-purchase agreements a clause which states that the hirer agrees to pay the same amount upon the voluntary return of the chattel, as he would be obliged to pay if he defaulted. The hirer

does not really understand what it is about, anyhow—only a few do—and nobody suggests he does.

That is what has happened. In consequence one receives a string of telephone calls from fellows who have done the right thing and returned chattels when they no longer wanted them or because they no longer had the means to pay for them, and then found they were being dealt with on the basis of defaulting. They have had huge bills to pay, and in my view this is totally wrong, completely unjust, and should not be tolerated.

In my book this is completely unfair. Not only is it unjust, but I believe that an overwhelming number of the members of this House at the time the Bill was introduced never dreamed that this situation could happen.

Mr. O'Neill: Is this illegal?

Mr. BERTRAM: No, it is not illegal.

Mr. O'Neill: Under what circumstances can that clause be included in the covenant?

Mr. BERTRAM: I suppose some bright boy thought he would put it in to negate the whole legislation, and people who are in no way blameworthy are being dealt with in the manner I have described. What concerns me as much as anything else is that people are getting bills which they should never receive; and I simply do not believe that the Parliament intended that this should occur. Section 28 of the Hire-Purchase Act lists many provisions which are void if included in a hire-purchase agreement.

In the 1931 Act the Parliament went out of its way to ensure that what it sought to do would not be defeated; because section 10 of that Act stated—

The provisions of this Act shall have effect notwithstanding any agreement to the contrary, and shall extend to any hire-purchase agreement made and in operation at or before the commencement of this Act.

So the Parliament then guarded against contracting out. That provision seems to me to be analogous to section 28 of the current Act. I think what is going on at the moment is permissible at law, but it is utterly harsh and completely unconscionable. It is for that reason that I have brought the matter to the attention of the House so that something may be done about it.

I wish to mention a few other items, but I do not propose to spend much time on them. I suppose it could be fairly and accurately said that the quality and the discernment of the electors of Mt. Hawthorn are as good as one will find anywhere. It is true that they insist upon the best representation that can be got,

but I do not suppose anyone can argue about that! I am not as shy as Prime Minister MacMillan.

I believe the story went that somebody suggested to Prime Minister MacMillan that his son was doing very well and would succeed in the parliamentary sphere. The Prime Minister said, "That is perfectly so; but, of course, I could not say so."

The Mt. Hawthorn electorate is, in the main, an old built-up area. A small amount of building is going on in residential areas, but not a great deal, because the area was developed many years ago in some cases and, in others, in the vicinity of 20 years ago. In consequence, for some years gone by—certainly in more recent years—there has not been much by way of demands from the people in the electorate for new roads, schools, and water supplies. Those amenities have been there for many years. Perhaps some extension of those services has been called for from time to time, but by and large I do not think my electors have received much from the public purse for many years past.

However, I do not think my electors should become the forgotten legion because of this position and, perhaps, because of their natural forbearance; so I wish to mention the sewerage position in my electorate. It is true that the bulk of the electorate is connected to the deep sewerage, but I will mention one or two sections which are not. One particular area, which is roughly bounded by Sasse Avenue, Scarborough Beach Road, and Harbourne Street, has been built up for 20 years or more, I would say. The area is not large; it consists of maybe a dozen small blocks, and no deep sewerage is available. In consequence, the residents repeatedly have to call in pumping services to clear their septic tanks.

In addition, a larger area bounded roughly by Stoneham, Hector, Charles, and Green Streets is not sewered. I do not think much has been done by way of sewerage work for residential purposes in the Mt. Hawthorn electorate for a long time. Whilst other relatively small pockets may also need the service to which I have referred, the areas I have described are the ones about which I am particularly concerned. It seems to me that in an electorate like Mt. Hawthorn in the year 1970 there really should not be homes which are without the proper deep sewerage facility.

I would certainly hope that something will be done for those areas in the very near future. I think it was suggested in answer to a question some months ago that some difficulty was being encountered because the department was not sure at that time precisely where the Mitchell Freeway would be placed; so perhaps complications arose from the planning of that freeway.

I certainly hope, in view of what I have said this evening, that a real attempt will be made, because not only is the need overdue but, judging from what the Mt. Hawthorn electorate receives from the Treasury, there is an element of fairness in a case submitted for some services to be supplied to the residents of the district. In this instance, as I have pointed out, there is a case for deep sewerage to be installed throughout the rest of the electorate.

I now wish to refer to section 57A of the Traffic Act. Subsection (2) of that section reads as follows:—

No person shall, within a prescribed area, park a vehicle on land which is not a road, unless he has been authorised to do so by the owner, or person in possession of that land.

A penalty is provided where people breach that subsection. The section further provides that the owner of the land or a member of the Police Force has authority to remove a vehicle which transgresses that subsection.

As I understand it, the subsection is designed to protect those people whose homes happen to be situated close to a cricket ground, football ground, or some large sports ground at which people congregate in large numbers to watch the sport that is being played. The spectators travel to the grounds in cars, and the great majority of them park their vehicles in authorised places, but others leave their vehicles parked in laneways and the like to the great inconvenience and embarrassment of the residents in the locality, because they are unable to obtain ingress to, or egress from their properties for the duration of the game that is being played in the nearby sports ground.

Purely by accident the owners of these residences have found themselves in this dilemma for quite a long time. Subsection (2) of section 57A of the Traffic Act was framed with the intention that it would be a cure for the dilemma, but in fact it has proved to be no cure whatsoever. Technical difficulties have arisen. At least one of my constituents has been told that steps will be taken to amend this Act to make it workable at some future time, but I did not notice such a move mentioned in the Governor's Speech that was recently delivered. To me it does not seem to be a gargantuan task to make the subsection workable, and I hope that if some draft legislation is being prepared at present, or even if there is not, something will be done to rectify the existing ineffective provisions of section 57A of the Traffic Act.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Mensaros.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Reply to Question: Correction

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [8.44 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, have I your permission to make a correction of an answer to a question without notice from the member for Pilbara this afternoon, in which he asked whether I intended to introduce legislation during the current session of Parliament to form a public accounts committee? My answer was, "Yes."

Actually, it is not intended that we introduce legislation, but that we amend the Standing Orders, and I am not sure whether the member for Pilbara was questioning me in detail. However, I want to make that correction.

I hope that those speakers who intend to speak to the Address-in-Reply debate will be ready, because, unless they are ready, this is their last chance.

House adjourned at 8.45 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 19th August, 1970

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

QUESTIONS (11): ON NOTICE

1. *This question was postponed.*

2. **IRON ORE**

Hamersley Range Agreement: Commencement Date

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Has a commencement date been established for the Iron Ore (Hamersley Range) Agreement?
- (2) If so, what is the date?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The 25th March, 1965.

3. **LAND**

Taxation Valuations

The Hon. F. R. WHITE, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Which municipal districts within the Metropolitan region were re-valued by the Taxation Department during the financial years ended—
 - (a) the 30th June, 1968;
 - (b) the 30th June, 1969; and
 - (c) the 30th June, 1970?