

## 2. Stock Diseases Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Health), read a first time.

House adjourned at 5.33 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 17th October, 1967

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

### AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

#### Tabling

THE SPEAKER: I have received from the Auditor-General a copy of his report on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1967. It will be laid on the Table of the House.

### TERTIARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

#### Tabling of Report

MR. BRAND (Greenough--Premier) [4.34 p.m.]: With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I propose to table two copies of the report of the Committee on Tertiary Education. Might I advise members that although sufficient copies were not printed to enable immediate supply, within a fortnight further copies can be obtained on application to the Premier's Department.

The reports were tabled.

### QUESTIONS (19): ON NOTICE

#### ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

##### Consumption and Generating Capacity

1. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) What was the total consumption of the State Electricity Commission electricity, including electricity used by the commission, for each year from 1956-57 to 1966-67 inclusive?
- (2) What was the commission's total generating capacity in kWh of electricity for each year from 1956-57 to 1966-67 inclusive?

Mr. NALDER replied:

(1)	kWh
1956-57	602,831,218
1957-58	644,818,089
1958-59	679,644,603
1959-60	729,768,833
1960-61	818,043,889
1961-62	882,280,793
1962-63	986,511,092
1963-64	1,094,484,831
1964-65	1,224,406,400
1965-66	1,370,593,300
1966-67	1,544,397,100

(2)

	kW
1956-57	212,000
1957-58	206,000
1958-59	235,000
1959-60	265,000
1960-61	295,000
1961-62	295,000
1962-63	289,500
1963-64	289,500
1964-65	289,500
1965-66	349,500
1966-67	409,500

### FISHING

#### Territorial Waters: Protection

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

- (1) Is he aware of the article appearing in *The West Australian* of the 12th October headed "Five-purpose ship planned by the Soviet Union"?
- (2) If he is aware of the article, can he advise what protective measures are being taken as to extension of territorial waters in the interest of the fishing industry in this State?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Legislation is being introduced by the Commonwealth Government to extend the territorial waters to 12 miles.

### WATER SUPPLIES

#### Denham Town Lots

3. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Can his department supply water to all Denham town lots which were recently offered for sale by the Lands Department?
- (2) If "No," will he state which blocks cannot be supplied and the reason?
- (3) Did his department at any time advise the Lands Department that water could not be made available to any or all of the lots; if so, when?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Water can be supplied to all Denham town lots which were recently offered for sale by the Lands Department. However, due to their high elevation, Lots 148 to 153 and 133 to 139 will experience low pressures during periods of peak draw.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) No.

## GOVERNMENT HOUSE

*Area and Valuation*

4. Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Premier:

- (1) What is the area of land (including gardens) on which Government House is situated?
- (2) What is the approximate value of the area, having regard to land values in the vicinity?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) 6 acres 0 roods 16 perches (approximately).
- (2) Because of the nature of the use of the Government Domain, which is a Class "A" reserve, the need to carry out a valuation has not arisen, and any assessment, if it were required, would necessarily take into account the future projected legal use. Without knowledge of the purpose of a valuation, any figure arrived at would be largely fictitious. However, the following amounts were paid in recent years for sites in the near vicinity—
  - (a) Former Christian Brothers College site of 2 acres 1 rood 1 perch was purchased by the Commonwealth for \$506,000.
  - (b) The Superannuation Building site of 2 roods 21 perches was purchased for \$242,115 (approx.)

## GOODS

*Repairers: Protective Legislation*

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

Has any further progress been made in regard to introducing legislation to protect tradesmen and agents who are left with uncalled for goods left for repair?

Mr. COURT replied:

A copy of the Disposal of Un-collected Goods Act of New South Wales (No. 57 of 1966) has recently been received and this, together with similar legislation enacted in Victoria, and the draft of a Queensland Bill, will be examined during the parliamentary recess with the view to preparing a Bill for introduction in the 1968 session.

ESPERANCE PLAINS  
(AUSTRALIA) PTY. LTD.

*Neridup Locations 12 and 16:  
Acquisition of Lots by Ready Credit*

6. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Who were the parties who were originally allotted Lots 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Neridup Location 12 and Lot

104 of Neridup Location 16 by Esperance Plains (Australia) Pty. Ltd.?

- (2) What was the amount of improvement on each lot at the time they were allotted?
- (3) What was the amount of improvement on each lot at the time they were acquired by Ready Credit?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Lots 3 and 4 of Neridup Location 12 were purchased by Sidney Harry Robinson of Barrenjoey Road, Newport Beach, New South Wales.

Lots 5 and 6 of Neridup Location 12 were purchased by Herbert Vincent Hills of 2535E Imperial Highway, Los Angeles 59, California, United States of America. Lot 104 of Neridup Location 16 was purchased by W. C. Kruger Company of Box 308, Santa Fe, New Mexico, United States of America.

- (2) Neridup Location 12 is the subject of a Crown grant issued in 1957, during the office of the Labor Government and the present Government was not involved in the sales.

Neridup Location 16 was the subject of a Permit to Occupy issued on the 13th March, 1959 (Labor Government) and the Crown grant issued on the 21st June, 1960. Departmental records reveal that the whole of Lots 3, 4, 5, and 6 were logged when inspected in March, 1958, but there was no development on Lot 104 of Neridup Location 16.

- (3) I am informed privately by a representative of Ready Credit Limited that the following improvements existed on these lots at the time of purchase:—

Lots 3 and 4—1,000 acres ploughed.

Lots 5 and 6—660 acres of second year pasture and one dam. The land was also fenced.

Lot 104—No improvements.

As indicated in my reply to question 11 on the 11th October, these sales were negotiated on a freehold basis by original grantees during the Labor Government's term of office.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

*Pneumoconiosis: Deferred Payments*

7. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Labour:

How many persons who have an entitlement for payments of

workers' compensation because of partial disablement due to pneumoconiosis have had the payments deferred by the State Government Insurance Office on the grounds that they were earning amounts in excess of the weekly award rate for machine miners?

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

None. Although payment of compensation has been deferred in eight instances, the State Government Insurance Office is not aware that any of the persons concerned was last employed in the mining industry as a machine miner.

8. *This question was postponed.*

### LAND

#### *Eastern End of Causeway: Vesting in Perth City Council*

9. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is there any land at the eastern end of the Causeway particularly between the river and Great Eastern Highway yet to be vested in the Perth City Council for development as parkland and gardens?
- (2) If so—
  - (a) what are particulars of the area, including size;
  - (b) when will the vesting procedures be completed?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

(1) Yes.

- (2) (a) Swan Location 7981 and Lots 38 (Diagram 34654), 39 (Diagram 34652) and 40 (Diagram 34653). The respective areas are:

Location 7981—6ac. 1r. 37p.

Lot 38—19.3p.

Lot 39—1ac. 1r. 23.3p.

Lot 40—1r. 33.9p.

- (b) All surveys have been completed and examined but the land comprised in Lots 38, 39, and 40 are yet to be re-vested in the Crown before the reservation may be formally gazetted. The preparation of new Certificates of Title for Lots 38 and 39 is also necessary prior to re-vestment. The various requirements are currently receiving attention and finality will be reached as soon as possible.

### COURT OF MARINE INQUIRY

#### *Collision between "Andrew" and "Katamereira": Rehearing*

10. Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) In respect of the collision between T.S.M.V. *Andrew* and T.S.M.V. *Katamereira* on Friday, the 26th February, 1965, and the subsequent court of marine inquiry as a result of which George Alfred Page, master of the *Andrew* at the time of the collision, lost his master's certificate, is he aware—
  - (a) at the time of the court of marine inquiry, G. A. Page was a patient at the Hollywood Repatriation Hospital;
  - (b) that G. A. Page was under sedation for a nervous condition and was recovering from an operation for bilateral hernia performed approximately two weeks earlier;
  - (c) that he was under similar sedation when he attended the court of marine inquiry, and that apart from his other ailments was suffering from acute laryngitis;
  - (d) that he received notice of the court of marine inquiry two days prior to the inquiry;
  - (e) that he left the hospital under sedation and endeavoured to obtain legal assistance from the Legal Aid Bureau but was informed that there was insufficient time for such aid to be given;
  - (f) that in addition to not being able to obtain legal aid he had no time to obtain witnesses in his defence;
  - (g) that the master of the *Katamereira* had several witnesses and legal representation at the court of marine inquiry;
  - (h) that G. A. Page has highly responsible witnesses who will substantiate evidence which he gave at the inquiry and in respect of which he was disbelieved by the court?
- (2) Was the court of marine inquiry aware of the matters referred to in questions (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (h)?
- (3) Was the Crown Law Department aware of same?
- (4) Is it considered that a court of marine inquiry conducted under these circumstances has satisfactorily fulfilled the purpose for which such courts are constituted?
- (5) Does he not consider that apart from new evidence which is avail-

able, the matters referred to in questions (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (h) alone, warrant a rehearing of the case under section 106 of the Western Australian Marine Act?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) (a) Yes.
- (b) I am aware that he was under treatment for a nervous complaint and I have since been advised that he was under sedation and had previously had a hernia operation. His doctor had advised the department that there was no medical reason why Mr. Page should not attend the court.
- (c) I am not aware that he was under sedation and suffering from acute laryngitis at the court of marine inquiry. He did not say so or appear so on the inquiry, and he did not seek an adjournment.
- (d) An endeavour was made to serve notice of the court of marine inquiry on the 21st July, 1965, at Mill Point Road, South Perth. It was subsequently learnt that he was at Hollywood Repatriation Hospital where he was served notice on the 26th July. The court of marine inquiry commenced on the 29th July.
- (e) No. The fact that a court of marine inquiry would be held was announced on the 4th May, 1965.
- (f) Mr. Page made no mention of any difficulty at or before the court of marine inquiry. He was aware of the preliminary inquiry previously made and had given his own evidence then, and all witnesses known to the department gave evidence before the court of marine inquiry. These included the masters and crews of the vessels concerned and passengers, one of whom had taken photographs.
- (g) Yes.
- (h) I am aware that the inquiry was held in July, 1965, and that in November, 1966, the honourable member referred to statements made by other witnesses who at the time of the collision were on shore ahead of the vessels and some hundreds of yards distant.

- (2) (a) Yes.  
(b), (c), (d) (e), (f) (h): Probably no.
- (3) The Crown Law Department was aware of the same information which I have furnished in answer to (1).
- (4) Yes.
- (5) No.

**ESPERANCE LAND AND  
DEVELOPMENT COMPANY**  
*Conditional Purchase Blocks:  
Agreement*

11. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) How many conditional purchase blocks were allocated for the year 1966-67 in the Esperance region east of the rabbit proof fence?
- (2) For this same period, how many blocks were allocated by the Esperance Land and Development Company?
- (3) Has the Government an official or unofficial agreement with the company regarding the sale of conditional purchase blocks in the areas adjacent to the Esperance Land and Development Company's concessions?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Three in the Esperance district and one in the adjoining Fitzgerald district.
- (2) For the period the 1st July, 1966, to the 30th June, 1967, 32 sales were negotiated by the Esperance Land and Development Company.  
During the period since, 1959, the company has sold 113 blocks totalling 268,677 acres.
- (3) At the time the original agreement was assigned, it was considered competition between the State and the company would not best serve the community interest. The original company voluntarily surrendered approximately 276,519 acres from its permit area and, when the agreement was re-negotiated in 1960, further land totalling 177,850 acres was deleted from the option area and so enabled the State to release blocks under normal conditional purchase.  
This allowed progressive releases of land for agricultural development until the company was in a position to make available its areas for sale.  
The State's right to release Crown land at its discretion was not prejudiced as 763 blocks totalling

1,209,322 acres have been released under conditional purchase since 1959, in the Esperance region east of the rabbit proof fence.

*Amended Agreement: Conditions, Acreage Acquired, and Allotments*

12. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Had the Esperance Land and Development Company spent on development the sum of money as required under clause 4 (A) (ii) of the amended agreement before the Minister gave the company permits to occupy the total area now in its hands?
- (2) What acreage covered by permits to occupy has been granted to the company since it took over and what area has it received free of encumbrances for its own use?
- (3) What area has the company allotted to purchasers to date?
- (4) How many individual sales have been effected?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Yes. Certificates furnished by the auditors of Esperance Land and Development Company, as provided in clause 4(B) of the Esperance Lands Agreement Act, 1960, state that the company has expended a sum considerably in excess of that required under clause 4(A)(ii) to cover the total acreage of all parcels selected.
- (2) and (3) The total areas granted to the company under the agreement are as follows:—
  - (a) Crown grants issued .... 372,739 acres
  - (b) Permits to occupy issued: 328,170 acres

Total area: 700,909 acres

I would say those acreages were approximate.

Of this total area, the State committee has agreed to the sale of holdings aggregating 268,677 acres, subject to adjustment on final examination of survey plans. Company sales in parcels selected have not been completed but, in terms of clause 6 of the agreement, at least 50 per cent. of the total must be available for share-farming, lease, or sale. The balance is retained by the company.

- (4) One hundred and thirteen.

### THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

*Policies: Number and Premiums*

13. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) How many compulsory third party insurance policies were current at the end of each of the last three years?
- (2) What was the total amount collected in premiums for such policies for each of the last three years?
- (3) What are the maximum and minimum premiums payable on various types of vehicles?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No records, but equivalent to number of traffic licenses issued throughout the State in each year.
- (2) Premiums received for three pool years ended the 30th June, 1967—
 

1964-65	.....	\$4,850,133
1965-66	.....	\$5,180,259
1966-67	.....	\$6,797,072
- (3) As per schedule of premiums tabled.

*The Schedule was tabled.*

### MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

*Accidents: Claims and Litigation*

14. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

In regard to the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust, can he advise—

- (a) The number of claims received from persons involved in traffic accidents during each of the last three years?
- (b) The number of claims that were litigated during each of the last three years?
- (c) The number of claims that failed; i.e., were finalised without any payment being made to the claimant, during each of the last three years?
- (d) The number of claims that succeeded; i.e., were finalised after payment of some money to the claimant, during each of the last three years?
- (e) The number of claims that remained outstanding at the end of each of the last three years?
- (f) The total amount paid to or for claimants during each of the last three years?

- (g) For each of the last three years what was the total amount paid to or for claimants for—

- (i) general damages;  
(ii) special damages;  
and as to special damages, the total amount paid out with respect to—

- (a) loss of salary or wages;  
(b) medical expenses?

- (h) What was the maximum amount of any claim paid out in each of the last three years?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (a) Contingent claims in pool years

1964-65	4,479
1965-66	4,676
1966-67	4,194 (Still incomplete as policies issued during year mature on varying dates to the 30th June, 1968.)

- (b) Accurate statistics of claims before the courts are not kept but a close approximation is—

Year	Litigated on Liability and Quantum	Lia-bility Only	Litigated on Quantum Only	Consent Judgment	Total
1965	18	1	73	37	129
1966	11	5	38	62	116
1967	15	2	45	54	116

to 6th October.

Note: Consent judgments are confirmation of agreed settlements by a judge only—usually of infant's claims and are not actually litigated.

- (c) and (d) No records.

- (e) As at the 30th June, 1967, the following claims were outstanding in the pool years shown:—

Year	Number of Claims	Estimated to Cost
1960-61	26	\$ 169,700
1961-62	25	143,650
1962-63	98	431,850
1963-64	249	1,229,796
1964-65	500	2,164,908
1965-66	1,095	3,702,160
1966-67	3,496	4,116,208

The year 1966-67 is incomplete as many more claims will be received as per reply to question 1 (a).

- (f) The total amount paid to the 30th June, 1967, on account of claims for the past 3 financial years is as follows:—

Year	\$
1964-65	2,770,748
1965-66	3,710,469
1966-67	3,725,418

These amounts will be increased on settlement of the outstanding claims set out in answer to question 1 (e).

- (g) The amounts paid to the 30th June, 1967, in the three preceding financial years is:—

Year	General Damages	Special Damages
(i) and (ii) 1964-65	\$ 1,953,443	\$ 817,505
1965-66	2,725,723	984,746
1966-67	2,706,712	1,013,706
Year	Wages	Medical Expenses
1964-65	\$ 270,430	\$ 379,124
(a) and (b) 1965-66	301,066	443,885
1966-67	280,233	442,071

The foregoing will again be increased on settlement of claims outstanding as set out in answer to question 1 (e).

- (h) The maximum paid on any claim in years:—

	\$
1965	153,875
1966	46,221
1967	66,107

## LAND EXCHANGE

### Agreement between Government and Perth City Council

15. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:
- (1) What are the particulars of the several agreements or deals involving the exchange of land which have been made during the life of the present Government between the Government and the Perth City Council?
  - (2) Were areas of land at Mt. Kenneth and City Beach the subject of any agreement?
  - (3) Does the Government propose to acquire Hamilton Square, Weld Square, and Russell Square from the Perth City Council?
  - (4) If "Yes," on what terms and conditions?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The only one the Public Works Department is aware of is set out in the Chevron Hilton Hotel Agreement Act, 1960, (No. 20), the relative clauses of the agreement being 17 to 35.
- (2) Mt. Kenneth—Yes. Clauses 27 to 29 of the above agreement. City Beach—Not in the above agreement. Several school sites have been or are to be allocated for the purpose but no agreements have been completed.
- (3) In terms of the latest plans, Hamilton Square will be needed for the Hamilton interchange and Weld Square will eventually be needed for the northern part of the ring road. Russell Square is shown on the region scheme as being required for roadworks associated with the ring road; however, the latest plans contemplate a variation in the associated roadworks that would not call for the use of Russell Square.
- (4) While the terms and conditions of the acquisitions have been discussed from time to time, formal negotiations have yet to be entered into.

## TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

### Distributions to Country Race Clubs

16. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) What amount of money was made available by the Totalisator Agency Board to country race clubs for the years 1964, 1965, 1966, and 1967?

- (2) What were the names and the amounts paid to each club for the above years?
- (3) What is the formula used for distribution to country race clubs?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

			\$
(1)	1964	.....	108,714
	1965	.....	144,158
	1966	.....	167,488
	1967	.....	158,171

- (2) In accordance with the provisions of section 28 of the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Act, 1960-66, the board pays over to the Western Australian Turf Club the total amount due to all racing clubs, and the turf club in turn distributes 20 per cent. of such amount amongst the country clubs on the basis of stakes paid by the country clubs during the preceding racing year. There are approximately 50 country clubs involved.

If the honourable member still desires the detailed information, arrangements will be made for it to be supplied.

- (3) Answered by (2) above.

## MINERS

### *Examination by Health Laboratory*

17. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it correct that many miners are now only being examined by the health laboratory at two-yearly intervals?
- (2) If this is correct, does he not consider that in the case of mine employees who have worked for some years in the mines this is too long an interval between examinations?
- (3) What is the reason for this delay?
- (4) Will yearly examinations be resumed?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is considered desirable that men who have worked underground for a number of years should be examined annually.
- (3) During 1967, difficulties have arisen due to labour shortages in the goldmining industry and the absence of the mines mobile X-ray unit for extensive overhaul and repairs, but examinations at the statutory intervals have been maintained.
- (4) Yearly examinations have always been available for underground miners.

## NICKEL MINING

### *Investigation into Injurious Elements*

18. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:

Referring to question 19 on the 21st September, 1967, and with particular reference to his answer to (3) and (4) thereof—

- (1) Does he not consider that a hazard of nickel mining is an exposure to elements which may cause a worker to contract dermatitis?
- (2) Is it logical to expect that these elements or others contained in the ore could cause lung damage to workers engaged in this type of mining?
- (3) As his answer to question (4) stated that his department "does not propose to carry out a special investigation of nickel ore mined at Kam-balda," will he state the reason why the department is not prepared to seek information from authorities in other countries where nickel mining is carried out, as requested in my question?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes. A small minority of people are sensitive to nickel. If a nickel miner is sensitive, he could develop a dermatitis.
- (2) Yes. As with hard-rock miners elsewhere, lung damage from silica is a possibility; and nickel miners will be given the same medical supervision as other hard-rock miners in this State.
- (3) The honourable member is in error. On matters relating to mining hazards in Western Australia, the department is continually in contact with authorities overseas. It has information on nickel mining overseas and is prepared to contact authorities outside Western Australia if and when the occasion arises.

## INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

### *Inquiry by Inspection of Machinery Department*

19. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Under what conditions does the Inspection of Machinery Department inquire into the industrial accidents involving machinery?
- (2) Which of the department's officers make such inquiries?
- (3) What is the purpose of such inquiries?

- (4) What action is taken on such reports?  
 (5) To whom are the reports made available?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Inquiries are made under the provisions of sections 50, 51, and 52 of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1921-1958.  
 (2) Any of the inspectors of machinery, but usually the inspector for the district or area concerned.  
 (3) To ascertain the cause of the accident and examine the boiler or machinery involved.  
 (4) Where necessary notice that the machinery or boiler is dangerous—fourth and sixth schedules to the Act—is served on the owner to take the action set out in the notice.  
 (5) As set out in section 51 of the Act.

### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

#### WOOL EXPORTERS LTD.

##### *Compensation to Dealers*

Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Can he advise the House of the final decision of the board of inquiry into Wool Exporters Ltd., and what type of compensation will be paid to the dealers that handle wool through that board?

Mr. NALDER replied:

Up till this time the Government has not received a report from the investigator inquiring into the situation which has developed from Wool Exporters Ltd.

### BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Bill.
2. Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Registration Fees Bill.

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

3. Discharged Servicemen's Badges Bill.
- Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Durack, and read a first time.

### EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Third Reading*

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [4.58 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

I wish to make some comments to clean up a few of the queries raised by the member for Kalgoorlie on which I undertook to have some research made. First of all I think it is important for us to realise

that this legislation was brought about by a position that was made more apparent when some of the consulates queried the situation with respect to their peculiar position in Australia if they did, in fact, take evidence.

In view of the fact that there was no positive legislation in the States or in the Commonwealth, it was decided by the several Ministers it would be appropriate to introduce legislation. Having made this decision in principle, it was then a question of what form the authority should take. So far as people with judicial standing are concerned, there was no desire to insist that the Attorneys-General in the several States should have to approve their taking evidence on oath; but where they do not have judicial standing in their own country, it was felt that somebody else should have the authority to say who would be an appropriate person to take evidence on oath. Hence the reference to approval by the Attorneys-General.

I should also point out that in regard to the proceedings, we are not really terribly concerned, as Australians, about the standing of these people in their own country, because they are only taking evidence in cases which are being tried under the laws of their own country. Perhaps I should more properly say "being dealt with" under the Statutes of their own country. Therefore whether they are good judges, or poor judges, or whether they have the standing of our Supreme Court or High Court judges does not matter, because we are not directly affected by the end result. However, there is the situation where there is a non-judicial tribunal. I can think of one. For instance, in connection with matters under the services pensions in America, there is a pension tribunal, and, in the interests of the people concerned, it would be necessary to permit evidence to be taken from them when overseas.

The honourable member was concerned as to whether Australians could be prejudiced by having to give evidence. As a result of research, it has been pointed out to me that no Australians could be forced to give evidence, because they could not be effectively subpoenaed if they decided not to give evidence. However, they must give truthful evidence if they have agreed to give evidence; and I think this is fair enough.

The only other point which was raised by the honourable member and which, from memory, is outstanding, is the matter of reciprocity. This is not inherent in the legislation nor is it categorically stated as a matter of basic administrative principle. I must be emphatic and say that I would not like to give an undertaking that the authority would never be given unless there was reciprocity. I can think of many circumstances when, as a matter of common sense, an Attorney-General in



any of the States would think it proper to give the approval even though there was no reciprocity. This would be done in the interests of the person the Attorney-General felt would otherwise be at a big disadvantage.

When the Attorneys-General of the several States were considering this matter they did consider the point raised in general principle and indicated they would be looking for reciprocal rights in the matter. I think that is fair enough; but I would not like to say categorically that it would be laid down as an absolute condition that there must be reciprocity. I think the honourable member would agree it would be quite unreasonable to say, as a hard and fast rule, that there must be reciprocity before this approval is given.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

### LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Third Reading*

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

### STOCK DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

#### *Third Reading*

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [5.4 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. HALL (Albany) [5.5 p.m.]: It is my intention to say a few words in regard to this Bill, which is rather commendable. My knowledge of this subject is based on the Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Health Report, part 5 volume II, which clearly defines the purpose for which the Minister introduced his Bill—the segregation of areas to prevent the spread of pleuro-pneumonia. I would like to quote from page 360 of this report on which an article appears under the heading "Contagious Bovine Pleuro-pneumonia" as follows:—

Contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia is probably the most serious contagious disease of cattle that has ever become established in Australia.

I think the legislation before us to bring this disease under control is the result of a realisation of the devastating overall effect pleuro-pneumonia would have on cattle reproduction in this State. This is important, because I do not think we have reached the maximum production of cattle in this State. We have a wonderful future to which we can look forward by developing the cattle and sheep industries in association with each other. We could develop an overseas market which would be of tremendous economic value to this

State. Continuing to quote from the report—

Though a very considerable measure of control has been attained, and the disease has been eradicated from over half of the continent, it remains enzootic in undeveloped northern pastoral areas. As there is constant movement of cattle from those parts and it is not practicable to assure freedom of animals from this disease, contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia is frequently introduced into clean areas.

I would think the Minister had this in his mind when he introduced the Bill. Cattle with this disease will be placed in the right areas so the disease can be kept under control.

I am a member who represents an area where beef production is very high, and I do not think it is fully realised just how much can be produced in the southern portion of the State. Some of the finest beasts are in that area. I think there is a tremendous possibility for the cattle industry to be carried on in association with sheep production. I think members will find that research has shown beef and sheep can be run together. There is a tremendous potential in the southern part of the State where pastures are lush; and I do not think anyone can dispute the fact that the areas concerned are clean in respect of cattle and sheep. Occasionally there have been areas where sheep have been affected by foot-rot, but not to any considerable degree.

As a State, I do not think we have realised the overall economic potential of beef production. Western Australia has not reached its maximum production in this regard. This is proved in England where forced feeding methods are used.

This measure is quite commendable; and it is not very often I give the Government a pat on the back.

Mr. Nalder: You cannot help it on this occasion.

MR. HALL: Disease can be devastating to the cattle industry, but I think the future is assured. More attention should be given to cattle production and sheep production in conjunction with one another. I was going to speak on the second reading, but became photogenic and could not go on the air.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [5.10 p.m.]: I do not think it is necessary for me to go over the ground again, because everything was clearly explained in my second reading reply. I gave the reason for the introduction of the Bill and the need for us to be vigilant in connection with pleuro-pneumonia by taking every precaution to stave off its spread. The member for Merredin-Yilgarn, who expressed his support for the measure, also made a valuable contribution on the importance of

this Bill to the stock industry. Therefore all I need say is that the points put forward by the honourable member have been well made. This measure is designed to decrease the incidence of pleuro-pneumonia in Western Australia and in the other States.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

## BILLS (2): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

### 1. Child Welfare Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Craig (Chief Secretary), read a first time.

### 2. Poisons Act Amendment Bill.

Bill received from the Council; and, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), read a first time.

## SUPPLY BILL (No. 2)

### *Standing Orders Suspension*

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer)

[5.13 p.m.]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

### *Message: Appropriations*

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

### *In Committee of Supply*

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer)

[5.16 p.m.]: I move—

That there be granted to Her Majesty on account of the services of the State for the year ending the 30th June, 1968, a further sum not exceeding \$54,000,000.

As members will recall, we have already passed one Supply Bill for an amount of \$68,000,000, made up as follows:—

Consolidated Revenue			
Fund	.....	.....	\$48,000,000
General Loan Fund	.....	.....	\$15,000,000
Advance to Treasurer	.....	.....	\$5,000,000

Expenditure incurred on services financed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund amounted to \$57,054,000 for the period of

three months ended the 30th September, 1967. Of this total, payments of \$13,356,000 were authorised by appropriations under special Acts and the balance of \$43,698,000 was expended under the authority granted by the first Supply Act.

Revenue collected in the three months to the 30th September totalled \$56,420,000 and fell short of expenditure in the same period by \$634,000.

The result for the first quarter of this financial year does not indicate any variation from the estimated deficit of \$724,000 provided in the Budget. In this respect it is normal for the deficit to accumulate in the early months of the year and, for obvious reasons, to reduce later as the deficit is offset by larger amounts of money coming in towards the end of the financial year.

Expenditure from the General Loan Fund for the three months ended the 30th September totalled \$6,382,000, but this rate of spending will increase as the capital works programme gathers momentum.

Further supply of \$54,000,000 is required to carry on the services of the State until the Estimates have been passed. The Budget is in the hands of members and gives full details of proposed expenditure and the estimated deficit. Of the \$54,000,000 now being sought, the sum of \$44,000,000 is to be issued and applied out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and the balance of \$10,000,000 from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [5.18 p.m.]: As is to be expected, the Government requires supply to carry on the services of the State until such time as the Estimates are finally approved; or, in short, the funds available to the Government, which have been voted to it, are running out and the Government needs a further supply.

Although we believe that the Government is responsible for a number of sins of omission and commission, we do not propose to take advantage of this debate to air our grievances. Other opportunities will be provided on the Estimates for what we have to say; and, of course, early next year the Government must face the electors and it will then be called on to give an account of its stewardship, and the Opposition will have its opportunity to indicate where it believes it can carry out a better job for the State than the present Government is doing.

Mr. Graham: That would not be very difficult.

MR. TONKIN: So at this stage we offer no opposition at all. The salaries of Government servants must be paid on the due date. I can recall that in the depression period it was not just a matter of bringing a Supply Bill to Parliament and getting approval; one had first of all to

obtain the money. A very serious situation did develop at one stage when the late Phil Collier went to London in order to arrange finance; and we were awaiting word in this State to say that the necessary funds had been arranged; otherwise the school teachers would not have received their salaries.

Happily, those times have passed. I do not think we will ever have another financial depression such as that, because the expert financiers have changed their views very greatly. I think it is appropriate I should remind members that quite often the theories advanced from the Labor benches, and which are decried at the time, are theories subsequently adopted as being the solution to difficulties. I can remember that when the late Edgar Theodore, who was Commonwealth Treasurer, suggested a very limited note issue of £20,000,000, or \$40,000,000 on present-day currency, the experts just would not listen to such a suggestion; but since those days the Commonwealth banking practice has developed considerably and, in common parlance, £20,000,000 would not be regarded as being a button off the shirt.

However, the fact remains that although this was suggested then as a method of overcoming the deflation that was occurring and enabling the wheels of industry to turn, the experts just would not accept the theory and so we did not have the advantage of that money.

Nevertheless, it is right and proper that Parliament should vote this money to the Government to enable it to carry on, and we approve accordingly.

Question put and passed.

#### *Report*

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

#### *In Committee of Ways and Means*

The House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair.

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Treasurer) [5.23 p.m.]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1968, a sum not exceeding \$44,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and \$10,000,000 from the General Loan Fund.

Question put and passed.

#### *Report*

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and read a first time.

#### *Second Reading*

**MR. BRAND** (Greenough—Treasurer) [5.25 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

I take this opportunity to thank the Leader of the Opposition for his support and to say that if amendments are made to the Standing Orders, this is the last time that this form of obtaining supply will be used in the House, and we will have a more simplified system.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee, etc.*

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

#### *Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and transmitted to the Council.

### **ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1967-68**

#### *In Committee of Supply*

Resumed from the 5th October, the Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair.

#### **Vote: Legislative Council, \$56,500—**

**MR. TONKIN** (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [5.30 p.m.]: I listened with the greatest of interest to the Premier and Treasurer when he introduced his Estimates for the current financial year. It afforded me some amusement when he said there was difficulty in deciding upon a commencing year for the purpose of making a review of the development of the State. Instead, he did not seem to have much difficulty at all, because he chose the very first year of his own Government's coming into office. I suppose that was not just a mere coincidence.

Mr. Brand: It was a coincidence.

Mr. TONKIN: However, Sir, it did not suggest that the Premier had any difficulty, did it? The Treasurer is a fortunate Treasurer. In fact, I would say he is the most fortunate Treasurer who has been in office since I have been in the Parliament, because a number of fortuitous circumstances have aided him from time to time and he has been able to sail along with ample moneys at his disposal. Of course, from time to time, he has joined in the chorus, along with other Treasurers—quite rightly, too—in pointing out that the States ought to have more money. Yet, he has had available to him quite substantial sums which have been far above what have been available to Treasurers before him.

Even so, the Treasurer has achieved a record; that is, during his term as Treasurer, he has imposed upon the State of Western Australia the highest amount of

taxation in the State's history. He claims—and quite rightly too on the face of it—that it has been possible for him to frame a Budget without recourse to increasing taxation. Anybody who reads that statement and who is familiar with the fact that no taxing Bills have been brought forward will say, "That seems to be pretty right."

If, in his three years' term of government, the Treasurer imposes taxes in the first two years and, in addition, imposes in the second year twice as much as he requires in order to provide for the third year, of course it is quite a simple matter to avoid the imposition of additional taxation in the third year. That is precisely what the present Treasurer has done.

When the Stamp Act Amendment Bill was brought before the House, we on this side pointed out that the Treasurer was astray in his estimate and that much more money than was estimated would actually be received; and it turned out that much more money was received. It would appear that either the estimate was made in a lackadaisical fashion or else the carelessness was designed in order to make it possible to levy a rate of taxation far and above what was really necessary at the time to meet the State's requirements.

An examination of the position is really illuminating. It should be remembered that the amendment to the Stamp Act provided that the new rates of duties would be available to the Government for a period of only five months out of the 12 months. Of course, the Stamp Act had been amended the previous session and the duties were increased on that occasion. Nevertheless, the amendment last session provided that the new duties would not operate until the 1st February, which gave five months of operation. What was the result? The Government achieved \$1,529,320 above the estimate.

The total amount received during the period of only five months when these new rates were operating was \$13,004,320, which represented a taxation impost under this heading alone of \$15.29 per head taking into consideration the increased population. The stamp duty tax is currently running at \$1,500,000 per month. The Treasurer proposes some slight remissions to remove anomalies which he estimates will cost \$430,000; and he estimates that without any addition to the rates at all, but on the existing rates, the receipts from this source of taxation this financial year will be only \$2,746,000 above the amount received last financial year.

The Premier has available to him departmental records and figures which are not available to me. However, I am going to make the forecast that his excess of collections this year over last year from this source will be nearer to \$5,000,000

than to \$3,000,000. I repeat: The Treasurer said the amount would be \$2,746,000, but I have said that his excess collections over last year will be closer to \$5,000,000. I base that statement on the fact that his collections are currently running at \$1,500,000 per month, and I expect them to increase. If we look at the amount received from stamp duty in 1963-64, which is not such a long time ago, we will see it stood at \$7,120,664. Therefore, the Treasurer has practically doubled this form of taxation in the three years since the last election.

That is the pattern which has been followed by other taxation. For example, let us consider land taxation. In 1963-64 the receipts from this source were \$2,645,634. For 1966-67, the receipts had increased by almost \$1,000,000. The figure was \$3,514,404, and the anticipated revenue from the same source for 1967-68 is \$3,820,000. The bulk of this money is coming from the same pockets. It is true that not all the metropolitan region improvement tax goes to the Treasury. The Metropolitan Region Planning Authority keeps some of it, but the people have to contribute the money and so it is fitting that we should look at this burden of taxation.

In 1963-64 the metropolitan region improvement tax totalled \$382,862, or 49c per head of population. In 1966-67, this figure increased to \$549,501, or 65c per head of the population. But just listen to the anticipated revenue from this source for 1967-68. It is \$883,000! So from 1963-64 to 1967-68, the taxation from this source has more than doubled.

Let us now look at another section of the community which seems to be the first to attract the attention of the Treasurer. I am referring to motor users and those engaged in the motor industry. Taxation on that section of the community in 1963-64 was \$7,915,492, or the extremely high sum of \$10.13 per head of population. For 1966-67, the motor taxation practically doubled. It went up to \$14,505,791, or \$17.08 per head of population. That was an increase from \$10.13 to \$17.08 per head of population in three years.

Mr. Lewis: Does that include third party insurance?

Mr. TONKIN: No. If one reflects on these headings one can see the tremendous increase in taxation which has been imposed in this State. Quite truthfully, the Treasurer said that other States also had to make a major effort in raising taxation. He said this State was no exception. But I have looked carefully at the rate of taxation imposed elsewhere and it seems to me that the imposition of taxation in Western Australia within the three-year period shows the heaviest increase of any State.

Mr. Brand: In what respect; in general, or in any particular?

Mr. TONKIN: The total impost of taxation—motor taxation, stamp duties, land tax, and metropolitan region improvement tax.

Mr. Brand: That is not so.

Mr. TONKIN: Well, it is up to the Treasurer to show, later on, how it is not so. It is so easy, of course, to say, "That is not so."

Mr. Brand: And it is so easy to say it is so.

Mr. TONKIN: I am endeavouring to give the figures.

Mr. Brand: You have not given any of the figures for the other States.

Mr. TONKIN: If I had any idea the Treasurer would not be accepting my statement as a self-evident truth I would have brought the additional information with me.

Mr. Lewis: What is so self-evident about it?

Mr. TONKIN: The figures are self-evident.

Mr. Lewis: But how can they be self-evident if you have not shown the figures for the Eastern States?

Mr. TONKIN: Victoria has yet to adopt this method of raising taxation—that is, the stamp duties method—so we cannot say it has followed along those lines.

Mr. Brand: It transferred 3 per cent. of the income of the State Electricity Commission, or its equivalent in that State, to general revenue.

Mr. TONKIN: Did it take anything from the Lotteries Commission, like the Government did here?

Mr. Brand: I should say it is getting a good hand-out from the lotteries in that State, but that would not make much difference, anyway.

Mr. TONKIN: It is up to the Treasurer to produce figures to disprove that, over three years, this State imposed a higher rate of taxation, and a greater burden of taxation upon the people, than has been done in any other State.

Mr. Brand: In the same period?

Mr. TONKIN: Within the same period.

Mr. Brand: Good.

Mr. TONKIN: I am very interested in one aspect of the Treasurer's finances, because it is a most important one. The Treasurer said that one has to raise money if one intends to spend. I do not agree with that statement altogether, because one can save and that will provide money to spend. I know the Treasurer has been raising more and more money and spending it so long as he can raise it, but my view is that, instead of imposing additional taxation all the time to obtain

more money to spend, it is more essential to search for ways to economise so that the money thus saved will be available for spending.

If that were done, the impact of an unproductive debt upon the Budget would be far less than is the case at present. Of course, Western Australia shows up very badly in this field as I shall indicate as I proceed. The cost of servicing our debt for the current year is expected to increase by \$2,818,000. According to the Grants Commission, the *per capita* burden of unrecovered debt charges is higher in Western Australia and Tasmania than in the other States, particularly New South Wales and Victoria.

It is as well that we should hear what the Grants Commission thinks of this method of finance. On page 36 of the Commonwealth Grants Commission's thirty-fourth report, 1967, the following appears in paragraph 39:—

In Western Australia and Tasmania the *per capita* burden of unrecovered debt charges is higher than in the other States, particularly in New South Wales and Victoria. The loan expenditure items primarily responsible for the unrecovered debt charges in Western Australia are railways, country water supplies, public buildings, harbours, development of agriculture and mining and the State Shipping Service (the last three items are included under "All Other" in Tables 13 and 14). In Tasmania the loan expenditure items which mainly account for the higher burden of unrecovered debt charges are railways and tramways, roads and bridges, public buildings and forestry. There has been a marked slowing down of loan expenditure on railways in Tasmania over recent years.

Mr. Hall: In speaking of harbours, there is only one to think about.

Mr. TONKIN: Paragraphs 40 and 41 of the report read—

The Commission has always been concerned with the level of unproductive debt in the claimant States because of the impact of unrecovered debt charges on the State budgets and ultimately on the amounts of the Special Grant. In the last two years the Commission has turned its attention to the high level of unrecovered debt charges incurred by Tasmania on roads and forestry. This matter was discussed in the last Report (paragraphs 176-180 and 167-170) and is discussed in this Report (paragraphs 178-183 and 358). As a result, the Tasmanian Government has taken action to recoup some amount of these debt charges commencing in 1966-67.

The published figures of unrecovered debt charges are not readily available. The differing practices of the States in their treatment of debt charges and recoveries, especially for business undertakings, make it extremely difficult to obtain figures which are comparable. However, the Commission has made the following estimate, taken from particulars in the public accounts of the States, of the amounts *per capita* of the unrecovered debt charges included in the budgets of each State for the years 1963-64 to 1965-66:

Then follows a table showing the various States with the amounts set out for each year. I do not propose to quote these, because it would be tedious to do so. They are available if members wish to refer to them. To continue—

These estimates relate solely to interest and sinking fund charges (plus exchange) on the public debt of each State after deducting the amounts recovered by each State. In all States the burden of debt charges arises in part from loan expenditure on various public works from which no direct income is received, such as roads, bridges and public buildings (particularly schools and hospitals), and partly from business undertakings which do not produce sufficient income to meet all or any of the debt charges.

It is to this angle that I want to draw particular attention. Since the Government has been in office it has had the strongest possible desire to dispose of State instrumentalities, whether they were making a profit or not; and to dispose of them for a figure which involved a considerable writing down of capital. That has a double effect upon the State Budget: firstly, there is the loss of profit to be considered.

Mr. Rushton: Were not some of them showing a loss?

Mr. TONKIN: I am talking about the instrumentalities which were making profits.

Mr. Brand: Which were they?

Mr. TONKIN: The State Building Supplies, and the Wyndham Meat Works.

Mr. Court: That profit, such as it was, did not benefit the State very much.

Mr. TONKIN: Which profit?

Mr. Court: From the Wyndham Meat Works. You should look at it.

Mr. TONKIN: Let me remind the Minister for Industrial Development that those works paid the interest and sinking fund on loan capital and still made a profit. When the works were sold substantial capital had to be written off, so the money was no longer available to pay

the interest and sinking fund, and that interest and sinking fund money must be found from taxation.

Mr. Brand: If we had carried it on we would have been up for a tremendous amount of capital.

Mr. Court: And we would have faced a losing period.

Mr. Brand: We had to put in a new electrical system, and we also had to pay £500,000 into the works at that time.

Mr. TONKIN: But this is done by private enterprise. We can all imagine what a money spinner the State Building Supplies would have been had that instrumentality been kept by the State. It should have been kept, particularly in view of the service it had rendered.

Mr. Court: Under State management those works haven't got a chance.

Mr. Jamieson: You don't want them to have a chance.

Mr. TONKIN: Properly nurtured and supplied with the requisite capital these works could have made a profit, just as the State Engineering Works make a profit. Incidentally, because of the action of the Government, the State Engineering Works have a reduced profit this year. I notice the profit is well down compared with what it used to be, and I ascribe this to the fact that the Minister for Industrial Development induced the Government to take away part of the works' capacity.

Mr. Court: They have been going through a period of extreme buoyancy.

Mr. TONKIN: We have heard that before; but the profit of these works is down, while the profits of everybody else in this State seem to be up. There is no reason why the profit of the State Engineering Works should not have been up had they not been shorn of some of their works' capacity. It is perfectly obvious what has happened. Part of the works which could operate at a profit was taken away and given to somebody else.

Mr. Court: A very small part.

Mr. TONKIN: Not only did that prevent the State Engineering Works from being in a position to do the work that that section of the works could do, but it was also the cause of the works losing work in other sections which they would have been able to do had the particular section not been taken away from them. So it has had a double effect.

When the Government follows this policy it increases the unproductive debt. The Government substantially increased the unproductive debt as a result of the sale of the State Building Supplies, and it also substantially increased the unproductive debt when it sold the Wyndham Meat Works. That increase of unproduc-

tive debt means a further impost upon the revenue and involves additional taxation.

That is the pattern. That is where the Government is culpable; in having followed this course and in having felt, "We will increase taxation; that will give us more money, and we will be able to spend that money." But this has been done without any thought being given as to what money might be saved in order to keep taxation down as much as possible.

The Minister for Industrial Development seems to have the idea that the Wyndham Meat Works did not make a profit at all. According to the figures shown in the financial statement, the profit for the last year during which the meatworks operated under State ownership was \$51,953.

Mr. Court: The point we were trying to make is that the commitment of capital at the Wyndham Meat Works was something the State could not tolerate, particularly with the pressures for development and the provision of schools, and so on.

Mr. TONKIN: We heard that argument with regard to Wundowie, but we have the works back again and we have to tolerate it. What did that particular transaction cost the State? I have not been able to find out what it did cost the State, but I am sure it cost a pretty penny.

Mr. Court: No it did not.

Mr. TONKIN: Perhaps at some appropriate time the Minister will inform us what that exercise did cost the State.

Mr. Court: I would be only too pleased to do so. I think some members opposite asked a question on this point earlier in the session.

Mr. TONKIN: It was something like \$200,000.

Mr. Court: That was not the cost of that exercise to the State. You are confusing that with the amount the company was paid for services which would have had to be rendered, as distinct from any profit it might have obtained superficially on top of that. They are two different matters.

Mr. TONKIN: I have the amounts, in round figures, to show the reduction in profit of the State Engineering Works. This profit was reduced by some \$40,000. My view—supported by some inquiry, but not an extensive one—is that the reduction in profit is due solely to the transference of some of the capacity of the works.

Mr. Court: I would not accept that.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister would not accept that, but he does not put forward anything substantial to refute my statement. It is so easy to do that.

Mr. Court: During a period of extreme buoyancy in the engineering industry, the transference of a very small part of the work to start a new industry is not that important in the total picture.

Mr. TONKIN: It would be interesting to know if the Minister can ascribe any other reason for the falling away of profit, during this year particularly, in a situation where there is buoyancy in industry in this State and when there is a demand for this type of work.

Mr. Court: It is not because of the change in the nature of the works.

Mr. TONKIN: That is a negative reply. The Minister cannot ascribe a reason, simply because there is not one.

Mr. Fletcher: I can give a reason.

Mr. Brand: Tell us.

Mr. Fletcher: Private engineering works in Fremantle are now doing the work which previously was done by the State Engineering Works.

Mr. TONKIN: The State Engineering Works by not being able to compete for some jobs would lose not only the profits from that particular section, but also the profits from other sections. It seems this does not mean a thing to the Government, which is hell-bent on disposing of State instrumentalities, irrespective of what increase in taxation might be involved.

Mr. Graham: It is prepared to help those who subscribe to the Liberal Party funds.

Mr. Brand: We do not go along the lines which you followed for a long while.

Mr. Graham: What were they—the building of houses, for instance?

Mr. TONKIN: The Grants Commission is very concerned about this unproductive debt. It is interesting to read that it is difficult for the commission to ascertain precisely the causes. I suppose, without knowing what policy this Government has followed with regard to the disposal of various works, the commission would not be able to follow this matter up, as I have been able to do.

Mr. Brand: The particular comment of the Grants Commission was centred on Tasmania, where a policy, different from that adopted in Western Australia, is followed.

Mr. TONKIN: It was not centred on Tasmania.

Mr. Brand: It mentions both States.

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot let the Premier get away with that, so I will read some of the figures which I had declined to quote. I refer to the figures which appear on page 36 of the report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission for 1967. The report states—

However, the Commission has made the following estimate, taken from particulars in the public accounts of the States, of the amounts *per capita*

of the unrecovered debt charges included in the budgets of each State for the years 1963-64 to 1965-66:

	1963-64
	\$
New South Wales ....	13.59
Victoria .....	21.43
Queensland .....	23.07
South Australia .....	27.14
Western Australia .....	28.01
Tasmania .....	27.67

The figure for Western Australia is the highest.

Mr. Brand: What was the figure for South Australia?

Mr. TONKIN: \$27.14, as compared with \$28.01 for Western Australia.

Mr. Brand: Is the difference of about \$1 important?

Mr. TONKIN: It is very important. The next group of figures shown in the report is as follows:—

	1964-65
	\$
New South Wales ....	14.46
Victoria .....	22.52
Queensland .....	24.62
South Australia .....	29.53
Western Australia .....	30.50
Tasmania .....	29.90

Mr. Rushton: Do you not think that the size of the State and the population have some reflection in those figures?

Mr. TONKIN: These figures are given on a *per capita* basis of the population.

Mr. Rushton: There are still the disabilities of size and acreage.

Mr. TONKIN: I shall deal with that in a moment—the disability of size. This is not always a disability, as the honourable member will find out.

Mr. Brand: Basic services have to be provided, whatever be the number of people.

Mr. TONKIN: The figures for 1965-66 are shown in the report as follows:—

	1965-66
	\$
New South Wales ....	18.13
Victoria .....	24.22
Queensland .....	24.44
South Australia .....	31.12
Western Australia .....	29.29
Tasmania .....	31.98

The explanation given by the Grants Commission for the improvement in Western Australia is the improvement in railways finances.

Mr. Brand: It does not matter whether it is from railways or from anywhere else.

Mr. TONKIN: That does not alter the basic concept I was developing; that is, that the load of unproductive debt is a matter for serious concern and it is not good financing to keep on building up unproductive debt by writing off capital

which is not then able to earn interest and sinking fund, so placing the burden upon the taxpayer to make good the loss. It is far better to have State enterprises continuing to operate at a profit and paying interest and sinking fund than it is to dispose of them, write off millions of dollars of capital, lose entirely the profit which was being made, and lose the interest and sinking fund which the money was previously earning. That is what has happened in connection with a number of the transactions this Government has entered into because it believes all State enterprises should be disposed of as quickly as possible.

At the Premiers' Conference in June, 1965, discussions centred around the revised financial assistance formula, and the new arrangements were supposed to be implemented in the year 1965-66 for a five-year period. This revision of the formula applied both to the total of financial assistance grants and also to the method of distribution as between the States. Under the old formula of 1959, there was a betterment factor which consisted of increasing the grant by 1.1 per cent. of the increase in the average wages of the Commonwealth for the 12-monthly period.

The new arrangements, which were subsequently agreed to, were to provide for the annual grant to continue to increase—and this should be of particular interest to the member for Dale—in proportion to the population and also according to the increase in the average wages for Australia as a whole. This suggested alteration, made in 1965, provided for maintaining the existing betterment factor and introduced an additional betterment factor. This provided for an increase of 1.2 per cent. over the basic elements previously used in this formula. These basic elements were increases in population and the average increase in wages throughout Australia.

In addition to that—which was to be retained—the new formula was to provide for another betterment factor of 1.2 per cent. It appears that under the 1959 agreement, the betterment factor averaged out at about .4 per cent. So the new arrangement actually trebled the betterment factor.

Mr. Rushton: Do you think the present formula is adequate or inadequate for Western Australia?

Mr. TONKIN: I think it is inadequate for all States. That is one of the reasons why leaders of the Labor Party throughout the Commonwealth, as well as the Federal leaders, intend to hold a conference in Adelaide early next month for the purpose of discussing the relationship between the States and the Commonwealth under two headings: the functions of both, and the finance which is required to enable those functions adequately to be carried out.



Mr. Rushton: Your argument seems to be based the other way.

Mr. TONKIN: No; what I am arguing is that the Treasurer has been fortunate inasmuch as during his term of office the successive improvements in the formula have benefited him considerably, over and above what his experience would have been had these new agreements not been entered into—

Mr. Court: Do not be upset about it.

Mr. TONKIN: —in each of the five years.

Mr. Brand: Irrespective of whether I was in office, or whether someone else was in office, there has been an improvement each time the formula has been reviewed.

Mr. TONKIN: That is what I am saying.

Mr. Brand: That is right.

Mr. TONKIN: The Treasurer has benefited from that improvement.

Mr. Court: You are not giving any credit to the Treasurer. He may have been instrumental in bringing about this improvement for the permanent benefit of the State.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Minister will be patient I will give credit where credit is due, and it is due in one particular only; and that is, the present Treasurer was instrumental in getting the Grants Commission and the Commonwealth to agree to a weighted average with regard to the new formula to be applied as from 1967-68, but he is entitled to no more credit than any other Premier who was present at the 1965 conference and who argued for an improvement in the formula.

Mr. Court: You are overlooking some important work done with the Grants Commission in representing this State's case very strongly and, I think, very efficiently.

Mr. TONKIN: That is a general statement with no data to back it up.

Mr. Brand: The fact remains these altered formulas benefited our State Treasury.

Mr. TONKIN: I would like, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin), to proceed with the expression of my views on this question.

Mr. Court: It is gratifying that we have been able to do a little better than others.

Mr. TONKIN: Of course it is, and I am not arguing that point. So, as I said earlier, it has not been all rough going.

Mr. Lewis: You are not complaining about it, are you?

Mr. TONKIN: The State has had the advantage of these improvements.

Mr. Brand: The States.

Mr. TONKIN: I am going to ask the Treasurer if he will go on record as claiming any credit for the \$5,000,000 non-recurring grant which was given.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. TONKIN: I was endeavouring to establish whether the Premier claimed the credit for the \$5,000,000 non-recurring grant which was part of the proposals accepted at the Premier's conference this year. The new formula which was previously suggested was actually accepted in 1967 and provided for a non-recurring grant of \$5,000,000 to be distributed amongst the States in the same proportion as the grants would be as produced from the new 1965 formula.

I take it from the Premier's silence that he does not claim any such credit. The fact remains that this was an additional credit over and above what the formula ordinarily provided for, and it is for the year 1967 only.

At the urging of the Commonwealth Government, a new standard basis is to be adopted, and we are to move from the two-standard-State basis which has been operative up to now, to a four-standard-State basis, South Australia and Queensland no longer being claimant States. This alteration was not accepted by the Grants Commission at first and it argued against the proposal; but it seems that as a result of persistent pressure from the Commonwealth Treasury, as from 1967-68 this new basis will become operative in place of the existing two-standard-State basis. I think this will be to the disadvantage of the States, and that is probably why the Commonwealth submitted this idea following the new formula which was first discussed in 1965.

Before I leave this point, I want to mention two other advantages which have accrued. There used to be a 12-month's lag in giving the betterment factor for the average of wages throughout Australia. That has now been reduced to three months, and so the new figure, if there is an increase in wages throughout Australia, will be reflected almost immediately in the grants, instead of consideration in connection with it being deferred for a period of 12 months.

One other advantage, and it turns out to be to the advantage of Western Australia—and I would not deprive the Premier of any credit in connection with this—is that up till this year no credit could be taken for accumulated net balances of favourable adjustments. Any favourable adjustment which was determined by the commission in any one year could be utilised in that one year; but there was no provision to enable it to build up any credit so that if in some future year there was an unfavourable adjustment, then money could be taken from the accumulated credit to meet that unfavourable adjustment.

Under the new arrangement it has been provided that these credit balances can be utilised in future years; and, as Western Australia has built up an accumulated credit of favourable adjustments to the ex-

tent of \$2,714,000, that is of very considerable benefit.

Earlier, when I was dealing with the impact of taxation on the States, I mentioned that this Government had raided the funds of the Lotteries Commission. Members will recall that we had a Bill here which provided for the Government to take 10 per cent. of the gross proceeds in 1967, 15 per cent. in 1968, and 20 per cent. in 1969. The sales of lottery tickets have continued to improve with the result that it looks as if for this year the Government will take \$477,000 of money which otherwise would have been left with the Lotteries Commission. Therefore the amount which it would have distributed has, because of that legislation, been reduced by the figure of \$477,000.

Mr. Craig: No, you are not quite right!

Mr. TONKIN: I am absolutely right!

Mr. Craig: No. That amount was a commitment from the Lotteries Commission for hospitals.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh no!

Mr. Craig: Oh yes it was!

Mr. TONKIN: The Lotteries Commission, under its Act, is empowered to make donations to whom it likes, so long as the recipients come within the classification of charitable organisations.

Mr. Craig: That is true.

Mr. TONKIN: If the Government had not taken that money in this way, then the commission would have been free to distribute it in accordance with the Act.

Mr. Craig: Yes, and it would have gone to hospitals.

Mr. TONKIN: It has \$477,000 less because the Government has taken it.

Mr. Craig: The Lotteries Commission was already committed for this amount to hospitals.

Mr. TONKIN: For 1963 it looks as if, on present sales—even if they do not increase—the amount will be \$715,000; and by 1969, \$954,000.

Mr. Craig: All for hospitals!

Mr. TONKIN: Where does that get us—saying "All for hospitals"? This is money which the Lotteries Commission would otherwise have available to it for distribution under its legislation—

Mr. Craig: Including hospitals.

Mr. TONKIN—money of which it has now been deprived because the Government has taken it. Those are the facts of the case.

Mr. Brand: They were the facts stated, in any case, when we introduced the measure, and we explained the reason?

Mr. TONKIN: I venture to say that if any indication had been given to Parliament at the time the legislation was introduced, it would never have been passed on that basis.

Mr. Craig: The fullest explanation was given and there was a lot of argument about it, too. You opposed it because you said it was not going to hospitals.

Mr. TONKIN: I was not in Parliament at the time it was discussed, so what a lot of nonsense the Minister is speaking.

Mr. Graham: As usual.

Mr. Craig: Well, he speaks the truth.

Mr. TONKIN: I am talking about when the Lotteries Commission was first established. If it had been suggested by the sponsor that the Government would come along and take increasing amounts from the profits in order to finance hospitals, the legislation would never have been passed. The purpose of the legislation was to establish the Lotteries Commission, which would conduct lotteries to take the place of the various raffles and art unions which were being run by all sorts of organisations in order to finance themselves.

It was stated in Parliament that it was intended that the raffles and art unions some of which were getting completely out of hand, would be stopped and that the charitable organisations, not the Government hospitals, would be financed from the Lotteries Commission. I suggest to the Minister for Police he read the debates which took place when the legislation was before Parliament initially. He will find the situation was exactly as I am now stating it.

We have reached the stage where the Government has decided that it will have a proportion of this money and apply it to hospital finance. It is very significant that in the figures given in the Auditor-General's report an amount is shown which includes a sum which has already been paid to the Government and which will be utilised for hospital purposes.

I was very disturbed to hear the Premier suggest he was thinking about increasing the price of electricity in order to increase the profit of the State Electricity Commission, with the idea of using that profit in place of loan money to enable the State Electricity Commission to expand its operations. From an interjection which the Premier made this evening, it looks as though he got this idea from the Premier of Victoria.

Mr. Brand: That is so. The idea is that 3 per cent. of the income of the State Electricity Commission should go straight to general revenue. The Victorians are now considering—and I think they have already decided—the placing of a surcharge in order to make a profit for the purchase of capital equipment. It is a second bite of the cherry.

Mr. TONKIN: No doubt the electors in Victoria will have an opportunity to pass judgment on that.

Mr. Brand: They have already done that, of course.

Mr. TONKIN: This is the position, however unpalatable it will be to the Minister for the North-West. In 1965-66, the State Electricity Commission made a profit of \$1,970,289. In 1966-67, it made a profit of \$2,721,726—a profit which is not the real profit at all, as the Auditor-General points out. He says that there should be added to this profit a further \$2,070,000 of unrecorded earnings. If we added that profit—as we should—we would see that for the year 1966-67 there was a total profit of \$4,790,000. Now that is not enough for the Premier; he wants to increase the price of electricity in order to make more profit from a State instrumentality whose purpose is service, not profit-making.

Is there any limit to the rapacity of the Government? It is reaching out to place burdens upon the general consumers and the taxpayers. I have already given the figures with regard to stamp duty—millions above what it ought to be—land tax, the metropolitan region improvement tax, and now this added burden. The State Electricity Commission has made a profit approaching \$5,000,000 in one year and the Government is thinking about increasing the rates to make still more profit.

Mr. Court: I think the Government has reduced the price on two, if not three, occasions.

Mr. Brand: When I made that remark I said I might follow Victoria's lead.

Mr. TONKIN: I suggest there are a number of fields in which the Government could be looking for opportunities to reduce costs to the people, and not increase them. The Government has made a complete failure with regard to land prices, and I rather suspect its hesitancy in connection with this matter is due to the fact that it is looking at the amount of money coming in because of rising prices. The Government has shown it is completely inept in this matter.

One of the worst features in this regard is that when new subdivisions are opened up and the land is sold, the local authorities and the Taxation Department increase the values on the basis of recent sales. So increased annual rate values are placed on land, resulting in steeply increased taxes, thus making the situation intolerable for a lot of people.

I had a case brought to my notice recently—it concerns the area of the member for Darling Range—of a person who had three blocks of land previously valued at \$380 for taxation purposes. As a result of the increase in the price of land, this man is now being taxed on a value of \$4,600.

Mr. Dunn: How long ago was the valuation made?

Mr. TONKIN: I cannot answer that question. All I know is that before the increase he was paying rates on a valuation of \$380, and now he is paying on a valuation

of \$4,600, and there was no interim increase. The water rates on the same land have gone up from \$7 to \$24. This is happening all around us. Sales of land take place and then increased values are placed on the already settled land on the basis of those sales. So everybody is bearing the burden whilst the speculators are raking in the profits.

On the 19th March, 1965, the Premier was reported in *The West Australian* as having said that the State Government was examining the position to get a clearer picture. I read the Premier's statement in this morning's paper and it looks as if he has not yet got a clearer picture, but is still examining the situation.

Mr. Brand: That is right, because there is no simple answer. If there is a simple answer, you give it to me.

Mr. TONKIN: The simple thing is that after all this time the Premier is now thinking about doing what he should have done in the initial stages, and that is to consult the real estate people. The Premier is now inviting suggestions from the Real Estate Institute of W.A.

Mr. Brand: The real estate people have been giving advice for a long time.

Mr. TONKIN: According to the Premier's own statement he invited suggestions from the real estate people.

Mr. Brand: Of course I did. Those people have already had an opportunity to appear before the committee.

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier's statement was that he was trying to get a clearer picture. Now, 13 days later, the Premier made this very forthright statement, "Speculation in Rural Land Must Stop." What did the Premier do to stop it?

Mr. Brand: What do you suggest he should have done?

Mr. TONKIN: What did the Government do to stop it?

Mr. Brand: I have just asked for your suggestions.

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier said it must stop, but did he think it would stop of its own volition? Did he think that his mere statement that it must stop would make it stop?

Mr. Brand: No.

Mr. TONKIN: Of course it did not stop.

Mr. Brand: Unlike yourself, I never think that way.

Mr. TONKIN: Then the Premier went a little further and said, "Action might be considered." Members should note that he did not say "would be," but instead said "might be." It seems rather strange that after saying it must stop, he is not saying that action would be taken to stop it but that action might be considered if any were practicable to dampen high land values in the urban area. What has been the experience? Last Saturday there was

a private auction of 25 blocks at Dianella and the average price was \$4,632.

I ask members: What hope is there for young people to strike out on their own if they wish to acquire a block of land and put on it a home in which to live? What chance have they got?

Mr. Dunn: Did you hear about the auction at Cannington?

Mr. TONKIN: Are we to say to these young people, "Just forget it, because you live in the wrong age"?

Mr. Dunn: No-one turned up for the sale at Cannington.

Mr. TONKIN: Are we to say to the young people, "It is not practicable for you to build"?

Are we to say that, or are we to take definite steps to make it possible? Many members in the Chamber know, as I know, that 30 years ago one could have bought a block of land with a river view and built a house on it for less than half the cost that one would now have to pay for the land alone.

Mr. Dunn: Why not go back 100 years?

Mr. TONKIN: That is the situation we have to remedy.

Mr. Toms: It might be better if we did go back 100 years.

Mr. TONKIN: The Government was supposed to have appointed a committee.

Mr. Brand: It has.

Mr. TONKIN: I found it strange reading this morning; because although the report of the committee has apparently not yet been made, the Premier is anticipating what the committee is going to say.

Mr. Brand: I said that it will not come forward with any bright suggestions, because it is a very difficult problem. As I said, if the Leader of the Opposition has any bright thoughts about it, let us have them.

Mr. TONKIN: I have a number of thoughts about what could be done, and it would not be what the Government did with regard to the land at Woodlands, either!

Mr. Brand: Wouldn't it?

Mr. TONKIN: That is, put it on the market and try to sell it at the market price. That is no solution to the problem at all. Obviously more land must be made available more quickly in order to meet the demand, and there should be stipulations which will shut the speculators out. I say to the Government that it should make this land available. The Government has plenty of it.

Mr. Court: With services?

Mr. TONKIN: The land should be sold with the stipulation that it has to be built on, and built on quickly.

Mr. Guthrie: What about the services?

Mr. TONKIN: Put the services in.

Mr. Court: Who is to pay for them?

Mr. Guthrie: What funds will be used?

Mr. TONKIN: Put the services in.

Mr. Guthrie: And go without schools and hospitals!

Mr. TONKIN: It would not be necessary to go without schools and hospitals. As soon as the Government determined the standard gauge railway was to be built, nobody argued that we would have to go without schools and hospitals.

Mr. Guthrie: But where will the money come from to pay for the services?

Mr. TONKIN: The bulk of it should come from the State.

Mr. Guthrie: What nonsense!

Mr. TONKIN: That is one of the reasons why the housing situation is in such a deplorable mess.

Mr. Court: That is absolute nonsense, because there are special capital allocations.

Mr. TONKIN: The two problems are bound up together; that is, the price of land and the shortage of houses. If one is solved, the other will be solved also. When people contemplate building it takes practically all their money to buy land and they have nothing with which to build.

Mr. Dunn: It was like that in your day.

Mr. TONKIN: What do people do? They turn the proposition down and do not build.

Mr. Brand: Possibly the same situation applied with you.

Mr. TONKIN: Because people have to have housing, they then look to the State Housing Commission for the necessary provision, but in vain. Therefore we have reached a stage which I say without hesitation is the worst in my experience. Only last Sunday morning, for the first time in my life I heard an appeal made from the pulpit. I heard the minister in charge of the service make an appeal to the congregation to help a family with three children who were in a house which was going to be bulldozed out of the road and for whom the Housing Commission could make no provision. Up to some months ago, my experience was that whenever a court order was given against some family for repossession of a dwelling, the Housing Commission would provide other accommodation. Now it will not, because it cannot. Those are the facts of the present situation.

We are depending upon more workmen coming to Western Australia to help develop the country. If we attract migrants to Western Australia but they then have the experience of not being able to find homes in which to live, we will find it extremely difficult to get the people we want. This is a question of major importance and is of the greatest possible urgency. Inquiries at the Housing Commission elicit the information that it is still dealing with applications lodged in May, 1965.

Mr. Graham: January, 1965, for some suburbs.

Mr. TONKIN: Inquiries also elicit that it will be dealing with these applications for months and months to come.

Mr. Graham: It has been 18 months without a move.

Mr. TONKIN: One can readily appreciate how serious this situation is. If land were available at a reasonable price, many of these people who are now looking to the Housing Commission for accommodation would be able to provide their own.

In this connection I am very interested in the latest development, sponsored by the Commonwealth Government, of housing loan insurance. This should result in building societies, in the main, being able to increase the amount of money which they are prepared to lend against securities. This action should make it easier for people who previously could not raise the necessary finance to be able to do so. However, it would give this movement a tremendous fillip if we could put a check on the rising price of land. All this will do, if some stopper is not put on rising prices, will be to force the prices up still higher, because there will be more people coming into the market who are able to pay the prices being demanded. This question ought to call for immediate attention by every department that has any knowledge at all of this situation.

I understand some suggestions have been made already to the Government by the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, but it seems they must have been unacceptable to the Government.

Mr. Brand: What were they?

Mr. TONKIN: I do not know. I tried to find out, but the Government would not tell me. However, I understand suggestions have been made.

Mr. Brand: Why don't you ask the fellow who told you that?

Mr. TONKIN: No fellow told me.

Mr. Brand: Well, why not ask her?

Mr. TONKIN: I saw published reports in various newspapers; a little here and a little there.

Mr. Brand: You are on the wrong track. I am anxious to examine any practical suggestion.

Mr. TONKIN: The interjection by the Treasurer indicates that suggestions were made.

Mr. Brand: Many suggestions have been made.

Mr. TONKIN: Well, it is time the Government did something about it instead of just looking for three years for a clearer picture.

Mr. Graham: Nine years!

Mr. Brand: Well, just let me know what your suggestions are.

Mr. TONKIN: I have already made a couple to the Treasurer. As soon as I

made one I was met with the suggestion—do without schools and hospitals! The Treasurer proceeded to talk about various avenues of production. He said there were new records in primary industry, but he did not intend to dwell on this matter. Of course, if he had dwelt on it he would have had to show that this general statement did not apply to the whole industry. For example, it would not apply to the dairying industry where the production of milk is down considerably as is also the production of butterfat. This is an industry which is definitely languishing and to which scant attention is being given by the Government.

Mr. Bovell: The dairy farm improvement scheme has been one of the successes in recent years.

Mr. TONKIN: What a tremendous success to be down 4,000,000 lb. in butterfat production!

Mr. Bovell: Because butterfat producers are now engaged in mixed farming.

Mr. TONKIN: The production of whole milk is down as well.

Mr. Graham: The timber production is down too.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us look at the figures. According to the latest authentic reports the whole-milk production in Western Australia fell by more than 6,000,000 gallons in 1966-67 compared with the production for 1965-66, and this was the only State in the Commonwealth that had a fall in production.

Mr. Bovell: It was not a very satisfactory year. This year there will be a different tale; in my district, anyhow.

Mr. TONKIN: According to the information I have obtained from the Department of Agriculture, this year a repetition of last year can be expected.

Mr. Bovell: Seasonal conditions down my way, anyway, are better this year.

Mr. TONKIN: For 1965-66 the whole-milk production was 61,865,000 gallons. This year the production has fallen to 55,585,000 gallons. That is a decrease of over 6,000,000 gallons. It might be argued that some of the producers have switched from whole-milk production to butterfat production, but that is not so. In 1965 the factory production of butter was 18,133,000 lb. and that has fallen to 14,424,000 lb. So if it is not obvious to the Minister for Lands, it should be obvious to you, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin), that this industry is in difficulties.

Mr. Lewis: Quite a number have gone into sheep, of course.

Mr. TONKIN: As a matter of fact, the whole of the south-west needs stimulating.

Mr. Lewis: Quite a number have gone into sheep.

Mr. TONKIN: For years the south-west has not shared in the development that has taken place elsewhere. The figures I have seen indicate that there has been scarcely any population increase in the south-west.

Mr. Lewis: The population is actually decreasing in the wheatbelt areas, but you would not say that is because of the prosperity elsewhere.

Mr. TONKIN: It is because the people from those parts have gone to live in the salubrious climate of Mandurah.

Mr. Lewis: You cannot have it both ways. Perhaps they have gone to live in the south-west.

Mr. TONKIN: Oh, no, they have not!

Mr. Bovell: It is passing strange that the electors in the Vasse electorate have increased in recent years, but, despite the quota increase, the redistribution of boundaries has shown that there is a decrease in area.

Mr. TONKIN: I thank the Minister for Lands for interpolating that speech into my own quite against the Standing Orders, but, nevertheless, I would indicate to him that all he need do is examine the report made to the last south-west conference and he will see that the residents of the district were expounding on the same theme I am on now, drawing attention to the fact that the south-west has not enjoyed the increase in population and development which the State generally is enjoying.

Mr. Williams: I think if you check those figures you will find they are wrong, as I pointed out earlier in the year.

Mr. TONKIN: The member for Bunbury did not point out anything.

Mr. Williams: Yes, I did.

Mr. TONKIN: He only suggested that the figures I used were approximate figures.

Mr. Court: Is not Bunbury one of the fastest growing towns in the south-west?

Mr. TONKIN: I would not think so. Bunbury is definitely growing, but to the extent that it is growing beyond the average growth would indicate that other towns are slipping back, because there is no average growth in the south-west.

Mr. Court: You cannot have it both ways.

Mr. TONKIN: There is no average growth that can be established by reference to the statistician's figures. I suggest it is time the Government should give some attention to this part of the State to see what can be done to enable it to share in this general buoyancy which it is supposed to be experiencing.

Mr. Bovell: The Leader of the Opposition is upsetting the member for Albany. Albany has had phenomenal growth be-

cause of the land that has been released in the district over the last nine years.

Mr. Graham: You are a funny Minister!

Mr. TONKIN: I said earlier it was incumbent on the Government to try to save money instead of raising the maximum taxation for the purpose of spending it, and I propose to indicate to the Government three ways by which it can save money. Over the years the country water supplies installation has expanded by adding a further extension here and a further extension there. The result has been that there are numerous right-angled bends in the reticulation system, and they all add to the friction in the pipes and thus increase the cost of pumping.

I think officers should be appointed to examine some of the older installations, and the Government should renew the pipes and remove the bends in the reticulation system. This would reduce the friction and, in turn, would reduce the pumping costs. I suggest the saving in operating costs would more than offset the interest and sinking fund payments for the loan money required to do the job. There is a big field for examination in that regard.

I am going to further suggest that some very close attention ought to be given to the high-level storage scheme which was suggested to the Government several years ago, and which was considered to be both practical and attractive, but which seems to have been jettisoned into the limbo of forgotten things.

This system, in short, consists of the establishment at the highest level in the Darling Range of a series of reservoirs. The Premier announced at Kambalda recently, that he was thinking about the establishment of another dam below Mundaring to meet the demands of Kambalda and other goldfields towns. Pumping costs are already terrific—they are of the order of some \$1,000,000 annually; or approximately some 30c per thousand gallons—and must be added to the cost of the water.

If adopted, this scheme would make water from Mundaring available to the metropolitan area, because it is already connected to the metropolitan system by trunk mains; and these high-level storages would reduce very substantially the pumping costs already involved. Apart from this, more water at a cheaper rate could be made available to the goldfields area.

For the life of me I do not know what the Government is thinking about. Here is a proposal which will cost considerably less than the proposals already announced by the Government; it will meet the situation much better, but apparently no action is to be taken in connection with it.

There was a recent announcement that the Government has decided to spend \$10,700,000 on a 35,000,000-gallon reservoir on the Dandalup River; and this

is supposed to bring water to the metropolitan area by 1975. I want to remind the Government that when the Serpentine Dam was being planned on the population trends at the time, it was considered that by 1975 additional water storage would be required. But these population trends have not been maintained—they have been accelerated—and we have now got a bigger population than it was estimated we would have by 1970. This makes the matter all the more urgent.

So, any scheme which would enable the Government to provide water earlier and more cheaply ought to be attractive to a Government which is anxious to save money, instead of raising it for the purpose of spending it. It looks as though the aggregate cost of the two proposals already announced by the Government—that is, the new weir below Mundaring and the other at Dandalup—will be in the vicinity of \$13,000,000. Figures already made available show that 3,500,000,000 gallons of water are at present being pumped up-country each year from Mundaring; and, of course, you would appreciate, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin) that the main reason for the high cost of this water to the goldfields would be because the top water level at Mundaring is only some 452 feet above sea level. This water has to be lifted from 452 feet to 1,000 feet, and more; and that is where the cost factor comes in.

If the Government proceeds to build this subsidiary dam below Mundaring, the top water level will be even lower than 452 feet. It is inevitable, therefore, that pumping costs from this dam will exceed existing pumping costs. The proposal which has been placed before the Government, and of which I am aware, would cheapen the cost of water, because it would reduce the capital expenditure involved in providing the necessary storage facilities. It would also reduce the pumping costs.

This scheme envisages a series of reservoirs with an aggregate capacity of some 30,000,000,000 gallons, which would be located at an elevation of from 900 to 1,000 feet. Water from the high areas in the range would be diverted into them and, in turn, they would deliver it into the up-country pipelines.

It is estimated that the delivery from such a high level would reduce the pumping costs by at least one-third. On present costs that would be a saving of approximately \$350,000 a year, or 10c per thousand gallons. Surely that is something to be taken into very careful consideration! The development of this high-level scheme for up-country supplies, in addition to effecting major savings in pumping costs would, at the same time, release all the low-level Mundaring water for use in the metropolitan area; and there would be no necessity to build additional trunk mains—because they are already there—to permit the Mundaring Weir water to be used

in the metropolitan area. This water has been so used on former occasions.

I am told also that the present capacity of Mundaring is capable of economic duplication; so that offers quite an attractive proposition. The first stage of the high-level proposals would be to deliver up to about 5,000,000,000 gallons of water per annum as against the present 3,500,000,000 to the country and goldfields; and it is estimated to cost only about half of the \$13,000,000 involved in the two proposals already announced by the Government. I suggest this is a question which requires the most earnest consideration, more especially as the provision of adequate water supplies has already become a very urgent matter.

There is a further proposal which has already been before the Government and which has received the cold shoulder, and this is in connection with a scheme known as pump storage for electricity. This method of storing electricity is already in use in Europe and America; and it seems to me to be a very feasible proposition in an expanding State like Western Australia, which is reaching out for more and more loan funds in order to extend electricity supplies. To me this is far preferable to adding to the \$5,000,000 profit which the S.E.C. is making through the increase in the price of electricity.

The idea involved in the storage scheme is to use the electricity from existing stations—for example the Muia powerhouse could be utilised and extended for this purpose—during off-peak periods to pump water to a high level, and then to use that water by means of a hydro-electric scheme to generate electricity and to make it available at the peak periods when it is required.

I questioned the Premier the other evening, when he was delivering his speech on the Annual Estimates, about the margin that is available to the S.E.C. in having to meet peak load requirements. My information is there is not very much margin at all, and that margin, such as it is, only exists provided all the machines are operating. If there happens to be a serious breakdown at a period of peak load, then we would be placed in a situation somewhat similar to that in which Tasmania unfortunately finds itself. I am of the opinion that much more provision should be made than is at present being made to enlarge the capacity of the S.E.C. to deliver power.

The basis of this hydro-electric storage scheme which has been put forward to the Government is that there should be a 300,000,000-gallon storage reservoir, excavated at the top of Mt. Dale. This would be connected by a pressure tunnel to a similar reservoir formed in Beraking Brook, 1,100 feet below and 1½ miles to the east of Mt. Dale. Three reversible turbine generators would be located

underground on this pressure line. When supplied with surplus electrical energy from the S.E.C.'s power stations at night, these turbine generators would operate as pump motors to lift the water from the low level Beraking Brook reservoir up 1,100 feet to the high level Mt. Dale reservoir. During peak demand periods in the day, the Mt. Dale water would be allowed to flow back to the Beraking Brook reservoir via the turbine generators, thus to generate electricity equal in output to the whole of the coal-fired station at Muja.

It is necessary for me to reiterate that schemes such as this are already in operation in America and in Europe, but it is strange that the proposal finds no favour in Western Australia.

Mr. COURT: It could be that such a scheme has been studied by the experts within the State Government, and has been found to be of no immediate economic benefit under the existing circumstances, because this pump-storage scheme which operates in other parts of the world where it can be big business is usually operated under circumstances different from the circumstances existing in Western Australia.

Mr. TONKIN: I hope the Government will have another look at this proposition, because it seems to me in the light of existing circumstances that it is very desirable that we should do something along these lines, because not only will such a scheme hasten our ability to meet requirements, but there will be a considerable saving in capital outlay. These are two factors which ought to make the scheme attractive in Western Australia.

Mr. COURT: I can assure you that the pump-storage system has not been dismissed lightly.

Mr. TONKIN: I am very glad to hear that. There are two other matters with which I desire to deal. I was somewhat disappointed to read that a proposal for low cost land at Bunbury had been stopped. A report which appeared in *The West Australian* of the 13th of this month states—

The Bunbury Town Council has been stopped in its attempt to provide low-cost home sites at Hayes Estate, two miles east of the town centre.

At a council meeting the mayor, Dr. E. C. Manea, criticised a government decision not to waive sewerage connections on the estate and said 147 blocks had previously been approved for subdivision with no mention of sewerage.

Reading that report caused me to throw my mind back to something I had read about the position in Lynwood where the sewerage situation is somewhat similar but where a different attitude was adopted by the Government. In *The Sunday Times* of

the 30th April, 1967, the following appeared:—

#### Set-back for housing area

Housing development planned on 3,000 acres at Canning Vale may be affected by drainage problems discovered in the area.

Portions of the land are held by the State Housing Commission and by several development companies.

Mr. R. B. MacKenzie, manager of the State Housing Commission, said yesterday the Commission held about 200 acres in the area—enough for 500 homes.

"It is impossible to say at this stage whether our building plans could be held up," he said.

"It is our job to overcome development difficulties which arise."

Prior to that a report appeared in *The West Australian* of the 27th April under the heading, "Development at Lynwood Endangered." This is the portion of the report which interests me—

A special conference has been held under instructions from the State Cabinet to discuss a sewerage problem which has jeopardised a major housing scheme at Lynwood.

Septic tanks in houses built in the first stages of the scheme in the past two years have been overflowing.

The conference was held between representatives from the Town Planning and Local Government departments, the Canning Shire Council and the housing scheme developers.

The Town Planning Department has approved subdivision for another 74 homes but the Canning Shire Council has told its health inspectors to see if septic tanks will function.

With regard to Lynwood it looks as if the Town Planning Department approved the subdivision, but it was the local authority which stepped in and raised doubts. With regard to Bunbury it looks as if the local authority is keen to provide the low-cost land and the Town Planning Department has approved the subdivision, but the Government has stepped in and stopped it.

Mr. Williams: In the case of Bunbury it will be seen from the report which you have read that this matter is to be the subject of further negotiations between the Government departments concerned and the town council.

Mr. TONKIN: I would hope so. In view of the interest shown by the Government where private developers are operating, I would hope that in the case of Bunbury at least equal treatment will be given, so that if possible the difficulties may be overcome and this building land may be made available.

Dealing with education, I am disappointed the Government has not made



a greater effort with regard to the housing of teachers. Teachers are obliged to go where they are sent and it is unreasonable for them to be expected to accept any sort of accommodation they can find for themselves. Therefore the Government should make a special effort to provide housing for those teachers who are sent out to country districts. I do not regard what has already been done as being a worth-while effort at all. It is not much more than a token effort.

I am very interested in the extension of State aid to independent primary schools, which is now part of Government policy. The Government started off initially by making grants to students in the secondary schools. I think the Government started at the wrong end first. The real difficulty is in the parishes. The secondary schools are looked after by the orders, which have a lot more money—although not sufficient—than the parishes. Responsibility for the parish primary schools falls on the individual parents in the parishes, and the primary schools have been languishing because of a shortage of teachers and a shortage of classrooms. The result is that large numbers of children are being taught under conditions which are substandard as compared with State school conditions; that is, classes are larger and the accommodation is not sufficient.

With regard to the Government's announcement of a flat rate of \$10 per child in the primary grades, I think this might have been utilised as a basis for those children in the infants' classes, where the cost of educating children is considerably less than it is for those in the higher classes. So, if the \$10 had been used as a base in the infants' schools, and increased through the grades until it approached the amount being given for those in the secondary schools, I think something nearer to justice would have been done, and it would not have cost much additional, either.

Parents who desire to send their children to church schools should have the right to do so. That has been generally acknowledged now by State Governments throughout Australia, and by the Commonwealth Government as well. Once we acknowledge that principle, there must be a responsibility upon us to see that we do not have a section of Australian children being educated on a much smaller budget than the State itself regards as necessary to make proper provision for those children for whom it is responsible.

I suggest that this is not a matter where there should be bargaining between this party and that party. Now that the principle has been recognised all the States and the Commonwealth should get together to determine what is the fair and proper thing to be done—and we should

all do it, not having first one State suggesting \$10, another State suggesting \$12, and another party suggesting \$14. That will not deal with the situation at all.

The principle has already been accepted and acknowledged universally in Australia, with no exception in State or Commonwealth. So we should get together, examine the situation in the stark reality of the facts, and see what has to be done. Obviously the States, if left to themselves, cannot do what is adequate under the existing formula; but the Commonwealth has already indicated, by its substantial grants to independent schools for science buildings, that some help in this sector of education is necessary. So if the States and the Commonwealth got together to determine a basis of assistance, we would cut out this bargaining, which is not good for anybody at all. We would reach a proper and fair basis which would be generally acceptable.

I hope that some move might be made in that direction in order to solve what has been a difficult problem but one which, I feel, is now much closer to a solution than ever it has been before.

I shall now conclude my remarks trusting that some notice will be taken of some of the suggestions I have made to the Government—particularly those with regard to saving expenditure, reducing the burden upon the taxpayers, controlling the price of land, and providing more homes for the people—and that the Government will govern in the true sense of the term. Government does not consist wholly and solely of establishing new industries and opening up new areas; there are human values to be taken into consideration and these must be kept in proper perspective. I think in many respects this Government has let human values get completely out of balance.

Mr. Brand: No, it hasn't.

**MR. FLETCHER** (Fremantle) [8.37 p.m.]: There seems to be a reluctance on the part of anybody on the other side of the Chamber to rise, so it behoves somebody on this side to do so. As I understand the situation, it is not unusual, when dealing with the Estimates, for an Opposition speaker to be followed by a member on the Government side. In this way, members on both sides of the Chamber have an opportunity to speak on matters affecting their electorates and the State as a whole.

I have considerable material here which I can use. I was in the process of collating that material when the Leader of the Opposition sat down after having delivered a splendid address in which he was critical of the Government in a constructive way.

This debate affords me another opportunity to answer, in particular, the Minis-

ter for Industrial Development. Pages 1415 to 1418 of the current *Hansard* reveal that he attempted to dissociate himself from the comment made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in relation to world reaction to what is taking place in Vietnam; and, at the same time, to dissociate himself from the comments I made at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference in Canada, a conference similar to the one which you, Sir, had the honour and privilege of attending previously.

As the Minister for Industrial Development had an opportunity to speak on that subject, I ask for the indulgence of the Chamber for about two minutes while I address myself to the Minister for Industrial Development. Even though he disagreed with what I had to say, I would inform him and other members that Senator William Fulbright shook my hand at the conference and congratulated me in regard to my comments on this subject. Did the Minister hear that?

Mr. Burt: You would not expect Senator Fulbright to oppose you.

Mr. FLETCHER: No. The honourable member is quite right. He has the privilege of disagreeing, but I am letting that side of the Chamber know that Senator Fulbright addressed conference after I did and said much the same as I did on this particular subject.

Mr. Burt: Of course, he is well known as being opposed to the Vietnam war.

Mr. FLETCHER: He is well known. I agree with the member for Murchison, because Senator Fulbright is the Chairman of the American Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is one of the most important committees in the American Senate. That being so, is that senator more qualified to express an opinion than are members here, including the Ministers opposite?

Mr. Hawke: Was he there at the invitation of the C.P.A.?

Mr. FLETCHER: He was there at the invitation of the C.P.A. as an observer, and he addressed the conference in the manner I have indicated. I thank the member for Northam for having reminded me of that fact. When the senator spoke he said no more and no less than I did. Why am I disreputable and why should I be reprimanded in this Chamber when a man of the senator's status said much the same thing? As a patriot—and I repeat the word "patriot"—he was concerned about what the undeclared war in Vietnam was doing to the American economy and prestige throughout the world. I say that I am similarly concerned for Australia for the very same reasons. I ask that nothing be said by those on the other side to discredit what I have said.

The current *Hansard* will reveal, furthermore—and I ask the member for

Murchison and the Minister for Industrial Development to listen—that I quoted to the Chamber from the conference report. Not only did Senator Fulbright congratulate me on what I had said, but the conference report indicates that the consensus of opinion—the Premier now finds it convenient to attract the attention of the Minister for Industrial Development so he will not hear what I am saying—

Mr. Court: I am listening. The more you want to do yourself in, the more I will listen.

Mr. FLETCHER: The consensus of opinion of the conference was in conformity with what Senator Fulbright had said, and with the humble opinion of the member for Fremantle, who was proud to represent members opposite even if he did not say what they would have liked him to say. Are members opposite qualified to question the consensus of opinion of that conference? Am I to go overseas from here as a puppet to say what will please America?

I said the other evening that I do not want decisions affecting Australia made in Washington or elsewhere by representatives of people who are not Australians. I do not want those people to formulate policies which will cause us to toe the line of those policies. I like to express an independent opinion, and I did no more than that.

I would like to say in the few brief seconds I wish to devote to this subject, that the Minister for Industrial Development is not only out of step with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Fremantle, but also with many of the delegates who attended that conference. I suspect—and I say this fearlessly—that the Minister for Industrial Development and the Prime Minister of this country are frightened to say what I said in case they offend America. America is a friendly nation and I accept it as such.

Mr. Burt: Do you think we owe anything to America?

Mr. FLETCHER: I will answer that presently. I say that no friend would respect me if I did not say what I think. I said what I thought at the conference and I repeated it here. I am not ashamed of a word of it.

Now to get back to the interjection of the member for Murchison. I think he asked me whether we ought not to be grateful. I presume that he is referring in that interjection to the assistance Australia received from America in the last war. Let me say that the worst mistake made by the Japanese was when they bombed Pearl Harbour, and bombed America into the war. When that bastion had gone what alternative was there to Australia but the Antarctic? America came to Australia to defend her own interests and, of course, ours.

That was a very different period in our history from what the position is today. At that time we were in the process of being invaded and many of us joined up to prevent that invasion. Precisely the same thing is occurring today in Vietnam, where many Vietnamese are joining up to stop the invasion of their soil by the Australians and Americans. We must see this from the point of view of other people. It gets back to the fundamental point. I reserve the right to preserve my country and I give those people equal right and opportunity to defend theirs.

I said a while ago that I am concerned about America's involvement and what it will do to its prestige. I am also concerned about what it will do to ours. I will admit that the point I am taking now is not good election material.

Mr. Brand: Your two minutes are up.

Mr. FLETCHER: I admit that we lost seats in the last Federal election and could in the next because of members opposite getting people to rush around to look for communists here, there, and everywhere. Those tactics have been employed since 1949, and will continue to be employed. If members opposite like to win elections that way, that is their business, but do not—

Several members interjected.

Dr. Henn: We are not looking for communists, but fellow travellers.

Mr. Graham: Running around with Adolf Hitler, that is what you should be doing.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not believe the member for Wembley meant that interjection because it implied I could be one of them.

Mr. Jamieson: The honourable member opposite is one of the two fascists in this Parliament.

Mr. Court: Good old Beeloo!

Mr. FLETCHER: If we were liable to invasion, I would join members opposite in an endeavour to repel such an invasion, as I did on the last occasion. Some members opposite also went away last time. It gets back to the declaration of human rights, which includes the right of any nation to defend its shores. Vietnam is doing that and unfortunately we are not doing ourselves any good by sending our troops over there.

But enough of that. I ask members for further indulgence on this subject for only another minute or two. This matter has many implications. It is of no use pretending otherwise. You, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin), asked the Deputy Leader of the Opposition where the reference to this subject was in the Loan Estimates. I could find an appropriate place to justify my speech on the subject; for instance, my salary was paid while I was away and therefore I could claim coverage under the appropriate item

on page 20. I am concerned about the impact of this war on the economy of Australia.

Let me briefly justify that comment. I quote from the *Australian Left Review*. I will admit it is a left-wing opinion, but it is not inconsistent with my own. All sorts of progressive people subscribe to this publication. I recently saw it on a shelf and having read the first two or three pages of it, I found it a convenient source of statistics.

Mr. Williams: People can quibble at statistics.

Mr. FLETCHER: My statistics could be quibbled at, so I am quoting from an authority other than myself.

Mr. Williams: Those figures could also be quibbled at.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will not quote in great detail, but on the first page it is stated—

Vietnam constantly exerts a growing influence on Australian national politics, as it does on international relations.

Who could quibble at that? Further on it is stated—and this is very salient to my comments—

The full consequences were not foreseen when the Government blithely acceded to American pressure and first committed an Australian battalion.

That is consistent with what I said, and I expressed that opinion before I read this publication. To continue—

McMahon's budget pleased no one, not even the Liberal Party he so blatantly aspires to lead—

That is why the Premier is short of money. I ask members to listen to some of these figures so that they will know what the situation is.

Mr. Brand: We were short of money before Vietnam.

Mr. FLETCHER: To continue—

... least of all Bolte, Askin, and other Liberal Premiers. And the budget was largely predetermined by the Vietnam intervention.

I ask the critics to listen to some of these comments, which are other than my own. I notice members opposite whom I am trying to educate by quoting these figures are now deliberately preoccupied with all sorts of other conversations, and so on. These figures are extremely revealing, and I ask the Premier to listen to the reason why he has not sufficient money to satisfy the needs of this State. To quote further—

Once launched on that slippery course, there could be less and less freedom of manoeuvre.

In six years military expenditure has grown from \$406 million spent in 1961-62 to \$1,118 million scheduled for 1967-68.

I repeat, the figure has climbed from \$406,000,000 in 1961-62, to \$1,118,000,000 which is scheduled for 1967-68, an increase of 175 per cent. Are not these figures revealing? To continue—

War spending now exceeds planned payments to the National Welfare Fund for Social services (\$1,071 million for this year).

I ask members to notice the disparity which exists between the expenditure of \$1,071,000,000 for national welfare as distinct from \$1,118,000,000 scheduled for 1968 for the defence budget. That is an increase of 175 per cent. Welfare expenditure was estimated to increase by only 45 per cent. in six years, yet war consumption is increasing four times faster than welfare expenditure. What does the medical member of the House think of that? He never even heard me! To continue—

Payments to the States, \$1,347 million, has increased only 69 per cent. in the six years despite the growing crisis in education, transport and other State and local government services.

McMahon's budget must have been even worse—and politically more damaging—but for a certain low cunning in passing the buck to the States.

What does the Premier think of that? The buck has been passed back to the States. To continue—

Sir Henry Bolte has set a new precedent, a state income tax. It is magnificently impartial—one cent. for every 10 dollars, whether the wage earner receives \$2,000 or \$20,000, and of course only on wages and salaries, not dividends, expense accounts or other perks.

This is what concerns me, because so much of the Budget is being spent for other purposes.

Mr. Brand: How do you account for the shortage of money before Vietnam when the Labor Government criticised the Federal Government for lack of finance?

Mr. FLETCHER: That is not consistent with what is going on now. This is now a false situation created as a consequence of being dragged to war at the chariot wheels of America. To continue—

The Treasurer's cynicism was nowhere more evident than in his justification of the freeze on old-age pensions. Of all the failures to act on social services, this caused the greatest moral revulsion, all the more since the Government has been so imprudent, inefficient and supine in face of the still-soaring price of the F111 and other American war equipment.

I ask members to listen to this brief Press report on the F111 plane.

Mr. Brand: The document you have quoted represents an unbiased opinion!

Mr. FLETCHER: It is no more biased than is the literature which defends your Government.

Mr. Brand: I have not quoted it.

Mr. FLETCHER: Since I have mentioned the F111, I ask members to listen to these comments. I am conscientiously trying to show why the Premier is short of enough finance. I quote from *The West Australian* of the 13th September, 1967, as follows:—

#### Paper Says F111B Unfit for War

The U.S. Defence Department has admitted to congress that the latest model of the navy F111B swing-wing plane is extremely deficient in combat-mission capability.

This was reported yesterday by the Wall Street Journal, which published the story under the headline:—

Pentagon admits Navy finds F111 unfit for War.

Members may argue with me but I am sure the Minister for Industrial Development would not argue with the Wall Street Journal which published that story under the headline—and I repeat this for *Hansard*—Pentagon admits Navy finds F111 unfit for war.

Mr. Brand: Give *Hansard* the paper and let them read it.

Mr. FLETCHER: *Hansard* will get the paper ultimately, but I want members, not only *Hansard* to hear the comments.

Mr. Brand: Is the Opposition to send the member for Fremantle to the next Coral Sea Battle service?

Mr. Graham: What has that to do with it?

Mr. Brand: It has a lot to do with it.

Mr. FLETCHER: There are 10 sympathetic countries in the world on our side, for every one on your side. I ask for your help, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin).

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Crommelin): Order! The member for Fremantle has the floor.

Mr. Brand: It is the members from the other side who are interjecting.

Mr. FLETCHER: The other evening the member for Beeloo said that before he got up to speak apparently nobody wanted to speak but when he was on his feet everybody wanted to speak. I find the same situation prevails at the moment.

Mr. Court: The member for Beeloo was interested when I was talking the other evening.

Mr. FLETCHER: I think the article is very interesting, and I ask members to listen to it. It says—

"Pentagon admits navy finds F111 unfit for War."

[Australia is buying 24 of the air force version of the swing-wing F111.]

The Wall Street Journal said that because of the deficiencies in the navy version, the Defence Department was seeking to assess penalties against the General Dynamics Corporation—the builders—for alleged failure to meet specifications.

My own notation on this article is that these planes have been inflicted on the American and Australian public. Because this is said by a party in Canberra with whom I am proud to be associated, we are alleged to be hypercritical of Government policy on the purchase of these planes. In my mind, this is another glaring example of our subservience to America; otherwise we would not be buying these planes, but instead we would be buying some British equivalent. We would be buying something which has been proven and not just something which is on the drawing board.

Mr. I. W. Manning: Which ones are you advertising?

Mr. FLETCHER: I will not be rude to the interjector.

Mr. Elliott: Britain did not have an equivalent, because it discontinued production.

Mr. FLETCHER: Whatever other planes we might buy, they would certainly be better than ones which are condemned by the Pentagon and by the U.S. Defence Department, which condemnation I have read out to members. I want to proceed to another subject, but I am trying to show the unfortunate Ministers opposite they are so short of money because their Federal counterparts are buying aeroplanes that will not fly.

Mr. Craig: You are flying a kite.

Mr. FLETCHER: Each one of these planes costs many millions of dollars. What would the Premier do with an extra \$20,000,000, or whatever these planes cost? What would the Ministers for Industrial Development, Police, Health, and particularly Education do with some of the taxpayers' money which is being wasted in this way? I ask Ministers opposite not to question my sincerity on this issue. The situation is ridiculous; that is, to buy planes off a drawing board—planes which even the Americans themselves question from the point of view of efficiency. Can Ministers of the Government not see what is wrong with that?

Mr. Court: The Americans have not condemned them for Air Force or Army use, but only for Navy use. If the country is not safe, nothing else matters.

Mr. Burt: Press for disarmament and we can all live happily.

Mr. FLETCHER: I am not necessarily advocating disarmament, and I cannot see why members opposite do not understand the importance of what I am stating.

Mr. Hawke: You will see once you have been here for a few more years.

Mr. Brand: I think you are getting your message over to the other side.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think the Premier means that.

Mr. Brand: I said that you are getting your message over to the other side.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will be grateful as long as someone gives me an intelligent hearing.

Mr. Nalder: Read from the other side of your face.

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think it is a joke, but obviously the Minister for Agriculture does. I can joke with the best of people. I have demonstrated my sense of humour to the Chamber, but I am quite sincere and serious on this issue. I ask Ministers not to let me sit down with the impression that nothing I can say will permeate prejudice. That is the impression which I get. I admit though that I do adopt a rather provocative line.

Mr. Toms: Whoever said that?

Mr. O'Connor: Disregard that interjection.

Mr. FLETCHER: However, I hope Ministers will not close their minds as a result of prejudice. They should listen and then, if they wish, disagree. They should not allow prejudice to influence their attitude. I try not to.

Mr. Brand: There is every evidence of that.

Mr. FLETCHER: I try to accept different points of view and that is why I said when I was away at the conference that the opinions expressed by the member for Fremantle were not necessarily the opinions of everybody on both sides of the Chamber. Could I be more sincere? I would like to add that while I was away I spoke on many other subjects beside the one I have just mentioned. I reported to members the other evening on the subjects on which I spoke. These concern matters in connection with shipping freights and similar things which touch on the portfolio of the Minister for Agriculture. I mentioned those other matters which touch our State although perhaps, not to the same extent as the Vietnam commitment.

Mr. Bickerton: The Minister touched the State.

Mr. FLETCHER: I will leave the subject at this point. I am sure, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin), you will agree with me when I say that our economy is affected as a result of Federal policy in regard to war involvement. This has repercussions right down the line and is affecting every person, not only in the State of Western Australia but also throughout the rest of Australia.

Mr. Graham: It is a shocking business.

Mr. FLETCHER: I would like to step on to less controversial ground by saying that I am very pleased with our leader's comment this evening regarding taxation and especially with reference to stamp duty. The Treasurer may recall that during the passing of the Supply Bill I mentioned the subject of stamp duty. He wondered where the organised opposition originated in regard to the injustice of the 3c in \$10 imposed upon the clubs. I am proud to say it originated in Fremantle from the R.S.L. Whyola Club. That club circularised all other clubs in Western Australia. As I have said, I am proud that the movement was initiated in Fremantle.

When the Treasurer saw the force of the opposition and also, possibly, my comment in *Hansard* he did promise to introduce legislation to alleviate this unjust tax upon a section of the community. Let me say this to the Treasurer: From his point of view it is quite good tactics. He imposes a tax; this contributes to the coffers; and then he makes the grand gesture of withdrawing the tax almost on the election eve, no doubt for the purpose of creating goodwill.

Mr. Brand: What would you have liked me to do?

Mr. Jamieson: It was because he got a lot more than he expected.

Mr. FLETCHER: When the Treasurer saw so much opposition, he did the sensible thing. However, I am questioning his motives in doing this right on the eve of an election. As I have said, the tax is imposed, something is now in the coffers, and now we have the grand gesture of bringing down legislation to alleviate the unfair tax burden—no doubt with the object of creating the goodwill mentioned within the electorate on the eve of the election. I tell the Treasurer that memories are not so short. After all, the election day is only a few months hence.

Mr. Brand: That is right.

Mr. FLETCHER: Some people will remember.

Mr. Bickerton: What day would you say?

Mr. Nalder: Offer a suggestion!

Mr. Jamieson: Sir Henry Bolte claims he has been left holding the bag.

Mr. FLETCHER: I quoted Sir Henry Bolte's reaction to the Federal Budget. However, everybody was so concerned with answering me back that I fear a lot of what I, in all humility, consider to be worth-while comment was missed. It is very satisfying to me that a Fremantle club initiated the club movement throughout the State to oppose the charge of 3c in \$10 on membership fees and other club income.

As mentioned, the amending Bill is pending. The Government has given way to pressure, and I am glad it has. I do not want to upset the Treasurer, but I would like to see some of the taxation he has taken from the community returned to Fremantle and, in particular, to the Fremantle Day Nursery (Inc.). Some members opposite may be wondering about the name of that organisation. It is the first organisation of its kind established in this State. As members opposite know, Fremantle Mayor Sir Frederick Sampson has claimed Fremantle to be the first city to establish many progressive organisations, but it is a fact that the Fremantle Day Nursery is the first of its type ever to be established in this State. There are many similar nurseries in the Eastern States but this is the first in Western Australia.

The Treasurer would appear to be making some answer to my comment, but I wish to tell him that when the member for Northam was the Treasurer of the State a £5,000 grant was made to the Children's Protection Society, which has a similar purpose to that of the Fremantle Day Nursery. On the initial approach to him the present Treasurer promised only half that amount, but subsequently, I am pleased to say, he made available an amount equal to that which was made available to the Children's Protection Society by his predecessor. However, in view of the inflation that has taken place in the intervening years, and whilst not wishing to look a gift horse in the mouth, the grant made available by the present Treasurer was certainly not equal in value to the amount made available by the member for Northam when he was Treasurer.

Mr. Brand: I would not expect you to say otherwise.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Treasurer knows on which side of the Chamber we, in opposition, sit.

Mr. Brand: Yes, I can see you standing there.

Mr. FLETCHER: Next year we may be sitting on the other side of the Chamber and I may be able to twist the new Treasurer's arm a little harder than I am twisting the present Treasurer's arm at the moment. I think the best thing I can do is to trace the history of the Fremantle Day Nursery for the information of members. The first moves were initiated by the wives of waterside workers and seamen; an important section of the community. The committee of the organisation still has representatives of those women on it, but the representation is now more broadly based. The work of the nursery has captured the imagination of wives and mothers, and others, in all stratas of the Fremantle community. There are representatives of trade and

commerce on the committee and, all in all, its members have made a very fine achievement.

Unfortunately the organisation leads a hand-to-mouth existence because not sufficient finance is available. It has explored all avenues of income. The Lions Club, Rotary, and other organisations have rendered considerable assistance. It is proposed that trotting evenings be held to raise money for this organisation, and there are many other splendid people and organisations who are assisting. Nevertheless, in spite of the assistance that is rendered, a sum of money, by way of annual grant or subsidy, is required for the conduct and administration of this nursery.

Prior to the organisation's being established, a questionnaire was circulated among the people of the Fremantle district and the committee was inundated with requests from mothers for their children to be accommodated in a day nursery centre. The following is the introduction of the president's report for 1967:—

Our first year as a corporate body was marked by considerable planning and fund raising for the purposes of establishing our first Day Nursery.

This second year has been one of growth and we are in the pleasant position of being able to see the fruit of our labours in the form of a much-needed day nursery service to the distressed families of Fremantle.

In support of the need for additional financial assistance from the Treasury, the staff required to conduct the nursery is as follows:—

Director—a State registered nurse, double certified sister.

Kindergarten teacher—qualified.

Three mothercraft nurses—fully trained.

Two nursing assistants.

One kindergarten aide.

One cook—domestic.

It can be readily appreciated that to maintain such a staff requires a considerable amount of money, and therefore further assistance is necessary.

The Fremantle Day Nursery was opened by Lady Gairdner and on that day a representative of the Public Health Department was present. In giving some assurance to the committee, to use his own words, he said, "We will not see you go broke." I remind the Treasurer of that assurance from an officer of the Public Health Department. In continuing to quote from the president's report, the following has been stated:—

The operating costs of the Day Nursery indicate that the annual loss will be about \$5,000.

Turning to page 2 of the report, these figures are published—

#### Estimate of Regular Income and Expenditure Based on Figures to Date

Income	
Collections from Mothers	12,780.00
	<u>\$12,780.00</u>

Expenditure	
Salaries	12,492.00
Salary Deductions	852.00
Housekeeping	2,472.00
Cleaning	1,248.00
Insurance	80.00
Telephone	100.00
Water	22.50
Gas	192.00
Electricity	126.40
	<u>\$17,584.90</u>

From those figures members can appreciate that help is badly needed.

I would now like to give the Chamber some idea of the type of people who are being assisted by this organisation. This information appears in the secretary-treasurer's report appearing on page 4 of the annual report. Under the heading "Attendances in Family Categories" appear tabulated headings as follows:—

Widows and Mothers,  
Unmarried Mothers,  
Partner in Gaol,  
Sickness and Invalid,  
Economic Distress,  
Marital Upset,  
Other Category.

Drawn from these various categories, there are about 70 children in the centre at the moment, and if sufficient accommodation were available twice that number could be cared for. The centre has not been established entirely for the benefit of distressed families. Its services are available in those instances where both parents are working. Of course, in such cases these parents are expected to contribute a much higher sum than an unmarried mother who has chosen to retain her child rather than have it adopted. Great credit is due to a girl who will do that. As a result of having her child properly cared for she can go to work knowing full well that it is in the care of an expert and well-trained staff.

As I have said, there is a small percentage of those who can pay the full amount to the day nursery. However, the services of the nursery are, predominantly, for those who are in distress.

Mr. Williams: What is the position in regard to a widow?

Mr. FLETCHER: The report refers to widows and widowers. It gives the number of children at the nursery as a result of the parents being either widows or wid-

owers; it refers to the children of unmarried mothers and of persons who are in gaol; and to those people who are sick or in economic distress. I would point out to the member for Bunbury that those in economic distress constitute the majority. In January there were 17; in February there were 25; in March the figure was 23; in April there were 24; in May there were 24; and in June there were 27. Those were the people in economic distress.

There are others who come into the category of marital upsets. In January these numbered 10, in February 14, in March and April 15, in May 14, in June 15. So the greater number of children who are attending are the children of parents who are in economic distress or who have had marital upsets.

Why should not these children receive the tender and expert care of the people I enumerated earlier? Why should they continue to remain in an unhappy home where economic circumstances are strained, or where there is uncongenial relationship between husband and wife? As a State we must provide some such benefit for the children concerned.

Let me briefly refer to those who benefit from this day nursery. It does not only serve the Fremantle City Council area. Page 5 will show that it also serves East Fremantle, the Town of Melville, the Shire of Cockburn, the Town of Cottesloe, and the Town of Claremont—even your own area is catered for, Mr. Deputy Chairman (Mr. Crommelin). So, as I have said, the day nursery does not serve only the Fremantle area. Children are sent from as far as the City of South Perth, from the Shire of Canning, the City of Perth, and the Shire of Belmont.

There is no doubt that what has been achieved in Fremantle provides a wonderful pilot scheme which could well be emulated throughout the State, subject, of course, to the Minister for Industrial Development not taking the lion's share of the Budget. It would be possible to achieve something along these lines if he left the Premier some money for this purpose.

Let me inform the Committee of one situation alone which justifies the establishment of a centre such as the one I have mentioned. In the *Daily News* of the 13th September, 1967, there is an article headed, "Rent Arrears Family Evicted by SHC." I would now like to quote part of this newspaper article which reads—

A family with five children and a husband who earns \$36 a week do not know where they will sleep tonight—as they have been evicted from their SHC home.

The mother said—

"We got behind with our rent early this year when I had to go into Royal Perth Hospital. There was nobody to

mind the children and my husband had to take leave without pay.

"This happened about three times, just as we began to get on our feet again, paying off the arrears. My husband, Mark, had to miss work again when the baby was born.

"The Housing Commission took us to court and we've had the bailiff out with an eviction order. Now, with the back rent and legal costs, we owe about \$130."

In that story alone one can see stark tragedy. If the equivalent of the Fremantle day centre existed in the area represented by the Minister for Transport, a parent in economic circumstances similar to those I have mentioned could send a child or children to the centre and go off to work assured that the children would be safe and well cared for by a well-trained staff. After work the children could be picked up and taken home. This situation could be repeated a thousand times throughout the State.

I think members are aware of the circumstances that confronted me before I entered the House as the member for Fremantle. My wife had undergone two big operations, as I had myself; and the economy of the house fell to a very low level indeed. While my wife was in hospital it was necessary for me to take time off, and our economic circumstances were so strained that I nearly lost my home. I did not know where to turn, simply because there was no day centre to care for my children. There are, of course, numbers of other people in similar circumstances.

These day centres are very necessary, and I hope something will be done about establishing more of them, if not by this Government then by some future Government.

I would like now to inform the Committee of the disparity that exists between the subsidies payable in this State and those payable in the Eastern States. I would first like to quote a letter written by the Premier on the 27th July, 1967, to the Secretary-Treasurer, Fremantle Day Nursery. It reads as follows:—

In a letter addressed to me on the 30th May you sought assistance from the Government to help defray the costs of conducting the Fremantle Day Nursery.

After considering the information supplied by you and having regard to other demands on Government, it has been decided to pay an annual grant for the conduct of the Nursery calculated on the basis of \$30 for each child in attendance on a full time basis subject to a maximum annual payment of \$1,500.

The grant is to operate from the 1st July 1967 and I suggest you contact Mr. J. F. Cumming of the Treas-



ury Department with regard to the submission of claims for this assistance.

The amount referred to in the Premier's letter is very poor indeed when compared to the subsidies paid in the Eastern States. A lady councillor—I think that is the best way I can put it—visited the Eastern States with a view to investigating child care in those States. The notes I have here indicate that there are three day nurseries for working mothers in Victoria, and one day nursery at which mothers who are shopping can leave their children. The staff at these nurseries are all trained and comprise a matron, mothercraft nurses, and kindergarten teachers. An economic unit is considered to be 50 children, and the ratio of staff to children is one trained person to five children. The fees—and I will give these in the old currency—range from 10s. to £2 a week according to the income of the person concerned. There is a local Government subsidy of £28,904 provided, and, for the information of the front bench, the State Government makes available £14,500, which is the equivalent of £100 per child per year.

Members will see the great disparity that exists if they compare the £100 per child paid in Victoria with the \$30, or £15, promised by the Premier.

Mr. Lewis: What is the subsidy here in regard to kindergartens?

Mr. FLETCHER: I am not talking about kindergartens.

Mr. Lewis: Are you comparing like with like?

Mr. FLETCHER: The maximum annual payment promised by the Premier is \$1,500.

Mr. Lewis: This is for playing centres.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Minister has not said my point. I am referring to the Melbourne City Council and to the day nurseries.

Mr. Lewis: You mentioned the extent of the assistance given in the Eastern States.

Mr. FLETCHER: The Melbourne City Council pays a subsidy of £28,904, and the State Government pays an amount of £14,500, or £100 per child per year.

Mr. Lewis: Is that for day nurseries also?

Mr. FLETCHER: That is for three day nurseries. The Sydney City Council subsidises seven day nurseries, and the Nursery Schools Association of New South Wales conducts 16 day nurseries and one college. The State Government pays a subsidy of £42,500 to the Nursery Schools Association.

Mr. Lewis: Does the term "day nursery" mean the same as the term applied in Western Australia?

Mr. FLETCHER: By and large it is the same. I have the composition of the day nurseries. The number of children catered for is 72, and this is somewhat similar

to the 70 who are catered for in this State; this applies to the Valley Creche Nursery in Brisbane. In the other States the position is similar. In the same establishment there are babies' nurseries, toddlers' nurseries, two-year old nurseries, three-year old nurseries, and four-year old nurseries. We have similar categories in Fremantle.

Mr. Lewis: In Western Australia a four-year old nursery is probably a kindergarten.

Mr. FLETCHER: A full-time qualified and trained kindergarten teacher is engaged at the Fremantle Day Nursery, but we are struggling to pay her wages and that of the double certificated sister in charge. We are managing to pay, but just managing.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Crommelin): The honourable member has another four minutes.

Mr. FLETCHER: For example, this Friday a fashion parade has been arranged on one of the Italian liners. From what I have heard from one who is very close to me, and who is also very closely associated with the nursery, I wonder whether the work connected with the organisation of a function such as this is worth the time and effort, for the sake of obtaining, to use a colloquial expression, "a few lousy dollars." I admit that civic minded people are associated with this day nursery at Fremantle, but in this day and age they should not be required to raise money in that way for a purpose which is of advantage to the welfare of the State as well as to the community of Fremantle.

It is appropriate that I leave the rest of my comments in relation to the various departments which are mentioned in the pages of the Annual Estimates. I shall refer to them on a subsequent occasion. I do not apologise for being controversial in the early part of my contribution. At least, to some extent, I got my message across to some members.

### *Progress*

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Williams.

### **LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Council's Message*

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Assembly.

### **ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL** *In Committee*

Resumed from the 11th October. The Deputy Chairman of Committees (Mr. Crommelin) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development) in charge of the Bill.

Postponed clause 8: Section 51A added—

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported after clause 17 had been agreed to.

Mr. COURT: When we were considering this Bill in Committee on a previous occasion I moved for the postponement of this clause following some queries raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I undertook to have some research made. The main burden of his submission was that under clause 8 of the Bill there was the possibility of a person's being struck off the roll by the Chief Electoral Officer and the person might object to being struck off, and there could be an isolated case when the objection was quite *bona fide*, but there was no basis of appeal.

I was impressed by his argument in this respect, because in electoral matters it is better to err on the side of punctiliousness than in any other way, although I have every confidence that the provision in this clause will be administered with common sense and understanding by the Chief Electoral Officer. I have found out that my comments were quite correct, inasmuch as the main occasions when this provision will be applied are those when a relative of a person who is obviously incapacitated seeks relief on his behalf in respect of compulsory voting; but the Chief Electoral Officer has no power to relieve that person of his commitments under the Act.

The point made by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was quite valid. There could be occasions when representations are made by relatives of incapacitated persons, but subsequently those representations may not prove to be as *bona fide* as the Chief Electoral Officer believed they were. I have therefore had drafted an amendment to this clause, but I do not desire to move it at this stage because of an amendment to a subsequent clause which has been drafted as a result of a query raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I refer to clause 11. What I proposed to do is to explain to members my suggested amendment to clause 8. The clause could then be passed without amendment, if that meets the wishes of the Committee. When the report is before the Chair I will move for a recommittal of the Bill for the purposes of reconsidering clauses 8 and 11.

The proposed amendment to clause 8, which I submit is a desirable one, is as follows:—

Page 3, line 25—Add after the section number "51A." the subsection designation "(1)".

Page 3, line 32—Add the following subclause—

(2) The Chief Electoral Officer shall not, under subsection (1) of

this section, remove the name of the elector from the roll unless—

- (a) he has, by notice in writing served on the elector, given notice of his intention so to remove the name of the elector;
- (b) he has, in the notice, specified a date being not less than fourteen days from the date of the notice on or before which the elector may by notice in writing serve on the Chief Electoral Officer to advise him that he objects to his name being so removed and
- (c) the elector has failed to serve a notice on the Chief Electoral Officer under and in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (b) of this subsection.

Mr. Davies: Can he then subsequently re-enrol?

Mr. COURT: It is important we have a clear understanding on this. This, to my mind, is better than a right of appeal. All that has to happen is for the elector to say he objects to his name being removed from the roll and he is back on it. In fact, he is never off it.

Mr. Jamieson: Can he go back later on?

Mr. COURT: He could always re-enrol but it would be most unusual. I want to assure the Committee that I have convinced myself, after studying the matter with the Chief Electoral Officer, that his intention was quite the reverse to what was interpreted by some members. His intention was to assist the electors who found it irksome to be subject to the provision of the Act because of their incapacity.

I think his objective is a good one, but this added safeguard, to my mind, is desirable, and I hope it achieves the purpose sought by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I do not propose to move this amendment at the moment, but it can be foreshadowed.

Mr. GRAHAM: With regard to the foreshadowed amendment, I want to say I appreciate the fact that the Minister has given further consideration to the point and proposes to bring forward an amendment which will be a vast improvement on the situation hitherto obtaining.

I want to say I am a little more fearful of what is written into the law than the Minister. He is relying on a generous approach, but, after all, what is stated in an Act forms the document from which an officer acts and he may be generous in his viewpoint or he may be otherwise. If what the Minister says is completely valid, then this amendment is designed

to assist people who suffer some unfortunate physical or mental disability. The removal from the roll should be at the request of the person affected. In other words, if a person is, because of some unhappy circumstance—to use a common expression—more a vegetable than a human being, it should be possible for him through the proper processes to be exempted from enrolment, and accordingly to be exempted from the procedure of being called upon to explain why he did not vote at a certain election for which voting was compulsory.

It would then be the role of the Chief Electoral Officer merely to vet the applications made to him in order to ensure they were *bona fide*, and that somebody was not making an application to be struck off the roll merely because he was too lazy to carry out his electoral responsibilities. I would ask the Minister to give some attention to this whilst there is still time.

A point was raised by the member for Victoria Park and the member for Beeloo by way of interjection. If the Chief Electoral Officer, under the terms of the foreshadowed amendment, feels that certain people's names should be removed from the roll for a good and sufficient reason in accordance with the Statute, does that mean a permanent disqualification; or, in the event of a change of heart or some improvement in the condition of the affected person, would that person have the right to re-enrol? The Minister seems to think he could make another application; but what is the situation in those circumstances?

After all, if the Chief Electoral Officer felt I was suffering from some disability and removed my name from the roll, what is to prevent me from applying for enrolment the following day? Does it mean the Chief Electoral Officer would have to accept my enrolment? I have the feeling that if the Chief Electoral Officer acts under this provision, it is final and permanent, and I would be completely excluded from the provisions of the State Electoral Act. In other words, I could no longer exercise my right to vote, because there is no follow-on from this provision for reinstatement. I am raising the question now so the Minister can give some attention to this aspect.

A great deal of the Bill we considered last week has been designed—and it is a step in the right direction—to make the State Electoral Act conform as far as possible with the Commonwealth Electoral Act. In regard to this provision, in order to deal with a few comparatively isolated cases, are we moving in the direction of again getting our Act out of balance, so making an increased hazard in regard to achieving the ideal of a common roll? This ideal means that when one is accepted for enrolment, one is placed on the Federal electoral roll and the State elec-

toral roll at the same time, and there are the same qualifications and the same disqualifications in both instances.

I would like the Minister to comment in regard to this point because, while what is proposed may serve a useful purpose, particularly in the way I have suggested, I do not think it is so vital that we should, with our eyes open, be going in the direction of making some further disparity between our legislation and that of the Commonwealth.

I do not ask the Minister to reply to my observation, but I would be obliged if, when the Bill comes before us for further consideration, he would take notice of what I have said and would give some indication of the thinking of the Government in this regard.

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not know why the Minister did not move his amendment. I take it the intention is to allow for time for the amendment to be placed on a future notice paper.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. Crommelin): I would point out to the honourable member that clause 8 is the only outstanding clause in the Bill. The Bill can be reported and, if the Minister so desires, he can then recommit the Bill.

Mr. JAMIESON: That might be so.

Mr. Graham: He also wants to amend clause 11.

Mr. JAMIESON: I do not see why he cannot deal with clause 8. I would like to comment on this clause.

Some protection should be provided because all sorts of things can occur with electoral Acts and enrolments. Anyone who is associated with politics seems to become an expert and finds some dodge, or way around the provisions when they are not to his liking. I would hate to think that anyone had been removed from the roll when he should not have been.

I feel that section 121 should apply because it provides for anyone who has been inadvertently removed from the roll. The situation might occur that a person whose name it was proposed should be removed from the roll might be notified. He might raise no objection and this might appear to be a sign to the electoral officer that the person's name should be removed. However, he might subsequently find out that the person concerned was away and someone had deliberately taken this action to have the person's name taken off the roll. Therefore I believe we should have some provision so that if a person's name is inadvertently taken off the roll, or taken off through no reason of his own, he should be entitled to claim a vote provided he has a card.

I take it the card would not be destroyed, because the situation is not the same as if a person had died. In that case the name would be struck off the roll and the card

would be destroyed. In the case of a name being struck off for some other reason, I assume the card would be merely marked or stamped to indicate that it was inoperative for the time being.

I suggest that although this may look to be a simple amendment, a number of complications could occur. I would suspect a move made to remove a name from the roll on the basis of a mental illness, etc., which would require a second party to undertake the negotiations with the department.

Even though the Minister envisages that a safeguard will be provided if the person concerned receives a communication of advice from the department, I feel that it might not be enough safeguard.

Mr. DAVIES: There is always a danger when we take some right from an individual, and it appears that there is a fear of danger in this case. It also appears, from what the Minister has said, that action will be taken to include in the Bill a safeguard to preserve the rights of the individual. It is amazing how many people are of the opinion that once they reach 75 years of age they no longer need to vote, or that voting is not compulsory for them. I am sure other members have come up against this situation many times because it is the opinion held throughout all the electorates.

I am sure members have also had to deal with handicapped people who are incapable of voting but whose names must remain on the roll at present. Although it may be possible, with some difficulty, to get them to vote at times, members will often not worry them. Also at a later stage members are often asked, on behalf of the elector, to explain to the electoral officer why the vote has not been registered. The explanation is usually accepted and no penalty is inflicted.

It is apparently this type of situation which we are endeavouring to overcome by allowing the Chief Electoral Officer to take a person's name off the roll under certain circumstances. However like the members for Beeloo and Balcatta, I would like some specific provision inserted in the Bill under which an elector can, if he meets the usual requirements, re-enrol at some future time. I do not quite know how this could be done, but perhaps if the Minister added to the end of his amendment some words which would indicate that a person, who could meet the requirements of the Act, would not be prevented from re-enrolling subsequently, the position would be cleared up and I would be satisfied. No doubt such an addition would also satisfy other members on this side.

I am sure we all agree that the instances when people's names should be taken off the roll are very few and far apart, and no great hardship is entailed in explaining such situations to the Chief Electoral Officer at the appropriate time. However, if the situation can be covered in the Act,

I have no objection, but I would like the addition of those few words as an extra safeguard.

Mr. COURT: I think members are shying at shadows a little because the intention is to try to relieve someone of a burden, not to take something away. I have accepted that some safeguard must be written into the clause because members were not thoroughly satisfied that the Chief Electoral Officer could be relied upon under all circumstances to act in a way which would not prejudice an elector. He does not have to strike a name off. He must merely satisfy himself that the name should be struck off, and then he can make up his mind finally whether it will be struck off.

To make the situation even safer, we have suggested an amendment under which notice must be given before a name is removed. If the person concerned does not want his name removed, it will not be removed. This is as near perfect as we can get to guard against anyone maliciously talking the Chief Electoral Officer into believing a person's name should be struck off.

However, I am anxious that members should have an opportunity to see the amendment in print before they vote on it. I have conferred with the Clerk and it appears desirable we report progress and ask leave to sit again in order that the amendment might appear on the notice paper. When we have considered it tomorrow I could seek the leave of the House, when the report goes to the Speaker, to have the Bill recommitted for the purpose of dealing with clauses 8 and 11, and then get it out of the way tomorrow.

No killing hurry is involved, but the Chief Electoral Officer is held up with some administrative procedures, including printing, until we pass this Bill. However, a day or two does not matter very much, I am sure, so I will arrange for someone to report progress.

Mr. Graham: Will you have a further look at it?

Mr. COURT: Yes.

#### *Progress*

Progress reported and leave given to sit again, on motion by Mr. Rushton.

### **TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 11th October.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [10 p.m.]: As the Minister said, when introducing this Bill, it is a small amendment to the Town Planning and Development Act, and it is one which is most desirable because it

brings our legislation into line with what is in operation in other States. The amendment will allow a person who has a parcel of land to enter into negotiations with people before subdividing the land so that he may sell the land to them after the Town Planning Board has approved of the subdivision. This practice has been indulged in in the past, but recently the court held that such a transaction was illegal. It was felt necessary to amend the Act so that these transactions could take place.

It appears that an agreement entered into by a vendor and a purchaser must be approved by the Town Planning Board within three months of the agreement's coming into force, otherwise such agreement will be void. Once the agreement has been approved, it is valid for six months unless the vendor and the purchaser enter into some other arrangement. In that situation it could be for a longer period.

This amendment seems to me to be desirable and it will not affect our present Statutes. I understand it brings us into line with other States. It will help people both interstate and intrastate who have dealings in property and they will know what is required where subdivisions are about to take place. I think both parties to the transaction will be fully protected.

The amendment will prevent a person holding someone to an agreement where the Town Planning Board refuses permission for a subdivision to take place. The vendor will also have the knowledge that he is secure if he has had to have financial backing for the subdivision. All in all, it would appear to be a desirable amendment, and I support the proposition.

**MR. TOMS** (Bayswater) [10.4 p.m.]: I want to briefly add my support to this proposition. When I heard there was to be an amendment to the Town Planning and Development Act, I hoped it would be a much bigger one because I believe several desirable amendments could be made to it.

The member for Beeloo, and the Minister, have described the amendment very well. The amendment seeks to make legal a position which, under section 20 of the Act, would be legal. It will protect the rights of an individual who has entered into an agreement to purchase subdivided land and who then finds out that the Town Planning Board is not in agreement with the subdivision.

All subdivisions must be approved by the Town Planning Board before any agreements are legally binding. This amendment is being made because of a situation which arose from a court action, and I think it is a very desirable amendment. I support the Bill.

**MR. LEWIS** (Moore—Minister for Education) [10.5 p.m.]: I wish to thank the member for Beeloo and the member for Bayswater for their general support of this Bill. As I explained when introducing the Bill, this is only a small amendment introduced for the purpose of clearing up a doubt which did not exist until a Supreme Court case ruled that an agreement was invalid.

As the member for Beeloo has pointed out, the approval of the Town Planning Board to any proposed subdivision will be an essential part of all agreements between vendors and purchasers. Subject to that approval being obtained, and subject to other minor conditions, agreements will be valid and enforceable at law. I commend the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee*

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

Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.

Clause 3: Section 20B added—

**Mr. GUTHRIE**: I desire to point out to the Committee—in case there is any misunderstanding—that the proposed new section 20B of the Act does not completely cover all transactions which at the moment can be declared illegal under section 20 of the principal Act. Section 20 of the principal Act covers leases and options, as well as sales. This amendment will apply only to sales. I mention that, in case anybody has the idea that any agreement which can be declared illegal at the moment will be secure after the passing of this amendment.

It may be that at some future time the Bill will have to come back to Parliament on this aspect. This has been a problem, because very often in the case of the subdivision of, say, a half-acre block, it is usually a case of a man wanting to subdivide because of an offer to buy a certain portion of his land. He is therefore only interested in getting a subdivision through in regard to that particular sale. That man does not want to finish up with a subdivision if the sale does not go through.

The sale is the important thing. As I have said, leases and options will still be illegal if entered into before the Town Planning Board's approval has been obtained.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

### *Report*

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

## EXPLOSIVES AND DANGEROUS GOODS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 11th October.

**MR. MOIR** (Boulder-Eyre) [10.11 p.m.]: This legislation is intended to amend the Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act, 1961-1966. It follows on a Bill that was introduced into the Legislative Council by The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs for the purpose of preventing the sale of fireworks, and it met with the approval of both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. However, before the legislation was proclaimed, some doubts arose about certain of the provisions. On examination, it was found that it went further than The Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs intended and, indeed, much further than both Chambers had anticipated. It was found it would ban the use of rockets used as distress signals by boats and ships; the use of Very lights; and small types of crackers and that kind of thing which are used at parties, and which are quite harmless. As a result, this amending legislation has been brought forward for the purpose of rectifying some of the provisions which were included in the original Bill.

In addition, opportunity has been taken to incorporate a few amendments which, in my opinion, are very desirable in order to bring the whole of the legislation up to date and more in conformity with present-day usage and requirements.

As far as the part of the Bill which banned the sale of crackers is concerned, both Chambers have given their approval and, in addition, it has met with quite a lot of commendation from the general public. We are all well aware of the distressing accidents that happen to children through the indiscriminate use of fireworks. I personally consider that we have reached the stage where fireworks are something which we can do without.

The use of crackers as a type of explosive will still be permitted, but they will be very severely controlled. Other provisions of the parent Act have been amended and one includes the appointment of a deputy chief inspector of explosives. We should all agree that is a very necessary amendment. We should have such an officer when we remember the large increase in mining activity which has taken place in this State with the consequential big increase in the use of explosives. Explosives are always dangerous. They are generally used by competent hands, but sometimes they can fall into the hands of people who are not conversant with their use and, for this reason, some very stringent regulations have been laid down for the use of explosives under any circumstances at all.

We also know that large amounts of explosive are used in the new methods adopted in oil search; that is, in the geo-

physical methods that are used both on land and in the sea. Of course, this use has to be controlled. We have had the experience whereby some of these charges have not exploded when they should have and, instead, have drifted onto the shore. For this reason, there has to be very stringent provision laid down for the use and the operation of that type of explosive. Indeed, the provision must apply to any type of explosive at all.

Another provision of the amending Bill is to define the composition, the quality, and the character of explosives. This action is very necessary, too, because we find that there are components used now which we would never have dreamt could be used as explosives. In addition, these are used to a large extent. I refer to the use of ammonium nitrate, which, as we all know, is a fertiliser, but when mixed with fuel oil it becomes a very powerful explosive. I might mention that under the regulations which were brought down either last year or the year before, a requirement was that anybody who mixed ammonium nitrate with fuel oil with a view to using it as an explosive had to be licensed.

Quite a few complaints have been made to me by people who are engaged in the mining industry because of this requirement. I consider it is quite an imposition on the small mining man who has to pay a license fee for this purpose, and in my view the position should be looked at.

When this legislation is proclaimed, another provision will be that a permit will be required to purchase explosives. I could not be more in agreement with that provision. The people who complain about having to pay a small fee to have the right to mix ammonium nitrate and fuel oil to use as an explosive point out that anybody at all can purchase explosives—gelignite and similar substances—by simply going to the vendor and paying for it. That is rather an incredible state of affairs, but the amendment will now make provision that a permit will be required before anybody can purchase explosives of any description. I only hope there will not be any fee charged for these permits.

I am sure the vendors in mining areas will know a person who has a legitimate use for explosives. That person would probably be in possession of a miner's right, if he is a prospector; he may be a member of a syndicate which is working a small mine; or he may be working for a larger company. In the latter case, of course, he would have some authority from the company and I do not think it is necessary to impose a fee similar to the one that is now required of the man who mixes ammonium nitrate with fuel oil. As a matter of fact, I sincerely hope that charge will be dropped, because, in my opinion, it is an imposition on the person who is engaged in the mining industry.

It is quite right that every care must be taken in regard to whom explosives are sold. I know that there are others, apart from those in the mining industry, who use explosives. Farmers, for example, use them to clear the land, but that is an aspect which can easily be policed to ensure that safeguards are taken.

The Bill also contains a provision empowering the Chief Inspector of Explosives to define standards for explosives and their constituents. This is most necessary. On looking through the Bill it would appear its provisions are extremely elastic which, in my opinion, is very wise. Changes have been made in the constituents of explosives which render it necessary for the wording of the Bill to be as elastic as possible, because those administering the legislation may find it difficult to convey its meaning to others and as a result may seek further amendments to the Act so that the legislation may be clarified. The officers in charge of its administration will be responsible people and I do not think they would do anything to which objection could be taken.

The Bill also contains a provision relating to the containers that are used for explosives and the method of their storage. Certain conditions are prescribed at present, of course, but they are applied to those places in the established mines where there are powder magazines which have to meet certain standards of safety. It is very hard to fix a hard and fast rule when explosives are carried around in those places where the operations that are being carried out are only temporary. In such instances the users of explosives should not be put to the expense of building an elaborate powder magazine dug into the side of a hill and covered with a certain thickness of protective material. It is well known that explosives can be carried in containers of an approved design which are quite safe.

This measure does not seem to interfere in any way with the amending Bill introduced by Mr. Stubbs in another place. On reading the *Hansard* report of the speech made by the Minister for Mines I noticed that the amendments in the Bill introduced by Mr. Stubbs will be proclaimed at the same time as the amendments in this Bill and that we can look forward to the provisions being in operation in the near future. I commend the Bill to the House and support the second reading.

**MR. BRADY** (Swan) [10.24 p.m.]: One aspect relating to the use of explosives has not been mentioned in the Bill, but it is of great concern to people living close to quarries. They are suffering the effects of the explosives that are being used at these quarries. The member who has just resumed his seat has covered the provisions in the Bill fairly extensively. I support the measure but I wish to point out to the Minister that recently I received complaints from people who live five or six

miles from a quarry which is conducting blasting operations with the use of explosives. These people complain that the blasting is damaging their houses.

**The SPEAKER:** To which part of the Bill are you referring?

**Mr. BRADY:** I am referring to the use of explosives and the Bill deals with the sale and use of explosives. I am trying to tell the Minister that there is a section in the Act which provides for an application to be made for a license to use explosives, but the Minister may refuse to grant such a license in the interests of public safety.

**The SPEAKER:** Is that section being amended by the Bill?

**Mr. Bovell:** No.

**Mr. BRADY:** I thank the Minister for Lands for helping me in this matter. I am trying to do something for the electors in my district.

**The SPEAKER:** You have to confine your remarks to the Bill. You cannot refer to the whole Act.

**Mr. BRADY:** The question of blasting is dealt with in section 34. Am I permitted to deal with the use of explosives for blasting, which is referred to in this section, or shall I resume my seat?

**The SPEAKER:** You can refer to it within the context of section 34.

**Mr. BRADY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the word "blasting" is used I wish to point out that members of the general public are being greatly inconvenienced by the use of explosives for blasting. I do not know what type of explosive is being used; whether it is a new type as mentioned by the member who has just resumed his seat, or the old type. The fact remains that damage is being done to residences in the vicinity of a quarry in my district, and as recently as 6.15 p.m. yesterday a violent eruption was heard in my home as a result of blasting taking place seven or eight miles away.

The Minister should confer with the Chief Inspector of Explosives to see if something can be done about the effect of explosives being used in the metropolitan area. I support the amendments contained in the Bill. I believe they are necessary and in the best interests of the general public.

**MR. DAVIES** (Victoria Park) [10.28 p.m.]: When this legislation was forecast last year there were all kinds of fears as to the probable public outcry against Parliament's taking away the playthings of the children in the community. It was feared there might be some reaction other than we have received; because it is quite apparent the public has accepted this legislation very well and recognises that, on the whole, it is necessary.

I know there have been representations from the suppliers that the Government should compensate them for the loss of

business suffered following the amendments introduced last year in another place seeking to prevent the sale of fireworks in this State. I think the Government has been very generous in its approach to the problem and the Minister, when introducing the Bill, said the Government would take action to see that retailers were properly compensated and would also take steps to ensure that they would not profit as a result of the Government's consideration.

This is the aspect of the matter to which I want to refer. I seem to recall that only recently I saw a newspaper report that the sale of fireworks has dropped alarmingly with the result that the suppliers of fireworks will have large stocks left on their hands, and by the time the next Guy Fawkes day arrives they will not be permitted to sell these fireworks. These people may suggest that because the Bill was not proclaimed they considered it necessary to import further large stocks of fireworks to meet the anticipated demand, and because Parliament indicated it would compensate them for any loss sustained they felt they were quite within their rights in importing further stocks.

The Government must watch the position very carefully to ensure that these suppliers do not profit from the action of the Government, because it could quite easily say there was no need for suppliers to import further stocks of fireworks—if indeed they have done so—and that they could have anticipated the demand for fireworks would drop, as it has dropped, at this time of the year.

I think it was the Minister for Industrial Development who tonight said that we were always tilting at windmills, particularly in regard to our reactions to legislation which happens to be before us. It would seem that this is one windmill that has got away from the Government, because there now appears to be no danger.

I do ask the Government to give very serious consideration before compensating the importers and suppliers of fireworks. I do not think the Government has any responsibility to compensate these people. If this were done, other sections of the community who might be put to expense as a result of legislation passed by Parliament might also seek compensation. To the best of my knowledge, in the last five years I have not known of anyone being compensated in the manner contemplated by the Government in this instance, particularly when they have had sufficient warning that action would eventually be taken.

**MR. BOVELL** (Vasse—Minister for Lands) [10.31 p.m.]: I thank members for their comments and their contributions to this debate. The member for Boulder-Eyre referred to the imposition of a fee

for permits that might be issued, and the member for Swan talked about the inconvenience suffered as a result of blasting operations in the quarries. I know the Minister for Mines—who, of course, is in another place—will give due thought to the points that have been raised.

In referring to the comments made by the member for Victoria Park, I did say when introducing the Bill that the Government would look into the question of compensation. This, of course, is again a matter for the Minister for Mines to deal with, and I have no doubt he will give consideration to the remarks made by the member for Victoria Park.

I do think, however, that where stocks have been purchased in good faith, it is only fair that some consideration should be given to compensation on a reasonable basis. Finally, I would say to the member for Victoria Park that no matter what comments were made when the original Bill was introduced by Mr. Stubbs in another place, all's well that ends well; and it would seem in this case that all will end well.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

*House adjourned at 10.36 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 18th October, 1967

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

### QUESTIONS (9): ON NOTICE

#### EDUCATION

##### *School of the Air*

1. The Hon. E. M. HEENAN asked the Minister for Mines:
  - (1) Is the scheme of education known as "School of the Air" functioning satisfactorily?
  - (2) Will the Minister give a brief outline as to the purpose and achievements of the scheme?
  - (3) Is it possible that the scheme could be improved and extended along lines which were recently submitted to the Director of Education by the Meekatharra Parents and Citizens' Association?