

far greater extent than is being done at the moment.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Does this include canned fish and everything else?

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: It includes both frozen and canned fish, and the figure I quoted was f.o.b. port of shipment. The total figure covers all imports relating to canned fish, fish in brine, salted fish, frozen fish, and all others. This is something to which we should give a great deal more consideration. The industry should be developed to a far greater extent than is the case at the moment.

I was rather interested to hear the remarks of somebody who was competent to pass an opinion, particularly when he talked about our carrying out our fishing activities from the kitchen door. I feel there is a good opportunity going begging for some enterprising body of people to establish a trawling industry somewhere along the south coast. I know this was attempted in 1949, and I am also aware of the fact that the State Government was considerably embarrassed over that deal. There were also a few private individuals who suffered as a result of the failure of that project. But because that venture failed I am not prepared to concede that other similar ventures would also fail, particularly if they were carried out by men with business acumen.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That venture did not fail basically through lack of fish.

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON: No, it did not, but a survey proved conclusively that the fish are there in great numbers. The report I have here was compiled by a master (Mr. J. B. Duthie) who was later in charge of one of the fishing trawlers. The report is of tremendous interest and contains much valuable information in regard to his observations and examinations. The fish are in great numbers on the edge of the continental shelf at the eastern end of the bight, but we were hopeful they would be found in abundance in close proximity to the point from which they were operating. However, according to this report, such was not the case.

If any company sees fit to move into this field, every consideration and encouragement should be given it by the Department of Industrial Development. We know that Japanese and Russian ships are trawling off our coast, so the operation must be profitable; and if it is profitable for them it should be equally so to any efficient company that is prepared to operate in this industry.

Of course, modern ships, modern equipment, and refrigeration would be needed; and this was lacking in the 1949 venture to which I have referred. That venture was condemned to failure before it started. At the time this venture was proposed and commenced to get under way, much

apathy was shown and disparaging remarks were made by people who should have known better—people who should have encouraged an industry of this kind. We should exploit this industry to a greater extent than we are doing at the present time.

Before I conclude I wish to refer briefly to another item. I would like to see the Forests Department conduct a survey into the possibility of establishing pine plantations on the Crown lands at Albany, and within the Denmark area. The department must have information available to it which we have not; and no doubt an investigation and survey along those lines would indicate the possibilities of the areas to which I have referred. It is possible to see the development that has taken place in afforestation when one looks at the 1964 report of the Forests Department. The department established 14,560 acres of *pinus radiata*, and 23,194 acres of *pinus pinaster*.

If the survey I have referred to were carried out, and afforestation could take place in the Albany and Denmark areas, it would be beneficial, not only from the point of view of our softwood timber requirements, but it would also foster the paper pulp industry which, in time—these things take quite a lot of time—would be to the advantage of Western Australia. Whether this possibility exists, I do not know, but I would appreciate the co-operation and advice of the Forests Department along these lines. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines).

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (North Metropolitan—Minister for Mines) [8.49 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 23rd August.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 8.50 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 17th August, 1966

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**ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE:  
SPECIAL**

ASSEMBLY, WEDNESDAY, the 17th AUGUST—continued.

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

## SUPPLY BILL

### Assent

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

## QUESTIONS (21): ON NOTICE

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

#### Connections at Weekends: Refusal

- Mr. DUNN asked the Minister for Electricity:

What are the reasons why the department will not connect electric power to premises on a Saturday or Sunday?

Mr. NALDER replied:

It would be too costly to keep office staff, meter fixers, mains gangs, and other employees standing by at penalty rates to provide the service suggested.

## DAIRYING INDUSTRY

### Acetonaemia: Incidence and Prevention

- Mr. RUNCIMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has there been any notable increase in the incidence of acetonaemia in dairy herds in Western Australia?
- (2) How seriously does the department regard this disease?
- (3) What steps are being taken in regard to prevention and cure?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) It is not known if there has been any notable increase in acetonaemia in dairy herds as no systematic investigation has been made. It is very seasonal in incidence and closely related to feed conditions, which vary from year to year.
- (2) Limited evidence available suggests that the disease is a real cause of loss to the industry in this State.
- (3) The disease is world wide in incidence and much research has been carried out concerning its nature and treatment. An investigation is being planned with the initial objective to determine the economic importance of the disease in Western Australia and the effectiveness of existing preventive and treatment procedures. Advice to farmers is fully available through extension officers, bulletins, and radio broadcasts.

## EQUAL PAY FOR THE SEXES

### Implementation by the Government

- Mr. FLETCHER asked the Premier:

- (1) Relevant to *The West Australian* of the 10th February, 1966, leading article heading that Mr. Brand has dodged the equal pay issue and in view of same Press comment that the industrial commission considers that authority not competent to grant equality of pay for women—

- (a) does he intend to grant like the South Australian Labor Government (*The West Australian*, 30/6/1966) equal pay by administrative action to female Government employees this financial year; or
- (b) next financial year?

- (2) Alternatively, is legislative action likely prior to the next State election to give the arbitration commission authority to grant equal pay?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) (a) and (b) The statement appearing in *The West Australian* on the 9th February, 1966, which apparently prompted the leading article referred to, defines the Government's views in regard to "equal pay".
- (2) Answered by (1).

## CARDIAC IMPLANTABLE PACEMAKERS

### *Number Imported*

4. Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Is he aware that—
- (a) More than eight commercial organisations in four countries are producing cardiac pacemakers;
- (b) The gross production of the two companies producing the pacemakers used by Royal Perth Hospital exceeds 11,000 units representing \$7.8 million;
- (c) The cost of components in the pacemaker type and models used by Royal Perth Hospital does not exceed \$48 per pacemaker;
- (d) The current cost of pacemakers to Royal Perth Hospital is \$430 and \$868 per unit;
- (e) There is no commercial manufacturer for cardiac pacemakers in Australia?
- (2) As the report of the usage of cardiac pacemakers by the National Heart Foundation for the period 1961-1964 is compiled only on data for which adequate follow-up information was available and does not reflect the total usage of cardiac pacemakers in Australia, will he undertake to establish the total importation of cardiac pacemakers into Australia and provide an assessment as to the cost involved for the period 1961-65?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) (a) I am aware that there are a number of companies domiciled in various countries producing cardiac pacemakers. I do not know the exact number of companies or their location.
- (b) I do not know the total number of units produced by the

companies manufacturing the pacemakers used at Royal Perth Hospital but it is assumed the number would be considerable if their units have international clinical acceptance.

- (c) A current assessment of the value of components used in a pacemaker is not available. In 1963 the value of the components then used was assessed and it was estimated that their value was in excess of \$100.

It is pointed out that the components would be a very small proportion of the cost involved in the production of a pacemaker. Labour, overheads, and developmental costs, would all be considerable and be reflected substantially in the market price of this medical apparatus.

- (d) The cost of pacemakers to the Royal Perth Hospital at the present time ranges from \$480 to \$868 per unit.

(e) Yes.

- (2) A survey conducted by the National Heart Foundation on the usage of cardiac pacemakers revealed that from April, 1961 until the first few months of 1965, 191 implantations were made in Australia.

This is presumably the total usage of cardiac pacemakers during that period in Australia.

Detailed analysis was made of 181 of these implantations as adequate follow-up data was available for this number only.

I will endeavour to obtain some later information which is not available locally.

## STATE SUPERANNUATION FUND

### *Legislation to Increase Pension Rates*

5. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation during the current session of Parliament to increase the smaller rates of pension now being paid under the State superannuation fund?
- (2) If so, is such legislation likely to be introduced in the near future?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) and (2) Consideration is being given to pension rates along with other budgetary proposals for this year and the Government's intentions will be announced when the Budget is brought down.

6. to 9. *These questions were postponed.*

## RAILWAYS

*New Station at Midland: Completion, and Letting of Kiosks*

10. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) When is it expected the proposed new station at Midland will be completed?
- (2) Have tenders or any arrangements been made for the hiring of kiosks on the new station?
- (3) If the answer is "No," when will tenders or other arrangements for hiring be made?
- (4) What type of kiosks will be available for public patronage?

*Delay in New Service to Perth*

- (5) What is the cause of the hold-up in opening the new service to Perth, i.e., "Kiss and Ride" service?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Commencement of work on the proposed station is dependent on re-examination of the requirements of the standard gauge project in the Midland area.
- (2) No.
- (3) Answered by (1).
- (4) No firm decision has been made in this regard.
- (5) Inauguration of the service is planned to coincide with the opening of the new terminal. Existing facilities at Midland are inadequate for the proposed train and bus services.

## TOTALISATOR AGENCY BOARD

*Betting Tickets: Methods of Payment and Cancellation*

11. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has the T.A.B. departed from its general practice which, according to information given by him to the Legislative Assembly on the 17th November last year, was to pay out according to the ticket presented?
- (2) Does the T.A.B. keep a record of each instance where payment on a winning ticket is refused on presentation?
- (3) When wrong tickets are issued from machines and bettors have refused acceptance, what procedure is standard practice if such tickets, because of inadvertence, are not cancelled prior to the running of the race for which the tickets were issued?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No; but if a specific case could be cited it is possible that the

board would be able to trace some record thereof.

- (3) The person in charge of the totalisator agency is required to pay both the amount of the bet and the tax thereon to the board, but is not permitted to pay such bet as a winning bet.

12. *This question was postponed.*

## POISON 1080

*Chemical Analysis*

13. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

In respect of 1080 poison, what are—

- (a) the chemicals used in its manufacture; and
- (b) its chemical analysis?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (a) Chemicals used in manufacture: Not known, but could be methyl chloroacetate and potassium fluoride, or methyl fluoroacetate and sodium hydroxide.
- (b) Chemical analysis:
  - (i) The chemical formula is  $\text{FCH}_2\text{COONa}$ .
  - (ii) The method of detection, e.g. for residues, is given in the *Official Methods of Analysis of the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists*, 10th Edition 1965, Items 24.153—24.161, pp. 399-402.
  - (iii) Method of analysis for purity is given in the World Health Organisation Publication, *Specifications for Pesticides*, (2nd Edition 1961) WHO/SRT/5 pp. 233-9.

## WATER SUPPLIES

*Perth: Bores, and Analysis of Water*

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

- (1) How many bores are used in connection with Perth water supply?
- (2) What is the full analysis of water produced by these bores?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Twelve. Nine in a normal summer and an additional three in an exceptionally hot summer.
- (2) An analysis of water from the Mounts Bay road bore, No. 2, which is reasonably representative of that normally used in summer time, is—

Mr. W. Hegney: Leave the fluoride out.

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: The fluoride is in.

Mr. Bickerton: What are you grizzling about?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: There is not enough of it. The table is as follows:—

Mineral Matter—Parts per Million.	
Manganese, Mn.—less than 0.02.	
Calcium, Ca—13.	
Magnesium, Mg—11.	
Sodium, Na—402.	
Potassium, K—14.	
Bicarbonate, $\text{HCO}_3$ —213.	
Carbonate, $\text{CO}_3$ —Nil.	
Sulphate, $\text{SO}_4$ —42.	
Chloride, $\text{Cl}$ —533.	
Nitrate, $\text{NO}_3$ —less than 1.	
Silica, $\text{SiO}_2$ —14.	
Iron, Fe—0.1.	
Aluminium, Al—2.	
Fluoride, F—0.4.	

Mr. Cornell: No water at all!

### WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY

#### *Writing Down of Stock, and Timber Rights*

15. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Have stocks of pig iron at the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry been written down during the last twelve months to below cost and therefore below market value?
- (2) If not, have they been written down at all and, if so, to what extent?
- (3) Has the substantial value of land purchased on behalf of the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry for removal of timber therefrom been taken into the accounts of the industry?
- (4) If the answer to any of the foregoing questions is "Yes", was any disapproval expressed from any quarter?
- (5) If so, by whom?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) No.  
At the present time I am considering a proposal to write down the value of 54 tons of pig iron from its book value to \$20 per ton. This particular batch of pig iron is high in sulphur content, and is unsaleable in its present form. It is proposed that it be progressively remelted.

(2) See answer to (1).

(3) Yes.

(4) and (5) See footnote.

Note: Reference (4) and (5).

As at the 30th June, 1965, stocks were revalued at the suggestion of the management to more realistic commercial values. Previously stocks of pig iron were taken into

account at cost of production, which in some cases was above market value.

The board objected to the amount of writing down proposed.

Reference was made to stock revaluation adjustments when the Wundowie Bill was before Parliament last session.

### PRIMARY SCHOOLS: FENCING

#### *Departmental Policy*

16. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does his department's policy in any way allow for the erecting of fences around primary schools?

#### *Carnarvon and Exmouth*

- (2) If "Yes", will he give early and favourable consideration to—

- (a) the completion of fencing the primary school grounds at Carnarvon; and
- (b) the fencing of the school grounds at Exmouth?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) Fencing of schools is provided where there is a definite traffic hazard or danger from straying stock.
- (2) (a) and (b) Consideration has been given to fencing both of these schools but it has been decided that it is not necessary.

### EGGS AND BUTTER

#### *Production Costs, and Sales*

17. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Concerning eggs and butter—

- (1) What quantity is produced in Western Australia and Australia?
- (2) At what price?
- (3) What quantity is sold—  
(a) overseas;  
(b) interstate?
- (4) At what price?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Quantity produced:

	Western Eggs m. doz.	Australia Butter tons	Australia Eggs m. doz.	Australia Butter tons
1962-63	7.8	6,965	110.4	201,272
1963-64	8.3	6,060	111.2	202,640
1964-65	9.6	7,702	124.1	203,465

- (2) Price:

	Western Eggs* Cents/doz.	Australia Butter† Cents/lb.	Australia Eggs* Cents/doz.	Australia Butter† Cents/lb.
1962-63	38	35.7	32	35.7
1963-64	38	38.0	37	38.0
1964-65	33	36.0	33	36.0
1965-66	40	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

\* Net to producers.

† Ex factory. Equalised throughout Australia

## (3) Quantity sold by Western Australia:

		Eggs doz.	Butter lb.
1962-63	Overseas	1,348,788	123,400
	Interstate	37,200	420,576
1963-64	Overseas	933,472	76,666
	Interstate	20,700	221,110
1964-65	Overseas	1,062,621	76,986
	Interstate	17,400	239,494

## (4) Export price for Western Australian sales:

		Eggs Cents/doz.†	Butter Cents/lb.†
1962-63	Overseas	33	27
	Interstate	58	46
1963-64	Overseas	38	28
	Interstate	56	47
1964-65	Overseas	30	26
	Interstate	52	48

† F.O.B. or on rail.

## MILK-

*Production, and Comparison of Prices*

## 18. Mr. GAYFER asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) What quantity of milk was produced in Western Australia over the past three years?
- (2) Is the Western Australian price of milk to the consumer comparable with the Eastern States?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Total production of milk for all purposes:  
1963-64—57,162,000 gallons.  
1964-65—61,883,000 gallons.  
1965-66—61,799,000 gallons.
- (2) The price to the consumer for one-pint bottles of milk in the various States is as follows:—  
Western Australia—10 cents.  
New South Wales—11 cents.  
Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and Tasmania—9 cents.

## WUNDOWIE CHARCOAL IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY

*Australian National Industries: Agreement for Part Disposal*

## 19. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

- (1) Was the Board of Management of the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry in the confidence of the Government in its negotiations with representatives of Australian National Industries?
- (2) Was the board asked for its views on the proposed agreement with A.N.I. before the agreement was finalised?
- (3) What concessions does the agreement give to the company in relation to—  
(a) freight rates;  
(b) write-down of capital?
- (4) What is the amount of management fee now being paid or to be paid per month by the Government to the company for managing the Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry at Wundowie?

- (5) Is the same management personnel as existed prior to the agreement being made with A.N.I. still carrying out the managerial and supervisory operations covering the industry at Wundowie?
- (6) What price is to be charged to the company for hot metal to be supplied by the Wundowie Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry to the company for use in the company's foundry?
- (7) When is a copy of the agreement as made between the Government and A.N.I. to be placed before Parliament and thereby made public?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) Yes.  
The Minister for Industrial Development had discussions with the board of management regarding the A.N.I. proposal, prior to the agreement between the Government and the company being finalised and signed.
- (2) The board members had ample opportunity to comment on A.N.I.'s proposal during the discussions referred to in the answer to (1) and prior to finality and signing.
- (3) (a) and (b) None to the company, but if this question refers to the Wundowie industry as distinct from the private company, then the answers are—  
(a) None;  
(b) \$2,207,102.  
The need for this write-down was explained to Parliament last session.
- (4) \$1,250.
- (5) Yes, with additional assistance on duties related to finance. A.N.I. also provide additional top level advice and supervision.
- (6) (a) Castings for sale locally, at the price per ton of industry pig iron to standard specification delivered Perth less cost of cartage and pigging. This results in a price, at the present time, of \$48 per ton.  
(b) For castings for sale outside the State, a basic price of \$38 per ton plus 25 per cent. of the foundry profit before tax.  
(Note—In the agreement the basic price is \$34 per ton but this is subject to any increase or decrease in the price of B.H.P. pig iron, which has recently increased by \$4 per ton.)
- (7) When the ratifying Bill is introduced in the near future.

# **MOTOR VEHICLE (THIRD PARTY INSURANCE) TRUST**

## *Premiums Committee: Meetings and Membership*

20. Mr. DURACK asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Has the committee known as the Premiums Committee met since its last report was laid before Parliament on the 12th November, 1963?
- (2) If "Yes"—
  - (a) how often has it met;
  - (b) what was the purpose and result of its deliberations?
- (3) If "No" to (1), why has no meeting been held?
- (4) Who were the "participating approved insurers" in the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust on the 30th June, 1959?
- (5) What participating approved insurers have withdrawn from the trust since that date?
- (6) What participating approved insurers have transferred their interest in the fund and who are the transferee insurers in each case?
- (7) Have any insurers been admitted to the trust since the said date otherwise than by transfer?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) On the 10th May, 1966, and the 20th July, 1966.  
 (b) The purpose of the meetings was to consider a report of the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust showing the financial position as at the 31st December, 1965, compared with that envisaged by the committee in 1963. Investigations are continuing and the committee will meet again when the accounts of the trust, as at the 30th June, 1966, are available.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Participating approved insurers as at the 30th June, 1959:  
 Alliance Assurance Co. Ltd.  
 Atlas Assurance Co. Ltd.  
 Australian Alliance Assurance Co.  
 Bankers' and Traders' Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 British Traders' Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Caledonian Insurance Company.  
 Century Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Chamber of Manufactures Ltd.  
 Colonial Mutual Fire Insurance Co. Ltd.

Commercial Union Assurance Co. Ltd. (name now changed to Commercial Union Assurance Co. of Australia Limited.)  
 Cornhill Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Edward Lumley & Sons (W.A.) Pty. Ltd.  
 Employers' Liability Assurance Corp. Ltd.  
 Guardian Assurance Co. Ltd.  
 Hartford Fire Insurance Company.  
 Harvey Trinder (Aust.) Pty. Ltd. (name now changed to Forsaith, Bucknell & Liggins (W.A.) Pty. Ltd.)  
 Insurance Office of Australia Ltd.  
 Lancashire Insurance Company.  
 Legal & General Assurance Society Ltd.  
 Liverpool & London & Globe Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 London & Lancashire Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Mercantile Mutual Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 National Insurance Company of New Zealand Ltd.  
 New Zealand Accident Insurance Company.  
 New Zealand Insurance Company Limited.  
 (The above two companies have since merged to New Zealand Insurance Company Limited.)  
 North British & Mercantile Insurance Company Limited (name now changed to North British & Mercantile Insurance Company of Australia Limited.)  
 Northern Assurance Company Limited.  
 Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society Limited.  
 Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation Limited (name now changed to Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation of Australia Limited.)  
 Palatine Insurance Company Limited (name now changed to Palatine Insurance Company of Australia Limited.)  
 Pearl Assurance Company Limited.  
 Perpetual General Insurance & Guarantee Company Limited (name now changed to City Mutual General Insurance Limited).  
 Phoenix Assurance Company Limited.  
 Provincial Insurance Company Limited.  
 Queensland Insurance Company Limited.

Royal Exchange Assurance of London.  
 Royal Insurance Company Limited.  
 Scottish Insurance Corporation Ltd.  
 Scottish Union & National Insurance Company.  
 Sea Insurance Company Limited.  
 South British Insurance Company Ltd.  
 Southern Union Insurance Company of Australia Limited.  
 Standard Insurance Company Limited.  
 State Government Insurance Office.  
 Steeves Agnew & Company (W.A.) Pty. Ltd.  
 Sun Insurance Office Limited.  
 Union Assurance Society Limited (name now changed to Union Assurance Society of Australia Limited.)  
 United Insurance Company Limited.  
 Victoria Insurance Company Limited.  
 Western Assurance Company.  
 W.A. Insurance Company Limited.  
 Westralian Farmers Co-operative Limited.  
 Yorkshire Insurance Company Limited.

(5) Withdrawals from the 30th June, 1959:

South British Insurance Co. Ltd.—withdrew as at the 30th June, 1959.  
 West Australian Insurance Company.  
 Standard Insurance Company Limited.  
 Hartford Fire Insurance Company.  
 National Insurance of New Zealand.  
 Cornhill Insurance Company.  
 Atlas Assurance Company Limited.  
 Australian and Eastern Insurance Company Limited.  
 Pacific Insurance Company Limited.  
 Perpetual General Insurance and Guarantee Company Limited.  
 Royal Exchange of London.  
 United Insurance Company Limited.  
 The Switzerland General Insurance Company has given notice of intention to withdraw as from the 30th June, 1967.

(6) Since the passing of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act (No. 2 of 1963), i.e., No. 71 of 1963, Messrs. Edward Lumley & Sons have transferred a portion of their percentage interest in the trust. The transferees, as a result, are as follows:

Ajax Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Associated General Contractors Insurance Company Ltd.  
 Australian and International Insurances Ltd.  
 Bell Insurance Co. Pty. Ltd.  
 Australian and Eastern Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Consolidated Insurances of Australia Ltd.  
 London Assurance.  
 Pacific Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Prudential Assurance Company Limited.  
 R.A.C. Insurance Pty. Ltd.  
 South Australian Insurance Company Ltd.  
 Switzerland General Insurance Company Ltd.  
 T. & G. Fire & General Insurance Company Ltd.  
 Vanguard Insurance Company Limited.  
 Western Australian Insurance Co. (Canberra) Ltd.

(7) New participants could only be admitted to the trust following the passing of the Motor Vehicle (Third Party Insurance) Act, (No. 2 of 1963), i.e., No. 71 of 1963. As from the 1st July, 1964, the following companies have become participants:

Ajax Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Associated General Contractors Insurance Company Limited.  
 Australian and International Insurances Ltd.  
 Australian and Eastern Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Bell Insurance Co. Pty. Ltd.  
 Consolidated Insurances of Australia Ltd.  
 London Assurance.  
 Pacific Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Prudential Assurance Company Ltd.  
 R.A.C. Insurance Pty. Ltd.  
 South Australian Insurance Coy. Ltd.  
 Switzerland General Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 T. & G. Fire & General Insurance Co. Ltd.  
 Vanguard Insurance Company Limited.  
 Western Australian Insurance Company (Canberra) Ltd.  
 Northumberland Insurance Co.  
 Transport & General Insurance Co.



**WATER SUPPLIES***Geraldton: Completion of Allanooka Main*

21. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Is he aware that owing to the light winter rains, resulting in practically no run-off of water in the Wicherina reservoir catchment area, Geraldton could be facing an acute shortage of domestic water in the summer period?
- (2) If so, will he take the necessary action to have the proposed water main from the Allanooka supply completed to the Geraldton reservoirs before the summer commences?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) There has been no run-off into the Wicherina reservoir this winter. However, there is sufficient underground water available to compensate for this and only minor restrictions, if any, are envisaged during the coming summer.
- (2) The necessary finance and materials are not available to complete the Allanooka scheme prior to the planned completion date of December, 1967.

**QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE****MITCHELL FREEWAY**

*Open-cut and Tunnel: Comparative Costs*

Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:

Will he table tomorrow all relevant papers dealing with the facts and figures in connection with the costs of an open-cut excavation as opposed to a tunnel at that portion of the Freeway opposite Parliament House?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

There are no detailed figures drawn up in regard to the cost of developing, by tunnelling, the first phase of the Mitchell Freeway. The figures I gave were given to the Australian Labor Parliamentary Branch through its secretary; and I gave an approximate figure which tried roughly to estimate what the cost of tunnelling might be.

Mr. Bickerton: In other words, you do not know which would be the cheaper?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON: Mr. Speaker, as the honourable member knows, this is quite ridiculous and I do not think it bears answering.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: EIGHTH DAY***Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 16th August, on the following motion by Mr. W. A. Manning:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

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

MR. MAY (Collie) [4.48 p.m.]: Having been associated with the senior officers of Parliament for the past 20 years, I feel I should take this opportunity to express my congratulations to them on the higher appointments they have received during this present session of Parliament. I would also like to say that I appreciate very much the help and assistance they have given me over the past 20 years in my position in this Parliament as a member for Collie.

Referring to the Barracks Archway, over which there has been so much said for and against, it occurred to me as I came over the Narrows Bridge and saw all the paraphernalia at the southern end of the bridge that it would not be a bad idea if the archway were taken to where the Old Mill is situated. I am sure the member for South Perth would appreciate it.

A great deal has been said in regard to two sessions of Parliament. I believe two sessions of Parliament would be appreciated, if the Government saw fit to introduce them. I suggest that March, April, and May would be the appropriate months for the first session, and that September, October, and November would be the months for the second session.

I do not know, but I feel sure that members will agree with me that when we leave Parliament House late at night or early in the morning, the weather sometimes is not conducive to the best of good health. We leave this building with its certain amount of warmth and we go out into the cold, collect our cars, and away we go. From that point of view alone, it would be beneficial to the members of Parliament if we were to have two sessions each year.

I want to say a few words about the Forests Department and the disability it brings to the Collie electorate.

Mr. Bovell: What about the advantages?

Mr. MAY: I would be happy to enumerate them if there were any.

Mr. Bovell: Do you know that the timber industry is much more important to Western Australia than the coal industry?

Mr. MAY: The Minister would not be game to come outside and say that.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not think I can allow challenges to be made in this House. The Minister is completely disorderly by interjecting.

Mr. MAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I appreciate that. The Forests Department takes up 80 per cent. of the Collie electorate and, as a consequence, the people of Collie are rated to the maximum to help make up the shortage which should be met by the Forests Department. The Forests Department pays no rates or subsidies. I would say to the Minister who recently interjected that if the Forests Department is such an asset to the State, I do not see any earthly reason why it should not pay some compensation to the electorate of Collie to make up for the rates which it does not pay.

I will read an extract from the *Daily News* of the 4th August. It is as follows:—

Local authorities will meet in Bridgetown on September 10 to discuss loss of revenue to councils with big areas of unratable forest land.

Two delegates from each of 49 councils from Gingin to Albany will be invited to the meeting.

Bridgetown Shire Clerk E. C. Molyneux said today that invitations would go to all authorities affected by forestry or pine plantations.

I think the Minister for Forests should have a good look at that. To continue the article—

"Councils we may have omitted in compiling the list will also be welcome," he said.

The meeting is expected to prepare a case for financial help from the State Government.

It will follow a meeting last month of delegates from seven South-West councils on proposals to protect councils with unratable forest reserves.

That meeting was told State forests made up a big part of some municipalities, that councils would not be in financial difficulties if State forests were ratable.

It is anticipated there will be 49 councils from throughout the State represented at the conference, and I think it is a matter to which the Government should give serious consideration. One can only get away with this sort of thing for a certain time and if the Government continues to force shire councils and municipalities to rate to the maximum, in order to make up for what should be met by the Forests Department, I think there will be some trouble in the months ahead.

The question of water rates also crops up, and this reference will apply to the old cry, "Go to the country young man."

I received from the President of the Pensioners' League in Collie a letter which reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,

As a result of taxation department revaluations water rates in the residential areas of Collie have been increased by 25 per cent. and more.

This savage increase has hit Collie pensioners who own their own homes. Are there no steps that can be taken to alleviate the lot of local pensioners? The cost of living has gone up by more than two dollars a week. Soon the Shire Council will be issuing their rate notices. Are these to be based, like the water rates, on a 25 per cent. increase?

You will be interested in this, Mr. Speaker. To continue—

The Taxation department has re-valued residential properties at Donnybrook, the increase being about 13 per cent. Why should Collie valuations be increased twice as high as Donnybrook?

Why have the rates at Collie been increased twice as much as those at Donnybrook?

Mr. Hawke: That is a complicated question.

Mr. MAY: Mr. Speaker has probably got the answer; I hope he has. A property at 132 Wittenoom Street, Collie, was rated last year at \$32.30. This year, the same property—which is a very old wooden building—has gone up to \$58.80. That gives some idea of what is happening to the people who do go to the country to help develop this State. Have members ever heard of anything so silly? I can quote the case of a property in South Perth which is six times the value of the one in Collie, where the water rate is \$48.76. I cannot see where there is any value in the term "Go to the country young man to make a living."

I think it is terrible to think we are calling on people to pay such steep increases. Why is it? Why should it be so? If any steep increases are to be made in water rates, they should be made in the metropolitan area, where a fair percentage of the people have no intention of going to the country. Why should we penalise those people who do go to the country? God knows what the shire council rates will be!

Another problem which is causing some concern in Collie is the catchment area for Wellington Dam. Collie itself does not gain one iota from Wellington Dam. The dam is there for the privilege of the people in the wheatbelt and for irrigating properties in the south-west. Yet as a result of the catchment area and the dam the people in the Collie electorate are not able to obtain one foot of land. We cannot go on

penalising people like that. First it is the Forests Department; and now it is the catchment area. I do not know what the next will be, but somebody has to do something about these things.

There was some talk recently about the cost of fertiliser going up and there was an immediate outcry from the farmers for an increase in the subsidy on super. I do not blame them, but I do not see why one section of the community should be spoon-fed while others are penalised to the extent I have just mentioned.

The Government, or at least some members of it, must give this matter further consideration. Time and again in this Chamber we have heard of what the Forests Department is doing, particularly to the people in the south-west. But nobody ever seems to take any notice of it. Yet the Minister tells me that what the department is doing will prove to be of benefit to the people of the State. That is probably so, but why should something which will be of benefit to the State be allowed to cause so much difficulty for the people in the area concerned? The Government cannot have it both ways.

I agree that the Forests Department does a good job, and I agree also that when the Forests Department takes over land on which there is no timber it prevents that land from being allocated by the Lands Department. Not a skerrick of land is available in the Collie district for that very reason, and it is a continual curse so far as the people of Collie are concerned. We all realise that it is necessary to have land set aside for forestry purposes, and as water catchment areas, but some compensation should be granted, in some way, for the disability it causes. This applies particularly to the Collie district.

In Collie there are large numbers of pensioners, and there is a reason for them. In December, 1960, when 500 men from the mines were put out of work, the State Housing Commission had at least 150 homes vacant—both rental and purchase homes—and the people who had been buying homes lost the lot because they had to shift elsewhere. There was no chance of any other industry, in which the men who were losing their jobs on the mines could be employed, being established in the Collie district. As a consequence the State Housing Commission had a brainwave and whenever a pensioner, anywhere in the State, applied for a house, he was told, "If you go to Collie straightaway we can provide you with a house", and that is how those empty houses were filled. The State Housing Commission wanted to make a virtue out of a necessity.

We have a few vacant houses in Collie, but the claim is that there are no vacant houses at all; and that position has been brought about by the fact that pensioners from all over the State were given the opportunity of taking over the houses vacated by the miners.

In 1960 the Minister for Industrial Development said that as a result of talks we had about people being put out of employment, Hawker Siddeley would build the most up-to-date mill in Australia at Collie. That was six years ago and, ever since, I have been trying to find this mill. I know the Minister gave me some explanations as to why it had not been built, but he was under the impression, at the time, that he would be able to overcome the difficulties involved. However, last week, in the local paper of the 11th August, under big black headlines which read, "Long Delay With New Timber Mill" the following article appeared:—

Hawker Siddeley Pty. Ltd. has told the shire council that there will be a long delay before further thought is given to the erection of a new timber mill in Collie.

In a letter to the council last week the secretary said that the Lands Department had refused to give the company a freehold title to land that it required in the Patstone-street industrial area.

I do not know whether the Minister for Lands knows anything about it. The article continues—

Without the security of tenure given by freehold title it was not a sound proposition to build a modern mill in Collie, he said.

The negotiations with the Lands Department had been going on for a long time and during that period it had been necessary for the company to turn its attention elsewhere.

It would be a long time before attention was again given to the Collie project.

Recently the council asked Hawker Siddeley Pty. Ltd. if it intended to proceed with its plan, announced four years ago, to build a modern timber mill at Collie.

That says four years ago. It should be six years ago. The article continues—

After negotiations concerning the use of a railway siding in the old Co-operative mine area had delayed its plans the company set April, 1964, as the target date for the new mill.

However, further difficulties occurred during which Hawker Siddeley announced from time to time that an early start with construction was expected.

When the company first announced that it would build a modern mill at Collie it said that smaller mills it operated in the district would then be closed. The intention was to concentrate activities in Collie.

I would like the Minister for Industrial Development to let me know, or let the people of Collie know, why that big timber mill which was promised has not been

built. I know that when the Minister gave me the information about the mill being built he was quite sincere about it. I repeatedly asked him what progress was being made and he told me he was having trouble in regard to it. I will be perfectly frank about this; the Minister told me there was some trouble in regard to Amalgamated Collieries, which held some mining leases in the district. This Government could not, or apparently would not—it is one of the two—cancel the leases so that the mill could be built. If I am wrong, I hope the Minister will tell me about it; but the impression I got was that the Government was having difficulty because of this.

As a consequence, since 1960 not one new industrial concern has been established in Collie. All the efforts of the Government appear to have been centred in the northern part of the State. Yet the Government will allow an area like Collie to become neglected—an area which is right in the heart of the south-west, and which has an assured rainfall. We can get nobody to take an interest in Collie and establish an industry, or something, that will take the place of the mining industry so that those miners who are losing their jobs can be employed. Nothing has been done in Collie to compensate for what has been done to the coalmining industry.

Mr. Court: What about the power station? Isn't that a major industry?

Mr. MAY: How many men will it take?

Mr. Court: But it is a major industry.

Mr. MAY: It is a major industry, but it is being built there because some of the other power houses will be cutting down on their consumption of coal. The Minister knows that.

Mr. Court: What does that matter? Collie is getting a major industry and a magnificent power station.

Mr. MAY: I will touch on that point later on when I come to the question of Collie coal.

Mr. Court: You don't want to forget this. It involves a multimillion-pound investment.

Mr. MAY: How many men will it employ? That is the point.

Mr. Court: Quite a few; and it will give them regular employment.

Mr. Hawke: How many?

Mr. MAY: It will not employ one-fifth of the men put off in 1960.

Mr. Court: How many are out of work in Collie today?

Mr. MAY: They have had to leave Collie.

Mr. Court: There are more houses there than when we had the renegotiations.

Mr. MAY: No there are not. I will challenge the Minister about that.

Mr. Court: They were screaming out for houses about 12 months ago.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must address the Chair.

Mr. Court: The honourable member should stick to the facts.

Mr. MAY: Have I your permission to speak, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER: Yes, as long as you address the Chair.

Mr. MAY: I have already explained about the empty houses at Collie and the method adopted by the State Housing Commission to fill them. The houses were not filled by working people; they were filled by old-age and invalid pensioners.

Mr. Hawke: The Minister knows that; he is kidding as usual.

Mr. Court: They were crying out for houses 12 months ago.

Mr. MAY: None have been built, so I do not know where the people are living.

Mr. Court: I would not know where the unemployed are that you have been talking about—the men who have lost their jobs.

Mr. MAY: I did not say there were any unemployed.

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member must address the Chair.

Mr. MAY: I did not say there were any unemployed in Collie. I said there would be more people becoming unemployed and they would have to leave Collie, in the same way as 500 of them did in December, 1960. Perhaps the Minister can answer that if you will let him, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Court: The action we took in respect of Collie saved it.

Mr. MAY: My God; save us from ourselves!

Mr. Court: They would have been so completely uneconomic that they would have ultimately gone right out of the business.

Mr. MAY: The Minister would have to talk for a long time to convince me with that line of argument.

Mr. Court: We don't have to convince you.

Mr. MAY: The Minister knows nothing has been done at Collie. Muja was not built as a result of this Government's efforts.

Mr. Court: The action we took there was in line with the action taken by the previous Government in trying to reduce coal prices, and I never heard you complain about that Government's actions.

Mr. MAY: Mr. Speaker, can I put a question to the Minister? It is to ask him what he has done since 1960 about starting industries in Collie.

The SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. Court: You know we have taken a lot of action to try to help your town. At one time it was not helping itself.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Collie.

Mr. MAY: As usual, the Minister is just trying to cover up.

Mr. Court: No; we have a very good record in Collie.

Mr. MAY: The Minister has something to answer for there. Is it any wonder the people of Collie have become discontented and upset? They are upset at present.

Mr. Court: They are being stirred up.

Mr. MAY: When the new coal tenders come into effect the same thing will happen as has happened at the end of each three-yearly period for some considerable time. There was a letter in the paper this morning which dealt with this subject and I would like to read it. Unfortunately I cannot find it at the moment but I will come to it later on.

This Government is continually giving away the public's industrial concerns. The latest is Wundowie. This Government is supposed to favour private enterprise, and it does; but when the Midland Railway Company was going into liquidation the Government took it over as a State enterprise, and it put its policy into reverse. The State Government bought that concern in order to save it. That is the sort of thing we have to put up with.

Perhaps some private member, or a Minister of the Government, will tell me why there is a continual set on Collie. Since 1960 we have had nothing but trouble there; there has been upset after upset in the industry and there is an increasing desire on the part of the present Government to use oil instead of coal. Instead of using our own native fuel, the Government prefers to use a foreign fuel and refuses to tell the public the price it is paying for it. However, one only has to read the paper to find out the price of coal for the next three years. It was published this week. Is that a fair proposition? Of course it is not! The people of this State are entitled to know the price this Government is paying for the oil fuel.

I now wish to speak for a short time on coal. The coalmining industry in this State over the last eight or nine years has reached a very low ebb. In fact, it has become so low that before long the industry will go out of existence completely. If another war were to break out there would be an immediate call for coal supplies, but there would be no open cut to produce the coal that would be needed in such an emergency once the supply of oil was cut.

At this stage I wish to thank the Minister for Industrial Development for making arrangements to enable members of Parliament to visit the north to see the development that is progressing in that

area. However, after making that trip I would urge the Minister for Industrial Development to invite the members of this House to make a visit to the Collie electorate in order that they may see what is going on. I challenge the Government to do that; that is, to permit the members of this House to see what is going on in the Collie area.

The State is being penalised as a result of coal orders being progressively reduced from year to year. Not only have I asked questions of the Government in this House as to what its intentions are in regard to the Collie coalmines, but also the people of Collie, through the miners' union, the Shire Council and the Chamber of Commerce have asked whether any effort is being made or steps being taken to make an estimate, as soon as possible, of the coal reserves in the Collie coal basin. Apart from making a shot in the dark, nobody knows what coal reserves are available. No action has been taken by the Mines Department to ascertain the extent of the reserves. Periodically, bores have been sunk all over the place, but the coal reserves in the Wilga area have never been estimated or a report made on the value of them. As a matter of fact, all that can be heard is the cry, "Burn oil".

The State is reaching a sorry plight; because God help the people of Western Australia if another war breaks out in the near future! The result will be that all oil supplies will be cut off, and there will be no coal supplies available; and everybody knows what happened during the World War. The Mines Department should be instructed that the Collie coal basin should be thoroughly bored to obtain a true estimate of the quantity of coal reserves that are available.

Before making reference to a report that has been collated on the Collie coalmining industry, I want to say that the Minister for Agriculture and Electricity has been good enough to make three separate visits to Collie. The Minister was shown everything he wanted to see, and he saw a great deal of which he knew nothing. I want to give him credit for the fact that the people of Collie appreciated his visiting their township on three separate occasions. Also, he went from one business place to another throughout the town in order to test the feeling of the business people as to the future of Collie. I do not know what report he made to the Government on his visits, but the Collie people certainly appreciated the visits he made. He had consultations with union representatives, members of the shire council, and business people in an endeavour to obtain their views on the coalmining industry.

I think the people he interviewed proved to him that the township of Collie and its residents are being badly treated because of the way the Government is dealing with the industry. I will now read

extracts from a report prepared by a section of the Collie people on the coalmining industry. It reads as follows:—

Just recently another five foot thick seam was discovered at the Muja open cut underneath the thick Hebe seam, proving that a survey is necessary. In Victoria, 6,400 bores, totalling 1,700,000 feet of boring, have been put down since 1941 and the survey is still continuing.

I do not think there has been 700,000 feet of boring done in Collie. The Government has no interest in the coalmining industry of this State. The report continues—

In the State Parliament on the 22nd of September, 1964, the Minister for Electricity—

The following I am about to quote is the information that was given by the Minister for Electricity in answer to a question asked by me on the coal requirements for the South Fremantle, Muja, and Bunbury power houses from 1965 to 1970:—

Year	South Fremantle	Bunbury	Muja	Total
	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons
1965	110,000	390,000	70,000	570,000
1966	100,000	280,000	270,000	650,000
1967	70,000	230,000	440,000	740,000
1968	50,000	150,000	630,000	830,000
1969	50,000	130,000	750,000	930,000
1970	40,000	140,000	850,000	1,030,000

From those figures it will be seen that the coal requirements for the Bunbury power station will have decreased from 390,000 tons in 1965 to 140,000 tons in 1970, and that the coal requirements for the Muja power station will have increased from 70,000 tons to 850,000 tons over the same period. The railways and the State Electricity Commission will gain as a result of that increase, inasmuch as they will not have to pay any freight charges.

The committee that was formed in Collie is urging the Government to retain the Bunbury power station which, as I have pointed out, will have reduced its coal requirements down to 140,000 tons in 1970. The report continues—

We would urge the Government to retain the Bunbury station, which is not an old power station, on its highest capacity, instead of reducing it to a coal burn of 140,000 tons in 1970. We would also urge the Government to make the South Fremantle power house a coal burning unit and the present oil contract which was made in 1961 for the period of five years for the supply of 30,000 tons of oil per annum should not be renewed.

We consider it has been proved that there are ample reserves of coal on the Collie field and there is no reason why the Muja power station should not be extended beyond its present capacity. Now is the time to do this, with all the equipment and labour available on the site.

So far as I have been given to understand, I do not think the Government has any intention of bringing this about. The report continues—

Subsidies are being made by the governments in many directions and no doubt the question of rail freight subsidies for coal should be considered. You are no doubt aware of many of the subsidies that are at present being paid and it is understood that Country Party Leader McEwen, in an address last week in Perth, stated that the subsidy for superphosphate last year totalled twenty-three million dollars and a quarter of this amount was paid to Western Australia.

In South Australia, coal freight is subsidised for the transport of coal from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta. We understand that the rail freight on coal is less than one per cent. per ton, per mile. As you are aware Leigh Creek coal has a calorific value of only 5,900 B.T.U.'s compared with the average Collie heating quality of 9,600 B.T.U.'s.

Rail freights were increased; as a matter of fact the increases became operative from the 1/10/1965. We understand that the price of coal from Collie to Bunbury was increased by 9s. 6d. per ton and there were similar increases on the freight to South Fremantle.

One just cannot believe what other States are doing with coal when one makes a comparison with what is being done in this State. The report goes on—

Rail subsidies, we understand, are in operation in the Eastern States. We do know that in 1961 briquette freights were subsidised from Yalourn to Melbourne and also other subsidies were in operation from Wonthaggi to Melbourne.

However, no such action is being taken in Western Australia and the people want to know why this Government is not doing its utmost to stabilise the coal industry. I continue to quote from this report—

Many visits have been made overseas by Ministers to consider iron ore, natural gas and oil but, very little has been said about the future of the Coal Mining Industry; it has definitely lacked the attention of this Government.

There is no doubt that this Government stands convicted of slaughtering the coal industry in this State by slow strangulation. As I said before, if a third world war breaks out, God help this State: because if the Government continues with its present policy, there will be neither coal nor oil supplies when they are urgently required.

Following the report I have just read to the House, a statement on the posi-

tion of the coalmining industry was prepared which, in effect, is a continuation. This statement reads—

It will be true to say that no town has suffered as much as Collie, due to policies introduced by this present Government and at the same time it would be true to say that no product or minable product has been reduced in price to the same extent as coal has since 1957.

1957: In this year the Hawke Labor Government saw the need to introduce Coal Contracts and do away with the vicious cost-plus system which was introduced by the McLarty-Watts Government. In 1957 the Hawke Labor Government called the first contracts for the supply of coal for Government instrumentalities. The Hawke Government aimed at a policy which would stabilise the industry and also stabilise Collie and at the same time introduce a policy which would not have a drastic effect on the employment in the industry but would assist in reducing the State's Coal Bill. As a result, the tenders were first accepted with a small ratio of open cut coal. It saw the retrenchment of 118 men from the Industry and the Contracts realised a saving on the State's Coal Bill down to one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per year and a further indirect saving of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000).

1960: 1960 saw the biggest blow ever struck to the Coal Mining Industry where some 500 men lost their jobs overnight. Shops became vacant, hundreds of houses were empty and the town was in a state of turmoil.

This was all going on as a result of the policy of the present Government. Continuing—

This was as a result of the present Government excluding Amalgamated Collieries from the Coal Contracts. The present Government increased the ratio of coal and at the same time made a further saving on the State's Coal Bill of nine hundred thousand dollars (\$900,000) per year. The present Government stated that its policy would stabilise Collie and the Industry and would bring about cheaper power which was necessary in order to encourage industrial expansion in the State. It is to be noted that although Collie has suffered, the employment level in the Industry has been drastically reduced, there has been no noticeable or any reduction in the price of electric power.

1963: Saw the S.E.C. make a net profit of \$1,098,160 and the Coal Contracts were renewed on a similar basis to those issued in 1960.

April, 1965: April, 1965, saw the flooding of the Hebe Deep Mine and

saw a further reduction in the Deep Mine coal trade following the Hebe closure of six thousand tons per fortnight.

At Collie today there are two deep mines only. The Western No. 4 will close early next year, so very shortly the size of the field will be reduced to one deep mine and one open cut. This is a very bad state of affairs.

On the 30th October, 1964, the State Government was determined to build the State's biggest power house at Kwinana, which was to be oil-fired. It now refuses to disclose the price it will pay for fuel oil, but openly discloses the price paid for coal. The Government's actions are still very suspect in the view of all fair-minded people in Western Australia.

The mining unions have urged the Government to extend the Muja power station beyond its present capacity, because with no private trade available the coalmining industry and Collie are, at the present time, totally dependent on the State Electricity Commission for their existence. The Government stated, in the first instance, that the power house could not be extended due to the reserves of economic coal not being known, and also to the limited supply of water available. Mining engineers and the unions have disproved this theory, and now the Government says it is a question of the use of alternate fuels in the power house, and that it will have to consider the question of using more oil and natural gas. We in Collie will meet that problem when we come to it.

I urge the Government to give serious consideration to the situation in Collie. The residents of the town have been loyal and good citizens of this State in every respect, and they have not caused any trouble. This Government has experienced little trouble, if any, from the men engaged in the coalmining industry. Therefore they are entitled to greater consideration than that given at the present time.

This State was developed almost completely through the use of Collie coal; but just because there is an easier method of obtaining power energy at the present time, the Government is prepared to sacrifice Collie in order to give preference to a foreign fuel. I have lived in Collie since 1922, and over the years we have experienced ups and downs in one way or another. We have been flooded out; we have been burnt out; and now many of the people of the town are being hunted out by the Government. If there is another town in this State which has had more bricks thrown at it, I would like to know its name.

The people of Collie do not deserve such treatment. They have been good and loyal citizens of Western Australia. Just after World War II they were asked to increase the coal output, which they did, but now we find that the present policy of the Gov-

ernment is to reduce its use of coal. I cannot understand why the Government should adopt such an attitude. I am aware that it has built a new powerhouse at Muja, but that only means that less coal will be burnt in the other power stations; it does not mean there will be an increase in the consumption of coal.

The present coal contracts have been allocated on the basis of 1,000,000 tons a year. We are already consuming that quantity. According to the State Electricity Commission the increase in the consumption of electricity in Western Australia will be considerable, and this should mean a considerable increase in the consumption of coal. But that will not be the case, because it is the policy of the Government to use fuel oil, and so reduce the consumption of coal, and thereby reduce the population of a town which has done a wonderful job for this State.

I pay a tribute to the people of Collie. In the first World War, on a percentage basis, Collie had more enlistments than any other town in this State; but all these things have been forgotten by the Government in its mad rush to take on something new, and thereby sacrifice the efforts and achievements of the town in the past. I do not know what will happen eventually. I feel sorry for the people of Collie, because on every occasion that new contracts for coal are made, their anxiety is terrific. One has to live there to understand the people's feelings.

I am sure the Minister for Electricity has a good idea of the feelings of these people, as a result of his visits to the district. I regret he was absent from the Chamber when I referred to his visits. I repeat that the people of Collie do appreciate them. They are of the opinion that after the Minister had visited the district and learned so much about the industry, some difference would be made to the present policy of the Government on coal use. I am sorry to say that has not been evident up to date. So we are to go on for another three years wondering what will happen at the end of that time. Continual anxiety exists in the town, and there is no need for it.

As I said earlier, Collie has to face up to many disabilities, one of which is the amount of land held by the Forests Department. It amounts to about 80 per cent. of the ratable land of the district. That department reaps all the advantages from the facilities that are provided by the shire, but the Government does not see fit to offer some subsidy, or some form of financial assistance, to enable the people of the town to enjoy the privileges which are enjoyed by other country towns, such as Donnybrook, where the recent increase in water rates amounted to only 13 per cent., as against the 25 per cent. increase applicable to Collie. If that is justice, then I do not know what justice is.

I shall withhold the rest of my remarks on Collie coal, because of some moves which will be made. Therefore I shall reserve my comments until the Estimates are dealt with, when I hope to be able to paint a better picture of the situation in Collie than I am able to at the present time.

**MR. DAVIES** (Victoria Park) [5.37 p.m.]: Speaking at the end of a debate as long as this, one is not left with very many subjects untouched. Many of the previous speakers have mentioned the same subject once or twice, so I hope I will be forgiven if I do that also.

I join with preceding speakers in paying a tribute to Mr. Fred Islip who retired from the position of Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. He was a friend to everybody, and he had the happy knack of making people feel important. Yet all the time many of us relied on his knowledge and on his ability to help us along. At all times he was courteous; he never differentiated between parties or members; and I have never heard him criticise any member in any way.

He always had a stream of tales to tell about the people who had been through this Chamber, but it was always in a very friendly and jovial manner that he spoke of them. I think it is an indication of his nature that he has refused to write any memoirs. He, of all people, could best write some very entertaining stories about parliamentary life, but he would not like to offend anyone, even in the slightest degree, and I feel that is why he indicated to me on one occasion that he would never entertain the idea of writing his memoirs.

It was also an indication of his nature that very few of us knew until the dying hours of the last session that it was to be his last in the service of this Parliament, and we as backbenchers were, therefore, unable to pay a tribute to him. So I now join with other members in expressing my appreciation to Mr. Islip for his ever-courteous help, always given in a friendly manner, and for the patience he showed in dealing with the many questions I put to him at various times.

The second subject on which I would like to speak, and which has been referred to by previous speakers, concerns the Barracks Archway. I must confess that originally I was all for pulling down the building. I was of that opinion until the time the archway was left standing alone as it is at present. It was not because the Premier expressed himself in favour of pulling down the archway that I changed my mind. Early one Saturday morning when there was very little traffic about I had a look at the archway against the background of Parliament House. The only fault was that the closer I got to the archway the uglier it looked.

The archway will need to be restored, and access to enable the public to inspect



it will have to be provided. The erection of a tablet to indicate to visitors what the archway is all about will have to be decided upon. I am sure the first thing visitors from the Eastern States will ask is, "What is that at the top end of St. George's Terrace?"

Mr. Graham: Most of all it needs a decent shove by a bulldozer!

Mr. DAVIES: In view of that remark, I would not like to see a headline appearing in the newspaper along these lines, "A Split in the Labor Party. The Member for Balcatta Believes the Archway Should be Bulldozed." I believe that with restoration and with the provision of access the archway could be well left in its present position. Parliament House would form a very good backdrop.

Mr. Nalder: Would you require the S.E.C. to install some lights there?

Mr. Graham: But with no meter box!

Mr. DAVIES: I am afraid it is not only a matter of leaving the archway as it is, or pulling it down. It has to be lit up at night to be effective, because in its present state it looks gloomy and ghostly. As the Minister for Electricity said, the S.E.C. will need to light it up in some form at night. I wonder what the aspect would be like if the archway were demolished? On reaching the top end of St. George's Terrace one would find a drop of 20 or 30 feet into an open cut.

Mr. Lewis: Let us remove it and then have a look.

Mr. DAVIES: The construction of an open cut roadway will be debated at a later stage, I am sure. I must go on record at this point of time as saying that I am in favour of retaining the archway, provided the Government can raise the money to restore it adequately.

As in previous years, at the beginning of this session we went through the procedure of the opening of Parliament. I was a little dismayed to see that better provision had not been made for the seating of the public in the gallery. I think it was drawn to the notice of the House Committee last year that the seating provided presented somewhat of a danger. It is a sad fact that members of the public who attend the function in the gallery—particularly the elderly; and there are quite a few of them—have difficulty in getting on to the seats. Having got there, they are frightened to move. The House Committee should give some consideration to this matter!

I have a fear that some day an accident will befall a person sitting in the gallery, and we will find him seated on one of the back benches of the House, because it is quite possible for people in the gallery to fall over the railing. Whilst such an occurrence might create a diversion, I am sure none of us would like to see it happen.

As usual the Speech of His Excellency detailed the various achievements of the

Government. As a member of the Opposition I have often thought what I would write about, if I had the opportunity; if I had that opportunity I am sure I would not finish up with a Speech like this one. There is very much in the State that needs attention. Whilst the Government can be proud of the achievements mentioned in His Excellency's Speech, there are some matters I would like to see included.

It has not been a good year in many respects for the Government. Some Ministers have had a good year and others have not. For instance we would not call it a vintage year for the Minister for Police. He has been in more trouble than Buck Rogers.

Mr. Dunn: Who is Buck Rogers?

Mr. DAVIES: Surely the member for Darling Range is not going to tell me he cannot remember Buck Rogers. It is not that long ago since he was a boy. The Minister has been in quite a deal of trouble and I am sorry to say that as yet he has not released a public announcement on the inquiry into the unfortunate death of John Knowles at the Riverbank maximum security institution. It is now, I believe, almost a month since this tragedy occurred, and surely to goodness it is a matter that requires and demands immediate attention! The public is entitled to know how the death occurred and what action has been taken to prevent a similar tragedy.

This is one thing we must thank the newspapers for. They were able to tell us of the unfortunate occurrence. It was already a fortnight old before word leaked to the Press, and perhaps if the story had not leaked out we would never have known. It is a terrible thing that it should have occurred and that a person in an institution of this nature should have access to any poison which can prove fatal, as appears to have happened on this occasion. I hope that not many more days will pass before we are given the result of the inquiry. Even if we are not able to be told very much before the coroner's inquest has been held I do think some statement is required from the Government. It has every responsibility in this direction and it does not seem to be very concerned at all, particularly in regard to this case.

The Governor's Speech does not give us very much hope of an interesting session. The legislation forecast appears to be extremely dull. Not very much social legislation is to be submitted to help the ordinary working fellow. It does not seem that many of the great problems of the State are to be attacked in any way.

I see no mention of restrictive trade practices legislation. I understand the Government has refused to work in with its Federal party in introducing complementary legislation. I do not know what this Government is afraid of. The Federal

Government took long enough to decide that legislation of this nature was necessary, and I am sure that big guns must have been brought to bear on the Federal Cabinet in an effort to keep any legislation of this nature out of Australia. However, the Federal Liberal-Country Party Coalition Cabinet has been convinced that legislation is necessary, but the mighty Western Australian Liberal-Country Party Coalition Government seems to think it is not necessary in this State. It has indicated, according to the Press, that it will not be proceeding with the necessary complementary legislation.

I think this is a great shame. There is obviously a great need for it. I believe the last Select Committee in this State found something like 104 or 106 associations which fixed the price of different commodities. Apparently we are going to be held to ransom by trade associations, which naturally are going to get the greatest price offering and so keep prices as high as possible; and, incidentally, keep out competitive tendering, which is completely opposed to the Liberal Party's professed policy of free enterprise. These trades stop any competitive tendering. Indeed, there is collusion, as we would realise, if we went to the Government Tender Board, the Railways stores, and similar places. We would find out that tenders for paint brushes, electrical goods, petrol, and a hundred and one other varieties of goods are all the same price; it does not matter how many firms tender.

If one firm submits a tender at a certain price less 10 per cent., it is not able to obtain the supplies to fulfil the order. Therefore surely there is ample evidence of the need for some kind of restraining influence to stop the public being held to ransom.

Look at the recent rise in the price of copper. That was \$380 a ton. It was announced that the price was going to be fixed on the London Metal Exchange price in future. Then, yesterday, the price was dropped by \$100; but in the meantime the price of copper and brass fittings has been raised. Some were again reduced slightly with the drop in the price of copper, but are we to know whether the rise has been a fair one, or whether the drop in price has been in accordance with the drop in the price of copper? We have no way of assessing this.

The price of copper must affect everyone throughout the length and breadth of the State. Some will be affected more than others, but every one of us must be concerned in some way, and there is a consequent automatic rise in the cost of living about which nothing is being done.

The Government should have some restrictive trading legislation and this is something which should be looked at to find out whether prices charged are fair and just, or whether the public is being held

to ransom. However the Government has not indicated that it is going to do anything in this regard and, of course, the Commonwealth has no power in regard to price fixing. The matter rests with the States to act if they so desire. As I have said, this Government has indicated that it does not intend to do anything to try to protect the public in this regard.

I must remind members that so far as the working man is concerned, he must go to court and prove to the satisfaction of that court that he is entitled to a rise in wages. By a majority or unanimous decision of the court he receives a raise according to the case that has been presented by the advocates. However the manufacturers do not have to worry about this procedure. They do not have to submit a case to any court. They are able to charge what they like and, by banding together, they are able to fix prices; and, at the risk of repeating myself, I say again that the public is being held to ransom.

I was sorry indeed to hear the Premier's answer on opening day to a question about two sessions of Parliament a year. He said that the Government would not do anything about this. Some time last year the Premier indicated that to hold two sessions of Parliament a year would necessitate a review of the Standing Orders, and I naturally thought that if he was genuine in the statements he made he would investigate the possibility, advisability, and practicability, of having two sessions of Parliament a year and he would consequently have got cracking by now to this end to see what was necessary. However when asked if there would be two sessions, he merely replied, "No".

I think he has some responsibility to this Parliament to say why there should not be two sessions a year. I understand that one of the reasons is that two sessions would not fit in with the wishes of the Ministers; they have their ministerial duties to perform and they would not be able to give as much time as they would like to those duties when Parliament was sitting. I would remind members that only last year two additional Cabinet Ministers were appointed, and this move was supposed to ease substantially the burden on the existing Cabinet Ministers. I believe that pro-rata, population-wise, this State has more Cabinet Ministers than any other State; and, surely, if those other States can have two sessions a year, and if their Ministers are able to attend earlier sessions—that is, sessions starting earlier in the day—then it should not be beyond the capacity of any of our Ministers to do likewise.

If this were done the Opposition and back-bench members would have some opportunity to take part in the proceedings of Parliament. We do not do anything as far as running the country is concerned during the off-season, shall we call it. We

find plenty to interest ourselves and plenty of work to do in our electorates—at least I do—but as far as physically taking a part in the government of the country for seven or eight months of the year is concerned, we have no opportunity to do anything at all.

I believe the Government has some responsibility to indicate why it will not accept the suggestion of two sessions of Parliament a year. It is not sufficient to rely on excuses, as the Government has done in the past. The Premier must say whether it is possible or impossible to review Standing Orders; and he must take Parliament into his confidence.

Mr. Gayfer: What did you do about it when you were in Government?

Mr. DAVIES: I unfortunately have had no opportunity of being with a party in Government.

Mr. Gayfer: Was there any reason given in those days why two sessions were not instituted?

Mr. DAVIES: I had not, before entering this House, ever taken a keen interest in whether there should or should not be two sessions of Parliament. However I feel now I am in a position to express my opinion on the matter.

Mr. J. Hegney: The population is increasing and so is the need for two sessions.

Mr. DAVIES: As the member for Belmont has just said, the State's population is increasing and there is more reason for us to have two sessions of Parliament each year.

The last matter on which I wish to comment has been mentioned by the previous speakers and concerns the trip north. Naturally I was very pleased with the arrangements made and was very grateful to have the opportunity of seeing so much in such a short time. My only criticism of the whole trip is just that—there was so much to see in such a short period that we did not have time to really get the feeling of the north. We did not have time to talk in most places to the people living there, and therefore we came away having seen and learned a little, but not as much as we would have liked to learn.

What staggered me most were the vast tracts of land which appeared to have been put to no good use at all. There were hundreds of thousands of square miles, and it certainly made me wonder what could be done to help the north.

I was naturally very pleased to see the activity in the projects up there. The only thought I had in regard to them was that all of those concerned seem to be assured of a return for their money. No-one so far as minerals are concerned, seems to be taking a risk in the north. The companies are all very wealthy and can afford to take risks, but they are also shrewd companies and know what return they will get for the money outlaid.

Their markets seem to be assured and they can rely on a good return. Everyone is working very busily up there, although I did not see anyone physically rushing around; everyone seemed to be working at a steady pace. Naturally the companies are prepared to pay overtime for long hours because the quicker production commences, the quicker they will get some profit back for the money outlaid. As I have said, I feel that none of them are taking a risk at all, and that applies to every industry I saw up there.

I was very impressed with the agricultural research in progress at the Kimberley Research Station. Research anywhere throughout Australia is one of the poor cousins of the community.

There never is enough money put into research. I do not suppose there ever could be enough to satisfy the people who are concerned with it. However, I am sure we cannot rely entirely on minerals for the development of the north. I feel we must still expect to receive a good deal from agriculture. I would like to see much more done; I would like to see more money made available to the Kimberley Research Station, and I would like to suggest to the Government that a minimum amount be reserved each year from mineral royalties solely for the use of agricultural research in the north. It is my opinion that agriculture and minerals are going to advance hand in hand.

The research station is going to want more money in order to facilitate the work which it must undertake. As we are going to receive some money through mining royalties in the north, I feel we could reserve some of this exclusively for research work. This money could be made available not only to the Kimberley Research Station but to other research stations in different parts of the State. I understand that, at the present time, money which is made available for research comes out of general funds. However, I think it would be equitable, fair, and, in fact, desirable if moneys from royalties could be made available to guarantee continuing research in the north-west.

Housing continues to be one of the greatest problems with which the back-bench member of Parliament is concerned. I do not know whether any of the members on the front benches—apart from the Minister for Housing—are worried at all by the receipt of calls in respect of housing. However, I can always guarantee that I will receive at least one each day—and, lately, I seem to be getting two or three. These calls are in the nature of queries as to the possibility of getting a house.

I have to repeat what I have said before, and that is that I have always found the State Housing Commission—and particularly its liaison officer with whom we deal—very fair. If one has a case which is genuine, and one where assistance is justified, help is generally available. The only

complaint I have to make is that whereas once upon a time help was afforded within a week or 10 days, now the period is some time from six to eight weeks before the commission is able to satisfy urgent applications. The position is deteriorating although increased houses are being built each year—that is, if one can believe the information that was contained in His Excellency's Speech on opening day; and I have not the slightest reason to doubt this information.

Mr. Graham: Increased numbers throughout the State—not by the State Housing Commission.

Mr. O'Neil: By the Government.

Mr. DAVIES: The member for Balcatta and the Minister for Housing appear to have this matter sorted out. The increased numbers are by Commonwealth and State agreement.

Mr. Graham: No; the increased numbers are by private enterprise and, unfortunately, with an increasing preponderance of flats rather than of houses.

Mr. DAVIES: I was merely looking at that section of His Excellency's speech where he said—

In the past year 2,500 homes were built by the State Housing Commission. This was 400 more than in the previous year.

Mr. Graham: Yes, but that has fallen from about 4,000 in the year 1955.

Mr. DAVIES: Later on I will make the point that the waiting time is getting longer but, at this stage, no-one is going to stop me from making the point that the figures shown in His Excellency's Speech are slightly inaccurate. I should imagine that the figures shown in this Speech were meant to reflect the past financial year. I would like to emphasise to those who have read the Speech, or who listened when His Excellency delivered the Speech, that, indeed, 2,500 homes were not built in the past year.

A question was asked of the Minister for Housing later in the session in this respect and his answer appeared on page 13 of the *Votes and Proceedings*, but I cannot give the date. The Minister said that 2,480 dwellings were built in the financial year which ended on the 30th June, 1966. This is not quite 2,500.

In His Excellency's Speech reference is made to the fact that the number of homes built by the State Housing Commission was, in fact, 400 more than had been built in the previous year. Once again slight license has been taken because, on referring to the answer to the same question asked of the Minister for Housing, the number given shows that only 349 more were built than had been built in the previous year.

I suppose it is permissible to talk in round figures but I should think that in the matter of a speech delivered by the

Governor at the opening of Parliament the information should be closer to the truth. I repeat: The difference was quoted in the Speech at 400, whereas the actual difference is 349. However, that is by the way.

We know that the State Housing Commission is building more houses, yet the fact remains that the waiting list is growing longer. When I first came into Parliament, I think the waiting period was about 18 months for rental accommodation and about 15 months for a purchase home. However, these respective periods are longer by approximately eight months at the present time. It is not always possible to obtain an accurate assessment, but I think I am being more than fair when I say that the waiting time has been extended in each of these categories by up to eight months.

Mr. O'Neil: That is the maximum. As you say, it is very difficult to generalise.

Mr. DAVIES: As the Minister says, there are areas where the waiting time is less. At one time it was easier to get a house in the Fremantle area, but now it is just as difficult to get a house there as it is to get one in the metropolitan area.

Mr. O'Neil: Only 12 months ago there was about a five months' waiting period in Medina, but this is not so now.

Mr. DAVIES: What really concerns me in connection with the State Housing Commission is the legal racket—and I call it a legal racket—that has developed with regard to purchase homes. If one comes within a certain means test, one can make application for a purchase home from the State Housing Commission. The State Housing Commission is able to accommodate the request within a period of, approximately, two years and it accepts a deposit of anything from £150 upwards. I think that in some instances the deposits range up as far as £400 or more.

These purchase homes are quite comfortable and I think the majority of the people who buy them are delighted with them. I have found that in the new areas which are being developed—such as Balga and Coolbellup—no sooner have the people installed themselves in their house and finalised all documents with the State Housing Commission than a land and estate agent calls around to ask them if they would like to sell the house. Initially, these land and estate agents offer £200 or £300 more than the amount which the people paid for the house. In most cases, the people say, "No, we are not interested in selling." At this stage, the agent generally raises the price to £500 or £800 more than the owners paid. To some people this offer is very lucrative as it means they have made £800 on a deal within a few short months. In many cases, the tenants are selling.

The agent goes down to the State Housing Commission and says, "This man wants to sell and that man wants

to buy." Provided the buyer falls within the means test category determined by the State House Commission, and is acceptable to the commission, he can take the house and buy it through the agent. The agent has his commission; the people who have sold the house have made £300, £400, or £500; and the State Housing Commission effects all the transfers and does all the work in regard to the house changing hands.

Members might suggest that it is rather silly for people to sell houses. I would think so too but, apparently, they are attracted to the easy money that can be made, and many of them then apply for tenancy assistance from the State Housing Commission. Provided these people are prepared to wait their turn, they can obtain help from the State Housing Commission and be provided with a house. Indeed, as the Minister has said, if these people are prepared to live in an area for which the waiting period is not very long, it may be possible for them to be accommodated with a house in a matter of five or six months.

These people find temporary accommodation in the meantime and are quite happy to experience the little delay, because this is offset by the profit they have made. The agent has made some money; the State Housing Commission has done all the work, and the commission has a new tenant—or a new person buying the house. The people who sold the house go back on the State Housing Commission waiting list and will be satisfied in due course.

I do not think this position is quite fair, and I think it is a matter which requires investigation. It is not happening only in isolated cases. I have gone through the papers and have selected them at random from the "Houses and Land Wanted" columns in the Press and I have found that the same agents are advertising regularly for State Housing Commission homes. On the 11th August, 1966, there were nine advertisements for State Housing Commission homes; on the 2nd August, 1966, there were four; and on the 6th August, 1966, there were five. So it goes on. My research took me back to May of this year and I found the same agents were advertising for State Housing Commission homes at that time. Obviously, they are happy to do this. They are happy to introduce the buyer to the seller and then take them down to the State Housing Commission, which does all the work. The agent pockets his £100 or £200 commission and all he has done, in effect, is to introduce two people. It is an excellent racket.

I think the State Housing Commission must take action to prevent this. There will always be many buyers for State Housing Commission homes. I understand that many of the migrants who come to this country have the necessary deposit and, consequently, are able to go straight

into these homes. This possibly accounts for the inquiries which have been received from many people who have asked, "How can a migrant who has been in the country for only four or five weeks obtain a State Housing Commission home?" This seems to be the answer.

I think the State Housing Commission has a responsibility to the people who want these homes, and a clause should be written into the contract to the effect that the home cannot be sold within a two-year period without the permission of the commission. I believe that the commission would be fair in deciding, if a request were made within that two-year period, whether it was a genuine case or whether some projected profit was anticipated. If the person insisted on selling, despite the fact that the commission did not want him to sell, the person could sell the house back to the State Housing Commission for the price he had paid, plus expenses. I, personally, would not want to see these people come out of it suffering a loss. However, I feel that the State Housing Commission should have the opportunity—at least for two years after completion—of buying back the houses it has sold and, in doing so, it could make these houses available to the people on the waiting list.

I repeat: Some agents are making a racket out of the State Housing Commission and I believe that some action is necessary immediately to stop this racket and to help the genuine home buyer. I hope that the Minister will have a look at this matter to see what can be done.

As I have said, I call it a legal racket and it is a legal racket. No-one is breaking the law—instead, these people are using the existing law to advantage.

I have given this matter a lot of thought and, as I have said, in my opinion the only way out would be for the commission to have the right for a period of up to two years, to buy the houses back.

Mr. O'Neil: We know this is happening but we find it difficult to stop the first sale by transfer. We are more concerned with those who come back to the commission—having sold the property—for a second bite of the cherry. This is not infrequent.

Mr. DAVIES: People who come back?

Mr. O'Neil: Yes; ones who have arranged to purchase a home and who have sold it by way of transfer and who re-apply for another house.

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

Mr. DAVIES: At the tea suspension the Minister for Housing had interjected to say he was a little worried as to how to deal with second applications for purchase homes. In my opinion these should be dealt with on exactly the same basis as war service homes, where a purchaser has one home and one only. I believe there are special considerations shown to people who receive assistance from the

State Housing Commission. For example the interest rate is slightly better, and the conditions generally are, I think, better than one is able to obtain from one's own bank. I believe this should be considered a privilege, and unless there is a very good reason why a second application should be made, no such application should be considered.

This has been a hard and fast rule in relation to war service homes. I believe there have been rare exceptions there; but, so far as the State Housing Commission homes are concerned, while there are very many people waiting for houses, and while there are so many deserving cases, I do not believe second applications should be considered. Indeed I would even be reluctant to accept an application for tenancy.

I know it is difficult to lay down a hard and fast rule, but if I were ever Minister for Housing and I felt the public was using the State Housing Commission for its own ends, and for its own profit, I would not be very sympathetic at all towards considering second applications for tenancy.

Mr. O'Neil: I said I was concerned with the number of applications for second assistance, but not how to deal with them.

Mr. DAVIES: If the Minister says he is getting a lot of applications for second assistance, it indicates that people are doing exactly what I say they are doing; they are selling their houses at a profit, and using the services of the State Housing Commission to make a few hundred pounds for themselves. I dare say the agents are also making a profit of £100 to £200, and someone gets a new house out of turn, and the circle starts all over again. I believe there are exceptions, but the commission will consider these.

Mr. Norton: That would be rental, but not purchase.

Mr. DAVIES: I believe there could be exceptions in regard to purchase homes. People may have decided to live all their lives in Carnarvon, or in Thornlie, and then find that for some unforeseen reason they have to shift. They may then wish to settle down permanently in another spot, and possibly in this instance special consideration may be given to a second application when the commission considers such an application.

Mr. O'Neil: Each application is considered on its merits.

Mr. DAVIES: I do want to see this racket cut down considerably. The fact that it is a racket is evident from the advertisements one sees in the Press asking for Housing Commission homes.

Mr. O'Neil: It would not be fair to stop the first sale by transfer, because the person who ultimately purchased the home would be an applicant for a Housing Commission home.

Mr. DAVIES: This is probably debatable. I believe the commission should have a very good look at all applications for a first transfer, because it means that somebody with money is getting a house out of turn.

Mr. O'Neil: Each one must be approved separately, but the matter of the commission resuming a house and reselling it means you offer for sale a secondhand house to applicants for new homes.

Mr. DAVIES: The Minister is missing my point. I believe that a house up to two years' old can still be considered new, and if the buyer gets back all he put into it, he should be satisfied. I object to people making a profit out of the State Housing Commission. I do not believe it should happen.

The only other thing I wish to mention in this connection is whether consideration can be given to raising the amount of money a person must have in the bank before he is entitled to a rental rebate. I believe it stands at \$400 at present, and with the increase in rents the people who have just over this amount in the bank are not entitled to any rebate, and they are paying very considerably-increased rentals, whilst people who perhaps have an amount just below that figure in the bank are enjoying substantial rebates.

Obviously we must at all times fix some figure which is a minimum, but I believe that with the changing money value this aspect could be looked at and adjusted accordingly. I know several cases that have come to my notice recently where there have been substantial increases which are only being applied at \$1 every six months, but this immediately cuts into the limited savings of these people, and whereas, they are able to pay the rent assessed out of their pension, they will be unable to meet the increased rent from their pension, and it means that they will have to draw on their savings. They may be able to meet the amount from their pension for the first increment, but after that they will be in trouble. But with the increase in rents, any recently-announced increase in pensions will quickly be absorbed. Persons receiving a rebate will immediately lose much of the social service increase received as a result of yesterday's Commonwealth Budget.

Mr. O'Neil: Anyone who was on a rebate prior to the rent increase does not suffer any rent increase.

Mr. DAVIES: The point I was trying to make was that because a person had \$400 in the bank he was able to meet his rent, at the time, from his pension. Now, with the increase in rentals, in some cases \$1 for the first six months, and another \$1 increase to follow, such a person is unable to meet the increase from his pension and will have to draw on his savings.

I believe the minimum figure should be increased, and we should try to help these people in some way. It is a matter of great concern to them. Everyone of us looks for security in his old age, and a few pounds which a person who is now a pensioner is able to save, is probably more to that pensioner than all the thousands of pounds which the Premier or any of his front-row Ministers possess. These savings become something which pensioners hate to dig into. They like to think that the savings are there in the bank for a time when they are needed. Of course they always hope that such a time will not come. I believe we need a reasonable review of the means test as applying to rental rates for pensioners and others in State Housing Commission homes.

I was delighted today to join other members of Parliament, and members of the community, together with overseas guests, at the opening of the W.A. Institute of Technology. I have closely followed the development of this institute for some considerable time, and while I was pleased to see it officially launched today, some sections of it have, of course, been operating, I understand, for two years.

I must congratulate the Government's publicity officers, because for the past week during the various news sessions we have been informed on numerous occasions that this institute was to be opened. These people certainly earn their money so far as publicity is concerned. A very good opportunity was afforded us to have a look over this institute today.

As the Premier said, it is a new concept in education, and one that will be watched with interest. He said we were still feeling our way somewhat in regard to it, and at this stage it was unwise to adopt any firm planning. The Premier felt that any planning in connection with it should be flexible. I agree with the Premier in connection with the general planning for the future additions, the future use, and the future integration of the technical institute, but I cannot agree with him in the matter of the staff.

I understand there is a considerable amount of disquiet at the institute because no-one seems to know which way the staff is going. I asked questions as to whether there had been any permanent staff appointed there, and I was told there had not. All the members of the staff are members of the Perth Technical College which, as I understand it, is likely to disappear, and the technological institute is eventually to take over.

The fact that one section has been operating for two years, and two other sections have been operating for a year, indicates to me that it is time the powers that be had a serious look at how they propose to staff this college, and how they propose to appoint members.

It is something of a scandal that three major departments can be operating there, and yet there are no permanently-appointed staff. But I understand this applies not only to the new institute but also to the Perth Technical College. Indeed there are five departments at the college which are controlled by acting heads. This means that if the heads are only in acting positions, then, of course, the other seniors, in positions below the heads, will also only be acting.

If this is to go on, as I understand it has been for a period of two years, it is time that the Minister had a serious look at the method by which these appointments are to be made. I believe there are five acting heads in the technical college: three in the engineering section—mechanical, civil and electrical; and the architectural and physics sections also have acting heads.

After much badgering we were finally advised by the Premier, through a Press release on the 11th instant that a committee had been appointed to inquire into tertiary education. The people on the committee all seem to be quite capable with the exception of one man who is a grazier. He is Mr. W. C. K. Pearce who is President of the Mingenew Shire Council. How he came to be appointed to a committee to inquire into tertiary education, I do not know.

I have never met him in the educational field before, and I do not know what his qualifications are. We know most of the qualifications of the other persons mentioned. I would be delighted to hear from the Premier of the special qualifications which Mr. W. C. K. Pearce holds that would fit him to be on a committee of this kind. I have been told that the delay in the appointment of the committee has been occasioned by the necessity to find suitable persons, but, as I understand it, nothing much is accomplished when a man like this is appointed.

Mr. Bovell: Mr. Pearce's qualifications are good, sound commonsense.

Mr. DAVIES: Those are outstanding qualifications! I would hope that most of us having anything to do with education or government would at least have those attributes.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is debatable.

Mr. DAVIES: The findings of the committee are going to have far-reaching effects: I should imagine the committee will have to sit for at least 12 months before it will be able to answer all the queries put to it.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. DAVIES: I hope we will not have to wait 12 months before we finalise some of the positions at the institute.

I agree it is a very fine concept, but I cannot go along with the architecture of

the place as I think it looks like a prison. However, it is very functional and well equipped. Indeed, in the physics section, I understand the equipment is better than that at the University. I might add in passing that I do not like the name of Institute of Technology. I do not think it conveys what the institute is, or what its purpose is. It is above what I have considered to be technical education, and slightly below university education. Indeed, I believe the only difference between the University and the institute is something of a social status.

One can enter the institute by passing five subjects of the Leaving Certificate examination. In fact, the passing of one subject each year is sufficient to qualify one to enter the institute, but to enter the University as a part-time or full-time student, one has to matriculate in the one year. I think some snobbishness will develop. I know that is a bad word to use in regard to education, but I think that is what will happen and I cannot sponsor a better word. I only wish I could.

Mr. Brand: You are in the same boat as we are; we have done the best we can.

Mr. O'Neil: It is a universally accepted name.

Mr. DAVIES: On the one hand we are told that this is a brand new concept in education, and, on the other, we are told that the name of the institute is universally accepted for this type of institution. I am delighted with the steps that have been taken, but I am concerned at the dissatisfaction which is now evident, and which will grow, in regard to staff. I think the staff has to know where it is going. The staff cannot wait for the departmental committee to sit for 12 months or more in order to bring down its findings.

There are too many acting positions on the technical side of education, and I have instanced some of them. The staff is unhappy, and an unhappy staff cannot be expected to give the loyalty which was praised today by the Premier and the Minister for Education. Therefore this is something that must be treated as a matter of urgency, because we will really have a thriving institute if we can obtain contented staff. I have been told in answers to questions that there have been two resignations from the staff at the institute. Technical men, particularly teachers, are hard to get, and I believe some more resignations are pending and that some members of the staff have already made applications for positions in other States and they are likely to be snapped up.

We do not want to lose any of the staff, because we cannot afford to do so. Therefore I repeat: We must treat as a matter of urgency the full-time appointment of staff members at the institute. We cannot wait until the whole institute functions as planned because, from what I heard

today, I understand this will take up to 20 years. I repeat: The chemistry department has been operating for two years, yet there are no permanent appointments today. So I plead with the Government to get on with the job and make the permanent appointments. This will have to be done if the institute is to be a new concept in education, as claimed by the Government.

I do not know how the proposed committee will sit, but I hope it will have public hearings. Education is a matter with which we must all concern ourselves. I was somewhat ashamed of my lack of knowledge, particularly in regard to electronics, when I was looking over the building today; and this shows how education has changed since we were at school.

Because of these changes, and because of the great interest there is now in education, I hope the committee will hold public hearings so that anyone who wishes to make representations to the committee will be able to do so. I hope the committee will sit regularly; and I hope it will not be 12 months before its findings are made known. Already too much time has been wasted before the appointment of the committee. Above all, I hope permanent appointments will be made to the institute before the committee comes up with its findings. I do not think it is necessary for the Government to wait for the findings of the committee before making the appointments. Indeed, it will be doing itself and the staff a service if it gets on with the job straightaway.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired.

MR. I. W. MANNING (Wellington) [7.53 p.m.]: I desire to take this opportunity to say a few words about the parliamentary inspection tour of the north-west. I do this, because I believe that later in the session, when the Estimates are being discussed, we can touch in more detail on the problems of our electorates, and I think that, perhaps, on an occasion such as this, we should take the opportunity of having a look at the State. Firstly, I want to express appreciation to the Minister for the North-West and his departmental officers who organised the tour. It was well conducted and very worth while, not only for the pleasure it gave members who participated, but because of its great educational value.

I had one or two outstanding impressions. I was tremendously impressed by all I saw and I suppose if we traversed here all those things that were shown to us, and all of the developments we saw while in the north, it would take a long time. I wish to comment briefly on one or two aspects, especially the Ord River scheme.

I do this, because the electorate I represent did, at one time, contain the whole



of the State's irrigation district. I was particularly interested in the irrigation activities at Kununurra. I believe the Government should be offered every possible encouragement to push on with the major scheme; and members here should offer every support they can to the Government in its approach to the Commonwealth for the additional \$70,000,000, or thereabouts, required for the construction of the main dam and the extension of the scheme to cover the full 170,000-odd acres available to irrigation in the Ord River valley.

I believe, too, we should encourage the Government to press on with this because of the need for a balanced development of the north. We know of the tremendous mineral wealth of the north, and of the mining activities that are taking place, but I do think we need to be reminded that with mining activities everything is taken out and nothing put back; but, with agricultural development, something is put in, and there is a good return to the country in accordance with what is put back.

There is no doubt, too, that agriculture will attract a greater number of people to the north than perhaps will mining, because many of the mining activities are concentrated in particular areas, whereas it might be possible in the areas not given over to mining activities to expand agricultural pursuits.

A point which impressed me about the Ord River scheme, and one which has not been given sufficient mention, is the type of farmer who has been allotted land there. These people in the agricultural area have been hand-picked from various ones who applied for blocks; and because they are hand-picked we can expect a great deal of them. It has been no surprise to me that, as each year has gone by and the returns have come in from the annual crops, there has been a marked increase in production.

It is very evident to me that in the progress of time these farmers are learning what their land will best produce and how to get more from it. I might mention, too, that these farmers are being assisted by some of the best technical officers it is possible to provide, having regard to their particular region; but, all in all, we should take into account the fact that we have some very skilled farmers in that area. I anticipate that production will increase annually, as it has done in the past several seasons.

I was impressed with the country from an irrigation point of view. No doubt, this land will produce all that is claimed for it, and, perhaps, even more. When one thinks that one dam on the Ord River will provide sufficient water to irrigate 170,000 acres, one realises it is, indeed, a tremendous scheme. There are also other areas in the north such as the Fitzroy delta, which has the same tremendous potential.

The other point which impressed me was the beef cattle industry in the north, particularly as this past season has seen a scarcity of beef cattle and meat prices have been very high. We have also to think of the present overseas markets which we have and the fact that these markets are expanding. From what I have seen, one of the greatest contributions to the beef cattle industry in the north is the provision of beef roads and the contribution made by the State and Commonwealth Governments in providing the sum of money they have over the past several years, 1961 to 1966. I think some \$14,000,000 has been spent on the provision of roads under the beef-roads scheme, and I believe a further \$3,000,000 is to be made available for the 1966-67 year.

From my observations, made while in the north, I think one of its greatest needs is good roads, particularly as most of the cattle these days are brought in by road train.

The damage done to the cattle is much too extensive to be disregarded. I have talked with a number of station owners who have said that some of their losses have been of considerable magnitude over a period of time. When the roads are very rough the cattle get down in the trucks. Good roads will overcome this problem, and will permit more rapid transport of stock from the station properties to the abattoirs or ports. Considering the number of cattle now being handled—I think we were told that this year at Derby there were some 10,000 head going through the abattoirs; at Wyndham some 25,000 head; and at Broome, approximately 24,000 head—something needs to be done. Of course, to those figures can be added the many hundreds which are brought south by ship for the metropolitan market. The cattle industry is a very big one and it makes a big contribution to the economy of Western Australia. It is an industry to which assistance, in the provision of good roads, is very valuable indeed.

I hope that in the light of the experience now being gained in the construction of roads in some of the out-of-the-way places, we might further extend some of the roads used by the cattle producers.

Mr. Rhatigan: We have to keep the electorate of Wellington functioning.

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I know the member for Kimberley has had something to say along these lines, and I offer my support because I consider this is one way in which substantial help can be given to the industry.

The cattle industry is one in respect of which, perhaps, the station people have to help themselves. But when it comes to the provision of roads, that is where they cannot help themselves, and it is one way

the Government can give substantial help for the progress of the industry. I put this observation forward as one of the matters that impressed me during our visit to the north.

I do not want to go into the other aspects of that visit except to say again that the taking of members of Parliament in a group on a tour of inspection, and showing them what is going on and what assistance is being given to particular areas by the Government, and allowing them to form their own opinions as to what is required for the future, is a very worth-while undertaking indeed.

I notice that the Federal Treasurer, in his Budget, has again offered assistance to the farmers of this State—or the farmers of Australia—by way of a subsidy on superphosphate; and in addition a subsidy on nitrogenous fertilisers. The figure of £80 per ton was mentioned for nitrogen.

Mr. Norton: Was the figure £80 or \$80?

Mr. I. W. MANNING: I am sorry; the figure is \$80 per ton. This is a worthwhile move. We in Western Australia will obtain considerable benefit from this subsidy because, as is generally known, throughout the South-West Land Division the soil types are not as rich as those in some other parts—or most other parts—of Australia. Additives to superphosphate such as the minor elements and nitrogenous fertilisers are a real necessity. The subsidy, and the thinking behind the provision of it, will be of tremendous assistance to Western Australia.

Undoubtedly, if the Federal Government saw fit to offer a subsidy after looking at the Australia-wide picture, Western Australia should benefit because of our greater use of, and greater need for, this type of fertiliser.

I want to direct the Government's attention to another matter, one which concerns ex-servicemen. My attention has been drawn to the fact that we offer a great deal of assistance to ex-members of the Navy, Army, and Air Force. There has been some extension of the benefits to eligible merchant navy men. In fact, I think the only assistance given to ex-servicemen which is not given to ex-merchant navy men is the granting of land with conditional purchase benefits. I refer to the benefits offered to ex-servicemen of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. As far as I can ascertain assistance is granted to the merchant navy men under all other headings. What I want to draw the Government's attention to is that if it was good enough to give assistance under all the other headings to merchant navy men, that assistance could well be extended to cover the conditional purchase conditions.

I will read a brief passage from the Land Act. It is from section 139B, and it indicates that assistance may be given to anyone—

—who became a member of any of the

naval, military or air forces of His Majesty the King—

at any time during the period of the war which commenced on the 3rd September, 1939; and that section of the Act also sets out the type of assistance which is given. I would ask the Government to look at this because I think that if assistance has been given under various headings it should also be given under this one.

I notice that one or two other members touched on the question of housing. I have mentioned before, and I would like to reiterate this point, that housing is one means by which we can assist decentralisation. We often find in some of the smaller country towns that there are only one or two applicants for houses. In most cases, in my experience, the need of the people who have made the applications has been considerable and would certainly match any that I know of in the more closely settled areas. However, because of the small number of applicants in those towns, little consideration is given to them. In the interests of the people in those small centres, I think we might have a look at this matter with some sympathy. I also think we can look at this from the point of decentralisation, because if houses are readily and reasonably obtainable in the small country centres it is much easier to get people to live in those places.

One other brief point I want to make is that during my travels and visits to other areas, I have never ceased to be amazed at the great service that is rendered to the State by our senior civil servants. We have many men throughout the Public Service in Western Australia who are making a tremendous contribution to the development of this State, and while we do expect people on the payroll of the State Government to work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., much more is the case with most of our senior men. I take the opportunity, during the debate on this motion, to say that I have noticed, on many occasions, that these people work long hours and work hard—far beyond the call of duty in many cases. It is good to know that this State is so well served by senior public servants.

I would not be prepared to name the people concerned or the departments from which they come, because what I have mentioned applies generally. I have noticed, particularly in recent times, that given the right encouragement by the Ministers in the various departments, it is remarkable to what heights the men can go. I express appreciation for what I have seen of senior civil servants, and for what they are doing.

I, along with other members, regret the departure from this House of Mr. Fred Islip, our ex-senior Clerk. I feel that each of us in this House has come to appreciate what he meant to the Legislative Assembly. I have been in this Chamber

now for some 16 years and during that period I came to appreciate the services which Mr. Islip rendered to the House, and his ready advice to us at any time we sought it. I express appreciation for the service that he rendered to this Chamber and the assistance he gave to me personally.

**MR. W. HEGNEY** (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.13 p.m.]: It is customary for members, when speaking to the Address-in-Reply—or the motion—to refer to matters of interest to their electorates, or to one or more subjects in which they have more than a passing interest. I was impressed the other evening by the contribution made by the member for Perth when he remarked on the necessity to alter the Standing Orders.

At the outset, I wish to make this point that whatever is done in regard to the alteration of Standing Orders, I would urge private members to ensure that the rights which they still have left to them are retained. It has been suggested that speeches are too long; that an hour is given for the Address-in-Reply. What is wrong with an hour for speaking to the Address-in-Reply?

A member: It all depends on who is speaking.

**Mr. W. HEGNEY**: Exactly. And it also depends on the type of electorate. Many members speak for 15 minutes or 30 minutes or 40 minutes, as the case may be, but if a member desires to make a comprehensive examination of the problems of his electorate, where is the place to do it? Where is there a better place than on the floor of the House? This is one opportunity for a private member to speak for an hour if he so desires.

A member who may have a close, compact electorate may have very few problems; but another member with a far-flung electorate and a diversity of interests and industries may require a longer time. He may adopt a different method of presenting his case to Ministers. Why should he not be allowed to carry on as at present? On the supply Bills and the general Estimates he is given another opportunity, but it must be remembered—and I would impress on private members to recognise this—that members, more particularly in the State Parliament, are spokesmen for the individual electors.

They are the spokesmen and the representatives of their particular electorates and, as such, it is their bounden duty to present the viewpoints of their electors, and any problems associated therewith.

I would say that if any attempt is made to curtail, or restrict further the rights of members, I will vigorously oppose it while I am here. As far as I can see there have been no abuses of the Standing Orders, and I suggest to members that they retain the rights they now have.

Also, as regards the matter of questions, with or without notice, a member cannot be expected to be conversant with all subjects or all problems which arise in his electorate and, as a consequence, if a citizen of this country, or an elector asks him to obtain information as soon as he can, and as directly as he can, from the Minister, it should be the right of the member concerned to frame his question as he thinks fit and submit it to the Minister.

Cabinet is responsible to the electorates—to the State—and I would suggest that if there is any curtailment in regard to the framing of questions it will be an infringement of the rights of members and it should be vigorously opposed. Questions without notice are asked at the discretion of the Speaker; and, as far as I can see, over the years there has been no transgression of our rights or privileges, if I may call them that, in this connection.

On the matter of Standing Orders, since they have been quoted, I agree to a certain extent with the member for Perth, who said that the progress of Bills could be expedited.

**Mr. Davies**: Hear, hear!

**Mr. W. HEGNEY**: But, after all, not such a great deal of time is taken up with the first reading; and, initially, only the Minister knows what is in the Bill at that stage. The next day he moves the second reading and then the Committee stage follows. Some members have suggested that certain Bills are not contentious, and that the Committee stage should be expedited.

That is a matter of opinion. With a certain Bill one member may think it is quite all right, and it should be able to go through without any opposition; whereas another member may have a different view. The idea of the Committee stage is to deal with a Bill clause by clause to ensure that nothing is agreed to without due consideration being given to it. Then the third reading takes place shortly after the Committee stage has been agreed to. That is in accordance with our Standing Orders.

However, while speaking of Standing Orders I would like to refer to two or three of them which deal with the opening of Parliament. For some time I have thought that there is a degree of superfluity in the opening of Parliament and the procedures adopted on that day. I would refer members to Standing Order 29 which reads—

When the reasons for calling Parliament together are announced by Commissioners appointed by the Governor, the same forms shall be observed by the Assembly as when the Governor opens Parliament in person.

Standing Order 30 reads—

On the receipt of the Message to attend the Governor to hear his Speech, the Speaker with the House

shall attend at the place appointed by the Governor.

And 31 reads—

The Speaker and the House having heard the Governor's Speech, and being in their own Chamber, the House may then adjourn during pleasure.

And so they go on. I see no reason why we should attend anywhere else at the opening of Parliament; and I believe that the office of State Governor should be abolished. I am not reflecting on any holder of the office, but simply on the office of Governor of this State. I say, without any qualification whatever, that one representative of the Crown in Australia is sufficient. Australia is one country, not six; and why is it necessary to have six representatives of the Crown for 11,000,000 people? Canada has one Governor-General representing the Crown.

It was all right to have a State Governor in 1929; it was all right to have one before 1890, or before 1901, when federation was established. When responsible government was established in Western Australia in 1890 there were six individual States, but in 1901 Australia was woven into one Commonwealth—one indissoluble Commonwealth and not six individual States. Yet we still have the time-honoured custom, or the tradition, of having a representative of the Crown in each and every State.

Incidentally, the boundaries of the States were only theoretical in the earlier years, and everyone knows the history of the development of New South Wales, Port Jackson, Moreton Bay, Port Phillip, Adelaide, the Swan River Colony, and Van Dieman's Land. But we have progressed until now we have one Commonwealth of Australia.

Many years ago Queensland abolished its second Chamber and now there is only one House in that State. Therefore I see no reason to retain the second Chamber here.

In round figures it costs the people of the State between \$80,000 and \$100,000 to maintain the Governor's establishment, and I would think the Government would be well advised to consider abolishing this superfluous office, with all its gubernatorial attachments.

Mr. Bovell: And with it the sovereign rights of the State.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: There are no sovereign rights; and, in any case, if there are, those sovereign rights can be maintained. I am not a constitutional lawyer, but I suggest that this Parliament—not this House—has the undoubted right—the constitutional right—at the moment to pass legislation to abolish the office of Governor and appoint the Chief Justice to carry on with any of the ceremonial work that may be required.

Now to return to the question of the futurity of having two Chambers in this

State. As I have just said, the State of Queensland abolished the second Chamber many years ago and for years now Liberal Governments have carried on with the one Chamber in that State. I understand, too, that in New Zealand the Liberal Government abolished the second Chamber because it was afraid that Labor would gain control of it and obstruct the Government's legislation. However, the point is that those Parliaments are carrying on with one Chamber.

Mr. Court: That is not a good reason for abolishing it.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: When I was very young, and that is a long time ago, I was led to believe that the Upper House, as it is called, or the Legislative Council, or another place, as you would have me call it, Mr. Speaker, or the House of Review, existed to prevent the hasty passing of legislation. However, after I began to take an active interest in politics in this State I found that that was all—

Mr. J. Hegney: Hooley.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: —false. I could use another name for that but, as my brother has just said, I found it to be all hooley.

Mr. Court: You have found it useful on occasions.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I found out very smartly just how much of a party House it was.

Mr. Bickerton: And what a party they have.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: In those days there was a property qualification applied to electors of members of that Chamber, but now the position is even more ridiculous. Can anyone successfully argue the point, or say where there is justification, in a State like Western Australia, with about 870,000 people, and an area of 976,920 square miles, for having two Houses of Parliament elected on the adult franchise basis, one with 50 members—and the number will be increased to 51 in the next Parliament—and one with 30 members?

There are 15 provinces represented in the Council, with two members to each province, and each province averages four or five Assembly electorates. Without introducing the party aspect, while this Government is in power it has a majority in both Houses and it can pass any legislation it likes. It is entitled to do that because the people of the State gave it a majority to carry on with the affairs of the State. But what about the second Chamber? The policy of the Liberal Party is the same in both Houses, and the Country Party is part of the coalition Government. Therefore the other Chamber is merely an echo of this one.

However, when a Labor Government has been in office the Legislative Council has been very obstructive in regard to its legis-

lation. I do not know the actual amount involved, but if the Legislative Council were abolished—and I am sure that if a referendum were taken the majority of the people of this State would be in favour of abolishing it—at least \$300,000 a year would be saved. It would be far better to have three more Ministers in this House. The \$300,000 saved each year could be put to far better use, such as the training of additional teachers, the provision of more classrooms, and so on.

I now wish to refer to the poor performance of this Government in regard to one particular matter which is of vital importance to the industrial workers of this State—the Workers' Compensation Act. I have vivid recollections of the days when £1 was allowed for medical and hospital expenses. Many years ago a Labor Government increased that sum to £100 and, over the years, we on this side of the House have tried to remove from the injured worker all legal liability for hospital and medical expenses. We have by agitation over the years gone a fair distance in this connection but there still remains that liability on the injured worker which we desire removed.

On four occasions I was deputed by the Opposition to introduce motions from this side of the House to try to impress upon the Government—the Liberal Government—the necessity to bring the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act up to date. We know the previous Minister for Labour, acting under instructions from his Government, postponed introducing appropriate legislation.

I do not intend to quote any figures because any member who desires can investigate the position in other States, and in the Commonwealth, but Western Australia is dragging its feet in regard to workers' compensation payments. A few years ago our payments were the average of the other States but now they are well below them. Since a Labor Government was returned to power in South Australia it has done much to improve the position there, and we ask the Minister in charge of the legislation in this State to give serious consideration to the introduction of legislation this session to bring our Workers' Compensation Act into line with modern trends.

If that is done it will at least show the Government has some recognition of the rights of people who may be injured in the course of their employment. I refer now to the question of medical payments, lump-sum payments for injured workers, and payments to dependants of deceased workers, apart altogether from hospital and medical expenses.

As regards the State Government Insurance Office, on five different occasions I was deputed by the Labor Government to introduce legislation to provide that the

activities of that office be extended to enable it to engage in all forms of insurance. Of course, we had a majority in the Legislative Assembly, elected by the people; but when the legislation passed this House on those five occasions it was defeated in another place. In fact, on one occasion the Bill passed the second reading stage and the General Manager of the State Government Insurance Office, whom I met in the passage said to me, "I think the Bill will go through." I replied, "You had better wait for the third reading to be passed." About half an hour afterwards the third reading of the Bill was taken and it was defeated. I mention that as a matter of interest to illustrate how legislation can be destroyed.

I now wish to refer to another subject which is of importance not only to the working people but also to small tradespeople. I refer to the hesitancy of the Government in introducing restrictive trade practices legislation. Some years ago the Government introduced a Bill which became known as the Trade Associations Registration Act, but it is innocuous, harmless, and has done nothing to protect the small traders of Western Australia; and, as the member for Victoria Park has pointed out, collusive tendering still continues. Some people call it "conscious parallelism". It is collusive tendering, and I am satisfied the Government is paying a great deal more for the materials and goods it purchases under the present unrestricted system than it would pay if there were legislation on the Statute book which was based on lines similar to the restrictive trade practices legislation. If this legislation were in operation it would prevent collusive tendering and would prevent people from conspiring—that is my word for it—to rob the Government and anyone else they can.

I know there are small business people in this community who are pressurised into doing certain things, otherwise they would not be supplied with materials and goods which are necessary for the conduct of their businesses. It took the Commonwealth Government about five years to pass the Trade Practices Act now on the Statute book. I followed the passage of the legislation very closely from the time it was handled by Sir Garfield Barwick; and now I find, after about four or five years, that a conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers has been held; and we are entitled to know, as representatives of the people of this State, what the Government proposes to do following the passing of this Commonwealth law. We want to know whether it proposes to shelve legislation relating to it and do nothing about it, because it is necessary for the State, together with other States, to pass complementary legislation to give full effect to the Trade Practices Act.

**MR. KELLY** (Merredin-Yilgarn) [8.33 p.m.]: I join with other members in making a brief comment on the very meritorious services rendered to this House by Mr. Fred Islip who retired only recently and who, I am certain, has been instrumental in imparting at least some knowledge of parliamentary procedure to many new members in not only a friendly, but also in a very helpful way. I also wish to congratulate those officers who, on Mr. Islip's retirement, have moved up the ladder and are now occupying the next grade in the important positions held by officers of Parliament.

Whilst in this frame of mind I express my appreciation to the Minister for the North-West and to the officers under his charge who were responsible for arranging a trip by members of both Houses of Parliament to the north of this State. I am sure I can say that all members were highly impressed with the trip, and would consider that the Minister and the Government should be congratulated on the decision to send members of the parties of both Houses into the north-west to enable them to see, perhaps for the first time, much of the wealth that exists there, and the methods that are now being used to develop it.

In view of the way the trip was organised, and the enlightenment and educational value that each member gained from it, the trip could easily be described as flawless. The only desire that members may have had lay in the hope that the little "tongue" in the whistle that was blown by the Minister would fall out at some time or another. However, that did not happen, although I think he did ease off a bit with it towards the end of the trip.

I have one or two minor matters to bring forward which concern the Minister for Works.

**Mr. Bickerton:** You will not get any satisfaction from him!

**MR. KELLY:** The Minister need not develop any ulcers in anticipation of what I am about to say. Members will probably have noticed that on the extreme edges of some of our main highways a white line has been painted, which is very distinct. It marks the edge of the road, between the bitumen and the gravel, very clearly, and it is very effective. I have heard a great deal of comment about this white line from people who have found it extremely helpful at night, and, conversely, I have not heard one single adverse criticism of it.

I now wish to express the hope that the Minister has every intention of painting a similar white line on the edges of the roadway on all the main highways of the State.

**Mr. Craig:** It is gradually being extended to all highways.

**MR. KELLY:** I understand that it comes under the Minister's department, does it not?

**Mr. Craig:** No; it comes under the jurisdiction of my colleague, the Minister for Works.

**MR. KELLY:** However, when all the edges of the main highways are painted with a white line I am certain it will eliminate, to a great extent, many of the accidents that now occur on our main roads. There are many drivers who are nervous of going too close to the edge of the road and, as a result, they drive too near to the centre of the road and very often accidents occur.

**Mr. Craig:** It also serves to protect the road edges.

**MR. KELLY:** I suppose it would have that effect, too. The other matter I wish to raise, which also concerns the Minister for Works, relates to road signs. In this instance the comments I have heard have not been very complimentary to the Minister. I am referring to the signs which have been placed at intervals along the Great Eastern Highway on which are painted the numerals "94". Many people consider that this sign is incomplete and that it is not readily understood by a great number of people, particularly travellers from the Eastern States, and also those people who have not resided in the State for any length of time. The sign is just an enigma to many of those people.

**Mr. Ross Hutchinson:** It is a standard sign.

**MR. KELLY:** It is a standard sign so far as the numerals "94" are concerned.

**Mr. Ross Hutchinson:** It follows the same system that is used in the Eastern States.

**MR. KELLY:** But that does not mean it conveys a clear meaning to motorists. We have various signs erected along our highways which indicate to the motorist the speed limit, the position of truck bays, curves in the road, and so on. All those signs, however, are indicative of what they are supposed to represent.

**Mr. Craig:** The member for Balcatta said there should not be any wording at all on signs erected at the sides of roads.

**MR. KELLY:** The Minister would know that in all countries where signs are erected on the highways to indicate the number of the highway, there is some further indication to indicate to motorists that it is the highway number. Therefore, I am of the opinion it is not too late for the signs that are already erected on the Great Eastern Highway to be fitted with some plate or device on which is painted the word "highway."

**Mr. Rushton:** I think they are shown on the mileposts in the Eastern States.

Mr. KELLY: That may be so, but in overseas countries the signs that are erected are not small by any means. In fact, they are large signs on which are painted the word and numerals "Highway 101", or whatever the number of the highway may be.

Mr. Davies: What about "route"?

Mr. KELLY: The member for Victoria Park suggested that the word "route" be used. I am not particular which word is used as long as it gives to the motorist some indication of what it is meant to convey.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The member for Balcatta did not seem to think that was a good idea.

Mr. KELLY: There would be a lot of opinions on this subject, but the practice of showing the word "highway" on the sign is widespread. Even if the existing signs on our highways are not altered, I would point out that they are rather small. Most countries overseas seem to take greater pride in their highways because, when indicating the highway number, they use a much larger sign.

I am firmly convinced that the word "highway" could be painted on to the existing sign, or a small plate fitted to the same post to indicate what the sign really means. I think that would have an extremely good effect and would be the means of eliminating any controversy or adverse comments from motorists. After all is said and done, the figures on the sign are quite meaningless except to those who know it is highway 94. For those who do not know, it is just left to their imagination to work out what the numerals mean. I am quite sure there are many people who would use that highway for the first time and would not know what the numerals meant.

I bring that matter to the Minister's notice, because my attention has been drawn to it on many occasions, and if the Minister agreed to add the word "highway" to the sign, it would be a great improvement.

I now wish to speak on the subject of copper. Once again it is found that copper has not only hit the headlines, but has also affected the economy of many countries. I think some reference was made to copper by the member for Victoria Park and the member for Wellington. I know that on several occasions in this House in the past reference has been made to copper, but mainly because it is used in the manufacture of superphosphate. On this occasion, however, the increase in the price of copper has been much greater, and its effect has been more widespread, than any increase has been in the past.

As I mentioned a moment ago, previously an increase in the price of copper was felt, because it was reflected in the price of superphosphate, and its cost of man-

ufacture. Very little effect was felt in other parts of the State, or in other countries. With this recent price increase, however, the price of householders' lines will be affected. The price increase will also have a bearing on the cost of motorcars, on copper pipe, and copper fittings, and even on the cost of brass fittings. What relationship there is between brass and copper in regard to the manufacture of various brass fittings, I would not know, but apparently there is some reason for the extremely steep rise in the price of brass fittings as well as copper fittings, and there is no doubt this will have a detrimental effect throughout the whole of this State.

This is the second price disturbance in 12 months, but by far the worst we have had in 25 years. At times during the World War the prices of all minerals fluctuated considerably. Any increase in the price of minerals that took place during the war was determined according to the importance a particular mineral had from the point of view of the war effort.

These very acute fluctuations in the price of copper are not justified. It is all very well to say that certain factors influence the price in some countries, but that does not detract from the fact that there is no less quantity of copper being manufactured in Australia today compared with two or even seven years ago. In most of the countries where copper is being recovered in large quantities, the labour costs are not high. Perhaps the custom of those countries is that there is not a need for a high remuneration of the work force. Nevertheless, now and again we are held to ransom in some form or other in the determination of the price of copper.

On this occasion we are told that the high cost in Chile and Zambia, I think, has brought about the very steep increase in price. It seems rather ridiculous that we in Australia—which is producing in Mt. Isa alone somewhere in the order of 80,000 tons a year, and elsewhere smaller amounts—should have to face the steep increase in price when our total consumption is only 90,000 tons. Yet we permit copper to be exported from Western Australia.

I consider that the outlook of both the Commonwealth and the State Governments on copper is far too casual. No great attempt has been made by those Governments to play any part in either keeping the prices of copper within bounds, or carrying out exploratory work to bring about a greater supply of copper and therefore a better control of world prices.

As a matter of fact, the price structure of copper at present is completely out of hand. There are no two ways about that, and there is no other way of looking at the situation. The price structure has reached an astronomical level, and the steep increase will, undoubtedly, have an

effect on many of the activities in the lives of the Australian people.

I understand one of the earlier estimates of the effect of the rise in the price of copper on the Australian economy is somewhere in the vicinity of \$30,000,000. That is only a guess, and my guess is that it will be much higher than that, because there is hardly an avenue where the effect of this steep rise will not be felt. Because of that it looks as if the time is ripe when some remedial action should, at least, be taken by both the Commonwealth and State Governments, if we are to rectify this very unsatisfactory position.

Towards the end of April, 1966, Zambian copper producers increased the price from \$840 to about \$1,250 a ton, but the London Metal Exchange quotations on the very same day reached \$1,567 a ton, I am told. I said there was no justification for such steep rises. I think the figures given in relation to the rise in the price of copper indicate very clearly that some funny business is going on.

I saw a reference to the figure which will apply to the people in Britain from the point of view of house construction, where copper is used for water reticulation and for other purposes. It was estimated there would be a rise of \$125 a house. This is a tremendous rise, when it is viewed in terms of the whole nation. Here in Australia where the home-building rate is continuing to grow the effect will be even greater than in some of the other countries.

On the 27th April last I read that an assurance had been given by the Mt. Isa company that local copper would remain at \$870 a ton, but on the 17th of this month we find that copper rose in price to \$1,250 a ton. Very quickly following on that \$1,250 figure being reached, we were told that the price would be dropped by \$100 a ton, and the new price would be \$1,150 a ton. But this is still an exorbitant price which industry, particularly primary industry, will pay; and it will pay a big swag of the total increase. Added to that is the fact that every home being built will be affected in some way or another, and so will the Government to a lesser or larger degree.

Why we in Australia should be related to the London Metal Exchange I do not know. It looks as if we are to be so related for all similar transactions in the future. This is difficult to understand, particularly when within Australia we are producing sufficient copper for the whole of the country's requirements. Evidently some monkey business is going on! It is high time the Government stepped in and took some action.

Several suggestions come to my mind as to the steps the Government could take. It could appoint a top-ranking official or a three-man commission to work out effective measures for the immediate control of all copper.

In speaking of copper, I naturally include copper scrap because it is in this field that a tremendous profit is being raked off by secondhand dealers throughout this and other States. To overcome the law as it now stands, these people, I am told, burn old wire and copper and do all sorts of things with copper generally to make it into sheet form. They wind it around drums and it then becomes a manufactured article. If that is not sheer deviation, I do not know what is!

I do not know why the State Government cannot adopt the outlook that copper is just as essential to us as iron ore, gold, or anything else. Perhaps it is a lot more so, because not very many people use iron ore, but a tremendous number use copper. The time is ripe for the Government to subsidise the search for copper. I do not say that the present Government is the only one at fault, but very little has been done in regard to copper. The present Government, perhaps wisely in many ways, encourages the search by private enterprise for minerals. Perhaps that relieves the Government of some responsibility, but where copper is concerned not much interest is displayed.

A few parties are engaged searching for copper, but not many. I asked some questions recently as to the term used in His Excellency's Speech. It was a very nice adjective, but apparently did not mean very much.

The time has come when we as a State should undertake a much more intensive search for copper than has ever been undertaken in the past. In order to encourage men to look for this mineral, a subsidy should be placed on it. No great rush will occur and therefore it will not be beyond the Government's means to provide the necessary money. It is rather a difficult mineral to find and the search in the past has been on a hit-and-miss basis instead of being organised. Such an organised search is warranted because of the wealth to be gained from the mineral.

The Government should also encourage financially the research into the upgrading of new and known deposits. Surface finds exist all over Western Australia and very little extension work has been carried out on them. In some cases the original prospector has worked on a very slender purse. He has mined some of the metal, collected a small parcel together, and taken it to the nearest treatment plant capable of handling copper residues, only to find that the grade was too low for him to proceed.

In most of these cases only the surface has been scratched and the copper lode would not have settled down. This has been the procedure for the past 25 to 30 years and no tangible results have been achieved because of the methods adopted and the lack of financial backing. Therefore in most cases the only ore that has



been crushed or treated has been weather-beaten, poor-quality ore which has not given a true indication of the quality of the ore at any great depth.

I could name 20 or 30 instances where such ventures have been commenced, but very soon deserted because the grade was found to be too low. The next move should be an attempt to upgrade the copper. I have heard it said that to do that is expensive. The installation of plant would be expensive, but so is copper at \$1,200 a ton. The situation has been reached where any further rise could quite easily create a minor upset not only in Western Australia, but throughout the rest of the world.

We should keep this problem foremost in our minds and endeavour to upgrade our copper in order that we might be able to utilise it. I am sure that this would be much cheaper in the long run than to buy copper at the high price it is bringing now.

Another matter which has been talked of many times in the eastern goldfields is the establishment of a treatment plant. One did exist in Kalgoorlie for quite a long time, but its methods were rather obsolete. Nevertheless over a period of years many crushings were treated and reasonable results were obtained. The time has arrived for the establishment of a modern, up-to-date plant in the eastern goldfields as near as possible to the known deposits. It should be placed in an advantageous position so that the ore which, although of a low standard, is sufficiently good enough to warrant a treatment plant, can be treated.

Even if the price of copper fell back to \$780, which it was originally, it would still be far too dear, but at the present time it is not within reach of the reasonable price which has been maintained over the years.

Finally, I think the same practice which has applied over the years in connection with the recovery of gold, where there is a method of subsidising cartage by prospectors, should be used. I think the subsidy is somewhere in the vicinity of 12s. 6d. per ton mile, or something like that. Prospectors throughout Western Australia have, over a period of years, been able to exist on this maintenance money and, in many cases, have completely justified the expenditure by the State by eventually getting on to very good gold. Of course, in doing so, they have repaid the amount of money that was advanced to them.

A cartage subsidy is one way to help copper production because the copper lodes are over a fairly large area of the State. Naturally, some of the hauls would be quite long to get the ore to the central plant. I think the time is right for the Government to go all out to bring about this change. There has never been a time in the history

of Western Australia when we have been in a worse position as regards copper.

So I bring these matters to the attention of the Government because I genuinely feel we can help to stem this very difficult situation that has arisen. I do not think the extremely high prices will prevail indefinitely; there will be a levelling out. Perhaps it will be within the next six months and will bring the price down considerably from what it is today, but not sufficiently to advantage the industry as it deserves. I would conclude on that note and ask the Government to examine thoroughly the possibility of bringing about a greater production of copper by the various means which I have suggested. I look forward to seeing some remedial action taken within the near future.

**MR. CORNELL** (Mt. Marshall) [9.4 p.m.]: I understand that I am the last batsman in, but I will not last long. Arthur Mailey, who played cricket for N.S.W., used to say that when he went in to bat the horse automatically backed into the shafts of the roller.

There are only a couple of things I wish to say. Current day journalism seems to have resolved into the summing up of the happenings of the week into a few brief remarks, and I might adopt that attitude by summing up the position as I see it: Boys' hair gets longer; girls' skirts get shorter; the Address-in-Reply gets drearier; and the Press coverage of Parliament gets scantier.

The Address-in-Reply has staggered to a close; and I, with many others in this Chamber, very gravely doubt its wisdom. I have listened to various speeches by various members. I have drunk milk with the member for Murray in his electorate; I have patiently sat and watched the member for Dale vigorously wield the parish pump; I have been to the Wyndham Meat Works with the member for Kimberley; and I have, in spirit, visited the electorates of other members.

I was not here last night when the member for Avon made his speech, but I understand that he rose at 6 o'clock this morning and made a persistent search through *The West Australian* for some reference to his speech. He ultimately ran out of news when he reached the death notices.

I do not know what is happening to the Press, but I hope *The West Australian* does not employ cost accountants, because it would get a shock if they looked at the cost of reporting the parliamentary debates. At least, of course, whilst the reporters are not reporting the parliamentary debates, they cannot be accused of misreporting and be put on the mat for stating that a member said certain things which the member denies.

Of course, that would not be new. I

came across an extract from the London *Spectator* of the 16th June, 1866, in which the then Prince of Wales took the Press to task because it misreported him.

The Prince was apparently laying a foundation stone and he made reference to the fact that "with the sanction of the Royal predecessor of my mother," to wit, Queen Elizabeth. Some ill-natured reporter wrote, "ancestor", instead of "predecessor" and the Prince was a good deal quizzed for tracing his ancestry to a maiden Queen.

So, at least, 100 years ago the Press was being accused of misreporting. So if that occurred when journalism was really a profession, what would happen today?

The member for Perth advocated the streamlining of our parliamentary procedure. There is nothing new in that, of course, and it seems the proposition has been exercising the minds of some members of the House of Commons who consider that the procedure there is also in need of some speeding up. The London *Spectator* again has some comment on that. It says that the reasons are many and varied, but the present reason appears to be that—

The intake of new Labour MPs were impatient not only of parliamentary proceduralism, but also of the personal inconvenience to which, owing to the smallness of the Government's majority, they were subjected.

They did not, at any rate, change their views at once—for a fair proportion of the 1964 intake, though hardly converted to traditionalism, are now somewhat less radical on parliamentary reform than they used to be.

They reckon that once a man gets into Parliament, he is soon knocked into shape.

The *Spectator* goes on to say—

No sooner had the 1964 intake begun to mellow, however, than they were followed by the numerically larger intake of 1966, who were, if anything, even more enthusiastic about the reform of Parliament.

The *Spectator* also states—

At the outset we are confronted by a difficulty. The various supporters of parliamentary reform have different and sometimes inconsistent purposes in mind. It would be tempting to follow the Non-conformist preacher who declaimed: "And here, friends, I see a difficulty in our path. Let us look it fearlessly in the eye, and pass on." However, the whole problem will be clearer, though its solution will inevitably be less tidy, if some account is given of the varying objects which contemporary reformers have before them.

Parliamentary reform, it is claimed, will "save time". This is all very well until one inquires whose time it is

that is to be saved. The Government's? Or the official Opposition's? Or the back-benchers'?

Then the article states—

But the real method of increasing the prestige of Parliament, one is told, is not to fiddle with procedure but to restore to the back-bencher the power and the independence that he once possessed and has now lost.

I think the writer of the article I have quoted sums up the position very well when he concludes by saying that his final prediction is that, "despite all this, the Executive will remain firmly in control of the House". How right he is! However, we have the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech and that poses the question of whether it should not be dispensed with for two years of the Parliament.

The Premier has said he proposes to follow tradition and have only one sitting of Parliament. Here let me interpolate by saying that there again we mellow as we proceed along the tortuous path of parliamentary procedure. For instance—if my memory serves me aright—the Minister for Lands, when he was a private member, delivered several homilies on the necessity, and the desirability, of two sessions of Parliament. However, since he has been a Minister, of course he has been pulled into line and one never hears a great deal from him about two sessions of Parliament.

Mr. Bovell: I have had far greater experience since those days.

Mr. CORNELL: I can also remember that on several occasions when the then member for East Perth, now the member for Balcatta, was in opposition he advocated that there should be daylight sittings of Parliament. However, when he became a member of a Government, daylight sittings of Parliament passed into limbo and we still sat up halfway through the night in order to pass legislation. As one cynic said: The fact that we passed legislation under the light of the moon was proof conclusive of how silly some of it was.

However, I must return to the Address-in-Reply. To my mind, the opening of Parliament also could be restricted to once in every three years. After all, what is the opening of Parliament but a parade for the fashion-conscious to display their wares once a year? If anyone got up in the House on opening day and delayed the procedure of Parliament for anything beyond the established hour, probably he would be stoned out of the House. It is a colossal time-waster and, in my view, the question of restricting the opening of Parliament to once every three years would mean that the consequential Address-in-Reply would be safely eliminated for two of the three years which comprise a session of Parliament.

The Address-in-Reply only enables members to wend from Dan to Beersheba

and to raise all kinds of matters when, possibly, they could get better results by making an approach to the appropriate Ministers. After all, *Hansard* has such a limited circulation—I think each member is entitled to eight copies—that when a member does get into *Hansard*, whatever he says in Parliament is not very widely read, because of the limited circulation.

In any event, that is my idea of one method of streamlining parliamentary procedures.

Before sitting down, I would like to add to the remarks of the member who has just resumed his seat by paying a tribute to Mr. Fred Islip, who has retired as an officer of this Parliament after over 50 years of service. I once told Fred Islip that he was one of the few people who graced this House and who had no right of reply. At least, he had no right of audible reply! I know for a fact that what he thought of a lot of members who wasted time in this House was unprintable. However, he has retired after a long, long service in the Parliament of Western Australia; and may the years ahead—for himself and his wife—be most enjoyable.

To the officers who have taken over from Mr. Islip, I congratulate them on their preferment and wish them well in their offices. I look to them for the same guidance that characterised Mr. Islip's sojourn in his office.

I trust that, with the disposal of the Address-in-Reply without amendment, we will be able to get down to running the business of the country. I support the motion.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

## STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

### *Convening of Meeting*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman) [9.14 p.m.]: With the indulgence of the House—and I do not wish the members of this House to get the idea that I wish to ask their indulgence too frequently, although this is the second time within two days that it has happened—I would like to announce that I have been asked by the Premier to convene the Standing Orders Committee. I informed the Premier that I proposed to do so after the Address-in-Reply had finished in order that any members who might wish to make a contribution along those lines would be enabled to do so before the committee met.

I might add that this is the first time I have received a formal request for the convening of this committee—the Premier wrote to me.

I would like to say that my own attitude towards changing Standing Orders is, of course, that I have no objection to change. The whole of the British par-

liamentary institution has only been able to remain in existence because of its capacity to change and to adapt itself to changing conditions. However, I think that change should be very carefully considered and, as at least one member suggested tonight, it should be a change made after mature consideration—that is, if we are to change our Standing Orders—and not just simply for the sake of change.

I think it would be a fair question if members were to ask themselves, "What do we expect from Standing Orders?" It might be as well to remember that all Standing Orders are primarily designed to expedite Government business. In other words, they tend to work to the advantage of the Government and to the disadvantage of the Opposition and, perhaps, the private member.

It is true that the usages of the House go back for many hundreds of years—in fact, the origin of some of the practices are lost in antiquity. However, it is also true that in 1840—when the first edition of Erskine May's work came out—there were only 14 Standing Orders in the House of Commons. Therefore, the development of Standing Orders in parliamentary history is a relatively new one. Actually, the great majority of the Standing Orders in the House of Commons—which, in any case, only amounted to putting into writing for the most part practices that had been observed previously—occurred between, perhaps, 1870 and about 1890.

I believe it has been suggested that the reason for the development of the Standing Orders was the somewhat obstructive tactics that were resorted to by certain Irish representatives in Parliament who, at that time, were pressing for home rule. Possibly, as a result of this, the opportunities and activities of private members and back-benchers were somewhat restricted.

Members should not only ask themselves what they expect from Standing Orders and what the object is of Standing Orders but, also, what the purposes of parliamentary debates are. Is it the intention that, as a result of debate in the House, the legislation that is proposed should be further improved and refined; or is it the intention merely that the process of introducing and passing legislation should be more or less to put a rubber stamp on decisions that have been taken by the Government of the day? If the debates are not of a standard which has this refining effect on legislation, then, of course, there will be the tendency to develop a sort of "rubber stamp approach" to parliamentary procedure.

As to Parliamentary procedure, if the calibre of the debate is high enough, Parliament is fulfilling its proper function; and the cut and thrust of parliamentary debate was originally intended to develop as being a means of improving legislation.

I am of the opinion that Standing Orders do not have a great deal to do with the standard of debate. To a very large extent, the standard of debate depends on the ability of the members, the amount of work they are prepared to perform in preparing their speeches, and the amount of research they are prepared to make, together with the degree of responsibility they are prepared to accept. These are the factors which really make for good debate.

We have had quoted various examples of the procedures followed in other Parliaments. These can be very useful guides; but here again one should ask oneself whether the circumstances and conditions under which other Parliaments work are completely applicable to the Parliament of Western Australia, and, also, whether they are completely desirable. The Parliament of Jersey Island has been quoted and our attention drawn to the number of sessions that are held by that Parliament, and a comparison was made with the number of sessions held by that Parliament and the number held by the Parliament of Western Australia. I have been to Jersey Island and I have seen its Parliament, but it was not in session whilst I was there. It is only an island, of course, about the size of Rottnest, and it is true that it has a very efficient Parliament, and we probably could learn a great deal from it. However, I do pose the question of whether we would want to do everything that the Jersey Island Parliament does.

The Premier might like to know that the members of that Parliament are not paid, and I was wondering whether the member who was so anxious to quote the example of the Jersey Island Parliament to us would like to follow its example in that connection as well. I think he may have second thoughts on the matter.

The Federal Parliament has also been quoted to us as an example. This is a Parliament from which I think we could benefit; but it must be remembered that the responsibility, the closeness to their electors, and the type of work members do in the Commonwealth Parliament is rather different from the work that we do. Also, at the moment—through no fault of any member in the Federal House—we have very few members in that House who have ever served their full apprenticeship; that is, who have sat both in Government and in Opposition, and one does wonder whether the procedures and the decisions that might be made on Standing Orders in a House in which the vast majority of members have not had experience of both sides of the House should necessarily be the ones that we should accept as shining examples.

I would like to point out that the Standing Orders Committee will be convened as soon as possible. In the meantime, as

the desire has been expressed for the transaction of our business to be carried out more expeditiously, I would suggest that under the existing Standing Orders there is considerable opportunity for speeding up our business. For instance, it has been suggested that we should adopt the Federal system of programming Bills: that the second reading conclude at a certain stage; that the committee stage conclude at a certain time; and the third reading finish at a certain time. We could achieve much the same effect in this House with greater ease than is done in the Federal House where a motion is brought forward which covers all sections of the debate and which, of course, becomes completely binding on the presiding officer.

I suggest to the Government, and to the Opposition, that it would be possible, if they so desired, for a Minister to introduce a Bill on Thursday afternoon and to indicate that the Government expected the debate on the second reading to conclude on the subsequent Tuesday. This would give an indication to the House of what the Government had in mind. We have provision in our Standing Orders to move for a debate to be closed at any time. So it would be possible, in this House, to give an indication, without being completely binding, that the second reading of a Bill could be expected to be concluded, and so everybody would be given full warning, under our existing Standing Orders, of the intention.

This would mean, if this procedure were adopted, that the Government would have some flexibility. For example, if the time for asking questions were extended beyond the normal time, and there happened to be some unexpected delays brought about by, say, an urgency motion, allowance could be made for these delays and the time for the conclusion of the debate could be extended to meet the convenience of the House.

Various suggestions have also been put forward to speed up our Committee procedures. I would point out that our procedures in Committee are virtually lifted straight from the procedures in the House of Commons, which were introduced in that House, of course, for the purpose of expediting business. The only difference in this House is that, when necessary, we form a Committee of the whole; whereas in the House of Commons, a relatively small Committee is formed from about 630 members to consider a Bill and it reports back to the House. Thus the significance of the Bill is known on receipt of the report from the Committee. The House does not lose control of the Committee, but this system does mean that the work of the Committee is done outside the normal sitting hours of the House, and it is a procedure which has, unquestionably, speeded up the work of the House of Commons.

I am not suggesting that this short cut is a procedure which this House would wish to adopt; I am just pointing out that this system could be implemented under our Standing Orders if it were so desired.

Finally, I wish to say that any criticism levelled against the Speaker is not taken by me as being personal. I believe it is quite right and proper for the Speaker to be criticised by the House. After all is said and done, he is appointed by the House, and he only remains in his position for as long as the House so desires. For the Speaker to be criticised by people outside the House is an entirely different matter, but I repeat that any member of the House is entitled to express his view on any action taken by the Speaker. I do not take such criticism personally, and I thank the House for the indulgence it has shown towards me.

### BILLS (12): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill.
2. Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act Amendment Bill.  
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Bovell (Minister for Lands), and read a first time.
3. Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Bill.
4. State Housing Act Amendment Bill.  
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. O'Neil (Minister for Housing), and read a first time.
5. Painters' Registration Act Amendment Bill.
6. Main Roads Act Amendment Bill.  
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Minister for Works), and read a first time.
7. Potato Growing Industry Trust Fund Act Amendment Bill.
8. Brands Act Amendment Bill.
9. Grain Pool Act Amendment Bill.  
Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.
10. Country High School Hostels Authority Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education), and read a first time.
11. Aerial Spraying Control Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture), and read a first time.
12. Licensing Act Amendment Bill.  
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. May, and read a first time.

*House adjourned at 9.39 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

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

### QUESTIONS (19): ON NOTICE

#### RETAIL TRADES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

##### *Female Representation*

1. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Labour:
  - (1) Are any of those named on the Retail Trades Advisory Committee of feminine gender?
  - (2) If not, and on the grounds that wives and/or mothers are principal purchasers of household goods and generally have a better evaluation of quality and price, on