

I have mentioned; namely, the flow of water, the storage of water, the generation of electricity, and any underground work.

All these works will be subject to contract in the first instance and it will then be necessary to engage a consulting engineer before the authority will even move into the field. Every exercise of this nature must have the Minister's approval. Consequently we are safeguarded in that respect. The corporation could not come in and override our authority.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I knew all that, but the point I raised has not been covered. In the operation of clause 3(2) what will happen if the Minister refuses to give his consent? If a private organisation decides to call tenders and the corporation makes the best offer but the Minister withholds his consent, what will be the position? As I read it, it means that every such exercise shall be the subject of the approval of the Minister.

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I feel it means exactly what it says.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Don't tell me!

The Hon. J. DOLAN: I am sure the Minister would need to have grave reasons for doing something of that nature. I am not referring to this Parliament or to any previous Parliament when I say that over the years Ministers have done things which probably would not have been approved of by the general public or by the Parliament. In these circumstances when it says that approval is necessary, it means just that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Approval has to be obtained in every exercise?

The Hon. J. DOLAN: There are numerous matters on which the Minister must give his approval, but many of them we take for granted. In this case I am sure we could take for granted that the Minister would give his permission except in unusual circumstances.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I believe the passage of this Bill is nothing more or less than a public relations exercise between the Commonwealth and the State.

The Hon. J. Dolan: It started with the former Prime Minister and the former Premier.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That makes no difference to me.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 9.59 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 25th August, 1971

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

QUESTIONS (29): ON NOTICE

1.

TIMBER

Royalties

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Minister for Forests:

- (1) Is he aware that the recently announced increase of timber royalties will cause some hardship within the timber industry?
- (2) Did the industry receive any prior advice of this matter?
- (3) Has the industry made any submission to him regarding the royalty increase; and, if so, of what nature and on what matters?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) Yes, however, the need of the Forests Department to continue its essential work on maintenance, re-establishment and protection of forests justifies this increase. The last royalty increase was 1st January, 1970, and since that date, wages have increased by 24%.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes. The submission was of a general nature, and listed the many factors that the industry considered should be taken into account in the deliberations of Cabinet.

2. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE IN JAPAN

Return to Western Australia

Mr. REID, to the Premier:

- (1) When will the official representative of the Government of Western Australia at present stationed in Tokyo, Japan, return to Western Australia?
- (2) What will be the duration of this visit?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The term of office of the present occupant of the position in Tokyo will expire in May, 1972.
- (2) This will depend upon the time then required for business consultations and the officer's own wishes in respect to recreation leave.

3. LAND

National Parks and Reserves: Area

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What percentage of Western Australia is set aside for national parks and for other types of reserves?
- (2) How does this figure compare with those for other States?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) The land set apart as reserves for all purposes, as at 18th August, 1971, comprised 14.5% of the area of the State.
- (2) The following percentages have been calculated from information given in the most recent edition of the Commonwealth Year Book.

| | % |
|-----------------|------|
| New South Wales | 8 |
| Queensland | 6.6 |
| Victoria | 15.9 |
| South Australia | 9.4 |
| Tasmania | 38.8 |

It should be noted that these percentages are not directly comparable, since the purposes for which reserves are declared, and the methods of recording these reserves vary from State to State.

4. EDUCATION

School Grounds: Improvements

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Treasurer:

Now that the announcement has been made by the Premier that the State's finances are not as serious as previously intimated, will he immediately approve the continuance of the many school ground developments and reticulation systems (some jointly with the parents and citizens' associations) which he has deferred, including—

- (a) Westfield primary school's urgent ground development;
- (b) Kingsley primary school reticulation scheme;
- (c) Kelmscott primary school ground development—safety measures to be in conjunction with the building of the Orlando Street bridge?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

Further consideration will be given to works of this nature when the budgets for this year are finalised.

5. HEALTH

Vegetables: Level of Insecticides

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister for Health:

With reference to question 9 on 19th August, 1971, regarding testing the level of insecticides in

vegetables, will he supply details of the results of such testing over the past 12 months?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

The testing of vegetables referred to by the Member is part of a regular sampling programme conducted by the Department of Primary Industry on fruit, vegetables and other produce coming on to the domestic and export market. The produce sampled is representative of food consumed in Western Australia and the results are made available to relevant State Departments on a confidential basis. I am consequently unable to supply details of these results but in general it may be said that many articles are completely free of residues resulting from pesticide use in agricultural practice, and where residues are detected, they are almost always present only in minute traces well below accepted tolerances of Australian and overseas authorities.

6. ROCKINGHAM-KWINANA HOSPITAL

Planning and Construction

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Have the alterations to the initial plan for the Rockingham-Kwinana Hospital, requested at the departmental planning meeting on 30th April been completed?
- (2) If "No" when will they be completed?
- (3) What were the alterations requested?
- (4) Has the Public Works Department completed the design of this building?
- (5) If "No" when will the design be completed?
- (6) Have the private architects been commissioned to prepare the contract documents?
- (7) If "No" when will they be commissioned?
- (8) Does the Government still consider the building of this hospital an urgent priority?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Answered by (1).
- (3) Relocation of departments to provide improved work flows.
- (4) No.
- (5) Approximately two months.
- (6) No.

- (7) Not determined. If Public Works Department staff are available at the time a private architect may not be commissioned.
- (8) Whilst it has a high priority, there are more urgent projects.

7. EDUCATION

Country Tours: M.T.T. Buses

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Government directed the M.T.T. not to accept country bus tours organised by schools?
- (2) If so, how many tours have been declined?
- (3) What are the details of the declined applications or requests for M.T.T. buses for school children's tours?
- (4) Will he advise the policy now and previously applying?
- (5) How many touring parties have had to be cancelled because of the changed policy?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) No. The policy being followed was agreed by Railways and M.T.T. during the previous Government's term.
- (2) Tours have not been declined but enquiries are referred by the M.T.T. to the Railway Department.
- (3) See answer to (2).
- (4) There has always been a restriction on M.T.T. buses running country tours.
- (5) The question is irrelevant because there has been no changed policy.

8. FREMANTLE HOSPITAL

Additional Beds

Mr. FLETCHER, to the Minister for Health:

Adverting to my questions 17 and 18 of 30th October, 1969, regarding need for additional Fremantle Hospital beds—

- (1) In view of the—
 - (a) progressive population explosion in areas served by Fremantle Hospital; and
 - (b) the consequent progressive decline in bed ratio per 1,000 of population,
 has there been any advancement in the 1973 anticipated date of completion of the first 150 additional beds?
- (2) Is the delay in commencement of Rockingham and Bulls Creek hospitals associated with intentions to spend

any available finance on expansion of alternative Fremantle Hospital accommodation?

- (3) Is he aware that drawings and detailed plans, previously requested, now exist for the two 150 bed blocks facing South Terrace?
- (4) Is finance available this financial year for commencement of any part of the planned expansion; if not, when can it commence?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) No.
- (3) No. Detailed plans are not available. Planning is still being developed.
- (4) Money will not be available, or needed, for either of the 150 bed blocks in the current financial year. Plans and documents will not be ready in time. It is expected that some loan funds will be available for work at the Fremantle Hospital on the casualty centre and perhaps the kitchen and cafeteria.

9. HEALTH

Day-old Chicks: Despatch in Railway Buses

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

- (1) Is he aware that the Railway Department has refused to carry day-old chickens in passenger buses because it is against health regulations?
- (2) Is it the chickens or the passenger who are endangered?
- (3) In what way does the danger arise?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) to (3) There is no health regulation relating to this matter. I am sorry I have not had time to check with the Railways Department, but perhaps if the Member directs his question to the Minister for Railways there may be a Railways By-law in relation to it.

10. WATER SUPPLIES

Wandering Dam: Storage

Mr. W. A. MANNING, to the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) What water is held in the Wandering dam at the present time?
- (2) How does this compare with the same time last year?
- (3) Is this sufficient for the coming summer and, if not, what is proposed to meet the need?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) 967,000 gallons.
- (2) 396,000 gallons less than this time last year.
- (3) Restrictions will be necessary if further rains do not materially improve storage.

11. EDUCATION

Carcoola Primary School

Mr. RUNCIMAN, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Why was it necessary to open the Carcoola (Pinjarra) primary school?
- (2) Why has the school been classified as a class one school?
- (3) Is he aware that there is an attendance of one child at this six-classroom school?
- (4) Is he aware that a class one headmaster is in charge?
- (5) In view of the shortage of highly trained teachers, how can he justify the present situation?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) The school building was completed, the first families had taken up residence, and additional enrolments were expected at an early date.
- (2) The school has been classified as a Class 1 primary school from 1st January, 1972. As from this date the enrolment is expected to justify this classification.
- (3) Yes, but the enrolment is expected to increase very rapidly in the near future.
- (4) No. A master is in charge.
- (5) It is considered that the action of the department is fully justified to meet the needs of the developing Carcoola township. Alcoa of Australia Limited built the school and said there would be a number of families there. Staff could be obtained only if it could be said there would be a school there. It is expected that after the August holidays there will be quite a large number of children as the families are moving into the houses now. Three hundred children are expected to be enrolled by the end of the year.

12. POWER LINES

North Metropolitan Terminal

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Electricity:

- (1) How much of the load of 425 MW expected at the northern terminal in 1975 will be transmitted on the 330 kV line?

(2) Although the proposed line from Kwinana to Balga is being designed to operate at 330 kV, is it intended to transmit at this voltage in the initial stage, or will a lower transmission voltage be used?

(3) Did the Commission in its calculations of meeting the expected load of 425 MW in 1975 make a comparison of the overall costs between 132 kV and 330 kV systems?

(4) If so, what were the relative costs, and, if not, why not?

(5) As from figures supplied it appears the average annual load increase at the northern terminal is approximately 15% and, at this rate, the load in 1975 would be 270 MVA, from where is the extra load to come to meet the estimated load of 425 MV in 1975?

(6) What is the expected capacity of all transmission from generating sources to the northern terminal in 1974, excluding the proposed 330 kV line?

(7) Is that capacity greater than it is today, and, if so, by how much?

(8) Of the present 132 kV lines which supply the northern terminal, how many are surplus to requirements to meet the present maximum demand, and what is the total capacity of the surplus lines?

(9) During the past 12 months—

(a) how many faults have there been on 132 kV lines which caused interruption of supply to areas supplied from Balga compared with faults in generating stations and substations installations; and

(b) how many times have power supplies failed because of lightning strike to 132 kV lines supplying the northern terminal during that period?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

- (1) 200 MW.
- (2) At 330 kV.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The 132 kV system was estimated to involve an overall additional cost of \$5 million on 1968 figures.
- (5) From western suburbs and the city.
- (6) Not available without examination of load flow studies of the interconnected system.
- (7) The power available to northern terminal would be less. The amount is not available without examination of load flow studies of the interconnected system.

(8) There are no surplus lines, but it is a feature of the 132 kV system that each major terminal will have three infeeds, any two of which will be sufficient to supply the load connected to the terminal. When the higher voltage is introduced these lines will become outgoing feeders from northern terminal (see (5)).

- (9) (a) Exact statistics not available without examination of outage reports. There have been several interruptions to areas supplied by the only 132 kV feeder ex northern terminal and there has been one substation fault at northern terminal in the last 12 months.
- (b) None. The design described in (8) has prevented failure of supply.

The questions deal with the past 12 months and the years 1974 and 1975. It is important to note that the transmission proposals make provision for long term expansion and too much emphasis should not be placed on the short term covered by the questions.

13. PROPERTY REVALUATIONS *Percentage Increases*

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has the recommendation of the Premier in his speech on 12th November, 1970, as recorded in *Hansard* volume 189, page 2154 regarding yearly percentage increases in property values, instead of the present system of periodical revaluation, been accepted by the Treasurer?
- (2) If "Yes" when will this recommendation be implemented?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr. T. D. EVANS replied:

- (1) to (3) The practical application of the proposal is still under examination and this will take some time.

14. MENTAL HEALTH ACT

Persons Detained in Strict Custody

Mr. MENSAROS, to the Attorney General:

How many persons are at present under strict custody upon the Governor's order pursuant to the last two lines of section 48(2) of the Mental Health Act?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:
Nil.

15. ROAD MAINTENANCE TAX

Collections: Government Departments and Local Authorities

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

- (1) What amount of road maintenance charge was collected from Government departments for the financial year ended 30th June, 1970?
- (2) What amount was collected from local authorities for the year ended 30th June, 1970?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) \$95,673.92.
(2) Nil.

16. COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

License Fees: Additional Revenue

Mr. O'CONNOR, to the Premier:

What is the estimated sum to be received from additional license fee collections from commercial vehicles following abolition of the road maintenance charge?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

Approximately \$4 million in a full year.

17. ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Medical Newsletter

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Has he read item No. 65 of the Royal Perth Hospital Medical Newsletter dated 11th August, 1971, relating to changes in admitting procedure?
- (2) How does he reconcile the contents of this item with his answer given to my question 16(1)(b) on 19th August, 1971?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Medical Newsletter was incorrectly worded as no changes have been made. The paragraph is really a reiteration of a very long standing policy and opportunity is taken from time to time to remind staff of procedures. This was the intention of the Medical Newsletter.

18. HEALTH

La Grange Mission: Aboriginal Children

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) With further reference to the four native children at La Grange mission with enlarged livers and spleens, about whom information was requested in my question 33

of 18th August, 1971, would he explain how he reconciles the two apparently contradictory replies he made then that "they have been very adequately investigated" and "no specific diagnosis has been made"?

- (2) Does he mean that the diagnosis of the illness afflicting those children is beyond the resources of the Public Health Department and all the facilities for clinical research available in Western Australia?
- (3) Have all those facilities been utilised?
- (4) Is it a fact that in 1969 a senior paediatrician recommended to the Commissioner of Public Health, in writing, that a professor of medicine and a microbiologist should be sent to La Grange to examine those children, and was any such action taken?
- (5) Would more active measures have been taken to investigate the illness if the children had been white and not natives?
- (6) Is this apparent unconcern for the diagnosis, and therefore treatment, of an unidentified illness affecting native children to be taken as typical of the attitude of the Health Department's administrators towards native health generally?
- (7) With regard to his statement that "the children are now apparently normal and healthy" would he be surprised to learn that that statement is quite untrue?
- (8) Since I am reliably informed that, at the present time, at least three of the four children affected still have enlarged livers and spleens and periodic attacks of fever and pain, would he say on what evidence he based his statement that the children are now normal and healthy?
- (9) In view of the doubt which exists regarding the accuracy of his statements about the present condition of these children, will he call for a medical report and table it with appropriate safeguards for the children's anonymity?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

- (1) to (3) One child was investigated fully in the Princess Margaret Hospital having been admitted there for an injury.
It was not considered advisable to send the others to Perth and separate them from the rest of the family group as they were desert

natives and the separation was considered too traumatic psychologically.

They have been investigated as far as is possible locally.

- (4) The matter was discussed with the professor and no visit took place. They have, however, been visited by a senior paediatrician and a specialist physician.
- (5) and (6) Health matters are dealt with in the department on a basis of health not race.
- (7) and (8) The child that was fully investigated in Princess Margaret Hospital had a pyrexia two months ago but otherwise appears well. No pyrexia in the others during the past year.

Statements are based on the reports of the nursing sister at the mission and the visiting doctor.

- (9) These children are under continuing medical observation. There are extensive medical notes on them at the mission hospital which may be obtained and made available for any medical scrutiny that Parliament may require.

I would like to indicate that the words used in answer to part (9) of this question; that is, "... made available for any medical scrutiny that Parliament may require" mean by specific motion or direction of Parliament.

I am sure, like myself, the honourable member would not want any person's medical evidence or history made public by its being tabled in Parliament.

19. INDUSTRY AND MINING

Safety Measures

Mr COURT, to the Minister for Labour:

- (1) How many and which authorities are responsible for the supervision, inspection and general approval of safety within industry, including the mining industry, in respect of construction, plant and equipment, and general industry operations?
- (2) Is there any current programme to bring all of these safety measures under one authority and at least avoid overlapping responsibilities of inspection, supervision and approval?
- (3) What action is currently taken to minimise overlapping of responsibilities and to avoid confusion and uncertainty on the part of management particularly in the mining industry?
- (4) (a) Are the regulations under the Mines Regulation Act being re-drafted or amended;

- (b) if so, will they be so drawn to distinguish adequately between underground operations and surface operations which follow substantially the normal surface industry pattern?

Mr. TAYLOR replied:

- (1) The following authorities and Acts are responsible for safety in industry:—

Department—

Labour.

Act—

Factories and Shops Act.
Inspection of Machinery Act.
Inspection of Scaffolding Act.

Department—

Mines.

Act—

Mines Regulation Act.
Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act.

Coal Mines Regulation Act.
Petroleum Pipelines Act.

Department—

Public Health.

Act—

Health Act.
Radio-active Substances Act.
Clean Air Act.
Poisons Act.

Department—

Local Government.

Act—

Local Government Act.

Department—

Forests.

Act—

Timber Industry Regulation Act.

Department—

State Electricity Commission.

Act—

Electricity Act.

Department—

Harbour and Light.

Act—

Western Australian Marine Act.

- (2) Functions under the Inspection of Machinery Act were transferred two years ago from the Mines Department to the Department of Labour for the purposes of co-ordinating that safety legislation with the Factories and Shops and scaffolding safety legislation.

Other safety legislation is under separate control, but there is a very close inter-departmental liaison and co-operation in these matters.

- (3) Inspectors having special technical or scientific training or knowledge and attached to other authorities to deal with matters within the scope of the Acts administered by those authorities, for example, certain State Electricity Commission Inspectors and Inspectors of Machinery, have been appointed special inspectors for the purposes of the Mines Regulation Act and Coal Mines Regulation Act.

I might add that the comments made in regard to "confusion and uncertainty on the part of management" are of some concern to me and we are following that aspect up to see if anything can be done to avoid it.

- (4) (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

20.

RAILWAYS

Picton Junction Marshalling Yards and Spur Lines

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Has the proposal for marshalling yards at Picton Junction and the spur line connection from Perth-Bunbury, Bunbury - Bridgetown line been finalised?
- (2) If not, at what stage have negotiations reached?
- (3) When are they likely to be finalised?
- (4) If approved, when will landholders concerned be officially notified that their land is required for these purposes?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) It is the department's intention to acquire land at Picton for the establishment of servicing facilities and for a direct connection from the south-western railway to the Picton-Bridgetown line. Plans have not yet been finalised.
- (2) Negotiations have been held with other departments and local authorities in regard to the planning implications.
- (3) and (4) If the proposals are approved it is expected that landholders will be advised of the railway land requirements prior to the end of this year.

21.

POLICE

Robberies in Country Towns

Mr. REID, to the Minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many robberies have been committed in country towns—
- (a) over the last three months;
- (b) for the same period last year?

- (2) During this period, what was—
 - (a) the total amount stolen in each year;
 - (b) the number of thefts in which oxy-acetylene equipment has been used?
- (3) Did the robberies committed using this type of equipment follow a similar pattern?
- (4) Does he know the cost of fitting an effective alarm system to strong rooms?

Mr. MAY replied:

- (1) and (2) The information sought is not readily available and would require extensive research throughout the State necessitating the removal of C.I.B. personnel from more pressing duties.
- (3) Yes. The *modus operandi* follows an identical pattern.
- (4) The fitting of an effective local alarm system, the latest perfected model in this field and recommended by C.I.B., is between \$600-\$800. The agents are Chubb Alarms, 73 King Street, Perth.

22. STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION

Bunbury South-West Offices: Lunch Hour Service

Mr. REID, to the Minister for Electricity:

Would he consider allowing the Bunbury south-west offices of the State Electricity Commission to remain open during the lunch break in order to provide an improved service to people living in outlying districts and towns?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

In view of the fact that the office is open to the public for 38 hours a week and takes a daily average of only 100 receipts, I do not consider extra expense should be incurred by opening during the lunch hour.

23. COUNTRY HIGH SCHOOL HOSTELS

Accommodation at Bunbury

Mr. REID, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many people and/or organisations have—
 - (a) inquired for high school hostel accommodation in Bunbury;
 - (b) requested that the Bunbury hostel be re-opened?
- (2) From what districts have these requests come?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

- (1) (a) Nine enquiries—all from parents.
- (b) Two requests—one from a group of parents and citizens' associations and one from a private person.
- (2) Harvey, Bridgetown, Balingup, Carey Park, Dardanup, Donnybrook, Moora.

24. BUNBURY RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

Transfer of Employees

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) What are the reasons for requesting the majority of Bunbury W.A.G.R. workshops staff to transfer to Forrestfield or resign?
- (2) As the workshops at Bunbury have been fitted out to do maintenance work and repairs on diesel locomotives, what are the reasons for not using these facilities to their maximum usefulness?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) The situation is attributable to the reduction in work volume at Bunbury following the change-over from steam to diesel traction.
 - (2) The Commissioner of Railways advises that the workshops at Bunbury are not equipped to do maintenance and repair work on diesel locomotives. They would require to be specifically equipped for this purpose.
- The Forrestfield depot has been specially designed for diesel locomotive repair work.

25. BUNBURY RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

Transfer of Employees

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Premier:

- (1) During the election campaign in Bunbury did he say that staff at the Bunbury W.A.G.R. workshops would not be transferred, if they were it would be over his dead body?
- (2) Is he aware that a considerable number of fitters, assistants, boilermakers, boilermakers assistants and labourers are being requested to transfer from Bunbury to a centralised depot at Forrestfield?
- (3) Because of the effect on families and the privileges of the men concerned, will he have the matter investigated with a view to having the men, where possible, gain employment in other Government services in Bunbury?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

(1) No.

(2) I am advised by the Minister for Railways that certain railway workers employed in the locomotive depot at Bunbury have been offered alternative employment at Forrestfield, Midland workshops or at other locations suitable to them where vacancies exist.

26. MEDICAL CENTRE

Abolition of Department of Psychiatry

Dr. DADOUR, to the Minister for Health:

(1) Has the University Department of Psychiatry been eliminated from the medical centre site?

(2) If so, why?

Mr. DAVIES replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by (1).

27. VEHICLE LICENSE FEES

Prime Movers, Trailers, and Passenger Vehicles

Mr. BLAIKIE, to the Premier:

With reference to the proposed increase in certain vehicle license fees, can he supply the following information:—

(1) In the event of an operator owning a prime mover and more than one trailer, would the owner be required to pay license on every vehicle?

(2) Will passenger vehicles be required to contribute to proposed vehicle license fee?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

(1) Yes, but semi-trailers will attract a nominal fee only.

(2) No.

28. TRADE REPRESENTATIVES

Primary Products: Promotion

Mr. McPHARLIN, to the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Does the Government intend to take any action in the matter of expanding overseas markets for primary produce by appointing qualified trade representatives—

(a) to travel and explore potential markets;

(b) to expand existing markets;

(c) to promote the greater use of western foods to the Asian people?

(2) What is the function of the export department of the Department of Agriculture?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

(1) (a) and (b) The Government is fully aware of the need for active involvement in market research. This year special provision was made for the first time on the budget of the Department of Agriculture for this purpose. A senior officer visited Japan early this year to study Japanese wheat requirements. One senior officer will be leaving in September to look into meat marketing and another will visit countries in Asia in October. Market opportunities which are identified will then be studied in depth. There are no plans at present to appoint qualified trade representatives but this possibility will not be ignored if it appears likely to improve market opportunity.

In the past marketing investigation has mainly been carried out either by the private sector or, where appropriate, by marketing boards. The trade commissioner service of the Department of Trade and Industry also has an important role.

The policy being pursued at present is to arrange market study tours by experienced professional officers concerned with specific products. These are designed to identify new markets and where possible to increase sales in established markets.

(c) The potential size of the Asian market and its proximity to Australia make this an important and logical area for the promotion of foodstuffs. The priority accorded to Asian markets must however, be viewed against our existing trade patterns.

(2) There is no export department in the Department of Agriculture. Officers in the Wheat and Sheep, Horticulture and Animal Divisions carry out quality inspections on grain, flour, seeds and fresh fruit and vegetables on behalf of the Commonwealth. Live animals are also inspected for the Commonwealth prior to shipment to comply with reciprocal international quarantine arrangements. Market research will be carried out by the

best available officers, depending on the special expertise required in a particular situation.

29. PARAMOTORS PTY. LTD.

Advertisement

Mr. A. R. TONKIN, to the Attorney General:

Does his department intend taking any action relating to the advertisement currently being shown on commercial television on behalf of Paramotors Pty. Ltd.?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

I have not seen any advertisement being shown on commercial television on behalf of Paramotors Pty. Ltd. but the department does not consider there is any action that can be taken in respect of an advertisement which appears on behalf of Paramotors.

QUESTIONS (7): WITHOUT NOTICE

1. IRON ORE DEPOSITS

Sub Judice Matters

Mr. COURT, to the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Will he please list the legal actions that are still current which make public discussion of certain of Hancock and Wright (and/or associate's) Pilbara iron ore matters *sub judice*?
- (2) Which legal actions have been terminated as a result of the amendments to the Mining Act passed last week?

Mr. MAY replied:

I would like to thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for some notice of this question. However I would point out that it is necessary to refer a question of this nature to the Crown Law Department for some determination; and whilst appreciating the fact that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has a motion in his name on the notice paper, I feel this question should have been placed on the notice paper. The answer is as follows:—

- (1) Writ issued out of the Supreme Court on the 13th August, 1971, under No. 3010 by James Delamore Nicholas, William Glen Nicholas, D.F.D. Rhodes Pty. Ltd., Hancock Prospecting Pty. Ltd., and Wright Prospecting Pty. Ltd., against the State of Western Australia, the Minister for Mines, and the individual members constituting the Executive Council.

- (2) None. Summonses have been issued with a view to obtaining orders from the Supreme Court—

- (a) to discharge the injunction; and
- (b) to dismiss the action referred to in (1) above.

2. FITZGERALD RIVER RESERVE *Road Construction*

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Lands:

Referring to questions without notice on the 24th August regarding a road into the Fitzgerald River Fauna and Flora Reserve, will he advise—

- (1) Did any person or firm apply for permission to build a road into the reserve?
- (2) If "Yes," who made the application and what was the department's decision?
- (3) If "No," what facts are known about this road?

Mr. H. D. EVANS replied:

I thank the honourable member for prior notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows:—

- (1) to (3) In the interests of investigations currently proceeding I am unable to elaborate on the reply given yesterday.

3. BUNBURY RAILWAY WORKSHOPS

Transfer of Employees

Mr. WILLIAMS, to the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Will the Minister reconsider the whole subject of staff transfers and the use of the Bunbury W.A.G.R. workshops with a view to continuing to use the men and facilities available at Bunbury to their full capacity?
- (2) As soon as possible and to enable him to have a full appreciation of the personal problems which will be encountered, would he agree to meet a deputation from the men concerned, together with myself, preferably in Bunbury, thereby saving any loss of earnings by the men concerned or, alternatively, to meet a deputation in Perth?

Mr. BERTRAM replied:

- (1) and (2) I thank the honourable member for some brief notice of this question. I will certainly take the opportunity as soon as possible to meet a deputation at

a convenient place and time because I particularly want to be fully apprised of the personal problems to which the honourable member referred; but I would hope that the people attending the deputation will assist me to assist them by telling me more than their own personal problems in regard to which I have a very real sympathy and concern. I would like them to assist me to assist them by also bringing evidence in respect of the first part of the honourable member's question so that I will have an opportunity to reconsider as favourably as possible the whole subject of staff transfers and the use of the W.A.G.R. workshops along the lines mentioned by the honourable member.

Mr. Gayfer: Another set of barracks for Quairading!

4. **HANCOCK AND WRIGHT**
Press Article: Redress under Standing Orders

Mr. COURT, to the Speaker:

Have you, Sir, seen page 4 of tonight's issue of the *Daily News* and, in particular, the reference under the heading, "Hancock: I was the one kept waiting"? One of the comments is—

Mr. Court apparently overlooked the fact that both Hancock and Wright once chased him half way across the world to London to try to get him to negotiate with us.

That paragraph is not of great importance because I can deal with it. I interrupted my own holiday in order to see them at their request. That is a slight difference! The paragraph which does concern me reads as follows:—

"The series of questions and answers concocted by Mr. May and Mr. Court in Parliament yesterday unsuccessfully attempted to refute my statements that 'we have never refused to negotiate'—and never will," said Mr. Hancock.

I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what redress under our Standing Orders is there to a member or members when they are incorrectly accused of collusion? I think the day there is any collusion between members on the other side and me, it would be such a shock that the Government would resign!

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bertram: "Collison" more likely than "collusion."

Mr. COURT: I ask you, Sir, whether you can advise me—I do not know about the Minister—what redress there is under Standing Orders for such a blatant untruth?

The SPEAKER replied:

For the information of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition I had a cursory look at this before I came into the Chamber. I will have to go into it in some depth and decide what action can or will be taken. I believe it may be necessary to refer this further.

5. **POWER LINES**
North Metropolitan Terminal

Mr. THOMPSON, to the Minister for Electricity:

My question relates to items (6) and (7) of question 12 on today's notice paper. Will the Minister ask the commission to make the studies and make this information available to me?

Mr. JAMIESON replied:

I think a lot of computation would be necessary to meet this requirement. Perhaps the member for Darling Range would like to have access to this information. I could make arrangements for him to go to the commission and he could glean more information in respect of this matter.

In such an area, it might be appropriate if I do invite him, because we seem to be getting nowhere. A great deal of technical information is required and it is taking a considerable amount of time and computation.

If it is the wish of the member for Darling Range, I suggest that he make arrangements with me. I will arrange for him to go down to the commission and for this information to be made available to him.

6. **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COUNCIL**
Composition

Mr. RUSHTON, to the Minister for Environmental Protection:

Relating to the Environmental Protection Act which has not been proclaimed—

- (1) When were the members of the Environmental Protection Council nominated?
- (2) Who were the members and what are their occupations?
- (3) Is it intended to retain the services of these nominated members in a similar capacity in the future?

Mr. J. T. TONKIN replied:

I thank the member for Dale for quite ample notice of this question, the answer to which is as follows:—

(1) The 28th January, 1971.

(2) Bernard Kenneth Bowen, Director of Fisheries and Fauna.

George Henry Cooper, Under Secretary for Mines.

William Roy Wallace, Conservator of Forests.

Donald Campbell Munro, Director of Engineering.

John Edward Lloyd, Town Planning Commissioner.

William Sharp Davidson, Commissioner of Public Health.

Sir Thomas Wardle, Lord Mayor of Perth.

Albert Ronald Main, University Professor.

William David Ride, Director, W.A. Museum.

May Knowles, Secretary, National Trust of Australia (W.A.).

Thomas Verna Dudley, Farmer.

Laurence Charles Brodie-Hall, President, Chamber of Mines of Western Australia.

(3) A decision on this will be made after the proposed legislation has been enacted.

7. IRON ORE DEPOSITS

Hancock and Wright

Mr. GRAYDEN, to the Minister for Mines:

In view of the fact that it is desirable on all issues for members of this House to hear all sides of an argument, will he take an early opportunity to acquaint the House with details of all the occasions on which it is alleged that Hanwright has failed to negotiate—

The SPEAKER: Order! This matter is starting to get out of hand. I believe too much levity is being taken with questions without notice. Members may know it is the duty of the Speaker to see every question that is put forward to make sure proceedings in this House are right.

I believe there could be attempts to get around this through questions without notice. The member for South Perth is well aware of my position. At least he ought to be. It is not altogether tenable, I might tell him.

I suggest that any member who wishes to ask anything further about iron ore and similar subjects should place his questions on the notice paper to give me a chance to look at them.

Mr. GRAYDEN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, my question arises in consequence of questions which you, Sir, allowed this afternoon and in consequence of those allowed yesterday.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL

Efficiency: Grievance

DR. DADOUR (Subiaco) [5.08 p.m.]: This is only the second time I have had an opportunity to speak on this subject and yet I have been accused of making, "repeated inaccurate statements and unsubstantiated charges." If the Chairman of the Royal Perth Hospital Board wishes to defend his hospital in this manner he ought to do much better than this, because this is only the second time I have spoken on the subject.

The chairman and his administrative officers have attempted, with great alacrity, to refute statements and allegations I have never made and to answer questions I have never asked.

They have attempted to twist my criticisms to their own advantage by saying that one area of great concern was a lack of space. Already they have deceived the present Government into buying a "C"-class hospital and obtaining the money to complete the present additions, but the Medical Centre has suffered already as a result of this. Already the Medical School building programme has been put back four years.

When elected to this Parliament I believed—and I still believe—that if I found something was out of tune with similar organisations in other States and other parts of the world, it would be my duty to bring it before this Parliament and the people of Western Australia. As I have said, I still firmly believe this.

To substantiate my criticism and to try to make Royal Perth Hospital a better hospital for patients and staff, as well as from an economy point of view, I have certain comparisons to make. I have taken from the annual reports of the hospitals concerned, the percentage of salaries and wages in relation to the total running costs for the year 1969-70. These are as follows:—

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, approximately 54 per cent.

Royal Adelaide Hospital, approximately 54 per cent.

Royal Melbourne Hospital, approximately 59 per cent.

Royal Perth Hospital, a little more than 70 per cent.

It will be seen that the figure for Royal Perth Hospital is at least 10 per cent. higher than that for other hospitals. I remind the Treasurer that 10 per cent. of the running costs of the Royal Perth Hospital will equal approximately \$2,000,000 this year.

At the 30th June, 1971 the staff ratio to inpatients at Royal Perth Hospital was at least 4.3 to one. In Great Britain, under the National Health Scheme, the allowable ratio is 2.5 to one for a similar type of institution. It must be remembered that Great Britain spends 30 per cent. of its gross national income on health and we, in Australia, spend only 5 per cent.

What more evidence is necessary to show that Royal Perth Hospital is out of tune? I have said before—and I repeat it now—that the administration is very guilty of wilful empire building. This is a sorry state of affairs when they prey on the ill-health of others. This year Royal Perth Hospital will cost the State approximately \$10,000,000 and it will cost approximately another \$10,000,000 from other sources. This will come out of our pockets through various sources such as hospital benefits, Commonwealth benefits, and various insurances, such as the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust, etc. A great deal of money is involved.

At all times my intention has been to try to improve the hospital and make it a better one so far as the patient-hospital relationship is concerned. At no time have I tried to destroy this.

Since my speech to the Address-in-Reply there have been improvements. A directive was issued on the 11th August stating that people must not be kept waiting for more than 1½ hours in casualty before being admitted. There have also been improvements in the interim summary reports.

Why did the hospital wait for my criticisms? Why did it not correct these deficiencies before I spoke? Let us hope the hospital maintains these necessary improvements. Who said the medical superintendent attended to the everyday running of his hospital? If so, this would never have occurred.

I repeat that the Royal Perth Hospital costs a great deal more to run than it should, and yet the hospital has decided not to answer several of my questions. Some have perhaps been unreasonable but some are very reasonable. What sort of a bureaucracy do we have here?

These people have panicked and tried to swing opinion that I was attempting to destroy the patient-hospital relationship, the very thing I have sought to improve. They are trying to switch it.

Also I have received a great number of letters supporting me. One of the letters I received came from a surgeon and in it he stated support and urged me to continue with my actions. Yet seven days' later the Minister for Health tabled a report from the Clinical Staff Executive of the Royal Perth Hospital. The report is over the same signature as the letter to which I have referred. Yet I am told that this report was a unanimous decision and, furthermore, that they had discussed my criticisms of the medical superintendent in his very presence. What credit could be put on this report when the signatory is rather two-faced? I consider that the letter weighs much more than the report. How can anybody have any confidence in a person such as this?

I can refute—and have refuted—the opinions in this report, as has the Minister himself by his answer to my question No. 15 on the notice paper for the 19th August last. Obviously the report is full of inaccuracies.

The Minister stated he will defend his senior officers while he is Minister. This is very commendable. Yet he had in his possession other proof that many of the things I had spoken of were absolutely true—and probably from somebody who is far more and better informed than I.

I have not spoken to one honorary medical officer at the Royal Perth Hospital who has a good word for the medical superintendent. I cannot understand it. I do not know what type of people we are dealing with. This is not a political problem: I have repeated this time and time again. The Minister himself stated that the Royal Perth Hospital is over 100 years old; it has been attacked for over 100 years. This problem is older than the Legislative Assembly. How can it be political when the problem has existed through a succession of Governments?

The Chairman of the Royal Perth Hospital Board says that I am out of touch. I merely wonder whether he knows what actually goes on in his own hospital.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park—Minister for Health) [5.12 p.m.]: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am still trying to get my shorthand up to date. The honourable member read his speech so quickly, I had not realised he had finished. I thought he would have taken at least 10 minutes.

First of all, his complaint seems to be directed to the fact that we have not properly considered the charges he has made. This is not quite the situation. The honourable member made charges of extravagance. He made charges of a lack of consideration by the administration. He made charges of not paying sufficient attention to the humanities associated with hospital treatment. I think these were the three categories of his initial complaints.

The member for Subiaco then went on to point out that this is only the second time he has spoken on this subject. I am sure all members will recall he has made statements in the Press, just as other people have made statements in the Press. Also, he has asked a number of questions to back up his argument.

Indeed, the first question of expenditure and the running costs of Royal Perth Hospital is of great concern to me, as I have previously indicated. I have directed that particular attention be paid to all expenses associated with running the hospital. I am unable to debate immediately with him the running costs of other hospitals for the very reason that the papers from which I would get this information have been made available by me to the member for Subiaco. He still has them. Therefore, I am not able to say whether the methods of assessing costs in Western Australia are the same as the methods of assessing costs in other States. If, as the honourable member states, there is a difference of some 10 per cent., which I think is the figure he mentioned, I will certainly try to find out whether there is an explanation for it.

I pointed out on one occasion that Royal Perth Hospital is not the most expensive teaching hospital in Western Australia. According to the information I was given when we were looking at hospital fees, the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital is more expensive.

I can only say that we are very conscious indeed of costs, and I hope that the fees which, I regret, are to be increased on the 1st September will do something to minimise the effect on the State. I shall try to draw some comparisons with other States' teaching hospitals to see what can be done in regard to the Royal Perth Hospital and whether a proper comparison has been drawn.

The honourable member then spoke about the administrator and made a statement which I cannot quite appreciate; that is, that I am in possession of other evidence which would make me believe that the statements he has made are correct. I deny any knowledge of this other evidence. If the honourable member would be good enough to mention to me in private what this other evidence is, I will certainly have a look at it.

I must repeat that Mr. Rees, the medical administrator of Royal Perth Hospital, has been with us for quite a number of years. He has made some dramatic and very good changes to the hospital. He is literally working for peanuts by way of salary from the Royal Perth Hospital compared with what he could be earning in other positions or in private practice. I believe we are very fortunate indeed to have him. He is a dedicated man.

I have seen no evidence of incapacity or lack of ability on his part. When one considers the areas of business and pri-

vate life encompassed by members of the Royal Perth Hospital Board, one can be sure they would very soon become aware of any lack of ability on the part of the medical superintendent, and they would quickly decide whether or not he was doing the job that was necessary for the effective running of the hospital. As I have said, there are some distinguished people on the Royal Perth Hospital Board—men who have great ability, who know the aspects of their own particular fields of influence, and who are associated with medicine in its other forms and the running of hospitals.

If one casts reflections on the administrator, one must cast reflections on the board because the board is charged with ensuring that the hospital is properly run. I believe the board carries out that function. Only the medical superintendent was mentioned. I will not say anything other than that I am satisfied with what the medical superintendent has done and the way he is running the hospital.

Mt. Vermont Hospital was not financed by loan funds but was financed in another manner. I think the Government would have been culpable had it not bought the hospital because it would have had to lease the hospital for a period with the option of buying it eventually, and in the long run that course would have cost more than the price that was paid for it.

I believe it is not the most acceptable form of annex to the hospital but it is fulfilling a purpose which had not been provided for and has been badly needed over the past 10 years or so. When the opportunity presented itself the Government grasped it with both hands, although it was difficult to finance. I am pleased to say the hospital has a very good bed capacity; there are about 108 patients in the hospital at the present time.

I have visited the hospital since it has been made an annex to Royal Perth Hospital. There are some operational difficulties but things are working out very smoothly. The patients are very happy with the treatment they receive, although it is necessary for them to go back to Royal Perth Hospital occasionally for some particular treatment. It is not the most desirable arrangement, but under the circumstances I think it is very acceptable.

The honourable member said he had received letters of praise and support for his action. I can only say that I, too, have received many calls and a great deal of correspondence to the effect that people have been well treated at Royal Perth Hospital. I am sure that in all things opposing parties can find support from various sectors.

The honourable member was rather disappointed and disturbed to find he had been given certain information by a surgeon who had signed a letter which was tabled in this House. I can understand his distress. I, also, would be very

annoyed in the same circumstances. However, I would ask the honourable member to remember that the person who signed that letter was the chairman of the clinical staff and he wrote the letter on behalf of the clinical staff.

I think I mentioned when tabling the letter that a number of meetings had been held. As far as the administration or the board of Royal Perth Hospital were concerned, the meetings were unsolicited. I understand they were spontaneous meetings and this surgeon was the chairman of the clinical group, on whose behalf he wrote the letter. Whether the letter accurately reflects his own views, I cannot say, but it reflects the views of the staff he represented, and he had been directed to convey those views to the hospital board and, subsequently, to me.

I note that the honourable member claims that two matters relating to communication with private practitioners have been corrected. I think I mentioned previously that the hospital often experiences difficulties in contacting private practitioners. It is hoped that the improvement which has been made will be effective; I think it should be. It adds to the work of the staff of Royal Perth Hospital and it adds to the running costs of the hospital, but if it will provide an avenue for better communication we will be happy to accept the additional work and expense.

The **SPEAKER**: The Minister has one more minute.

Mr. **DAVIES**: As to the matter of the other arrangements in regard to the casualty section, I think these have been adequately explained in the answer to a question on today's notice paper. Before the question appeared on the notice paper the matter had been brought to my notice by the honourable member and I had already asked for reasons. The answer to the question contains the reply I received.

On the whole, I believe any member is entitled to criticise. However, I hope he will do so fairly. If there are grounds for criticism in any area affecting my departments, I shall be pleased to make an investigation.

FLOREAT PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Arts and Craft Teacher: Grievance

MR. **MENSAROS** (Floreat) [5.22 p.m.]: My grievance might appear to be a small one as the actual complaint relates only to a small community and, comparatively, only a small amount of money or expenditure is involved. Yet because the problem I intend to bring to the attention of the House and the Minister for Education emanates from general policy, it is beyond the scope of personal representation to the Minister or the department, and I believe and am satisfied it is rightly the subject of a grievance to be brought before this House.

This problem—again because it emanates from general policy and not individual decision-making by the department—must have wider—indeed, State-wide—implication and must affect many parts other than the school to which I am referring in my electorate. I am referring to the Floreat Park Primary School.

Towards the end of the last school year—about October/November, 1970—this school received from the Education Department a useful and greatly appreciated supply of hand and power tools to be used as aids and practical equipment in the teaching of arts and crafts such as light woodwork, clay modelling, weaving, leathercraft, and the like. The value of these tools was around \$1,000.

I imagine it was envisaged by the department that because of the depleting number of children at the school—due to the fact that the average age of the surrounding population is increasing and the population does not change very much—the two unused school rooms could be used for these arts and crafts classes as prevocational training at primary school level.

These classrooms are ideally situated because they are separate from the main buildings of the school; they have plenty of washbasins and other plumbing facilities for the children to wash their hands after the classes; and there is also a separate bituminised area in front of them. The headmaster, teachers, pupils, and the P. and C. association were thrilled at the prospect of these new arts and crafts classes, which were to commence soon after the beginning of the new school year in 1971.

They soon found out, however, that the drive for saving and economy implemented by the present Government would jeopardise the commendable aim of the previous Government and Minister for Education.

Firstly, the school asked for the supply by the department of benches, without which the tools cannot be used. The request was rejected on the ground that the economy drive necessitated savings. Naturally, the P. and C. association did not receive this rejection with great enthusiasm. Nevertheless, a responsible attitude was adopted, and instead of crying "crisis in education," or resorting to propaganda methods, which we have all known only too well in the past, the P. and C. association simply decided to purchase the benches, and did so, in order to further its educational aims. I, as the local member, agreed to this course and commended the P. and C. In fact, I publicly told them that no matter which Government occupied the Treasury bench it was not the empty propaganda that was important but the educational aims and achievements.

Through the efforts of the P. and C. association, the benches have been supplied. Everybody was happy that the craft classes would soon commence. This, however, was not to be, because of what I believe to be the short-sighted attitude of the Government. The department, again referring to the policy of saving, did not supply a specialist craft teacher to conduct the classes, although the headmaster showed that the classes would be supplied full-time during the week by the 400-odd students who attend Floreat Park school. The repeated request of the headmaster, after consulting the P. and C. again, was later narrowed down to a compromise solution. He said, "If you cannot supply a full-time teacher, give us a part-time teacher who can be used by other schools for perhaps half the week; or we can make these facilities available for another school so that the specialist teacher can be used not only for our children but also for the children of another school."

This compromise suggestion has not been approved, and still nothing has happened. All this equipment which has been paid for by taxpayers' money, is left rusting and idle. I ask: Is that economy? I think it will be agreed that it is a false economy and a wasteful saving of the money of the community.

I emphasise that the school is not clamouring for any flashy or new buildings and equipment. It is quite content to use the old timber-framed classrooms. I think the school has displayed more common sense than the Government has displayed because it provided the benches for the classes. It did not mount a newspaper campaign or attack the Government. It only wanted to achieve the aim of these specialist classes.

I think this is plain common sense, advocated with dignified restraint. Consequently, I would like to ask the Minister for Education to inquire into this matter and to try, perhaps, to bend the policy of the Government so that these children will have what they want.

Not wanting to be accused of making the same error for which I criticised the Minister just now, I want to use fully the 10 minutes available to me. I would like to direct the attention of the Minister to another localised yet perhaps more important problem at the school. The eastern wing of the main school building of the Floreat school contains a long corridor—it is almost 100 feet in length—with two classrooms on one side. This section of the building is elevated, being above the canteen. There is only one exit which is also used for classrooms on the other side of the building.

Surely this must be against fire regulations. I have not checked those regulations, but whether or not this is a breach

of them, it definitely would be a tremendous hazard to the children should a fire occur and they were compelled to leave the rooms in a hurry.

In this case no refusal has been made to the repeated requests of the headmaster. In fact, plenty of promises have been made; but surely promises will not save these school children. I do not think the Government's policy of economy would go so far as to endanger the lives of the children. As we all know, a fire is an act of God and not an act of Government. I again ask the Minister to look into this matter.

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Minister for Education) (5.32 p.m.): It seems to me that the member for Floreat is advocating that special provision, which ordinarily cannot be made for primary schools, generally, should be made for this school. He thinks the school should be provided with a teacher in order that use may be made of the facilities because the parents and citizens' association is in a position to provide that which other parents and citizens' associations cannot provide. That would be all right if the Government had ample funds to allocate to those things of No. 1 priority.

The honourable member spoke about false economy. If one has a certain number of dollars to spend and one spends them on matters of the highest priority, I would regard it as a misuse of money if one dropped some items of primary importance and substituted others of lesser importance, even though some particular district may desire that to be done. In a situation in which the Government is obliged to curtail expenditure not only of its own volition, but also at the special request of the Federal Treasurer and the Prime Minister, there is no room for special provision for activities which may be dear to the hearts of people in certain districts. However, I will obtain a copy of the speech of the member for Floreat and refer it to the Director-General of Education for his comments. No doubt in due course I will have an opportunity to further explain the position.

With regard to the second matter raised by the honourable member, it seems to me that the fire hazard he mentioned has not just sprung up since this Government took office. The honourable member has had three years in which to have this corrected, if it is the serious matter he now talks about. However, I do not want to hide behind that. What I said with regard to his first request will be applied to his second request. I will bring the matter to the notice of the Director-General of Education, obtain his views, and advise the honourable member in due course.

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Clean Air Act Amendment Bill.
2. Bulk Handling Act Amendment Bill.
3. Stamp Act Amendment Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

BILLS (2): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. Pay-roll Tax Assessment Bill.
2. Pay-roll Tax Bill.

Bills introduced, on motions by Mr. T. D. Evans (Treasurer), and read a first time.

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL*Third Reading*

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

WARDEN'S COURT*Prospecting Areas 1237 to 1240: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 18th August, on the following motion by Mr. W. G. Young:—

That this House considers applications made in respect of Prospecting Areas 1237, 1238, 1239 and 1240 situated near the junction of the Suesetta and Fitzgerald Rivers should be listed for hearing in the Warden's Court as soon as possible, and regrets the action of the Premier in withdrawing the hearing listed for the period 21st July to 25th July, 1971.

MR. NALDER (Katanning) [5.38 p.m.]: I wish to commend the member for Roe for bringing this matter before the House. I think the introduction of a motion of this kind improves the education of members, and especially of those members who have no connection with the area referred to in the motion. This motion also highlights part of the geography of the State in relation to an area about which hitherto we have known very little. I have visited the area—although not quite at this particular spot—and the member for Roe and others have also visited it. This indicates that members are prepared to gain first-hand knowledge of the problems associated with this proposal.

I wish to comment on two aspects: firstly, the need to be alert and to encourage the establishment of any new industry in this State; and, secondly, the aspect of environmental control which plays an important part in the motion before the House.

Firstly let me comment on the proposed industry. If members look at a map of the area they will find that there is a stretch of coastline between Bremer Bay

and Hopetoun of approximately 60 to 70 miles. Practically no habitation exists in this area—it has not been developed, and it is a neglected part of our coastline. It is probably little known to the people of this State, although possibly fishermen would have some knowledge of the coastline and would probably be capable of indicating in detail what are its possibilities.

We all know that the area in question is a large reserve—in fact, it comprises 604,000 acres. I have flown over it a number of times and on many occasions I have driven along the eastern portion of the reserve. I have walked through some of that land and I have met some of the farmers who have developed land to the east of the reserve. I agree with the member for Roe that this particular portion of our coastline should be preserved, and I will refer to that later.

The point I wish to make at the moment is that we have a possibility of establishing an industry which would be of advantage to the Jerramungup area, which is one of the regions affected by drought. The establishment of an additional industry there would be of great benefit to the district.

I think it has been said on many occasions that if an industry is established and people are encouraged to settle in a district, for every two people who settle a third is attracted. So, with regard to the case submitted by the member for Roe, it could be anticipated that if the proposed industry gets off the ground 30 or 40 men will be employed and 15 or 20 others will be attracted to the area. We could expect that a percentage of the employees would be married with families and this, in turn, would attract more activity to the town of Jerramungup.

Jerramungup is a new town. It has been established as a result of the war service land settlement scheme made possible by the Government of some few years ago. In the last two or three years those settlers have found themselves faced with a number of difficulties of which we are all aware—and we discussed this matter last night. However, it is possible that a number of those people might find part-time employment if the industry which has been outlined to the House were established.

In my opinion the move of the member for Roe is a most reasonable one. He requests that the agents of the company involved be permitted to experiment in, and to make a survey of, a very limited portion of the reserve involving only 6,000 acres.

If we look at this area and across the surrounding country we will realise what a small portion of the land is required to enable test bores to be sunk, in order to determine whether or not the proposition is practicable. That is the basis of

the motion. In moving the motion I believe the honourable member was influenced by his desire to help a district where montan wax can be extracted from the coal. It appears there is a likely market for this product.

Not only will the establishment of an industry be of advantage to Jerramungup, but also it will have a beneficial effect on the towns en route right through to the Port of Albany. This industry will have a great impact on the district and on the port. It will benefit the towns in the immediate vicinity and on the route to the Port of Albany by the creation of added interest and added employment. Of course, this will encourage shipping to use the Port of Albany. This has a twofold effect: Not only will the industry provide work for people in that part of the State, but the ancillary businesses which will be established will also benefit the port and the whole district served by the port.

I have a particular interest in this matter, and it concerns the environment. This is a question about which people cannot talk too much. We should act on the advice that is available, to make sure that in the future land is reserved in its natural state and people of future generations will be able to enjoy its use.

International fame is attached to the Fitzgerald River area, because it contains species of plants and shrubs that are not found anywhere else; and it would be a tragedy if these plants and shrubs were to become extinct. In view of the large area involved, I emphasise that a part, if not the whole of it, should be preserved. That does not mean to say that industry should not be encouraged to become established there.

Mr. May: These shrubs and plants are found wherever the coal exists in the area.

Mr. NALDER: These plants and shrubs do not exist anywhere else in the world. In a large part of this region the Qualupbell grows in profusion. I would be the last to suggest that we should disregard this aspect, and throw open the whole area to mining and other forms of development. I doubt whether much of this land lends itself to any type of development. In the main it consists of rocky country, and in view of that it should be preserved and not interfered with—with two exceptions.

I think a survey should be made of the area so that roads can be constructed to enable the public to have access to these rare shrubs and plants. Apart from that, I believe it is the responsibility of Parliament to ensure that every effort is made to control bushfires in the area. I think barriers should be constructed, and controlled burning should be carried out from time to time, to restrict the effect of uncontrolled fires. It is most important for that to be done.

From my own experience I realise that as soon as the natural shrub dies back it becomes a target for anybody who desires to clean up the bush by throwing a lighted match carelessly. This has been done by some people in farming areas when the menace from vermin was acute. Then again fires might be caused when lightning strikes, and we are all aware of occasions when dry storms have erupted and havoc is caused to the bush by the resultant fires. In situations such as these every effort should be made to erect natural barriers in the reserves so that controlled burning can be undertaken from time to time, and so that the spread of uncontrolled fires can be restricted.

Mr. May: Would it be the function of the environmental authority to recommend controlled burning?

Mr. NALDER: I think it is, but I also know the Minister for Lands has certain powers under the Land Act to protect the reserves. However, that is not the real purpose of the motion; its purpose is to enable agents of the company concerned to sink test holes in order to determine the quantity of coal that is available and whether a viable industry can be established. Advantage should be taken of this opportunity as quickly as possible, so that the industry can become established and provide employment for the people in the district in what is a difficult period.

It cannot be denied that we are passing through a phase in the development of this country which is near disaster proportions; but we believe the tide will turn, and that in the future there will be greater demand for production from the rural community.

I commend the honourable member for bringing this matter before the House. I trust no undue delay will occur, and that action will be taken promptly to enable the case to be heard in the Warden's Court so that the agents of the company may sink test bores to determine whether an industry can be established in the area.

MR. H. D. EVANS (Warren—Minister for Lands) [5.54 p.m.]: I would like, firstly, to make the observation that the level of this debate has probably been as rational and as studied as any we have heard in this House. In particular I make reference to the attitude of the Minister for Mines who summed up with very balanced words the situation that appertains. Coming from him, that is a tribute to the consideration that has been given to, and the research that has been undertaken in, this matter.

Whilst the motives of the member for Roe in moving the motion are certainly of the highest order, he has failed to appreciate several basic factors which enter into the question. Indeed, the Leader of the Country Party has made reference to the need for the establishment of an industry in this region; and nobody denies

this. This is most desirable to assist in alleviating the plight of the farming community there, particularly as the Ravens-thorpe copper mine has closed down. The plight of these people has been approaching—to use the words of the Leader of the Country Party—desperation point. This is a situation which we deplore, and one we would like to rectify in any way possible.

However, in this context there is the question of the actual examination of the product—montan wax. Perhaps the member for Roe was under some slight misapprehension, because from the information that is available we know that montan wax is a mineral readily supplied on the world market, and the production from existing sources will cope with more than the total world consumption. Not only are there two sources of supply in East Germany, but there is also one in New Zealand where I understand the concentration of the mineral runs to about 11 per cent., as against about 6 per cent. in the case of the mineral found in the Fitzgerald River area.

As far as can be determined, the viability of this project is rather marginal, but that is no reason why an examination should not be made, provided that safeguards in every direction are assured. There is also a very grave need for a total examination of the scientific and the ecological aspects of the reserve which has not been fully made up to this point of time.

The question to be decided is which examination should be conducted first. The coal deposits have been located there for countless years, and will remain there for a considerable time to come, but prospectors are not inclined to tiptoe through reserves in their search for minerals. Generally they go into an area with modern machinery, and the damage which they cause in exploration can be far more devastating than the construction of a road or similar access to the area; and others follow.

It is therefore with some concern that since today's sitting commenced I have learnt from information supplied to me by my colleague of the existence of a road into the reserve. Even at a time like this a road has been pushed through. It can be argued that such a road may serve to control fires in the area, but I think it is more likely to provide access, the results from which can be far more damaging than fires.

Everybody acknowledges the need for reserves to be set aside, but they must be classified. Some reserves require total exclusion of the public, whilst others should be developed to make use of the facilities and to give the public full access. Somewhere between the two our interest lies. Because of its unusual nature, it would seem to me that the Fitzgerald River Reserve merits some exclusion until such

time as the situation in regard to scientific findings on the 97 types of flora, in addition to a number of species of fauna, which do not exist anywhere else in the world can be determined. These have links on the one hand with specimens in South America and on the other hand with specimens in Africa. Therefore the story which will be unfolded finally is only a matter of conjecture at this stage.

It is essential that we establish exactly what is required. Before we make a move we have to decide one way or another whether, firstly, a scientific and detailed examination should be undertaken, having regard for priorities and mining prospects. It might be said that only 6,000 acres are involved, but let us consider the location. The area is right in the middle of the reserve, and as a consequence means of access, in addition to that already established, will have to be provided.

The despised scrub country to which the member for Roe referred is some of the most scientifically and biologically interesting country in Western Australia.

Mr. W. G. Young: I think I referred to mallee country, not scrub country.

Mr. H. D. EVANS: It is on this mallee scrub that certain species depend. The quickest way to destroy a species is to remove its environment. That is a far more certain way to destroy any species than by shooting. Destroy the environment and the species which it supports is finished. In many cases large areas are required to ensure the survival of certain species.

The numbat depends on the Wandoo forests. Remove the Wandoo forests, and that species will cease to exist. That is an illustration; it does not apply in this instance.

The reserve in question is, at the moment, a Class "C" reserve and is vested in the Department of Fisheries and Fauna. At this stage I wish to draw attention to the restraint shown by the Minister for Mines. It is possible for him to have the reserve declared a totally prohibited area. The area, because of the manner in which it is vested, could have been so declared to the total exclusion of everybody including the fishermen who use the inlet. Others are necessarily involved. The area could also have been declared a Class "A" reserve and, indeed, the Government has resisted pressure in this direction for a very good reason.

The wording of the motion may sound reasonable and if you will bear with me, Mr. Speaker, I will quote it as follows:—

That this House considers applications made in respect of Prospecting Areas 1237, 1238, 1239 and 1240 situated near the junction of the Susetta and Fitzgerald Rivers should be listed for hearing in the Warden's Court as soon as possible, and regrets the

action of the Premier in withdrawing the hearing listed for the period 21st July to 25th July, 1971.

That, in itself, is tantamount to a motion of censure on the Premier. The motion implies that the Premier specifically aimed at the withdrawal of the hearing. That is not so. It was a Government decision and in this respect the Premier has been placed in a false light. I draw the attention of the member for Roe to this point.

Probably it was not his intention to censure the Premier, but that is what he is seeking to achieve. I do not think the Premier should be left in that light; he is most undeserving. The Premier has examined the situation and has made statements which have been indicated in the balanced reflections of the Minister for Mines.

It could be argued that the Warden's Court is not the proper place to have an issue such as this debated when so much is involved, scientifically and biologically. Indeed, it is even more debatable whether it should have been allowed to go to this extent while the appointment of a director of environmental protection was in the offing. To go to the extent requested by the motion without giving the Director of Environmental Protection an opportunity to examine the situation would put the Premier in a ludicrous position. The Premier has given notice that he will introduce a Bill concerning this very matter.

This issue is of world-wide interest, and one body will be flying its representative from Melbourne so that its case can be put forward. A ludicrous situation could result if proceedings were allowed to continue with these important matters pending. Surely it would make a sham of the declared intentions of the Premier in the matter of environmental protection. The member for Roe can smile quite happily about this. However, if the case is examined in an objective manner that is the conclusion which must be reached.

I find I cannot approve of or support the motion moved by the member for Roe. While on the one hand the application to the Warden's Court has not gone forward, on the other hand the moves that could have been undertaken to make the reserve completely inviolate were not carried out. Surely this indicates the diverse nature of the proposed environmental protection machinery about which this State will be able to boast in the not-too-distant future.

Before any action is taken on this point the two sides of the issue have to be examined. The Leader of the Country Party recognised the dilemma which is involved. On the one hand, there is the need for protection of a strip of country which is of world-wide interest, and has a unique scientific value. On the other hand, there is the development of an industry. I imagine we will experience

this type of conflict right throughout the rest of this century, but such conflicts will have to be resolved by careful and detailed examination of all the factors. Such factors cannot be examined before the environmental protection legislation has been agreed to. The Director of Environmental Protection will then be able to examine situations as they exist.

While the member for Roe has acted with the best motives—which I can appreciate—I feel his motion is somewhat precipitous. I sympathise with the point of view which initiated the motion. However, for the sake of the planning, and because of the necessary examination, I am afraid I cannot support the motion.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [6.09 p.m.]: I agree with the previous speaker when he says that the member for Roe introduced this motion with good intent. We can also agree with the Minister for Lands when he mentions the word "ludicrous." The Premier has placed himself in that unfortunate position.

Mr. H. D. Evans: Rubbish! Your Government took similar action.

MR. RUSHTON: There is no need for the Minister to get excited.

Mr. H. D. Evans: What is the member for Dale talking about?

MR. RUSHTON: The reserve in question is of the utmost importance, and of great interest to all concerned. It has been examined closely by people who are vitally interested in it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Does the member for Dale consider there ought to be mining on the reserve?

MR. RUSHTON: The report and certain recommendations were made available to the previous Government. The hearing of the case in the Warden's Court was withdrawn until such time as the environmental legislation was enacted.

The present Government has played politics and has not proceeded with that legislation. The director was appointed, and a council to advise the director was nominated. The machinery was set in motion for an examination of the whole issue of the Fitzgerald River Reserve and the industrial involvement, but the present Government deferred the matter.

We know that Albany is concerned with the development of the reserve. The member for Albany exploited the situation during his maiden speech last year. We now understand he has a different point of view.

Mr. Cook: That is not true.

MR. RUSHTON: The member for Roe is most concerned with the delay which has occurred because opportunity has been available for something to be done for the people he represents in that area.

Mr. H. D. Evans: And what would be the cost? The member for Dale does not know.

Mr. RUSHTON: I ask the Minister not to get excited. As a matter of fact, I am inclined to agree with the sentiments expressed by the Minister and I expected this matter to be handled expeditiously by the Director of Environmental Protection. However, it was unfortunately cast aside by the Government.

This is a sad motion because it puts things in their wrong order. I have a tremendous sympathy for the member for Roe in his necessity to introduce this motion.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Does the member for Roe want mining on the reserve?

Mr. RUSHTON: I want to have the situation fully examined.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Rubbish.

Mr. RUSHTON: Does the Premier not want the situation examined? Is he disagreeing with his Minister?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Dale will address the Chair.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Does the member for Dale want mining on the reserve?

Mr. RUSHTON: I have heard only the Speaker's directive to continue.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. RUSHTON: The position is similar to that which occurred with the Deputy Premier in recent times. The Deputy Premier has caused concern in Albany because of the statements he has made, and those statements were an insult to the intelligence of the people in the area. It is a sad situation when a member of a Government can go to a town which is in distress, as far as employment is concerned, and make a statement which the people cannot swallow.

Returning to the matter of the Fitzgerald River Reserve, my sympathies are with the member for Roe. The reserve should be examined as quickly as possible, taking into consideration the requirements of the local fauna and flora. Because the Government has been playing politics the matter has become a great worry. The delay in considering this vital issue reflects on the employment position, with which the member for Roe is concerned. The motion has merit, and I hope the survey will come under the strict guidance of the Director of Environmental Protection.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. RUSHTON: Before the tea suspension I was reaching the conclusion of my address and I would like now briefly to summarise my remarks. I have expressed sympathy for the member for Roe in his endeavours to achieve some results for his electorate.

I feel that the motion before us has been conceived from a feeling of despair. The motion does, however, highlight the stop-and-go nature of the Tonkin Government since it has been in office. We all know, and I have previously said, that prior to and up to the election the Minister for Mines in the Brand Government had withdrawn from listing these reserves which were to be dealt with in the Warren's Court.

As we all know, there was a change of Government on the 20th February and, shortly after, the present Premier announced that he would not proclaim the Act dealing with environmental protection. I believe this was deliberately done as a political gimmick, but it has back-fired.

Unfortunately, the intention of the previous Minister for Mines to have these reserves reviewed was of no avail; that is, to give full regard to the environmental protection legislation and the possibility of having it vetted by the director and staff appointed to preserve and protect our environment.

The Tonkin Government then had the reserve in question relisted. This also represented and indicated the stop-and-go nature of the present Government's thinking. A little later the case was again withdrawn from listing.

This no doubt has driven the member for Roe to despair and is the reason for the motion which is now before the House. The member for Albany complained that I misquoted him when I indicated that he should have been far more effective in the interests of Albany and the electorate he represents.

Mr. Cook: I said you should substantiate the claim you had made.

Mr. RUSHTON: I felt the member for Albany should have pressed the Government to get on with the job of having these reserves reviewed in order that something might be done. This, however, did not eventuate.

I also mentioned previously that the Deputy Premier visited Albany and, I feel, he insulted the intelligence of the people of that town by the suggestions he made to them. As the Minister for Lands put it, this can be seen to be a sham and mockery of the whole issue. It is, however, an important issue; one that is vital to the State. It is certainly most important to the people who have been involved in preparing a report of the national parks and reserves of Western Australia.

As I have mentioned, the recommendations made in connection with this reserve were for the purpose of investigating the matter fully and making it an "A"-class reserve for the preservation of flora and fauna, with the added intention of keeping the area as a nature reserve.

The Minister for Mines had the unenviable task of having to make a very responsible decision in connection with this matter. While he was away in Japan, however, the decision he had previously made was revoked and reversed; I believe this is the understanding he gave us. This, of course, places him in a very awkward position and, as the Minister for Lands has said, his address the other night was a well-balanced recitation of the facts.

The Government and the Minister for Mines have the final say as to what will happen to the Fitzgerald River Reserve, but my feeling is that the reserve should be fully investigated and consideration given to the recommendations made. Having regard for all the facts presented and the unfortunate position in which we find ourselves as a result of the tardiness of the Tonkin Government, I think we could certainly ask that this reserve be re-listed and that all the facts be presented. The Minister would then make the final decision and he, in consultation with his Government, could make a recommendation on that point of view.

I have great reluctance in pressing on with this issue until it has been fully investigated but, in all the circumstances, I think that what I have requested is a fair thing to ask at this point of time.

MR. STEPHENS (Stirling) [7.38 p.m.] : I have very little to add to the motion so ably moved by the member for Roe, and so capably supported by the member for Avon and the member for Narrogin who did their homework by accompanying him into the area prior to the motion being moved in this House.

This question is one of immense interest to the people of Albany and I would like to associate myself with the remarks made by the members on this side of the House when speaking in support of the motion.

Members may wonder why, as the member for Stirling, I should be so interested in Albany. For those who are not conversant with the boundary or geography of the area I would point out that my electorate includes Spencer Park, which is a suburb of Albany.

Mr. Jamieson: A good member lives there.

Mr. STEPHENS: In Stirling! I thank the Minister for those kind words. If, as a new member, I may be so presumptuous as to pass an opinion, I would like to say that I was impressed with the manner in which the Minister for Mines answered the case put forward by the member for Roe. If all the debates in this House were conducted on the same plane, the public image of Parliament could only be enhanced.

I was not present when the member for Avon made his speech, but on reading it in *Hansard* I was very pleased to see he shared the same point of view, and that he complimented the Minister for Mines on the manner in which he had answered the case.

If I am wrong in what I am about to say, I trust the Minister will forgive me, but I did gain the impression from his remarks that the Minister rather regretted the fact that the case had been withdrawn from the Warden's Court. I realise the necessity for conservation, and I also appreciate that in the past we have neglected this as, perhaps, we have also neglected looking after some of our old buildings. I do feel, however, that we have tended to go to the other extreme.

In this connection I am reminded of a semi-hermit or recluse who had an orchard in the Kalgan River area, quite close to where I farm. In his old age this recluse came to the conclusion that every time he made a sale or conducted any business whatsoever, he was taken down. Having come to this conclusion, he decided that one way to overcome the problem was not to sell anything at all and, accordingly, he never conducted any sales. This was not a very common-sense approach to the problem, but I draw the analogy because I feel that although the conservationists are sincere in their endeavours, their attitude at times lacks a little common sense.

When moving an amendment to the Address-in-Reply last year in connection with the Fitzgerald River area, the member for Albany suggested that it be made an "A"-class reserve and quoted several authorities, two of which were the Australian Conservation Foundation and Dr. Ronald Melville, lately from the botanic gardens at Kew.

Both these authorities appeared to be emphatic that the whole of the Fitzgerald River area should be preserved. Speaking generally of the area this could, no doubt, be true, but it has been pointed out by previous speakers from this side of the House that the specific area required by the mining company consists of 6,000 acres only, which would be of no great value so far as flora and fauna are concerned.

This view is substantiated by Dr. Beard who is no doubt known to many of us because of his association with the King's Park Board. In a letter which Dr. Beard wrote and which was read at a meeting of the Albany industrial advisory committee he pointed out that the area required by the mining company had no great value from the point of view of conservation.

It appears to me that if an appendix is taken out of a human body what is left is still perfectly capable of carrying on the normal functions of the body. So if we take 6,000 acres from 600,000 acres I feel --in view of the comments made by Dr.

Beard—that the result will be quite satisfactory and it would in no way impair the Fitzgerald River area from being retained as a flora and fauna reserve. At this stage, of course, the mining company only wants the right to go in and prove the area. This has been very ably and amply pointed out by previous speakers, so there is no need for me to dwell on this point.

Having been present at a special meeting of the Albany industrial advisory committee, I know that that committee—which could be taken to represent opinion in the Albany area—is most concerned and anxious to see that the position in relation to the Fitzgerald River area is resolved so that if the claims prove to be a viable proposition they can be proceeded with. The attitude of the committee is, of course, understandable because although we are quite aware that the mining venture in question is not a major concern, it is one that will bring undoubted benefits to the town of Albany. For example as has already been mentioned, 10,000 tons of montan wax a year would be shipped out of Albany. This would mean at least two or three ships a year into the town. This, in turn, would necessitate victualling, bunkering, and the spending of money by sailors which, of course, would all add to the economy of the town; an economy which is rather dead at the moment. In addition, if the company were to set up a mining venture in the Fitzgerald River area, it would need to draw supplies of fuel, and once again these would come from the Port of Albany.

There are other factors to be considered, such as repairs and maintenance to machinery. The nearest adequate facilities of this type are at Albany and this work would naturally gravitate there. It can be seen that it is of great importance to the people of Albany that something is done about this matter. I feel that putting this motion into effect would give more confidence to the town than the exercise in public relations recently carried out by the Treasurer and the Minister for Industrial Development when they visited Albany. In the main there was nothing new in what they said. A great speech was made about the \$1,250,000 to be spent on the technical school at Albany. Several months previously this had been front page news in *The Albany Advertiser*. This was the type of information fed to the town on that occasion, and I do not think I need add more than that.

Mr. Graham: Except I would add you are shockingly out of touch with the feelings of the Albany people.

Mr. STEPHENS: I represent only the Spencer Park part of the Albany area, but having lived in Albany since 1934 I think I am in touch with the people of Albany.

Mr. Graham: I think you had better have another look.

Mr. STEPHENS: I am always ready to learn. I am only a newcomer.

Mr. Graham: That is rather obvious.

Mr. STEPHENS: With those few remarks, I support the motion.

MR. HARTREY (Boulder-Dundas) [7.47 p.m.]: I do not wish to delay the House in the consideration of this motion. I am sure it has been moved with the highest motives but I wish to refer to a very old law which was part of the Magna Carta. This says, "Justice ought not to be sold, denied, or delayed." However, what justice means depends upon the circumstances of each particular case and it has been laid down as a principle of law that a reasonable adjournment ought to be granted unless it would do every serious damage to the other party.

These applications are for prospective areas and if a warden heard the case he not only has the power but also the duty to either grant or refuse the application. If the applications are for mineral claims or leases, the Minister would receive the recommendation of the warden and might delay the determination of the claim for as long as he thought necessary. However, in this particular instance, it would be unjust if the applicant's case was complete but the case for the ecology was not fully presented for reasons which we all know. The adjournment is fully justified by every elementary principle of law and justice.

Therefore I have much pleasure in supporting the attitude of the Government and in opposing the well-meaning and *prima facie* justifiable application of the member for Roe. If his motion is accepted it would not be justice; it would be the very opposite. I again quote the maxim to the House to which I referred the other evening, *audi alteram partem*—hear both sides of the case.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park—Minister for Fisheries and Fauna) [7.50 p.m.]: I also oppose the motion moved by the member for Roe, and I use this opportunity to bring before the House the result of the investigations carried out by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna in regard to the Fitzgerald River Reserve. Like the previous speaker, let me say that no-one decries the motives of the member for Roe in bringing this matter forward, but I believe the Opposition is looking at this with a view to expediency and disregarding the future effect.

First of all, the speakers to the motion have indicated that this matter warrants urgent attention although it has only arisen relatively recently. The history of the Fitzgerald River Reserve, as members may be aware, goes back to 1904. I understand at that time there was a move to take part of the Fitzgerald and Susetta Rivers for the purpose of water reserves.

This is a long time ago and since then there have been various attempts to extend or to excise parts of the reserve. Generally these attempts have been supported by the farmers and the country shires. Again this is understandable but I sometimes wonder whether farmers as a whole have very much appreciation of the need for preserving our national parks and some other areas in the State for posterity and perhaps to greater advantage.

Dealing with the history of the scheme, I would point out that nothing much seems to have been done in regard to the reserve until June, 1950. The then Government Botanist, Mr. C. A. Gardner—whom I am sure is well remembered by many people in this House and whose work is very much appreciated—dealt with a request from the Naturalists Club for the creation of a national reserve near Israelite Bay. Mr. Gardner suggested that six such reserves be set aside, one of which is the present area, Reserve No. 24048. That suggestion was supported by the Lands and Surveys Department and on the 15th September, 1950, the Minister for Lands approved the creation of the reserve.

Because no specific surveys have been carried out in the area, difficulties occurred in fixing the actual boundaries of the reserve. Arbitrary boundaries were established as a result of conferences between the Government Botanist, the projects officer of the war service land settlement scheme, and the Surveyor-General, and the reserve was declared by notice in the *Government Gazette* of the 22nd October, 1954. The reserve was classified as of class "C" and it was considered that adjustments to the boundary would be required following closer examination of the reserve and the adjoining Crown land.

In March, 1957, came a series of requests that large areas of the reserve be excised and released for farming purposes. This was from the Phillips River Road Board, now the Ravensthorpe Shire Council, and it was supported by the Gnowangerup Road Board.

On the 14th July, 1961, the Tree Society, alarmed at the rapid progress of the subdivision and the release of land for farming purposes in the vicinity of the reserve, requested that it be reclassified as of class "A." The Minister for Lands advised the President of the Tree Society that following a complete classification only portion of the reserve was to be retained and the balance developed for agriculture.

In 1962 the Western Australian sub-committee of the Australian Academy of Science Committee on National Parks issued a report in which it expressed the opinion that the reserve should be reclassified as of class "A" for the preservation of flora and fauna and an additional area to the east should be set aside and

classified as of class "A" for public recreation with both areas vested in a statutory body as a national park. The report did not elaborate on the suggested boundaries of the reserve or the proposed addition, and the description referred to land in the vicinity of the Fitzgerald River only.

In December, 1964, following the preparation of a scheme of subdivision of vacant Crown land abutting the reserve, the Surveyor-General's division proposed that the reserve boundaries be adjusted by excising an area of 95,000 acres of good agricultural land, and including an area of 66,000 acres of land not suitable for agriculture. It was suggested that the time was appropriate for the boundaries of the reserve to be finally determined.

The proposed adjustment met with opposition from the Department of Fisheries and Fauna and the Forests Department, but here again it was supported by the Gnowangerup Shire Council. The proposal became known to the various bodies interested in conservation and attracted objections from the Western Australian Botanical Society and the Tree Society, as well as some Press comment. The National Parks Board sought to have the reserve placed under its control.

Alarmed at the prospect of a reduction in the rate of release of Crown land in the area for agricultural purposes, requests for the release of land within the reserve suitable for farming were received from the Fitzgerald Progress Association, Gardner River Progress Association, Jacup Progress Association, Jerramungup Progress Association, and the Bremer Bay Progress Association.

Mr. Gayfer: Do you want the Minister's glasses so you can read it better? There are some alongside you.

Mr. DAVIES: I am managing quite well, thank you.

Upon the formation of the Reserves Advisory Council which was established to advise the Minister for Lands on reserve matters, the issue of the future of the Fitzgerald River Reserve was referred to the council for consideration. This is the important point. Following the deliberation, the council adopted—

Mr. W. G. Young: Which council was that?

Mr. DAVIES: —two resolutions. The first one reads as follows:—

It was resolved to recommend that the purpose of Fitzgerald River Reserve 24048 be changed from "Flora and Fauna" to "National Park," proclaimed as of Class "A", vested in the National Parks Board, subject to minor adjustment of boundaries as required by the Lands Department. Section 29 of the Mining Act not to be invoked.

This resolution was dated the 12th June, 1969.

No-one could deny that the matter had not been well considered, and no-one could deny that the resolution which I have just read out was a perfectly just one under the circumstances. The land was being excised for agricultural purposes and the somewhat indistinct boundaries of the reserve were being eaten into.

Of course the cry now is that we should allow prospecting and mining on the reserve for the purpose of testing the depth and extent of the coalfields. If the coal reserves are found to be of an economic nature undoubtedly pressure will be put on the authority to allow the mining to proceed.

This is not in keeping with what the Government hopes will be the future of the area. There seems to be some logic in having this matter heard in the Warden's Court, and there seems to be some criticism of the Government for delaying the hearing. I know the Government's attitude has not changed from the time when its members were sitting on the other side of the house. The Government's views are the same as those expressed during the last session of Parliament. We believe that the matter should be looked at by the proper people, and the proper people in this instance are those associated with the protection of the environment. A lot of attention was paid to this issue by the last Government and we will do the same.

If the Warden's Court hears this matter it may or may not hasten a decision by a month or six weeks, but as it has been swinging for something over 12 months, I cannot see the need for any great urgency.

Statements have been made that it is unlikely that any great damage will be done; that the people concerned can be trusted to respect the land upon which they will be operating and to ensure that no damage is done beyond that of the immediate work in hand. I cannot believe that this is so. Let me say, I have not visited the area but I do not feel we can take notice of statements of this kind. An unfortunate position exists at this very reserve at the present time. Indeed questions in regard to this have been asked by those on the other side of the House.

I believe the member for Dale earlier this session asked some questions about the road which allegedly was to be put through the Fitzgerald River Reserve. Together with others, he expressed concern that this should have happened without authority being given. Further, a number of societies have written to both me and the Minister for Lands expressing their concern—which they are justly entitled to do—and as I have indicated to them,

and as I wish to indicate to members, the matter is under consideration by the Crown Law Department.

I am disturbed indeed by a report that has been put before me by the Director of Fisheries and Fauna. This report arose from an article which appeared in the Press and points out that the road-way has been bulldozed with scant, if any, regard for the damage that could have been done to the topography of the country; to a type of plant that could have been destroyed and lost forever. I do not say that any damage was done, but apparently the bulldozer went straight through the reserve and took everything before it. Apparently damage has been done to the reserve; the company had no authority to do the work and, in fact, showed a complete disregard for the law of the land.

This is a company that is associated with mining. I do not say that all companies associated with mining would show the same disregard for the environment, but the action of this company does tend to destroy my faith in other companies that I would expect would preserve a reserve such as this. We have had the matter authoritatively reported to us. Indeed, I think all members have seen the photograph which appeared in the Press on the 21st August which, I believe, showed the road going right into the area. This report has since been checked and the road is indeed there.

The company concerned was told by the Lands Department that it had no authority to build the road; but, nevertheless, it decided that the decision of the Lands Department was wrong. I do not know on what grounds the company decided to go ahead with the work, but it took the law into its own hands and having thus committed an offence the maximum fine that can be imposed on the company is only \$200.

Mr. O'Neil: As Minister for Fisheries and Fauna you are canvassing a field which the Minister for Lands decided was not wise to canvass; that is, the new road into the Fitzgerald River Reserve.

Mr. H. D. Evans: In speaking, I think I mentioned that my colleague had given me some information after the House had commenced sitting.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Fisheries and Fauna will continue.

Mr. O'Connor: Do not turn on your colleague.

Mr. DAVIES: Do not turn up my collar? I would not put on a purple collar, anyhow; I will tell the honourable member that.

Mr. O'Connor: It is your face that is purple, not your collar.

Mr. DAVIES: At the time he spoke, the Minister for Lands would have had a minute that I sent to him, but the fact remains

that the matter will be investigated by the Crown Law Department and I hope action will be taken against this company which has thumbed its nose at the Government. Without even bothering to make inquiries, the company has said, "We have decided your decision is wrong and we will take the law into our own hands."

This is the type of action the Opposition was complaining about earlier this session; that is, that people are inclined to take the law into their own hands. If a handful of demonstrators want to take the law into their own hands to express their opposition to some particular event, according to the Opposition that is wrong. However, if an influential and powerful company wants to thumb its nose at the Government, knowing that what it is doing is breaking the law, this, according to the Opposition, is apparently right, and it reflects the attitude that we have come to accept from the Opposition whilst it is in Opposition and also previously, when it was in Government.

Mr. O'Neill: Who said this was right? What are you doing about it?

Mr. DAVIES: I am pleased that some concern is being shown and I hope that support will be forthcoming should action be taken against the company. If the Opposition is genuine in showing concern about a road being built through the Fitzgerald River Reserve, surely it must express genuine concern about any other activity that is likely to take place on the reserve until a proper assessment of the position has been made.

I do not believe any great benefit will come to any part of the State by taking the matter before the Warden's Court now, when we have authoritative bodies in the State that can give an opinion. I believe a great deal of time and money can be spent in taking the matter to the court in the knowledge that the decision finally rests with the Minister for Mines, and that by the time the Warden's Court has heard the case no doubt the Minister for Mines would have a report from his own officers who may or may not agree with the decision of the Warden's Court. There is no need to waste this time, effort, and money.

I do not believe any serious delay will be caused by the action that has been outlined by the Minister for Mines. I do not believe any great benefit can come to the State by taking the matter before the Warden's Court. I can understand the motive of the member for Roe in bringing the matter to Parliament. Indeed, I should imagine that had I been on the Opposition benches I might have aired the matter myself before the House. However, the fact remains that a line of action has been clearly outlined by the Government. This has been made after due

and mature consideration of all the facts involved and I believe it is the only course that can and should be followed.

MR. W. G. YOUNG (Roe) [8.07 p.m.]: In replying to the debate on the motion that I moved a fortnight ago I would like, firstly, to thank the members who have spoken to it. Obviously the matter has been well researched because there is no doubt that it was well debated. Probably a near record has been created in view of the number of Ministers who have been drawn into the debate and as a result I think the people of Western Australia and the Parliament will be better informed of the situation which exists in the Fitzgerald River Reserve.

Before making any comment on what has been said by all those members who have spoken, firstly, I would draw the Premier's attention to the remarks I made when I introduced this motion. I do this because the Premier, in an interjection he made this evening, said that the member for Roe was interested only in mining on the Fitzgerald River Reserve. I state quite categorically that this is entirely wrong. Certainly I am interested in mining on the Fitzgerald River Reserve. If it can be proved that a viable proposition can be established on that reserve; if there is something that will be of benefit to the State, all of us should be involved in it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Irrespective of anything else?

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: I did not say that. Mining and conservation can progress side by side, otherwise action would not be taken to establish an industrial and mining complex in the Swan Valley at the moment. The present Government has amply demonstrated that it is investigating the possibility of establishing a refinery in the Swan Valley and this would prove that mining and conservation can progress side by side.

If the mining project on the Fitzgerald River Reserve is to be of benefit to the State let the Government have a look at it as I suggested at the outset when I introduced my motion. I want to make it perfectly clear that my interest in the Fitzgerald River Reserve is confined to ascertaining whether the project will be an economic and profitable proposition for the purpose of mining brown coal to produce montan wax. That is the substance of the motion and, in the main, that is the substance of the remarks made by the various speakers. A few red herrings have been drawn across the trail, and I do not refer to any member in particular.

I now take the opportunity to reply to the points made by the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, although, in fact, he spoke last. The point I want to make is that some reports have appeared in

the Press implying that the company interested in the brown coal deposits for the production of montan wax constructed a road into the reserve. Perhaps in some way it is being implied that the company is associated with the construction of this road, although I am not saying that the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna said this.

Mr. Davies: No, it is not.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: I know that that is not a fact. I know who pushed the road through and I think every member of this House probably knows. The company operating in that area has a mineral claim to mine manganese, and I think the Minister for Lands or the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna will correct me if the statement I am about to make is wrong, and I am quite prepared to be corrected. My understanding is that if the company has a mineral claim and the right to mine, it has the right to build an access road.

Mr. H. D. Evans: This point is under consideration.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: Is it a fact that in the past this was the opinion held, or is it to be altered in the future?

Mr. H. D. Evans: On Crown land there would be differences.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: I suppose this is enough to make the company think there is an area of doubt, because I think the Minister for Lands also expressed the opinion that there is an area of doubt. This company has moved in and built an access road. I regret that it did not approach the Minister or the Director of Environmental Protection with a view to ascertaining the best route this road would follow. The people who are interested in the montan wax area have specifically said on numerous occasions that they are quite prepared to comply with any conditions that are laid down by the Director of Environmental Protection, the Minister for Fisheries and Fauna, or any other department interested in the area.

The company is prepared to investigate the area to ascertain whether the deposit of brown coal is an economical proposition. If the terms of regeneration and the conditions laid down by the Director of Environmental Protection are so stringent that the project would no longer be economical, the company is prepared to abandon it. At all times the company has expressed its willingness to co-operate in all ways. In fact, in the past it has made a point of contacting the Museum in regard to any fossils that lie within the seams of coal so that an officer of the Museum can be present when the fossils are extracted and determine on the spot whether they are of any value.

To return to the speech made by the Minister for Mines, I agree with other members that he stated his case quite adequately. He agreed with the motion in principle. He had previously agreed that

the matter should go before the Warden's Court to make it possible for the hearing of the application to take place, because as reported in *Hansard*, he said—

I was quite convinced in my own mind that it would be better for all the information in relation to this matter to be revealed in a Warden's Court where everybody was under oath.

I think that is a very important point. After hearing so many rumours about what is going on and what is not going on in the area, if these people had been obliged to appear in the court to give evidence on oath the true facts would have been brought to light.

Sir David Brand: But at the time the two Ministers concerned were in Japan.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: It is regretted that the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Industrial Development were in Japan when the Premier decided to take the matter out of the hands of the Warden's Court.

Great play has been made of what could happen if the area were mined, and with many of the remarks I agree. A lot of fauna and flora is indigenous to that area and like everyone else I wish it to be protected. However, the company wants only to prove this area and, as I mentioned the other night, those concerned will enter the area in a four-wheel drive vehicle with a rig on the back, and drill approximately 40 holes over an area of 6,000 acres. The holes will be no deeper than 30 feet and will be 6 inches in diameter.

Anyone who has driven through the area, as did the member for Narrogin, the member for Avon, and I, will realise that a vehicle makes no impression on the growth in the area. We drove through a couple of areas off the existing track because of trees which had fallen across the track. When we came back over our path we could not even find the track where we had entered the undergrowth, although it was only three or four yards away. The country is mainly mallee, and anyone familiar with mallee knows that it is tough and springs back after something has been over it, and there is no apparent damage.

This was the situation in the area we visited to the north of the coal seam, which I might point out is situated mainly in the valley at the mouth of the Susetta and Fitzgerald Rivers. No mining operations would be undertaken in the hills which abut the river valley because of the problem of overburden. In the valley the coal has been pressed down with an overburden of 10 to 20 feet. In the hills, however, the overburden becomes much greater and the economics of shifting 30 to 50 feet of overburden would not make it a viable proposition.

Dr. Beard, the former Director of the King's Park Board, has been mentioned in this House tonight. He went into the area and submitted a report on his findings. I

must emphasise that Dr. Beard did not investigate the whole reserve as it contains some 604,000 acres and no person in one lifetime would be able to explore thoroughly an area of that size and report on every acre. However, Dr. Beard went into the area where the coal seam is, and the point I want to make is that—

The **SPEAKER**: Order! There is too much audible conversation.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: —the coal is showing in a seam above the ground, and Dr. Beard said that the area he investigated contained no flora or fauna of any particular significance. Such an opinion of a man of his authority is not outweighed by the opinions of other experts which have been repeated here tonight.

Of course, it does not matter what subject is under discussion, differing opinions will be expressed. The Minister for Fisheries and Fauna referred at one stage to the Gnowangerup Shire, and said that that shire wished the area to be declared a closed reserve.

At times councillors are defeated and others are elected in their place, and I can assure the Minister that at this time the Gnowangerup Shire, knowing the dire circumstances of those at Jerramungup at the eastern end of the shire, as a result of the farming recession, is very favourably inclined towards anything which may help to establish a decentralised industry in its area.

We cannot stress this point too much. This industry could be of value to Western Australia and, more particularly, to the people in the area. It would certainly be of value to the Port of Albany if and when the shipments of wax commence from that port. However, I am now doing the same as every other member has done. I am talking about the mining operations. My motion does not mention mining. It merely refers to the exploratory work necessary to be undertaken before anyone knows whether or not mining operations could be carried out on a commercial basis. Once this matter has been heard in the Warden's Court, it could be that the exploratory work will prove that no viable commercial operation is possible, and in that case the matter would be concluded once and for all.

Mr. Gayfer: If the strings are too tight.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: This is quite so. If the strings are too tight and the economics are proved to be against the project, the industry will not be established. However, if the Minister so desired, the exploratory work could be undertaken under the supervision of his department.

The team, comprising two operators and a geologist who would pinpoint the holes, would, I have been assured by those concerned, take anyone in with it to select a route and indicate where digging may be

undertaken. In this way the area could be proved completely without any damage being done to the environment.

I brought back with me a sample from the Fitzgerald River Reserve and the Minister for Mines very kindly agreed to have his department analyse it. When I introduced this motion I indicated that some 6 per cent. wax content on a dry-matter basis would be enough to make the extraction a viable proposition.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: How do you know that without knowing what price you could get?

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: As I said earlier, no fixed price has been arranged and no contract has been signed, because it is not possible to have a contract signed in regard to something still in the ground, and in regard to which there is some doubt concerning its extraction on a commercial basis. However, the company assures me that firm orders are available and that the wax could be marketed.

Mr. Gayfer: Just think of the royalties you would get.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: At 6 per cent. this would be an economic proposition. The Minister for Mines has kindly given me the analysis carried out by the department and it indicated that the material contains 6.27 per cent. benzine-ethanol soluble waxes and 1.61 per cent. hexane soluble waxes expressed on a dry basis in each case.

Mr. Gayfer: The sample was from the surface, too.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: Yes; this was a surface sample which had been exposed to the weather for some time, although I do not know for how long, and it could have been affected to some degree. Therefore the deposit could possibly contain a higher extraction rate than that revealed by the analysis.

I think it was the Minister for Lands who said tonight that this wax was fairly common throughout the world, and that in fact a deposit in New Zealand was currently being explored. This is well known. Deposits of various types of this wax are in existence throughout the world, but the significant feature of the deposit at the Fitzgerald River Reserve is that it has an extremely high melting point which is very necessary for its principal or most important use; that is, for electrical fittings.

Another deposit is to be found in the Lake Muir area in Western Australia, but I am told that the melting point of that deposit is lower than the melting point of the wax that could be extracted from the Fitzgerald River area.

The Minister stated that he regretted he could not support the motion and he hoped that in the light of the evidence he had presented I might consider withdrawing it. I think the point was well made. The Minister has quite fairly and honestly

stated his case and that of the Mines Department. He said he was quite prepared to let the matter go ahead because he wanted to ascertain—and I am sure the Minister for Industrial Development would agree with him—whether it was possible to establish another decentralised enterprise out of the city. Then we had the intervention of the Premier, who is the Minister for Environmental Protection, who had the matter withdrawn from the court.

The Minister for Fisheries and Fauna said that another month or two would not seriously endanger the operation. With this I agree, and I cannot see any great urgency in the matter. However I would point out that the case was first listed for hearing in June of last year, but as yet no hearing has been held. There has been postponement after postponement, and what guarantee have we that that situation will not continue? On page 682 of *Hansard*, the Minister said—

... I hope the member for Roe will accept the assurance of the Government that it will look into this matter. I have spoken to Dr. O'Brien and this is one of the first jobs he will undertake. From the mining point of view we have advocated many jobs that we want Dr. O'Brien to undertake, and he has indicated that the Fitzgerald River Reserve will be one of his first assignments when the environmental protection Bill is passed by Parliament. That is, I trust that it will be passed by Parliament.

I think this is the point: provided the Bill is acceptable, it will be passed by Parliament; but the previous Government introduced a Bill along similar lines, and it was passed by Parliament, but not ratified by this Government.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Or the Government which secured its passage either.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: That is right. The present situation could continue for some months and more adjournments could be secured. The Bill might take some time to get through the House and we have no guarantee of how long that will take or how long after it passes the House it will be proclaimed.

Mr. Davies: With co-operation it will fly through.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: If it is such a good Bill we will co-operate.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Hope springs eternal in the human breast.

Sir David Brand: You can say that again.

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: I have said that if it is good it will be passed. However, a need might exist to rewrite the Mining Act because the provisions in the environmental protection legislation might conflict with some of the provisions in the

Mining Act. If we find that one piece of legislation is fighting against another, the present situation could drag on.

I have no mining interest in the area, but this industry could be a help to the people in the eastern end of the Gnowangerup Shire who could play a part in the mining venture. They could keep on with their farm work, but by working for the mining venture they could augment their incomes and make their farms viable. As was pointed out last night by the Minister for Agriculture, many of the applications for rural reconstruction are borderline cases. If this wax industry was a going concern in the area, and the people on the farms could get work for six weeks or so during periods of each year carting wax to Albany, and carting fuel back to the treatment plant, they might earn sufficient on a long-term basis to allow them to stay on their farms.

Those who are familiar with farming know that such an arrangement would not create any hardship on the farm. Except for seeding, shearing, and perhaps harvesting times, the farmers could spend some time away from their farms and earn extra income.

Also, it must be a help to the Port of Albany in connection with which we have heard many opinions expressed. We have heard tonight how the Treasurer and the Minister for Industrial Development went to Albany and made certain promises. I hope these promises will be carried out, because we want to see some industries located outside of Perth. For far too long we have seen the city of Perth growing and the population in the country areas declining. What I propose is a step in the right direction. The Minister for Mines has signified he cannot support the motion, but I hope the Minister for Industrial Development will see his way clear to offer some support for it, although in saying this I am reminded of the words, "Hope springs eternal" mentioned by the Premier.

Mr. Williams: The Minister for Industrial Development is itching to sing out "Aye."

Mr. Graham: The member for Bunbury could be half right. It is either "Yes" or "No."

Mr. W. G. YOUNG: Before concluding my remarks, again I would like to thank members who have spoken both for and against the motion. I particularly wish to thank the member for Avon and the member for Narrogin who took time off to come with me into the area and have a look at first hand. Not only were they able to go into the Fitzgerald River Reserve to look at the situation there, but they were also able to look at farming areas. The southern section—South

Gairdner—is having an excellent season. Once one leaves South Gairdner and travels north towards Jerramungup, although the situation is not as bad as it was in 1969, it is approaching it. There are poor paddocks, very little feed, and very backward crops.

Had the Minister for Mines been present tonight I would have asked him whether there is any possible way, within his ministerial powers, whereby he could allow exploratory work to go ahead subject to any controls which the Minister for environmental protection might decide to impose. At least in this way we could get it off the ground. Time is drifting on. If there is benefit to be gained for those districts we want that benefit now and not in 12 or 18 months' time when farmers in that area who are not viable and who have been refused assistance under the reconstruction scheme will have gone.

Certainly those who leave the land will not come back until there is a very definite upturn in farming. Once they leave the district it will mean the town of Jerramungup will suffer drastically. The country was thrown open mainly under the war service land settlement scheme. Most of the farmers are war service settlers. The scheme got off the ground in 1959 and enjoyed 10 years of prosperity. A similar situation occurred after the 1914-18 war when Western Australian agriculture boomed for 10 years only to be followed by the unfortunate depression of the 1930s.

People who were new settlers have not had any time to consolidate and now find themselves in distressed circumstances. I am sure that anything operating in the district would be of some help to the area in general. I commend the motion.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—21

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mr. Blaikie | Mr. O'Connor |
| Sir David Brand | Mr. O'Neill |
| Mr. Court | Mr. Reid |
| Mr. Coyne | Mr. Ridge |
| Dr. Dadour | Mr. Runciman |
| Mr. Gayfer | Mr. Rushton |
| Mr. Lewis | Mr. Stephens |
| Mr. W. A. Manning | Mr. Williams |
| Mr. McPharlin | Mr. W. G. Young |
| Mr. Mensaros | Mr. I. W. Manning |
| Mr. Naider | (Teller) |

Noes—21

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Mr. Bateman | Mr. Graham |
| Mr. Bertram | Mr. Hartrey |
| Mr. Blackerton | Mr. Jameson |
| Mr. Brady | Mr. Jones |
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Lapham |
| Mr. Burke | Mr. McIver |
| Mr. Cook | Mr. Norton |
| Mr. Davies | Mr. A. R. Tonkin |
| Mr. H. D. Evans | Mr. J. T. Tonkin |
| Mr. T. D. Evans | Mr. Harman |
| Mr. Fletcher | (Teller) |

Pairs

| Ayes | Noes |
|-----------------|------------|
| Mr. Hutchinson | Mr. Moiler |
| Mr. R. L. Young | Mr. May |
| Mr. Thompson | Mr. Taylor |
| Mr. Grayden | Mr. Sewell |

The SPEAKER: The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Noes.

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

KWINANA-BALGA POWER LINE

Delay Pending Survey: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 18th August, on the following motion by Mr. Thompson:—

That, in the opinion of this House, no decision should be made on the construction of the high voltage power lines from Kwinana to Balga until a survey by the proposed Environmental Protection Council or a competent independent authority has been submitted to the Government, and laid on the Table of the House.

MR. O'CONNOR (Mt. Lawley) [8.38 p.m.]: I rise to support the remarks of the member for Darling Range in connection with power lines going through the hills area. I refer members, particularly those who have not seen it in recent days, to the wording of the motion. I consider it is a very reasonable request and I am quite sure any reasonable Government would support the motion and understand what the member for Darling Range is trying to achieve.

This matter is of grave concern to many people throughout the State. When members of the present Government were in Opposition they tried to indicate they were the saviours of conservation in this State. In this House they said all sorts of things in connection with conservation. Tonight I hope they will show that what they said when on this side of the House was not so many words; that they actually meant what they said; and that they are prepared to stand by it.

I believe we should not show disregard for public feeling in this way, because this matter is extremely important and will affect very many people in this State. If the power lines go through the area suggested by the S.E.C. they will leave a scar on the escarpment. From the point of view of economy, I can understand that the S.E.C. probably wants the cheap way out. However, the cheap way out for the commission is not the cheap way out—or the best way out—for the people of this State. I believe the Government should take this into consideration when looking properly at this matter. Economics are not the only factor. We will have to live with this for a long time to come and once the lines are placed in the position indicated I believe they will be there for all time.

Much of the natural vegetation will be affected if the lines go through the hills area. The member for Darling Range has worked extremely hard in connection with this matter. He has brought it to the

attention of the House. He has given his views to the Press and television. As I have said, he has worked extremely hard in his efforts to make sure the lines are placed in the best position for the people of the State. Public feeling has been indicated by the petition which was brought to the House by the member concerned. In all it has 9,500 signatures. The fact that so many people were prepared to sign a petition indicates the feeling of the people. It is not an easy matter to obtain the signatures of such a large number of people on a petition of this nature. I am quite sure if sufficient time were available and others knew exactly what is to happen in this regard, probably the number of signatures would be doubled without any trouble at all.

I do not believe the Government should shut its eyes to this matter. I am sorry the Minister concerned is not in the House at the moment. He indicated that in his opinion the lines and the towers concerned would look majestic. They may look majestic if they go through someone else's electorate or near someone else's home. However, when they are to come near one's own electorate and are to scar the escarpment in the way they will, I do not think they will look majestic.

When we were the Government we undertook that no decision on the construction of these lines would be made until the matter had been looked at by the environmental protection body. I know the present Government has cast this body aside and, in doing so, I believe it has cast the people of the State aside. The Government should allow this matter to go to a competent authority before any decision is made. I do not think it should be left entirely in the hands of the S.E.C. As I have pointed out, it is easy to understand that the commission wants to run its organisation at the best possible cost economically. The commission does an excellent job in this State. In some ways I do not blame it for trying to keep the costs down. However, I am not concerned personally if a cent or two is added to my bill each quarter to make up for the difference involved in putting these lines in their proper place. I am sure this applies to many other people in the State.

Previously we have seen power lines installed in different places. We have seen the desecration caused. We have been concerned in the past and now we should be concerned at the action which is contemplated. The Premier has indicated he is not prepared to delay a decision. Had he been on this side of the House, he would have been tearing us apart for doing what is now proposed. We do not want to tear him apart, but we do want results from him. We want him to do the right thing and refer this matter to an authority to examine closely before any action is commenced.

The legislation which we agreed to could have covered this matter and I am sure it would have covered it very well. As I have said, the member for Darling Range has put a good deal of work into this and I believe it should be taken into consideration, because the case he put before the House last week was a very good one. I certainly hope his request has not fallen on deaf ears and that the Government will have some regard for what he said.

I believe the Minister has a responsibility to confer with his department as regards this matter and to advise the department what he thinks should happen. I do not think he should let the department go ahead willy-nilly and do what it wants to do without any consideration of what the Government, the Parliament, and the people of this State think. The Minister has a responsibility to this State and I hope he will uphold it.

Reference has also been made to the establishment of a bauxite industry in the area. Some people are for it, some are against it. Personally, I think most of the people in the Swan Valley are not bitterly opposed to it because if a bauxite industry is established there it will increase the value of their properties. I do not blame them for that because it will put more money into their pockets, but I do not think these things should be proceeded with too hastily; they should be referred to a competent authority before any final decision is made.

The Government acted very quickly in connection with the corridor plan. It did not take very long to obtain the services of another person in order to get a second opinion. Why could it not also move quickly in this matter and get another authority to investigate the matter and report back to this Parliament? I do not think the State Electricity Commission should push the Government around. The Government should take the action which it feels is right.

Some members have said that these lines would not look unsightly. The Minister himself indicated that they would look majestic. I heard the comment that they could be very useful—they could be fenced off and used as chicken-runs! Perhaps that is what they will look like when they are erected in the area. I think the lines are unsightly, and if they were going through my electorate I would certainly take the same action as the member for Darling Range has taken in an effort to try to prevent the lines being erected.

The S.E.C. should not be almighty in this regard. The Government should act to ensure that these lines are not erected until the matter has been referred to the authority concerned. The M.R.P.A. has given consideration to several different routes for these lines—four in all. They are the foothills route, another route known as the valley route, the eastern

route, and the coastal plain route. When there are four alternatives, they should be considered very carefully before a final decision is made.

I think the member for Darling Range also mentioned that the standard gauge railway line is another possible route for the power lines. Economically, that would probably be a very good route. It is not a densely populated area, and the land values there are not extremely high, probably because a great deal of it is farm land and a number of trains go through the area. I know the power lines would have to be kept a reasonable distance away from the railway line because of the effect on signalling equipment, but surely it is a possibility that could be investigated.

The coastal plain route goes through the Gosnells area. Although the land in this area is flat and not extremely costly, I believe there are some problems in connection with the Perth Airport. I do not know whether those problems are great, and I do not know whether members of the Government know, but this is another matter that should be thoroughly investigated before a final decision is made.

The eastern route is a longer one. It has been indicated that it is about 111 miles long, as against 85 miles on the other route. The eastern route zig-zags all over the place, and I believe a more direct route could be taken, as mentioned by the member for Darling Range. If that is so, it would be more economical than the route that has been chosen.

I believe the matter is of vital importance to the people of this State, and it is of tremendous importance to the people in the Darling Range area. It should be studied by an independent authority. People's opinions should be considered. The escarpment protection committee did a tremendous amount of work on this matter, and each member of Parliament has received letters about it. The committee considered that a single row of towers could considerably cut the costs. If so, why could this not be done? The Government could save money on this. A figure of \$7,300,000 has been mentioned.

I commend the member for Darling Range for bringing this motion to the House. I remember that when it was proposed to erect lines across Blackwall Reach there was a great hue and cry about it from members of the present Government, who felt we were doing a dreadful thing and thought we should increase the costs two or threefold by putting the lines under water. In this case we are not asking the Government to double or treble the costs. We are asking the Government to hang on and refer the matter to a competent authority.

I support the member for Darling Range and hope the Government will take this matter into consideration.

MR. RUSHTON (Dale) [8.51 p.m.]: I would like to congratulate the member for Darling Range for representing his electorate so positively and making this House and the Government aware of the facts involved. I think this clearly illustrates that those on this side of the House have an interest in people; it also illustrates the effects of the socialist doctrine of the other side.

Only last week we had an illustration of the misdirected attention given by the Government to the question of land tax, which demonstrated that the Government disregards sectors of people who are few in number and kowtows to sectors who are great in number. But that is history.

The Premier has made great play of his consistent conduct. We heard about this on TV earlier in his reign. Of one thing we can be sure: the only thing on which he has been consistent is his inconsistency.

This motion also involves my electorate. With the previous member for Darling Range I attended meetings in his electorate which the present member for Darling Range also attended. I am fully aware of the feelings of the people concerned. I was astounded at the calibre of the people and the forthright, frank, and honest approach they had to this subject.

Unfortunately, the Minister is not here to listen to the debate, and to me that is not very acceptable. I think he should be here to answer our submissions and to gain a fuller understanding of the case that is being presented. In Kalamunda, a case was made out very clearly and with great integrity, and I think their case, which is being presented by the member for Darling Range, deserves a hearing and consideration by the Government.

I would like to mention briefly how my own electorate is involved in this motion. Other electorates are also involved, and I will be very disappointed if other members do not give support to the member for Darling Range.

This line comes from the south-west and into the Shire of Armadale-Kelmscott, which is in my electorate. A number of alternative routes have been proposed. The coastal plain route, which follows the broad gauge railway, would not touch my electorate to any extent. Further consideration should be given to that route because I believe there are ways and means of minimising interference with navigational aids at the airport. A case has been made out as to why the line should not follow that route.

This motion does not advocate a particular route. The motion requests that a survey be made by a competent authority. Another suggested route was around Byford to Kalamunda; yet another was between Kelmscott and Seaforth; there were also the foothills route and the route over the escarpment. The route over the

escarpment at the back of Kalamunda was the route that, generally speaking, was given first priority by the Shire of Armadale-Kelmscott.

The other day the member for Canning presented a petition from the people of Seaforth, who object to the foothills route which goes through that area. I will be very disappointed in the member for Canning if, after presenting that petition, he does not support the member for Darling Range. He is fully aware of the feelings of the people and the disadvantages they will suffer if that route is adopted. He is one person who should be giving support to the member for Darling Range.

The route along the foothills has many disadvantages, to which attention has been drawn by the member for Darling Range, by the people of Kalamunda, and by people in the metropolitan area. The disadvantages are obvious. Anybody who has an interest in aesthetics will be fully aware of the tremendous expense that has been incurred by the M.R.P.A. in protecting the escarpment. I am not sure how many millions of dollars have been spent on this project, but the work that has been done and the considerable expenditure that has been incurred in protecting the escarpment are being disregarded by the Government in its proposals for the erection of this power line.

I think the big issue here is the ethics and creditability of the Government's actions. In this debate there is an issue that is above the pros and cons of different routes. In fact, the creditability of the Government is at stake, and the Premier is very much involved in it.

The other day the Minister for Works and Electricity made the comment that he thought he was coming out very well in this matter because he had the luck to be pure. He was referring to the fact that last year he supported a proposal to erect the power lines across the Swan River. He did not stop to think that although he might be pure in regard to this matter he had made the comment that he thought the S.E.C. should provide a little more money to improve upon what was being done. Generally speaking, he stood his ground and supported what had been done.

The Premier had some amazing things to say about the present situation. One of the comments of the present Premier is reported on page 2739 of the 1968 *Hansard*, and reads as follows:—

It makes me smile when I hear the picture the Minister paints about the aesthetically attractive pylons and the wires which are almost invisible.

He thought that was amusing, but now the pylons have attracted a "majestic air." As I understand it, those are not the Premier's words, but the words of the Minister for Electricity. The then

Leader of the Opposition went on to some other interesting points and he made this comment—

The Minister implied that. That is my reasoning from what the Minister has told us: the cost of this is prohibitive. I should point out that the cost would become greater as time went on.

He also said—

I do not know whether the economics will. The commission made a profit of \$4,000,000 last year, and surely that is enough. How much more profit does it want to make annually? Half of that profit will be sufficient to place the line underground. This money comes from the consumers, and, what is more, it has been obtained by the implementation of the policy of the Government for the purpose of raising funds for capital expenditure.

This makes most interesting reading because we still have that \$4,000,000; and surely if there is to be an extra cost at this point of time a portion of that money should be used. The motion does not seek that cost should be considered, it asks for the wishes of the people to be considered. It is rather interesting to read the opinion of the then Leader of the Opposition. We go on a little further and we find that after some interesting comments by the then Minister for Works (Mr. Ross Hutchinson), the present Premier said—

The Minister will find that when we reach the policy-making stage in 1971 we will develop our policy in regard to all these matters.

His prediction was spot-on. His party became the Government in 1971. But now his policy is totally opposite to what it promised then. The then Minister for Works said—

I look forward to seeing this in your policy.

Of course, now we are badly disappointed because the Government is doing exactly the opposite to what its intention was then. This is what is concerning us so much. The Minister for Works made some interesting comments when he opposed the motion. He ran through many of the points that had been raised, and he indicated that the responsibility of the S.E.C. was not to the protection of the environment. However, that is where we say the Government should play its part. This illustrates the whole situation.

The Brand Government gave a clear undertaking that it would proclaim the environmental protection legislation and that the legislation would have full regard for this issue. But the present Government declined to proclaim that legislation and it did not avail itself of the opportunity to consult a body of most creditable men. I think everyone would

agree that the members of the proposed council would have vetted this question very closely and we would have had far more confidence in their decision than we have in this decision of the Government.

We do not challenge the actions of the S.E.C.; it is charged with certain responsibilities, and we all acknowledge that. But we say that it should not be held responsible for the environment, the aesthetics, and the routing of this line. The Government is abrogating its responsibilities. It says it is going to create an environmental protection body with much more strength than that proposed by the previous Government. Once again, the Government will take no responsibility in this matter. It will leave it to the new body. The Government should face up to its responsibilities and to the people who elect it. Under the proposed system the electors will not have the opportunity to judge the action of the Government because the Government will give away its power to another body.

The Government is saying that it does not want to face up to these difficulties. It wants somebody else to face up to them. It wants to hide behind the apron strings of another body. Those facts are being clearly shown by this issue. The Government wants to introduce new environmental protection legislation to give away its power to a body which will be independent of the Government. It should be condemned for the very action of abrogating the responsibilities with which it was charged when it took office.

I think I have indicated that we are concerned about the inconsistencies of the Government and the way it has played around with the question of the Pacminex alumina refinery project. Nobody knows for certain what is going on in regard to that project. The Government was pressurised by the Executive of the Australian Labor Party into making a decision; and we are still not clear in which direction the Government is travelling.

We are aware of the stop-go activities of the Government in relation to the Fitzgerald River Reserve. Coming closer to home, we are aware of the Government's decision in regard to the establishment of a power station at Long Point. These are all worrying decisions because the Government does not seem to know which way it is going.

The SPEAKER: I cannot see any connection with the motion.

Mr. RUSHTON: I will come back to the motion.

The SPEAKER: I would like you to do so.

Mr. RUSHTON: The member for Darling Range received a letter from the Premier.

Mr. Graham: I am just wondering what your Government did about the P.R.T.S. plan, the corridor plan, high-tension wires, iron-ore—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Dale will continue.

Mr. Graham: Talk about uncertainties!

Mr. RUSHTON: It is interesting to hear the interjections of the Deputy Premier. I am sure he has many more red herrings up his sleeve.

Mr. Graham: Your Government decided nothing about a power station.

Mr. RUSHTON: Let me return to the letter received by the member for Darling Range. The letter was written to him by the Premier and it showed a lack of concern for the people in the Darling Range area. In answer to queries raised by the member for Darling Range, the Premier said—

Thank you for your letter of 1st July concerning the 330 k.V. power lines. Your specific requests are answered as follows—

- (a) It is considered that the foothills route and the escarpment route represent the most westerly and easterly alignments which reasonably could be followed.

So there is a decision that we are now limited to those two alignments. To continue—

- (b) and (c) The State Electricity Commission is charged with the responsibility of providing an economic and reliable supply of electricity. It is inherent that under its Act it must relieve the Government of the detail of running a major public utility.

The Commission is broadly responsible to its Minister and hence the Government. The Act provides for proper procedures in matters of this nature. Any further reference by the Government of the dispute to an area where legislation has yet to be enacted would introduce unwarranted delay.

Tonight the Government was happy to delay the Fitzgerald River Reserve issue; but five minutes later it is not prepared to delay a decision on a matter which is vital to so many people. In the evaluation of the Government not enough people are involved to warrant consideration.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You are arguing two ways at once.

Mr. RUSHTON: No, I am not.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Yes you are.

Mr. RUSHTON: I am saying that last year the members of the present Government were arguing in one direction, and this year they are arguing in a different direction.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Don't you know that many people are concerned with the Fitzgerald River Reserve?

Mr. RUSHTON: I am concerned with it.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It does not sound like it. You are so concerned that you would not answer the question as to whether or not you wanted mining.

Mr. RUSHTON: I do not want any mining to take place until the matter is fully examined.

Mr. Graham: You voted the opposite way.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Dale had better get back to the power lines.

Mr. RUSHTON: This case is very clear. It highlights the Government's lack of regard for the wishes of the people in connection with a vital aesthetic issue. All that is being asked of the Government is that the route of the power line should be fully examined and evaluated so that people may have confidence in what the Government is doing. We want the Government to be consistent. We think that if it is possible to delay one matter then it is reasonable to delay this one, especially when we take into consideration the fact that the previous Government had made a commitment. It is normal for an incoming Government to uphold the commitment of an outgoing Government. In this case we believe it is reasonable that the incoming Government should uphold the undertaking of the previous Government; that is, that this issue should be dealt with in the manner submitted to the House by the member for Darling Range. I have much pleasure in supporting the objective of the member for Darling Range in this motion.

SIR DAVID BRAND (Greenough—Leader of the Opposition) [9.12 p.m.]: This motion has been read out in the House on a number of occasions, and the objective of the member for Darling Range is clearly understood. It is not for me to repeat the remarks which have been made already on a number of occasions concerning the details of the costs of this route, the alternative routes, the story of the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, the number of public meetings which have been held, the letters to the Press, or the discussions by local authorities.

Indeed, it has been said already by the Premier when referring to the previous motion that many people are involved in the issue of that motion—namely, the issue of conservation. However, in that case the principle involved was indeed different. My

interest in this matter is that of the Leader of the previous Government in advising our candidate for the electorate of Darling Range as to what he should do when attending public meetings, and what undertakings he should give if he was elected and if the Government was returned. Sadly enough the Government was not returned; but I wish to make it quite clear that I suggested the member for Darling Range should request what he has requested in his motion.

As the then Premier, I was able to suggest this course of action as a result of my experience as Minister for Electricity at one time; for I knew that it was most difficult to decide where a power line, a power house, or a host of other things should be sited.

One must have regard for the practical problems of a Minister, and certainly the problems of the commission. So, I was very cautious as to the advice which I gave to the member for Darling Range. However, I suggested that we should delay making a decision on the construction of the power line in one place or another, until such time as the conservation authority could look into the matter, because this Parliament had already agreed to the proposals on conservation which we put before it; that subject to the appointment of a director and the proclamation of the Act, our Government intended proceeding with the matter straight away, and would forward it after the 20th February last to the director for an examination of the problems which confronted the people, and with which many others were concerned even though they did not have a direct interest or lived in the area affected.

Because I knew we could do that, I have a very clear conscience in saying that we are honouring our promise; and I believe this Government should honour its promise. However, this Government did not proclaim the Act, because, as it explained to the public at large, it had other proposals one of which was to give big teeth—a real dental operation—to the new authority of which we have not yet seen anything.

Mr. Jamieson: That is a beauty!

Sir DAVID BRAND: Before the Minister says that it is a beauty with big teeth, I would like to read out some of the election promises which the present Premier made. He had a great deal to say about Ministers who did not comply; and his great interest was that Ministers should be nailed down, but he said our proposals did not do that and allowed Ministers to please themselves. We have only to read *Hansard* to see what ridicule was cast upon our proposals.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: You do not have it right, because your Bill had only one Minister, and not Ministers in charge.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I will read out what the Premier said at the last election.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Be factual.

Sir DAVID BRAND: I will be factual, because I will read what he said.

Mr. Bertram: You cannot do better than that.

Sir DAVID BRAND: In his policy speech the then Leader of the Opposition, who is now the Premier, had this to say—

The Brand Government announced it was going to take the lead in Australia in dealing with pollution of the environment but in actual practice it has fallen well behind the other States and the provision made in Western Australia to deal with the problem is most inadequate.

I do not agree with what he said. To continue—

The legislation passed establishes a Department of Environmental Protection but the administration of the Act and the control of the Department is vested in a Minister.

For purposes of the Act there is to be an Environment Council, the functions of which are mainly purely advisory.

Although an obligation has been placed on all Ministers to refer to the Minister for Environmental Protection certain matters arising in the planning stages of construction of developmental projects, that is where the obligation ends.

Where any such matter is referred to the Minister for Environmental Protection he may please himself whether he requires the Environment Council to furnish him with a report with or without a recommendation.

Providing the Minister for Environmental Protection has asked for a report he is then obliged, under the Act, to forward a copy to the Minister of the Crown who first referred the matter to him and a copy to the Premier accompanied by such recommendations and comments as it pleases the Minister to make.

Under the Act any individual or body of persons may refer any matter believed to require investigation for the purpose of preventing environmental pollution but where any matter is so referred, the Minister may please himself as to whether he will require the Environment Council to furnish a report.

Although the Environment Council is obliged under the Act to prepare and furnish to the Minister a report on its operations, which report must subsequently be laid before each House of Parliament, the Council cannot report on those matters which

have been brought under the notice of the Minister for Environmental Protection but have not been referred by him to the Council.

We sought in the Parliament to amend the Act to make it obligatory upon the Minister to refer all matters brought under his notice to the Council and to request a report but the Government used its numbers to defeat our intention and the matter therefore remains completely at the Minister's discretion.

All the time he was implying this should not be. That is how I read his comments, but I do not know how the Attorney-General will interpret them. He might tell us later. To continue with the then Leader of the Opposition's policy speech—

We are determined to protect the environment and preserve our beaches and Reserves.

The basis for a programme of environment protection for Western Australia will be established by an Environment Protection Authority through the control of waste and the prevention of pollution.

This Authority will administer the Act which we shall ask Parliament to pass and assume overall responsibility for environment protection and conservation notwithstanding provisions to the contrary in such Acts as the Mining Act.

I presume he was also referring to the Electricity Act. To continue—

We shall appoint an Environment Protection Council and an Environment Protection Appeal Board.

I read into that statement that any Minister would become subject to this authority. As the Premier has outlined very clearly, this matter was put before the people and they decided his party would be elected to office.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: When the Bill comes before us you will find out that it provides exactly that.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The point is the Bill is not here, and there is no such law in existence. This seems to me to be a very weak excuse.

Mr. Jamieson: Under your law this matter could not have been referred.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It would have been referred.

Mr. Jamieson: It could not have been.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It would have been referred had events taken the normal course. The people who were protesting about this matter had the right to have it referred, and any Government having an interest in an important question of this nature would have allowed it to proceed to the stage where it was examined.

Mr. Jamieson: You made the mistake of defining what they could do, but the definition would not have allowed matters of this nature to be considered.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The point I am making is that I advised the present member for Darling Range to tell the people who attended the protest meetings what we as a Government would do. A law had been passed, and it was about to be proclaimed. Despite what the Minister for Electricity has said, the whole question would have been placed before this authority.

Mr. Jamieson: Why did you not proclaim the Act?

Sir DAVID BRAND: The reason that we did not proclaim the Act was that the Bill passed through Parliament in the latter stages of the session—just as some measures will be passed through Parliament late in the session on this occasion—and after the appointment of the director who had to return to America to continue his work with N.A.S.A. In view of the imminence of the election we decided not to proclaim the Act, because the director and other people connected with its implementation were not here. This was the sensible course to follow. The Minister for Lands smiles, because he agrees with me. I am sure he does, because he has common sense. He paid me a compliment last night, and I want to return it.

I decided to speak to make sure that it is clearly understood that all the undertakings I gave on this matter have been honoured, or attempted to be honoured. I have been a Minister of the Crown, and I realise many problems arise in matters such as this. Let us say that a power line has to be established in this direction; and I believe most thinking people accept the fact that one must be established.

Mr. Thompson: Not necessarily.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The honourable member can explain to the House at a later stage what he thinks about this. I believe that in some way or other a power line somewhere in that direction must be built. Whilst alternatives may be suggested, these alternatives must be practical and reasonably economic, because people recognise that the cost cannot go beyond a reasonable amount.

I cannot help referring again to what has been referred to by two members in this debate: that when the controversy arose over the construction of a power line over the Swan River at East Fremantle the present Premier was most vocal. All the problems before us, for which certain excuses are being put up, did not exist as far as we, as a Government, were concerned! It was contended they could be resolved.

Mr. Jamieson: You are not going to reciprocate on this motion! Seeing that I voted with you on that occasion I hope you will vote with me on this occasion.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The issue is not the same. The issue before us is the undertaking to present this problem to the conservation authority, or whatever be its name, before a final decision is made. I leave it at that.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Your Government overrode the decision of the Swan River Conservation Board in respect of the construction of the power line over the Swan River.

Sir DAVID BRAND: It was not a matter of overriding the board's decision.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That was what you did.

Sir DAVID BRAND: The fact remains that the Swan River Conservation Board gave a very balanced opinion on the matter.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: It was against the proposal to build the power line across the Swan River.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Fletcher: I wanted less than half a mile of cable to be sunk under the river bed. There is no comparison between the two cases.

The SPEAKER: Order! If members do not desist they will be down in Bunbury before they are finished.

Sir DAVID BRAND: In any case, the main points of conflict in this controversy concern the people living in the hills and many others who are interested in conservation. This matter presents many problems, in the same way as the proposal to build the power line across the Swan River presented many problems at the time. I would point out that at that stage we as the Government had no special authority to depend on for examining these matters.

Let us be fair. It is only in the last 12 months that the world at large has recognised the danger of pollution, the lack of conservation measures, and the need to preserve our natural environment. If we are honest we must agree that many of these matters were not given consideration by Governments and by the people; and those who did in earlier cases raise their voices were crying in the wilderness. Anyone who says anything different is hopping on the bandwagon, and being wise after the event.

We have to be realistic in these matters, as I advised the member for Darling Range to tell his people. Let us honour the promise in respect of this important matter. I support the motion, and I commend the member for Darling Range for the action he has taken.

MR. THOMPSON (Darling Range) [9.29 p.m.]: May I start off by thanking members on this side of the House for the support they have given me. I would point out to the House that there has been only one speaker from the opposite side who has spoken in this debate. I find this situation to be rather unusual, especially when one refers to *Hansard* and reads what was said in the debate when the question of building a power line across the Swan River at Fremantle—which project was undertaken a few months ago—was before the House.

Mr. Jamieson: How many members on the Government side spoke then?

Mr. THOMPSON: One or two, I believe. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the fact that the power lines would have to go somewhere. Indeed, some power lines will have to go somewhere but I hope to indicate that there is no necessity for the construction of 330 kv lines at this time.

I thank the member for Dale for the great interest he has shown in this subject right from the time I became involved, and right from the time the people of Darling Range became involved. He has attended each public meeting, and has taken an interest in the subject.

Previous speakers have indicated that the former Government gave a very firm undertaking to the people of the State that this issue would be referred to the Department of Environmental Protection before a decision was made. It was also stated that a decision would not necessarily be made by the State Electricity Commission; because the issue had a far-reaching impact it ought to be made by the Government.

I will relate this motion to another matter which was debated in the House recently, and I refer to the corridor plan. The corridor plan will be referred to another authority even though the Government-appointed Metropolitan Region Planning Authority put forward a proposition for the development of the Perth metropolitan region. The present Government believed there ought to be a second opinion, and quite frankly I support that contention. However, I do not support the appointment of the person who was appointed, bearing in mind that he had already stated his thoughts on the subject in a 30c booklet. The Government will now pay up to \$5,000 for his services.

Mr. Jamieson: Be careful; I might retain him to give advice on the power lines!

Mr. THOMPSON: I do not think that is very likely

Sir David Brand: Remember the archway.

Mr. Jamieson: But he did not jump off.

Mr. Court: He was only appointed because he had an opposing viewpoint.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMPSON: That is true. The Minister for Electricity indicated that the State Electricity Commission was charged with the responsibility of providing an effective and reliable power supply for the people of the State and, indeed it is.

For 20 years before I came to this Parliament I had a fairly close association with the State Electricity Commission and with some of the men who are now senior officers of that department. I was employed in the department now administered by the Minister for Electricity—the Public Works Department—in the electrical engineering field. For a number of years I was stationed in the south-west where I had a close association with the State Electricity Commission in the construction of many lines throughout the south-west area of the State.

Mr. Jamieson: The department has improved since the 20th February.

Mr. THOMPSON: That is open to debate.

Sir David Brand: I have been reading the papers lately.

Mr. THOMPSON: I have full sympathy for the State Electricity Commission in the difficult job it has in keeping abreast of the commitments for power supplies in the State. I also recall that during my association with the State Electricity Commission it made mistakes, and it will admit it has made mistakes. I am not saying that what is proposed is, necessarily, a mistake. What I am saying is there ought to be a second opinion; someone else should examine what is proposed.

It was noticeable that when the Minister made his speech the other night he read the bulk of it, which I believe was contrary to the Standing Orders of the House. However, I suppose that as he does not particularly understand the subject it was reasonable that he should be allowed to read his speech which was obviously prepared by someone in the State Electricity Commission.

Mr. Jamieson: You do not know what you are talking about now; a Minister has certain privileges.

Mr. THOMPSON: It was quite obvious that the Minister did not have a command of the subject otherwise he would not have had to read his speech.

Mr. Jamieson: That is pretty hollow.

Mr. THOMPSON: Section 27 of the State Electricity Commission Act charges the commission with the responsibility for the safe, economic and efficient supply of electricity. The Act makes no reference to any consideration of aesthetics or protection of the environment.

The Minister said that to delay this decision would place a further impost on the people of the State, and cause the price of electricity to rise. I do not think that argument is quite valid if we look

further into the problem. The Minister admitted that the State Electricity Commission Act does not require the commission to protect the environment, and I believe the State Electricity Commission is aware of this fact.

We have been told that no swath will be cut through any area where the power lines are to be erected. A newspaper article which appeared in the *Daily News*, on Friday, the 23rd April, carried a heading, "Foothills will not be disfigured: SEC." Part of the article read as follows:—

The SEC says it will not disfigure the Darling Range foothills with the proposed 330,000-volt Kwinana-Balga power line.

What a lot of nonsense! I would like to refer members to other transmission lines which have been constructed by the State Electricity Commission in recent times. Indeed, I took the trouble last night to drive to Pearce to have a look at the 132kv line which is being constructed to Moora.

On a two or three-chain reserve there is not a vestige of vegetation rising above 18 inches. Before the commission commenced to construct the line everything in its path was knocked down. It is necessary for that clearing to take place to protect the power line. What the Minister has told us, when he said that the vegetation would not be disturbed, is not consistent with what is being done by the commission every day. Not only does it initially knock down all the vegetation, but it takes drastic action to ensure that the vegetation does not grow again.

I will refer to a letter addressed to one of my electors. It is from the State Electricity Commission and is dated the 22nd July, this year. It reads as follows:—

Further to my letter of the 5th July, 1971, our officers have inspected your property.

The power line goes across the private property. To continue—

They found that the trees in question are suckers and small seedlings that have been growing within 1 chain of the centre line of the Commission's transmission line. The suckers had grown to approximately 12-15 ft. in height and together with young seedlings under the line were considered to be a hazard to the operation of the transmission line if they were allowed to continue their growth unchecked. They also constitute a hazard as far as fires are concerned, inasmuch as the flames from the burning tree could cause the conductor to soften, break and then drop to the ground.

The Commission therefore pursues an active policy of patrolling these major transmission lines regularly and noting such hazards. These are then

removed by spraying the young seedlings with a 245T Hormone spray. This spray is non toxic to animals and man, nor does it affect the wild flower growth.

Thank goodness we can preserve the wild-flowers. To continue—

It is a selective spray that is only active on the Eucalyptus species, and is only applied within 1 chain of the centre line of the transmission line.

I point out that that transmission line consists of one pole and the full width of the line at the head of the pole would not be more than eight or 10 feet. The Minister said that the foothills route was virtually clear. I drive through that area every morning to come to this place, and if that area is cleared then I do not know the meaning of the word "cleared." The area is heavily wooded and it is a very picturesque part of the metropolitan area.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Is that the route favoured by the M.R.P.A.?

Mr. THOMPSON: Yes, and it was interesting to note that the M.R.P.A. entered these negotiations after the decision had been virtually taken by the commission to route the line east of Kalamunda. The commission appeared to accept the cheaper route, but in the area of the Guildford Grammar School, where the M.R.P.A. recommended that the line should not go across the school, the commission decided to take the line through the school grounds.

It is a lot of nonsense for members opposite to tell us that the M.R.P.A. is interested in environmental protection, and holds some sway in this matter. The M.R.P.A. holds no sway unless the State Electricity Commission chooses to accept the recommendations.

We have been told that if the valley route is adopted the lines will pass over the top of the vegetation in that area. I do not see how the vegetation will not be disturbed during the course of the construction of the line. The vegetation will be disturbed and, what is more, the commission will take steps to ensure that it does not grow again. It is clear that the commission cannot afford to have the line damaged by trees, or more particularly, by fires in the tops of the trees.

The minimum clearance of the line above the ground will be 25 feet and very many species of eucalypts grow to a height greater than 25 feet. Those trees will be cleared, so it is not true to say that the vegetation will be allowed to remain. I intend to quote what the Minister for Electricity said about environment when speaking about the lines over the river. It is interesting to see that

he refers to people jumping on the bandwagon of the environment. The Minister stated as follows:—

If they are successful, our standard of living will cease to exist and we will return to nature. Specialist authorities without the responsibility to get a job done can place impossible conditions on the "workhorses" of the community such as the State Electricity Commission.

Does that mean that we should not consider the environment and we should not consider what we are leaving for future generations?

Mr. Jamieson: You are being unfair to the commission, and all the people who constitute the commission.

Mr. THOMPSON: I am not being unfair at all. I am stating the facts as they are.

Mr. Jamieson: You are being very unfair, and you know it. You should have a look at some of the substations, and see the steps which have been taken to improve them and then you will know you are wrong. You must go around with your eyes closed.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMPSON: I request the Minister for Electricity to drive out as far as the Wanneroo wireless station where the 132 kv line has just been constructed. The line crosses Wanneroo Road at a very great height because it has to pass over a 22 kv line which runs parallel to Wanneroo Road. There is not a vestige of vegetation there. The trees have been knocked down to make way for the power line.

I do not think the State Electricity Commission can have much regard for the environment because I know what is involved in the construction of power lines. With my own hands I have been involved in the construction of power lines—not to the same magnitude as those now being constructed, but the problems were the same.

There is a contrast between the attitude expressed by the Minister in this instance, and that expressed during the debate on the river crossing. During that debate the Minister said that the State Electricity Commission was amassing huge profits, and that some of the profits should be ploughed back to ensure that the aesthetics of the countryside were protected. He said the lines should be made as unobtrusive as possible.

Mr. Jamieson: The commission is doing just that.

Mr. THOMPSON: That may be the case, but I believe this particular matter should be reviewed by someone other than the State Electricity Commission. The prime

objective and criterion in assessing the route for any power line must not be one of cost.

Mr. Jamieson: We should be humorous and refer the matter to you, and whoever you offended could take to you afterwards.

Mr. THOMPSON: Three or four routes have been under consideration even though the Minister said in this House that only two were being considered.

Mr. Jamieson: The other night I told you there were four.

Mr. THOMPSON: In a previous question I asked how many lines the State Electricity Commission and the M.R.P.A. had considered before making their decision on the power line. The Minister said two had been considered by the S.E.C. Four had been considered by the S.E.C. and the M.R.P.A. combined. So, in fact, four routes were considered.

The coastal plains route follows, generally, the route of the standard gauge railway line. Objections were raised by the Department of Civil Aviation because of the possible dangers to the Perth Airport. I have been told it would not be very difficult for the S.E.C. to meet the clearance requirements of the Department of Civil Aviation. The lines can be lowered. The height of 140 feet for the towers is purely an arbitrary figure. By placing the towers closer together, their overall height can be reduced. The 140 feet has been plucked out of the air as the height for these lines. In a special circumstance where it was necessary to lower the line, lower supports could be used which would reduce the overall height of the line.

I am told the insulators on these lines are in the order of 11 feet each. With the lines being one above the other, there are 33 feet of insulators before there is any allowance for clearance above the ground. There is no need for the lines to be constructed in that way in all cases. At Pearce the configuration of the line has been changed. Instead of grouping them with the insulators counter-poised above them, a horizontal configuration has been used. Instead of having the insulators dangling from the top, the insulators have been placed on the top of the supports, thus reducing the height of the pylons on which the lines are supported. In that way it would be possible to pass the airport at a lower height.

If that is not practical, underground cable could be used. Not a great length of underground cable would be necessary, and I think it would be advisable to use it for that short length of the route in order to pass the airport, thereby eliminating the problems associated with the airport. A great saving to the State would be achieved if that were done.

A little earlier I referred to the fact that the decision on the route through the valleys had been made before the matter

was referred to the M.R.P.A. I believe that was totally wrong. There are three bodies that should be in complete agreement about the power lines; that is, the State Electricity Commission, the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority, and the Department of Environmental Protection. The Government should also have a say in it. If there is any conflict between those three bodies, it should be resolved by the Government, which is responsible to the people. The S.E.C. is not responsible to the people; it is isolated from the people and does not have to answer to them every three years.

In answer to a question a few days ago, the Minister said that the S.E.C. had advised that there were severe limitations along the Great Eastern Highway that prevented the continuation of the power lines on the five-chain reserve.

I fail to see that the restrictions are so tight, when it is possible to have three chains for the construction of one line, taking two lines singly each side of Midland. I fail to see how it is possible to have three chains for each of those lines and it is not possible to have five chains for the construction of both lines in the same reserve, thereby eliminating interference with Guildford Grammar School.

These lines pass through the electorate of the member for Swan, and I would be very surprised if he is not perturbed about the commission's proposal to split the lines into two and take two separate lines through his electorate. I believe Guildford Grammar School has legitimate reasons for asking the Government not to put lines through that school.

Mr. Brady: If you had not made this a political football, we might have had a deputation about the matter.

Mr. THOMPSON: I did not make it a political football. In response to a request I made to the Premier on the 1st July, he said, "We will not take the matter out of the hands of the S.E.C. We will not refer the matter to the environmental protection council. The S.E.C. has the power under its Act to make the decision and we will leave to it the detail of running this public utility."

The word "detail" flabbergasts me because the construction of a line of this magnitude is no mere detail. We have been told a number of things about radio interference. We have been told the lines will interfere with radio and we have been told they will not interfere with radio. I think they will. I believe the corona discharge on the insulators will interfere with radio and television, the degree of interference depending upon atmospheric conditions at any given time. I suggest there will be considerable radio and television interference along the line.

Mr. Jamieson: You are the ultimate in experts.

Mr. THOMPSON: I am not the ultimate in experts. I believe that is the case, and the Minister has not said categorically there will not be any interference. He has said that when interference occurs the commission will take steps to eliminate it, so there will be interference along the line.

Mr. Jamieson: Nothing could be fairer than that.

Mr. THOMPSON: No, but if the insulators are cleaned, thus eliminating interference, and the interference recurs owing to particular atmospheric conditions, I suggest the commission will not go back and clean the insulators again because the commission has a fair length of line to service and it will have other problems to attend to before it can get around to cleaning the insulators.

I think the Minister said a few unkind words about the escarpment protection committee the other night. He more or less implied that the committee has no regard for progress and does not care whether or not this project proceeds so long as the lines do not go through the area with which it is concerned. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The members of the committee are highly responsible people who hold very responsible positions in this community.

Mr. Jamieson: Who stopped cars in order to get signatures on petitions?

Mr. THOMPSON: The Minister is no doubt referring to the petitions that were signed in the Helena Valley. There is no doubt that they did ask people to sign petitions, and I will deal with the petitions shortly. The members of the committee are responsible people who have approached this matter in a very responsible way. I think it is unfair of the Minister—

Mr. Bickerton: They are also on the roll, are they not?

Mr. THOMPSON: No, they are not. The honourable member implies that they are on the roll for Darling Range, but not all of them are. Perhaps they are on the roll for some other electorate.

Mr. T. D. Evans: I hope they are on some roll. They are irresponsible if they are not on any roll at all.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMPSON: The other night the Minister said that the farmer was the greatest desecrator of our environment. I cannot see the connection between the green belt, for which the people of this State have paid \$2,500,000 in order that it might be set aside as a backdrop to the city, and farming activities in the rural areas of the State.

Mr. Jamieson: The lines will not go through the green belt.

Mr. THOMPSON: Precisely, but they will hang right in front of the green belt. They are to be allowed to pass virtually within

feet of the green belt. If they go across the face of the escarpment they will greatly detract from the green belt which has cost the people of this State so much.

Mr. Jamieson: They will not be seen.

Mr. O'Neil: Does that imply that you know where they are going?

Mr. Jamieson: Come up to my office any day and find out whether you can see the lines going through your territory. They are about four miles away.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMPSON: I would like to refer to a question that was recently asked in this House. I asked the Minister—

How many times has power failed because of lightning strikes on 123 kv lines supplying northern terminal during the last twelve months?

The Minister replied—

None. There have been no outages of the line because of lightning strike. He went on to say that the design described in another paragraph had prevented failure of supply. The fact is that there has been no outage of supply as a result of lightning strikes.

The other night I think an interjection from the other side implied that there had been outages of the power supply. We can recall one which occurred fairly recently and caused great concern to the previous Government. All the power-generating points in the State went out of action. That had nothing whatever to do with the failure of the transmission line. It resulted from a fault within the generating system which was compounded by the fact that the S.E.C. was not expecting it. One unit went out. Additional load was passed down the line to another generating station, which in turn went out, resulting in a chain reaction.

That sort of thing could probably happen again but the commission keeps referring to the security of supply. I venture to suggest that the majority of outages that have occurred on the S.E.C. system in recent times have not been directly connected with transmission but have been attributable to the failure of power generation equipment and substation gear.

I have received a couple of opinions on the safety of the new lines constructed along the five-chain reserve. In answer to questions I put to the Minister I was informed that lightning strike to an area on the five-chain reserve would not render both lines inoperative but would be confined to one line, and there would be security by virtue of the other line.

That information is not entirely supported by senior engineers of the State Electricity Commission, who have said that, ideally, these lines should have two entirely separate routes, but because they knew there would be one heck of a row if

they attempted to take two separate three-chain reserves they decided to put the lines along one reserve. The commission is virtually putting all its eggs in one basket. I do not think it is true to say it is necessary to construct both these lines along two rows of towers at the present time. I believe one row of towers would be sufficient.

We were told that by 1975 the load at the northern terminal would be 425 megawatts. We were also told that the present lines passing through the metropolitan area are sufficient to carry the load until that time. Therefore, just under 425 megawatts is capable of being carried on the present transmission system. The proposed lines will have a capacity of 1100 megawatts—three times the capacity of the lines that now pass through the metropolitan area.

I was informed, in answer to a question on today's notice paper, that 200 megawatts of the 425 megawatt load in 1975 will be carried on the 300 kv line. That is a very small proportion. As I said earlier, I do not think there is justification for the construction of a power line of that magnitude at the present time. There is obviously sufficient capacity on the lines that now pass through the metropolitan area to take us up to 1975, and a degree of safety exists. Answers to further questions indicate that two-thirds of the present lines passing through the metropolitan area are sufficient to carry the load at any one time, so one-third of the capacity is spare.

I believe there is no justification for these high lines to be installed at the present time. A huge saving could be made by the provision of additional 132 kv lines now. We are also told by the commission that power generation up to the late 1970s or early 1980s will be south of the metropolitan area. This implies that after that time we can expect to see a power station in the north. I believe that 55 per cent. of the load in the metropolitan area is distributed from the northern terminal. As the population builds up in the northern area, there will be an increased load and an increased demand which would justify construction of a power station in the north.

I submit that the present 132 kv lines plus a few more would be an adequate connecting link between the power generation plant in the north and the power generation plant south of the city. This would thereby eliminate the need for the construction of the proposed 330 kv lines. The service thus provided would be equally reliable; in fact it would be more reliable than two 330 kv lines along the one route because there would be a multiplicity of two 132 kv lines which would not be prone to outages from any one cause. I fail to see why a line of 330 kv is needed to transport power over such a short distance.

Ninety kv is transmitted from the metropolitan section of the grid to Bunbury or vice versa on 132 kv lines and these lines cover a far greater distance than the power lines around the city. If finance is short, as we are constantly told, I believe we should wait until there is a demand for more and bigger lines and I suggest by that time there would be justification for the construction of a power station in the north.

Mr. Bickerton: What is the advantage of waiting if they go through eventually anyway?

Mr. THOMPSON: The advantage to be gained by waiting is the saving of a great deal of money.

I suggest there is no need for 330 kv lines to interconnect the power generation units that will be north and south of the city. There is adequate capacity on 132 kv lines to cater for 425 megawatts. The lines to go through are only expected to carry 200 megawatts; the balance will be carried on the existing lines.

Mr. Bickerton: I see your point but it would be very costly to defer this.

Mr. THOMPSON: I do not say I am right but as I see it—

Mr. Bickerton: I do not say you are right either.

Mr. THOMPSON: I would like now to refer to the petition. Mr. Speaker, the first thing you do after reading prayers in this House each day is to ask whether any member has a petition to present. This is an indication of how important a petition is. The Minister for Electricity says that petitions are not of very great value.

Mr. Jamieson: I do not know of one Government which has been influenced by a petition, and this has been over a very long period.

Mr. THOMPSON: A great many people have signed this petition. Many people are concerned about the matter. I would like to refer to the fact that the people who have signed this petition came from a very wide area and they have signed it because they are concerned. The Minister in his reply the other night said that the petition was paraded in hotel bars; cars were pulled up in the street, and people were asked to sign. No-one signed with a gun pointed at his head; people were only too willing to sign once they were aware of the implications of the proposal, and particularly when they could see the natural beauty of Helena Valley and the foothills. A petition was set up at the Six-way Service Station at the foot of Gooseberry Hill. People were prepared to sign the petition because they could see the beauty of the area. Balloons were flying 140 feet up in the air and the people were horrified when they saw the height to which the towers would go.

The Minister said delay would cause a collapse of the system. I do not think it will. The State Electricity Commission

has the capacity to see it through until 1975. It could construct lines of a lesser voltage to cater for the present needs. That is what has happened up to now; it is an acceptable method and I believe until there is a power station in the north that system could continue.

For a number of reasons this matter ought to be investigated by some independent authority. If the Government cannot wait until the environmental legislation is enacted, then I think some other independent authority should be asked to examine it. I believe the technical aspects have to be examined. There is conflict between the Metropolitan Region Planning Authority and the State Electricity Commission and this is another reason why the matter should be considered. I very strenuously urge the members of this House to support the motion.

Mr. Speaker, I have received a great number of letters since I became involved in this issue. I have a thick file of letters from people everywhere. I received a very amusing little poem only today and in conclusion I would like to read it to the House. It sums up the situation very nicely. It is called "Ode to an Ostrich" and it reads as follows:—

Oh Mr. Jamieson the statements you have made

To those who appreciate beauty, the penalty has been paid;

Where ignorance is bliss, it's folly to be wise;

Look to the hills where majestic towers rise,

As monuments to bad planning, they reign supreme;

High as your office, I would deem.

There you survey from your lofty domain,

Towers so obtrusive, oh, what a shame!

As Minister for Works, you applaud them galore,

Yet a few months ago Tonkin voted them an eyesore;

A Ministerial fairy story we are consistently told,

A mass of steel is a beauty to behold. Those emotional folk who live in the hills.

Don't know what is good for all their ills.

It is in the name of progress our champion doth roar,

Many dictators have used that cry before.

We live for today, what care I of tomorrow;

Blow you Jack, I do not share your sorrow;

It is my bad luck to live near Maida Vale,

How fortunate you are to live in Cloverdale.

The route is economic and is really well planned;

Minister you must be kidding, get your head out of the sand.

[Applause from the Gallery.]

The SPEAKER: Order! If there is any more of that noise we will have to clear the gallery. It is not only your right to be in the gallery but your privilege. You must understand that this is the Parliament of Western Australia. I hope you realise that whenever you enter these Chambers.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—22

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mr. Blaikie | Mr. O'Connor |
| Sir David Brand | Mr. O'Neill |
| Mr. Court | Mr. Reid |
| Mr. Coyne | Mr. Ridge |
| Dr. Dadour | Mr. Runciman |
| Mr. Gayfer | Mr. Rushton |
| Mr. Grayden | Mr. Stephens |
| Mr. Lewis | Mr. Thompson |
| Mr. W. A. Manning | Mr. Williams |
| Mr. McPharlin | Mr. W. G. Young |
| Mr. Mensaros | Mr. I. W. Manning |

(Teller)

Noes—22

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Mr. Bateman | Mr. Graham |
| Mr. Bertram | Mr. Hartrey |
| Mr. Bickerton | Mr. Jamieson |
| Mr. Brady | Mr. Jones |
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Lapham |
| Mr. Burke | Mr. McIver |
| Mr. Cook | Mr. Norton |
| Mr. Davies | Mr. Sewell |
| Mr. H. D. Evans | Mr. A. R. Tonkin |
| Mr. T. D. Evans | Mr. J. T. Tonkin |
| Mr. Fletcher | Mr. Harman |

(Teller)

Pairs

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Ayes | Noes |
| Mr. Hutchinson | Mr. Moller |
| Mr. R. L. Young | Mr. May |
| Mr. Nalder | Mr. Taylor |

The SPEAKER: The voting being equal, I give my casting vote with the Noes.

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 26th August, 1971

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. N. E. Baxter) took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

TASMANIAN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Visit of Speaker

THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I wish to advise the House that The Hon. C. R. Ingamells, Speaker of the Tasmanian House of Assembly, is within the precincts and I propose to invite him to a seat on the floor of the House.

QUESTIONS (7): ON NOTICE

MILK BOARD

Albany Milk Supply

The Hon. J. M. THOMSON, to the Leader of the House:

Further to my questions on the 19th and the 24th August, 1971, relating to the Albany Whole Milk Producers and the Milk Board, and with reference to negotiations carried out in 1964—

(a) did the Board stipulate that the operations of the treatment plant at Albany were restricted to within the Albany, Denmark and Mt. Barker areas;

(b) if the answer to (a) is "Yes"—

(i) on what basis was this stipulation made;

(ii) were they advised of the stipulation; and if so, when;

(iii) did the licensee and the producers acknowledge and accept the stipulation referred to in (a) above?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

No stipulation was made.

(a) and (b) The question of supplying markets other than the local market, was not raised.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Iron and Steel Complex

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Leader of the House:

In view of the statement by the Minister for Industrial Development that economics would govern where a \$1,000 million iron and steel complex would be established; and his recent statement whilst visiting Albany that he would be endeavouring to get the industry for that town; what is the Government offering the company in Albany in the form of land, water, housing, electricity, harbour facilities, etc., to encourage them to change their mind about staying at Kwinana?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

The proposal to establish a \$1,000 million steel complex is still the subject of a feasibility study by the company concerned, and the Government has made no offer of assistance at this stage.

If the investigations by the company indicate that Albany or some other decentralised location has possibilities, but assistance from the Government is necessary to