

Legislative Assembly

Friday, the 26th November, 1965

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The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

POSTPONEMENT OF QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I propose to adopt the same procedure as I did early in the week as far as questions are concerned.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate, from the 17th November, on the following motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Debate adjourned to a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr. Evans.
(Continued on page 3064)

TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 18th November, on the following motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. TOMS (Bayswater) [11.4 a.m.]: This is a small Bill—peculiarly so, seeing it is an amendment to the Town Planning and Development Act—containing only six clauses, four of which deal with penalties, one with a proposition regarding subdivision and the other with the cost of constructing roads. It is amazing that the necessity for the first amendment has not previously been noticed, seeing the Act came into force in 1929. The Minister has power under the particular section to make regulations, but no penalties are prescribed. During the period since 1929, there has been no need to prescribe penalties. Apparently there have been no offences and, consequently, no need to take any action.

I am wondering whether the reason for the provision of penalties is what is taking place in the deferred urban area where certain land agents are taking up land under a bill of sale and are giving the seller only 10 per cent. of the purchase price and promising the balance when subdivision takes place. The Minister did say that apparently applications have been made for subdivisions, and the names of the owners of the properties were not on the application. This could be the reason for the desire to have penalties prescribed under the regulations. Whilst I agree with the member for Fremantle in this matter, I am not at all happy about penalties under regulations; but in the Bill a maximum of £100 is set.

This is also applicable to the next amendment, because it raises a penalty from £50 to £250. If £50 was a reasonable figure in 1929, I think members will agree that £250 is reasonable these days, so I have no objection to that clause.

The third amendment deals with town planning in regard to town planning schemes, or the acquisition by either the Town Planning Board or a local authority of public open space for recreational purposes. As members know, the amount that should be contributed by subdividers has been debated, but under the Act 10 per cent. is the figure set down for subdividers to contribute towards public open space.

Any members who have had local government experience will know of the practice of local authorities, with the sanction of the town planning authority, of course; namely, that in the event of a five-acre lot being subdivided, half an acre is the contribution, and in the case of a smaller lot the contribution could be a quarter of an acre. In many districts there are small parcels of land in respect of which the contribution would be a quarter of an acre or half an acre. Such pieces of land are not of much use to the local authorities, because all they could do with them would be to put some grass and swings on them.

The proposition now is that the local authority may purchase a piece of suitable land for open space of, say, 15 to 20 acres, and the subdividers of small lots contribute 10 per cent. of the value of the subdivision, and the money is put in a special fund by the local authority to assist in the provision of large playing fields.

This practice should have been adopted many years ago, because we have small pieces of land that are of no use to anyone. The local authority of which I am a member has quite big town planning schemes in operation now, and the siting of these open public spaces is very good, because there will be playing fields easily accessible to the majority of the people in the district. I do not think any member would complain about that, because there is a great deal of logic in it. With the shortage of playing fields, this provision will be one way by which, in the newer areas, plenty of playing fields will be provided.

The other amendment deals with the subdivision responsibilities in regard to road construction costs. The amendment is framed mainly to overcome an anomaly which has existed. This is quite a good amendment and one which, I believe, all local authorities will welcome. It sets out clearly the responsibilities of the subdivider in respect of the costs of roads.

The Bill is a small one and most of the amendments are really necessary. They will be welcomed by the local authorities, particularly those that have town planning schemes. The measure will also assist the Town Planning Board itself to overcome problems which have existed. I support the second reading.

MR. LEWIS (Moore—Minister for Education) [11.11 a.m.]: I thank the honourable member for his general support of the Bill. I appreciate that no provision has previously been made for penalties for breaches of the regulations.

Mr. Toms: It is strange it has not come up before.

Mr. LEWIS: It is. I have browsed quickly through the information at my disposal to try to find the reason. I understand that recently the regulations have been seriously breached and therefore attention has been focused on the need to provide some penalty.

Mr. Toms: You do not think it is as a result of the rumours concerning the purchases of urban land?

Mr. LEWIS: I have been quickly looking through the speeches of the Minister in another place, but he has not referred to other than the need for a penalty under the regulations. I am not able to point to specific instances of breaches of the regulations, but I feel these penalty provisions would not now be desired were a need not felt for them. I thank the honourable member for his support of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Lewis (Minister for Education), and passed.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from an earlier stage of the sitting, on the following motion by **Mr. Court** (Minister for Industrial Development):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. BRADY (Swan) [11.15 a.m.]: Since this Bill was before the House some weeks ago I have studied the various clauses, which seek to make approximately 41 amendments. In the main, I think the measure will streamline the licensing activities of the State, rather than bring about an immediate solution of some of the difficulties which have been highlighted in the Press during the last six months.

The Bill will provide for the issue of limited hotel licenses along lines similar to those which are followed for the issuing of publicans' licenses. The restric-

tions which section 58 apply to females who hold a general or publican's license will apply also to the holder of a limited hotel license. The measure also seeks to insert in the Act the definition of a bar or bar-room. This will enable a married couple with children who are residing at a hotel to take the children with them into the dining room which, up until now, has been prohibited to children by implication, but not specifically.

The Bill also seeks to provide that instead of a licensee having to obtain special permits to be absent from his premises for more than a total of 28 days, he will now be required to obtain such a permit only if his absence from the hotel is to be continuous or for some indefinite period. For those licensees who cannot pay their license fees at the due time, the Bill seeks to provide an extension of time for them. I know that in the past some hotelkeepers have found their revenue to be such that they could not pay their fees on time and consequently they were liable to a heavy penalty.

The Bill will also provide that the Licensing Court itself will fix its sitting days in certain instances instead of the Minister. There will also be a provision to expedite the granting of canteen licenses. In the future applications will be heard by the court on the occasions it may decide.

The section in the Act dealing with the granting of temporary licenses will also be tidied up by the Bill. It is on record that a temporary license which was granted to a P. & C. association was apparently obtained to serve liquor in the grounds of a school. The Bill seeks to prevent such an occurrence in the future. Clubs which seek a renewal of their licenses will not, in the future, have to specify the name and address of each member. Instead, only the numbers of the club need be stated, together with the number of unfinancial members.

If the Bill is passed, the Act will provide that witnesses attending the Licensing Court to give evidence in support of the granting of a license, provisional license, or some other method of licensing will be forced to answer questions. Previously, they were not under any such obligation. The provisions in the Act relating to drinking on passenger vessels will also be tightened up by the Bill. It would appear that those in the past holding a packet license for a vessel travelling, say, between Perth and Rottnest, have been a little lax and have breached the terms of their license. The Bill will tighten up this provision so that only those passengers travelling on the vessel will be able to drink on the vessel.

The Bill will also tighten up section 49 to prevent young people under the age of 21 years, in collusion with adults, obtain-

ing access to liquor as readily as they have done in the past. I could continue for some time to criticise the Bill, because it falls far short of what the general public expected of the Government concerning the prevention of drinking in certain premises around the metropolitan area, and possibly some of the country centres.

When the measure was introduced in another place some six or seven weeks ago its provisions sought to apply a blanket coverage of all premises in the metropolitan area where liquor was being consumed at certain times. However, when it was passing through another place, some members objected that those conducting decent premises would be subject to obtaining permits or licenses under the provisions of the Bill when they were not in any way suspect. In other words, those conducting reputable establishments would be put to some trouble and difficulty and would probably have to pay the fee for a permit or a license when it was not intended in the first place by the police or the Government that they should come under the provisions of this Bill.

The Minister in another place subsequently amended the Bill as it was first introduced, and the amended measure is now before us. As I said before, in the main the Bill will streamline the activity of the Licensing Court and, in some cases, will impose certain restrictions on those people who seek to obtain a license for packet vessels. Actually the Bill will whitewash all those places in the metropolitan area and also other establishments which were the subject of an extremely critical report by an officer of the Police Department which was presented to the Commissioner of Police.

That report was made public and copies of it were made available to members of this House. In order that members may appreciate the difference between the original measure as it was introduced by the Minister in another place, and the Bill in its amended form, as it is now before us, I will quote an article which appeared in *The West Australian* on the 5th August, 1965. This article is headed—

Criminals, Prostitutes Haunt Clubs: Report

And it goes on to state—

Many of Perth's nightclubs and coffee lounges are the haunts of known criminals, prostitutes and teenagers seeking illicit liquor, according to a special Police Department report to Police Minister Craig.

Then the article went on to deal with how liquor sales were being made in the metropolitan area. It referred to what went on in what it called club A, and the number of people who frequented it. It then

dealt with club B, which has been the subject of numerous complaints, and then club C, and the newspaper article stated—

These premises, usually open on Friday and Saturday nights, are patronised by suspected and known prostitutes and convicted criminals until about 3 a.m. Brawls and disorderly conduct are fairly regular.

As I was saying earlier, this Bill will not stop immediately the activity of any of those night clubs. The clause which seeks to restrict them will introduce a new section to the Act, to be known as section 134B. That proposed new section provides that these premises, which will be known as unlicensed premises, will be permitted to continue as they have done in the past. The new section, in subsection (2), reads as follows:—

(2) Objections to the bringing of liquor onto any unlicensed premises and the consumption of liquor on such premises may at any time be made to the Licensing Court by—

- (a) any inspector of licensed premises;
- (b) any police officer stationed in the licensing district wherein the unlicensed premises are situated;
- (c) any person authorised in that behalf by the council of the municipal district wherein the unlicensed premises are situated,

and every such objection shall be in writing signed by the objector and shall set forth the grounds of the objection.

The proposed new section then goes on to provide that an objection may be lodged with the Licensing Court about any premises now being conducted in the metropolitan area or a country district, and the terms of the objection must be specified. On pages 8 and 9 of the Bill, certain grounds are set out which can be used when lodging an objection against the occupier or proprietor of any unlicensed premises, in regard to the way they are being conducted.

These objections will in due course be heard by the Licensing Court which in turn will be able to grant permits for these premises to carry on under restricted terms, if it feels disposed to grant them. If a person to whom a permit had been granted were to breach the conditions of the license it would be withdrawn, and he would be put out of business.

In addition to an inspector of licensed premises, any police officer stationed in the licensing district of the unlicensed premises, and any person authorised by the local authority of the unlicensed premises, other citizens in the municipal dis-

strict concerned should also be permitted to lodge objections to the bringing of liquor onto unlicensed premises for consumption. Another paragraph should be added to proposed section 134B (2). That would leave the matter open and would enable any person who sees dangers in people being permitted to drink in public until 3 a.m. to lodge an objection with the Licensing Court.

Mr. Graham: Would the wowsers not have a picnic?

Mr. BRADY: I am not worried whether or not the wowsers would have a picnic. I would remind the honourable member that not only wowsers are affected. Many people in the community do not object to others drinking until the early hours of the morning, while many others do object; but they are not wowsers. They object to being awakened at 3 a.m. by the noise of car engines revving up, by loud conversations, by horns blaring, and by vehicles racing up and down the street, and generally disturbing the peaceful atmosphere of a suburb or of the city.

People holding those views should be entitled to lodge an objection with the Licensing Court. The authority to object should not be confined to the three types of persons mentioned in the Bill. I am sure the inspector of licensed premises would be delighted to get home at night and have his normal rest, in preference to walking around Perth or some suburb at 3 a.m.

A police officer stationed in the district where the unlicensed premises are situated can also lodge an objection. Such an officer is appointed to the department to perform duties such as this. I am hoping the Police Department will do its duty under this proposed section of the Act, and will face up to its responsibility. As a citizen and as a member of Parliament I shall expect the police to act in that way.

The third category is the person authorised by the local authority to act on its behalf. In my view great difficulty will be experienced in getting people to act in this capacity. There are many instances where people desire to lodge an objection with the Licensing Court, and they should not be prevented from so doing.

I could suggest other amendments, but I confine myself to dealing with that particular provision in the Bill. I said earlier that I wanted to make some reference to unlicensed premises being permitted to remain open on Saturday nights until 3 a.m. the next morning. If these premises are permitted to remain open on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday until 3 a.m. the following morning I cannot see why they should be permitted to remain open on Saturday night until 3 a.m. on the Sunday morning. We should

not pander to people who wish to drink liquor in public places until 3 a.m. on Sunday. I concede the point that they could be permitted to drink until 3 a.m. on every other morning, but in a civilised community we should draw the line there.

I shall not move an amendment to prevent drinking of liquor from Saturday night until 3 a.m. on Sunday, but other members in this House may feel disposed to do so. If such an amendment is moved I shall give it my support. If people wish to consume liquor in public places until 3 a.m. in the morning they could be permitted to do so on every day of the week other than on the Sabbath.

There is a phase in the lives of nearly all young men and women—between the ages of 17 and 25 years—when they want to hit the high spots and like to think that they are grown up, but everything possible should be done to discourage them from drinking on Saturday nights until 3 a.m. on Sunday.

I draw attention to the last annual report of the Commissioner of Police (Mr. O'Brien) for the year ended the 30th June, 1965. It contains a section dealing with teenage drinking. In the report he states:—

A matter of vital concern to the Police Force in a democratic country in its endeavours to bring criminals to justice, is the steady erosion of police powers. There is a body of opinion, not numerically strong but certainly influential, which seems to place the "rights" of the suspected criminal above the rights of society, against whom he is suspected of having offended. Surely the society which guarantees the rights of the individual is entitled to protection. In theory that protection is provided by the Police Force but the usefulness of the Police Force is being undermined by Court practices and decisions restricting the powers of the policeman in the interrogation of suspects; in the field of arrest and in regard to search and seizure.

Some members might say that that has no reference to the consumption of liquor on unlicensed premises. I concede the point that it does not make specific reference to this aspect, but it is a matter which is causing concern to the hierarchy of the Police Department; that is, the gradual erosion of the responsibility of the Police Department. I would hate to think that the vested liquor interests could be influencing people not to tighten up the control on liquor activities in this State.

In appendix 7 (a) of the report of the Commissioner of Police to which I have just referred the number of charges under the Licensing Act is shown as being 1,138. One-third of this number concerns the

obtaining of liquor by juveniles, in respect of which 435 charges were laid, and 433 convictions were recorded. Included in the total number of charges were 327 for drinking liquor in streets and parks, etc., in respect of which 323 convictions were recorded. That makes a total of 762 charges concerning the drinking of liquor in parks and streets and the obtaining of liquor by juveniles, out of 1,338 charges laid under the Licensing Act.

Members have been told by me that this Bill falls far short of curbing immediately the activities on these premises, which are now to be regarded as unlicensed premises. The best that can be said of this measure is that there could be a gradual tightening up of control over the years, and to that extent the Bill before us should be supported. I close on that note. I support the measure which has been introduced, but I do not think it goes anywhere near as far as it could go to tighten the control of these premises.

It is a start, and I hope as the years go by the position will be tightened further. I support the Bill, but give notice that I intend to move an amendment to clause 24 to enable any person to lodge an objection to the conduct of unlicensed premises.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [11.43 a.m.]: I too support this Bill; and, as I have said previously, I hold very liberal views on the Licensing Act.

Mr. W. Hegney: You mean Labor views.

Mr. DAVIES: I am sorry to have offended the member for Mt. Hawthorn. I have very liberal views on the Licensing Act. It is not a thing we can control completely through legislation, but where it is necessary to introduce legislation it should be directed towards the best possible effect.

I support the Bill generally, because it tightens up the administrative matters and makes for easier application of the licensing legislation. By that I do not mean that it will be easier to obtain liquor and licenses: I mean the administration of the law will be applied more realistically in accordance with existing standards.

My main reason for rising to speak on this matter is to refer to a report which was tabled earlier this year concerning the activities of various coffee lounges in this city. At the time they created a great deal of interest. The report was published when it was made available, and it contains a great deal of information and findings of the Police Department which must cause a great deal of concern. These activities, about which every member of this House has known for a very long time, have been going on for years.

The worst feature, I think, was the fact that some proprietors of coffee shops were taking advantage of the teenage public to

obtain money to provide a service which, in effect, was not a service at all, but merely allowed the teenagers the use of the premises for drinking. For this, the teenagers had to pay 10s. 6d. or £1 entrance fee plus corkage on any liquor consumed.

Perhaps this is one of the results of the high wages paid to youth. I know when I was 18 I could not afford to pay the exorbitant fees charged. So this is one of the penalties of the higher wages paid and the affluent society which we enjoy. It is also the result of advertising on television and in the Press. There is a good deal of sophistication associated with drinking, but although the young people think they are achieving sophistication, they are not. They are drinking under appalling conditions and someone is making a tidy sum of money out of it.

The report itself, on which I wish to speak, contains three outstanding facts. The first is the method by which the drinking is done; the second, the place where the drink is consumed; and the third, the charges which are made. There is, perhaps, a fourth aspect and that is the suspicion that most of these coffee lounges are frequented by known criminals and prostitutes and suspected criminals and prostitutes.

There is a great deal to be concerned about when we take these various facts into consideration; but one feature about the report I do not like is the naming of a coffee lounge which, in my opinion, is quite respectable. Some places referred to are obviously very bad, such as Chequers Night Club; the Fox Hole, which has since closed down, this being one of the benefits of the Government's resumptions; Chez Cherie; El Rio Night Club; C.J.'s; Budapest; and Club 7. Then there is the following sentence:—

The following premises are all run on similar lines as above:—

These premises quoted were Acapulco, L'Aurora, Coffee Pot, Gilt Dragon, and El Bongo. I cannot vouch for all these because I have not had time to frequent them all.

Mr. Hawke: Yet!

Mr. DAVIES: However, I can vouch for the Coffee Pot. This is a coffee shop I have attended regularly for some 10 years, and never during the whole of my attendance there—and I have been there at various times from early evening till two o'clock in the morning—have I at any time seen one bottle of liquor in the place. I think the fact that the Coffee Pot has been included in this report in an all-embracing coverage does a great deal of injustice to a very respectable establishment. I say it is respectable because from time to time I see quite a few well-known supporters of the Liberal Party there.

A Government member: It must be good!

Mr. Hawke: It cannot be too good then!

Mr. Graham: It seems the sooner it is closed the better!

Mr. DAVIES: If it is claimed that the Liberal Party supporters are respectable, then I think we can all agree that an injustice has been done by including the Coffee Pot in this report.

Mr. Moir: You surely do not associate with Liberal supporters?

Mr. DAVIES: I want to make it quite clear that I do not associate with them socially, but unfortunately they seem to go to the same places I go to. They must be endeavouring to associate with me; that is the only way I can put it.

I feel a great deal of injustice has been done to a respectable establishment run by respectable people and frequented by respectable customers. Unfortunately, because of the great publicity and outcry over the report when it was made available, these people suffered some indignity and, no doubt, a loss of business.

I did not see it, but I understand that Channel 7, I think it was, had a coverage of the places mentioned in the report. One of the features was "These are the places which must be closed" or something like that; and then the station featured the sign of the Coffee Pot which was viewed on everyone's screen—in my opinion wrongly.

The matter was referred to the Minister for Police who, unfortunately is not in the Chamber at the moment. I spoke to him privately about it, but he was not prepared to take any action. He felt that as the matter had been placed before Parliament he would leave it at that. No legal action could be taken against this TV station because it claimed it was reporting fairly the proceedings in Parliament.

Therefore I want to make it known that whilst the bulk of the report may be quite true, as far as the Coffee Pot is concerned it certainly should not have been included. I do not know what investigations were undertaken. I do not know that I would know any police officer if he had been in there when I was. I do not know that I would know any prostitutes or thieves, or suspected prostitutes or thieves, so I am unable to say whether they frequent the premises. However, usually no more than about five people are in the coffee shop at any one time. I think the only time it is crowded is after the theatre.

It is a very fine service provided by very fine people and it is appreciated by quite a number of people in the community. So on their behalf I protest that the name of the Coffee Pot was included in the report and ask that the police be a little more circumspect in the future and be absolutely certain of their facts before they damage a respectable business.

The only other comment I would like to make concerns the power to make a complaint against the proprietor of any of these coffee shops. There is a clause which provides that this can be done if unlicensed premises are conducted in a disorderly or unseemly manner or in such a way as to disturb the quiet of the locality or the comfort of residents. I hope that next session legislation will be introduced to deal with noise generally. Not only could coffee shops provide a disturbance to the community because of noise, but, as I have mentioned before, various dances and other functions, of which I have had some experience in Victoria Park, also greatly disturb the community. However, nothing can be done about it, as the position stands at present.

There has been a break-through in this legislation because a complaint can be made to a magistrate and certain action is possible. However, I hope that we will not restrict this to coffee shops, but will ensure some peace in the community by legislating for disturbances which come from establishments.

There is nothing further I wish to say except to repeat that I support the Bill generally. It is a measure which deserves the support of all and is one of great concern to the community. In the next 12 months or so I hope we will find that its effects have been very good.

MR. COURT (Nedlands—Minister for Industrial Development) [11.55 a.m.]: I thank the two members for their support. The two main points mentioned by them respectively were, from the member for Swan, the suggestion that any person should be allowed to object to these unlicensed premises if he felt the conduct of them was not satisfactory; and the other one, from the member for Victoria Park, was the fact that in his opinion the Coffee Pot had been unduly selected for reference in connection with these premises which the police thought were not being conducted in a desirable manner.

Dealing with the first point raised by the member for Swan, I want to respectfully point out to him that if his amendment were incorporated in the Bill it could produce an unsatisfactory situation. The present position is that if one has an objection to some conduct that is taking place in a particular situation, one usually gets in touch with the police. The police have been trained, and I think that with fairly good judgment they exercise a certain amount of discretion as to a frivolous complaint. They are able to decide what is a frivolous complaint and what is a genuine complaint.

Sometimes the police do not act as quickly or as directly as some people would like, but they do study the whole picture and the whole law. We all know

that when there is a genuine cause for complaint because someone is being endangered or disadvantaged in a particular way they act in a responsible manner.

The Government gave consideration to the incorporation of this point, but on reflection decided that if such an amendment were incorporated some complicated provision would have to be made to enable the court to deal with the vexatious complainant who complains not because of any real inconvenience to a person, a family, or the community, but because he has an inherent objection to anything of this kind. If these complaints are referred to the police they, in the course of their duties, will exercise a certain amount of practical commonsense as to what action should be taken, just as they do in the dozen-and-one other cases entrusted to the police.

If a resident feels that the local police constable or sergeant, as the case may be, is not taking action as positively and as effectively as desired by the resident, he has his redress. Members know that occasionally we receive a complaint from a constituent who says that he has complained to the local constable or sergeant about a particular matter and the sergeant has not done anything about it, and the constituent will then ask us to follow it up. In such a case I have often found that the constable or sergeant has had a good reason for adopting a certain attitude, and it is part of one's duty as the local member to explain this to the constituent. It does not matter to some constituents, of course, what we explain to them because they will not accept it anyway.

In regard to the point raised by the member for Swan we finally decided to leave it as it is so that a local resident can complain to the police; and I think this will remove the possibility of a vexatious complaint.

On the point raised by the member for Victoria Park about the inclusion of the Coffee Pot in the report, I want to say to him that when the police made this report they had a responsibility to cover all these establishments that had come under their notice. Some might seem fair and some bad in their conduct.

It is unfortunate perhaps that those people were included in this group of establishments which were investigated; but, of course, if one conducts a business of that type he must realise that the police, in the course of their duties in undertaking such study and supervision, would naturally include such people in any report. I would not know the actual merit of their particular case, but I think the reference in the report by the police would be a factual one. I do not know that the report referred to that establishment in any strong terms. In fact, I could not recall the references made to the Coffee Pot.

I do know that from the subsequent follow-up of some of those premises, the police have reported that there is no current sign of liquor being consumed by juveniles in the Coffee Pot, and it is being conducted in a manner which is satisfactory at this point of time.

Mr. Davies: My complaint was that the report was all-embracing and said, "similar places, including the Coffee Pot."

Mr. COURT: The report was a general report on the conduct of the places. If the honourable member, and other people, frequent those places it does not mean that they, as patrons, indulge in the practices reported on.

Mr. Hawke: That is not the point; the businesses can be affected.

Mr. Craig: Don't blame the Government or the Minister, because the report was released by the member for Balcatta.

Mr. Hawke: I am not blaming anybody.

Mr. Craig: Just let us get it straight.

Mr. Hawke: It was not released in regard to the names of the places. No names were mentioned.

Mr. COURT: The whole question of any publicity was triggered off by the release of the report by the member for Balcatta, regardless of whether it included names or not. Once it had been released there was no alternative but to make the information available. It was not the Minister's intention to give those people publicity; on the contrary, it is the duty of the Minister and the police to take action to try to remedy the conduct of the premises.

Mr. Davies: If the Minister checks *Hansard* he will find that the member for Claremont asked for the names of the premises to be made public.

Mr. COURT: That, of course, is so. The situation had been created by the member for Balcatta because once he gave the release to the Press there was good reason for the rest of the information to be made available. There would have been all sorts of allegations, and particularly from the other side of the House, so we had to get it in the right perspective. If the people concerned feel aggrieved it is unfortunate; but if they conduct premises as the member for Victoria Park has mentioned, they should not be concerned.

I come back to the report which was made by the police. They had to cover all places of varying propriety in the conduct of their investigations.

Mr. Davies: I could name half a dozen similar places which were not mentioned in the report.

Mr. COURT: It might be, of course, that there was no reason for the police to be interested in those places. I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 23 put and passed.

Clause 24: Section 134B added—

Mr. COURT: The amendment on the notice paper is to delete the word "in" and substitute the word "during" in line 8 on page 10. I think if honourable members have a look at the wording they will appreciate the significance of this amendment. It is purely to correct the grammar. The section will then read—

... shall authorise the occupier of the unlicensed premises to permit liquor to be brought on to those premises and consumed during such hours

Mr. BRADY: My amendment, Mr. Chairman, is on page 8 and this amendment moved by the Minister is on page 10. I did not mention the page number because it was the only subsection (2) in the clause.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): I was going to mention that point to the member for Swan. It appears we will have to go back to his amendment.

Mr. BRADY: I do not know that I should give a lot of publicity to this fact, but there are a lot of police stations where no police are in attendance after 11 p.m. That could apply more in the country than in the metropolitan area. I would be inclined to think some individuals in the community would know more about what was going on than the Police Department.

There could be some people who, instead of asking the police to take action, would sooner do it themselves, if they have the right approach to this matter. If this amendment were accepted, the Licensing Court would be able to decide whether the objection was of a vexatious type. The reason for raising this matter is that if an individual felt he would like to take action he would have the right to do it. I move an amendment—

Page 8—Insert after paragraph (c) in lines 23 to 26 the following new paragraph to stand as paragraph (d):—

(d) any person who deems it advisable to lodge an objection to the conduct of unlicensed premises.

Mr. COURT: I oppose the amendment for the reasons I gave when replying to the second reading. The honourable member said that it could be that police stations in certain areas are shut after

11 p.m. This may be so, but there is the emergency number—000—which is very effective. In fact, it is sometimes even more effective than the local number. However, this type of complaint is not dealt with at the time, because one does not lodge a complaint to the Licensing Court in the middle of the night. One is more likely to ring the police station, and the police would have a look at the complaint as quickly as possible.

I think that if the member for Swan reflects he will realise that if we put this provision into the Act we could be inundated with all sorts of false complaints. Complaints could come from genuine people, but they could also come from those sort of people who know no rhyme nor reason—the sort of people referred to by the member for Victoria Park.

So I think it is better to follow the procedure which we do in so many other cases and allow the local citizen to complain to the police. The police will use the normal practical approach and a certain amount of commonsense and discretion in the matter, and will take the necessary action. As I said earlier, if the local person finds the police are not acting as he thinks they should, he will have no hesitation in approaching the Commissioner of Police or the Licensing Court, or the local member. Those people, in turn, will have a look at the complaint to see if it is justified.

I think it is much better if left as in the Bill. I would also point out that to the best of my knowledge there is no prohibition on the vexatious complainant or litigant in this Act. There is in some other Acts. It was felt at the time that if such people were going to be included it would be necessary to include certain powers to deal with vexatious complainants.

Mr. JAMIESON: I would like to indicate that I do not go along with the amendment proposed by the member for Swan, because there is always likely to be the vexatious complaint. I feel the individual has a safeguard in the local authority and all those others concerned, to whom he can complain. Very often it is advisable for action to be taken through a third person otherwise there could be almost a local war between the proprietor of one of these establishments and the next-door neighbour. I suggest to the honourable member it is more desirable for a third person to take the action rather than for it to be done by an individual.

Mr. BRADY: If the people who are responsible do their job there will not be any necessity for an individual to have to take action. I still think the amendment should be agreed to because this Bill gives unlicensed premises the right to continue their activities until 3 a.m. on a Sunday morning. In those circumstances, I think

the individual should have the right to raise a protest if he feels it is necessary and desirable to do so. We should not take that right away from him by saying that complaints can be made to the police. I know of people who prefer not to go near a police station at any time. They prefer to deal with matters in their own way.

I have had instances in my own electorate in the last 12 months, where people have come to me asking what can be done to close certain premises down. I have had to take the matter up and some of the premises were not even known to me. I had no idea that they were being conducted in an unsavoury way, and I go around my electorate at all times of the day and night. Many people are not in a position to ring 000 at 3 o'clock in the morning and ask the police to have a look at certain premises; and if the Government believes that those responsible will do their job properly then there is no need for it to worry about my amendment being agreed to.

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

Ayes—11

Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Norton
Mr. Hall	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Toms
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. May
Mr. W. Hegney	

(Teller)

Noes—29

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Jamieson
Mr. Brand	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Court	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Craig	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Davies	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Durack	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Elliott	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Gayfer	Mr. Runciman
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rushton
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Williams
Mr. Hart	Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. Hutchinson	

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Curran	Mr. Crommelin
Mr. Tonkin	Mr. Bovell
Mr. Sewell	Mr. Burt
Mr. Rhatigan	Dr. Henn

Majority against—18.

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. COURT: I mentioned earlier an amendment I had on the notice paper and gave the reasons for it. I move an amendment—

Page 10, line 8—Delete the word “in” and substitute the word “during”.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. COURT: I move an amendment—

Page 11, lines 7 to 9—Delete all words after the paragraph designation “(a)” down to and including the word “consumed” and substitute the following words:—“brings or causes or

permits to be brought any liquor onto, or consumes or permits to be consumed any liquor”.

The simple explanation is that there has been a drafting error and if the clause remains in its present form the cause of the offence is missing and it would be just a matter of words. The revised form shows clearly what is the offence.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 25 to 41 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, with amendments, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and returned to the Council with amendments.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1965-66**In Committee**

Resumed from the 19th November, the Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair.

Vote: Railways, £5,085,000—

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [12.31 p.m.]: One matter that I mentioned last year, and which is now taking some shape, is the Kewdale marshalling yards. I suggested to the Minister that the department should make a decisive move to name these marshalling yards—whether it be Kewdale, Cloverdale, or whatever the name decided on. I received a letter saying that the commission was giving this matter attention, and that it would no doubt bring forward some suggestion before long. But so far as I can ascertain no particular action has been taken as to what these yards will ultimately be called.

Earlier in another debate I was taking the Minister for Education to task about his attitude towards the provision of halls, gymnasiums, etc., in high schools. I see that provision is made for extension to the Cannington High School, but I would ask the Minister to take a personal look at this high school, because the architect's plans were originally wrongly prepared for the provision of a hall, or gymnasium, at the school. In effect the ultimate hall will be built on top of what is now the elaborate dressing rooms that have been provided as part of the wall structure of the hall. In other words, half the height of the walls has been built.

If the considerable amount of finance the department found to put into these most elaborate dressing rooms had been applied towards the provision of a hall, it

would have more than met the cost. Having nice dressing rooms is all very well, but it is far more necessary to have provided a utility type of service in the form of a hall. I was at the school during a big parents' night held there, and in the construction that is now taking place there is provision for another open-air hall. Neither the headmaster nor anybody else knows why this is being built, or what it is for.

It is an unreal attitude on the part of the department to say that it cannot provide these facilities, because it is channelling finance into other directions which are not needed quite so urgently. The parents and citizen's association is doing all it can to help, and the school itself is going ahead rapidly. There is no doubt that further buildings will have to be erected later to make it a three-year high school. The school has made good progress this year, and it is essential that this hall and gymnasium be provided. If this is not done we will limit the activities of the children, when it is necessary during the fine weather for them to get out in the open air assembly areas.

If there were an overall policy in this matter I would be prepared to go along with it; but I would like the Minister to come down with me to the Cannington High School and see what has been done. I am sure he will be very cross to see the amount of money that has been spent without providing the necessary utility services. The other night we had quotes in relation to considerably greater structures than this on which a lot less had been spent. In effect it was only necessary to complete half the side wall, place a roof on top, and thus make it a serviceable hall.

I have not had an opportunity to view the Kewdale High School, and see what facilities have been provided there, but if the position is anything like it is at Cannington I would be most concerned that there was not greater departmental control of the architects in their supply of non-essentials.

Another matter on which I wish to touch is the provision of a public hospital in the area south of the river. The Minister for Health is, of course, now in another place, and it will be difficult for me to get any satisfaction in the matter. It seems to me that the Bentley hospital was unnecessarily delayed. It would be interesting to know how far behind the contract time the present building is. It is a vital necessity; and while there is provision for funds on the schedule, my complaint is that the matter is not being treated as expeditiously by the Government as it should, bearing in mind the fact that other areas in the State have been provided with hospitals. It is possible that the other areas need hospitals,

but the particular area to which I refer has needed hospital accommodation for many years. It would appear that at the moment the department's attitude is that it will be finished when it is finished, and the department seems quite happy about it. It certainly needs a kick along to ensure that there are no further delays.

Every time I have asked a question about the matter a period of six months has been loaded on to the completion date. The Minister who previously controlled the health portfolio knows that this hospital was expected to be opened this year. As things are, we will be lucky if it is open next year. I think the original timetable for opening was March, 1965, but things have gone completely haywire, and it would seem we will now have to wait a very long time before this hospital is completed.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: One of the reasons is the contractor's difficulty in securing suitable labour.

Mr. JAMIESON: Here again it is possible for us to develop an argument as to whether this is the fault of the Government or of the Employers Federation, and such a discussion would not be appropriate to this matter. If the obtaining of suitable workers is a problem the Government should do something about it.

The member for Victoria Park is also concerned about the Kewdale High School, and as I indicated to the Minister earlier, progress seems to be reasonable so far as that is concerned. I would like the Minister to check the position, however, because there are a number of children who are having their education disrupted by having to go to Midland, while others have to go to school at Victoria Park. It is not possible to co-ordinate the school activities of these children when the schools are about 14 miles apart. The advance in this matter is not as great as we hoped, though another five or six weeks could make a lot of difference. I would like the Minister to obtain an assurance from his departmental officers that everything possible will be done to see that the work is completed for the opening day. I would not like to see the incident that occurred at Cannington last year repeated, when children had to be sent away on the first day because they could not be accommodated.

Mr. Lewis: This disability is appreciated but it happens in many places in the metropolitan area.

Mr. JAMIESON: Maybe it does, but the position is quite ridiculous. It might be possible to accommodate children at Cannington in a few halls, but some of them would have to be dispersed to Midland, Victoria Park, and so on. There will be chaos unless we can provide the necessary accommodation. The essential parts of the

school classrooms must be provided by the contractor as soon as possible. There may not be the same urgency for the other facilities that are required. I will have something further to say when the vote on the Department of Agriculture is before the Committee.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [12.43 p.m.]: I notice under the heading of "Mines—Development of Mining" an item which refers to the purchase of drilling equipment. I am at a loss to understand what this means. If he knew the circumstances any thoughtful member of this Assembly would wonder what is behind such an entry. I feel very disappointed with the Mines Department record generally in regard to its search for gold.

Some few years back the hydrological section was formed within the Mines Department, and at that time two drills of medium depth capacity were purchased by the department. The hydrological section was set up mainly for the purpose of drilling for gold in certain areas where the picture was not quite clear, and where it was thought there would be advantage in drilling under these conditions. I understand that today the department has four or five drills of a similar character.

In the interim—that is, between the establishment of the hydrological section and the present moment—quite an amount of other work besides drilling for gold has been undertaken by this section. Even while my party was in power there was some extension of the drilling activities on behalf of the Public Works Department. We were frequently called in to drill for various reasons.

The extension of that work has apparently absorbed the hydrological section. It has been rather a matter of the tail wagging the dog in this regard, because in the time that has intervened, I understand very little drilling for gold and minerals has taken place. So I was somewhat surprised to see among the reasons why this £168,000 was devoted to the Mines Department that there was to be a purchase of further drilling equipment.

I want to say that originally the drilling for gold met with quite an amount of success. Some of the notable areas drilled where results were achieved and where valuable data was available were in the Murchison area at Day Dawn. In fact, the present member for Murchison was connected with that show at the time. We did not only drilling, but directional drilling to good effect. The results were very pleasing because of the fact that they did prove the drilling was worth while. Drilling at Day Dawn was down in the vicinity of 4,000 feet, but at that time the money market was not very buoyant where the search for gold was concerned. I think a company was formed with the idea of get-

ting value at the 4,000 ft. level, or in that vicinity. I understand nothing was finally completed by way of development.

New strikes of gold were indicated at Marble Bar in some of the shows that were drilled. As a matter of fact, one actively opened up and recovered quite a lot of gold in the interim. So it seems that the principle of the Government undertaking drilling in areas where good indications were available to it and where private plants were not in operation was worth while.

It seems rather strange that this State which was previously prepared to foster the goldmining industry, should want to almost subordinate those interests to those of iron ore. I think it is almost an indictment of us as a Parliament and of the Government of Western Australia that this should have taken place. I would draw the attention of members to the fact that over the past half century on three occasions gold has come to the rescue of Western Australia and has resulted—if I may use this term—in resuscitating the State in many directions.

It should be recorded that, up to the last eight or nine years, gold was in the ascendancy with regard to the total production of all commodities in Western Australia. At the time when wool overtook gold, the total recovery figure for gold was somewhere in the vicinity of £380,000,000. So it will be seen this important industry should not be allowed to lag; and the only method available now to that industry is deeper drilling of many of the mines that have been closed down, in some cases because of lack of capital, and in others because the amount of gold cut out at a given time in that mine's operations.

However, as has happened at Bullfinch, geological opinion is quite often contradicted by the actual results achieved. As I have indicated, at Bullfinch, the geological opinion over a period of years was that the horizon of gold terminated at the 500 ft. level. Of course, a new company came in with sufficient finance to enable it to drill ahead of the 500 ft. level, and it finished up at the 2,000 ft. mark and recovered a tremendous amount of gold during its period of operation.

Sitting suspended from 12.51 to 2.15 p.m.

Mr. KELLY: Before the luncheon suspension I had made a short reference to the difference between the old geological ideas and the more modern practices in the mining industry, and I had mentioned the experience at Bullfinch where a stage had been reached that the field would not continue below the 500 ft. horizon; but by virtue of a new programme the mine was able to continue for a number of years after recommencing operations at the 500 ft. level. The operations were

continued to about the 2,000 ft. stage, but at that stage the values were not very good. But that experience serves to show that mining fields are always likely to come back, particularly if we adopt new and modern means of gold search.

The department has allowed the gold-mining section of its hydrological branch to become defunct. If that position is allowed to continue it will register a distinct disservice to goldmining and will not contribute towards the expansion of this important industry. The Premier has said that some of the loan money is to be devoted to drilling equipment, and I would like him to give some assurance that the equipment will be suitable to go into the goldmining industry, or the minerals industry, generally, and so improve the position of the industry, which I feel is in a very serious position.

Over a period of years we have seen the goldmining industry get into difficulties, and from time to time various measures have been taken by way of Government finance and loans, and by all sorts of other means, to place the industry once more in a sound position; but we do not seem to have achieved very much success.

If we allow a section such as the drilling section to get behind in its work the position will not get any better. Many important centres call for a drilling programme and a policy that would cover that type of work—centres such as Murchison, Coolgardie, Yilgarn, and, of course, other districts that would benefit very greatly.

Mr. Norton: The Gascoyne, too.

Mr. KELLY: Yes. In the period when I was working in that area there were several promising strikes, and operations were being continued at Bangemall and several other places, and the values were quite high. I do not know what the geological aspect is in the granite country, but I do not know that where a gold lens occurs the values are usually high. It might be that the granite strata could be overcome by deep drilling and go on to great things so far as the Gascoyne is concerned.

I feel that the future of this industry is dependent on drilling. In the old days prospectors were able to go out and, with the panning-off method, they could discover new fields; but it would appear that the majority of such fields have been exhausted and today only drilling is left if we are going to bring this industry back on to the even keel that it undoubtedly deserves to be on. I hope the Premier will be able to enlighten us as to the present position regarding the drilling equipment of the Mines Department and the intentions of the Government for the future.

The only other remark I wish to pass is in connection with the fishing industry. Earlier in this session during the course of my comments on one of several Bills that

the Minister introduced on this subject, I intimated my opinion that the time had been reached when we should match ability with ability and equipment with equipment; because this industry, by virtue of the fact that it has commanded quite a reasonable income over a period of time, has got to the stage of such efficiency of equipment, generally, that it is far better equipped than the department itself; and, of course, that has been the position for a long time; it is not something that has just cropped up in the last few months or in the last few years.

Unless the Fisheries Department is given an opportunity to appoint more inspectors and improve their equipment in order to match the ability of experienced fishermen to overcome the difficulties under which the industry is suffering, and to ensure that the inspectors are present at the right fishing grounds at the right time, it must be open to criticism.

At the risk of being accused of repetition I want to mention that I said previously that Treasurers have a great responsibility to bring the Fisheries Department up to a standard where its equipment and vessels are equal to, if not superior to, those used by fishermen engaged in the industry. Unless an inspector can be supplied with the type of craft and necessary equipment which is of the same standard as or better than that used by fishermen great difficulty will be experienced in overcoming the problems besetting this industry.

The Fisheries Department has to develop a new look altogether and increase its expenditure. There was a time when it was regarded as being the Cinderella department, but it is no longer that and it is charged with the responsibility of controlling an industry the activities of which are wide and varied. I would also say that many of those engaged in the industry are extremely selfish. In dealing with a fisherman one is dealing with a selfish type of person, when one considers the activities of the industry as a whole and in a general manner.

However, there is a reason for his selfishness. Many fish abound in a large area of ocean. Fishermen spend years in the industry and develop the ability to be able to read the characteristics of the waters in which they fish to such a degree that they can estimate fairly accurately the extent of their catch and the type of fish they will catch in certain places; they can tell that the best crayfish can be caught at a certain spot, and they are jealous of the fact that they have explored these waters, which makes it only natural for them to object to anyone else learning of their fishing haunts.

The peculiarities of the industry govern, to a great extent, the habits and ideas of each fisherman, so the Fisheries Department must be completely and well equip-

ped with fast vessels which can travel at a speed a little greater than the average fishing craft. Until the Fisheries Department is placed in a commanding position in the industry by being provided with first-class equipment, modern vessels, and a sufficient number of inspectors to police those engaged in the industry, any improvement will be slow. Unless that is done the industry will degenerate, and the figures for the overall take of crayfish that we saw a few years ago will decrease in the future.

This is a time when one would expect a reasonable allocation on the Loan Estimates for the administration of this department, and more money to be expended for the replacement of vessels conducted by the Fisheries Department. The department must assume greater responsibility and increase its activities if the industry is to continue to progress and prosper.

MR. MAY (Collie) [2.27 p.m.]: I wish to say a few words on a matter regarding which I moved a motion about the same time as this during the last session of Parliament. When the Minister for Electricity spoke to the motion, which sought that any proposed new power station should use Collie coal, and in the interests of decentralisation should be constructed close to the coal resources, he was inclined to be a little unkind. Actually, the purpose of my motion was to object to the siting of a new power station at Kwinana.

However, I know the Minister's true nature, and that, deep down, he did not mean what he said. At that time he accused me of creating a situation which did not exist. He said that production of coal at Collie would continue to improve regardless of a new power station being erected at Kwinana. He spoke at great length and quoted facts and figures to protect the reputation of the State Electricity Commission; but I say here and now that I did not attack the State Electricity Commission in any shape or form.

What I did attack was the Government's policy in seeking to erect this new power house at Kwinana. The Minister referred to East Perth, South Fremantle, Bunbury, and, finally, to the Muja power house. He said that there was a complete absence of any criticism about the construction of those power houses which are now in operation.

Each of those power houses was built to use both classes of fuel—oil and coal. I am not attacking the use of either of these types of fuel on the basis suggested by the Minister, because the power houses were built to use both classes of fuel, and I am in agreement with that.

In the 1939-1945 period the situation arose when oil could not be obtained as a fuel and coal was used. That possibility is likely to arise again. I am trying to find out whether the new power house to be

built at Kwinana will use only oil as a fuel, or whether it will be able to use coal as a fuel if the situation demanded. In the absence of information from the Minister and the S.E.C. I take it the power house will be designed to use only oil as a fuel.

I have not been able to ascertain what percentage of each fuel is being used in the existing power houses. I know that both oil and coal have been used but I do not know the percentages.

In his speech the Minister referred to the supply of water at Collie and said there was not sufficient in the Collie-Muja area to enable the power house to be extended. I refer to the winter of 1964 when the floods occurred. The people of Collie were rowing boats over the tops of the houses. That would give some idea of the quantity of water that was available, but it was allowed to flood the town of Collie, flow along the Collie River into Wellington Dam, and over the dam. With the exception of any water that might have been used for irrigation in the Harvey-Brunswick area the rest of that water flowed into the sea.

We have engineers in this State who are capable of designing a method to trap that floodwater for use in the extensions to the Muja power house. The Minister said that had it not been for the raising of the Wellington Dam wall by 50 ft., the Muja power house would not have been built, because there would not be sufficient water to keep it going. That is "bunkum."

Members from the south-west realise the amount of water which was lost during the winter of 1964 and which finally finished up in the sea at Bunbury. We have capable engineers in this State to trap the water before it reaches Collie, and thereby enable the Muja power house to be extended when the necessity arises, thus obviating the need to build the power house at Kwinana.

Who knows at this stage what amount of water could have been trapped? I feel sure our engineers can trap the water before it reaches Collie. It would obviate the flooding of the town and the wasting of the floodwaters. The Minister said there was limited "competitive" coal on the Collie coalfields. Neither the Minister nor anybody else in this State has any conception of what the Collie coalfields hold. Time and again I have endeavoured to persuade this Government to conduct a bore survey to ascertain what coal in the Collie basin is available for use. How can the Minister or anybody else say there is a supply of 30 years of competitive coal in the basin? That answers my question and proves the necessity for such a survey to be undertaken, so that we will know from some recognised authority what coal does exist and what is available for generating electricity in the years to come.

Neither the Minister nor anyone else can anticipate what coal will be available to supply the Muja power house or any other that uses coal. I cannot agree more with that view. The Premier interjected when the Minister was speaking and asked what would happen if oil or gas in commercial quantities were found in Western Australia. I say when that time arrives and oil or gas is found in commercial quantities—I think it will be found—that will be the time to determine the fuel supplies of the State. For the present we should leave the position as it is.

I now refer to the situation in South Africa. The South African mining digest of the 16th July, 1965, contained an article relating to the building of a new power house. The cost will be 150,000,000 rands, which is equivalent to £75,000,000. It will be the biggest power house in the southern hemisphere. The article in that journal states—

Reference to plans for building a 2,000-megawatt power station costing R50-million in the South-Eastern Transvaal—it would be the biggest electricity-from-coal powerhouse in the Southern Hemisphere—was made recently at Volksrust in the Transvaal by the Deputy Minister for Agricultural Affairs, Mr. H. E. Martins.

Mr. Martins said that a broad sector of the Eastern Transvaal was being explored for a site suitable for a venture of such massive proportions. The project, already labelled, "Station Y" would require coal reserves of between 300-million and 400-million tons—enough to keep the plant going for 30 to 40 years.

The plant would burn from 6 to 7 million tons of coal a year, and would need about 40-million gallons of water a day.

Mr. Martins said that in determining the site, experts had to realise it was not economic to transport coal over long distances. It should be known early in the new year where "Station Y" would be located.

The principal feature of that article is that the power house will not use oil as fuel. It will be supplied entirely with coal mined in the Transvaal State.

If that can be done in the Transvaal, why can it not be done here? Why must we use oil? I think the situation as revealed in that article speaks for itself, and it also indicates to me, at any rate, that they are in a position to obtain oil as cheaply as we can but they are going to burn entirely coal.

I was going to suggest that the South African Minister should be seconded to tell us exactly why they will burn all coal in their power house, and send our Minister over there in order that he might

be enlightened as to how they can do it. Then he could come back and persuade the Government here to burn native coal instead of oil at Kwinana.

It is a remarkable achievement for South Africa to be able to spend so much money on a power house which, although it could as easily burn oil, will be utilising the native fuel. That is my argument at present on the proposed power house at Kwinana. The winter of 1964 proved that there is sufficient rainfall in the area to extend the present Muja power house, provided the Government will agree to do so. The coal is there, too.

Mr. Brand: If we could discover oil and gas, would that not be a local material, too?

Mr. MAY: The Premier was not listening. I said I could not agree more that when the time came that this State was producing its own oil or gas in commercial quantities, that would be the time to consider the situation. But until that time arrives, why should we use the foreign fuel instead of our own native fuel available at Collie?

The Government must know that we have never fully explored the coal basin at Collie and therefore we do not know how extensive it is. The Mines Department does not know what the coal basin contains and someone should instruct the Mines Department to go ahead and explore the Collie coal basin in order to ascertain what the coal position will be in years to come. The Government does not do that. It does not grasp the idea that it is necessary. It is going to burn oil because it is more convenient. I know it is convenient.

Mr. Brand: And cheaper!

Mr. MAY: Will the Premier tell me what price the Government is paying for the oil? That is a fair question. It is no good saying the oil is cheaper unless I am told what the Government is paying for it. The Government has no hesitation at all in informing the general public what it is paying for coal, has it? Of course it has not. Every three years the price of coal is published in the local papers and everyone knows what the two companies are getting for it; but when it comes to oil, it is a different proposition. The Premier has consistently refused during the last three years to provide me with information in regard to the cost of fuel oil.

I want to say to the Premier that when the time comes—and I hope it will—when this State is able to produce its own oil and gas, then I would say he will have a perfect right to reconsider the question as to what fuel should be used. I think that is a fair enough proposition. However, I cannot carry my argument to its proper conclusion unless the Premier is

prepared to tell me what he pays for oil. Why should it be confidential? The coal companies' information is not confidential.

Mr. Brand: I could not tell you because I do not know.

Mr. MAY: Don't give me that! I believe a lot the Premier tells me, but I could not believe that. He knows very well what he is paying for oil, and if he does not it would take him but a few minutes to find out. I am fighting for the life of Collie on this matter and if the Government is going to continue—and I know it will—to increase the consumption of oil—

Mr. Brand: Won't the consumption of coal increase?

Mr. MAY: The consumption of coal will come down, irrespective of the quantity available.

Mr. Brand: Won't the consumption of coal increase?

Mr. MAY: I know that was spoken of at the time.

Mr. Brand: Answer my question.

Mr. MAY: I will answer the question. The Minister told me when he replied to my motion that there is only enough coal in the Collie coal basin to last for another 30 years.

Mr. Brand: Won't the consumption of coal—

Mr. MAY: Don't try to trap me! I will not be trapped. I will make by own speech in my own way. There is only enough coal to last for 30 years. In other words, Collie is assured for 30 years to come in regard to the use of coal.

Mr. Brand: It is assured so long as it has coal to supply.

Mr. MAY: The Premier tells me that he is going to use more Collie coal. Of course he will, but we never know the moment he will use more oil. He is saying what is happening now, but tell me how much oil will be used and how much coal will be used in four of five years' time! I would be glad to argue the situation then. At the present time, yes, but we have no assurance that the S.E.C. or the railways—no, we will discount the railways altogether. We have no assurance that the S.E.C. will be using more coal in 1970 than it is today. It is only supposition on the part of the Premier—only supposition.

Mr. Brand: Surely this is a realistic approach? What would make you think it would not be?

Mr. MAY: Because the Premier is going to use more oil. He has continually each year increased the use of fuel oil.

Mr. Brand: And increased the use of coal.

Mr. MAY: To a certain extent; but it will not last.

Mr. Brand: Why not?

Mr. MAY: Because according to the Minister it will not be there.

Mr. Brand: You are sure for 30 years. If you are right and there is more coal, we will use it.

Mr. MAY: It is not my suggestion there is more.

Mr. Brand: You have said we should drill and look for more.

Mr. MAY: I said the Government should ascertain the amount available.

Mr. Brand: That is right. You are saying there is more than 30 years' supply.

Mr. MAY: According to the Minister, Collie has only enough to last 30 years.

Mr. Brand: If there is enough to last 40 years, we will use it. We cannot use it if it is not there.

Mr. MAY: The Premier will be burning more oil than now.

Mr. Brand: We will be using more oil, but we will also—

Mr. MAY: That is just what I have been saying.

Mr. Brand: I wish you had stayed overseas for another six years.

Mr. MAY: The Premier cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Brand: I wish you had had a further holiday.

Mr. MAY: So do I.

Mr. Brand: That is one thing on which we agree.

Mr. MAY: It is.

Mr. Brand: I am glad you sold your farm.

Mr. MAY: I do not think the farm has anything to do with this.

Mr. Brand: You might start talking about land.

Mr. MAY: I am not worried about land. I am worried about coal.

Mr. Brand: You talked about it last time.

Mr. MAY: I am talking about the increased consumption of oil now.

Mr. Lewis: The Premier means you were in a better mood when you had the farm.

Mr. MAY: I am in a good mood now. God knows what he wants! I could not be more pleased with myself. If I do not please the Premier, he has to take it. That is all.

Mr. Brand: I am quite happy.

Mr. MAY: The quantity at Collie is not known.

Mr. Brand: Is it a fact that you want more houses at Collie?

Mr. MAY: We are not building houses. We are trying to build up consumption of coal. The Premier cannot bring those sardines across the track with me. If the Minister would give me an assurance that the consumption of coal will increase equally with the consumption of fuel oil I would be satisfied.

Mr. Brand: Do you suggest the use of further mechanisation to extract the coal as cheaply as possible?

Mr. MAY: That cannot be done if the coal is not there. Does the Premier expect me to believe that the power house at Muja will not supply fuel more cheaply than the price at which oil can be purchased?

Mr. Brand: I have not said anything at all; nor has the Minister. We will use the coal.

Mr. MAY: The Minister did say that in the last session of Parliament.

Mr. Brand: You are talking of the Kwinana power house.

Mr. MAY: Yes; it was said that it cost too much in the way of freight to take the coal to Kwinana. Instead, the proportion of electricity for consumption should have been increased from Muja. That power station will use the coal on the spot. That is my argument.

Mr. Brand: In the meantime Collie will grow and grow as it has in the past.

Mr. MAY: Collie is not growing.

Mr. Brand: Is that so? How many houses do you want there now?

Mr. MAY: We had 50 empty houses at Collie, which situation was caused by the operations of this Government in 1960 when 500 people had to leave the town. Now the houses are filled with pensioners from all over the State because there is no accommodation anywhere else for them.

Mr. Brand: But they are people. How many extra houses do you want?

Mr. MAY: I will challenge the Premier on that. When he tells me the quantity of coal and oil to be used, I will reply to his question.

Mr. Brand: You had better get me a computer.

Mr. MAY: I do not know who is making this speech: the Premier or I. I take this opportunity to reply to the Minister; and I do not think he meant what he said last year. We have always been good friends and we have a lot in common in other ways. I am prepared to accept his assurance that he did not mean half of what he said in the last days of the last session.

As for the S.E.C., I did not try to trap it in any way. As a matter of fact, I agree that it is a very good department. I know the manager very well and I claim him as a personal friend. I think he is

doing a good job; but he has still to carry out the policy of this Government. The policy of this Government is to use fuel oil wherever possible.

Mr. Brand: What are we using at Collie? We are using coal at Collie.

Mr. MAY: Yes; I know. A lot of fuel oil will be used too. I know what is going on.

Mr. Brand: Yes; a drop of oil is used to start the motors.

Mr. MAY: At South Fremantle a tap has only to be turned, and of course it is done.

Mr. Brand: That is generally acknowledged and it has been known for about four years.

Mr. MAY: It has to be acknowledged. The same thing applies at Kwinana. The Minister did not say what fuel would be used and I ask him now: Does he know whether the Kwinana power house is going to burn oil or coal? No reply! We will just have to let it pass. Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition asked the following question:—

- (1) Has a contract for the supply of open-cut coal from Muja been let to the Griffin Coal Mining Company either by the Government or by the State Electricity Commission?
- (2) If not, has anyone on behalf of the Government or the State Electricity Commission given an assurance to any representative of the Griffin Company along those lines?

The answer to that question was—

- (1) and (2) The State Electricity Commission has a 12-year contract with the Griffin Coal Mining Company that ensures supplies of open-cut coal for the Muja power station beyond the period of the current coal contracts.

That is a similar situation to the one I have thrown at the Minister in regard to the price of fuel oil. There is no-one, outside the S.E.C., the Minister, and the Government, who knew that the Griffin Company had a 12-year contract over and above the present three-year contract—when it runs out. All this is being done under the lap. Nobody knew about that proposition until I mentioned it in this House. Why all this subterfuge? Why keep it in the dark?

The same thing applied to the argument last night with regard to the reclamation of the Swan River. The Government did not bring that before Parliament. I am not grizzling because that was not done; I am grizzling because it was done under the lap.

Mr. Brand: What was done under the lap?

Mr. MAY: Granting that 12-year contract.

Mr. Brand: I thought you were talking about the river reclamation.

Mr. MAY: The public is entitled to that information. I am not arguing against the fact that the Government has done it; it is the manner in which it was done that I am concerned with. It was an under-hand method. I will ask the Minister—he is not listening, so I will wait.

Mr. Nalder: This is not question time; you were complaining a while ago about not being able to make your own speech.

Mr. MAY: Will the Minister tell me, and the other members in this Chamber, how long it is since the Griffin Company was granted the contract for 12 years' supply of coal over and above the present three-year contract?

Mr. Gayfer: Put it on the notice paper.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): I think the member for Collie had better proceed with his speech.

Mr. MAY: I will proceed when the Minister answers my question.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): It is not question time.

Mr. MAY: But I am not different from any other member.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. W. A. Manning): I point out to the honourable member that the Minister is not obliged to reply.

Mr. MAY: If he would answer my question I would be satisfied. Now he is involved in another conversation. I have tried to impress in every way possible that this Government, or any other Government—I do not care what Government—should continue wherever possible to use its own natural fuel which, in this case, is our coal situated at Collie. Whether it be two tons or 2,000,000 tons, or 2,000,000,000 tons, it does not matter, so long as we go about it the right way and try to ascertain what supply is available; and if it is available, we should use it.

The town of Collie has been stultified in many ways because of the action of the present Government. The Forests Department controls 70 per cent. of the electorate at Collie, and that particular area is tied up. We cannot get one foot of ground for primary production. On top of that, we have the catchment area for the Wellington Dam. That also stultifies any primary production such as the growing of fruit around Collie. This Government does nothing in any way to compensate. I do not know why.

Mr. Brand: What did you do about this problem in the six years that you were in government?

Mr. MAY: Those other 500 people were still living there until this Government made them shift out. The Wellington

Dam does not belong to the Collie electorate at all. We are suffering because of Brunswick Junction and other places.

Mr. O'Connor: We are a State.

Mr. MAY: Does not the Premier think there should be two-way traffic in this matter? More than six years ago the Minister for Industrial Development promised me he would provide some industrial establishments in Collie so that the Collie people would be compensated for what is happening in regard to forestry land, mechanisation in the production of coal, and for the catchment area for the Wellington Dam. But not one thing has been done.

If the Government and the S.E.C. would take more coal from Collie to enable the 500 men who had to leave there to go back I would be quite happy with the situation and I would not be annoying the Premier, the Minister for Electricity, or anybody else. Surely we are entitled to some consideration! Can anyone tell me of any other town in the State which has been victimised in the same way as Collie has been?

Mr. Kelly: Coolgardie has.

Mr. MAY: But the people knew at the start that when the gold ran out Coolgardie would run out. But the coal at Collie has not run out and, as a consequence, it should be the means of providing employment and homes for the 500 people who had to leave and go elsewhere. I will conclude on the note that if the present Government will allow State instrumentalities to use the extra quantity of coal needed to return those 500 people, I will be quite happy.

Vote put and passed.

Votes: State Electricity Commission, £650,000; Public Works, £12,847,004; North-West, £1,881,996; Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage, £3,000,000; Mines, £168,000; State Housing Commission, £250,000; Agriculture, £250,000; Forests, £180,000; Fisheries, £58,000; Industrial Development, £200,000; Lands and Surveys, £24,000; Other State Undertakings, £553,000; Sundries, £908,000—put and passed.

This concluded the Loan Estimates for the year.

Report

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILLS (10): ASSENT

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Fisheries Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

2. Clackline-Bolgart and Bellevue-East Northam Railway Discontinuance and Land Revestment Bill.
3. Road Maintenance (Contribution) Bill.
4. Local Government Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
5. Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act Amendment Bill.
6. Stamp Act Amendment Bill.
7. Offenders Probation and Parole Act Amendment Bill.
8. Architects Act Amendment Bill.
9. Painters' Registration Act Amendment Bill.
10. Pig Industry Compensation Act Amendment Bill.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Message: Appropriations

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

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Second Reading

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [3.9 p.m.]: As this is a formal Bill, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

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

HORMONE-LIKE HERBICIDES

Control: Motion—Defeated

Debate resumed, from the 13th October, on the following motion by Mr. Sewell:—

That in the opinion of this House the Agricultural Department should immediately control the manufacture, sale, distribution and use of hormone-like herbicides and similar substances, so as to prohibit their use, except under strict departmental supervision.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [3.15 p.m.]: The member for Geraldton introduced this motion because of a situation that had occurred in his electorate. I think most members know from the speech he made just what the situation was amongst the tomato growers in that particular area.

A little later the honourable gentleman introduced a deputation to me pointing out the problems associated with the use of hormone sprays in that area, indicating that in quite a number of cases—and in almost every instance so far as the tomato growers in the Geraldton area were concerned—the crop had been affected by what was considered to be the use of sprays. No-one was able to pin-point the actual person, or persons, or the type of herbicide used which was responsible for this problem.

From the outset I would like to say that I—together with the Government and every member in this House—am aware of the importance of the very careful use of herbicides and insecticides which have been introduced into this country. These are also used in other countries of the world for the control of weeds and insects.

Before replying directly to the matters raised in the motion I think it is wise that we should give some thought at this moment to the value that is accruing to this State from the use of these hormone-like herbicides. These materials are manufactured in practically every country in the world. Over the last few years science has made very rapid progress, and has made available to agriculturists generally very valuable information concerning the testing, and increased production in many agricultural lines which are produced not only in this State, but also in other countries of the world.

I want to refer to the fact that the control of a number of weeds, especially in the wheatgrowing areas of this State, has resulted in a tremendous increase in the production of wheat. In this season alone it has been estimated that the herbicides referred to have been used on over 1,500,000 acres to control wild radish, wild turnip, and double-gees in crops.

I think we can readily appreciate the fact that crops growing in conjunction with weeds must result in a reduced harvest. It might be well to mention that the majority of the acres of land that have been sprayed have had this done from aeroplanes. This is a feature that is worldwide. We find that the use of aeroplanes has revolutionised the use of these sprays; and in every country in the world this method is used not only to control weeds, but also to control insects; and, in addition, to add fertiliser to crops. So, from this angle, this is a situation which has developed and one which will proceed, because of the value agriculturists place on this service.

I do not think anybody can argue about the serious effect wild radish or wild turnip can have on a crop; and any member who has seen such a crop would know just how valuable herbicides of this type can be in the virtual elimination of these weeds.

I do not know whether members have had an opportunity of seeing a badly affected crop; but it is possible with the naked eye to look across a field cropped with wheat and hardly be able to see any wheatheads because of wild radish and wild turnip that have sprung up in the flowering and seeding stage. However, a few days after the spray has been used, there is a complete change in the situation. This is a feature that we must endeavour to continue to use if we are going to take full advantage of the operations, not only of the companies that are making available the planes to spray, but the companies that are making the sprays available to the agriculturists.

It is unfortunate that science has not been able to be completely specific in the use of herbicides as to the effect they can have on a number of other plants. I have no doubt that every member in this House has had his attention drawn to plants in the garden or plants on the road-way that have been sprayed with some type of herbicide, and those members know exactly what effect this material has on plant growth. There are some plants that are particularly susceptible to even minute traces of these materials.

Of course, if herbicides are used in any quantity, they can not only affect plant life, but they can also contaminate the machinery that has been used for spraying purposes. As I said earlier, a minute quantity of herbicides is sufficient to vitally affect such crops as cotton, tomatoes, and grapes. As far as this State is concerned in some areas we are entirely dependent upon this type of production. As was said by the member for Geraldton, the growing of tomatoes in his area is an important agricultural pursuit. In the north of the State the growing of cotton will, in the future, we hope, be very important; and in the Swan area we are dependent on the growing of grapes. These are the three types of plants that are very susceptible to various types of herbicides.

As I pointed out, there are many hazards associated with the use of these materials and I think most agriculturists appreciate this situation. We have used every effort at our disposal to inform the public of the importance of having a full knowledge of the use of herbicides and what can result from their misuse in regard to certain plants. The Department of Agriculture has used every opportunity through the Press and over the radio to make the public aware of the problems associated with the use of herbicides.

It has been found that despite this publicity, accidents do occur; and in some cases it has been said that these accidents have occurred because of lack of knowledge as to the effect the herbicides will have on certain plants. In other cases,

it has been claimed that many people were ignorant of the effect that the use of these herbicides could have.

One can go along to a store and buy some of these herbicides in small bottles. They can, perhaps, be used with the idea of controlling weeds. They will do this; but they will also have their effect on garden plants. Many plants, as I have already pointed out, are very sensitive and it is important that everyone be fully acquainted with the effect of herbicides on plant life and what can happen as a result of their careless and indiscriminate use.

I would point out that we have legislation in this country dealing with the control and use of herbicides; and I want to make this information available to the House as I think it is wise we should be reminded what legislation we already have on our Statute book. There is a total prohibition on the application of dangerous herbicides by means of aircraft within a 12-mile radius of Mt. Scott, Geraldton. The honourable member and his party that met me some few weeks ago are fully aware of this situation. In addition, aircraft cannot fly over this area without the approval—that is, simply fly over the area—in writing of the chief weed control officer of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Davies: What radius is that?

Mr. NALDER: It is a 12-mile radius of Mt. Scott, Geraldton. In actual fact, although requests have been received, in no instance has approval been given. However, at the present time there is reason to believe that some aircraft spraying was done last year within this protected area; and if this proves to be the case, prosecutions will be instituted.

I make this statement because at the present time investigations are being carried out in an endeavour to find out all the planes that have been in that particular area over the last few months. An endeavour is being made to track down the person who might have been responsible for the trouble that has faced the tomato growers in the Geraldton area.

There is also a prohibition on the application by ground rig of 2,4-D ester within a mile of any tomato garden; 2,4-D ester vaporises readily and could thereby cause damage to tomatoes being grown for commercial purposes.

There is a requirement that any person who contemplates spraying with a hormone-like herbicide by the use of ground equipment within a 12-mile radius of Mt. Scott must give notice to the Department of Agriculture at least 14 days prior to the commencement of spraying. A similar regulation has just been gazetted in relation to vines in the Swan Valley area. The comments I am making with reference to the growing of tomatoes apply also to the growing of grape vines and cotton.

This requirement is listed so that officers of the department can get in touch with those using ground rig spraying within the 12-mile radius and point out to them the dangers which could be associated with their actions if any carelessness occurs. It enables the Department of Agriculture to fix a time of spraying, and if damage from such action did occur then the liability for such damage could be fixed and the person doing the spraying could be sued for such damage.

The effect of the above legislation is, firstly, to prevent the use of aircraft spraying with herbicides within a 12-mile radius of Mt. Scott, because this is the means by which vapour might be transmitted to gardens; and, secondly, to ensure that any spraying by ground rig should be done at such a distance and in such a manner that damage would be completely avoided.

On the manufacturing and sales side legislation provides that all herbicides be registered under the Health Act, their chemical contents must be stated, and the labels on the containers must be submitted for approval. The legislation makes provision for sampling and analysis of herbicides submitted for registration. These are the types of controls which are used in every country where herbicides are applied to crops. Special attention is given to susceptible crops.

The legislation enacted within States is also supported by action taken by the Commonwealth Department of Civil Aviation in respect of pilots. By arrangement, the Department of Civil Aviation includes in each pilot's manual a provision that no agricultural aircraft carrying hormone-like herbicides shall fly over defined areas at Geraldton and in the Swan Valley where tomatoes and vines are grown. This arrangement has been made because the flight of aircraft under such conditions is beyond the jurisdiction of the State Legislature.

In addition, further legislation has been provided on a uniform Australian basis to enable additional restrictions to be imposed on the aerial application of pesticides and herbicides and to ensure that pilots have a full knowledge of the effect of these materials.

Mr. Davies: How long has that been in operation?

Mr. NALDER: Last year we introduced legislation dealing with the activities of pilots, and there has been other legislation introduced from time to time. There is power, of course, under the legislation to regulate what shall be done, and the department uses this power freely in every case.

When the legislation has been completed, negligence could result in the withdrawal of a pilot's license. It is believed that the legislation already enacted, and that at

present being considered, does take into account fully the hazards to susceptible crops of early application of herbicides and pesticides, and the dangers which might result from careless ground applications.

I think every member must appreciate the full problem associated with all the agricultural industries. The problem occurs where people become careless. I point out the situation—and it has been referred to, I think, by the member for Geraldton—that arose in Kununurra. Publicity had been given to the effect some sprays for the control of insects have upon the pilots.

Mr. Sewell: That is correct.

Mr. NALDER: The pilots were advised about the possible effects on their skin if they did not take the necessary precautions. This was emphasised again and again; but, apparently, they could only learn by experiencing the effect of the spray on themselves. Of course they started to suffer pain and other effects, and immediate action had to be taken to ground them. At Kununurra, with the temperature at about 100 degrees, the men concerned did not feel inclined to be rugged up, which would be necessary if they carried out instructions, because they must have every part of their skin protected in some way; but most of them were getting around in shorts because of the conditions.

I am only saying this to emphasise the fact that the public are inclined to get careless. They use these materials and do not see any ill-effects upon themselves and so they become careless, and it probably is not long before some ill-effects are felt, not only on the persons concerned but also on some plants that are grown, not by themselves, but by neighbours.

I wish to refer again to the comments made by the member for Geraldton with reference to the effects resulting from the indiscriminate use of this material in the Geraldton area. The Department of Agriculture immediately took action and made every effort to find out what was affecting the tomatoes. Advice was taken from everybody concerned; and I might say there was a peculiar feature that existed, but at the moment we have no proof of what brought it about. Some of the people concerned said that in their opinion it was caused by the Agriculture Protection Board unit that was being used to spray weeds on the side of a road. It appeared that evidence was clearly available that the wind blew in a certain direction and that the tomato plants were affected on one side. It was proved that this was the cause of the wilt effect on the bushes.

Mr. Gayfer: That would be under strict departmental supervision.

Mr. NALDER: Yes.

Mr. Sewell: Not strict enough.

Mr. NALDER: That is not so, because in areas miles away from where this spray was being used, the same effect was observed.

Mr. Jamieson: The spray has been known to travel eight miles in certain circumstances.

Mr. NALDER: It probably travels further than that, if we could prove it; and that is the information we are endeavouring to get. However, at the moment I am talking about a spray that was used on the road and applied by a mechanically operated unit; but we have not sufficient information as to the movement of sprays when aeroplanes are used. We have not sufficient information of the movement of these materials from one area to another which can be expected following spraying by an aeroplane. It has been suggested, but not proved, that such instances happen, but it is considered that a plane spraying a wheatfield perhaps 15 or 20 miles distant from the area I mentioned earlier, could have been the cause of the problem outlined by the member for Geraldton relating to tomatoes in that area.

One does not need to use much imagination to realise what can happen. If the wind is blowing in a certain direction and there exists the right type of weather at a time when the air is still, the material could float around in the atmosphere for perhaps a day, and then, following a rainstorm, the herbicide could be carried by raindrops on to the plants and affect them adversely. We are endeavouring to ascertain what effect on foliage does result, and we have approached the Meteorological Bureau to discover if these things could be possible in the area in question.

We are very concerned over the position because the tomato industry is most important to the State generally, and to the Geraldton district in particular. We are anxious to ascertain, first of all, what effect the herbicide had on the tomato plants this year, and also to ensure that a similar circumstance does not occur. I have mentioned those sections in the legislation we have on the Statute book to control the spraying of herbicides, under the provisions of which we are endeavouring to get to the root of the problem that beset the Geraldton tomato growers.

I think I have said enough to point to the importance of the proper use of herbicides and their value to industry. As I have said, we have regulations and legislation which give the Department of Agriculture and the Health Department all the necessary power at this stage to take action, but it is the practical interpretation of these sections that is required. Every effort is being made to control the use of herbicides, but also we want to ensure that, in using them, the possibility

of accidental misuse does not occur, and that there will be no recurrence of damage being caused to the tomato crop at Geraldton, and the grape vines in the Swan Valley by the misuse of herbicides.

Mr. Davies: What about compensation? Have you considered that?

Mr. NALDER: I mentioned a moment ago that if it can be proved that anybody has misused any herbicide, action can be taken against him. If an officer of the Agriculture Protection Board misuses these materials accidentally the department itself is liable. Conditions are laid down for the sale and distribution of these materials; and, as I have already pointed out, strict control is exercised over the use of hormone-like substances, particularly in areas where crops grown are susceptible.

I do not mean to imply that in the light of further evidence these controls will not be exercised. I want to mention that the Director of the Agriculture Protection Board only last week visited Canberra to take part in a conference of officers from all over Australia who are meeting to discuss this very subject.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.4 p.m.

Mr. NALDER: I was referring to the fact that the Director of Agriculture had attended a conference in Canberra. Although there is an Act and there are regulations made thereunder for the control and use of the various types of herbicides, it does not suggest that we are not prepared to alter their uses in the light of new evidence. This matter was discussed at the conference in Canberra, and the latest information collated from various countries of the world on the uses of these materials was made available. All States agreed that if necessary the legislation would be amended.

Information has been obtained from various countries of the world. Further, international conferences are held about twice yearly at which the various aspects, the development, and the use of these materials are discussed.

Earlier I referred to the use of some of these materials by the Agriculture Protection Board in the Geraldton district. I did not mention the type of material used, although the member for Geraldton did outline the effects of herbicides, from the information contained in a bulletin issued by Mr. Meadly of the Department of Agriculture. That bulletin dealt with the materials used by the board in spraying the roads adjoining the gardens at which the tomatoes were affected. The material 2, 4-D amine, which is a non-volatile substance, has been used previously without any damage at all to the tomatoes.

Mr. Sewell: That has not an oil base.

Mr. NALDER: No. That is the difference between this material and 2, 4-D ester, the latter being a volatile substance which could cause damage when sprayed some distance away from plants which are susceptible to it. The Agriculture Protection Board takes every precaution with 2, 4-D ester. It uses 2, 4-D amine which is quite a different substance.

Mr. Kelly: Are any of these herbicides likely to poison stock where the fodder has been treated by them.

Mr. NALDER: There is no evidence to indicate that stock are affected, although the materials might affect the plants. If stock were to eat plants which had been treated there would be no immediate effect, but this is another subject altogether. The problem associated with the use of some of these materials is causing concern, because it has been revealed that stock eating fodder which has been sprayed are affected; by that I mean the meat and the milk of the animal are affected. At this stage we have no evidence as to how much fodder the animal must eat before its meat or milk becomes affected.

The Department of Agriculture has a large number of bulletins available to the public on the use of herbicides or insecticides. I picked up a few at random from my office today, and they cover a very wide field; so there is no excuse for any person using these materials on his garden, or for the control of insects, to be uninformed. The public can go to the department in Jarrah Road, to any branch in country districts, or to my office in the Treasury Building to obtain these bulletins.

We are making every effort to educate the public in the use of these materials. Before resuming my seat I wish to refer to one other point made by the member for Geraldton. It is the loss sustained by tomato growers in the Geraldton district. Although I have not had an opportunity to visit the area, I have been interested in the losses. Up to this point I have not been able to obtain an accurate assessment of possible losses in production, but inquiries indicate that although the tomatoes were affected the season was a reasonably good one. I obtained this information from various channels. I admit there have been some losses, but the season was a reasonably good one. When the member for Geraldton made the statement about the losses sustained by the tomato growers it appeared that those losses were severe, but that has not been borne out, although I admit that to a point the growers have been affected.

I regret the incident, although there is no proof as to how the losses did occur. The department will make every

effort to see that a similar incident does not occur again. The wording of the motion is—

That in the opinion of this House the Agricultural Department should immediately control the manufacture, sale, distribution and use of hormone-like herbicides and similar substances, so as to prohibit their use, except under strict departmental supervision.

Regarding the first point of the motion, it would be impossible to prohibit the manufacture of these materials. We would be in extreme difficulty with the Constitution if we attempted to do that. It would not be practicable to expect the Department of Agriculture or any other department to come into the picture at all. The regulations made under the various Acts give us all the power that is required. All the information that we have been able to obtain is available to the public.

The department is making a determined effort to ensure that the use of these herbicides is controlled, so that their effects will be felt in the right channels, and so that they will not get out of hand and bring about a situation such as that outlined by the member for Geraldton.

The concluding words of the motion, "except under strict departmental supervision", are applicable. We have all the power and the authority under the various pieces of legislation to take action. In view of all the knowledge that is at our disposal I cannot see that this motion is a practical one. Although I welcome the opportunity for debate on this question—no doubt other speakers will take part in the debate—I cannot agree to the motion as it is; therefore I must oppose it.

MR. JAMIESON (Beeloo) [4.15 p.m.]: I was rather disappointed to hear the Minister oppose the motion, because it gave the impression that it does not have any particular value. All the information given by the Minister indicated that to a degree he was sympathetic towards the problem brought about by the use of the new hormones and herbicides. I presume there are other fields in agriculture which require attention, other than those to which he has given attention.

I draw attention to some interesting statements in a publication which will show the need for something to be done about the use of these materials. I first came to gain some knowledge of this when, several years ago, while making constant journeys through the electorate of the member for Victoria Park down Shepperton Road and across Rushton Road, I noticed a row of Cape lilac trees which had adopted a fern-like leaf instead of the normal leaf. I considered that this was a problem which needed attention, particularly when I found that this fern-like

leaf was on trees not only in that particular area, but also in various other portions of my electorate.

I eventually took the matter up with the Department of Agriculture, and information was subsequently published in the *Park Post*. I intend to indicate to members the attitude then adopted by the department. The following appeared in the *Park Post* on Thursday, the 10th June, when I thought the general public should be given the information:—

Noting that the leaves of some Cape lilac trees in the district had adopted a fern-like appearance, the member for Beeloo, Mr. C. J. Jamieson, M.L.A., took the matter up with the Department of Agriculture asking the reason for the change and also whether the trees were likely to suffer any permanent damage.

In a written reply the Department advised that an inspection had been carried out and it was discovered that in several localities in Victoria Park and surrounding districts, including Welshpool Road, Mars and Gladstone Streets, plants have shown symptoms typical of those caused by growth regulators such as herbicide 2,4-D.

Cape lilacs, hibiscus and vines have been affected, the leaves becoming finely divided. These three plants are known to react readily to such chemicals.

The Department points out that it is seldom simple to indicate the origin of such trouble. Only small amounts of 2,4-D are necessary and the effects can be caused in a number of different ways such as:

1. Drift from spraying operations for weed control.
2. The use of equipment previously containing 2,4-D or a similar chemical.

That is an important one. To continue—

3. The parking of weed spraying equipment in the vicinity. Vapour can rise from volatile chemicals such as 2,4-D ester, particularly when high temperatures are experienced during the summer.

Mr. Jamieson said this week that it did not appear that the plants concerned would suffer any permanent damage. He would, however, be making further inquiries in this regard and also into the extent to which the herbicide is used.

That I did, and I found out that the department had been somewhat concerned about it. Mr. Meadly, the officer in charge of the weeds and seeds branch of the Department of Agriculture wrote a warning article which was quoted in full by the honourable member when

he introduced the motion. It appears in *Hansard* and points out the problems associated with this hormone-like herbicide.

It is interesting to see how some trees and plants can be affected by these sprays. I have here some samples which I will table later with your approval, Mr. Speaker. This one is a small portion of the Cape lilac. It is the top shoot of a Cape lilac leaf and shows the normal formation, and the one next to it is the fern-like formation as a result of the spray.

This one is a common garden shrub—the Blue Solomon. On the left is the normal type of vegetation, and on the right is a mutated version which has been affected by the sprays.

Now we come to one of the hibiscus varieties. This is known as the Japanese lantern plant. It has little red blossoms on it. It should have an oval-shaped leaf like this one on the right. The mutated leaf shows the effects of the drift from the factory some 500 yards away. The top section of the sheet shows a combination of the mutated and ordinary leaf of this particular shrub.

Those are some I have had for some time, but on the way in today I obtained some samples to show the effect of the mutation caused by the drift from such sprays. This is a Cape lilac. Members would hardly recognise it as such. It has a very fern-like leaf; and this other specimen is how it should be. This one is off a normal tree.

Here is a sample of one recovering from the effects of spray. The trees in Rushton Road are similar to this as they start to recover. The early leaves forming come rather well and later on it reverts again to the other fern-like foliage.

Referring to the common garden plants, these are often affected. Many will not recognise this sample here. It is what is commonly known as the Rose of Sharon, or the hibiscus multiflora. It is obvious that a considerable amount of mutation has taken place because of the drift from the factory where this type of spray is manufactured.

This particular specimen is the Blue Solomon to which I referred earlier. That is in its normal form and members will probably recognise it from their gardens. This is a sample which has been mutated and is trying to flower. It is horribly mutated and it is not recognisable as the plant it should be.

The hibiscus seems particularly badly affected, and the Minister indicated of course that a move had been made to stop aeroplanes flying over areas where the vines were situated. I suggest that to protect gardens in the metropolitan area some

consideration must be given to stopping aeroplanes flying anywhere. Something must be done to safeguard the gardens. The product must be kept under control.

Here is an example of the combination of the normal foliage and the mutated foliage. This one is very much mutated as members can see. It has a series of spikes and dots on it, and is nothing like the proper foliage that is usually found on the hibiscus.

Therefore it would indicate that this spray has a general effect. This specimen here is a badly-affected cassia. I was unable to obtain a proper specimen of it because the only one available was on the bush which had been mutated. It had some yellow flowers on it, but they were in a pretty bad condition, too.

The Minister referred to vines. Here is an example of the effect on the ends. The leaves are badly deformed and it seems to appear on the later growth. I visited the property from which I obtained these samples a few weeks ago when I was after the original specimens I have here on paper, and these vines seemed to be growing all right this year; but the later growth is again mutated and they are starting to die off from the end because of the growth forced into them by the hormones. That is the way the spray kills the weed. It makes it outgrow the root strength and the weed dies.

Mr. Nalder: Is that vine from the metropolitan area?

Mr. JAMIESON: Yes. The last specimen is of interest because I did not think that anything affected our eucalypts. I obtained this one not far from the factory where the chemical is manufactured. Members can see the considerable mutation of the eucalypts, and if any member desires to obtain a specimen himself he can go to Railway Parade, Welshpool, just outside Lanes, W.A., or a little way up from there.

I have shown members those samples to indicate that these sprays can cause damage to gardens. It does not stop at that. It has a particularly bad effect on rose gardens, and the frightening feature about it is, of course, contained in Mr. Meadly's article. He said—

Do not leave vehicles or equipment used for spraying in the vicinity of gardens or sensitive crops, particularly when the temperature is high.

That is from the *Journal of Agriculture*, Western Australia, the July edition. People both in the metropolitan area and country areas are entitled to some protection from the ravages of this type of herbicide that is being used. Many people spend a considerable amount of time in their gardens, but in the case of spite or jealousy someone has only to leave a can of this stuff on a roadway or in a vehicle in the front of a fellow's place when it is a bit

warm, and there it rises from the back of the car, and the garden suffers as a result. The owner of the garden wonders what has happened to it, but he cannot do much about it except to hope that in a season or two the effects will die out. That is not good enough, and I feel the matter is rather important and that the Department of Agriculture, knowing the dangers, should have another look at it.

Mr. Graham: What distance from the factory is affected?

Mr. JAMIESON: The garden from which I obtained these specimens was about 500 yards from the factory, but plants are affected even when much further away. The department indicated that in some cases there seemed to be no positive reason why a garden should have been affected except that some vehicle or apparatus must have been parked nearby. This is quite possible, because the gardens concerned are on the main highway which has been used to transport hormone sprays, and the drift has gone up the Victoria Park scarp. I do not know how far, but it could have been a fair way.

A considerable number of warnings have been issued by various people on the use of these sprays and I intend later on to quote a few sections of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson to indicate how she found the results of many of these things. In South Australia, a new chemical—Picloram—was being reviewed, and the following appeared in the *Journal of Agriculture* in that State, in August:—

What is Picloram?

Picloram resembles 2,4-D or 2,4,5-T in its action but is many, many times more powerful.

The chemical is rapidly translocated within plant tissues where it regulates the plant growth, and eventually causes death.

Leaves of treated plants first develop a "cup" shape—

That is typical of those samples I showed a moment ago. To continue—

they then die and fall. New growth appears twisted, and woody plants show a characteristic splitting along the stems.

Some plants are more tolerant to picloram in small doses than others. We now know that in certain situations, the application of $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of active picloram an acre reduces the height of a wheat crop, but apparently, even on our sandy soils, wheat and barley withstand 1 ounce of active material before yields are damaged.

Grassy species can usually withstand its herbicidal action better than broadleaved plants. Medics and clovers are unfortunately very hard hit.

Surprisingly enough, members of the cruciferous family, such as wild turnip, are fairly tolerant.

So we have to be careful, when we increase the strength to get rid of some of these plants, that we do not make a blue with the calculations and find that we are worse off than before. To continue the article—

Picloram lasts in the soil for a long time, just how long in our conditions, we don't yet know. This has advantages of course, but there are disadvantages, especially when we are trying to resow our clover and medic pastures.

Besides getting rid of the pest, picloram leaves the plant bare and useless.

I notice this book, *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, is widely read and I understand our library had to buy in three copies because of the demand. I draw members' attention to the cover note where reference is made to the Duke of Edinburgh saying—

"I strongly recommend Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring' if you want to see what is going on."

Just to give an indication that Rachel Carson is not just a fly-by-night authoress I will quote as follows from the cover of her book:—

Rachel Carson, author of "The Sea Around Us" and, "The Edge of the Sea," is a biologist who became so concerned with this situation that she spent four and a half years gathering data from America, from Great Britain, and other parts of the world, on the effects of the pesticides now in general use. The facts, as set forth in this book, are appalling.

In the book she deals particularly with the effects of 2,4-D as follows:—

Under some conditions, the chemical conversions and transformations that lie at the very heart of the living world are affected. Nitrification, which makes atmospheric nitrogen available to plants, is an example. The herbicide 2,4-D causes a temporary interruption of nitrification.

This is an important feature of the agricultural requirements in our soil. I understand that nitrogen content is demanded by these various pastures to induce nitrification. If we are going to apply herbicides freely we are likely to damage the nitrification and be back where we started. So we have to be careful. To quote again—

In recent experiments in Florida, lindane, heptachlor, and BHC, (benzene hexachloride) reduced nitrification after only two weeks in soil;

That indicates that the other types of herbicides can have an effect. To add to this, one of the problems, as I understand

from talking to my colleague, is the fact that wildflowers in the Badgingarra area are affected where the department has been spraying the verges of the road. It is passing strange that similar occurrences were referred to by Rachel Carson, and I quote—

Take, for instance, the commodity prized by every chamber of commerce throughout the land—the good will of vacationing tourists. There is a steadily growing chorus of outraged protest about the disfigurement of once-beautiful roadsides by chemical sprays, which substitute a sere expanse of brown, withered vegetation for the beauty of fern and wildflower, of native shrubs adorned with blossom or berry. 'We are making a dirty, brown, dying-looking mess along the sides of our roads' a New England woman wrote angrily to her newspaper. 'This is not what the tourists expect, with all the money we are spending advertising the beautiful scenery.'

In the summer of 1960 conservationists from many states converged on a peaceful Maine island to witness its presentation to the National Audubon Society by its owner, Millicent Todd Bingham. The focus that day was on the preservation of the national landscape and of the intricate web of life whose interwoven strands lead from microbes to man. But in the background of all the conversations among the visitors to the island was indignation at the despoiling of the roads they had travelled. Once it had been a joy to follow those roads through the evergreen forests, roads lined with bayberry and sweet fern, alder and huckleberry. Now all was brown desolation. One of the conservationists wrote of that August pilgrimage to a Maine island: 'I returned . . . angry at the desecration of the Maine roadsides. Where, in previous years, the highways were bordered with wildflowers and attractive shrubs, there were only the scars of dead vegetation for mile after mile.'

I am sure the Premier would be interested in what I have read because his area is renowned for wildflowers. I am sure that if this spraying keeps up without an abundant knowledge of what is going on, we are going to be in trouble. There are many references in this book, and some of the more important ones are worth quoting. I quote as follows—

The most widely used herbicides are 2,4-D, 2,4,5-T, and related compounds. Whether or not these are actually toxic is a matter of controversy. People spraying their lawns with 2,4-D and becoming wet with spray have occasionally developed

severe neuritis and even paralysis. Although such incidents are apparently uncommon, medical authorities advise caution in use of such compounds. Other hazards, more obscure, may also attend the use of 2,4-D. It has been shown experimentally to disturb the basic physiological process of respiration in the cell, and to imitate X-rays in damaging chromosomes. Some very recent work indicates that reproduction of birds may be adversely affected by these and certain other herbicides at level far below those that cause death.

The mutations to which I referred earlier are very much like those caused by radiation. The properties of the hormones evidently have a similar effect to radiation on such vegetation. There are several problems associated with this matter in the metropolitan area which need very close examination. If manufacture is to be carried on, it has to be carefully controlled. Suggested recommendations regarding 2,4-D by Mr. Meady are as follows—

Take added precautions when sensitive crops such as tomatoes, vines and lupins are in the vicinity.

Do not store 2,4-D along with other pesticides or fertilisers.

Some of these sprays are manufactured in my territory within 100 yards of a stock food manufacturing firm. On the leeward side of the spray manufacturing firm is a factory run by one of Western Australia's farmers' co-operative organisations where stock food is mainly manufactured.

There is a danger that stock food could be stored in the same shed as a tractor which had been used for general farm work. The stock food being contaminated could pass contamination on through fertilizers, etc., stored with it. The farmer would not know where the damage came from. Those are things I think the department should give some attention to and why it is vital that a motion like this should be approved.

I would like to make some comments in connection with the tomato crop at Geraldton. The Minister said that as far as he knew the people were reasonably satisfied with the return from their crops. That could well be the case, but the housewives around Perth might think differently. As I understand it—and I might be a little out here—the crop was recognised as being only about one-third capacity. Many people got one-third of the crop they expected, but got three times the price and they are no worse off, and are not complaining. But from the economic point of view of the people who had to pay the extra cost, it is a bad feature in the economy of the country that this was allowed to go on.

Mr. Nalder: I think your figures are quite out.

Mr. JAMIESON: The cost figures are not out. We could not send 39,000 cases of tomatoes overseas this year, because we did not have the tomatoes. The crop was certainly well down.

Mr. Nalder: I understood you to say one-third down.

Mr. JAMIESON: I think the production was more like one-third of the absolute possible. That would be nearer the mark because of the high price and the scarcity of the tomatoes. The growers received this higher price because they did not have the same number of cases. I understand they had mutations on the various farms, and many tomatoes did not have seeds and many plants did not have leaves. They had all sorts of problems which came about because of the effect of the hormone sprays.

Many of the vast patches of pink everlasting have disappeared from the verges of the roads because of the spray which has been used. They cannot exist when such hormones are used for spraying. Their make-up is not such that they can resist this sort of thing. If it has the severe effect, as it appears to have, it could be used maliciously.

We certainly hope that nobody will ever use this stuff maliciously, but there are occasions when such things occur. Someone could have a nice crop, and someone else who did not like that person could park his truck, or breakdown, on the road alongside the crop. There could be an old container on the truck which had 2,4-D in it. It might be a hot afternoon and the breeze could take the fumes across the crop and it could be ruined. The other fellow would then have an advantage. That could occur if protection is not afforded. There are all sorts of malicious people around and these things do occur with suburban gardens. Trees have been pulled out in the Minister for Industrial Development's territory. If somebody were to get hold of some of the hormone spray—and I understand one can buy it without restriction here—then trouble could start. I think the Minister said that they could not be controlled because we would run up against constitutional barriers. I do not believe that.

Mr. Nalder: That would be in the manufacture.

Mr. JAMIESON: Even in the manufacture. We still have certain rights of protection. Even with pharmaceutical products we have had sets of circumstances similar to these.

Surely the Minister is not going to suggest that we need not prohibit something if we do not want to use it. I do not think the hormone should be cut out entirely—I realise that in certain instances a certain

amount of good can be done by the use of them, and it has been done. The protection should be given to the farmers and their crops, and they should be warned of the dangers.

A person would not have any crop to harvest in the long run and so on that score we would have to assess what was the best thing to do.

I am sure we would not have any trouble if we wanted to institute controls here and those controls contravened Commonwealth law in some way. The Commonwealth would soon come into line because we must protect our agricultural pursuits. The fruit check-points on State borders contravene the Commonwealth Constitution but objection has never been taken to them; and I should imagine if objection were taken the States would howl to high heaven and something would soon be done to allow them to continue. We cannot allow anybody to spread disease and I am sure if any constitutional problems arose they could soon be ironed out.

The Minister spoke about limitations on aircraft; but as I indicated earlier, to be fair about it we would have to make sure that the planes did not leave the metropolitan area with such substances aboard; because irrespective of the aerodrome from which they took off they would at some stage pass over vines. If they took off from Jandakot they would pass over vines in the Spearwood area; or, if they were travelling north, they would finish up passing over vines either in the eastern suburbs or in the hills, where there are a number of vineyards. So it is almost impossible for a plane that has some of these unpopular substances on board—they are certainly unpopular if one is on the receiving end—not to cause some trouble and inconvenience.

Also, it is high time we made some inquiries into the effects of these mutations on animals. As has been indicated, frequently the effect is similar to radiation and these herbicides could have a chromosomal effect on animals, and this effect could even extend to human beings. These possibilities should be thoroughly investigated, particularly to find out whether there has been any mutation in infants born in areas where these herbicides have been used. These are the problems we have to face up to when we start to introduce things that cause an imbalance in nature.

I believe the honourable member was quite justified in introducing a motion such as this into the House and in it he states—

That in the opinion of this House the Agricultural Department should immediately control the manufacture, sale, distribution and use of hormone-like herbicides and similar substances, so as to prohibit their use, except under strict departmental supervision.

In my view there should be control over these substances; every aspect of their manufacture and use should be covered. If a person came to Perth with a truck with some of these substances on board, and they started to affect gardens, it would be very difficult to catch up with him under the present arrangements. I know the Department of Agriculture has ways and means of checking on people who are allowed to use these substances, but by the time he was caught a great deal of damage could have been done. He could park his truck on the side of the road, or on the road verge, and damage could be caused to gardens over a considerable distance away from the truck. Action should be able to be taken against a person such as that because it is not fair that others should suffer because of the use of hormone-like herbicides by agriculturists or people who are contracting for agricultural spraying.

Mr. Nalder: What you are saying is very unlikely to happen, because they must have a special machine to spray and they would not be bringing a machine like that into the city. It could happen but it is not very likely to happen often.

Mr. JAMIESON: I again refer to the fact that an inspection of one suburb alone by the department revealed affected patches all over the place. The method I have mentioned is about the only way it could have happened unless, of course, somebody in the area got hold of some spray and proceeded to spray his garden with the substance that has been causing the damage. That is another reason, too, why these herbicides should be controlled. I do not think we should allow them to be used in any metropolitan suburb other than for the control of weeds, and probably it is not even necessary to use them for that purpose in the metropolitan area because the only weeds that need to be controlled here are all on the outskirts, anyway.

The danger from these sprays is enormous. Take a farmer in the Geraldton area, for instance, who has a plot of tomatoes. He could import some stock food from Wesfarmers, store it in his shed, and find that his whole patch of tomatoes has gone bad. He would not be aware of the fact that the stock food was the cause of the trouble and it would not be the responsibility of the manufacturers of the stock food because they would not wilfully use any substance that would cause damage like that. But it could happen and there should be some control over it.

If the Department of Agriculture had full control over the manufacture and distribution of these herbicides it would be able to make sure that they were not likely to be a danger to agricultural pursuits. At the present time the manufacture of these products is not a parti-

cular danger. It is more or less an obnoxious industry and there is no doubt that if any person living near these factories had a garden he would certainly know the effects these products would have on it.

I think the former member for Dale had a considerable number of problems in his district. There was a case he mentioned of a manufacturer near Koops nursery.

Mr. Rushton: That would be in the Canning district.

Mr. JAMIESON: No; it was further out in the Dale area.

Mr. Rushton: The old Dale area?

Mr. JAMIESON: I can remember Mr. Wild raising the issue in this House when he was a member of the Opposition. He brought it to the attention of the Minister for Agriculture and wanted something done about it. A great deal of damage was caused because the dust from some herbicides which were being manufactured in the area was drifting with the wind and settling on gardens. It is not fair that people who love gardens, and who spend many hours looking after them should have them damaged in this way, and it is not realistic for the Government to allow this sort of thing to continue without control.

Anybody who is prepared to beautify his home by cultivating a good garden, and growing vines and plants should be encouraged by the Government. But at the present time there appears to be no regulations under which positive action can be taken against anybody who causes damage in this way. The people who manufacture these substances and indiscriminately apply them to other people's plants—it is indiscriminately applying them, even if it is not done deliberately—through the carriage of herbicides on vehicles, and in a number of other ways, should be stopped.

The earlier samples I showed of the effects of these substances are almost identical with the illustrations in the magazine I have. I would refer members to it in the hope that they will examine the feature article written by Mr. Meadly because I am sure he knows how dangerous these herbicides are and what effects they have. He warns people about their effects, but does not suggest that they should be banned completely. He states that a great deal of trouble will be caused if people continue to use these herbicides without taking adequate precautions.

I support the motion. I believe no harm can come from passing it and I am sure the Minister, on reflection, will realise we are all endeavouring to minimise the undesirable effects these herbicides are having on agricultural properties and gardens. These sprays, herbicides, and germicides are of use on certain occasions but they should be strictly controlled.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [4.55 p.m.]: I shall not take up too much of the time of the House, but I believe the Opposition has rendered a service to the State by bringing to the notice of the Minister and the Department of Agriculture some of the great dangers that exist with the indiscriminate use of some herbicides and pesticides. As the Minister said, there is no doubt they are of great benefit to the agricultural industry; but, unfortunately, while we may look to their immediate benefits sometimes we do not look far enough ahead to see what side effects they have and what the ultimate benefits are likely to be.

The only reason I want to support the motion is to draw attention to much of the work that has already been done in connection with this matter. The member for Beeloo has already quoted from Rachel Carson's book, *Silent Spring* and I have read a review of a book called *The Harvest that Kills* by John Coleman-Crooke. It was published by Oldham of London. Unfortunately I have not been able to get a copy of this book, but from the review it appears that it follows up the valuable work done by Rachel Carson and illustrates and gives further examples of the dangers to the community from the indiscriminate use of these materials. I believe there is a great deal of indiscriminate use although not so much by the Department of Agriculture. The Minister has admitted that there could be accidents; but, of course, we could allow for that, and I am sure the Department of Agriculture is well aware of the dangers that exist.

Nevertheless, everyone who uses these substances does not have the same expert knowledge as those in the department and, of course, other people are likely to suffer because of this. I would point out there has been a great deal of activity in regard to this question and a considerable number of findings have already been made public. In February, 1964, a *Review of the Persistent Organochlorine Pesticides* was published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in London. In this report it is pointed out that after six months' inquiry by those who were on the committee—and they are all eminent scientists who are listed in the publication; and certainly their qualifications are beyond question—20 to 25 in number, they banned the use of aldrin, dieldrin, and heptachlor.

I am not familiar with two of those substances, but I am familiar with dieldrin which is readily available and used to a considerable extent by suburban householders. I have used it myself and I know of many others who have done so. Subsequent to the original report which was published, a supplementary report was made available and in this report again it was pointed out that various other pesticides should be banned or made available

only for commercial use. This, I think, is the real intention of the motion—that the Department of Agriculture should have the authority to control the use of these goods where they are being used commercially.

I believe some of them are so powerful that there is no need for the ordinary home gardener to use them. He could find something less dangerous; and if the Department of Agriculture could control the distribution of such goods, and make them available only on prescription, or authorisation, the danger would be controlled to some extent.

This same advisory committee also recommended to pesticide and weedicide manufacturers that they should find a safer substitute for D.D.T. and D.D.E. New Zealand quickly followed the lead and regulations are in existence there which control the use of these goods. I believe action was taken in that country in 1964. However, the three chemicals I mentioned—aldrin, dieldrin, and heptachlor—are still freely used and are freely available in Australia.

I do not know whether members have seen them around, but in the *New Zealand Journal of Agriculture* for November and December, 1964, there are articles which I think members will find very enlightening if they would care to read them. There are two articles, one of which is headed, "Insecticides: Their Safe, Efficient, and Legal Use" and the other is headed, "Insecticides: Toxicity and Hazards in Use."

These articles bring out the dangers of insecticides to people who use them. They bring out the dangers to consumers and the dangers likely to accrue to the public from eating food that has been sprayed by many of these herbicides and insecticides, and they also point out the hazards to birds and fish. The aim of the articles is to make an objective inquiry into the use of these insecticides, and the hazards associated with their use. I feel sure, as I have said, they would make very interesting reading. I will not delay the House, however, by quoting them.

I understand the Attorneys-General of the Commonwealth met in Perth in 1964 to consider the controls of aerial spraying and pesticides, and I imagine that legislation emanated from their findings. I do not know whether that legislation was adopted in all States of Australia, but I should imagine the position is satisfactory so far as it goes.

But there is an increasing use of aerial spraying, and while I have admitted that this may have a great many advantages, I feel we must be concerned with the attendant dangers. The Commonwealth statistics in August of this year showed that in 1964 aerial crop dusters treated nearly 10 times the acreage that was sprayed in 1957. Much of the spraying was with chemical pesticides.

The Victorian Government instituted an inquiry after considerable alarm was expressed by the public generally. This inquiry into pesticides and weedicides started in 1964, but although an interim report was promised in December, 1964, I can find no evidence of a report having been made available.

Those are some of the references I have come across in the past week or so, and I think they outline effectively, and with some force, the real need for some control to be used over these pesticides. I hope the Minister does not take our comments as criticism of the Department of Agriculture for the work it does. As the Minister pointed out, there are numbers of publications available, and indeed he was able to supply us with a number of them.

I would point out, however, that some of them are dated 1955, 1956, and 1957; whereas many of the pesticides and weedicides about which we are complaining today were not even known of at that time, so obviously they could not be covered by the pamphlets. Looking at the remainder of the pamphlets I find that while there are types of herbicides which can be used, and while we are given such information as rate of application, time of application, and other comments, there is no comment at all on the dangers associated with their use.

I have gone through these pamphlets very quickly and there could be some comment I have missed; but looking at the headings I cannot see where the public has been warned of the dangers to the user, and the likely effect of the residue left on the plants, or of the likely side effects on other plants. Apart from those publications—one dealing with insect pests and their control, and the other with damage caused by hormone-like herbicides in which there are some form of general warning and necessary precautions—there is no other real information as to the dangers of these sprays.

Unfortunately most home gardeners do not take advantage of the service made available by the Department of Agriculture: they usually go into the horticultural section of a store and ask for a bottle of something which they spray on the plant with reckless abandon and often with dire effects.

Mr. Nalder: The Health Act makes it necessary for any producer of herbicides to show the directions and precautions on the bottle.

Mr. DAVIES: Most of these insecticides are in very small bottles, and they are quite expensive. The instructions generally indicate that one should wash one's hands immediately after use, and that one should not smoke when using them and so on. I do not think the directions drive home forcibly enough how really dangerous they are. I have had personal experience in this

matter, and I am sure the Minister knows of people who have broken out in a rash after using systemic sprays and have suffered other ill effects. I think we should exercise some sort of control and make them available only for commercial use on application. They certainly do a mighty job, but there are a lot of less dangerous insecticides which can be used by the home gardener—those which have less dangerous effects.

While there is a growing concern about this matter I feel we have done a service by bringing this to the notice of the House and, I hope, to the notice of the Department of Agriculture. I think we have pointed out the concern that has been expressed to us by various people in our electorates, and the concern we feel after reading we have done on the subject. I hope some good will come of this motion even though it is likely to be defeated.

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [5.8 p.m.]: I wish to thank the Minister for Agriculture, the member for Beeloo, and the member for Victoria Park for their contributions to the debate. The Minister has told the House quite a few facts that were not known to members generally. I will, however, leave his remarks on the motion till after I have dealt with those made by the member for Beeloo and the member for Victoria Park.

The member for Victoria Park suggested the appointment of an advisory committee to help control herbicides. He mentioned the fact that most of these dangerous sprays should be sold only under prescription. I think that suggestion has a lot of merit, and, of course, it would come under the general provision if this motion were carried.

I think the House is indebted to the member for Beeloo for his contribution, and particularly for his exhibition of various plants and trees that have been affected by these sprays in the metropolitan area. When I introduced the motion, and when the Minister spoke to it, we dealt mainly with the question of tomatoes, and mention was also made of grape vines, and so on.

The member for Beeloo, however, has proved beyond all doubt what a lethal weapon these herbicides can be, particularly when we see the mutations and distortions that are caused in the metropolitan area. The honourable member made reference to wildflowers on the verges of our roads in this State. I noticed in one place in particular on the road from Perth to Geraldton that for a great number of years there had been an exhibition of everlasting flowers. I believe this was the only place in Western Australia where those flowers grew. They were the tall stiff type with a black centre.

In the last two or three years, however, it has not been possible to find half an everlasting flower; they have all been killed on the railway reserve which adjoins the main road that runs towards Mingenew. I mention that as a very definite example of the effect of these sprays. I know there are members of this House who have visited this area to view these everlasting flowers. Many people from the metropolitan area have also visited this site. But, as I have said, in the last two or three years there has not been an everlasting flower to be seen.

There are also everlasting flowers to be seen on the Mullewa-Geraldton Road, but these do not have the black centre. These flowers are beginning to take on a warped and twisted look which, I would say, is caused by the spraying done by the Agriculture Protection Board for the various weeds that grow alongside the road.

The Minister said that the department was not responsible for the spraying of this 2,4-D ester or 2,4-D amine. The 2,4-D ester has an oil base, and the Minister told us it is sprayed by aircraft. It could float around and lodge in various pockets thus providing a real danger to everything around it. But if 2,4-D ester were not used in the Narngulu area for carnation weed, and if it were 2,4-D amine which was sprayed this would appear to be equally lethal, because I have seen the damage caused after the Department of Agriculture has sprayed along the verges. I have known of a case in a particular reserve used by the department for camping and the storing of metal where the driver apparently had a little of this spray in his drum which he sprayed on the ground. It destroyed all the wattle bushes and everything it touched. It also destroyed a very fine tomato garden in the area which was just coming into fruit.

I would not go so far as to say that all the blame should be laid at the door of the Agriculture Protection Board, but it certainly must take a good deal of the blame. I do not know whose fault it is, but I would like to repeat for the benefit of the Minister and of the department that 2,4-D amine, which has not an oil base, is certainly very lethal when it is sprayed on road verges, particularly if there are vines, or flowers, or trees around, because these are affected most adversely, as pointed out by the member for Beeloo.

I feel that a tight control should be kept over these herbicides. This is not the first time that the gardens in the Geraldton area have been affected; they were also affected last year in a small way. At the moment I do not know which herbicide was used—whether it was 2,4-D ester, or 2,4-D amine—but it certainly spoilt a number of the gardens. The gardeners were given to understand that

this would not happen again, but it has happened again this year, and in a more vicious manner.

Wherever the spray came from, the attack on the tomato gardens in the area was certainly a very vicious one.

Mr. Nalder: Do you suggest the Agriculture Protection Board should not operate there at all?

Mr. SEWELL: I suggest the Agriculture Protection Board would be doing the State a better service generally if it employed labour to pull the carnation weed by hand and burn it—I understand that the spraying is done mostly for carnation weed. There is not that much of it.

Mr. Nalder: Actually land opposite landholders' properties is generally the responsibility of the landholder.

Mr. SEWELL: That may be so, but I could not debate that at this stage. Usually the growth along the sides of roads that have been sprayed contains small wattles—which abound in that area—high natural grasses, which do not seem to be affected by these herbicides, and carnation weeds. Sometimes the carnation weeds are close together, but in other instances they are chains apart. I do not suggest that these weeds should not be destroyed, but money would be saved if they were pulled up by hand.

I agree with my colleagues when they say that we have drawn the attention of Parliament to the dangers of herbicides and insecticides; and I would suggest a large percentage of people in Western Australia—and particularly in the metropolitan area—do not realise the dangers that we are bringing on ourselves with the constant use of insecticides and herbicides, irrespective of what their names might be.

If we made a little more use of the hoe and weeds were pulled up instead of our going around with trucks and utilities spraying willy-nilly throughout the country I think the State would be better off. I know the House has been interested in this matter; and I know it is a very live question in the Geraldton district as to whether growers will receive compensation or not for the loss of their tomato crop this year. However, that is a subject we do not debate here. I cannot bear out what my colleague, the member for Beeloo, had to say when he referred to the third loss, because I do not know the true figures. I understand they are not available. But I do know that the growers lost a valuable market they had built up at Singapore as a result of the spraying of a herbicide by some person, or persons, unknown.

I commend this motion to the House. I cannot see the point of the Minister's argument when he says we already have regulations. Apparently the regulations have not been carried out to their fullest extent. We know that regulations very

rarely are. They are hard to implement; and the action of the member for Victoria Park in drawing the attention of the Minister to pamphlets and gazettes issued by the department should prove to the Minister that not sufficient has been done to educate the public on the use of these various hormone herbicides and insecticides. I cannot stress too much that we just do not know what we are fooling about with. I use that term quite advisedly, because I think that is all we are, in the main, doing.

People buy a bottle of this stuff and put it in the cupboard. The member for Beeloo pointed out that in his area there is a factory which manufactures these materials and there is also another factory which manufactures superphosphate, and various foods for poultry are stored by people. Contamination could result from these herbicides. Damage has been caused to the tomato crops in the north, as well as at Carnarvon and on the goldfields; and many people who use these herbicides would not have a clue as to what could happen to their gardens.

I think this motion is important, and I cannot agree with the Minister when he says no advantage could be gained if it were carried because the regulations already exist to control these materials. I do not believe the regulations are strong enough. We have dealt strongly with other subjects in this House this year, and I think it is necessary to take strong action against anybody who uses these herbicides in a manner which is not correct; and the department should have power to deal with the situation.

Mr. Nalder: It has the power, and it will be done.

Mr. SEWELL: The Minister has assured me it will be done, and I thank him for that assurance. I am sure the tomato growers at Geraldton and Carnarvon and those people who conduct the vineyards on the Swan will be pleased to hear that.

Question put and negatived.

Motion defeated.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Council's Message

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

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Tourist Act Amendment Bill.
2. Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act Amendment Bill (No. 2.)

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Council's Message

Message from the Council notifying that it had disagreed to the amendment made by the Assembly now considered.

In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Craig (Minister for Police) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment made by the Assembly, to which the Council has disagreed, is as follows:—

Clause 4, page 4, line 8—Insert after the word "section" the words "provided that the officer or the lastmentioned person has received through the post an acknowledgment of delivery of such letter purporting to be signed by the person to whom the same was addressed."

The Council's reason for disagreeing to the Assembly's amendment is as follows:—

The original clause in the Bill and the service process contained therein is considered to be more practicable of application than the suggested amendment.

Mr. CRAIG: At the outset, I would say I agree with the reason advanced by the Council.

Mr. Tonkin: How? It does not state a reason at all.

Mr. CRAIG: If the honourable member will be patient I will try to explain why. This Bill dealt with an amendment to the Justices Act to allow a summons to be served by certified mail or registered post. The time involved by members of the Police Force in delivering some 22,000 traffic summonses a year involves between 7,000 and 8,000 man-hours, and it was felt the position could be met by the proposal contained in the Bill.

The member for Kalgoorlie drew attention to certain features of the proposal. I do not necessarily agree with him; and I will refer to *Hansard* and what I had to say when the honourable member sought to have part of section 56 of the Justices Act inserted in the amending Bill. I said—

There is one thought that comes to my mind. If a person by devious means declines to receive such registered letter, the court cannot proceed towards carrying out a possible conviction. Perhaps the member for Kalgoorlie can enlighten me on this point. Otherwise the amendment is quite acceptable. However, if it is apparent this difficulty could eventuate as a result of the proposed amendment, I will have to seek further information on it.

That is exactly what I did do. As a result of that inquiry I was able to make this morning, I had no alternative but to

agree, as I stated a moment ago, to accept the reason advanced by the Legislative Council.

In principle the amendment suggested that the postage should be by the A.R. system. In other words, the postman has to get a signed acknowledgment of the letter he is delivering; and it must be delivered to the person to whom it is addressed.

There are certain difficulties that make themselves apparent. The person involved could be a working man and the postman would deliver the letter to that person's home address. Of course, he would be absent and the letter could not be delivered to him at that address. So it goes on.

Mr. Tonkin: What goes on?

Mr. CRAIG: The letter does not go on; it goes back to the sender. This particular system was tried in Victoria, but, it proved to be unworkable. In that State they reverted to the method originally proposed in this Bill. The Commissioner of Police is opposed to the amendment as he considers it would be completely unworkable.

If we persist with the amendment, we might as well forget all about the original suggestion in the Bill and carry on with the system of personal delivery. There are other ways by which the acceptance of such a service by post could be overcome, as has been the case in Victoria. They had to change the colour of their envelopes and use other means to disguise the type of letter being delivered by the A.R. system.

It stands to reason that if a person involved in some traffic breach or accident knew he was going to receive a summons, he would do all he possibly could to avoid receiving it. I cannot help but feel that the proposal as originally moved by the member for Kalgoorlie would not be practical. Let us not overlook the fact that the intention in the first place was to save a considerable number of man-hours of the Police Force, to release those members for more important work. I move—

That the amendment made by the Assembly be not insisted on.

Mr. TONKIN: I am absolutely disgusted! The reason given is that this will be more practical. Is not some consideration to be given to the person to whom the summons is directed, in order to protect him? This method which is to be applied is already in existence. If there is some more practical method, why was not the method changed long ago? It must be remembered that the proposed provision is an improvement to save expense and time. But it should not be at the expense of justice to the individual.

All that will be necessary in the future will be for someone to aver that he posted the summons, and that will be accepted.

The unfortunate person who might not have had the slightest idea of the issuing of a summons would be convicted in his absence, and the only safeguard is that he would not be sentenced until he was found. That will be a lot of good to a person who did not have the slightest idea that a summons had been issued against him!

It is intended to extend this principle to other traffic offences. It might be argued that a person who has committed a traffic offence will know that in due course a summons will be coming along, and therefore he should not be surprised. But this method is to be extended to the Plant Diseases Act under which an offence might have been committed, but the person might not be aware that he is to be summonsed. I myself have had letters belonging to other people put in my letter-box, and I have delivered them to the proper address.

Mr. Craig: Would it be a registered letter?

Mr. TONKIN: No.

Mr. Craig: These would only be registered letters.

Mr. TONKIN: If the person is not home, how is a registered letter to be delivered to him!

Mr. Craig: A card would be left to that effect.

Mr. TONKIN: Suppose the card is not picked up and the letter not obtained?

Mr. Craig: You were talking of letters wrongly left in your letterbox.

Mr. TONKIN: A card for a registered letter might be left in the wrong letter-box, and if the person who got the card tore it up, what would happen to the person who should have got the registered letter but did not get it? It has not to be averred that the registered letter was received; all that has to be averred is that the letter was posted.

Mr. Craig: That is so.

Mr. TONKIN: I say it is not good enough. There should be some protection for the individual. If it is considered there might be some obstruction to justice because a person who has committed a traffic offence is going to absent himself and decline to get the registered letter, then the obvious answer is to use personal service the same as is required by law now, and for which this new method is to be substituted. What is wrong with that? How many people, knowing that personal service will involve them in extra expense, and knowing they have no hope of dodging the prosecution, would deliberately refrain from accepting the letter? There might be a few fools—odd ones—but just how many people would deliberately refuse to accept a registered letter, knowing it was a summons, in order to avoid legal action?

They would know they could not avoid it. But if there were some such people, the answer is personal service of the summons, and the additional expense to be loaded on the person concerned. The only disadvantage to the department would be that the service would take a little more time, and the department would be compensated for that financially.

Surely we should not give in this easily to the Legislative Council in this matter! This is the popular House; the people's House. We have some responsibility to safeguard the rights of the individual. Too much bureaucracy is growing up; too much desire to make things easy for departments at the expense of the individual; and here is an opportunity to do no more than is right and just; namely, to give the individual to whom the summons is to be posted a proper opportunity to receive it, and not have him convicted in the belief that he has received it when he has not. That is all this amounts to.

The only reason given to us by the Legislative Council for the method it wants is that it is more practical—not more just; not more fair; not more reasonable, but, from the department's point of view, more practical. Should that be the criterion? I hope not. I can suggest a lot of things which are more practical in the process of law. Why take the trouble to send a summons out at all? It would be more practical, once an offence has been committed, to convict the person. But would we stand for that? I hope not. This proposition before us is no more reasonable than that.

Just imagine that all that has to be done is to get up and aver that the letter was posted, and that is enough. The man can then be convicted. He might have gone for a job in the country. I posted an urgent letter this year telling a man to report to the Government Stores where he could be immediately interviewed for a job. I waited a month, expecting to hear from the fellow that he had got the job, but when I finally made inquiries he had not received the letter. I then wrote a letter of complaint to the Postmaster-General's Department, and I received a reply explaining that the department was very sorry but that a new postman had confused the streets and delivered the letter to a wrong address. What happened to it, I do not know. That man could have lost a job—I was able subsequently to pick the matter up from where it had been left off—through the failure of the Postmaster-General's Department to deliver a letter.

Mr. Guthrie: Was that ordinary post or registered post?

Mr. TONKIN: Ordinary post. But the Minister has explained that in the case of a registered letter, it would not be left in the box but a card would be put there.

If a card had been dropped by this postman who did not know his streets, in the same way as he dropped my letter, the person to whom it was addressed would not have received the card, so he would not know there was a registered letter for him. But the case would go on, and there would be an averment that the letter was posted.

Mr. Craig: If he did not collect the registered letter as instructed by the card, he would be sent another card.

Mr. TONKIN: Where were we told that?

Mr. Court: That is the procedure.

Mr. TONKIN: I understand the provision in the Bill to be that it is sufficient to send a registered letter, and all that has to be averred subsequently is that it was posted, and the justice hearing the complaint to which the summons relates may accept that as proof of service.

In the interests of the person concerned, and in the interests of justice and fairness, we should do something, within reason, to ensure that a person has actually received the summons which has been issued against him. This is, for the department, a substantial improvement over the existing method, and I do not think it should mind the little inconvenience which may be involved because occasionally a person will decline to accept the letter, knowing it is a summons and wanting to hold up the process by declining to pick it up. I understand that is the argument against the insertion of the provision in the Bill.

Mr. Craig: Not necessarily.

Mr. TONKIN: I hope the Minister will explain "not necessarily."

Mr. Craig: He might not be able to be contacted.

Mr. MOIR: I must protest against the attitude of the Minister. I feel this will mean that injustice will be done to people from time to time. I have personal experience of this sort of thing at present, because I am awaiting a letter from Esperance. The secretary of the shire council said he had been instructed to send me a copy of a letter.

Mr. Craig: Was he to send it by registered post?

Mr. MOIR: I take it it would be sent by ordinary post.

Mr. Craig: This is by registered post.

Mr. MOIR: Registered post can be very much the same.

Mr. Craig: What is the purpose of registering a letter?

Mr. MOIR: What objection has the Minister got, where a registered letter is not acknowledged, to sending an officer of the department along to serve the summons personally?

Mr. Craig: The purpose of the Bill is to save man-hours.

Mr. MOIR: Would it make that much extra work when a letter is not acknowledged? On how many occasions would that occur? The Minister, of course, is his usual self, so that whatever the departmental people want, that is law to him. It does not matter what the citizens want, or how much they will be inconvenienced! The Minister is not concerned about that aspect at all. I am sent here to represent the people, and when I see something that I think will create an injustice to the people I will speak up.

Mr. Craig: Give us some of your reasons.

Mr. MOIR: If the Minister will have the kindness and courtesy to keep quiet while I am speaking, I will continue. I listened to him when he was speaking. At the present time I am expecting a letter from Esperance. I was informed at the weekend by the shire clerk that at the direction of his members he had forwarded to me a copy of a letter which the council had written to the Minister for Local Government. I have not received this letter. Inquiries are being made, but I do not know where the letter is. I know that three other letters were posted to me in the last three months, but I never received them, and there has been no trace of them. I had a letter addressed to me in Kalgoorlie about three years ago, and it bore the initials of the postal delivery officers who had taken it to seven different addresses; and I venture to say I would be as widely known in Kalgoorlie as any other prominent person there. Some mistakes can be made by postal officers. I have great regard for them, but mistakes do occur.

I also point out to the Minister that registered letters are sometimes stolen. In fact, close relatives of mine who work in the P.M.G. Department have advised me not to send a letter by registered post, but to send it by ordinary mail, because a registered letter attracts more attention and there is more chance of its going astray or its contents being stolen. In the few cases when registered letters are not delivered all that would be required would be for a notice to be served personally. I can think of nothing worse than for a person to be charged with some offence; to be unaware that a summons has been served on him, and eventually to appear in court without any defence. Once the penalty was imposed upon him it would be hard to rectify.

Mr. DURACK: As I played some small part in regard to this amendment yesterday evening, I should perhaps say something on the message from another place. Without having any great time to consider the Bill, I was immediately concerned about safeguards for a person who did not receive a summons,

and I began to consider what his position would be. The Minister, when speaking on the second reading said that adequate safeguards were provided in section 160A of the Justices Act. That section provides that a decision is given to justices pursuant to the jurisdiction that is conferred on them by the principal Act, and the Bill will confer jurisdiction on them to convict a person who is not before them on the certificate that the summons is posted.

So a decision is given to justices pursuant to the jurisdiction that is conferred by this Act. The section goes on and another provision follows, but the jurisdiction conferred on the court is that it may refuse the application to set a decision aside or it may set aside the decision on such terms as it thinks fit; or, in any case, may make an order for costs as it thinks fit.

To me it does not appear that this section gives any safeguard where a service has been effected by post. The object of the section is to cover a person who knows he should be present in a court on a certain day, but for some reason or other he and his solicitor do not appear, and he is convicted. Therefore, in that case, 21 days seems to be a reasonable time to permit him to do something, but that does not apply to a person who would be served by a summons by post under the provisions of the amending Bill and who does not receive the letter for one reason or another.

It is quite simple to think of a case that is applicable. Under the Bill the summons may be posted 14 days prior to the return of it. It may be that the person to receive it on that day went off on six weeks' holiday and made no arrangements for the forwarding of his mail or for it to be held by a person living on the premises, or something of that nature. If anyone is present at his address, it would be delivered, but if no-one is there it cannot be signed for and it is just held; and a person returning after six weeks' holiday could eventually find that a summons had been forwarded to him to appear in court four weeks prior to his opening the letter. He then visits a solicitor or the court posthaste where the safeguard is read out to him, and he discovers he is seven days too late to do anything about it.

That is a situation which could arise. That is the reason that, after considering the clause yesterday evening, I felt the amendment by the member for Kalgoorlie to provide for an A.R. registered service would be a proper safeguard in the circumstances I have outlined. I have found the A.R. registered postal service quite satisfactory. I can appreciate that there might be some people who would not accept it, particularly if it was apparent that

the letter had been sent by the police, although under the Bill the summons will be posted by an officer of the Court of Petty Sessions. I do not see why the face of the A.R. card should disclose that it is a summons, or who the person is that is sending it.

Mr. Guthrie: Commonwealth regulations require that the name of the person shall be on the card.

Mr. DURACK: Every A.R. registered letter sent out of my office has the name of a member of the firm on it, but not the name of the firm. I am prepared to accept the Minister's view that the A.R. registered post may be impracticable. The police may know more about the position than I do and I do not want to press this point. However, I will press that some proper safeguard should be incorporated in the principal Act to cover the particular situation I have indicated. If the Minister will give me an assurance that this will be done next session, I will be prepared to support his motion.

Mr. GUTHRIE: A position such as has been outlined has been covered by the Interpretation Act for some years, and there are all sorts of provisions to protect the person's rights. Provisions of this nature are also found in the Land Act and have been there since 1874. In that Act all that is required to be done by a mortgagee who sells a person's property is that he shall send a notice by registered post to the address on the title, even though he knows full well that that is not the true address of the person. He then proceeds to exercise his rights. From time immemorial there have been provisions in the Local Courts Act which provide that a summons can be left at the address of any person with someone who is over the age of 16 years, irrespective of whether he is a relative or not, and that provision has been accepted.

Together with other members of the legal profession, I have had personal experience with A.R. card systems and the completely unsatisfactory results that developed in being forced to use it immediately after the war to serve notices. We discovered that, as the card had to have on it the name of the sender and his address—because the card has to be returned to the sender—usually, when it was received at a man's address, his wife would ask who the sender was, and when she got a reply, would say that her husband was not home. The husband would not take any action because he would realise that it was probably a letter to evict him from his home. The same would apply if the A.R. card system were used to serve traffic summonses.

I agree with the Commissioner of Police that the measure may as well be dropped if the A.R. card system is followed. As to whether the ordinary

registered post is sufficient, I have said that the serving of a summons by this method is already provided in various Acts. In fact, the Interpretation Act does not even provide that registered post is necessary. As for the suggestion that officials of the P.M.G. Department would rob what was in the registered letter, they are adept in regard to what they pilfer, and they are not likely to open a registered letter which has been sent out by the traffic office or the clerk of petty sessions, because it would prove to be rather unprofitable.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Boulder-Eyre have cited many examples of ordinary letters going astray, and I entirely agree that they do. A postman merely drops an ordinary letter in the letterbox, and he can quite easily make a mistake and put it in the wrong letterbox. But with a registered letter the postman has to ask the person who answers the door if Mr. Jones lives there, and if the reply is in the affirmative he obtains a receipt for the registered letter. If he goes to the wrong house, the person opening the door would soon inform him that he has made a mistake. He is then directed to the right house.

In the case of a registered letter the fact that it was not received would be notified to the court. That is the procedure adopted 14 days before the court hearing. The advice that it had not been delivered would reach the court long before the hearing of the case. Are we to imagine the police or the court would allow proceedings to go on when the post office has notified that the registered letter has not been delivered? When a registered letter is sent, it can be proved conclusively where it went to.

In a case where it can be proved that the registered letter went to the wrong address no court would seriously refuse an application for a rehearing, so long as the person concerned had reasonable grounds.

Mr. Tonkin: Would that not involve expense?

Mr. GUTHRIE: It would, but I would expect the Crown to bear the expense in those circumstances. In my 37 years of legal practice I cannot recall any case where a registered letter was not delivered in accordance with the procedure I have outlined, or alternatively that notification failed to come back to indicate the letter had not reached its destination.

My experience of A.R. service is that it is useless. We were compelled to get around it by adopting a subterfuge by using the name and private address of one of our staff members on the envelope to ensure that the addressee received the notice. No clerk of courts would be prepared to adopt such a subterfuge.

The proposal in the Bill is well worth a trial. It has worked satisfactorily under many Acts. Under the Local Courts Act a summons could be left with the person at the address who appeared to be over 16 years of age, and it could be served on a visitor to the house.

I do not think the great hardship imagined by some members will be occasioned. In the case of traffic summonses the persons concerned know what is going on, and in 99 cases out of 100 they have supplied their addresses to the police.

Mr. BRADY: It is wrong to assume that because people know that a traffic offence has been committed a summons will follow. On occasions traffic offenders are not served with summonses; instead they are required to attend a lecture at the National Safety Council.

When I was the Minister for Police there was an instance when the department had to compensate a person for wrongfully serving a summons on him and sentencing him to a term of imprisonment. The circumstances of the case were these: The person had failed to pay maintenance to his wife, as a consequence of which he was imprisoned. Some papers were served on him while he was in gaol and he was made to serve a further term, but it transpired that he was not the person concerned. Subsequently, the department had to compensate him.

We should insure that the correct person is served with the summons, and so give him the right to defend the case. Too often it is accepted that because the police lay a charge the person is guilty of the offence. I do not subscribe to the view that a person should be found guilty of an offence, when a summons has not been served on him.

Mr. TONKIN: I understand the main objection of the Police Department to the amendment is that there will be very little advantage to it. It can only come to that conclusion on the assumption that practically everybody avoids the acceptance of summonses. We should take a realistic view, because a very small percentage of people would do as the member for Subiaco has suggested; that is, decline to accept service as they knew they were involved.

If there should be cases under this amendment where service is avoided because of the refusal to pick up a registered letter, then personal service can be adopted. Time does not mean anything to the department. Sometimes it takes months before summonses are issued, so what does it matter if another three weeks' delay is occasioned? The department would be able to add the cost of the personal service and recover the amount involved should a conviction be recorded. What we should ensure is that no-one is convicted without knowledge that his case is to be dealt with in court.

If members were to give sufficient thought to this amendment they would agree to it. Even if it gave protection to only a small section of the community it would be worth while. In the long run it would not cost the department anything.

I appreciate the difficulties of members on the Government's side. Private members on that side might hold views contrary to the views of the Government. I make no criticism of them for the way in which they vote, but I do feel that the arguments used by the member for Perth could be adopted *in toto*. They would justify members voting against the Minister.

The member for Perth speaks from practical experience of issuing summonses. He has dealt with many cases where from time to time injustice has crept in. The amendment is a step in the direction of preventing an injustice being done to the individual. If the postman delivers a registered letter to an address and no-one is home he places a card under the door to indicate to the addressee that a registered letter awaits him. If the addressee does not return home for some weeks the card still remains under the door. In my case when I am away and a card is left under my door, the post office phones me to tell me there is a registered letter for me. What would happen in the case of a person who is not on the telephone?

It is all very well for the member for Subiaco to say that the postal authorities will within a fortnight notify the sender of the registered letter of its non-delivery, but suppose it does not. Then the person against whom the summons has been issued would have no opportunity of entering a defence, and in his absence the court would convict him. It is scant satisfaction to him to be told that he will not be sentenced until he is apprehended.

There is always the question of expenses. I know of many cases where people had a very good defence, but they refused to enter a defence because they did not want to take time off work. We are here to protect the people, and not to make it easier for Government departments. It would be a different matter if the expenses were to be met by the department. Sometimes it takes more than six months to serve a summons, so what matter if it takes another month in having to resort to personal service? This will happen in only a few cases.

I absolutely refuse to believe that the people *en masse* will decline acceptance of registered letters. There might be the odd one or two who attempt to stave off the evil day by refusing to pick up summonses, but sooner or later they are caught up with and it costs them more money.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TONKIN: I conclude my remarks by appealing to the Government to have some consideration for the individual because the department will lose nothing thereby. The time involved will not matter and any extra financial consideration can be recovered if it is necessary to make personal service. I suggest we have a responsibility to safeguard the rights of the individual, and this is our opportunity to do so.

Mr. CRAIG: I will be brief. I might inform the member for Perth that consideration will be given to the matter if it is found necessary to make amendments to overcome the objections he raised. His points of objection were similar to those raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and other speakers; so I do give that assurance.

I would like this to be given a trial for the next 12 months. As I stated earlier there are no fewer than 22,000 traffic summonses served personally by members of the Police Force and I feel sure that this proposed method is one that will be acceptable. No-one likes receiving summonses and I feel sure that anyone receiving one would much prefer to receive it by registered post than from a uniformed policeman at the front door who would be in full view of the neighbours. I feel for that reason alone it will be an acceptable method. The position will be closely watched; and if amendments to the Act are necessary, they will be made.

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

Ayes—22

Mr. Bovell	Mr. Hart
Mr. Brand	Dr. Henn
Mr. Burt	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Court	Mr. Lewis
Mr. Craig	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Dunn	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Durack	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Elliott	Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Gayler	Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Williams
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Noes—12

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Davies	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Toms
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. May

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Curran
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Evans
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Hall
Mr. Rushton	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Runciman	Mr. Jamieson

Majority for—10.

Question thus passed; the Assembly's amendment not insisted on.

Report

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

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 4)

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

Council's Amendment: In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Brand (Premier) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment made by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 2, page 2, line 16—Delete the word "the" and substitute the word "a".

Mr. W. Hegney: That must have taken some juggling!

Mr. BRAND: I think almost five hours were spent on this Bill in another place and the result of that long deliberation is of such a minor nature—substituting "the" for "a"—that I will not delay the Committee by any debate. There seems so little difference, I accept the amendment, and I therefore move—

That the amendment made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr. Hawke: Why?

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

Report

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

CAVES HOUSE DISPOSAL BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

QUESTIONS (13): ON NOTICE

"C"-CLASS RESERVE No. 18723

Granting of Lease and Conflict with Act

1. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) As section 117 of the Land Act deals with the Governor's power to lease town, village, or suburban lands, how does he reconcile the granting of a lease of a "C"-class reserve under section 117 of the Land Act?
- (2) On what date was the designation of part of Reserve No. 18723, situate at Rest Point, changed from "C"-class reserve to town, village, or suburban land?
- (3) What was the date of the issuance of a lease to Messrs. Swarbrick & Sons of part of Reserve No. 18723?

- (4) On what date was the Manjimup Shire Council notified of the change in designation of part of Reserve No. 18723?
- (5) Was the change in designation made in order to conform to section 117 of the Land Act?
- (6) Had the change in designation not been effected, would not the granting of the lease been *ultra vires* part III of the Land Act which deals with reserves as of "A," "B," and "C"?
- (7) What price did F. R. and D. M. Hay pay to Messrs. Swarbrick & Sons at the taking over of this property?
- (8) What was the value of improvements done at that date?
- (9) Is he aware that the property in question is advertised for sale on page 55 of *The West Australian* newspaper dated the 18th November, 1965?
- (10) What further improvements have been made to the property during the tenancy of F. R. and D. M. Hay?
- (11) On what date was this property sold to F. R. and D. M. Hay?
- (12) Is it a usual or regular practice for land of this description to be offered for sale before a transfer has indeed been registered?
- (13) Will he take steps to deal with what appears to be an emergency?
- (14) On what date was the change of designation gazetted?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) Walpole Lot 231 was excised from Reserve No. 18723 by notice in the *Gazette* of the 10th January, 1964. Lots 233 and 234 formed portion of Nelson Location 11451, which was vacant Crown land.
- (2) Walpole Lots 231, 233, and 234 were included within the boundaries of Walpole townsite and declared as town and suburban lands by a notice in the *Gazette* of the 10th January, 1964.
- (3) Leases were approved on the 3rd April, 1964.
- (4) By letter dated the 17th March, 1964, the Shire of Manjimup was advised of the inclusion of the three lots in Walpole Townsite.
- (5) Lot 231 was excised from Reserve No. 18723 to enable the land to be leased under section 117 of the Land Act.
- (6) Yes.
- (7) The documents transferring the leases from Swarbrick to F. R. and D. M. Hay have not yet been lodged. The sale includes freehold Nelson Location 11680.

- (8) The total value of improvements on the freehold and leases was assessed by the district land inspector at £32,385.
- (9) This advertisement was brought to my notice this morning.
- (10) Unknown.
- (11) Although the transfer documents have not been lodged at the Lands Department the solicitors advised that the date of settlement was the 30th June, 1965.
- (12) No.
- (13) Matters will be considered on their merits and at the appropriate time.
- (14) The 10th January, 1964.

RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT HOUSES

Costs of Improvements

- 2. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Railways:
 - (1) What amounts have been spent by the Railways Commission in improving departmental houses occupied by employees over each of the last three years?
 - (2) What are the main improvements provided by such money?

Installation of Hot Water Systems

- (3) Has any money been spent on the installation of domestic hot water systems in departmental properties?
- (4) If not, will an allocation be made to enable departmental properties to be so equipped as is happening with properties owned by other Government departments?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) to (4) This information is not readily available, but it is being extracted and the honourable member will be advised as soon as possible.

ROOSTERS: BANNING

Perth City Council By-law

- 3. Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Health:
 - (1) Is he aware that the Perth City Council at its meeting on Monday last referred back to its Health Committee a proposed amendment to the council's by-laws seeking a ban on roosters (see *The West Australian* newspaper of the 23rd November, 1965)?
 - (2) Is it a fact that the reason for such reference to the Health Committee stems from a strong doubt as to the legality of such proposed banning?

- (3) Is this matter one exclusively for the council to resolve?
- (4) Should the council eventually pass a by-law providing for banning, what approximate interval of time would normally elapse before the by-law became effective?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) No.
- (4) One to two months.

NATIVE RESERVE AT KALGOORLIE

Appointment of Caretaker and Supply of Electricity

- 4. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Native Welfare:
 - (1) Does his department intend—
 - (a) appointing a resident caretaker at the Kalgoorlie native reserve; and
 - (b) connecting electricity to this reserve?
 - (2) If so, when? If not, why not?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) and (2)—
 - (a) There is already a native caretaker on this reserve.
 - (b) Overhead electric lights are already installed. It is not proposed to extend this facility to the reserve dwellings.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY: PERTH-NORTHAM

Loan: Reduction in Savings

- 5. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

Will the additional cost of £2,000,000 on the standard gauge railway between Perth and Northam mean the £600,000 per year anticipated saving will now be reduced, or will B.H.P. and the primary producers be charged increased freights to meet the additional interest costs?

Mr. COURT replied:

There is no current reason to believe this additional construction cost will impair the actual saving expected on the Avon Valley section of the dual gauge route operations.

Escalation provisions of B.H.P. freight rates are in the 1960 agreement.

Other freight rates are generally related to the system as a whole, and not one particular section.

RAILWAY CROSSING AT MARKET STREET, GUILDFORD

Flashing Lights: Installation

6. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

When is it proposed to place flashing lights on Market Street crossing, Guildford?

Mr. COURT replied:

As previously explained to the honourable member the Level Crossing Protection Committee is investigating this crossing.

WEST MIDLAND RAILWAY STATION

Temporary Shelter during Demolition of Buildings

7. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Is he aware that all buildings at West Midland station on the up-side are in course of demolition?
- (2) Will he take action to ensure some temporary shelter is made available pending building of the new station?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It is intended to provide a temporary shelter.

CROSSWALKS

Improved Lighting: Tests

8. Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Police:

Have any conclusions yet been reached on tests being made to improve lighting standards at pedestrian crosswalks?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

The actual trials of sodium coloured illumination of six pedestrian crossings in Stirling Highway should commence within about two weeks.

STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

Perishable Freight: Through Loading to Eastern States

9. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Railways:

When is it expected that the Western Australian Government Railways will accept perishable freight traffic as through loading to Melbourne and Sydney per standard gauge?

Mr. COURT replied:

Perishable traffic is accepted now and satisfactorily conveyed by rail in each direction, examples being beans and tomatoes to the Eastern

States and westbound traffic including margarine, chocolates, pineapples, etc.

In addition, privately-owned refrigerated containers are conveyed in each direction.

Through standard gauge perishable traffic will be accepted in 1968.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES IN GERALDTON DISTRICT

Provision

10. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Electricity:

When can it be expected that electric power will be supplied to the Moonyoonooka, Waggrakine, Glenfield, and Narngulu areas?

Mr. NALDER replied:

Moonyoonooka:

It is hoped to make a supply available in the latter half of 1967.

Narngulu:

Cannot be considered until after the line to the Allanonooka pumps has been constructed, probably in 1967.

Waggrakine and Glenfield:

A survey of this area is about complete and a contributory extension scheme will be offered to residents shortly.

ABATTOIRS IN GERALDTON DISTRICT

Establishment

11. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Has any progress been made in the proposal to establish abattoirs in the Geraldton district?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The Government is endeavouring to reach agreement with a private firm that has shown interest in the establishment of an abattoir at Geraldton.

TRAINEE TEACHERS

Allowances, Conditions, and Remuneration

12. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Education:

Respecting trainee teachers attending University on a full-time basis and trainee teachers attending Teachers' Training College, respectively—

- (1) What payments or allowances are made?

- (2) Are those amounts sufficient to meet the full cost of the items for which they are designed?
- (3) If not, what is the estimated deficiency in each case?
- (4) What fees or charges must be met by the trainees?
- (5) Do the replies to the foregoing suggest that the University trainee is penalised financially for undertaking higher education?
- (6) If so, to what extent?
- (7) What is the likely financial return in each of the next two years?
- (8) How long thereafter would it take for the financial circumstance of the teacher with the University degree to equate in aggregate from the inception of training with the financial circumstance of the teacher without?
- (9) Having regard for the financial impact on the student or his parents, is the arrangement equitable in that it places a heavier burden on those who could be regarded as having better potential?

Mr. LEWIS replied:

- (1) (a) Attending Teacher's College:

£

1st Year—

Living Allowance	....	350
Book Allowance	....	20
Average Travelling Allowance	....	25
Total	....	£395

2nd Year—

Living Allowance	....	350
Book Allowance	....	10
Average Travelling Allowance	....	25
Total	....	£385

- (b) Attending University:

1st Year—

Living Allowance	....	350
Book Allowance	....	20
Average Travelling Allowance	....	25
University Fees	....	120
Total	....	£515

2nd Year—

Living Allowance	....	350
Book Allowance	....	20
Average Travelling Allowance	....	25
University Fees	....	115
Total	....	£510

3rd Year—

Living Allowance	....	350
Book Allowance	....	20
Average Travelling Allowance	....	25
University Fees	....	100
Total	....	£495

4th Year—

Living Allowance (if over 21 years of age)	....	450
Book Allowance	....	20
Average Travelling Allowance	....	25
University Fees	....	80
Total	....	£575

- (2) and (3) It is impossible to answer these questions so far as living allowances are concerned owing to the wide variation in types of accommodation availed of by individuals but, striking an average, the allowances are considered adequate.

Book allowance is intended to cover approximately two-thirds of the cost of new books and this it does under the revised scales (from 1st January, 1965).

Travelling allowance from residence is paid by the department in excess of 2s. per day but all costs to practice schools are met. These are considered reasonable.

- (4) (a) Attending Teachers' College: Student Council Fees—£4 10s. per annum.

- (b) Attending University and Teachers' College:

University Guild and Faculty Society Fees—
 1st Year—£11 3s.
 2nd Year—£10 2s.
 3rd Year—£10 2s.
 4th Year—£5 12s. 6d.
 College Student Council Fees—

1st to 3rd Year—£2 5s. per annum.

4th Year—£3 per annum.

- (5) No.

- (6) See answer to (5).

- (7) If the honourable member means "what maximum salary can be participated in the two years of service after training" the answer is:—

(a) Two-year trained teachers—

	Male	Female
	£	£
1st Year	1,222	1,014
2nd Year	1,302	1,094

(b) Four-year trained teachers—

	Male	Female
	£	£
1st Year	1,542	1,340
2nd Year	1,622	1,414

- (8) The total amount received in allowances while in training plus salary after training by male secondary teachers doing a four-year course would exceed the amount received by a two-year trained male primary teacher after the secondary teacher has taught for slightly less than six years. (Time has not permitted a calculation to be made for female teachers.)
- (9) Yes; it is considered equitable because the teacher training for four years forges ahead of the two-year trained teacher after the sixth year and has greater qualifications for more rapid promotion.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

Group Contributory Schemes: Reduction of Charges on Increased Membership

13. Mr. RUSHTON asked the Minister for Electricity:

Are State Electricity Commission contributory schemes adjusted in favour of scheme members on new consumers being connected?

Mr. NALDER replied:

Yes.

QUESTIONS (3): WITHOUT

NOTICE

SUPERPHOSPHATE DELIVERIES

Zones

1. Mr. GAYFER: On behalf of the member for Mt. Marshall, I would like to ask the Minister for Agriculture the following questions. I understand he has been given some prior notice.
- (1) What, in broad outline, are the boundaries of the various zones for superphosphate deliveries?
- (2) By whom were those zones drawn up, and is there any departmental support or authority for their operation?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The honourable member gave me some notice of these questions and the answers are as follows:—

- (1) Geraldton—All points north of Coorow and Buntine.

Picton—All points south of a line joining Coolup, Dardadine, East Arthur, and Lime Lake, and west of the line joining Lime Lake and Denmark.

In case members do not know the locality of Lime Lake, it is situated six miles south of Wagin.

To continue—

Albany—All points east of a line joining Lime Lake and Denmark and south of a line from Lime Lake to the Lakes District.

Esperance—A radius of 125 miles from the works plus Ravens-thorpe and the Lake District.

Metropolitan—All other areas.

- (2) There does not appear any record of any departmental committee being appointed with reference to zoning areas. I have been informed that these zones were drawn up by the companies manufacturing superphosphate.

TERTIARY EDUCATION

Appointment of Committee of Inquiry

2. Mr. DAVIES asked the Premier:

Has there been any development since my question earlier this session with regard to the appointment of a committee to inquire into tertiary education? Could the Premier tell me if any decision has been reached?

Mr. BRAND replied:

I cannot report any further progress except to say it is the intention to appoint the committee as soon as we can.

WATER SUPPLIES AT POINT SAMSON

Inspection of Files

3. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:

Some days ago I asked the Minister a question concerning the Point Samson water supply. I asked him if he would table the file, which he refused to do. I then asked him if I could view the file in his office and he said he would investigate the matter. Has he had time to investigate the matter; and, if so, what has he decided?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

In reply to the honourable member: Yes. I have looked at the file again and if the honourable member cares to get in touch with me, or my secretary if I happen to be absent, he can make arrangements to view the files at my office.

SUPERPHOSPHATE: PRODUCTION AND USE

*Inquiry by Select Committee:
Motion—Defeated*

Debate resumed, from the 13th October, on the following motion by Mr. Kelly:—

That a Select Committee be appointed thoroughly to examine all aspects of superphosphate production, distribution, and use, the feasibility of extension of superphosphate manufacture to selected inland areas, and the future prospect for the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country centres.

MR. HART (Roe) [7.55 p.m.]: Returning to this motion which was moved by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn earlier in the session, I would like to add something to the debate. To some extent the Minister for Agriculture has replied to the remarks made, and the subject has been covered fairly well. However, I would like to add something more to the debate on several subjects, mostly in the vein that I do know that a lot of farmers are seeking more information on the question of superphosphate and the various methods of distribution throughout Western Australia.

The member for Merredin-Yilgarn moved that—

A Select Committee be appointed thoroughly to examine all aspects of superphosphate production, distribution and use, the feasibility of extension of superphosphate manufacture to selected inland areas, and the future prospect for the establishment of bulk depots in suitable country centres.

I think the subject of superphosphate, in connection with primary industry in Western Australia, is inclined to get overlooked and not treated in the proper light of the great importance which it is to farmers and primary producers. We have reached the stage where something like 1,000,000 tons of superphosphate is produced each year, mainly by one combination of manufacturers, with about 160,000 tons produced by an independent company in Cresco.

That production involves primary industry in the expenditure of about £10,000,000 a year. It is their first cost in the production of their grain or their

pasture for their stock. It is a very big question to them; and, as the member for Merredin-Yilgarn has already intimated, there is a very earnest desire among a lot of the people—and more particularly those in the central eastern wheatbelt—for more information about all aspects appertaining to this subject.

In putting forward his request for a Select Committee, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn has touched on a number of points which I think I need not go back to in detail. He has mentioned the concern about the price of superphosphate used in Western Australia, the cost of superphosphate mixtures, and the need to know more about future sources of supply of phosphate rock, sulphur, and other requirements.

Amongst the growers, and this may be somewhat ill-founded, there is a strong doubt whether the growers are getting their supplies at competitive rates. I think that over the years farmers in Victoria have consistently been supplied with super at a price considerably below that in our State and below costs in other States of Australia. That can be borne out by looking at the records of prices over the years and prices this current year.

A very important point which has been put forward by growers, and this was also mentioned by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, is that more thought should be put into the search for some of the elements required, and this search should be carried out in Western Australia. Another point which has been raised—and this has been a lively question—is that farmers, and particularly those back from the seaboard, are concerned as to whether inland superphosphate depots are justified, or whether they are not justified, and at what cost they could be established.

There is also another subject which was brought forward by the central eastern wheatbelt farmers, and that is the question of whether an inland works could be justified. This point arises mainly because those farmers, over many years—in fact over the whole time there has been agriculture in Western Australia—have paid the highest freights for their superphosphate, and they have had no assistance by way of a reduction in costs as other districts have had with the establishment of outports. They have been of great benefit to the districts in which they are built and the group of farmers to whom I have referred are wondering whether it is possible to establish an inland works which could serve their area.

One of the main thoughts behind this proposal is that if an inland works were established these farmers would receive the benefit of bulkhandling the produce to their farms. I support that thought because from my own experience I would say that this is the only way to handle super-

phosphate—in bulk from the point of manufacture direct to the farmer. There is no room for anything else, and that really is the only way to handle superphosphate.

They are some of the main thoughts that have been put forward; and, as a farmer who represents a large number of farmers in the central eastern wheatbelt, I think the thoughts are well founded and are worthy of a great deal of consideration.

The next point I wish to discuss is whether a Select Committee is the best method of inquiring into this question. As I think is well known, the question of seeking further information in regard to superphosphate is a very important one, and this search has been going on for some considerable time. The honourable member opposite moved a similar motion for the appointment of a Select Committee last year. It was not exactly the same as the one moved this year, because it dealt more with the costs of minor elements, mixtures, and so on, which is still a burning and current question this year, but on this occasion there has also been added a point regarding the feasibility of extending superphosphate manufacture to inland works.

Arising from the pressure, or the requests that were put forward not only in this House but also by farmers generally, and the Farmers' Union, the Government last year appointed a Cabinet subcommittee to go fully into the question. The subcommittee in turn appointed an inter-departmental committee and asked its members to prepare a report covering most of the points the honourable member has raised in his motion. On that inter-departmental committee, whose membership was made public, there were some authoritative people and some who held high positions in their respective departments. The committee consisted of—

An economist from the Department of Industrial Development.

The Economic Research Officer, Department of Industrial Development.

The Commercial Superintendent of the W.A.G.R.

The Economic Research Officer, Department of Transport.

The Officer-in-charge of Rural Economics and Marketing, Department of Agriculture.

The Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of Transport.

As I said, that committee has put forward a report which, to some extent, covers many of the points that have been raised. It has not covered them fully, but I think the committee has submitted a good deal of information which will provide a firm foundation for further thought.

The Cabinet subcommittee, in turn, has been having discussions with manufacturers, the Farmers' Union, and all concerned with superphosphate to try to get a better understanding of the whole question. That brings me to the point of whether the request for a Select Committee at this stage should be agreed to or not, or whether we should continue with what we have currently in hand. I am of the opinion at this stage, in the light of what has already been put forward—although I do not agree with it wholly—that we should continue with the proposals that we now have in hand. Many of the proposals that have been submitted are worthy of support, and in view of what has been done I must come to the conclusion that at this stage it would be better to vote against the honourable member's request for a Select Committee.

I would now like to enlarge on three matters that are exercising farmers' minds at the moment and are causing them a great deal of concern. I touched on one at the beginning of my speech. It is a hardy annual but one which has not yet been satisfactorily answered, although various points of view have been expressed in regard to it. For many years in Victoria, superphosphate from the co-operative company has been cheaper than from any other company. This is a well-known fact to those who have studied this question, and I have given it a good deal of study. I was in Victoria when the co-operative company was started and it is a fact that that company is able to supply superphosphate cheaper than anyone else in Australia.

From my limited knowledge of the question, and the tie-up of the superphosphate companies throughout Australia, I think members will find that the co-operative company in Victoria is the only truly competitive company. That statement might be challenged, and perhaps I could be proved wrong, but that is my personal opinion.

There was an article written in the Press last year which endeavoured to show that Western Australian superphosphate was the cheapest superphosphate in Australia. The article was quoted in this House and it has some very interesting information. We have to bear in mind that in this article the prices current at that time were quoted. For ordinary bulk superphosphate in Western Australia the price shown is £7 6s. and in Victoria the price is £5 19s. 6d. Yet the person who wrote the article states that Western Australian superphosphate is the cheapest in Australia.

After perusing the article very carefully I felt there must be some other reason for the statement and so I asked the Transport Board to give me the current railway freight rates on a 150-mile basis in Wes-

tern Australia and Victoria. I find that in Victoria the cost on a per-ton basis for 150 miles is approximately £1 11s. and in Western Australia, on the same basis, the price is £2 7s. 6. So when one adds up the figures one realises that in Western Australia superphosphate costs £9 13s. 6d. a ton on the farm, bulk—that is 150 miles from the point of manufacture—and in Victoria, on the same basis, the cost is £7 10s. 6d.

I daresay there are several other angles that could be put forward in this argument, but from the farmers' point of view the position is not so good. From there I would turn to the question of country depots and I would revert once more to the report of the interdepartmental committee. This report contains a wealth of information both on country depots and on the possibility of establishing inland work. The report shows that it could be very expensive to establish country depots, and personally I am not surprised at that. I fail to see how it would not be costly to establish these depots, because there are construction costs, weighbridge costs, the overall amortisation, and the costs of manpower required over a certain period to handle the tonnage of superphosphate required. In those circumstances I do not see how the depots could be established at a cost which would work out attractive to the farmer.

I know many farmers are concerned about the position and are anxious to try the proposal, but my own thoughts are that it is a doubtful proposition. The interdepartmental committee's report on the question sets out figures for various tonnages and I am sure those interested in the question would have perused the report and made themselves familiar with its information and recommendations. Perhaps the only real answer will be to establish them at spots where groups of farmers say they want them; but before they commit themselves they should ask themselves just how badly they need a depot and what they can afford to pay for it if they do get it.

In my opinion the only place to store super is at the point of manufacture. That is where it should be stockpiled by the manufacturers themselves; and when I look around Western Australia, at Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, Albany, Esperance, and the various transport systems—mainly road transport—that are operating, I am far from convinced that our transport system cannot handle the superphosphate to the farmers, even with increased tonnages, when they want it.

Another question raised by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn was that of inland works. Here again the interdepartmental committee has put forward some very sound information. Schedules based on tonnages, and so on, are soundly based.

However, I think there are two sides to this argument; and if we look around Western Australia—and touching on the question of transport—we find that the Government has been successful in establishing manufacturing centres at Albany, Esperance, Bunbury, and Geraldton. These have been of great benefit to the farmers in those areas. It is a question which concerns everybody, including the manufacturers. They played a part in establishing these centres; but the Government, particularly in regard to Albany and Esperance, should be applauded for the mighty big part it played in the establishment of those works.

Now there is a demand for some assistance for the central eastern wheatbelt men who produce a tremendous quantity of grain. The interdepartmental committee's report, which is soundly based, looked upon the question very coldly—if I can use that term—from a business point of view. But had the same reasoning been applied when there was a request to establish works at Albany and Esperance no works would have been built.

For that reason, and also in the interests of decentralisation, I think more should be done at a Government level instead of worrying about this from a business point of view, and a tolerant approach should be made when assessing whether now is the time for establishment of further inland works. With the establishment of inland works the rock has to be transported from the seaboard; but in any event if no inland works are established, the superphosphate has to be transported; so there is really no difference and it would not be a difficult problem to get over.

To get back to the question of supplying the central eastern wheatbelt farmers, I would say that Merredin would be a suitable spot for the establishment of an inland works because it is on the broad gauge line and the farmers in those areas have a claim. It may not be possible to build the works today, or even tomorrow, but I believe they have a claim for some assistance towards establishing the works at Merredin because of the high freight rates they are forced to pay at the moment.

Also, because they are at present denied the great benefit of being able to take their superphosphate in bulk, they have a great claim indeed. I have checked from the Bureau of Census and Statistics and I find that within a radius of 75 miles of Merredin last year—dealing in round figures—an amount of 160,000 tons of superphosphate was used for pasture and cropping in that area alone. That is a lot of superphosphate. It is 33,000 tons above what was used in previous years. The area is going ahead, and I think this is something that must be taken into account very seriously.

When I discovered that, I thought I would have a look at the grain production, and I was rather staggered to find that in that particular area, within a 75-mile radius of Merredin, the production last year was 24,890,000 bushels of all grain which was received by C.B.H. That is roughly a third of the State's production in that year for that particular centre. That area is still paying the highest freight—up to nearly £3 a ton—on its superphosphate. It has had no assistance for many years, and it is time we gave the matter a good deal of consideration.

Somebody might say that some of this production which I quoted within a 75-mile radius of Merredin is also near Perth. We must remember, of course, that there is a potential 75 miles the other way towards Southern Cross and beyond. So it will be a long time before we have 30,000,000 or 40,000,000,000 bushels of grain a year. I know of no greater potentials for wheat growing than this area.

For those reasons I urge the Government to assist those people along the lines I have mentioned. I trust that the departmental committee will have discussions with the people concerned, and that it will be active and strong in its efforts to help the people in this area. That being the case, I feel I cannot support the member for Merredin-Yilgarn on the question of the appointment of a Select Committee, although I support, largely, the case he has put forward.

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [8.19 p.m.]: I cannot understand the timidity of members of the Country Party, and particularly the member for Roe who has just resumed his seat, when questions of this nature crop up. Last year I moved a similar motion in this House and got absolutely no support from the Country Party members. I will make an exception of the member for Mt. Marshall who supported the motion in his speech, but did not support it with his vote.

I think it is in the farmers' interests that an inquiry be held. I am surprised at the member for Roe, because he should know the value of a committee of inquiry, since he has recently been on a committee of inquiry with me and other members of Parliament; which committee, after months of deliberation and travel, hearing the views of witnesses in the goldmining industry, was able to bring down a report of 47 pages.

If the recommendations in that report could be carried out and put into effect I am sure they would be beneficial to the mining industry. I am quite sure the member for Roe must appreciate the value of that. He must realise the value it would be to the farming industry if a committee of inquiry such as that suggested in the motion were appointed, and

we obtained the viewpoints and the necessary information from farmers as to what their superphosphate problems were.

The honourable member was completely off the beam when he spoke about a departmental committee which would cover practically everything in this motion. That is quite wrong, though I will not go into the details of the matter. I will leave it to the mover of the motion, the member for Merredin-Yilgarn, to deal with later.

What I particularly wish to emphasise are the problems experienced by a section of the people in the Salmon Gums area. At the request of farmers' organisations there last year—and many requests were made to various Ministers concerned, and a deputation was introduced to the Premier himself on the occasion of the opening of the superphosphate works at Esperance—we sought the permission of the departments concerned, or the sanction of the Government, to permit farmers living in the Salmon Gums area to have bulk deliveries of superphosphate made to them.

These people are in the unfortunate position of living just outside the 50-mile limit. At present there is no permit required for the delivery of superphosphate by road up to 50 miles from the works. The 50-mile limit ends at a little siding called Circle Valley 10 miles south of Salmon Gums and, consequently, these farmers must have their superphosphate transported by rail.

The present-day methods which have been in operation for a few years have brought about a service called "spread service"—with which you, Mr. Speaker, would be conversant, under which superphosphate is carried from the works in bulk and spread straight on to the pastures in the farmers' paddocks. I am informed that this saves the farmers £2 12s. a ton, and if they are handling large quantities of superphosphate, as they are nowadays, a saving of £2 12s. a ton cannot be disregarded. Besides this, the superphosphate is spread on and distributed without any storage at all. Storage can be provided at a cost of £1,250 per unit. I have these figures from the superphosphate people. I received them today, as a matter of fact.

Mr. O'Connor: What sort of storage is this?

Mr. MOIR: It is bulk storage on the farm, which would enable farmers to load their machines and spread the superphosphate in the paddock. It is a special type of machine manufactured by Wesfarmers. I am informed the amount of superphosphate that would be involved is 500 tons. I am not making a request to the Government to extend the 50-mile limit to 70 miles or anything like that. There are no farm operations carried on a few miles north of Salmon Gums. I suppose the

limit of farming would be about 15 or 17 miles north of Salmon Gums after which there are no more farming operations until we get into the wheatbelt near Southern Cross.

Mr. O'Connor: I presume these farmers will want a line kept open for them in that area.

Mr. MOIR: These farmers will produce so much wheat this year that the railways will have the greatest difficulty in carrying the grain away.

Mr. O'Connor: The railways will handle it all right.

Mr. Hawke: When?

Mr. O'Connor: This year.

Mr. MOIR: I hope it is not left for months and months. The Minister speaks very confidently, but I do not think he realises just what will happen in that area this year. The position is rather anomalous for these farmers who happen to live outside the 50-mile zone, and if they could be provided with these facilities and have the superphosphate brought to them and spread on their ground they could save £2 12s. a ton and, what is more important, they could save a considerable amount of valuable time.

Quite apart from any other considerations, the farmers could have the superphosphate spread on their properties at the appropriate time of the year; the time when they require it. There have been representations made, and there have been people attempting to have this position rectified without getting anywhere at all. This does not involve a large number of people, and they could quite easily be given this concession without any serious hardship to the Minister for Railways. That is only one of the matters that could be probed into by this committee.

It seems to me to be a trivial matter to rectify the disabilities that I have mentioned—though they would appear to be impossible of rectification, because there have been many representations made to the Government and to various Ministers. I admit some of the Ministers were sympathetic, but nowadays we cannot get very far on sympathy. I think there is something wrong when a matter as simple as that cannot be rectified, and if an inquiry were held I am sure we would find many other disabilities brought to light. I have no doubt that members of the Country Party appreciate that fact only too well.

I wonder, when we are considering these people who are suffering from these disabilities, whether it is necessary to take some Country Party member into our confidence and say, "We think this ought to be done, but we feel it would be a waste of time for a Labor member to bring it forward. Will you bring it forward?" Perhaps that might be the only way for us

to get somewhere. That is how it appears to me, because no matter how worth while the proposition is, if it is put forward from this side of the House it is doomed to failure. Members will find, however, that as long as we consider the propositions are worth while we will continue to put them forward.

MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin) [8.29 p.m.]: I want to say a few words on this subject because, according to the member for Boulder-Eyre, it seems that if a motion is moved for a Select Committee on a subject like superphosphate we must support it. The point is that the honourable member must prove that a Select Committee will do something which cannot be achieved in other ways. We realise the importance of superphosphate, because of its very widespread use in Western Australia, and its high cost. Those are certainly very important factors, but we must look at the matter objectively.

What would a Select Committee produce? What could it do? I know it could make inquiries; it is easy to do that. But what could it do that is not already being done? The matter is being inquired into at the present time in various ways. As indicated, there is a departmental inquiry into the matter; and there is an inquiry into the establishment of inland works at Merredin, and an inquiry into the establishment of inland works in the central great southern, at, say, Narrogin.

All this arises because of the zoning setup. I noticed the member for Mt. Marshall asked a question today concerning zoning arrangements. This has been a matter of concern for some considerable time, because the superphosphate companies will only deliver to a certain zone from a certain works. Although the central great southern area is nearer to Picton, we are compelled to take our superphosphate from Bassendean. The distance in mileage from Fremantle to Narrogin—I use Fremantle and not the works, because it has to be taken to the works from Fremantle—is 174 miles. The distance from Bunbury is 120 miles.

We place a great deal of emphasis on the saving of rail freights; and freight on 54 miles is involved here. The new land-backed wharf at Bunbury has opened up this question, because it would be quite possible to offload the phosphatic rock at the new land-backed wharf at Bunbury by loading direct into rail trucks, and then take it to the central great southern. At the present time these superphosphate works that are supposed to be at the ports have to have the phosphatic rock carted from the ship's side to the works; that is, from Fremantle to Bassendean, or Bunbury

Harbour to Picton. In Albany it has to be taken across the town to the superphosphate works.

However, if the works were established in the inland areas this phosphatic rock would be offloaded at the wharf, railed to the area where it is to be used, and then taken by farm truck to where it is consumed. That would mean one handling. I think it is a matter of very great importance, but it is no reason why it should be inquired into by a Select Committee. At the present time, the matter is being inquired into by the Department of Industrial Development. So why should two bodies inquire into the matter?

I have the figures relating to the saving in freight if superphosphate were supplied by the nearest works. The saving in freight at a place like Dumbleyung, if it took its superphosphate from Picton, would be 8s. 7d. per ton; at Lake Grace the saving would be 7s. 7d.; Wagin, 8s. 7d.; Williams, 5s. 9d.; and so on. There are other places, too. These are some to which the member for Roe referred that were paying excessive freights because of the zoning system.

A Select Committee cannot alter these facts. So I rose to point out that because a Select Committee is suggested to inquire into important subjects, it does not prove that this would be a desirable thing. As I said, we all know superphosphate—the use and cost of it—is a very important factor; but attention is already being given to it from other angles.

I would like to point out we have no obligation or desire to see a Select Committee inquire into things that are already being dealt with in a manner which I think will be far more satisfactory than a Select Committee could possibly be. Therefore I see no reason why this motion should be supported.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [8.35 p.m.]: I desire to thank those members who have contributed to the debate on this motion. Some quite interesting angles have been presented. Before going any further, I would like to know something about what I regard as a remarkable experience in so far as this motion is concerned. On looking through the Orders of the Day I find this motion we are debating tonight was, for the first time, placed on the notice paper as far back as the 5th August of this year.

The introduction took place on the 15th September, the Minister replied on the 13th October, and today is the 26th November; and this is the last item on the notice paper. I wonder why. I wonder if procrastination had something to do with the delay that has occurred. I know at the early stages the Premier was good enough to leave this matter on the notice

paper, because I was indisposed with a bad foot at that time, and was unable to get here. I appreciate that; but I have not appreciated very greatly being padded up for about three months to reply to what I knew would be the Minister's case in refutation of the necessity for a Select Committee.

I knew his approach would be the same as it was last year when we were given very few reasons as to why there should be no Select Committee. We were quoted a number of extraneous matters which had no application to the case in point, but which were, unfortunately, the Minister's reasons as to why there should be no Select Committee; and he was backed up by his Country Party henchman for similar reasons. They agreed almost *in toto* with the contentions of the motion, item by item, and yet they were not prepared to throw in their lot to make this Select Committee operate—and it could operate and operate successfully in the interests of the producers of Western Australia.

On this occasion I thought the Minister definitely skidded gingerly around the motion. For the most part he talked around the motion, and when he did remain on it for a short period, I think it can be said he feebly attempted to justify why there should be no Select Committee. He gave us the costs of superphosphate in Canada, in Victoria, in California, and finally in New Zealand, none of which have any practical application at all to Western Australian conditions.

Let us for one moment reflect on the position in Canada or California where cost of living is at least 2½ times dearer than it is in Western Australia, whether it be a matter of labour, the cost of clothing, or anything else. One of the things the Minister should know a lot about is wool; and a woollen suit, not well tailored, would cost a minimum of \$140 in California, but the same suit could be bought here off the hook for £21. So there is no comparison there at all between the cost of production in California or Canada as against the cost of production in Western Australia.

Mr. Nalder: You can get suits in America much cheaper than you have just quoted.

Mr. KELLY: I am speaking of a woollen suit; and in 1956 the cheapest was \$140, which is over £70 in our money—and that is over three times the cost of what it could be bought off the hook in Western Australia.

Mr. Lewis: Did you move among the goldplated hooks?

Mr. KELLY: The only authority to back up the Minister in his refusal to appoint a Select Committee came from a feature article in *The West Australian*; and the Minister extensively quoted this writer's

opinion. I would think there would be much more reliable authorities than that from whom the Minister could have obtained information with reference to what is being asked for in this motion.

Of course, in justifying the cost of superphosphate as something we have to accept, the only point he submitted was the increased cost of copper. He said the rises we have had in the past and those to which we will have to submit in the future will be governed by the cost of copper. Goodness gracious me! On a number of occasions we have had an analysis of superphosphate-copper mixture. No copper at all goes into straight superphosphate and there is no justification for the excessive amount added on every occasion when copper appreciates a few degrees in the market. There is no reason for that at all.

We know there may be some necessity, from time to time, as a margin is reached, to put in a little extra charge for copper, but this is of such a diminutive quantity in a ton of super that it would not possibly have the reflection on cost as indicated by the Minister.

There again, what is the Government doing in regard to the production of copper in Western Australia? There are dozens of low-grade shows lying idle into which people have put their own capital to try to bring them up to something reasonable, but they have not had sufficient resources for this purpose. The Government knows as well as I do—and the Mines Department probably knows better than the Government—that it would be possible to upgrade copper supplies in Western Australia in order to make a grade suitable for use in superphosphate, but nothing is being done at all. The whole of the attention of the Government is centred on iron ore. It does not give a hang about the rest of the metals; it is only interested in the metal backed up by the companies. The one that does have a reflection in this case is the manufacture of copper and it should be treated within Western Australia.

Mr. Nalder: Are you of the opinion the low-grade ore could be upgraded?

Mr. KELLY: Definitely.

Mr. Nalder: At an economic rate?

Mr. KELLY: Yes, I would say so, taken over a term period. I do not think it would be justified in one year, or even perhaps in five years; but taking a long view, it would undoubtedly be justified, because we are not going to stop on 972,000 tons of superphosphate a year; this State is going to appreciate that figure quickly.

Mr. Nalder: Where is the area you referred to situated?

Mr. KELLY: There are dozens of places like Marble Bar, Yilgarn, and the Murchison.

Mr. Norton: And in the Gascoyne.

Mr. Nalder: Wouldn't the cost of getting the ore to the metropolitan area be prohibitive?

Mr. KELLY: It would not be prohibitive. We would want a central plant in one area; and the upgrading of copper is simple; it is one of the easiest metals to upgrade, yet the Government is making no effort to do anything in this regard.

We have had indications that the Government is not prepared to accept a Select Committee. It could be expected that the Government, through its apparent superiors—the superphosphate companies—is not prepared to have an investigation into the supply of superphosphate.

The Minister seems quite satisfied that the cost factor is all right. There are many farmers not satisfied that the cost of super is on a correct basis. Many of them accept the price, but they do so reluctantly because it has increased so much. But of course the Minister does not seem to have any true feelings for the people who are using large quantities of superphosphate.

If there is nothing to hide; if there is no possibility of betterment in regard to superphosphate prices, what has the Government to fear from a Select Committee? Why this continued refusal to let us get to grips with what is a difficulty so far as the producers in this State are concerned?

There should be no reluctance at all. If the conditions are such as the Minister endeavoured to make out, the Government ought to be pleased that a Select Committee could come back to the House and say, "There is nothing wrong with this business. The Minister is right, and everything will go along smoothly from now on. We will be one happy family and agreed on this subject." But the Minister is not prepared to take that risk. What the risk is, I cannot see. If I thought in the same way as he thinks, I definitely would not have any worry about a Select Committee. However, that is his outlook, and I cannot understand it at all.

I think a Select Committee would be unbiased in its approach to all the problems contained in the motion. I think, for instance, it would thoroughly examine every avenue of transport and all the channels by which the costs of super on the farm are increased; and in some cases it would inquire into the position where transport facilities are not satisfactory. All of these things would be taken into account by a Select Committee, and it would get down to a practical rather than an academic examination of the entire subject; and I say "academic"—and I will deal with this matter more fully in a moment—because I consider the findings of the inter-departmental committee are based academically rather than practically.

A vital part of the motion deals with inland superphosphate works, and there has been a deal of controversy over a period of a little more than 12 months, not in one centre only, although, naturally, one centre would house the superphosphate works. A new tone has been introduced and thrown in for good measure by the member for Narragin who said the inland superphosphate works could possibly go to Narragin. I have no complaint with that. There may be a necessity for inland superphosphate works at other centres, too; but the inland superphosphate works I had in mind would be at Merredin; and when this motion was brought forward a terrific amount of ground had been covered in the examination of the various aspects of establishing a superphosphate works at that centre.

The member for Mt. Marshall, by way of questions and research, had acquired a fund of information, which he submitted to a committee which was eventually formed in Merredin and of which he is a member. This committee dealt with the possibility of establishing a superphosphate works at that centre. The honourable member is fully convinced of the necessity of these works. He fully realises—without my committing him at all—that procrastination has been the record of the interdepartmental committee and the Cabinet subcommittee, because there has been a long time in which to bring this matter forward, but we are not even near completion yet.

There has been an air of secrecy about the whole matter as far as the Cabinet subcommittee is concerned, and it was only when we got down to tin tacks by introducing the motion that we found there had been any activity at all; because within a short time of the motion appearing on the notice paper, the Government was prepared to make a statement.

I think that during the course of moving the motion I read out some comments made by the Premier, which showed very fully that his statement was prompted wholly and solely by this motion, because he dealt almost in sequence with the items in the motion and with what had been achieved by the interdepartmental committee.

Mr. O'Connor: A lot of work had been done by the Cabinet subcommittee prior to this.

Mr. KELLY: I know; but I will show a little later, when I come to an analysis of the committee's report, just what shortcomings there are in that report as far as inland superphosphate works are concerned. Naturally, with the idea of an inland superphosphate works emanating from Merredin, the first thing was to call a meeting of farmers from a very broad area to discuss the possibilities, and that meeting was attended by a large and representative gathering covering a wide

sphere of interests, and a strong committee was formed. But the committee was not formed of academic men; it was formed of practical men who understood the requirements of the district—men whose whole stake was in the district, whether they were businessmen, bank managers, farmers, hotelkeepers, or others. They were all keenly interested in the establishment of works at Merredin, and they had a tremendous amount of data at their disposal to support their contention regarding these works.

The whole matter of the establishment of superphosphate works at Merredin has been based on a 70-mile radius. The member for Roe gave us some figures a moment ago that covered a 75-mile radius. Our figures could have been extended to cover that radius, but I think for the purpose of the interdepartmental committee's findings, and because of previous negotiations, I prefer to stick to the 70-mile radius as that is the one on which the figures have been based. But the inclusion of the extra five miles by the member for Roe brings in the requirement of another 25,000 tons of superphosphate a year, and that is considerable when we realise that the biggest factories at present are not manufacturing above 200,000 tons of superphosphate. So the issue becomes an even more important one when the radius of 75 miles is taken instead of the one I previously mentioned.

It does appear, however, that the Government is not prepared to look further than the coastal areas for the establishment of a superphosphate works, and it has stated why it feels that should be the *modus operandi* that we should follow in this State. I do not think that can be substantiated. The Government is not prepared to agree to a special rate for the cartage of phosphatic rock; but there was no coercion needed to offer the iron ore people—B.H.P.—very reasonable concessions. But the Government could not offer a concession for the establishment of a superphosphate works at Merredin because it would create a precedent. What tommyrot! Can the Minister expect us to swallow that statement? The Government falls over itself to give a powerful company like B.H.P. an advantage amounting to about 1.43d., but the best we can manage for the superphosphate interests is 3.26d., so that the iron ore companies will operate on an additional concessional basis of nearly 2d. per mile.

The Minister talks about the establishment of a precedent. Goodness gracious me, there is no establishment of a precedent! This is going on in all parts of the State at different times. We give concessions to cart various things by air to the north-west; and over a period we have granted concessions in many directions. So such poppycock as the Minister has tried to put over us is just too weak for examination.

I say without fear of contradiction—that is, contradiction on any sound basis—that the Government has gone out of its way to defeat the establishment of an inland superphosphate works. It has done that at every turn. The whole of the examination was based on a cold-water attitude from the start; and no matter how we view the examinations that have been made by the Government they are all tinged with the same outlook in so far as the establishment of an inland works is concerned.

Where would Western Australia be today if it had not been prepared to take some risks. If our forefathers, and if the present Government and past Governments had not been prepared to take risks in the establishment of ventures in different places, where would we be as a State? We would still be getting around with nulla nullas. The various authorities have had to take responsibilities and risks. But there is no risk in this matter, although it is regarded as a risk.

Mr. O'Connor: If there is no risk, why has it not been set up?

Mr. KELLY: Why did the Government set up superphosphate works in other centres such as Esperance, Geraldton, and other places.

Mr. O'Connor: You say you had a strong organization in Merredin prepared to go ahead?

Mr. KELLY: Yes.

Mr. O'Connor: Why didn't it go ahead?

Mr. KELLY: What has the Government done towards helping that committee? The Government has had to put money into all these other centres and has had to continue to put money in. Why should it not do the same at Merredin? I am not going to keep answering the Minister; I have a given amount of time and I am going to use it irrespective of whether the Minister chips in or not.

Mr. Nalder: Has the committee come up with any proposition? If it has, I have not seen it.

Mr. KELLY: There are none so deaf as those who will not hear, and none so blind as those who will not see. There has been a proposition put up, and the Minister knows it.

Mr. Nalder: A proposition put up by the committee? Is that right?

Mr. KELLY: Yes. The committee has discussed it with various Ministers, and the Minister for Agriculture has been informed of what has taken place. As a matter of fact he is going to Merredin to discuss the proposition with the members of the committee. At this point I would like to ask the Minister this: How long is it since the Ministers of this House have found it necessary to exclude the member for the district when three Ministers at a time go into a district? Three

Ministers are going to Merredin to discuss the proposition I am speaking about now.

Mr. O'Connor: This was at the request of the shire.

Mr. KELLY: Even so, I have had to get my invitation from the shire. I thought it would be the decent thing for one, anyway, of the Ministers to give me an indication, or at least to indicate that they were going into the district. The Minister for Transport has been good enough on past occasions to so advise me.

Mr. Nalder: The decision that any Minister would go there is not more than two days old. So there is plenty of time to deal with the situation you mention; and it has always been the practice to do that as far as I am concerned.

Mr. KELLY: Apparently insufficient time has elapsed for me to have received an invitation from Merredin, but three Ministers will be going there to discuss this important question with the Merredin Shire which I have tried to discuss in this Chamber without much success.

Mr. Nalder: You must have received an invitation this morning.

Mr. KELLY: Yes, I did.

Mr. Nalder: That would be right.

Mr. KELLY: I want to express what I think of the findings of the interdepartmental committee. I know many of its members and I have contacted some of them on occasions, so there is nothing personal in my criticism. I think a committee of this kind, appointed in the way it was, and the way the personnel was loaded by the Government with the specific object of getting the answers it desired, was not well-balanced. All but one of that seven-man committee came from the Department of Industrial Development. Only one came from an outside department—the Department of Agriculture—and of the seven men four are economists. Even the officer from the Department of Agriculture is in charge of rural economics and marketing.

Mr. Lewis: What was his name?

Mr. KELLY: The Minister should know because he was the one who appointed him.

Mr. Lewis: I just cannot recall his name.

Mr. KELLY: It was Mr. G. D. Oliver. It is obvious that, whatever recommendation was reached by this seven-man committee, with their outlook in life and their upbringing, the decision they would make would undoubtedly have an economic flavour, and that is what the Government sought. It wanted to have cold water thrown on the project with a view to squashing it, so that the manufacture of superphosphate could be left in the hands of monopoly companies which exist at present. There is no doubt that they are monopoly companies, because I have a report, from which I will quote later, which

shows that six of the companies are interested in superphosphate manufacture and the seventh operates as an agent of the leading superphosphate firms.

So I think that any consideration that would be given to the establishment of an inland superphosphate works by this committee would be given purely in the light of whether such a project would be economical. There would be nothing practical in the approach of the members of the committee. As a result we got an answer that was expected and the answer that was requested by the Government.

Mr. Court: You can't say that with all fairness. Two of the senior Ministers in the Government are successful farmers with a practical approach.

Mr. KELLY: I am now speaking of the findings of the interdepartmental committee.

Mr. Court: Yes, I know; but you said that this is what the Government requested.

Mr. KELLY: Yes; it is. The whole outlook and every consideration that was given by the personnel of this committee when it examined the question of establishing an inland superphosphate works indicated that they did not want an inland superphosphate works. The Minister's own statement and the quotes I made when introducing this motion showed conclusively the outlook adopted by the Minister.

Mr. Court: Don't you think there is a logical and practical approach from the Government?

Mr. KELLY: If there were there would be no delay in the establishment of a superphosphate works at Merredin. The Minister had his opportunity to make his contribution to the debate on the motion so I ask him to keep quiet while I make mine. If some members of the committee had been producers, shire councillors, or businessmen, we could have expected a practical, down-to-earth conclusion from them and not one purely and simply based on economics and on unsound figures which are published in the report. I will return to them in a moment.

I think that if the committee had been composed of people who were residents of the district and had intermingled with those who reside in the Merredin area they would have had a general and keen desire to have an inland superphosphate works established at Merredin or at some other inland centre; and by giving study to the academic side of the question as well, I am sure they would have reached a far different solution from that which this committee reached. We would have had far greater emphasis placed on many other matters which do not appear to have been dealt with by this committee.

I commence to speak of one under the heading of "Decentralisation". If this report is any indication of the Government's attitude towards the question of decentralisation, as enunciated by the Minister for Agriculture, it is no wonder that the subject of decentralisation was not considered, and is not being considered now. In speaking to the motion, on Wednesday, the 13th October, 1965, in the course of his speech the Minister referred to bulk depots. As far as they were concerned I said a close examination would be made of the possibility of establishing depots. I did not say that depots would be established, although the Minister, in, his speech, said I did. I now quote an extract from the Minister's speech, which appears on page 1447 of *Hansard* proof No. 11, which reads as follows:—

In my opinion the situation in relation to that aspect has been adequately covered. In November of last year Cabinet gave full consideration to this proposal and appointed a subcommittee which investigated the details relating to the requirements of this State in the interests of decentralisation in particular, because that is a policy which is supported by this Government.

After quoting that, I point out that the Government is a group of gentlemen who, over a period of time, have endeavoured to stress the importance they attach to decentralisation, and yet one of its chief exponents on the front bench tries to put this over.

Mr. Lewis: Don't you think that, in the question of superphosphate—

Mr. KELLY: I am now speaking of decentralisation.

Mr. Lewis: Don't you think that the prime concern is to get the superphosphate on to the farm at the cheapest price possible?

Mr. KELLY: That will make no difference to my line of argument. This is what the Minister stated. Members should have a look at *Hansard* and read the Minister's speech because it shows the true attitude of the Government towards these matters.

Let us look at some of the reasons put forward by the committee in support of its findings. One of them was that it favoured the location of super works at seaboard towns as against inland centres. Its entire thinking on this matter, which is indicated throughout the report, is based on that starting point. It desires to economise on transport costs of imported phosphate rock and brimstone. Goodness gracious! In the absence of a concessional freight rate there would not be any great advantage in establishing an inland superphosphate works, but we are able to extend this concession to other industries and to other forms of transport

—and let me make one point clear; namely, that transport systems throughout the world depend on backloading. Apparently the Minister for Railways does not want any backloading.

Mr. Court: Not much he doesn't!

Mr. KELLY: Well, he is not prepared to go part of the way so far as being able to have our superphosphate manufactured at Merredin at a cheaper price. The member for Roe has given an indication of the variation between transport costs in Victoria and the transport costs on the Western Australian railways.

Mr. Court: You have to take the total into consideration.

Mr. KELLY: I am speaking of the 150-mile mark to which he referred.

Mr. Court: We know you of old, and your habit of plucking one little figure out of many.

Mr. KELLY: It was the member for Roe who quoted the figures, and what he said is perfectly true.

Mr. Court: You have to take the whole structure, and not refer to one little sector.

Mr. Tonkin: Would you cut the freight rate on iron ore from Wundowie?

Mr. Court: Yes; it is the "M"-class freight rate with the low value subsidy that goes for all similar ores, except in regard to B.H.P. which does not get it.

Mr. KELLY: The next point put forward by the interdepartmental committee was adequate labour supplies. What was the labour supply like at Picton Junction, Albany, or Esperance? Was it any better than that at Merredin? Of course it was not. The committee next mentioned the necessity of suitable supplies of water and power at a reasonable cost. What sort of simpletons do the members of the committee seem to think we are? Surely the Government would not swallow that! The Government is the supplier of both water and power in all towns between Merredin and the metropolitan area and in other centres. Does this mean that the other places are getting a better deal than the people at Merredin on the supply of water and electricity? One can only arrive at the conclusion that that must be the position.

The next point the committee makes in support of its findings, was the convenient siting of the superphosphate works to transport facilities in the distribution of the finished product. How odd that sounds! The Government has made a determination to establish all its superphosphate works along the coastline. What does that mean? Simply that every one of those works will be able to supply only the hinterland behind it, because they are all on the extreme western edge of the State. So every ton of superphosphate has to be fanned out from each centre on the coast to the various inland centres;

whereas if superphosphate were manufactured at Merredin its distribution would not be confined to a specific area in the vicinity of the works, but the area of distribution would have a circumference of 360 degrees and with a radius of 70 miles from the works itself.

I hope to make a few comments on the report of this committee.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): You have another five minutes.

Mr. KELLY: I am only half way through my speech, Mr. Speaker! The interjections have been really terrific!

The SPEAKER: I hope you are not reflecting on the Chair.

Mr. KELLY: Oh no! That is the last thing I would do, Mr. Speaker! There are many tangible features in this report. They are features which were held in great store by the members of this interdepartmental committee and of which members of the Cabinet subcommittee have taken a lot of notice. I hope you will bear with me long enough, Mr. Speaker, to let me show you that some of these features are not in accordance with facts, because my case is based upon them. For instance, the future superphosphate requirements are set out in scale form, starting off within a radius of 20 miles and finally within a radius of 70 miles. This booklet predicts that by 1968-69 within a radius of 70 miles of Merredin the tonnage would be 118,600; but in actual fact last year it was 130,000 tons, and thus exceeded the figure predicted by the committee for 1968-69.

There is no further need for me to analyse a report of this kind, because the basis upon which it has been furnished is entirely wrong.

Mr. O'Connor: Where did you obtain the figure of 130,000 tons?

Mr. KELLY: From a newspaper report which states—

Findings On Superphosphate Plant Question.

Merredin, Thursday: The local committee investigating the establishment of a superphosphate works at Merredin disagrees with many of the points made in a report by the government-appointed committee which examined the proposal.

Merredin committee chairman G. F. Talfor said this today.

The government-appointed committee had said the quantity of superphosphate being used in the Merredin area was 96,000 tons a year and that future use should be calculated on an annual increase of 4.24 per cent.

These figures were unrealistic, he said. More than 130,000 tons had been used in the Merredin area during the 1964-65 season.

With continued development of clover pastures, the amount used would be comparable with that in other parts of the State—an increase of about 10 per cent. yearly.

The Merredin committee considered that it was economical and practical to plan for a works of 150,000 tons capacity, but the government report based production figures on 50,000 and 100,000-ton capacities.

Mr. Court: You missed one vital point which the committee made. It was dealing with the sales figure as distinct from total usage.

Mr. KELLY: I am dealing with the figures on a practical basis.

Mr. Court: I want to hear from you whether you are prepared to force people to use superphosphate from a nominated works or whether you are prepared to give them a free choice of supplies.

Mr. KELLY: The idea was to establish a superphosphate works at Merredin on a co-operative basis. I understand the brochure which has been distributed subscribed almost 100 per cent. to the establishment of superphosphate works at Merredin.

Here is another factor entering into possibility at this juncture. Much of the money which is being flung around in South Australia in connection with the purchase of an interest in a superphosphate works could now possibly be channelled to Merredin. There is a very much more important angle than even the inter-departmental committee's report on this matter.

In discussing costs the report states that to establish works in Merredin it would have to be done on a 50,000 to 100,000 tons basis. Let us get down to something real and factual. Merredin exceeded 100,000 tons last year, but the report is based on a possible figure of 98,000 tons. The figure which the committee is prepared to agree on for the establishment of this type of superphosphate works in Merredin is 50,000 to 100,000 tons. It thinks that 50,000 tons is nearer the figure, and that any quantity below would be uneconomic. According to this report 100,000 tons is an economic possibility, but that figure was exceeded by 30,000 tons last year, yet the Government cannot see any merit in the proposition.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member's time has expired.

Extension of Time

Mr. TONKIN: I move—

That the honourable member's time be extended.

Motion put and passed.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Mr. KELLY: There are a few more points I would like to make. I have intimated the unfairness of the Government's attitude in regard to concessional freight which it is prepared to advance to B.H.P. in addition to the other concessions which have been thrown in, such as the diversion of the railway line for its specific use.

Mr. Court: That is not correct.

Mr. KELLY: Of course it is.

Mr. Court: You stick to the facts.

Mr. Hawke: A hundred million in respect of Yampi Sound.

Mr. Court: It is not correct.

Mr. KELLY: Of course it is.

Mr. Court: The line is not for the exclusive use of B.H.P. The freight from that company is only part of the total freight.

Mr. KELLY: That is a laugh.

Mr. Court: You can laugh as long as you like.

Mr. KELLY: In rebuttal of the idea of the introduction of concessional freight, the concluding chapter in the report states that the alternative to avoid a penalty is to increase railway freights in another direction; but the committee can see no justification for preference for a Merredin superphosphate works at the expense of other railway users. At whose expense are we carting iron ore at 1.43d. per ton?

Mr. Court: We will make a profit out of it.

Mr. KELLY: We always make a profit out of anything the Minister does!

Mr. Court: We will make a profit out of it.

Mr. KELLY: The balance sheets have not shown that.

Mr. Court: We are doing a darn sight more than your Government managed to do.

Mr. KELLY: The Minister's Government was fortunate to get in at the time which it did. It followed the groundwork done by the Labor Government.

Mr. Court: Your Government had a £5,500,000 deficit.

Mr. KELLY: I will not deal with the costs of superphosphate, because the member for Roe touched on that point. This is one prize decision of the committee in referring to the 1.43d. per ton mile; The corollary of this is that superphosphate must be produced at Merredin at an annual rate of 100,000 tons in order to be at all competitive. Of course, that figure has been well and truly exceeded. Even allowing for a percentage of the users who are

shareholders in existing monopoly companies continuing to buy their superphosphate from those companies, there is still an ample demand in Merredin for the establishment of a superphosphate works. The report goes on to say—

If a concession rail freight of 1.43 pence per ton mile were extended to the Merredin manufacture, and not to metropolitan producers, virtually all of its output of 100,000 tons could be sold in the area. In effect, a subsidy of £1 0s. 5d. per ton or £102,000 per year, either by way of rail freight concessions or some other payment, would enable a Merredin producer to become competitive with the present delivered price of superphosphate.

The committee realised that once the 100,000 tons or better mark was reached there would be an advantage to the district. It is prepared to admit that.

A subsidy of £102,000 per year to be given to the superphosphate users in Merredin would be small compared with the amount of subsidy that is given to B.H.P. The Minister says that 2,000,000 tons would be the maximum in respect of which that subsidy would apply, but in 18 months' time we would be handling 3,000,000 tons, and the subsidy would run into £750,000.

Mr. Court: It is not getting a subsidy.

Mr. KELLY: Of course it is. The people in Merredin would not be getting a subsidy if the Government gave them a lower freight rate.

Mr. Court: It is no good discussing logic with you on these matters.

Mr. KELLY: The Minister will have to use much more logic when he goes up to Merredin on the 12th of next month.

Mr. Court: If you distort the picture in that way I will not even try to convince you.

Mr. KELLY: Another finding of the committee was that last year the Merredin market represented 12½ per cent. of the total Western Australian market. The figures given by the member for Roe justify the comments here. Of course this is a very important centre, and it uses a tremendous quantity of superphosphate.

I would now refer to the balance of the recommendations of the committee, because they should be recorded in *Hansard* as there are only a few copies of it available. I obtained mine from the Merredin Shire Council. I think the Government should at least have supplied members of this House with copies. The conclusion of the committee was—

On the evidence available the establishment of superphosphate manufacturing works at Merredin, from the point of view of investors, must be regarded as an extremely uncertain financial venture.

Without any Government assistance it is unlikely that such a concern could win any of the existing market purely on a price basis.

Granted Government assistance, either by way of rail freight concessions or subsidy payments, £102,000 per year, a Merredin factory could offer at a competitive price all of its 100,000 tons output, provided the present price of metropolitan superphosphate is not reduced.

Is there hanging over the Government a threat of a likely reduction in the price of superphosphate should works be established at Merredin? I think that is the reason that this conclusion has been reached by the committee. To continue—

However, as sales of 100,000 tons would represent 12½ per cent. of the existing producers' market some action by the existing producers must be anticipated. In these circumstances, the Merredin producer would be faced with two alternatives.

If the interdepartmental committee has done the great job that the Cabinet sub-committee claims, why is there so much secrecy enshrouding the activities of the subcommittee that we do not know what it is doing? I am not very convinced by any of those reasons.

Regarding the idea that superphosphate costs are as low as possible let me refer to what is stated in *The Farmers' Weekly* of the 21st October, 1965. The report is as follows:—

Government Should Take Close Look at Sulphur Costs

The Commonwealth Government should have a close look at the cost of imported sulphur as the higher cost of this ingredient has resulted in a rise in the price of superphosphate thus nullifying the benefit of the superphosphate subsidy.

This was stated by the general president of the United Farmers and Woolgrowers' Association of N.S.W., Mr. L. M. Ridd, last week.

The Minister thinks what the superphosphate committee does is in order, that the costs are above board, and that no investigation at all should be made into the superphosphate position in Western Australia.

Regarding the huge profits that are being made by the various superphosphate companies, let me refer to a few headlines. One newspaper report states—

Millions for Fertilisers

ICIANSZ and CRA have announced a £12,000,000 scheme to build ammonia and nitrogenous fertiliser capacity in Newcastle, New South Wales.

Where did they find the £12,000,000 to put into this project?

Then we come to the point of the intended sale of Cresco interests in South Australia. One American firm was prepared to offer at that particular time, 30s. a share. That was about two months ago. Then there was a counter-offer by Esso and that counter-offer was in the order of 70s. Therefore the bargain-hunting basement has been reached and the different companies are vying with one another. Apparently they have plenty of spare cash to splash about. It was not very long before we read in the Press that a new plant was planned for Sydney. They are well supplied already, as is Western Australia, but they are still wanting and getting more. On the 12th August the following appeared in the paper:—

The Boral group will build a £5,800,000 nitrogenous fertiliser plant at Silverwater, Sydney, in conjunction with Mitsui and Co. Ltd. of Japan.

The proposed plant will have an annual capacity of 113,000 tons—

That is not as much as we could manufacture in Merredin the very first year of operation. To continue—

and will use the Toyo Koatsu process. Whatever that might be! I do not know. They are anticipating spending in all £11,250,000 to establish these works. The next we read was that a £2,000,000-offer for shares in Cresco had been made. This was again getting in the bargain-basement section and on the 13th October the following appeared in the Press:—

American-owned W. R. Grace (Australia) Pty. Ltd. has made a £2,000,000 bid to acquire a 50.1 interest in SA-based Cresco Fertilizers Ltd.

The amount of £980,000 eventually changed hands for 10 per cent. of the shares, which shows that it was a very much more valuable industry than was at first indicated by the offers. The shares at that time—the 13th October—were 65s.

A little later, on the 16th November, two new moves in the battle took place. The shares by that time were 90s., and finally the American company offered 90s. for the shares and, as I have just explained to the House, they accepted a 10 per cent. interest of the shares and paid nearly £1,000,000 for them.

I think I have said enough to justify the opinion of those on this side of the House that a Select Committee should be appointed to inquire into all the matters in relation to superphosphate in this State, including an investigation of depots, the establishment of inland superphosphate works, and the transport position of superphosphate. It now gives me a great deal of pleasure to commend the motion to the House.

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

Ayes—16

Mr. Bickerton
Mr. Brady
Mr. Davies
Mr. Fletcher
Mr. Hawke
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Jamieson

Mr. Kelly
Mr. Moll
Mr. Norton
Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Toms
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May

(Teller)

Noes—23

Mr. Bovell
Mr. Brand
Mr. Burt
Mr. Court
Mr. Craig
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Durack
Mr. Elliott
Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Hart
Dr. Henn
Mr. Hutchinson

Mr. Lewis
Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Marshall
Mr. Nalder
Mr. Nimmo
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. O'Neill
Mr. Runciman
Mr. Rushton
Mr. Williams
Mr. I. W. Manning

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr. Curran
Mr. Hall
Mr. Graham
Mr. Sewell

Noes

Mr. Crommelin
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Grayden

Majority against—7.

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

BILLS (3): RETURNED

1. Parliamentary Allowances Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).
2. Members of Parliament, Reimbursement of Expenses, Act Amendment Bill.
3. Constitution Acts Amendment Bill (No. 3).

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

LOAN BILL, £27,170,000

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 23rd November, on the following motion by Mr. Brand (Treasurer):—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Electricity) [9.40 p.m.]: I want to take this opportunity to make some comment on the activities of the State Electricity Commission. I think everyone will agree that the activities of the commission, in the interests of the people of Western Australia, have been outstanding; and although I tabled the report of the commission only a few days ago, I think it would be as well for me to make some comment so as to place on record the results of the work of the commission over the last few years. I want to quote some figures covering the last five years. In

1961 the number of consumers in the metropolitan area was 138,064. In the country—

Point of Order

Mr. HAWKE: I have no desire at all to prevent the Minister from making a statement, but I am a bit in doubt as to how it comes about that he can stand up and go ahead with the statement. Am I to understand that after the Minister has completed his statement and sits down, it would be in order for any other member to stand up and talk about any subject in which he is particularly interested?

Speaker's Ruling

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I cannot anticipate what the statement is going to contain, but provided it can be related to the Loan Bill—in other words, provided the subject matter is something that will be the subject of loan expenditure—then I think the debate would be pretty wide.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

Mr. NALDER: I hope to be able to give this information to the House because there is no doubt that the loans that will be made available will certainly be taken up by the State Electricity Commission to continue with the expansion work of which I am going to make some mention.

I was just giving the information as to the number of consumers in metropolitan and country areas in 1961. There were 22,893 country consumers, including 151 under the contributory scheme. The figures have greatly increased since that time until at the 30th June, 1965, there was a total of 189,844 consumers made up of 156,082 in the metropolitan area, and 33,762 in the country, including 2,274 under the contributory scheme.

Those figures indicate that there has been a rapid increase in the number of people who have taken advantage of the services of the State Electricity Commission. Since the 1st July, 1959, the commission has acquired a number of town supplies in the country. These have been in the south-west and great southern areas south of Brookton and including Brookton, and have included seven country towns in the wheatbelt areas and one in the north—at Northampton—which has recently been taken over by the commission.

At this moment the commission is negotiating for the taking over of a number of power stations in country towns so that the services of the commission can be extended to those areas. In addition, the demand has increased and it has not only brought about a very satisfactory situation as far as these extensions are concerned, but it has also influenced the increase in the number of secondary industries which have also taken advantage of the services of the State Electricity Commission.

To take advantage, and keep pace with the demand, the commission has had to extend its generating power and this has been done with the assistance of, perhaps we can say, relatively small work force. The commission has in its employ some 2,500 people, not only working in the metropolitan area but also servicing the towns in the country and extending the lines to the farmers who have taken advantage of the contributory scheme which was set up some years ago. Referring to the demand again, many expanding secondary industries have taken advantage of the supply not only those in the metropolitan area, but also industries which are being established and extended in some of the country towns.

The generating power of the commission, I think everybody knows. The member for Collie referred earlier tonight to the Muja power house where just recently the first 60,000 watt turbo-alternator was placed on commercial load. This was several months ahead of the schedule which had been planned and the power, of course, is being extended from this generator to the metropolitan area. The construction of the Muja power station is forging ahead and the other three generators should be in operation by 1968.

Tenders have already been called for two 120,000 kilowatt units for Kwinana and it is hoped that they will be in operation by 1970 and 1971. The power system of the State Electricity Commission is now approximately a £45,000,000 industry which gives an economical and reliable supply of electricity to more than three-quarters of the State's population. It is also one of the big industries of the State.

It is expected that by 1970 it will expand to a £90,000,000 undertaking. That is only a short period of time when we consider how long the commission has been in existence. By 1970 the industry will compare in size with the largest industries in this State.

The commission spends several millions of pounds annually in contracting for generating plant, and it erects approximately 1,500 miles of power lines in various parts of the State. It connects some 6,000 new consumers and this would be sufficient for a couple of reasonably large country towns. The commission maintains a reliable supply of power for domestic use and for industry, although there are a number of hazards, one of which we experienced only a few days ago—that of wind and storm.

Despite all this the State Electricity Commission has a very proud record. I also remind members of some of the problems which are associated with power supplies in other parts of the world. We have only recently heard of a breakdown in New York, in North America. We also heard of breakdowns which occurred in Great Britain not only this year, but last

year as well. I think we are reasonably fortunate that in this State the blackout periods have been very few indeed. This no doubt, is contributed to by the skill of the officers of the State Electricity Commission in their efforts to make available 24 hours a day and seven days a week for 365 days of the year a reliable power supply for the population of this State.

When the commission was instituted by an Act of Parliament in 1946 it continued its work in a small way, of course, by comparison with what it is doing today. It did not make a profit until the year 1953, but it has been continuing to make a profit since that time. I would also remind members that during this period there have been two substantial reductions in the charges for electricity. It is the aim of the commission to continue to expand and make every effort to see that the charges are kept as low as possible in the interests of industry and in the interests of the domestic consumers. I think this can be claimed to be a remarkable record and I would like the information placed on record. I think it will be appreciated not only by the Parliament of this State, but also by the consumers of Western Australia who take advantage of the electricity supplies.

Mr. Hawke: What is the total number of consumers in Western Australia?

Mr. NALDER: The figure at the moment is 189,844. That shows a rapid increase; and if the honourable member would like to see the figures later I will be happy to show them to him.

I crave the indulgence of the House for a few moments to reply to some criticism which was levelled by the member for Balcatta, in this House recently, against an officer of the commission. I feel that the statements which were made were quite extravagant, and from what I know of the manager they were not at all correct. I want to say that in my opinion the criticism was quite unnecessary and quite unjustified, and I want to let the House have the following information with reference to the point raised by the honourable member.

The member for Balcatta felt that the commission—that is, through its officers—with reference to the positioning of meter boxes, was not consistent and because of this there were people who, when building homes, were receiving advantages because of the inconsistency of some of the officers of the commission.

The honourable member challenged me to make an inspection of the houses and he gave the position of the houses in the various streets where he considered this deficiency had occurred in the siting of meter boxes. I spent several hours the other week going through the area. I saw three of the houses he mentioned but I did not go to the other areas because I saw sufficient to convince me that the

regulations which had been gazetted by the commission had been clearly and faithfully carried out. I looked very closely at the position of the meter boxes and I was convinced that the inspectors were carrying out their job faithfully and honestly. There were hundreds of houses—not just dozens—through North Perth, out to Balcatta, Osborne Park, across to Scarborough, Wembley, Claremont, Swanbourne, and back through Subiaco to West Perth.

Mr. Graham: Who went with you?

Mr. NALDER: The manager of the S.E.C., and Mr. Lake, who was one of the officers mentioned by the honourable member.

Mr. Graham: Perhaps it would not have been a bad idea if I had been asked to go along with you.

Mr. NALDER: I saw the houses which were mentioned by the honourable member and I was convinced that the officers of the commission and the inspectors were carrying out their duties faithfully and honestly as far as their interpretation of the Act went.

Mr. Graham: Would you be prepared to come out with me one day?

Mr. NALDER: Yes; I would be quite happy to go out with the honourable member when it is convenient to both of us.

Mr. Graham: Thank you very much. You have had the wool pulled over your eyes.

Mr. Hawke: Will you require a referee?

Mr. NALDER: I do not want to read all the regulations which apply, but I have a copy of the regulations of all the power suppliers in Australia. It is interesting to note that the regulations gazetted with reference to the positioning of meter boxes are very similar in the various States. I will just read one Western Australian regulation and the corresponding Victorian regulation. It is regulation 245 (a) and is as follows:—

The Supply Authority shall have the right to decide as to the most suitable position for fuses, circuit-breakers, indicators and meters and termination of service leads.

A note on that regulation reads as follows:—

This is the position with all the Regulations and By-laws which have been studied. This covers most of the States of Australia and New Zealand. For instance, Regulation 14(e) of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria's Wiring Regulations 1961 states—

The supply authority will determine the point of attachment for the overhead service line or the point of entry for the underground service line, as the case

may be, and also the position for the location of the service fuse or fuses, supply meters, and any other apparatus of the supply authority.

If any honourable member would like to see the rest of the information I would be happy to hand it to him. The situation is almost the same in the other States of Australia.

The point is that this situation has been emphasised, and in bringing this matter forward some people will get some benefit because I am satisfied that there are some architects and some builders who appear to be taking advantage of the situation by submitting plans which test the authority of the State Electricity Commission. I feel that this is absolutely unnecessary; and when plans are made available, even before the local authority gives a permit for the building to proceed, it should be made perfectly clear on the plans where the meter box is to be placed.

If we could work out some regulation, or even if it were necessary to amend the Act, I think this would be desirable to cover the position; because why should we have a small section of the community trying to take advantage of something when the biggest percentage of the population are quite prepared to accept the regulations as set out? One has only to drive around the metropolitan area and one will see hundreds and hundreds of houses with the meter box in the front, placed in a position where it can be seen without difficulty. I think we would be doing a service, and certainly helping the commission to carry out its job—which job should be to assist the consumers to be connected to the supply as quickly as possible, and without any argument—if we could work out a regulation to cover the position.

Mr. J. Hegney: These meter boxes can be a bit of an eyesore, and they are on many houses.

Mr. NALDER: But the consumers generally accept the position and place the meter boxes where they are readily accessible and can be easily seen not only by the general public but also by the inspector, if he wants to read the meter or turn the supply off. I feel that should be the position. I think every country member knows that the people in the country would put meter boxes anywhere so long as they could be connected to the supply.

Mr. Graham: Of course the S.E.C. has the power to make the people put them there, too.

Mr. NALDER: That is so; but why should we be arguing about this point? Why should we not try to make it possible for this work to be done without any argument and so help the officers of the S.E.C.

to carry out their work? Why should a member have to come to the House and criticise the officers?

Mr. Graham: Echo answers, why?

Mr. NALDER: Yes, why? Why should we not help in some way, even if we have to amend the Act or introduce amendments to make it more convenient and helpful for the officers of the S.E.C. to go about their work without having to argue the point with a building contractor, an architect, or an electrician about where the meter box should be placed?

Mr. Davies: Reason; that's exactly what we want—reason.

Mr. NALDER: Surely we can do something to help the situation instead of having arguments all the time. That is why I intend to endeavour to find a way out of the situation.

Mr. Graham: I am pleased to hear that. You will get co-operation from us if that is your approach.

Mr. NALDER: That is my approach. I cannot see any reason why a member should have to come to this House and criticise an officer of the commission if we can help to overcome this problem in the future. That is the constructive outlook I have on the situation.

Mr. Davies: Hear, hear!

Mr. NALDER: I have looked at buildings and, without measuring the distance from the road, or the gate, to the door, it looked to me as though the regulations were being faithfully carried out from the inspector's point of view. I cannot see why we should continue with the situation as it is today, because in all the circumstances I have outlined I think we must look at the position fairly and squarely and make a determined effort to state what shall be the position in the future so that there will be no argument with the building contractors or anybody else regarding where the meter box shall be placed. If we do not do something this question will be brought up again and again and we will have continual argument about it.

I do not think that should be the situation. We should try to overcome it, and I will have a close and careful look at this. I hope, before the House meets next year, we will be able to find a solution which will be satisfactory to all concerned and will overcome the difficulties with which we are faced today. As I said earlier, as soon as it is convenient I will go with the honourable member and we will have a look at the points at issue, and perhaps between us we will be able to work out a solution to the problem.

Mr. Graham: Will you agree to the member for Victoria Park coming with us?

Mr. NALDER: Yes; I do not mind who goes. But I do not think it is necessary to have a large number.

Mr. Graham: The member for Victoria Park and I raised the issue here, and I think it might be fair if both of us were to go with you.

Mr. NALDER: I am happy about that. However, I wanted this opportunity to say that in my opinion the criticism with reference to the manager was quite unjustified. The honourable member did not see the manager; he rang him on the telephone; and I think we all appreciate the fact that if we are not reaching agreement on all points we get to the stage where our nerves become strained and perhaps we say things we may not be happy about afterwards. I think that is the situation with everybody.

Mr. Fletcher: And you blow a fuse.

Mr. NALDER: If we were close enough we might. I was going to make some reference to the situation that was mentioned by the member for Victoria Park, but at this stage I do not think any good purpose would be served by doing so. The honourable member said I got up in my seat in the office and I looked like "he didn't know what."

Mr. Davies: I said you nearly jumped across the table at me.

Mr. NALDER: At that stage I think I had every reason to do so; because the deputation had been introduced to discuss a certain subject, and when no satisfactory conclusion had resulted from our discussions, the honourable member introduced a new subject altogether, which had not been discussed previously. That is the reason why I did it.

Mr. Davies: Tell us what it was. It was the difference between the policy of your Government and the policy of the Opposition.

Mr. NALDER: We were not discussing policy at the time; we were discussing what the State Electricity Commission ought to be doing with meter boxes. However, the subject has been discussed; and, as far as I am concerned, I am satisfied to let it stop at that, and I shall meet the honourable members concerned, or any other member who would like to discuss it with me, and we may be able to find a solution.

Mr. May: Would you be prepared to go to Collie and have talks there?

Mr. NALDER: I have never refused to go anywhere when an invitation has been issued.

Mr. May: Thank you very much; you will get one.

Mr. NALDER: A lot depends on the urgency and need for a discussion on any matter.

Mr. May: But will you come if we arrange a conference?

Mr. NALDER: I have never refused an invitation to go anywhere—

Mr. May: Thank you.

Mr. NALDER: —and neither have I refused to discuss things with a member in my office. I thank the House for giving me this opportunity, first of all to give an outline of the activities of the State Electricity Commission and also to make a contribution with reference to the positioning of meter boxes in the metropolitan area.

MR. DAVIES (Victoria Park) [10.10 p.m.]: I am delighted that the Minister spoke tonight. I asked him yesterday, or the day before, whether he intended to give us any information about our dissatisfaction on the positioning of meter boxes and he said he would. Because he has, and particularly because of the information he has given us, I think he deserves our thanks. I am pleased to note the conciliatory mood he is in. I do not know if it has anything to do with the end of the session; but as I told him before, if the same sort of attitude had been taken regarding our complaints it would not have wasted the Minister's time, the time of the S.E.C., my time, the typist's time, the postman's time, and the time of many other people.

I think our requests have been reasonable. Had they been unreasonable, impractical, dangerous, or prejudicial to established principles, we would not have pursued the case further. However, let me say that at no time have I ever queried the efficiency of the State Electricity Commission, although it seems to have been reported in the paper from time to time, or at least the inference has been there, that the department itself has been attacked. That is not so, for the very good reason, as the Minister mentioned tonight, that considerable progress has been made by the commission and I have great admiration for the department.

I did make some reference to the general manager, and I think not without justification. However, there is no need to pursue the matter further. We have other cases that have been brought to our notice where we think injustice has been done—that is, the member for Balcatta and I think so—and I am sure the Minister will be able to show us whether he is right and we are wrong, or the other way around, when we make an inspection.

I do not intend to delay the House further except to say that, like the Minister, I feel that out of all this some benefit will come to many ordinary householders who have been faced with a problem. I look forward to a successful conclusion to our visits to the places which we have mentioned.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [10.13 p.m.]: I, too, want to pay a tribute to the Minister for the tone he introduced into these discussions. If only the general manager of the S.E.C. had been similarly disposed there would have been no occasion for the member for Victoria Park, or me, to have brought the matter to the attention of this House. I do not want it to be thought by anybody—and I detected some smirks from the other side of the House—that the member for Victoria Park and the member for Balcatta are isolated on this question; because I am aware of the fact that there are members of the Country Party who are concerned about the same issues; and there are members of the Liberal Party in this House, including one of the Ministers, who considers that he has more warrant for criticism than either the member for Victoria Park or the member for Balcatta.

It so happens that two members on the Opposition side of the House gave vent to their thoughts and experiences, not because of any sadistic satisfaction they might derive from it but because they were concerned at the attitude of a department and its chief in the way they deal with clients, without reason and stupidly and absurdly. I am certain that the Minister will agree wholeheartedly when he sees some of the stupid things which have been insisted on by this department. Nobody wants to criticise, and if it is possible to resolve the problem in order that at least in the future the right thing will be done then certainly something will have been achieved.

I want to say that I think undue emphasis was given in the Press, and I hope that this is not construed as an attack. I am afraid that that word is a little overdone. I have re-read the remarks I have made, and which occupied approximately half an hour, describing the situation, which I will not repeat now.

I started off apologetically, almost, by saying that I had to utter in the House what I felt was my duty, and I was doing that with considerable reluctance. I mentioned stages of the process from the beginning to the end, and the reaction and the attitude of the member of the department.

I feel I was critical only to the extent that it was necessary to be critical, because I say to the Minister, and indeed to all members of this House, that if I told them some of the things that have been perpetrated by this department in the matter of placement of meters they would not believe me. It is necessary for them to see this with their own eyes; and for that reason I am deeply appreciative that the Minister has agreed to accompany us on a day which is mutually convenient.

I am with the Minister when he says that the regulations have been faithfully carried out. Of course they have; because the regulation says, that the meter,

shall be placed on a dwelling or structure, wherever the electricity commission decides. So if it is to be placed in the middle of a bedroom window, or the front door, or on the back roof, it still accords with the regulations. But what we protest about is that the meters are required to be placed in some of the most absurd positions.

These are not exaggerated statements on my part; I am prepared to back up every word and adjective I have employed by visually demonstrating to the Minister that what I have said is true. Since speaking initially, quite a number of letters have been addressed to me, and following their receipt certain inspections have been made.

I would say to the Minister that some who are architects and builders have similarly discussed the matter with me, and they seem resentful of the peremptory attitude of the State Electricity Commission particularly in its inconsistency. These professional men who design and who construct have had to endure all sorts of indignities because of an irrational and an inconsistent approach.

I daresay it is understandable that an officer or an inspector in a certain district would have a slightly different interpretation from a similar officer in another district. But one would expect that when the anomalies are brought to the attention of the person charged with the responsibility of administering the department he would regard the matter sympathetically in order to iron out these anomalies.

Unfortunately, however, that attitude was not forthcoming, and regretfully there was an attitude of arrogance, of domination, of short shrift, and of impatience; an attitude of not being prepared to listen to reason and accept reason.

Mr. Nalder: We have heard all this.

Mr. GRAHAM: That is so. I am making the position, I hope and trust, perfectly clear; that it is not a question of a couple of members who have conspired to make an attack on a public servant; it is the case of a couple of members who felt it was their bounden duty and responsibility to bring the matter before the House; and that is precisely what has been done.

I only wish the attitude of the general manager were more in conformity with that of the secretary of the S.E.C. Nobody could hope for a more gentlemanly and sympathetic approach and reception than one gets when one has occasion to interview Mr. Blockley.

I close on the note that there was in my speech the sharpest contrast, because shortly after addressing myself on this subject when, again I say regretfully, I felt it my duty to make some criticism of the State Electricity Commission and its General Manager, I had occasion to approach the Metropolitan Water Board.

My communication was addressed to the General Manager of that instrumentality. Within the course of a few days the Chairman of the Metropolitan Water Board called up here at Parliament House to see me, with a view to discussing the problem, and to hear some further elaboration from me in order to have a full appreciation of the particular problem. He then gave me an assurance that investigations would be carried out in order to see whether it was possible to do something to alleviate a certain problem. Surely we, who are members of Parliament are acting not from personal pique, or any personal desire; all we ask is that we be facilitated in our attempts to render service to our people.

Any person who is a member of this Parliament has a sense of responsibility; and if a departmental officer is able to demonstrate the impracticability of, or is able to produce arguments against, a certain proposition, then members are prepared to accept that and, of course, we do on many occasions; because we miss perhaps as often as we have successes when making representations on behalf of our districts, and of people who have reposed their confidence in us.

I think, therefore, that it may not be a bad idea if there were a greater concentration given to this matter of public relations so far as Government instrumentalities are concerned, not only in respect of members of Parliament, but in respect of the public generally.

My final word is again to express my thanks to the Minister; and to say that I look forward with eager anticipation to the day when together we travel around and look at some of these things of which we have spoken. I hope and trust, with him, that it will be possible to work out a solution that will not mean any loss of dignity to the State Electricity Commission, but will give greater satisfaction to the public and to those who are helping in building and designing operations for them.

MR. TONKIN (Melville—Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.24 p.m.]: I was disappointed that the Minister in his review of the activities of the State Electricity Commission did not explain why it was necessary for the commission to budget for a profit of over £1,000,000 next year. I have steadily watched the accounts of the commission from year to year. In its early years it made what was regarded as a reasonable profit and carried on quite nicely. But in later years its profit has been jumping by hundreds of thousands of pounds a year; and now I am astonished to see that it is budgeting for a net profit exceeding £1,000,000.

State instrumentalities are not expected to do this, unless they are to be used as taxing machines. Their object is to provide a service as efficiently and cheaply as

possible in the interests of the people. They are entirely different from privately-owned concerns, because those concerns are in the business to make a profit for their shareholders, and they strive to make as much profit as they can. But that should not be the purpose of a State instrumentality; which should be there to serve the public and the business community as efficiently as possible, and as cheaply as possible, without being a burden upon the taxpayers.

I cannot see why it becomes necessary for this commission to budget for £1,000,000 profit; and that having no regard for the unread meterage which is very substantial, and which must add to this profit. So the true position is that the net profit anticipated for next year—if we are to take into consideration the unread meterage—will be well over £1,500,000.

I say there is no warrant for this, and it should be appreciated that in this last year the commission has altered its method of charging, with the result that the old age pensioners—the people who are consumers of small amounts of current—have now to pay more than they paid before; substantially more. I cannot see the reason for that.

I saw a letter sent to the commission asking for an explanation of the imposition of this service charge that has gone on. The answer was that this change had cost the commission money. That is scant satisfaction to the persons to whom the change has meant an increase in cost; for them to be told, "You are not to worry about this because in making this change the commission has actually lost money."

This is all very well for the commission which is making £700,000 profit already, and budgeting for over £1,000,000 next year. Therefore I say the explanation is unsatisfactory, and the position, in my view, is such as to justify a reduction in the price. Not only would that help to some extent in decreasing the burdens of people generally, but it must assist industry; and that should be one of the aims of this State—to reduce the power costs to a minimum, and not to run the service in order to amass large profits. I do not know what is in the mind of the commission in this regard, but I am certain the time has almost arrived when a halt must be called to this increasing profit, and that the people should be given the benefit.

I hope when we are discussing these matters next session the situation will be such that recognition will have been made of the increasing costs and the increasing profits, and that some steps will have been taken to adjust the position.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

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

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with an amendment.

Council's Amendment: In Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. W. A. Manning) in the Chair; Mr. Brand (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment made by the Council is as follows:—

Clause 7, page 2, line 29—Delete all words after the word "is" and substitute the following words:— "amended by inserting after the word 'inoperative' in line 13 the words 'as against the commissioner.'"

Mr. BRAND: I am going to agree to the suggested amendment of the Legislative Council. When this debate took place in another place, it was adjourned for the purpose of allowing the Treasury and other officials to examine the position. It is now considered by them that this process as against the one suggested in our Bill and put up by the draftsman achieves the purpose and avoids the anomalies and problems which have evidently been experienced under the Commonwealth Income Tax Act.

It was considered by the Legislative Council that the words originally used could bring about certain difficulties. This amendment will achieve the purpose we originally set out to achieve. I move—

That the amendment made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not know sufficient about this to be sure of the exact position. I trust that this does not mean that the amendment will in any way affect the return to the Treasurer with regard to taxation. I thought one remark the Treasurer made suggested that that might be so. On that assurance I am quite happy, because the Legislative Council has no power to amend a money Bill if, in doing so, it affects the revenue of the State. Provided that is not the position, I have no objection to the amendment.

Mr. BRAND: I can assure members this in no way affects the income. I have had this matter thoroughly examined by the

experts and the amendment is purely to avoid legal problems which have resulted from time to time on account of this wording, which was taken from the Commonwealth Income Tax Act.

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

Report

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

Sitting suspended from 10.38 to 11 p.m.

BILLS (2): RETURNED

1. Appropriation Bill.
2. Loan Bill, £27,170,000.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

CLOSE OF SESSION*Complimentary Remarks*

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [11 p.m.]: Nothing now remains but for me, at the end of the first session of the 25th Parliament, to wish you a very happy Christmas and a healthful and prosperous new year; I thank you, Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, and the Deputy Chairmen of Committees, for the way in which you and they have controlled and chaired the debates in this Chamber; and trust that Christmas will be a most happy and cheerful time for you and your families.

To the officers of our House go out our thanks for their continued efficiency; for the very cheerful and courteous way they have looked after the members of this House.

In making reference to the officers, I take this opportunity to express to Mr. Fred Islip, the Clerk of the Assembly, our very best wishes for his retirement, for he intends to retire at the end of this financial year, and therefore this will be his last session. He has been in this Parliament for some 50 years. He started as a messenger. I think he has been Clerk of this Assembly for some 18 years, and Clerk Assistant for 15 years. I am sure I speak for every member when I say that Mr. Islip has served us well.

He has served us well inasmuch as his judgment and advice on all matters have been close to being exactly right; as right as one can get in interpreting Standing Orders. Very often this is only a matter of opinion. His advice to you, Mr. Speaker, to the Chairman of Committees of all Governments of different

political complexion, and to other Speakers drawn from all parties, has been quite impartial, and was drawn up on a sound basis.

As the chief officer in this Assembly he has stood firmly for the principles and traditions of the House; he has done all he could to uphold the intention of the Standing Orders. Having served under 13 Speakers and 13 Premiers, starting off with the late John Scaddan, he goes out on retirement with our good wishes. We all hope that his retirement will be all that he has planned and hoped for; and we hope that he will live long with his wife and family to enjoy every day of his retirement.

I now want to express to the Deputy Premier my very real thanks for his loyalty and help in every direction. To the deputy leader of my party, the Minister for Industrial Development, I offer my thanks for his untiring efforts, his loyalty, and his willingness to undertake any job at any time. To my ministerial colleagues, and particularly to all those who have loyally supported the coalition Government, and who sit on the backbenches, I also offer my thanks.

I would like to express to the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and all those who sit behind them our very best wishes for the festive season. Of necessity at times in this House there must be wordy battles, but so long as we can leave with the feeling that we have spoken up for the principles for which we stand, then we have done our best. We can feel proud that we, as members of Parliament representing the people, have done the job for which we have been elected. That is important. I hope this festive season will be a happy one for them, and that in the New Year prosperity and good health will continue to follow them.

To the *Hansard* staff might I express our thanks once again for the hard work they have put in, for the courteous manner in which they have helped us, for the way in which many of our speeches have been remodelled, and indeed for the way in which they have taken down for many long hours the speeches made in this House.

This brings me to mention the impending retirement of the Chief Hansard Reporter (Mr. Chinery). He is serving his last session of Parliament, and I think it is his intention to retire in August, 1966. In the meantime he is going on an overseas visit, and presumably he will not be recording the speeches of this House again. The job of Chief Hansard Reporter is an exacting one, and entails long hours of work during the week as well as the weekends. I am sure that we all express to Mr. Chinery, who has served for 30 sessions in this House, our very best wishes on his retirement and to thank him for the job he has done for us and the way in which he performed it.

To the officers, to those who serve us in this Parliament, to Mr. Burton and Mrs. Burton, to the stewards and all the others who look after us, including those at our post office and the typistes, we say Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Those are my sentiments. We are living in rather challenging times, and the hope of each and everyone of us is that peace will continue, and that our country will continue to prosper so that we can make a contribution to the general peace of the world. I conclude with the old saying, "peace and goodwill to all men."

MR. HAWKE (Northam—Leader of the Opposition) [11.7 p.m.]: I would like to join in supporting the remarks made by the Premier. I express to you, Mr. Speaker, my personal appreciation of the manner in which you have discharged your duties during the session. I think I speak on behalf of all members on this side in that regard. You have presided over the House with all of those qualities which go to make an efficient and acceptable Speaker to both sides of the House, and to individual members.

I particularly join with the Premier in expressing the remarks which he made regarding Mr. Fred Islip. I would like to think that I have been here as long as Fred. However, he started before I did in this Parliament, and I have nothing but the highest regard for him. He has discharged his duties, as the Premier said, in the highest possible manner. His quietness of spirit and his reliability are qualities which have endeared him very much to all those who have come into contact with him in connection with the work of Parliament. I know that those who have worked with him on the staff, including several Speakers, have greatly appreciated the help from Mr. Islip. I certainly trust that both he and Mrs. Islip, and members of their family, will enjoy many happy years in future in his retirement.

Mr. Chinery has been a very capable officer. I think the *Hansard* which is produced in Western Australia, apart from its unflinching accuracy to the extent of almost 100 per cent., is one of the best *Hansards* in any part of Australia, and certainly better than the one produced in the national capital of Canberra.

I naturally support to the full the remarks of appreciation which the Premier has expressed to the many people in this Parliament House who assist in the work we have to undertake. I specially, of course, thank the members on this side, including the Deputy Leader. I want to say a special word of thanks to the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Norton) who has been acting Whip for our party during practically the whole of this session. He has done that job in a willing, friendly, and

efficient way and we appreciate very much indeed the manner in which he carried out all those duties.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAWKE: I also wish to thank the Leader of our party in the Legislative Council and all our members there who have stuck with him in the tough battle which they, in the minority—the same as we are here—have waged. They have not won a great many victories, but here and there they have succeeded because of the merit and argument in their case. I noticed that the Premier did not mention the Pressmen, and I am sure it was an oversight.

Mr. Brand: It was.

Mr. HAWKE: I would like to say a very sincere thank you to practically all the Pressmen. I think, except for the odd one, they have done an exceptionally good job. Why the odd one has got off the beaten track of reasonable approach, I am not proposing to say. I know that the job of a Pressman is not the easiest job in the world. Naturally some people in the newspaper world, not the working journalists, think our job as members of Parliament is about the easiest and most overpaid in the world. I do not profess to know how difficult the job of a Pressman is, but I do know the working journalist has a pretty hard row to hoe in some situations.

It would be a poor journalist who did not know what his editor is keen about and keen to publish at certain times and it must be a pretty tough job for the working journalist to keep within the code of ethics of his profession and at the same time please his superiors on the editorial staff. I have had a great deal to do with Pressmen over the years and have always had a very high respect for about 99 per cent. of them.

Before I conclude I would certainly like to join in wishing you, the Premier and his colleagues, all my colleagues, and all members on both sides, and everyone associated with Parliament—even all the Pressmen—a cheerful Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Deputy Premier) [11.14 p.m.]: I would like to join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in support of the sentiments expressed to all those in the Parliament of Western Australia for the work that has been done in the interests of Parliament generally.

I have not yet had the opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to the high position of Speaker. I will do that now although it is getting late, but, I feel, not too late. I also express the wish that you will enjoy the season we are now approaching, together with your good wife and family.

I would also like to thank the members of the Country Party for their support and especially the Deputy Leader (Mr. Lewis) who kept things moving while I was overseas. I have not found any criticism to level against him except that he takes too long to answer questions. However, that was only this evening.

I would like to say to Mr. Islip how much I have appreciated over the years the courtesy and approach he has made to any problem put to him. Members of Parliament have been assisted in many ways by the friendly attitude of the officers of the House. Mr. Islip has helped considerably with advice and information time and time again and I would like to associate myself with the best wishes already expressed to him, his wife, and his family. Our best wishes are extended to him for good health and happiness in the future.

It is not necessary for me to cover all those who have already been mentioned, but I would like, on behalf of the Country Party, to wish all members of this House a very happy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) [11.17 p.m.]: The Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Premier, and members: My task is a somewhat difficult one inasmuch as firstly I feel I should thank all those—I refer, of course, to the staff—who have assisted me in the conduct of the Assembly during the session. To these people—the Clerks, the messengers, and all those associated with the House, including, of course, the constable—I offer my thanks, because without them the Speaker's job would be quite impossible.

I would like to thank the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Deputy Premier for their kind sentiments expressed about me and to say to members generally that I have, as Speaker, had perhaps the easiest session I have known as Speaker. Generally speaking I am very well treated as a Speaker. I have a good House to preside over and I do, not run into the difficulties that beset some of my colleagues in other Houses of Parliament; and I am very grateful.

Let me assure you that I appreciate very much the courtesies that all members of the Ministry, the Opposition, and the staff have shown me; and I would like to reciprocate the sentiments expressed to me and those who are near and dear to me in connection with the festive season.

I feel on this occasion it would be quite wrong of me not to make some reference to the very great debt of gratitude that I owe to the Clerk, Mr. Islip. I think it may be of interest to some members of Parliament—particularly the newer members—if I were very briefly to let you know his record.

He was appointed to the temporary staff on the 22nd July, 1915, and to the permanent staff on the 1st January, 1916. I was under six years of age then. He was promoted to Clerk of Records and Accounts on the 14th October, 1931; and then promoted to Clerk Assistant and Sub-Librarian on the 11th September, 1933. He was appointed Librarian on the 21st September, 1945, and became Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and Secretary of the Joint Printing Committee on the 1st April, 1948. On the 19th April, 1948, he was appointed a justice of the peace. During that period, in one connection or another, he has rendered assistance—as the Premier has pointed out—to no fewer than 13 Speakers.

I think that, with the exception of The Hon. J. B. Sleeman, he has had to put up with me for longer than anyone else in this House and presumably, if I might use a simile, I am the last child that he has reared. I trust I can show due respect for the person responsible for my upbringing without wishing to visit any of my deficiencies on him. However, I must say a Speaker naturally has a particular relationship with his clerk, and I have been singularly fortunate.

I have noticed in my travels that Mr. Islip's reputation has spread far beyond Western Australia. He is looked up to by clerks of all Houses throughout Australia, including the Federal House, and I might add that in my overseas travels I had numerous people ask me if that fellow Islip was still with me and, if so, what a lucky chap I was. I think Mr. Islip has really cut out a niche for himself and the Parliament of Western Australia has been very much better for the very long and very noble service that he has rendered to it.

I might add that he has done a sterling job for us over many years as secretary of the C.P.A. In fact I believe it was largely through his efforts—and I say this without wishing in any way to

detract from any work that other people may have put in—that our branch is functioning as well as it is and the C.P.A. has come to mean as much to us as it has. I am certain the C.P.A. will go on and do even greater things for us.

I think we are also fortunate that, largely as a result of the work he has done, we have a very good staff in the Assembly; and I have no doubt that the good work he has done will live on after him, as it were, and that we will get the benefit of his work and his example for many years to come.

Now, on behalf of the staff I wish to thank the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Deputy Premier for the very kind remarks they have seen fit to pass. I thank the gentlemen concerned and I make a special effort on behalf of Mr. Islip to thank people for the very many kind things that have been said. He is, of course, completely silent in these matters so I am afraid the task falls to me to express his appreciation of the sentiments that have been expressed. I cannot very well thank myself on his behalf, but at least I thank everybody else.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier) [11.24 p.m.]: We might have an opportunity when Mr. Islip can speak for himself.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): I am sure we will.

Mr. BRAND: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date to be fixed by the Speaker.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.25 p.m.