

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: This Bill has every merit. It is submitted in plain truthful language and stipulates what is wanted. I have put human dignity into it. I think a voteless person is a second-class citizen. I told the women that when I was fighting for the vote for this House. I also told the womenfolk of the honourable members belonging to the Liberal and Country parties. I told them that a man's right of democracy is in his vote.

What the honourable Mr. Strickland said just now is true. It was true in the early goldfields days when mine managers and officers of the mines were requested to serve on local government authorities. The honourable Mr. Heitman's uncle was there and therefore the honourable Mr. Heitman knows I am speaking the truth.

It is time this camouflage, untruthfulness, and dishonesty was banished from our society. It is about time we lived as honest, democratic people, and it is time this Government woke up to the fact that the writing is on the wall. If this Government does not bring democracy into this community of ours, it will not survive, but will go out of existence. I am not going to bring the axe on my head by following that statement up and indicating what I mean.

I thank honourable members of the Labor Party who have supported me and I thank those who have been magnanimous enough to express their opinions on the Bill. I hope that the Minister when he says his prayers might realise that democracy is worth something and will come back and cause the Bill to be passed. We never know! I commend the Bill to the House.

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

Ayes—12

Hon. D. P. Dellar	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. J. D. Teahan

(Teller)

Noes—14

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. H. K. Watson

(Teller)

Pair

Aye

No

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. L. Loton
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Majority against—2.

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

House adjourned at 10.49 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 14th October, 1964

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Before we commence questions, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the fact that the questions addressed to the Premier will be answered by the Deputy Premier because of the impaired eyesight of the former.

DRAINAGE IN BASSENDEAN AREA

Press Statement by Minister

1. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:
 - (1) Did he see and read the report published in *The West Australian* on page 7 of Friday, the 9th October, and headlined "Wild Blames Council for Poor Drainage"?
 - (2) Is the statement attributed to him true in all particulars?
 - (3) Did he ascertain from the council concerned what actions it had taken and what work was planned?
 - (4) In view of the statements of the Public Health Commissioner, the council's health inspector and its engineer, does he not consider his remarks unwarranted and unjust and deserving of an apology to the shire council?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The presentation was not completely factual in that it created the impression that some general remarks of mine were specifically related to the Bassendean Shire Council. What I said was that it was no good crying over spilt milk in these things, but it appeared that in the main it was the fault of the local authority for allowing people to build before the Government of the day had put in the drainage. People bought land in these areas because it was cheaper, and before granting a building permit it was the council's responsibility to see that the land was reasonably drained. All that most local authorities were thinking of was the rates—the more people they got into the district, the more rates they would receive.

Mrs. Smith, the lady who led the deputation, inquired was it correct that the Bassendean council had been asked to contribute towards a drainage scheme and I replied in the affirmative, adding that the Metropolitan Water Supply Department was responsible for provision of the main drains

and the local authority for subsidiary drainage into the main drains, and the residents were the meat in the sandwich between the local authority and the M.W.S.

The last two winters had been unprecedented, and there had been drainage problems in many areas. It was difficult to know where to start first. I indicated that some surveys had been made and that I would discuss the matter immediately with the chief engineer; what the deputation had said about the septic systems was really frightening and I promised to look at the problem as constructively as possible.

(3) This was already known.

(4) No.

T.A.B. BETTING BILL BRIBERY ALLEGATIONS

Tabling of Report of Royal Commission

2. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Premier: In view of the fact that one has never been tabled or presented to Parliament, will he now lay on the Table of this House a copy of the report of the Royal Commission into allegations of bribery in connection with the Totalisator Agency Board Betting Bill 1960?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

Yes.

The report was tabled.

POWER BOATS REGISTRATION

Policing

3. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Works:
- (1) Is he aware that at certain holiday resorts, especially at holiday times, only about 10 per cent. of power boats using outboard motors are registered?
 - (2) Is he satisfied that the Harbour and Light Department has sufficient inspectors, motor vehicles, and boats to ensure that registration is being undertaken?
 - (3) What increases in the abovementioned items have been made since registration of power boats came into being?
 - (4) What increases are proposed?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) No. The department does not agree with the figure of 10 per cent.
- (2) One of the terms of reference for the Royal Commission on Safety of Boats covered this aspect and the commissioner's report is awaited.

(3) One speed boat and five honorary inspectors.

(4) Answered by (2).

ROADS IN PILBARA DISTRICT

Bituminisation

4. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Works:

What is the amount of bituminising work to be carried out in the Pilbara district in the next 12 months, and where is it to be done?

Mr. WILD replied:

Under its 1964-65 programme of works the Main Roads Department has made provision for the following surfacing work in the Pilbara district:—

North-West Coastal Highway:

Re-sealing 12 feet wide for a distance of nine miles between 1,174M and 1,183M pegs at an estimated cost of £4,000.

Point Samson-Roebourne-Witte-noom Road:

Re-sealing eight miles between Point Samson and Roebourne at an estimated cost of £9,600.

Point Samson-Roebourne-Witte-noom Road:

Reconstruction and sealing of six miles between 52M and 58M pegs (00 = Roebourne) at an estimated cost of £7,500.

Port Hedland Town Streets:

Funds have been provided for the extension of the surfacing of Sutherland Street for a distance of .32 of a mile.

NORTH-WEST PLANNING COMMITTEE

Programme of Work

5. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for the North-West:

What programme has been arranged for the committee known as the North-West Planning Committee for the next 12 months?

Mr. COURT replied:

The North-West Planning Authority is composed of senior officers. Its work will be of a continuing nature and not necessarily regulated by yearly programmes.

It is working in close co-operation with the Northern Division of the Commonwealth Department of National Development to assess the basic resources of the north-west portion of Western Australia and to carry out investigations and planning for developmental projects.

DECEASED PERSONS' ESTATES*Number Exceeding £20,000, and Classification*

6. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Justice:

- (1) During the year ended the 31st December, 1963, how many deceased persons left estates valued for probate in excess of £20,000?
- (2) Of these, how many in total fall within the general classification of farmers, graziers, pastoralists, agriculturalists, orchardists, and allied designations, including where prefixed with such as "formerly," "retired," "widow of," etc.?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) 171.
- (2) 74.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS*Delay in Tabling*

7. Mr. W. A. MANNING asked the Premier:

Further to my questions concerning departmental reports, on the 31st October, 1963 and the 6th November, 1963, will he now advise the result of his inquiry into the possibility of speeding up the presentation of reports?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

Following the questions asked by the honourable member last year, the attention of all Ministers was directed to this matter and they were requested to take appropriate action in regard to the departments and instrumentalities under their respective jurisdictions.

DRUGS: ADVERTISING AND SALE*Legislative Control*

8. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware of *The West Australian* of the 29th February, 1964, reference to a regulation associated with Kefauver-Harris Drug Act of America which requires drug manufacturers to prove that all drugs manufactured since 1938 are not only safe, but do what they claim?
- (2) In view of exaggerated, dangerous, and expensive advertised claims regarding certain drugs sold in Western Australia, and presumably other States, will he—
 - (a) at the next Health Ministers' conference request other State

Ministers to join with him in a joint approach for comparable Federal legislation;

- (b) if unsuccessful in this respect have State legislation brought down to achieve that purpose?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) There is already some power in the Health Act to deal with false or misleading claims for drugs. It is agreed that this does not go far enough. With this in mind the Government has prepared a new Poisons Bill notice of which has been given this afternoon. This will provide power to demand assurances as to the safety of new drugs and to control the sale of all toxic drugs. Similar legislation is expected to be brought down in all States.

Mr. Tonkin: Will it apply to fluoride?

MEAT PROCESSING*Provision of Radiation Plant*

9. Mr. FLETCHER asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is he aware—
 - (a) of *The West Australian*, 24th February, 1964, reference to a meat "pasteurisation" process which keeps meat fresh and tender for periods up to 10 weeks without freezing as a consequence of having been irradiated with radioactive cobalt;
 - (b) that favourable reports have been received on the first six pasteurised lamb carcasses sent from England to Australia;
 - (c) that better appearance, flavour and tenderness is attributed to meat so treated?
- (2) Has any consideration been given to equipping this State's abattoirs with such meat processing plant?
- (3) If not, will he hasten to ensure that Western Australia acquires such plant with a view to ensuring that this State is not disadvantaged in regard to the meat export trade?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) to (3) I am aware that a great deal of work has been done over the last few years in investigating the various methods of preserving food by the application of radiation. Unfortunately, in some instances food so treated was shown to have some toxic properties.

The treatment of food by radiation is a matter of national importance and must be acceptable throughout the Commonwealth before it is put into effect.

There is therefore a special committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council investigating this matter, and the States await guidance from this committee.

LAND AT ESPERANCE

Sales by Esperance Land and Development Company

10. Mr. HART asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Has he seen the report of land sales at Esperance by the Esperance Land and Development Company averaging £2 14s. 2d. per acre with third of holding ploughed and burnt?
- (2) What was the unimproved value per acre price range to the company?
- (3) Are these sales on a freehold basis?
- (4) Has the company incurred—
 - (a) any expense by way of survey and access roads, etc.;
 - (b) any expense other than actual work on holding?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) I have seen the Press report of the 13th October, 1964.
- (2) Four shillings per acre, plus one shilling per acre survey fee.
- (3) The sale of land is subject to the conditions of the Esperance Lands Agreement Act, 1960. Improvements as set out in this agreement are required to be completed before the land is transferred on a freehold basis.
- (4) I have no knowledge of what expenses the company has incurred.

FERTILISERS

Manufacturing Companies and Principal Shareholders

11. Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many fertiliser manufacturing companies are operating in this State?
- (2) Will he supply a list of these companies?
- (3) Who are the principal shareholders in each of these companies and what are their respective holdings?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Four.
- (2) (a) C.S.B.P. and Farmers Ltd.
(b) Cresco Fertilisers (W.A.) Ltd.
(c) Albany Superphosphate Co. Pty. Ltd.
(d) Esperance Fertilisers Pty. Ltd.
- (3) The information sought is not on hand but can be obtained by the honourable member from the Companies Office, T. & G. Building, Perth.

DRIVERS' LICENSES

Requirements for Visitors

12. Mr. TOMS asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Do visitors from overseas or the Eastern States have to pass any test relating to drivers' licenses when desiring to drive their own or hire cars in Western Australia?
- (2) Is there any specified time (apart from the expiration of license) for which permission is granted and, if so, what is the period?

Mr. CRAIG replied:

- (1) No. The Traffic Act provides in section 35, in relation to visitors from overseas, and section 36, for visitors from the Eastern States, that such visitors may drive in this State on their local licences whilst they are visitors. They not required to undergo any test.
- (2) There is no specified time—apart from expiry of licence—but if the department becomes aware that such a person settles in this State and ceases to be a visitor he would be required to take out a local licence.

CREDIT BETTING

Ministerial Statement in 1960

13. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that in 1960 the then Minister for Police, speaking in Parliament on behalf of his Government, said—
 - (a) "Credit betting off-course in totalisator regions will no longer be legal and bets will be possible only in cash or against cash deposits or winnings held by the T.A.B.";
 - (b) an agent "won't be able to encourage credit betting"?

Tasmanian Report on Position in Western Australia

- (2) Does not the following extract from page 8 of the report on a proposal to introduce off-course

totalisator betting in Tasmania and which was presented to the Premier of that State this year confirm the fact that credit betting off-course is being carried on in totalisator regions in Western Australia—

"However, there is one important feature in the Western Australian operations which is not contained in the Victorian system in that credit can be extended to a bettor by an agent of the Totalisator Agency Board. As between the agent and the Board all transactions are in cash but as between the agent and the bettor credit can be and is extended. This is a circumstance which has played an important part in the extension of the system in Western Australia?"

Encouragement by T.A.B. Agents

- (3) Does not the granting of credit to bettors by agents of the T.A.B. encourage credit betting in abrogation of his Government's assurance to Parliament?
- (4) Apart from the desirability or otherwise of credit betting is it not of the greatest importance that emphasis be placed upon the maintenance of the integrity of Parliament rather than on materialism?

Action to Rectify Existing Position

- (5) What action does he propose to take to rectify the existing position?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) Yes; I believe so.
- (2) Whilst I accept no responsibility for what does or might appear in the Tasmanian report, it is known that it is quite legal in this State for an agent of the board to maintain a backer's account in credit. By so doing a lot of betting that would normally be carried on through illegal bookmakers is converted into legal betting with the T.A.B.
- (3) and (4) In asking these questions I can only assume that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has overlooked the fact that between September and November, 1961, with a full knowledge of the board's current practice, Parliament rejected a Bill introduced by him on this matter.
- (5) No action is contemplated.

WATER RATING

Inclusion of Darlington in Metropolitan Scheme

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

When early this year he refused the request of a deputation that Darlington be included in the metropolitan water supply scheme for rating purposes, how did he distinguish between that district and Kalamunda, seeing that there appears to be little difference in the strength of the claims between the two places?

Mr. WILD replied:

The request of the deputation was referred to the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Board which, after considering all aspects, decided not to take over Darlington at that stage.

HOUSING FOR TEACHERS

Agreement with Teachers' Union, Interest Rates, and Erections

15. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has he reached agreement with the Teachers' Union in the matter of housing?
- (2) If "Yes" what interest rate is to be used in the calculation of rents?
- (3) How many homes is it proposed to erect for teachers this financial year?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) The union has been advised of the Government's proposals in respect of Government employees' housing, which no doubt are now being considered by that body.
- (2) No specific rate of interest is to be applied as charges are to be determined on a fair rental basis.
- (3) Not yet determined; but a sum of £250,000, as mentioned in my speech on the Loan Estimates, is to be spent this year on Government employees' housing generally.

THEATRE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Treasury Grants

- 16A. Mr. CORNELL asked the Treasurer:

- (1) What amounts, if any, have been contributed to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust by the Treasury in each of the following financial years:—

Year ended the 30th June, 1962;
year ended the 30th June, 1963;
year ended the 30th June, 1964?

- (2) What moneys, if any, have been disbursed, and what organisations have participated and to what extent) by way of direct financial aid from the Treasury to local theatre endeavours in this State in each of the following financial years:—

Year ended the 30th June, 1962;
 year ended the 30th June, 1963;
 year ended the 30th June, 1964?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

	£	
(1) Year ended the 30th June, 1962	5,000	
Year ended the 30th June, 1963	5,500	
Year ended the 30th June, 1964	10,000	
(2)	National Theatre Inc.	Patch Theatre
	£	£
Year ended the 30th June, 1962	1,703	750
Year ended the 30th June, 1963	2,081	—
Year ended the 30th June, 1964	2,305	—

ADULT EDUCATION BOARD

Treasury Grants for 1962 to 1964

- 16B. Mr. CORNELL asked the Treasurer:

What amounts have been made available by the Treasury to the Adult Education Board in each of the following financial years:—

Year ended the 30th June, 1962;
 year ended the 30th June, 1963;
 year ended the 30th June, 1964?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

	£
Year ended the 30th June, 1962	5,850
Year ended the 30th June, 1963	5,850
Year ended the 30th June, 1964	6,850

Tabling of File on £2,000 Grant by Government

17. Mr. CORNELL asked the Treasurer: Will he lay on the Table of the House the correspondence relative to the grant of £2,000 to the Adult Education Board referred to in part (6) of my question 20 of the 16th September last?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied: Yes.

THEATRE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Ballet and Drama in Country Districts

18. Mr. CORNELL asked the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that the ballet is more popular and better received in country districts than are drama performances?
- (2) Is it not so that the three tours of drama in 1964, which were made possible by contributions from the Government and the Elizabethan Theatre Trust prevented tours of ballet?
- (3) When the Adult Education Board was asked to sponsor a tour of ballet in the country districts in 1964, what reasons were advanced for refusing the requests?
- (4) Have requests to the Elizabethan Theatre Trust from ballet organisations for assistance all been refused?
- (5) Is it correct that when ballet in this State is brought under the direct control and/or influence of the Adult Education Board and/or Professor Alexander, the Government will extend assistance thereto?

Representative of Theatre Arts on Elizabethan Theatre Trust

- (6) Will he consider ways and means with a view to recommending that this State's theatre arts be provided with a representative on the Elizabethan Theatre Trust who is—
 - (a) democratically appointed;
 - (b) responsible;
 - (c) fair minded;
 - (d) approachable;
 - (e) qualified;
 - (f) acceptable to those he or she purports to represent?

Grants to Elizabethan Theatre Trust: Use

- (7) Is it a fact that grants from the Elizabethan Theatre Trust are used in defraying—
 - (a) expenses of representative on the trust;
 - (b) grants to the Adult Education Board and National Theatre;
 - (c) professional theatre owners' rentals for Eastern States companies visiting Western Australia;
 - (d) expenses and salaries of singers, dancers, actors and others from the Eastern States?

Financial Backing for Ballet Tours

- (8) Is it a fact that when the Adult Education Board tours National Theatre plays, financial backing is provided, but when ballet is so toured the ballet organisation is forced to provide its own backing?
- (9) When approached by ballet leaders, you stated that the Government provided the Adult Education Board with funds for the touring of ballet. Why is it then that the touring of ballet is not backed by the board?
- (10) Does he agree that in any programme of State subsidisation recognition of ballet, and in particular country tours of ballet, should be included?

Denial of Aid for Certain Theatre Organisations

- (11) Is it not a fact that whilst the Elizabethan Theatre Trust—
 - (a) continues its role as controller-general of State subsidisation, and
 - (b) is so closely linked to the Adult Education Board by virtue of the fact that the principal officer of both is identical,

those theatre organisations who continue to pursue an independent course and elect not to become appendages of the Adult Education Board will continue to be denied financial aid?

Professor Alexander's Proposals for Ballet

- (12) At a recent meeting called by Professor Alexander to discuss future ballet plans, did the Professor refuse to allow discussion on the proposals propounded by him and then close the meeting?
- (13) Did Professor Alexander inform a newspaper reporter prior to the meeting that it had already been decided what form ballet entertainment should take in this State, and that he was going "to bang heads together" to bring this about?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) to (13) Although the Government provides the Elizabethan Theatre Trust and the Adult Education Board with annual grants, which incidentally are only a small fraction of their total income, it does not determine the policies of these bodies.

Both organisations are independent bodies and are responsible for their own affairs, details of which are not available to the Government.

PNEUMOCOONIOSIS COMMITTEE**Tabling of Report**

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

As he is no doubt aware that the recently-tabled report of the committee which inquired into pneumoconiosis has aroused wide interest among mineworkers, and further that the evidence given to the committee was of an expert nature, would he please lay on the Table of this House a transcript of this evidence so that such valuable information can be availed of by those desiring to make a closer study of the subject?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

It will be necessary to reproduce copies of the evidence, and as soon as this has been done, they will be tabled.

ORD RIVER COTTON GROWING**Mechanical Pickers: Cost, Ownership, and Terms of Hiring**

20. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister for Agriculture:
 - (1) How many mechanical cotton pickers are on the Ord River cotton growing scheme?
 - (2) What did each of these mechanical harvesters cost?
 - (3) Are these harvesters State owned?
 - (4) If so, on what terms are they leased, hired or supplied to farmers on the scheme?
 - (5) If not, do the farmers supply these harvesters themselves or are they chargeable against the purchase lease of the land?

Conditions Required from Applicants

- (6) What are the conditions required from applicants for land development on the Ord River scheme?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Five mechanical cotton pickers harvested the 1963-64 crop. It is expected there will be 20 by next harvest.
- (2) Approximately £11,500.
- (3) No.
- (4) Answered by (3).
- (5) Supplied by the farmers.
- (6) Conditions are set out in a brochure issued by the Department of Lands and Surveys as each group of farms is released.

The brochure was tabled.

DAIRY FARM IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Definition and Application

21. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) What is the dairy farm improvement scheme? Does it still operate?
- (2) To whom does it apply?

Qualifications and Assistance Granted

- (3) What qualifications are required to be eligible for assistance under the scheme?
- (4) What is the amount of assistance allowed under the scheme per settler?

Total Expenditure and Acres Involved

- (5) What is the total amount expended on the scheme to date?
- (6) How many acres does this involve?

Eligibility for Assistance

- (7) Would a settler engaged in mixed farming such as fruit-growing and dairy farming be eligible for assistance under the scheme?
- (8) Would the sons of farmers engaged as above be eligible for assistance under the scheme to enable them to remain on the farm?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) The dairy farm improvement scheme still operates. It is a developmental scheme designed to aid butterfat producers on under-developed farms in the south-west dairying districts of the State.
- (2) and (3) Farmers on under-developed farms may apply for assistance provided their farms—
 - (a) contain not less than 160 acres of cultivable land or, if of less acreage, contain soil types adequate to produce 8,200 lb of butterfat in a year;
 - (b) have at least 50 acres of pasture already developed; and
 - (c) produced in the year preceding lodgment of application no less than 1,200 lb nor more than 8,200 lb. of butterfat.
- (4) No limit has been set on individual assistance, and the amount of the loan varies with each settler's circumstances. It is estimated the average loan will finally be between £1,700 and £2,000.

- (5) The Government has allocated £270,000 to the scheme.
- (6) Improvements effected comprise:—
 - 8,730 acres of new clearing,
 - 6,150 acres of part clearing and thinning out,
 - 8,940 acres of cultivation and pasture,
 - 13,800 chains fencing,
 - 189 water points,
 - six purchases of land.
- (7) Yes, provided that income from the sale of butterfat and/or milk products and pigs represents at least 75 per cent. of gross income (including income from the sale of normal farm cattle surplus).
- (8) No.

POTATO GROWING

Rhizoctonia: Reduction and Prevention, and Losses Incurred

22. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Has it been brought to his notice that rhizoctonia fungus disease has been increasing in severity in the Manjimup-Pemberton potato-growing districts?
- (2) As this disease could lead to heavy losses of income to growers, what steps has the Department of Agriculture taken to—
 - (a) prevent the incidence of the disease;
 - (b) reduce the severity?
- (3) Have any losses been incurred by growers in the areas mentioned? If so, what were these losses?

Silver Scurf: Effect and Eradication Measures

- (4) Has the disease known as silver scurf made its appearance in the above districts?
- (5) If so, have any losses been incurred by growers?
- (6) What is the effect on potatoes by the disease?
- (7) What steps has the Department of Agriculture taken for the prevention and eradication of the disease?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Yes. It has been reported that the incidence of rhizoctonia is higher than previously.
- (2) Local officers are advising growers on recommended methods of control.
- (3) Yes. An accurate estimate of losses from this disease is not possible as similar effects may result from other causes.

- (4) Yes.
- (5) Losses have not been significant.
- (6) A minor skin blemish.
- (7) Control measures are not warranted.

INTRASTATE AIR SERVICES

Commonwealth Takeover: Effect

23. Mr. HALL asked the Premier:

- (1) In view of the contemplated takeover action of the Commonwealth Government of the air services within this State and intrastate, can he advise the consequential action to country air services now in existence?

Albany-Bunbury Service: Establishment

- (2) Has the Government given earnest consideration to establishing an air service between Albany and Bunbury?
- (3) If the answer to (2) is "No," will he undertake to have investigations made with a view to implementing such a service between the two country centres in the interests of tourism, trade, and mail services?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) As far as can be ascertained there is no consequential effect on country air services now in existence.
- (2) No.
- (3) In the event of an application for such a service being made, a departmental investigation will be undertaken.

RATES PAYABLE BY PENSIONERS

Amendment of Act: Views of Shire Councils

24. Mr. HALL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

Can he advise the outcome of his representations to the country town councils and shire councils for their views as to amending the Local Government Act, 1960, section 561, which exempts from paying rates only those pensioners actually occupying their properties?

Mr. NALDER replied:

The Local Government Association stated that it considered the provisions relating to deferment of pensioners' rates should not be liberalised any further. The Country Shire Councils' Association also suggested that there should be no alteration to extend

the privileges conferred upon pensioners because it could lead to abuse.

The Country Town Councils' Association, although asked for comment on the 1st of May last, has not yet sent in a definite reply.

An amendment to clarify the Act, but without extending the privileges conferred upon pensioners, has accordingly been included in the Bill now before Parliament.

ALBANY REGIONAL HOSPITAL

Geriatric Ward Additions

25. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Health:

Is it the intention of the Government to add additions to the Albany Regional Hospital geriatric ward for the express purpose of caring for the aged persons unable to be taken care of in the "C"-class hospitals?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

There is no proposal for additions to the Albany Regional Hospital at the present time as the bed capacity of the hospital is sufficient to cater for existing requirements of all classes of beds.

AIR DENTAL SERVICE

Aircraft Hire, Salaries, and Other Expenses

26. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Air Dental Service conducted by the Public Health Department?
- (2) Is the Public Health Department responsible for the costs incurred as a result of the following:—
 - (a) hire of aircraft;
 - (b) salary of each dentist;
 - (c) all other expenses?

Fees: Assessment and Crediting

- (3) Who assesses the fees to be debited against the patient?
- (4) To which department or organisation are the dental fees credited?
- (5) Are the fees for dental services resulting from the air services the same as those charged in the metropolitan area?
- (6) If not, would he indicate the percentage increase and reasons for the difference?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) No—by the Perth Dental Hospital subsidised by the Medical Department.

- (2) Yes—the department meets the net cost in subsidy payments.
- (3) Perth Dental Hospital.
- (4) Perth Dental Hospital.
- (5) No.
- (6) Fifty per cent. higher than in the metropolitan area due to the substantial extra cost of conducting the service.

POULTRY FARMING

Milling Monopolies and Feed Cost Rises

27. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Is he aware of the growing concern of poultry farmers in Western Australia at the growth of monopoly within the milling industry?
- (2) Would he agree that there is a tendency for the small family farms to be forced out of production as a result of feed cost rises coupled with a decline in the net returns from eggs?
- (3) Is he further aware that a large company located at Welshpool has recently installed milling equipment at a cost of many thousands of pounds?
- (4) Does he consider that over-capitalisation of mills will result in further price rises in poultry feed in the near future?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No. There have been amalgamations of flourmillers in Western Australia. With regard to prepared poultry feedstuffs, however, there are still three main millers who are in direct competition, and this has been the position for some years.
- (2) No. The price of prepared poultry feedstuffs has not increased markedly over the last eight years and net returns to farmers for eggs (all grades) have averaged about 3s. 9½d. per dozen for the last five years. The average net return for September this year of 3s. 2d. was approximately the same as for 1960, 1961, and 1962. The annual average net return in those years was 3s. 9½d. The net return for September, 1963, was higher than for September, 1964.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) No. There is no evidence of over-capitalisation in Western Australia in the milling of poultry feedstuffs. The Welshpool mill has had to increase its output because of increased usage

of prepared foods by poultry farmers (including broiler production), and also for pigs, cattle, and sheep. Perseverance with obsolete equipment would have raised costs, weakening their competitive position. The modernisation also takes into account future requirements and should hold costs down in the long term.

LAND AT ESPERANCE

Sales by Esperance Land and Development Company

28. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Lands:

- (1) Is the Press statement of the 13th October, 1964, correct in stating that 11 partly developed farm blocks, described as one-third cleared, burnt, and ploughed, but having no fencing, pasture, water, or buildings, were sold by the American-financed development company to various owners?
- (2) If so, were the usual conditions imposed on the company, or was it operating on a much more generous bracket of conditions than is the case with ordinary Crown land applicants?

Mr. BOVELL replied:

- (1) and (2) The sale of land by the Esperance Land and Development Company as reported in the Press on the 13th October, 1964, was in accordance with the conditions of the Esperance Lands Agreement Act, 1960. The conditions of this agreement relating to improvements will be applied before the land is transferred to the company.

MURESK AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Expulsion of Students

29. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) How many exclusions or expulsions have occurred from the Muresk Agricultural College during the last five years?
- (2) What have been the offences, disciplinary or otherwise, which have caused these exclusions?
- (3) Is smoking by students under the age of 18 a breach of college rules?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) Four.
- (2) It would be improper to make public the reasons why students are excluded or expelled.
- (3) Yes.

LAND AT ESPERANCE*Sales by Esperance Land and Development Company*

30. Mr. MOIR asked the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware of the report contained in *The West Australian* newspaper on the 13th October, of the sale by auction of 11 partly developed farm blocks at Esperance by the Esperance Land & Development Company at prices reported to be up to £9,750 for blocks stated to be one-third cleared, burnt and ploughed, but without water, fencing, pasture, or outbuildings?
- (2) Is this in accordance with the terms of the Esperance Land Agreement No. 36 of 1960 with particular reference to the amended definition of development in that agreement?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The request by the company to sell this land was examined by the State committee appointed under clause 12 of the agreement. The members of this committee are—

The Under-Secretary for Lands
The Surveyor-General
The Divisional Land Superintendent and
The Solicitor-General.

The sale of this land is in accordance with the Esperance Lands Agreement Act, 1960, and development as defined in that Act will be required before the land is transferred to the company.

CRAYFISH*Value of Catches*

31. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Fisheries:

What was the value of crayfish taken in the years from 1956 to 1964 inclusive?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The prime value of crayfish production (i.e., the value to the fishermen) in the years concerned expressed in round figures, was as follows:—

	£
1956 —	1,202,000
1957 —	1,314,000
1958 —	1,893,000
1959 —	2,489,000
1960 —	2,700,000
1961 —	3,540,000
1962 —	3,664,000
1963 —	3,896,000
1964 —	Not yet available.

CENSORSHIP OF LITERATURE*Commonwealth Review and State Representations*

32. Mr. DAVIES asked the Chief Secretary:

With reference to the answer given to my question on uniform literature censorship, can he advise—

- (a) What is the form of the review at Commonwealth level;
- (b) have any representations been made on behalf of this State;
- (c) if so, in what form?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (a) to (c) There have been a number of conferences between the Commonwealth and the various States at senior officer level in an effort to secure uniformity in administration under existing Commonwealth and State laws; and incidentally, a great deal has been achieved.

Since the last conference early this year, the Commonwealth has announced its intention to review legislative requirements as a preliminary for further discussion at ministerial level between the Commonwealth and the States.

This State has indicated that it is prepared to co-operate with the Commonwealth and the other States in considering any necessary legislation to unify censorship under Commonwealth jurisdiction.

Inquiries by my department arising from the honourable member's previous question, indicate that the Commonwealth is still considering the subject matter.

ORD RIVER SCHEME*Commonwealth Financial Assistance: Correspondence from Prime Minister*

33. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has he received any correspondence recently from the Prime Minister in connection with the request for a grant of £30,000,000 for the main Ord River dam scheme?
- (2) If so, will he advise the House of the contents of any correspondence?
- (3) If not, is he in a position to indicate to the House when he may expect an answer?

Mr. NALDER (for Mr. Brand) replied:

- (1) to (3) The latest letter from the Prime Minister on this subject was dated the 9th August, 1964.

A copy is attached to this reply which, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will table.

The copy of the letter was tabled.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PAINTINGS FOR PARLIAMENT HOUSE

Response from Local Authorities

1. Mr. MOIR asked the Speaker:

In reference to the invitation extended to local authorities throughout the State to donate paintings applicable to their localities to be placed in Parliament House, is he in a position to indicate the extent of the response, and when can it be expected that the paintings will be displayed?

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman) replied:

Approximately 30 pictures are to hand.

There is an encouraging interest displayed by shire and town councils in this matter, and it is expected that some 90 or so pictures will ultimately become available for display in Parliament House.

The House Committee will be guided by Mr. Claude Hotchin in the evaluation of the various pictures and in their display to their best advantage.

I cannot say when this matter will be finalised.

INTRASTATE AIR SERVICES

Government's Attitude and Notification of Commonwealth

2. Mr. TONKIN asked the Premier:

- (1) Has the Government determined its attitude on the action of the Commonwealth in controlling air services intrastate?
- (2) If so, has it notified the Commonwealth of its attitude?
- (3) Has it decided to support the Commonwealth, or otherwise?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) to (3) This matter has been discussed and a final decision will be made on Monday, following which the Prime Minister will be advised.

ARMADALE-KELMSCOTT HOSPITAL

Takeover by Department and Reinstatement of Matron Galliers

3. Mr. D. G. MAY asked the Minister for Health:

(1) I must apologise to the Minister for not giving notice of this question, but will he indicate whether it is quite definite that the Department of Health will take over the Armadale-Kelmscott Hospital?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, will he advise if it is the intention of the department to reinstate Matron Galliers?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

(1) and (2) In reply to the honourable member for Canning the situation is as described in the Press some few days ago when it was reported that the Hospital Board of Management held a special meeting in my office, and passed a motion asking the Minister for Health to take over the management of the hospital, following the final decision on legal and technical requirements which go with the exchange from board management to departmental management.

The matter of the reinstatement of Matron Galliers can be determined as soon as the legal technicalities have been finalised; and by legal technicalities I mean the finalisation of accounts, the exchange of land which is owned by the board, and one or two other matters.

BILLS (3): INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING

1. State Housing Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Ross Hutchinson (Chief Secretary), and read a first time.
2. Parliament House Site Permanent Reserve (A[†] 1162) Act Amendment Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Wild (Minister for Works), and read a first time.
3. Town of Claremont (Exchange of Land) Bill.
Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Crommelin, and read a first time.

CHIROPRACTORS BILL

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

BILLS (7): THIRD READING**1. Youth Service Bill.**

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

2. Bibra Lake-Armadale Railway Discontinuance and Land Revestment Bill.

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

3. Fremantle Harbour Trust Act Amendment Bill.

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

4. Used Car Dealers Bill.

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

5. Wills (Formal Validity) Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by Mr. Court (Minister for Industrial Development), and passed.

6. Rights in Water and Irrigation Act Amendment Bill.**7. Water Boards Act Amendment Bill.**

Bills read a third time, on motions by Mr. Wild (Minister for Water Supplies), and transmitted to the Council.

**LONG SERVICE LEAVE ACT
AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)***Report*

Report of Committee adopted.

GOLDMINING INDUSTRY*Reduction of Allowance: Motion*

MR. MOIR (Boulder-Eyre) [5.10 p.m.]:
I move—

We deeply regret the action of the Industrial Commission in reducing the goldmining industry allowance from 30s. to 22s. 6d. per week, thus compelling the workers concerned to make financial sacrifices in order to effect economies in the industry.

This is a very important motion to a great number of people who are engaged in the goldmining industry, with which 10 unions, with varying numbers of members, are connected.

These unions and their members have a record for industrial responsibility which is second to none, in either this or any other State. For many years the mining industry has enjoyed dispute-free periods, and the members concerned are to be congratulated for that record.

I sometimes wonder whether a good industrial record reacts to the advantage of the workers who are prepared to accept the good with the bad over the years, and who are prepared to reconcile differences without resorting to stoppages; because at times, although lip service is given to express appreciation for such efforts on the part of the workers, when an industrial tribunal adjudicates on disputes in the industry it is cognisant of the fact that the workers are a very law-abiding body. What the workers in the goldmining industry have done over the years could react to their detriment.

The gold industry allowance was introduced many years ago into the awards governing the mining unions; it was introduced in 1934. This allowance has applied over a period of approximately 30 years, during which time the mining industry has experienced many ups and downs, including the difficult war years when it received special dispensation from the Commonwealth Government, led by Mr. Curtin, which enabled the industry to retain key men to carry it on until the end of the war, when it was able to absorb a large number of men who returned from war service.

It is as well for me to recount the history of the gold industry allowance so that honourable members of this House will be thoroughly conversant with it, and for the purposes of the record. My authority for this information is derived from the statement of the employers' advocate who appeared before the Industrial Commission during the recent application by the goldmining companies for the abolition of the gold industry allowance. The advocate, tracing the history of the allowance, said—

Since 1934 it had been referred to as an industry allowance, but it could rightly be called a prosperity bonus. In 1934 it was said that because of the prosperity of the industry it was felt that an industry allowance could be granted. The original allowance of 12s. a week had been progressively lifted to £2 in 1954 and subsequently had been reduced to £1 10s. Now faced with the prospect of an increase in the State basic wage the companies are looking for reductions of the industry allowance for some relief.

In this case it was quite apparent that the mining companies sought the deletion of the industry allowance because they were afraid substantial increases would be granted in the State basic wage, the case for which had been before the Industrial Commission for some weeks, and which had been projected for quite some considerable time.

It was quite evident that the mining companies sought to counter any substantial increase which might be made by the Industrial Commission in the basic wage by having it offset by the abolition or

reduction of the industry allowance. Of course, we have seen that their fears were not greatly justified, when we consider what the Industrial Commission granted to the workers of Western Australia and what the total effect of that paltry increase was. We find that the increase granted by the Industrial Commission, in effect, did not mean very much at all.

A basic wage decision was given fixing the one basic wage of £15 8s. for the whole of the State; and when we remember the State was divided into three districts—the metropolitan area, the South-West Land Division, and the goldfields and other areas; and there were at times three different amounts operating to be paid in those various areas—on the face of it, it appeared, according to the commission's determination, that the increase on the mines in Kalgoorlie would be 11s. 4d. per week.

At this point I would like to quote from *The West Australian* of Wednesday, the 23rd September, where, amongst a lot of other comment, the Premier had this to say—

... the commission's decision to apply a uniform basic wage was a good, practical move, though it would impose some difficulties on the goldmining industry.

Evidently the Premier, with his knowledge of the goldmining industry, was of the opinion that while it would impose some difficulties on the industry, those difficulties were not insurmountable. However, on the same day, the commission gave its decision in regard to the application by the employers for a reduction or abolition of the industry allowance in the goldmining industry and granted a reduction of 7s. 6d. per week which, of course, brought the 11s. 4d. gain down to 3s. 10d. as the net gain.

Here I want to mention that when another matter affecting the goldfields was being debated in this House, the Minister for Industrial Development interjected that it was all a question of how much the take-home pay was as far as the miners were concerned. On the face of it, it would appear that even with the reduction of 7s. 6d. the miners have made a gain of 3s. 10d. Is it not rather a coincidence that that was the amount of increase awarded by the Industrial Commission in respect of the basic wage that was to operate in the metropolitan area? However, when we remember that a sum of 2s. 10d. was, at that time, due owing to the increase in the cost of living, we see that the net gain to the mineworkers out of the basic wage application and the application by the employers was 1s. per week.

In the first place the employers of the mining companies applied for the abolition of the whole of the industry allowance. During the course of the hearing before the commission they modified the claim and stated that they would be happy

if a reduction were given in such a way that it would offset increases that could take place, from time to time, in the State basic wage, which meant that any increase in the State basic wage would be nullified by a corresponding decrease in the gold industry allowance.

During the years there had been other applications to the then Arbitration Court for a reduction in the industry allowance; and in 1955 that court saw fit to reduce the allowance by 5s. a week. The employers made another application in 1960 and the court saw fit to reduce the industry allowance by a further 5s. a week. But there was a very important difference to the decision on those two occasions from what the position was in regard to this latest case. The court put in a "no reduction" clause, which meant that where a worker was receiving a certain amount of money, whether he was on the base rate or whether he enjoyed a margin, a reduction would not take effect if it meant he was to receive a lower payment. Of course, that is not the case with the latest decision, which is a simple straightout reduction of 7s. 6d. a week; and there are no provisions applying as far as "no reduction" is concerned.

There was a further application by the mining companies to the Arbitration Court in 1963 for a reduction in the industry allowance, which was refused by the court on the ground that the industry was in a sufficient state of prosperity to enable it to carry that amount and that a reduction in that year was not justified. It seems rather remarkable that although no violent changes have taken place in the industry since that time we find in 1964 the commission has granted the most severe reduction that has ever taken place at any one time.

The Industrial Commission not only granted this severe reduction, but it extended an open invitation to the employers to make application at any time for a further reduction or complete abolition of the industry allowance. This is what the commission had to say in delivering the decision; and I am quoting an extract from the transcript—

There should be no doubt that the goldmining industry is not at the same level as it has been in previous years or in 1963. Mr. Martin has indicated that the 1964 figures will reveal a more serious position, and as the employers do not intend to reduce wages as a result of this application it is felt that it is more desirable to await the receipt of these figures before coming to a conclusion as to whether or not the allowance should be abolished or substantially reduced. The employers can make the further application, which was indicated would be made, at any time and the commission will be in a position to gauge any effect arising

from the 1963 decision and from the "economies" referred to in that decision.

So it will be seen that while the present decision is that the industry allowance be reduced by an amount of 7s. 6d. per week, there is an open invitation for the employers to come along at any time to make application for the abolition or substantial reduction of the remaining part of the industry allowance, which is now at £1 2s. 6d. per week. Of course, it cannot be denied that some gold producers are finding it ever increasingly hard to maintain their profits. Nevertheless, profits are maintained—and they are substantial profits.

I should point out, as I have done on previous occasions, that the difficulties facing the goldmining industry at present have been brought about almost wholly and solely because the industry's product is the subject of international politics and international policy adopted by a group of western countries; and Australia has, of course, subscribed to that policy.

One has no quarrel with that; but I think one is entitled to quarrel with the fact that the policy, on a national level, has resulted in penalising the industry—which is an important industry—and it should be recompensed by the Government which subscribed to this policy.

Here let me say that I criticise the Commonwealth Government very severely, and also the State Government to a lesser extent, for not assisting the goldmining industry to a greater extent than they do. One sees other industries in this country which are being assisted. They are granted all sorts of concessions, to a far greater extent than the goldmining industry.

It is true, of course, that the Commonwealth Government does provide a measure of assistance, but it is far from adequate. I wish to quote from the address of the President of the Chamber of Mines given at the annual general meeting held on Tuesday, the 28th May, 1963, in Kalgoorlie. Among other things, he said as follows:—

Subsequently as a preliminary measure, the Federal Government re-enacted the existing Act for a further period of three years, but intimated that a final decision on the submissions would be made before the introduction of the 1962-63 Commonwealth Budget.

At the invitation of the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, a delegation comprising members of this Chamber and the President of the Victorian Chamber of Mines visited Canberra on 29th August, 1962.

The delegation discussed with officers of the Treasury Department and the Bureau of Mineral Resources legislation proposed by the Federal

Government to provide assistance to the Gold Mining Industry in the following form:—

That a development allowance be payable to all mines not in receipt of subsidy, of up to 4s. per ton of ore treated for expenditure on development in excess of normal expenditure on current mine development.

On 14th December, 1962, assent was given to an Act, No. 102 of 1962, entitled "Gold Mines Development Assistance Act" described as an Act to assist the Development of Gold Mines.

During the first week of April, 1963, an officer of the Treasury Department and an officer of the Bureau of Mineral Resources visited Western Australia to discuss certain aspects of the administration of the Act with producers who had applied for approval as "approved producers" under the Act.

Many matters of procedure were raised and their resolution required a visit to Canberra early in May by local representatives to reach final agreement with Government officials.

The basis for administration of the Act is that the difference in gross development expenditure will be determined between the claim year and the base year. From this difference the value of extra gold won from development will be subtracted with credit given for the cost of extracting such gold together with residue losses.

In effect companies will not be able to recoup the full additional expenditure on extra development, if total gold won from development is greater than that obtained in the base years. The development allowance will be of progressively greater assistance to companies as their search for ore bodies becomes more widespread, or if the value of developed ore decreases.

The implementation of the Act therefore will be of value to the Gold Mining Industry as it will provide for a proportionately greater refund of extra development expenditure as work proceeds in the less intensively mineralised areas of the mines.

On behalf of the members of the Gold Mining Industry I wish to express appreciation of the Federal Government's action in this matter.

I suppose the Chamber of Mines was thankful for small mercies. It thought in 1963 that the Act was going to be helpful; but it appears that the Commonwealth Government adopted a parsimonious attitude in rendering even a small amount of the assistance which it gave. The president of the Chamber had this to say—

As I mentioned last year the Gold Mines Development Assistance Act was proclaimed in 1962. Under this

Act, three Kalgoorlie Companies have received interim payments totalling £91,000 on account of additional expenditure incurred for extra development work carried out during the financial year 1962-63.

I must report however that finalisation of claims for that year has not been made, as Treasury Officials have not as yet determined the basis for administration of the Act. The expressed purpose of the Act to assist the development of gold mines can only be achieved by the broadest interpretation of its provisions.

Members should bear in mind that this was said 12 months after the previous statement. The president went on to say—

In this regard we view with concern the non-approval by the Treasurer of the 1962-63 development programme of one of our member companies. Our interpretation of the intention of the Act, and indeed our initial submissions to the Federal Government, were to the effect that the development allowance should assist companies to fully develop and exploit the gold-bearing minerals in the less rewarding areas of their leases. We intend to pursue these matters further with the Federal Treasurer.

Members will see from the remarks of the president that goldmining companies are not at all happy about the way the Commonwealth Government is treating them. This is reflected in the position of workers, who are now being called upon to bear losses in their wages.

From out of their wages workers in the industry have to clothe and house their families, provide the bread and butter for their families, educate their families, and meet all the necessary outgoings in connection with their families. In almost every instance wages earned in the industry are earned the hard way, not only from the point of view of toil and the nature of the work, but also from the point of view of the frightful risks which some men in the industry have to take. Some men meet with serious accidents, and there is serious deterioration in their health after they have worked in the industry for a number of years. I therefore feel keenly when workers in the industry are called upon to bear a burden which should not be imposed on them.

The commission's view might be that it is assisting the industry by reducing the remuneration of workers by 7s. 6d. a week, and is offering to reduce it still further by another 22s. 6d. a week. I think the commission has done a grave disservice to the industry. It is a well-known fact that there is an Australia-wide shortage of skilled craftsmen. The industry is confronted with the situation that quite a lot of skilled men are looking elsewhere

for employment. They do not have to look very far when there is this shortage of skilled tradesmen, not only in this State but also in other States.

In the long run the reduction which has been given will rebound against the mining companies who applied for it, and they will find themselves short of skilled tradesmen. It is hard to believe that in 1963 the industry was considered to be so prosperous that not only was a reduction in the industry allowance considered to be unwarranted, but the court granted a 10 per cent. increase in margins.

The court did not do that lightly, because at the time there was an application for the industry allowance to be made applicable to other metalliferous mining ventures in this State. I refer to asbestos mining at Wittenoom Gorge. Those of us who are familiar with industrial matters know that the 10 per cent. increase came about by an increase granted by the Commonwealth authority which unions throughout Australia that were not covered by Federal awards were at liberty to apply for.

The unions which had members working in the asbestos industry at Wittenoom Gorge also made application for the 10 per cent. increase; but because of the depressed conditions which existed at that time, or because it was considered that the industry was not as flourishing as it had previously been, the court granted an increase in margins of only six per cent. to that particular industry.

It did not see fit to grant a lesser margin for the goldmining industry; it granted a full 10 per cent. increase. There was no six per cent. increase for the goldmining industry. Although the court had seen fit in previous years to reduce the industry allowance 5s. on each of two occasions, with a no reduction clause, it did not believe that there should be any further reduction in the industry allowance. On the contrary, it considered there should be an increase in margins of 10 per cent., and a further increase with regard to annual leave provisions.

At the annual general meeting of the Chamber of Mines in 1964, the president of the Chamber had this to say—

The problems of the industry have been aggravated during the year by the 10 per cent. increase in margins and the additional annual leave of one week granted to employees. These imposts, together with an increase of 3s. 9d. per week in the basic wage, have resulted in higher working costs which it has not been possible to offset despite improved techniques in various mine operations.

In 1963, after hearing the evidence of the unions, and all the information and figures supplied by the employers in support of their case, the court saw fit not

to reduce the industry allowance any further but to grant an increase of 10 per cent. in margins and an additional one week's annual leave.

However, in a few short months, without any apparent alteration in the position of the goldmining industry, we find that this newly-appointed commission has seen fit to award one of the biggest reductions ever made in the wages of employees in the mining industry, and it has intimated, in no uncertain terms, that the door is wide open for an application at any time for a further reduction, or a complete abolition of the industry allowance.

When one considers all the circumstances surrounding the appointment of the commission, and what happened during the basic wage case, and the storm of criticism that has been aroused by the decision given by the commission in that instance, and one remembers the wholly political and scandalous appointments of these people who now constitute the commission, is it any wonder that workers everywhere are starting to have grave doubts about what their future will be under this commission? I am quite sure there are many workers throughout Western Australia, and particularly on the goldfields, who will agree completely with an article which appeared in this morning's issue of *The West Australian*. This article is headed, "No Confidence in Commission", says Hawke", and it reads, *inter alia*—

Mr. Hawke was commenting on a leading article in *The West Australian* which said that he had shown scant respect for arbitration or Parliament during an attack on the commission in the Legislative Assembly last Wednesday.

He said that in fact the speech showed no respect whatever for the commission.

One could not conscientiously have respect for a tribunal which, in a period of progress, and heavy profit taking, increased the actual basic wage by only 1s. 2d. a week.

The commission had awarded a rise of 3s. 10d. a week but 2s. 8d. of this had been due because of a previous increase of 2s. 8d. in the cost of living.

He went on to say—

"My respect for the constitution of Parliament is real and deep, but it does not prevent me from saying things that should be said, sometimes in strong language," he said.

"*The West Australian* is now trying to protect the commission and the Government, yet it did not print one word of protest against the action of the Government last year when Mr. Justice Neville was removed completely from the field of industrial arbitration."

With those sentiments, I heartily agree, and I am quite sure there are many other people who agree with them also. I pointed out previously that over the years the workers on the goldfields, and particularly in the mining industry, have accepted decisions of the court of arbitration. Those decisions did not always please them; far from it. But they felt that there were two sides to every question, and that there was a body in existence which did adjudicate in a fair and reasonable manner, and which did try to hold the scales of justice evenly between them on the one hand and the employers on the other.

However, I am very much afraid that the action of the Government last year in abolishing the Arbitration Court and setting up this new commission, and the results flowing therefrom in recent cases before the commission, have caused very serious disquiet not only amongst the workers but also amongst all connected with the industrial movement, and particularly those who are charged with the duty of trying to look after the working conditions and the remuneration of their union members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Wild (Minister for Labour).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Approach to Commonwealth for Assistance: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 2nd September, on the following motion by Mr. Fletcher:—

That in the opinion of this House the Hon. Premier should, with a view to assisting local government finance, make a Federal approach at the earliest opportunity in an attempt to achieve the following:—

- (1) That the grant under the Commonwealth Aid to Roads Act be increased by 50 per cent., with local roads receiving the same proportion as at present.
- (2) That the Commonwealth create a Local Services and Amenities Fund to which shall be allocated 5 per cent. of all income taxation collected each year.
- (3) That the Commonwealth be requested to increase the grants to the States so that the State Governments may ensure that their acknowledged obligations to local government be adequately met.

MR. WILD (Dale—Minister for Works) [5.53 p.m.]: This motion, moved by the honourable member for Fremantle, is very largely a local government matter, and refers only in some minor degree to main

roads. However, it has fallen to my lot to resume the debate on behalf of the Government; as a result, most of the answers I give will be read.

It is a matter of great regret that this motion has been brought forward. However, it is certain that a similar move is being taken right throughout the Commonwealth under the inspiration of the Australian Council of Local Government Associations. I say it is a matter of regret that this motion has been moved, because local authorities are not half as badly off as the honourable member has indicated. The claim that local government is being neglected has been put forward in each State; and the movement is sponsored by men who, although inspired by the highest motives, are at times inclined to allow their enthusiasm to outrun their discretion.

Local government, without a doubt, has a very good case for increased assistance; no-one denies that. But might I say that a good case does not in any way need to be exaggerated, and an exaggerated claim could have the effect of casting doubts on the sincerity of the people who are putting it forward. Any honourable members who have examined the position of local authorities carefully—and for that matter, all honourable members of this Chamber—have a very good knowledge of how the local authorities in their districts are progressing. I think it can truthfully be said that local government is being given a pretty good deal indeed.

The honourable member for Fremantle has stated that this is not a party matter. I quite agree that this should be so, and it should not be treated along those lines, but should be treated strictly on its merits. If it is regarded as a party matter that can only be because it has been brought forward in a way which indicates that there is some desire to gain a political advantage. If the motion is to be interpreted as criticising the Government of this State for not doing more to assist local authorities, then it must be remembered that the criticism is of all the States, including those in which the government is in the hands of the party responsible for the moving of this motion.

The honourable member quoted from a statement issued by the conference of Ministers of Local Government held in Sydney in 1962. Since then, of course, there have been further meetings; and after the last conference, which was held in Brisbane in July, the following statement was issued:—

The conference of Ministers for Local Government, held in Brisbane today, examined the statement prepared by the Australian Council of Local Government Associations for increased financial assistance.

The conference noted that certain portions of the statement, which had Commonwealth-wide circulation, were misleading in that they were couched in general terms which did not have general application to all the States.

The conference decided to leave to the Ministers of the respective States the question of dealing with the claims of the Australian Council of Local Government Associations.

This statement made it quite obvious that the Ministers of all the States were concerned at the statements made by the Australian council; and I would inform honourable members that this question was raised at the last council of Ministers by the representative for Western Australia, The Hon. L. A. Logan, Minister for Local Government in this State. Other Ministers expressed themselves as being disturbed, and rightly so; and without wishing to indulge in any polemics on the subject the Ministers authorised the short statement which I have just read to the House.

As I have already indicated, the report is misleading, to say the very least; and, in fact, it is untrue in many ways regarding the position of local authorities in this State. Conditions vary from State to State, and the position of local authorities in this country differs entirely from the position in other countries with which comparisons have been drawn. In actual fact, the Australian Council of Local Government Associations is trying to compare the incomparable.

The mover of the motion quoted from the report and referred to the sources of revenue available to local authorities. This indicated that Australia was in a worse position than the United States of America and Canada. In comparing the activities and revenue of local authorities, regard must be had for what they do and what functions they carry out; because much of what is done by local authorities in the United States, and in the United Kingdom is, in our case, done by the State Government.

The honourable member for Fremantle has stated that in Australia 61 per cent. of local government revenue is derived from rates. The latest figures available in the Local Government Department in our State are for the year 1962-63, and these show that the revenue of local authorities was derived from the following sources:—

Rates 46.5 per cent.

Traffic Licenses 18.8 per cent.

Government Grants and matching money subsidies 18.6 per cent.

Sanitary charges 5.3 per cent.

Income from property 5.3 per cent.

Miscellaneous 5.5 per cent.

A total of 100 per cent.

This shows that the traffic licenses and Government grants with matching money subsidies total 37.4 per cent. of the entire income of councils, whilst rates were only 46.5 per cent. compared with the 61 per cent. quoted in the report; they compare much less favourably with the position in the United States and show an improvement over Canada.

If, however, we take into account some of the things which local authorities are called upon to do in this country and then consider what local authorities have to do in other countries, counting the expenditure of the Government of the State on those services, we get an entirely different picture. Take two things alone and they will be quite sufficient to show the falsity of the claims put forward by the Australian Council. I refer specifically to education and police. These are functions of local authorities in overseas countries.

The expenditure on education alone in this State, quite apart from buildings for the year 1961-62 as shown in the last *Pocket Year Book* available, was £11,819,000, and the expenditure on the police totalled £1,905,000. This ignores the provision of capital expenditure out of loan funds, and is the expenditure only from Consolidated Revenue. Using these figures and treating them as a subsidy to local authorities, in that we do the work instead of asking them to do it, the picture becomes quite different. The total assistance from Government grants, licenses, etc., then amounts to no less than 72 per cent. of the total income of local authorities and the percentage borne by rates falls to 20.7 per cent. If regard is also given to other matters carried out by the State which local authority does in other countries, the percentage of rate spent by local authorities on the total of works and services as compared with other countries would become smaller still.

The honourable member has also quoted from the report a complaint that the ratepayer has to bear too large a part of the cost of the nation's road system and classes this at 40.3 per cent. in Australia compared with 23.8 per cent. in the United States, and 24.8 per cent. in Canada. An analysis of the figures in this State indicates that the total road expenditure for 1962-63 borne from rates is only approximately 18 per cent., which gives us quite a different picture from that presented by the publication quoted by the honourable member.

The honourable member then went on to quote an increase in local government rates and in State Government taxation, contrasting this unfavourably with the lower increase in Commonwealth taxation, and blaming the present State Government for the increases in the percentage in this State. The plain fact is, of course, that this State is going through a very intense

programme of development and its population is increasing rapidly. There must automatically be an increase in the yield from taxation of various types.

Moreover there has been an inflationary movement for some years—not, I would say, an unduly large inflationary movement, but that which has become regarded as more or less natural in an expanding economy; and naturally enough this has resulted in a great increase in the State's taxation collections. Members on this side of the Chamber have no wish to unduly increase State taxation; but the State must go ahead, and the honourable members opposite would be the first to criticise the Government if it lacked the courage to collect the necessary money to make sure that the State does continue to progress and to provide full employment.

The relative decrease in Commonwealth taxation, of course, is obviously due to the fact that the base year selected for the comparison was shortly after the termination of the war and, naturally, taxation for war purposes has been falling since that time; and, moreover, with the increasing prosperity resulting in ever-increasing yields from taxation with lower payments necessary by the Commonwealth, that Government is in a very happy position indeed. The State Government, however, in running its own affairs, and in giving assistance to local authorities, has been compelled to increase taxation considerably more than local authorities have been authorised to increase rates.

Instead of being criticised on the one hand for alleviating the burden of local authorities and on the other hand for increasing taxation, the Government should be complimented on the fact that it has been prepared to assume so great a burden that the local authorities have been able to avoid increases as great as the Government has been forced to authorise.

Local authorities are in no different a position from the State or the Commonwealth in one sense, because they too are being urged by pressure groups and by the whole of the inhabitants of each of the States to ensure that their State and their country progresses. This progress costs money and therefore must be paid for.

The honourable member, in moving the motion, expressed concern that matters were being provided at the expense of the ratepayers, when he considers, and the publication from which he quotes considers, that it is the taxpayer who should bear these costs. There is a good deal of confusion in this matter, because to a very great extent the ratepayer and the taxpayer are the same person. If there were to be very great assistance given from State funds or from Federal funds to the local authorities this would be relief to the ratepayer, but he would immediately be called upon to pay more in his capacity as a taxpayer. A saving in one way, therefore,

must be paid for either by the same person in some other way, or by some other person.

The honourable member has quoted an extract from the publication of the Australian council criticising the land-rating system as being out of date. It must be remembered that the land-rating system is only one cog in the whole wheel of taxation. If that cog is considered alone and all other aspects ignored there may be much justification for this criticism. When, however, regard is given to the fact that there are so many other forms of taxation at present imposed by both State and Federal sources it will be seen that the rating system secures a small portion of revenue from one source, leaving it to the various Governments to collect money from other sources, and as far as possible avoiding any duplication of the sources of revenue.

The question of whether the rating system is equitable has been examined in countries overseas and examined in this country. The findings of all persons who go into the matter disinterestedly will be usually found to be that although the rating system has disadvantages not only is it still the most useful method of raising finance for local authorities but, when coupled with a rational system of government grants or assigned taxes, seems also to be the only one which does not introduce complications greater than any other systems suggested to replace it. That is the view taken in this State; and local authorities here are, of course, much better off than their counterparts in the Eastern States in that they are granted as assigned taxes the traffic license fees. These, with generous Government grants, have put them in a happier position than their Eastern States counterparts.

This is shown quite conclusively, despite the complaint of the honourable member for Fremantle as to the burden of rates there, by comparing the rates levied by head of population in this State with those in other States. Unfortunately, the latest figures available at present from the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics are for 1959-60, but that publication shows the same trend for the preceding five years and it is known that this trend is continuing.

I think it is well worth having a close look at the rates per head of population in each of the States at that time. They were as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
New South Wales	9	10	0
Queensland	9	19	3
Victoria	7	18	5
South Australia	6	9	11
Western Australia	5	10	2
Tasmania	6	15	11
Australian average	8	9	9

We, in this Government, do not presume to reply to the criticisms of the other States which are shown in the report to which the honourable member for Fremantle has referred. We know that the Governments in those States can produce an equally devastating reply.

I do not think there is any need for me to labour this point any further. What I have said shows the complete fallacy of trying to use a generalised and misleading statement issued by the Australian Council to Local Government Associations to indicate that local authorities in this State are being ill-treated. The Government is out to help local authorities. The Minister for Local Government, the Treasurer, and all other Ministers are prepared to listen to any reasonable propositions put forward by local authorities; and I feel quite sure that local authorities, when they deal with this matter from their own knowledge and without any idea of climbing on the bandwagon, of the Australian Council, will admit that they are in a really good position in this State.

I have already said it is regrettable that this motion has been brought forward. I am prepared to go further and state that it is both unnecessary and presumptuous. At the suggestion of a body of men representing local authorities throughout Australia, with the exception of Victoria, which will have no part in the council, it seeks to tell the honourable members of this House, and the Government of this State, what should be done for local government. I feel that this is a reflection on the intelligence and goodwill of honourable members of this House.

We are, each and every one of us, quite well aware of the value of local government to the community—and without hesitation I wish to pay a tribute to the wonderful voluntary work carried out by councils throughout the State; work which makes the task of the Government and of every honourable member of this House much easier—and we do not need to be told in this type of motion anything about local government in this State.

I, for one, would not presume to tell Governments in other States, or honourable members of the Legislature in those States, that local governments in their States are suffering disabilities, which must be remedied in any particular manner. Less still would I agree to tell the Commonwealth that one of our responsibilities—local government—is in a bad way, and that the Commonwealth must provide the solution by the application of a readymade formula designed by a number of gentlemen, who, though admittedly actuated by public spirit and enthusiasm in a good cause, are, nevertheless, taking a wrong course in trying to exert pressure on Governments and Parliaments throughout Australia in an organised way.

We are quite capable of solving the problems of local government in this State, without having to seek the permission of well-intentioned but, I think, misguided men in other States. The Australian Council of Local Government Associations has no monopoly of brains, nor of goodwill towards local government. Each and every honourable member of this House is entitled to consider this problem, and deal with it in this State in his own way.

By jumping on the band wagon of the Australian Council, our own local authorities may even do harm to their own cause, by focusing attention on the much better treatment given to councils in this State than is given to those in the other States, and thereby drawing the attention of the Grants Commission to this fact. For we must be fair and honest in this matter. We all know that this is the only State where the traffic license fees go to the local authorities. If the councils in other States received the same treatment, probably this motion would never have come before us.

Let us look at the proposals in the motion. Not only are we to tell the Commonwealth that we are incapable of solving the problems of local government, and must ask it to do so, but we set out to say just what the national Parliament is to do. It is to pay to local authorities five per cent. of the income tax collections of the Federal Government, plus 50 per cent. increase in petrol tax grants. That would mean, in our State, about £13,000,000. This is 20 per cent. more than the total revenue at present enjoyed from all sources and more than 2½ times the rates collected.

If this sum were paid over, councils as a whole, could increase the volume of works by 50 per cent., and stop levying any rates. The whole of their income would then be provided by taxes imposed by State and Federal sources, and the sense of responsibility which is felt by those who have to impose taxes on the people would be entirely removed from the councils and transferred to the Governments and, incidentally, to the honourable members of this House.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. WILD: I was referring to the question of the Commonwealth Government being prepared to listen to proposals such as those which have been put forward. In the main that is the futility of the motion before us. Before I conclude, it would be as well for me to refer to an answer given by the Prime Minister on the 16th September last, when he said that the Commonwealth Government had refused to allot a specified portion of income tax revenue to local authorities. He said further that if the Commonwealth Government were to adopt such a proposal it

would be assuming responsibility for decisions that was the prerogative of State Governments; and that successive Commonwealth Governments had consistently maintained that as local authorities are constituted and function under State laws, it is the responsibility of State Governments to evaluate the needs of local authorities, and to meet those needs from within their own resources.

Let us think for a moment just how this sum is to be provided. Is the Commonwealth Government to produce this money out of the air? Not at all. It must be drawn out of the pockets of the taxpayers, most of whom are also ratepayers. The people, as a whole, will still be called upon to provide the same amount of money. All that would be achieved would be the transference of the burden from one type to another.

It would, of course, lighten the burden on some, and increase the burden on others. It would certainly be a great relief to the land speculator, and the lifting of rating from land would almost certainly result in a very great rise in the price of land for housing and other purposes. This would add to the burdens of the State in carrying on its functions—burdens which are already quite severe enough in this wide-flung and fast-developing State, and burdens which are already hard to bear.

We know quite well that local government needs extra money. So does the State, and so do we all. But without an increase in production and a rise in the national income, the share of one section can be increased only at the expense of another section. The Commonwealth Government knows that as well as we do, and as well as the sponsors of this motion do. So what is the use of passing a motion which, in fact, can only make us look ridiculous?

We are prepared to assist local government as well as we can. We are ready to discuss any problem with local government authorities, but I do not think that we should fall into the trap of committing ourselves in the way this motion would have us do. I therefore oppose the motion, and request honourable members to accord it the treatment that it so richly deserves.

MR. ROWBERRY (Warren) [7.35 p.m.]: Firstly, I would like to take the Minister to task for implying or for saying directly—I have not had the opportunity to read his words in *Hansard*, but I think what I am saying is right—that the Council of Local Government Associations and its members were presumptuous in bringing this motion before the House. He finished up by saying that he hoped this Assembly will give the motion the treatment it richly deserves.

Mr. Bickerton: That is to carry it. There is nothing wrong with that!

Mr. ROWBERRY: I hope so. The word "presumptuous", according to the dictionary, means to venture without positive permission, to form confident or arrogant opinions, and to take a liberty. I would ask the Minister if anyone in this House, in particular the honourable member for Fremantle, has taken a liberty in bringing this matter before the House. The honourable member for Fremantle quoted extensively from a booklet dealing with local government finance, which was prepared by the Australian Council of Local Government Associations, and according to my understanding the Minister said that council was also presumptuous.

Presumption implies the existence of power, and for anyone to dispute that power is to be presumptuous. The Minister should know that in a democracy all power is, or has been delegated, and therefore there is no such thing as presumption or absolute power. I can assure the Minister that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. If it is the policy of this Government to look upon honourable members who move motions with which this Government does not agree, or with which its policy is in contradiction, as presumptuous, then it is time the Minister learnt a little of what constitutes democracy.

The honourable member for Fremantle was very modest in his request. I have before me a booklet which cannot be assumed to be a Labor publication, or a supporter of Labor ideas or policies. It is entitled *Commerce, Industrial and Mining Review*.

Mr. Dunn: Why not?

Mr. ROWBERRY: In reply to that interjection, I say, "by their fruits shall ye know them." I suggest the honourable member read the publication and see what it endeavours to achieve. If he does he will see it is not a supporter of Labor policy.

The honourable member for Fremantle was very modest in his demands when he moved—

That the grant under the Commonwealth Aid to Roads Act be increased by 50 per cent., with local roads receiving the same proportion as at present.

I shall quote now from the August issue of the publication to which I have just referred. It states—

It would be fair to say that the new Commonwealth Aid Roads Act, which took effect in June, will set the pattern of the nation's transport policy over the next half decade.

This article was written by W. R. Blunden, Professor of Traffic Engineering, University of New South Wales. He went on to say—

There are, of course, important national policies relating to other forms of transport—policies directed

at expanding our great air transport network, forging new links in the rail-standardisation scheme, expanding harbour and port facilities and sustaining the ship-building industry.

Further on the article states—

With the total for the next five years set at £375m., what can we expect?

Will the spending of this kind of money see a major road building programme under way?

Certainly it represents an increase of 50 per cent. on the previous five years; but how does it relate to the cost of modernising our road system?

I do not know how the honourable member for Fremantle arrived at the 50 per cent. increase, or whether he has read this publication. Not many people bother to read it, because they cannot gain inspiration from it.

Mr. Dunn: You mean they cannot understand it.

Mr. ROWBERRY: We can always count on the honourable member for Darling Range to say something discourteous, and to take those on this side of the House to task for lack of intelligence or lack of education. Of course we do not aspire to the educational heights reached by honourable members opposite! At least some of us on this side are taught good manners, and do not impute foolishness on the part of others. He should remember what the Bible says: that whoever calls his brother a fool shall be in danger of hellfire. I cannot assume that the honourable member will be burnt in hell. To continue with the article—

A recent survey of the nation's road needs by the National Association of State Road Authorities shows that the deficiency for the 1964-9 period after making allowance for the revenue capabilities of the States will be of the order of £431,000,000.

So the 50 per cent. that has been allocated will not adequately fill the bill.

Here is another part of the article which is very interesting, and the Minister should listen to it because we have heard that a representative of road transport may in the near future be a candidate for the Dale electorate—

The road transport operator is acutely conscious of the increase in his overhead and operating costs that result from carrying on business either in the tangle of urban traffic or in daring competition with high powered cars on the sub-standard two-lane two-way highways connecting our great cities and rural centres.

In terms of official estimates or ordinary road user reactions, the policy behind the new Act can at best be regarded as one of holding the line in the face of increasing pressure of

traffic in the hope that the new Commonwealth Bureau of Roads will send adequate reinforcements by 1969.

But can we hold out for five years? I fear not.

We can therefore ascertain whether or not the honourable member for Fremantle was presumptuous in trying to give the Government some assistance or suggestion; if he has erred then he has certainly erred in very good company. The article goes on further to say—

Forty per cent. of the amount that finally reaches the State road authority must be spent on rural roads other than the main roads and, by a process of elimination, there is nothing left for the acute road problems of the great urban centres.

Thirty years ago a policy that favoured the rural areas was undoubtedly sound—and rural areas still have genuine road needs.

Then he goes on to say—

I would conclude, therefore, by saying that the policies implied in the 1964-9 Roads Act do not, in my opinion, recognise the magnitude, nature and importance of the problem of providing the nation with a modern road system.

So we can see that the honourable member for Fremantle was on really sound ground. The Minister has actually not done enough homework on this particular question. He certainly has not got his ear to the ground so far as the authorities, and those who represent the motor vehicle owners, drivers, and users are concerned, because the R.A.C. has been pressing for years for a bigger allocation of the fuel tax assessment to be devoted to roadmaking.

I especially deplore a Minister of the Crown who stands up in the House and says that an honourable member who advances opinions in a democratically-elected Assembly is being presumptuous. Surely the Minister is the one indulging in presumption in adopting such an attitude.

MR. FLETCHER (Fremantle) [7.47 p.m.]: I would be glad to resume my seat if some Country Party members would elevate themselves for the purpose of supporting my motion which would do the people they represent a considerable amount of good.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Hearman): I do not think I can permit that at this stage.

Mr. FLETCHER: Possibly not, Mr. Speaker. They do not lack enthusiasm for the cause, but they are evidently complying with Liberal Party domination and discipline.

Mr. W. A. Manning: Who said that?

Mr. FLETCHER: However, I thank the Minister for his carefully-prepared speech, which he delivered in an attempt to rebut the case I submitted in support of my motion which, for the benefit of those in the House, reads as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House the Hon. Premier should, with a view to assisting local government finance, make a Federal approach at the earliest opportunity in an attempt to achieve the following:—

- (1) That the grant under the Commonwealth Aid to Roads Act be increased by 50 per cent., with local roads receiving the same proportion as at present.
- (2) That the Commonwealth create a Local Services and Amenities Fund to which shall be allocated 5 per cent. of all income taxation collected each year.
- (3) That the Commonwealth be requested to increase the grants to the States so that the State Governments may ensure that their acknowledged obligations to local government be adequately met.

The honourable member who has just resumed his seat submitted a case to show I am in good company in moving the motion. He quoted extensively from the *Commerce, Industrial and Mining Review*, which submitted a good case. However, I thank not only the honourable member for Warren for his contribution, but also the Minister. Despite the fact that the Minister did all he could to rebut my case, I thank him for going to the trouble of submitting such a speech in an attempt to defeat my motion. It indicates that my motion must be worth while or the Minister and the Government would not have gone to all the trouble they did.

I could, if I wished to get provocative, as I usually do, take exception to the fact that the Minister said my motion was unnecessary and even presumptuous. I would point out to the Minister, the Premier, and members of the Government generally, that two local authorities in my electorate do not think my motion was unnecessary and presumptuous; the preponderance of councillors and ratepayers in my electorate do not think that the motion was unnecessary and presumptuous; and for the information of honourable members, including the honourable member for South Perth—

Mr. Grayden: What have I done now?

Mr. FLETCHER: Nothing; but the mayor of that illustrious suburb did.

Mr. Rowberry: Suburb!

Mr. Grayden: City!

Mr. FLETCHER: His worship the mayor phoned me and congratulated me on my motion and the speech I made in support of it. Furthermore, he asked for a copy of that speech, which I was very pleased to make available to him.

The Minister said that local authorities are not badly off for finance. He should ask the ratepayers their opinion and hear their complaints! My own local store-keeper as recently as this morning declared his rates had escalated. I think sky-rocketed was the word he used.

Mr. Rowberry: Since this Government has come into office!

Mr. FLETCHER: Of course, I explained it was based on valuations established by the Taxation Department and that he paid rates accordingly. However, he takes exception to the rates he pays in proportion to the services he gets. He is not critical of the local authority. He is critical of the fact that there is not more finance made available from Federal coffers to assist local government. That is the purpose of my motion.

However, I do not want to take up too much time, because there are other honourable members on this side of the House who have motions they wish dealt with this evening. I submit now, as I did before, that all taxpayers should contribute towards local government in the manner I have suggested. I do not propose that income tax should be increased by 5 per cent. I do not wish to give that impression at all. I merely state in my motion that 5 per cent. of all income tax at present levied should be made available to all the States, and Western Australia in particular, by the Federal Government.

Adult franchise presupposes that a person is old enough to vote and therefore that same person is old enough to pay income tax. A proportion of the income tax he pays should be made available to help maintain roads and other amenities which are provided by local authorities. I would point out, for example, that young single people drive motorcars but they do not pay rates. They contribute in part to the wear and tear of the roads but, I repeat, they do not pay rates.

Is the Minister listening to the argument I am submitting? I am pointing out that young car drivers contribute to the wear and tear of roads but they do not contribute to the maintenance of them. I say it is only reasonable that through the taxation they pay they should contribute in the manner I have suggested. In other words, 5 per cent. of all taxation should come back to the States to help not only in regard to roads, but also other items such as swimming pools.

Through the medium of rates, the rate-payer contributes to the building of a swimming pool, which the young single taxpayer enjoys. Therefore, why should

such person not contribute towards the establishment and maintenance of such an amenity? Would not the Country Party members be happy to realise that young single people contributed in the manner I have suggested rather than have the burden placed entirely upon the rate-payer? I know local authorities would. I cannot understand how honourable members opposite can consistently oppose such a proposal.

Mr. Gayfer: Because you are talking a lot of rot and we therefore choose to ignore you.

Mr. Dunn: How do you dispose of the £10,000 paid by the Government for swimming pools?

Mr. FLETCHER: I do not think the honourable member for Avon thinks I am talking a lot of rot at all, because he knows the argument I have submitted is quite reasonable; and that all taxpayers, including single young people, should contribute financially towards amenities provided at the moment by ratepayers.

Mr. Dunn: How do you dispose of the £10,000 paid by the Government for swimming pools?

Mr. FLETCHER: That is another matter entirely. The Minister was busy congratulating the State Government on its attitude and help to local authorities, but while congratulating the Government he was not doing anything to rebut the argument I submitted. He quoted from *The West Australian* of the 16th September, 1964, in which it was stated that the Prime Minister believed local government was a matter for the States. I also have that newspaper cutting and I have made some annotations beside it. Portion of the article reads—

The Commonwealth Government had refused to allot a specific proportion of income tax revenue to local government authorities, the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, said today.

I do not know how the Prime Minister received knowledge of my motion.

Several honourable members interjected.

Mr. FLETCHER: However, the Minister cannot take refuge behind that because there were more people than the honourable member for Fremantle responsible for this motion. As has been pointed out by the honourable member for Warren, the Australian Council of the Local Government Association was responsible for the text of my motion. The newspaper article continues. "He"—that is, the Prime Minister—

said if the Commonwealth were to adopt such a proposal it would be assuming responsibility for decisions that were the prerogative of State governments.

I think I have submitted a case to show that State governments lack the necessary financial ability to meet all the commitments, as I will show subsequently in regard to roads, which is another portion of my motion.

There was another article on similar lines appearing in *The West Australian* on the 6th October this year, and portion of it reads as follows:—

BUREAU SEEN AS KEY TO AUST. ROADS

Brisbane, Mon.—The establishment of the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads could lead to better coordinated road planning and development, Repatriation Minister Swartz told road transport operators today.

Further down the article states—

In his annual report, federation president P. Blakiston had criticised the lack of co-operation and co-ordination between States on road transport matters.

The following appears further down, and this is more important and supports my motion:—

Australian roads carried 70 per cent. of goods moved by all forms of transport.

That being so, it indicates all the more justification for my motion which seeks greater Federal aid for this State's roads. I do not think the honourable member for Avon will state that that part of my motion is rot. I have here portion of the notes I used when moving the motion originally. *Hansard* will reveal the content of those notes wherein I stated that I concede that W.A. in particular, as a claimant State, does receive, from the Commonwealth, payments of various descriptions for special purposes. However I do feel that we are justified in asking for the extra amounts sought in my motion.

I have already submitted argument to show that despite the fact that we are a claimant State and receive special grants, we are entitled to receive further grants. To aid my argument, I quote from the publication *Australia's Road Needs for the Ten Year Period 1964-1974*. I wish honourable members opposite had gone to our library and studied this publication, because they would not then have found it difficult to support my motion. On the first page of this small book we find this heading, "A Message from the Chairman of the National Association of Australian State Road Authorities." I shall read two paragraphs from this message, which is signed by F. D. Jackman, chairman, as follows:—

Following the backlog in road maintenance during the war, and the unprecedented increase in motor vehicle usage in post-war years, it became

evident that the Australian road system was becoming more and more inadequate to meet the demands of increasing traffic.

That is an argument in support of the case I am submitting. On the next page we find a heading "Australia's Road Problem. Estimated Growth in Motor Vehicle Usage," and these figures are given—

1964.

Population	....	11,200,000
Vehicles	....	3,800,000

1974.

Population	....	13,600,000
Vehicles	....	5,900,000

Why do not the Minister and the Government concern themselves with the situation which has developed, and support my motion for finance to be made available to meet the position I have mentioned? On page 3 we find this—

Between 1944 and 1962 the Australian population has increased by 48 per cent. Over the same period the increase in motor vehicles has been 280 per cent. and vehicle ownership has grown from 1.1 vehicles per 10 persons in 1944 to 3.2 vehicles per 10 persons in 1962.

And that, I submit, is on an already inadequate road system. On page 4 there is a graph which shows the total miles of road and the type of road pavements as follows:—

Australian Road Pavements 1962—		Per cent.
Bitumen or concrete	....	14
Gravel	....	23
Formed	....	25
Unformed	....	38

The publication shows that of a total of 544,386 miles of road, only 14 per cent. has a dustless surface. I admit these are Australian figures, but Western Australia forms a portion of the total, and the figures quoted are representative of the situation here. Pages 6 and 7 are even more illuminating because on those pages the following heading appears:—

Funds Allocated for the Construction and Maintenance of Roads and Bridges in 1962.

The local government funds are mentioned; and let me draw to the attention of the Minister, who contradicted the figures I quoted. The Minister said local government authorities paid a lesser amount. This publication shows that local funds for roads throughout Australia amounted to £65,753,000, and Commonwealth funds were only £57,388,000. I submit the reverse should apply: the greater amount should come from Commonwealth sources in the way I have suggested in my motion.

Page 6 of this pamphlet shows the breakup of the total expenditure on roads. This breakup is illustrated in the form of a circle, and it shows the following figures:—

	Per cent.
State	29
Local Government	38
Commonwealth	33

The Commonwealth's proportion is smaller than that of the local government's, and I mention that to contradict the figures quoted by the Minister. On page 7 we find, in relation to Commonwealth expenditure—

These funds represent an expenditure of only £A320 per mile of road.

Corresponding overseas figures—

New Zealand—£A700 per mile of road.

United States of America—£A1450 per mile of road.

This information must surely demonstrate that more money is needed in order to raise the Australian road standard, and that of Western Australia in particular.

Here is something which is rather illuminating and topical, particularly in view of the road safety campaign that has been attempted within the State. The Premier will be disappointed, as a consequence of having declared a safety week, to know of the deaths that occurred during that week on the roads; and I am drawing the Premier's attention to the figures on page 10 of this publication—

Road Deaths (per 10,000 vehicles)

United States of America	5.00
Canada	6.95
New Zealand	4.93
Australia	8.78

That is a scandalous situation, and the House can draw its own conclusions. There is a higher incidence of road deaths in Australia; and Western Australia bears its proportion. Australia has 8.78 road deaths per 10,000 vehicles, whilst the United States, with a greater density of population and vehicles, has a lower fatal accident rate. That is because of our inferior roads.

I point this out to the Premier: Does it not demonstrate the need for him to join with other Premiers to show that a greater grant should be made available from Federal sources in order that we might have better and safer roads for our road vehicles?

Mr. Brand: I have had difficulty in convincing the other States that we are not getting too much as it is.

Mr. FLETCHER: I have heard criticism to that effect.

Mr. Brand: It does not matter what you have heard; it is a fact.

Mr. FLETCHER: If the Premier were to join with the other Premiers, they would have a case to put before the Federal authorities. I point out to the Premier that the taxpayers' money is used for far less worthy causes—

Mr. Brand: For instance, what?

Mr. FLETCHER: —than preventing road deaths.

Mr. Tonkin: By making up the loss on the sale of the State Building Supplies!

Mr. FLETCHER: I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I can mention ways and means by which the taxpayers' money is wasted.

Mr. Brand: I can mention Wundowie, and that sort of thing.

Mr. FLETCHER: Private enterprise has done work on State schools that has had to be re-done; but that is a side issue and is not relevant to the motion.

Mr. Brand: I thought you might come to that conclusion.

Mr. SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): The honourable member should disregard the interjections.

Mr. FLETCHER: On page 10 of this pamphlet there is another illuminating argument in support of my contention. I will not quote it, even though it contains valuable information. I do not want to weary the House; I want to see members on our side of the Chamber getting on with their motions.

Somebody just interjected and said he thought I had convinced the Country Party members that more roads and amenities are required in their areas. I hope I have; I have done my best to do so. However, the result will be revealed when the question is put. On the final page of this publication we find—

Australian roads are constructed and maintained by State Road Authorities.

Those authorities include the Main Roads Department of Western Australia, and also the local authorities. The roads are contributed to by shires, cities and municipalities; district councils, etc. Other authorities include forestry departments; national park authorities; boards of works; electricity authorities, etc. If the Premier wants to help these authorities to create better roads in this State, then he will support me and do what my motion suggests.

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

Ayes—19

Mr. Bickerton	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Brady	Mr. Moir
Mr. Davies	Mr. Norton
Mr. Evans	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Fletcher	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Graham	Mr. Rowberry
Mr. Hall	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Heal	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. H. May
Mr. Jamieson	

(Teller)

Noes—19

Mr. Bovell
Mr. Brand
Mr. Burt
Mr. Cornell
Mr. Craig
Mr. Dunn
Mr. Gayfer
Mr. Grayden
Mr. Guthrie
Mr. Hart

Dr. Henn
Mr. I. W. Manning
Mr. W. A. Manning
Mr. Nalder
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Runciman
Mr. Wild
Mr. Williams
Mr. O'Neill

(Teller)

Pairs

Ayes

Mr. D. G. May
Mr. Toms
Mr. Curran
Mr. J. Hegney
Mr. Hawke

Noes

Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Court
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Crommellin

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

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

DEATH PENALTY ABOLITION BILL

Second Reading

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta) [8.17 p.m.]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

My first observation is that I would have hoped this Bill would be introduced under more auspicious circumstances than exist, unfortunately, at the moment. I hasten to mention that the introduction of this measure is yet another stage of a process which, unfortunately, has been spread over a number of years in an effort to attain an objective, and that the Bill does not necessarily have application to any individual case. I also hasten immediately to assert that those words are not to be construed in any way that I, or those who believe with me in the principle of abolition of capital punishment, have any reservations whatsoever.

This evening it is my intention to quote from various authorities more extensively than is usually the case when one is addressing the honourable members of this Chamber. The reason for this is that, having addressed myself to this subject and related matters on so many occasions, my feeling is that honourable members can, with facility, refer to earlier speeches and, more importantly, perhaps they may not be so interested in my views and opinions as those of other people.

In the Parliament of Western Australia many attempts have been made to bring about what is gradually becoming the accepted principle in civilised countries throughout the world. It is regrettable but true that Western Australia is rapidly finding itself at the end of the queue in this trend. In other words, this State is now, in fact, in the position of robbing a sister State—South Australia—which had the reputation of being the “hanging”

State, and bringing that appellation to the State of Western Australia. I shall have more to say on that shortly.

I find that, in the year 1927, the then honourable member for Perth—whose politics were opposite to those of the Labor Party—introduced a Bill which, had it been agreed to, would have travelled about 99 per cent. in the direction of abolishing capital punishment. In 1941, the then honourable member for Subiaco—then Mrs. but now Dame, Florence Cardwell-Oliver—of a party opposite to that of which I am proud to be a humble member, introduced a Bill containing terms 100 per cent. of which are embodied in the Bill I am presenting this evening.

In 1952 I introduced a measure that went part of the way towards the abolition of capital punishment, thinking that perhaps there is some advantage in progress by stages. I interpolate here to say that I think I had one put over me by the Attorney-General of the day in that year. He counselled his supporters to vote against the measure on the grounds that the question of capital punishment was being investigated by a most authoritative Royal Commission which had been set up in Great Britain. It was subsequently discovered that the terms of reference of that Royal Commission—one of the findings of which I shall quote presently—did not require it to investigate and report upon the effectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent for the commission of the crime of murder, or any other capital offence.

In 1960, I introduced the Death Penalty Abolition Bill without gaining one supporter from the other side of the House. In the following year I introduced a measure which would have made it incumbent on at least two Ministers of the Crown to attend an execution before it could be carried out; for them to be in the company of the other public officials who, under the law, are required to be in attendance at an execution. However, I was unsuccessful in that attempt.

A further measure was introduced in 1962 to abolish the death penalty, but again without gaining one convert to the cause. I had made the resolution that, as the mood of this House had been tested during the life of Parliament, I would not make another endeavour during this Parliament. But circumstances have necessitated some further action being taken, because, in 1961, in an effort to defeat a move of mine, this Government introduced legislation which abolished capital punishment for murder, but retained it for wilful murder. For murder there was to be a term of imprisonment of 15 years, but the royal prerogative could not be exercised. That, incidentally, is the only sentence which can be imposed by any court in Western Australia in respect of which Her Majesty is denied the right of exercising the royal prerogative.

So we now have the ludicrous position that a person who is found guilty of the lesser offence of murder is obliged to serve a prison sentence of 15 years which cannot be reduced by so much as a day. But a person who has committed a more serious offence of wilful murder, for which the death penalty is retained, but in respect of which the royal prerogative can be exercised, can have his sentence of whatever years reduced by the Governor on behalf of Her Majesty—in other words, the Government of the day—to two years, two months, two days, or any period whatsoever.

Unfortunately, since Parliament gave attention to amendments of the Criminal Code and other Statutes, in recent months we have had a case of a person being found guilty by the court for wilful murder and sentenced to a period of 10 years, and every honourable member in this House knows that the term served will be less than that. So because of this game of party politics with this most serious of all matters, surely, we find that for the most serious offence under our Criminal Code a person can escape with a slap on the wrist, comparatively; but for the lesser offence, if found guilty, a person must be sentenced to a minimum term of 15 years' imprisonment.

Accordingly, everybody will admit, surely—particularly legislators—that there is urgent necessity for some corrective action to be taken! Because of that fact, this Bill is before Parliament now. I have already indicated that it is a world-wide trend for the death penalty to be abolished. By and large the more civilised the community, the more disposed it is to take action along those lines.

For the sake of brevity, I will now quote part of a sermon delivered by the Reverend John Bryant, in July, 1960, when he was dealing with this subject—

The Royal Commission on capital punishment in England which met for six years from 1949-1953, under the chairmanship of Sir Ernest Gowers—came to the conclusion that "There is no clear evidence . . . that the abolition of capital punishment has led to an increase in the homicide rate or that its reintroduction has led to a fall."

He went on to say—

Mr. Justice Barry of the Victorian Supreme Court makes the same point: "It is clear that the mode of penalty cannot be demonstrated to have a significant effect upon the crime rate."

The reverend gentleman continued—

It is evident, too, that most murders result from passion under a momentary emotional stress or because of a deranged mind. In such cases capital punishment would never be a deterrent. Such individuals are

not capable of calmly and rationally appraising the effect of capital punishment on themselves.

The British Royal Commission over that period of some six years investigated the records and the processes of every corner of the world, and nowhere in the world was there proof or evidence to satisfy that distinguished body—and there were many who comprised the commission—that capital punishment served any social purpose. That Royal Commission which, I repeat, was not appointed to make recommendations to the Government or to Parliament as to whether capital punishment should be abolished, arrived at certain conclusions, of which I have quoted one; and it is in accord with inquiries made elsewhere.

I now quote from the *Australian Law Journal* of the 23rd June, 1960, as follows:—

The Chessman execution was the occasion for a worldwide revival of the capital punishment debate. Appropriately enough, it coincided with the arrival in Australia of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Capital Punishment in Ceylon appointed in 1958 and presided over by Professor Norval Morris, Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Adelaide.

The Commission found that there was no greater deterrence to potential murderers by imposing capital punishment on a few than by imprisoning all convicted murderers.

It goes on—

Today the death penalty survives in only four countries of Western Europe (Britain, the Irish Republic, France and Spain) and in practice is invoked by increasing rarity both in the United States and the States of the Commonwealth.

What is the position with regard to Europe? First of all, in a number of those countries, capital punishment has been abolished and reintroduced on account of circumstances which I will not now outline, but I could, and indeed I shall in reply, if there be any necessity for it. Austria abolished capital punishment in 1950. In Belgium, capital punishment still exists, but since 1863—that is more than 100 years—the death penalty has always been commuted. In Britain, as honourable members are aware, since the Royal Commission of which I spoke, there are very few counts where murder is a crime for which the death penalty can be imposed. There is no need for me to go into details.

In Denmark, capital punishment was abolished in 1930, although in 1952 it was reintroduced for use in emergency during foreign occupation. Here let me say that many standards and codes unfortunately disappear when countries are faced with invasion or are living in a state of war.

In Finland, capital punishment was abolished in 1949, but it still applies in an emergency of war. France still retains capital punishment: whilst the federal republic of Germany abolished it in 1949. It still persists in the Irish Republic; but in Italy capital punishment was abolished in 1944. In Luxembourg, capital punishment still exists, but no executions have taken place since 1822, over 140 years ago. In the Netherlands, capital punishment was abolished in 1881; in Norway, 1902; and in Portugal, 1867. It still persists in Dictator Spain. In Sweden it was abolished in 1953; and in Switzerland in 1937, with the proviso that in a state of war under their military code it could be imposed and enforced.

So it will be found that the great majority of the countries of Europe, without going further afield, have determined that in a modern civilised community the taking of life by the State cannot be justified on any grounds. I here and now make the statement that nowhere in any part of the world where a comprehensive inquiry has been undertaken, has an authoritative body found argument that the State taking the life of convicted criminals and murderers results in a deterrent in any way as compared with other forms of punishment. Indeed, I shall indicate—whether it be by coincidence or something else I do not know—that here in the State of Western Australia the murder rates have actually increased over the periods when executions have been carried out. I will quote the figures and the periods, but I am not necessarily going to draw any conclusion therefrom, because these world-wide authorities of which I have spoken have made studies throughout the whole of the globe; and whilst in certain cases there has been an upward movement and in others a downward movement, there is nothing conclusive in those movements to satisfy those members of Royal Commissions and other investigating bodies.

Having mentioned the trend in those other countries as mentioned by investigating bodies, let us look at the position in Australia. The last execution that took place in South Australia was in 1958—six years ago. The last one in Victoria was in 1951—13 years ago; the last one in Tasmania was in 1946—18 years ago. In New South Wales the last one took place in 1939—25 years ago; and in Queensland the last execution was in the year 1913—51 years ago. Here in Western Australia the last execution which took place was in 1964; and it would appear there is to be a second execution in 1964.

Throughout the whole time and life of the Brand Liberal Government in Western Australia there has not been an execution anywhere in the Commonwealth of Australia except here in Western Australia where there have been three; and we are

on the verge of a fourth. If it could be proved and established beyond any doubt whatsoever that some purpose was being served, however bitterly we might be opposed to the State taking human life, perhaps the Government would have an argument that it was saving lives and protecting the public.

Of course, that cannot be said. Indeed, as indicated earlier, the statistics, even in Western Australia, significantly point in the opposite direction. In the other States of the Commonwealth there has been a great deal of public agitation when Governments have sought to impose the death penalty. There are Liberal Governments as well as Labor Governments throughout the Commonwealth of Australia—at the present moment more Liberal than Labor—and yet in none of those States have they embarked on the process of the State taking human life as a penalty. Some of those Governments believe in capital punishment, but because of the probable reaction of the public—and, shall I say—the reaction of the Press—I hazard the suggestion that no Government is game to impose the death penalty or to allow it to remain.

You noticed, Mr. Speaker, that in South Australia within the last week a man was condemned to death. The Playford Government played about for a little while, but within 48 hours before the hanging decided to commute the penalty to one of life imprisonment. Honourable members will recall that in the State of Victoria the Government proposed to hang a person, but because of public reaction it did not; and people from that State have told me that whilst it is still on the Statute book the penalty of death will never again be inflicted in that State.

I want now to read a leading article from *The Herald*, Melbourne, of the 6th November, 1962. I do so, because it epitomises my thoughts; and coming from a conservative journal, perhaps it will have some effect on those who sit opposite me in this Chamber. The article is headed, "No More Gallows" and reads as follows:—

Now that the sentence on Robert Peter Tait has been commuted from hanging to lifelong imprisonment, it should be possible to close the most difficult and painful side of this important public issue.

The fate of one depraved murderer has been decided. The action taken yesterday by the State Government averts, for the present at least, the re-introduction of the gallows after more than 11 years of disuse in Victoria. Tait is now classified as a mentally impaired criminal, never to be released.

The community can now turn its thoughts to the wider question of whether this decision should lead on constructively to the abolition of capital punishment for all time.

The whole purpose of the campaign that centred on Tait was to have this wider question faced and answered. The Government itself aroused public feeling when it ruled, three months ago, that the long-established custom of commuting death sentences should not apply in this case.

Until then, it had come to be accepted that in Victoria as in other progressive places the penalty for murder was life imprisonment. The courts were still required to pass sentence of death on convicted murderers. But we seemed to have moved on from the anomaly of deciding in terms of party politics whether the sentence should be carried out or commuted, and there was reason to hope that in time the extreme of capital punishment, after long disuse, would disappear from our legal code.

There is a subheading "Face Issue" as follows:—

It is now clear, however, that the issue has to be more positively faced. Despite yesterday's decision in the Tait case, the Government affirms that it believes in capital punishment "in appropriate cases". This view, and the answer to it, should come under calm and thorough examination.

If particularly savage killings are defined as "appropriate cases" for hanging, enlightened opinion will still be deeply concerned. The more savage the form of murder, the less likely it is that a death sentence will deter others. The irresponsible and the deranged are not warned off by the prospect of punishment.

When the deterrent argument is put aside, as it must be in the light of expert knowledge, hanging becomes the ritual revenge of the community. That concept belongs in a primitive age, not in a modern State.

It is right that our thinking should extend to ensuring that the viciously abnormal are never released to endanger innocent lives. But this does not mean we must return to the barbarism of the gallows.

The death sentence is under its strongest challenge in Victoria as a penalty degrading to those who sanction it. The time for its abolition has surely come.

I have no desire to be personal in connection with this matter, but I wish that this were a leading article in *The West Australian* and that its contents were directed to the present Government. Surely this Government is not incapable

of learning! In so many particulars—which need I enumerate?—this Government and its members, both in this Chamber and in another place, have resisted reforms year after year. But in the passage of time this Government has introduced measures which it violently opposed until a few years ago.

Mr. Fletcher: Adult franchise—

Mr. GRAHAM: For the Legislative Council, yes. Citizenship for natives. A five-day banking week.

Mr. Fletcher: Workers' compensation.

Mr. GRAHAM: And so on, and so on. Let us not divert ourselves from our mission. I am suggesting that as the Government has demonstrated its capacity to learn; that it is not afraid to imitate; that it will, on occasions, even listen to the Opposition; but if it prefers to do these things itself rather than allow the Opposition to do anything, surely the time has come for the Government to do some new thinking with regard to this issue! The Government should look about and should not necessarily accept a word of mine. I have some snippets of Press cuttings which I propose to read. One reads as follows:—

Don't Hang Say 824

The Guild Council, governing body of students at the W.A. University, will support the W.A. Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.

The decision was made on the results of the circulation of a questionnaire to 1,756 students this month.

And "this month" was August, 1964. Another item appeared in *The West Australian* on the 4th April, 1963, and reads as follows:—

U.S. Vote on Death Penalty

New York, Wed.: New York State moved a step closer to the abolition of the death penalty last night, when the State Senate voted to end the automatic death sentence for people convicted of premeditated murder.

By a 55 to 2 majority, the Senate gave final legislative approval to a Bill permitting juries to recommend life imprisonment where the death sentence was previously mandatory.

Another appeared in *The West Australian* on the 4th January, 1963, and reads—

Gallows May Go In Canada

A double hanging in Toronto, with all its macabre ritual, has triggered a fresh wave of protests across Canada, which is expected to lead to early abolition of capital punishment.

I have not got the date of this particular one, but it reads as follows:—

Move to Scrap the Guillotine

The guillotine will become a museum piece if a Bill to abolish capital punishment shortly to be presented to the French Parliament becomes law.

The following appeared in *The West Australian* on the 18th December, 1962:—

A.C.T. Move on Hanging.

Canberra, Mon.: Abolition of the death penalty in the Australian Capital Territory was recommended tonight by the A.C.T. Advisory Council.

The recommendation will be placed before Interior Minister Freeth, who is expected to pass it on to the Federal Cabinet for consideration.

The following appeared on the 3rd November, 1962:—

Doctor's Role at Hangings Questioned
Sydney, Friday: A prominent Victorian psychiatrist, in a letter to the Medical Journal of Australia, has denounced the presence of a doctor at hangings.

Dr. J. L. Evans said that a doctor who took part in a legalised killing was guilty of infamous conduct in a professional, if not legal, sense in the eyes of many of his colleagues.

Those clippings indicate the trend throughout the world. When I introduced a Bill in 1960 a number of persons signed a petition, a copy of which was received by each honourable member of this Parliament at the time. The petition is dated the 12th December, 1960, and I propose to read it. I do so largely for this reason: That if there are honourable members on the other side of the House who, on account of party-political considerations, or considerations of personal animosity, feel disposed to vote against my proposition, then perhaps they will pay some heed to those persons who have appended their names to this petition. It reads as follows:—

A Petition . . .

To the members of the Legislative Assembly in relation to the abolition of capital punishment.

Recognising the desirability of removing from the Statute Book of Western Australia the provision of capital punishment, and understanding that there is before the present session of Parliament a Private Member's Bill designed to secure that end, we, the undersigned citizens from varied departments of public life, urge that you, as a duly elected representative of the people of Western Australia, treat the Bill as a non-Party measure. We could hope that you might feel yourself able to personally support the measure.

The significant part is, of course, the signatories. I will read them in turn; they are as follows:—

Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver; Professor Walter Murdoch; Professor A. C. Fox, Department of Philosophy, University of W.A.; Professor F. R. Beasley, Dean of the Faculty of Law,

University of W.A.; Wilfred Dowsett, Senior Lecturer in Economics, University of W.A.; Alan Williams, Department of Engineering, University of W.A.; Mr. E. K. Braybrook, Senior Lecturer in Law, University of W.A.; Mr. Eric Edwards, Department of Law, University of W.A.; Professor Alex King, Department of English, University of W.A.; Phillip Parsons, Department of English, University of W.A.; Dr. R. B. Lefroy, W.A. Medical School, University of W.A.; Rev. John Bryant, Congregational Minister of Perth; Rev. Dr. Frank Nicholls, Moderator of Presbyterian Church in W.A.; Rev. Maurice Lee, Baptist Minister in Perth; Rev. Murray Savage, Church of Christ Minister of Perth; Rev. T. Brian MacDonald, Dean of St. George's Cathedral, Perth; Rev. Ralph Sutton, Methodist Minister of Perth; Rev. Rabbi L. Rubin Zacks, Chief Minister of Orthodox Jewish Synagogue, Perth; Rev. Rabbi George W. Rubens, Chief Minister of Liberal Jewish Synagogue, Perth; John M. Wheeldon, Solicitor, of Perth; John Henshaw, Solicitor, of Perth; V. J. A. O'Connor, Solicitor, of Perth; John Birman, Educationalist; L. W. Wilkinson, Society of Friends; Mary Durack, Writer; B. M. Rischbieth, O.B.E., J.P.; Irene Greenwood, Broadcaster; E. C. Gare, Company Secretary.

I would hazard a guess that the list would be as representative a gathering of worthy citizens as any honourable member could compile. Quite spontaneously they decided—without any consultation with me; because I was the private member introducing the Bill—they would append their signatures and ask all honourable members in the Legislative Assembly to support them in their prayer. The move was unsuccessful.

I have already indicated the experience here in Western Australia in respect of hangings, compared with that of other States of the Commonwealth. I find, from figures supplied to me by the Queensland Government, that in that State—where there has been no execution for more than half a century—the murder rate is practically identical with that of Western Australia. This is a comparison with a State which has many features comparable with our own, the only difference being double the population; and by and large their experience is double the number of murders.

I repeat that in Queensland there has not been an execution for a period in excess of 50 years. In Western Australia there was a hanging on the 4th July, 1960. There was another on the 6th June, 1961; another on the 20th January, 1964; and apparently there will be another hanging on the 26th October, 1964. In the four last years, from July, 1960, to August, 1964, there were 40 murders—an average of

10 a year. For the four years, from 1956 to 1959 inclusive, there were no hangings. There were 31 murders—an average of eight murders per annum, as against 10 in the last four years.

Those figures are taken from statistics supplied to me by the Minister for Police and the Police Department. One would have thought, if there is a deterrent effect in these executions of convicted murderers, that following the years 1956 to 1959—when there was an average of eight murders per annum—the number would have been reduced to three or four; or in any event, a figure considerably less than the average of eight. But the figure happens to be 10. Therefore one of the few props that are submitted is found to be unworthy of the job. In other words, it does not apply.

I suppose that here and now I should say—as I have said on so many previous occasions when anticipating the taunts that are made from time to time—that those who espouse the cause of the abolition of capital punishment are accused of exhibiting a concern for the murderers without giving any thought to the victims or the families and dependants of victims.

Of course, any thoughts or suggestions along those lines are completely absurd and ridiculous. It is a matter of the form of punishment; and because some young chap—as indeed one did travel through my electorate—travels at 70 miles an hour and commits a very serious offence, and I maintain that he should not be executed because of that offence no-one would suggest that I am condoning what he has done or that I am advocating that he should escape scot-free. I am not even suggesting that he should be horsewhipped or anything else. But this is the year 1964. We have facts and figures at our fingertips already available. We have the experience not only of Western Australia but of every other part of the world.

This is portion of an extract from the *Observer*, Sydney, dated the 8th August, 1959. It is headed "Politics in the Hanging State" and reads as follows:—

In recent months South Australians have been describing themselves as The Hanging State. It is an unpleasant appellation, and it is causing a marked unease among the normally complacent population of that comfortable territory. This unease developed to a critical point as the drama of the Stuart case unfolded, and the next few weeks South Australia is likely to be the centre of Australia-wide attention if the problem of capital punishment explodes in the face of the Government. The emotion built up around the complexities of the Stuart business, but there is a far sounder reason for South Australians describing themselves so bitterly as The Hanging State. South Australia is an executioner's heaven!

Unfortunately the mantle has been cast aside by South Australia and it rests heavily on the shoulders of the Administration in Western Australia—four hangings during its period as a government at a time when not one hanging has taken place in any other part of the Commonwealth of Australia, even in the State which had earned for itself the appellation the hanging State.

Here is the front page of *The Sun* in Sydney, published on the eve of the last hanging in Western Australia. Every single line on the front page and every single line on page two is devoted to Western Australia. A Western Australian over there at the time wrote me a personal note; and he said, "If you people over there were in Sydney tonight I guess you would not be proud to be a Western Australian."

This Government, because of its rigidity and its stubbornness in refusing to face facts, is earning for Western Australia a name and reputation which it should not have; and, in addition, by its decisions it is running counter to world-wide evidence, and committing, surely, a moral sin in allowing this outmoded brutality to be continued in our fair State. When there was a prospect of another hanging, as was thought to be the position in other parts of Australia earlier this year, the Methodist Church in Sydney convened a meeting; and, while it was held the best part of 2,000 miles from this spot, 800 people attended that meeting as a protest against capital punishment, anticipating that there would be another hanging in Western Australia.

It is interesting to note some of the people who spoke and what they said. Mr. McCaw, the Liberal member for Lane Cove, said this—

Every christian person in Australia wants the death sentence commuted. No country had produced statistics which showed that capital punishment was a deterrent to crime.

He said he had supported the New South Wales Labor Government when capital punishment was abolished in that State. Mr. Doig, the Liberal M.L.A. for Burswood, supported the protests against capital punishment. The Rev. Allen Walker, whilst his professional duties pertain to matters related to church work and Christianity, has politics which any fair-minded person would say are diametrically opposed to those of the Labor Party's philosophy. At this public meeting he said—

Life cannot be destroyed anywhere without cheapening life everywhere. The test of a society is the compassion it shows towards its weakest members. Capital punishment does not deter and as it has no effect on the crime rate it becomes an act of retaliation unworthy of a modern society.

The leading article published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the 4th April stated, amongst other things—

Many people will certainly hope that what has happened in Perth will lead to a reconsideration of capital punishment in the States which have insisted on keeping it.

So we gain some appreciation of the notoriety which Western Australia is earning because it is so hopelessly outmoded in respect of this issue. Perhaps I should anticipate some taunts from those who disagree with me—"Why was not legislative action taken when Labor was last the Government?" As I quoted from a Melbourne newspaper, the people in that State had become accustomed to a procedure under which, whilst the death penalty still remained on the Statute book, it would never be invoked. That, unfortunately, was the misguided thought of the Government which occupied the Treasury benches here from 1953 to 1959.

However, in view of our further experience, and the hopeless mess that was made in 1961, surely this is the time and the occasion for some deep thinking in connection with the matter! The position, as I have indicated on other occasions, is that those who sit on your left hand, Mr. Speaker, all believe in the abolition of capital punishment and all of us, subscribe to the platform of the Australian Labor Party which advocates the abolition of this bestial treatment. Every honourable member on the other side of the House is perfectly free to exercise his judgment one way or the other without infringing his party platform, and it is a shocking commentary on this Parliament when one knows, as I know, that the majority of honourable members of this Chamber are opposed to capital punishment and yet, for unworthy reasons, the Bill does not pass.

Of course, one is well aware of the machinery of Parliament, the way in which Cabinets operate, and the loyalties which are necessary if a government is to legislate effectively. But those considerations have application where matters of principle, policy, platform, and undertakings given to an electorate are concerned. Surely in the matter of a social question, closely related to Christianity and religion, and to one's personal views, apart altogether from study and research, it is a shocking thing that honourable members are allowing some prejudices, whether they be personal, party, or something else, to operate instead of voting in accordance with their consciences!

I have yet to learn of any public disquiet on any occasion when a government—or rather the Governor, but, of course, on the advice of the government—commutes a death penalty to one of a term of imprisonment. But I am equally certain that on every occasion when a hanging is to take place there is disquiet evident

in many quarters, and there are no party political barriers under such circumstances.

I suggest it has an unhealthy effect—and that is an understatement—upon the body politic—upon the community generally. It has anything but an uplifting effect upon those who earn their living at the Fremantle Prison. A Comptroller of Prisons of recent years died as a consequence of witnessing a hanging. It filled him with such nausea and abhorrence that he started taking drugs and, whilst under the influence of drugs, he fell and injured his head which resulted in his death. I know that because when I was Minister for Housing I was approached by a departmental officer to do something for his widow as that man had died under such distressing circumstances. He had died because a government had insisted that this barbaric remnant of an archaic law should be employed.

Recently I had occasion to have a conversation with a person who has attended not one but more than one hanging in Western Australia. I did not pursue the question; I have not called at his home, as I could have done, for the purpose of eliciting details. But to this day that man suffers from some nervous irritation from time to time that makes itself evident on his body. It is caused by the image, or the picture he has in his mind of the dread few minutes, or whatever period this operation takes, when he is compelled to be in attendance.

Yet in the year 1964 we insist that certain servants of the State must be in attendance at these ghastly ceremonies. Even murderers show a little compassion, because I am informed that a clergyman is required to be in attendance but he does not attend if the condemned man expresses his wish that that person be not there and, out of consideration for the reverend gentlemen, I am informed invariably, or almost invariably, they are spared this sight, which could have an irreparable effect upon any normal sensitive person's mind.

So whichever way we look at it this is a process which has no part in modern law. As already indicated, Western Australia is miles behind every other State in the Commonwealth; and, in the case of certain countries in the world, it is more than 100 years behind the times. I have said on several occasions when I have introduced the legislation that some day, be it next year or in five years or 15 years' time, capital punishment in Western Australia will be abolished. We cannot hang on to this dastardly thing in the face of the rest of the world which inevitably is moving towards the abolition of capital punishment.

Why not now? What evidence is required additional to that which I have endeavoured to submit this evening;

and which, I repeat, I have submitted in the hope that authoritative documents throughout the civilised world—not opinion—prove conclusively that the taking of human life by the State contributes nothing in the matter of deterring others from taking human life in certain circumstances.

I am no psychiatrist; I am no medical practitioner; I am no scientist, or anything else; but to me it is a very simple lesson. It is not in the nature of one created in God's image a human being to take the life of another—it is not within his nature and compass to do so. From time to time, however, these tragedies occur; obviously, therefore, there is something wrong with the individual who commits the offence.

Based on the experience of the last four years, in the year 1965 there will be 10 more murders in Western Australia. I can guarantee that not one of those 10 at this moment has any thought of committing such an offence. It might be you, Mr. Speaker; it might be somebody else; but whoever those 10 persons might be they have no intention or thoughts whatever of committing something that will undoubtedly happen. There may be a weakening or a snapping of a cord, or something else, and those persons will take the life of another.

Have we not advanced to the stage that we can have regard for proper treatment, attention, and punishment without the extreme of taking human life? The term that is usually employed is judicial murder. I do not know the position in Western Australia, but it is known in Great Britain, in Italy, in France, and in other countries, and indeed in the United States of America, that persons have been condemned to death and executed when they have been innocent. In each case it appeared at the time that there was not a shadow of doubt in any respect; not a single shadow of doubt as to the guilt of the person who was found guilty.

But in some cases sometimes 18 or 20 years later—there was one in Italy where 18 years later—it was found that the person who was executed was not guilty; it was in fact his brother who was guilty of the offence. Who knows whether on occasions persons who have appeared palpably and obviously guilty in Western Australia were perhaps not in fact guilty? Perhaps had they even been permitted to live there may have been some factor or circumstance later on that would have provided some evidence leading eventually to the truth of the situation.

Here let me say—and I say this is unfortunate—that in Western Australia at the present moment there is one person, if not more than one person, who has been found guilty of murder, or wilful murder, and who is incarcerated at the present moment, but in respect of whom before very long it may be found that a

mistake has in fact been made. Unfortunately—and I am saying this in all seriousness—the event which this Government has precipitated and timetabled for next Monday week may have a substantial bearing on what I have said. I am sorry at this stage that I cannot be more explicit, for a very good reason.

But those who have read the documents and records in the mother country—Great Britain—would be aware of cases where everything pointed to a person being guilty, and where, quite apart from the person's own protestations of innocence, everybody concluded that that person was guilty but was subsequently found to be not guilty. That has happened within recent years.

So this legislation if agreed to will remove the death penalty from the Statute book of Western Australia. It will follow the example of Queensland and New South Wales; it will follow the example of so many countries in Europe and in other parts of the world. There will not be, and there cannot be any detriment in such a move as is already demonstrated by the authorities that I have quoted. So we will have reached a stage, even though belatedly, where the taking of life so far as Western Australia is concerned will not occur in respect of persons who have deranged minds, whether for a split second or whether over a lengthy period; and I hope we will never see the day when Australia, including our own State, is involved in war, when life is taken.

I hope we will attain to a state where human life is something sacred; so sacred that the State will not be a party to the taking of another's life. Persons whose minds are so deranged that they are impossible should, of course, be incarcerated for the terms of their natural lives, because there would be a risk of danger to the public for them to be liberated. Others who had committed this most serious of crimes would be in prison for a term perhaps unspecified, to spend their time in prison; to be cared for, to be tended; and to be nursed back to health; faithfully observed and scrutinised to ensure that there is no danger to the community if they were released; because murderers have been released in Western Australia and have not committed additional major crimes. Some hundreds have been released in Great Britain after various terms of imprisonment.

I am not suggesting what the period should be. So far as I am concerned the period should perhaps be a minimum specified time, and I would not make that very long either, but as long thereafter as is necessary to nurse that person back to a normal life. I say I would not make the term of imprisonment particularly long, because it has been found in other parts of the world that beyond a period of approximately 10 years a person commences to deteriorate; and to release a person after

20 years' incarceration is increasing the possibility of another offence being committed, particularly when compared with his release after a period of, say, 10 years.

But the experience has been that those who have been in prison for committing a serious capital offence have, when they have been released, either followed the straight and narrow path, or their misdemeanours have been in the category of minor or comparatively minor offences with very few exceptions.

There is the Bill which I submit to this Chamber; to this Parliament. I regret the necessity for it, but I repeat it has been brought about because of the botch that was made in 1961 under which a person committing the most serious of crimes can be imprisoned for a short time while the person committed for a lesser offence receives a minimum of 15 years irreducible.

My final words are similar to those expressed on other occasions. The Parliament of Western Australia is going to accept a Bill for the abolition of capital punishment some time. I submit it is not possible to adduce more convincing evidence than is available at the present time. Therefore, why not abolition now?

I suggest it is not a very pleasant job for the Government to make the decision it made recently. It is not in the interests of justice or of the morale of the people that this operation wherein somebody is hired from another State to come over here should depend on whether the A's sit on the right-hand side of the Speaker or whether the B's sit over there and comprise the Government. It should not depend on those circumstances; nor was the Government—which feels it is somehow committed to this sort of action—justified in taking the steps it did previously on public pressure, in respect of the case of a person found guilty of wilful murder earlier this year and whose sentence was commuted, but because of public pressure not only from the people of Western Australia but from those Australia-wide, and indeed internationally, and notwithstanding the verdict of the court, and without any recommendation to mercy, the Government felt it could not stand up to such pressure.

I suggest that those factors are bad for law; and bad for respect for Parliament, and the administration. Accordingly I do make a fervent appeal to those who sit on that side of the House that as they are not bound by any platform or dogma they are free to vote for this measure if their conscience so dictates; free to make some study of this and be guided by the facts. If that be the case then capital punishment will be abolished in the year 1964.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Minister for Agriculture).

PAINTERS' REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed, from the 2nd September, on the following motion by Mr. Graham:—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. WILD (Dale—Minister for Works) [9.31 p.m.]: The honourable member for Balcatta introduced a Bill which contained two amendments to the Painters' Registration Act, some three or four weeks ago. One amendment seeks to increase the size of the board by adding another master painter; and the other seeks to delete from the Act the term "Master Painters' Association of Australia" and to substitute the term "Council of Master Painters', Decorators' and Signwriters' Associations of Australia".

I cannot agree to this Bill on two or three counts. On the question of increasing the representation of the Master Painters' Association, the honourable member for Balcatta during the second reading went to some length to indicate that on the board there was a representative of the paint manufacturers, a representative of the master painters, and there was the chairman of the board. He considered that as legislation had been introduced basically to look after the painting industry on the labour side and not on the manufacturing side, the master painters were entitled to another representative.

If there is any justification for increasing the membership of the board, there is much more ground for the Government, through the Minister for Labour, to have a representative on it. I am advised that of approximately 650 registered painters in Western Australia just over 200 are members of what is thought to be the Master Painters' Association. Obviously, there are 450 who have not seen fit to join that association. If there is any justification to increase the membership then the other 450 are entitled to representation.

This Act has been on the Statute book for only three years, and it has been my prerogative to administer it for the last 2½ years. During this period I have not received any complaints about the legislation. I cannot see any ground for increasing the size of the board; in any case, if it is to be increased then the 450 master painters who are not in the association should be represented on it.

The other amendment in the Bill seeks to substitute another title for that which appears in the Act. I suppose I was as much at fault as the honourable member for Balcatta in accepting that there was a Master Painters' Association of Australia. I now understand there has not been one for three or four years. The body which

is recognised is the Council of Master Painters, Decorators and Signwriters' Association of Australia.

From inquiries made of the Federal secretary of that association who is domiciled in Victoria, the qualifications for membership in that association have been ascertained. I would point out that if we agreed to this Bill we would let into the industry in Western Australia, through the back door, the very type of person this legislation was designed to keep out. The qualifications are—

The applicant must have been in business for a period of twelve months, during which time he shall have employed labour.

The Association, on receipt of application must inspect work carried out by the applicant and assure themselves of the standard of workmanship.

The applicant's background must be investigated as to character and financial stability.

As far as possible it is demanded that the applicant should have completed a satisfactory trade course.

In Western Australia a painter who applies to be registered under the Act is entitled to be so registered if and when he pays the fees for such registration, and satisfies the board that he has attained the age of 21 years and is of good character, and that he—

- (1) has completed the prescribed course of training, and has passed the prescribed examination as laid down by the board for persons other than apprentices who have had five years' practical experience in the painting trade, or as laid down by the Court of Arbitration for apprentices to the painting trade; or
- (2) is a member of an association of painters recognised by the Master Painters' Association of Australia; or
- (3) has in some place other than Western Australia obtained a degree of efficiency as a painter which the board considers is comparable with that ordinarily attained by persons who have completed the course of training, passed the examinations, and worked as mentioned in subparagraph (1) of section 12.

If anything at all should be done, that section should be deleted from the Act. It does not contain the standards or qualifications which the honourable member for Balcatta endeavoured to obtain when he introduced the legislation.

Mr. Graham: Will the Minister give consideration to substituting for the words proposed to be inserted, the words "The

Master Painters' Association of Western Australia", instead of including the federal body?

Mr. WILD: I am prepared to look at that point. It is the intention of the Government, on the grounds I have given, to oppose the measure.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Kelly.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

Disallowance of By-laws 493 to 500L:

Order Discharged

Order discharged from the notice paper, on motion by Mr. Grayden.

DAIRYING INDUSTRY: BUTTERFAT SECTION

*Inquiry by Special Committee into
Economic Position: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 9th September, on the following motion by Mr. Rowberry:—

That a Special Committee be appointed, representative of the three political parties comprising this Parliament, Government Departments, and all sections of the industry, to seek ways and means to improve the economic position of the Dairying Industry, Butter Fat Section, in this State.

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Minister for Agriculture) [9.39 p.m.]: In introducing this motion the honourable member for Warren gave the reasons for the setting up of a committee of inquiry. It is interesting to note that a portion of the motion is in almost identical terms with a portion of a letter he received from Mr. J. P. Norton, Deputy Chairman of the Australian Dairy Produce Board. One part of the motion is—

all sections of the industry . . . to seek ways and means to improve the economic position of the Dairying Industry . . .

A portion of the letter I have referred to states—

all sections of the industry . . . was set up for the purpose of seeking ways and means to improve the economic position of the industry . . .

The honourable member quoted the letter he received from Mr. Norton which mentioned that an inquiry had been instituted in Queensland, and that the committee comprised representatives of the State Government, Government departments, and all sections of the industry.

It appears there had not been any publicised approach by the dairy section of the Farmers' Union for any move in the direction proposed by the mover of the motion. A few weeks prior to the motion being moved I received a deputation from the dairy section of the Farmers' Union,

and its members indicated to me they were concerned about some sections of the industry, and they intended to call a conference of producers in a town in the south-west, which is the centre of the dairying area, when the matter would be discussed. They said that if the conference came forward with proposals, the Government should give consideration to them and be prepared to implement them.

At this stage I understand such a conference has been held, but no approach has been made to the Government concerning any recommendations passed by the conference. The House would be ill-advised to move for the appointment of a committee to investigate a matter which in the opinion of the producers themselves has yet to be considered by them.

I would remind the House that this matter goes much further than the State of Western Australia; because, as everyone knows, the Commonwealth Government pays a subsidy on butter production. Therefore the subject matter of the motion should be considered on a Commonwealth-wide basis. I shall give reasons for this shortly.

This matter was investigated by a committee set up by the Commonwealth Government a few years ago, and a report has been made available. That committee travelled throughout the Commonwealth and inquired into every section of the industry. It took many months for the committee to complete its investigations, and eventually it submitted a report to the Government.

We have also been informed—and the honourable member made reference to this—that the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has started an inquiry into costs and the general economics of the dairying industry in Australia. That committee I understand has made an approach to the officers of the Department of Agriculture in this State and has received every co-operation. All information it requires will be made available in order that its investigations will prove fruitful. Information will be made available which will help in the first instance the Commonwealth Government to make a recommendation which might help to stabilise the industry and place it on a firmer footing than it is on at present.

The honourable member spent some considerable time giving reasons why he felt the investigation should cover all aspects of the industry. He mentioned the importance of fodder, grasses, etc. The old statement, and I do not think anyone can dispute it, that 90-odd per cent. of the breed of an animal goes down its neck still applies today, and it does not matter how well bred an animal is, if it is not fed properly then the maximum results cannot be achieved.

Mention was also made of the investigations that had taken place in other parts of the world. I would like to inform honourable members that the Department of Agriculture here has received reports of investigations and research being undertaken in every country of the world, and from time to time we send officers overseas to those countries to attend conferences in order that they might be well informed on every aspect of the industry. Therefore we are not out of touch with what is going on in other countries. The honourable member mentioned the position in England, and I would remind him that with reference to agriculture in the Old Country, subsidies play a very important part.

Another aspect he mentioned was that some inquiry should be made into salt as a barley fertiliser. That comes under fodder production, and the information is already available to the department in this State. I am informed it does not have any effect on the position as far as fertilisers in Western Australia are concerned.

I would like to comment on the remarks of the honourable member in regard to the efficiency of the dairy farmers in this State. It is accepted that a number of dairy farmers are not prosperous and that their farms are what could be termed substandard. The Government, through the dairy farm improvement scheme, is endeavouring to help those farmers by organising additional carrying capacity and providing considerable financial assistance. In view of the frequent reports that a large percentage of the dairy farmers are in a substandard position, it is surprising that there is not a large number of applicants for this assistance under the scheme.

The work of the Government in the past in establishing the dairying industry has resulted in this extensive mixed farming pattern which exists today. In 1920, about the time when group settlement started—and this was the commencement of the continuous effort to establish this industry—there were fewer than 17,000 acres of pasture in what are now termed the dairying districts of the State. Today there are over 2,000,000 acres under pasture. This development has followed the efforts of governments in the past, and the present Government, in establishing these areas and helping the industry to gain improved knowledge and experience and has led to the present situation. The establishment of the dairying industry could be said to have stimulated the development of the whole of the grazing areas of the south-west where, at the 31st March, 1964, there were 209,253 dairy cattle, 243,056 other cattle, and 1,860,087 sheep. That indicates a general improvement in the carrying capacity of the whole of the south-west area in which dairying is the main agricultural pursuit.

The Government appreciates that dairying is still a developing industry—that it is developing under difficult clearing conditions. I do not think anyone can contradict that. We have the hardwood forests which are very difficult and costly to clear. Even when the timber is cleared—whether it be bulldozed or rung and then bulldozed—the timber is very slow to burn and so a considerable time elapses before the clearing and burning are completed. As I have said it is a costly undertaking.

The Government does not accept the statement that the climate is a disadvantage. We know that it is advantageous in the dairying industry because there is a period of green pasture growth under unirrigated conditions of from six to nine months. We have a natural climate which is an advantage except for a short period in the middle of summer and perhaps a similar period in the wintertime. This last season has been a very good season in the lower south-west and it has continued and probably this year will be an above-average season because of the early rains. This of course, is a hazard which is accepted by agriculturists in every part of the world.

Farmers can plan their seasonal activities with confidence. The productivity of the dairying districts here is much higher than in many other districts in Australia. Success depends on adequate farm size and in this respect the Government is making the positive contribution which I have already mentioned under the dairy farm improvement scheme.

Considerable success has been achieved in the grade herd testing in which over 20 per cent. of the cows in the dairying districts are being tested. The size of herds has increased in 10 years from 35 to 49 cows and this is a substantial advance.

The honourable member mentioned the fact that quite a number of people in the dairying industry itself had lost interest and had carried on other forms of agriculture. Well now, what can we do about that? It is still a free country, and if a person gets tired of dairying and wants to extend his interests into other fields, I cannot see that we can do anything about it. You know yourself, Mr. Speaker, that if you in your district wish to carry on dairying that is all right. If you choose to extend your interest into the beef industry, you have the opportunity and privilege to do so. If you want to grow fruit, you are at liberty to exercise your right in that regard. If you consider it is economic to diversify your interests, it is your right as an individual to do so.

Many problems are associated with this particular section of the industry. With the increasing carrying capacity, farmers are faced with the decision as to whether to increase the herd further and employ

labour and suffer a reduced net income temporarily until sufficient additional cows can be milked to cover the increased cost; or to undertake, in association with their dairy herd, the production of fat cattle or sheep, or the growing of fruit. Some of those who have reached that stage have elected to undertake sheep or beef as a sole activity and they have a perfect right to so decide. The fact that these farmers turn to other livestock activity cannot be taken as an indication that the dairying industry is unsuccessful.

There is, of course, a swing to sheep. But it is not the small substandard farmer who does this. If he does, his position becomes still worse. There is ample evidence to show that in farms up to at least a carrying capacity of 40 or 50 cows, the returns from dairying are superior to those from other forms of livestock farming. The emphasis being given by officers of the dairying division of the Department of Agriculture to improved shed design to enable the through-put of more cows per labour unit will result in an increased out-turn of milk per man and so contribute towards greater economic stability.

There is no doubt that some farmers have an income which is still under the basic wage, but these are the farmers who are on properties which are as yet insufficiently developed. This does not apply only in the dairying districts of the State. It applies in every section of agriculture. I do not doubt that we could travel to any area of the State and find substandard farms, whether they be wheat farms, dairying farms, or mixed farms. A number of reasons are to be found for this, but I do not intend to go through them. Another point is that we should not get or give the impression that these substandard farms are to be found only in the south-west portion of the State.

The difficulties of achieving the necessary degree of development are fully appreciated, and the Government on several occasions approached the Commonwealth Government for funds to implement a plan to help these farmers in the dairying areas, but unsuccessfully. I have already mentioned the committee of inquiry into the dairying industry which recommended the creation of a fund to assist in such development, but the recommendation has not been accepted.

I have also already mentioned the investigation which is being carried out by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and also the fact that the Department of Agriculture is co-operating in every way by supplying all the data the bureau requires. This will not be an inquiry into the cost of production but will consist of an examination of the economic status of dairy farms. On completion of this work, data will be available to assist in the evaluation of the condition of the dairying industry.

A suggestion has been made that several individual aspects of farm practice should be examined and that existing knowhow is not being used. This suggestion could apply to the wastage of feed, which I did mention a little earlier and to which the honourable member made reference. Undoubtedly there is a wastage of feed and this applies not only in the south-west but in many other places in Australia as well. An effort is being made by the department to ascertain a practical use of all the material grown on the farms so that as near 100 per cent. as possible is utilised for stock production.

The question of greater fodder conservation has been mentioned by many honourable members representing country areas in the past. Fodder conservation is an insurance against a period of, say, a long dry autumn or a wet winter when it is necessary for fodder to be conserved and when there has to be the best utilisation of fodder for stock. Practices successful in other environments need not necessarily be successful in this State. Officers from the Department of Agriculture have visited overseas countries and the Eastern States to find out what the situation is in those places and to see whether what is done there can be applied in this State.

It is acknowledged that Western Australia is importing dairy products from the Eastern States, and this is likely to continue while comparatively good prices are being received for other livestock products. However, should there be an alteration in the relativity of prices, there could be a sudden upswing in the output of milk. There does not appear to be a case for the Government to assist in stimulating a particular industry at the expense of another. If more land is devoted to dairying, less will be available for meat and wool production. Economic positions must determine the policy from time to time. The question of substandard dairy farms; i.e., underdeveloped ones, is something quite different and should not be confused with the general examination of the economic status of the industry as a whole.

I make these points because I believe that because of all the investigations that have gone on in the interests of this industry on an Australia-wide basis; the fact that there is already an inquiry being carried out by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics; and the fact that the Government is already assisting the improvement of dairy farms under the dairy farm improvement scheme which is operating in Western Australia to the advantage of all those who wish to apply for assistance under it, I feel that at this stage no good purpose would come from an all-party committee; and added to that committee would be members of the Department of Agriculture and people interested in the industry.

I mentioned earlier that the officers of the Farmers' Union have already made an approach and have said they are holding a conference and will submit a proposal to the Government to see what can be done. We have not yet received that proposal, and I feel that any inquiry at this stage would only be duplicating information that will be made available by the industry itself.

I consider the present policy is the one we should continue, because in the past it has been accepted that if the industry has a problem it should discuss it, reach agreement, and bring the matter to the Government for consideration. When that position applies, the Government will give consideration to all aspects that have been brought forward. So I believe it is not necessary to have this committee at this stage, and I oppose the motion.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [10.4 p.m.]: The note on which the Minister concluded his remarks is rather surprising when we analyse his actions a few years ago when war service land settlement was reputed to be in a bad state. The Minister for Agriculture was then a back bencher in the Government, and he was a very strong advocate on behalf of the war service land settlers. He put forward the point of view that Parliament should appoint a Select Committee to go into the affairs of that section of Western Australia who, at that time, were struggling. He was even happy to join with the then Opposition in endeavouring to do something about the position.

Mr. Nalder: There was no other inquiry going on at that time.

Mr. KELLY: That did not make any difference.

Mr. Nalder: Yes it did; a big difference.

Mr. KELLY: No; because we have had these inquiries, on a Federal basis, on a number of occasions.

I shall quote to the Minister some of his replies in regard to the inquiry he mentioned during the course of his remarks, and those replies will show very clearly that, from his point of view, nothing has been achieved. So far as the previous inquiry was concerned, he was not even interested because, he said, it was a Commonwealth matter.

The question before us is somewhat closer to home and is something we should take an interest in; we should not put the responsibility on to some other section. This motion should receive the fullest consideration and support in this Chamber. I say that, because there are a number of honourable members here who represent, in some form or other, sections of the dairying industry.

It is perfectly evident from the many headlines we have seen in the past 12 or 18 months that all is not well in this

industry, and I would think that, generally speaking, there is an ailment within the dairy industry.

I know there are some people who are doing very well. Those in the whole-milk section who have big quotas and who are able to keep employed a family of several sons, or who can afford to pay employees, are doing all right. By virtue of the fact that they have a high quota, they are able to keep their heads well above water and make a success of the industry. But they are not the majority of the industry, by any means; nor do they represent all sections of the industry.

When we consider both sections—the whole-milk and the butterfat sections—we find there are many dairy farmers, not only in Western Australia, but in all States, suffering from an insufficiency of finance to do the things they want to do. This is not something new that has occurred overnight. This has been the position for quite a period. I think it calls for remedial action other than mentioned by the Minister; namely, a Federal inquiry. We know what these inquiries are. They go on for 18 months or two years. One dairy industry inquiry furnished its report in August, 1960, but it commenced its sittings somewhere in the early part of 1959. It took a long time and required a lot of money for the committee to find out all the things that it reported on.

As a matter of fact I think that had the committee's recommendations been adopted there would have been civil war in the country, because some of the recommendations could not have been accepted by this or any other government. Nevertheless, those findings were the findings of a reputable set of men who went thoroughly into the dairy industry. So much for the actions of a government following the recommendations of a committee of this kind.

There is no gainsaying that some of the best brains in Western Australia, as well as of Australia, were represented on that committee; and I think the members of the committee did a tremendous job in compiling their report—a report which has been shelved ever since, because the Federal Government has taken no action to implement any of the recommendations.

The replies of the Minister for Agriculture show clearly that he is fully cognisant of that fact. I say that the Commonwealth Government recognised the precarious position of the dairy industry when it instituted this very inquiry that has been mentioned. Undoubtedly had the recommendations been adopted there would have been some very drastic occurrences within the industry, and many people would have been set thinking as to who was going where. To my way of thinking the report was couched in the strongest possible terms for a committee to use.

I think this is a mixed-up industry, and has been for a long time. This is not an occurrence which has just come upon us; the industry has been in a difficult position for quite a period.

In reference to the inquiry that took place, when I questioned the Minister I asked him these four questions—

- (1) Could he advise if the Commonwealth Government adopted the recommendation contained in the report of the Dairy Industry Committee of Enquiry released in August, 1960, that a dairy development council be established?
- (2) If not was any other committee appointed in accordance with recommendation 21 of the report?
- (3) Could he advise what sections of the report have been adopted and what action has resulted?
- (4) Was any action taken in this State to put into effect recommendation 23 of the report?

The Minister's reply was given in the form that we have got accustomed to here. One would think that the department, or the Minister himself, never made a mistake, but was always completely right and that there was no room for anybody to sneak in some little suggestion that could be adopted.

Mr. Nalder: You had that confidence in your department when you were the Minister.

Mr. KELLY: Certainly I did; but I did not always let everything go without having some comment to offer. I frequently entered into controversies that existed not only in the department but outside of it.

Mr. Nalder: That is right.

Mr. KELLY: The Minister must get this well into his mind: that it is not only the departmental angle that has to be considered. There is an angle beyond the department's angle, and that is the one we have to give a lot of consideration to.

Mr. Nalder: We are listening to your viewpoint now.

Mr. KELLY: Yes; and I am hoping I can contribute something. I know this is a difficult subject, and there have been many inquiries in times gone by, but we still find there is a canker that has never been overcome. The Minister's reply to my questions was—

- (1) to (4) As far as I am aware, no action has been taken on the recommendation of the Dairy Industry Committee of Enquiry (1960). Any action is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.

After a period of four years, even with a very complete document of recommendation, the Commonwealth has done nothing; and the Minister says it is quite all right

to leave things for another four years, and then, if the Commonwealth so desires, conduct another inquiry.

Mr. Nalder: I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. KELLY: That is what the Minister implied.

Mr. Nalder: What a wonderful imagination you have.

Mr. KELLY: That is the only inference I could draw from the Minister's attitude and from his answers to the questions; namely, that he is completely out of touch in respect of the industry.

Mr. Nalder: The answers given in reply to the questions you asked are correct.

Mr. KELLY: The answers may be correct from the Minister's point of view, but they do not get the industry anywhere. That is the point I am endeavouring to bring home to honourable members this evening; namely, that there is need for a better approach to be made to the problems of the dairying industry than those which have been made by the Minister on its behalf.

The Minister provided us with some statistics when he was speaking to the motion, covering several sections of the industry which he regarded as being sick. Of course they are sick! It is not news to us to learn that many dairy farms have not enough feed to keep their quotas going, insufficient land cleared, and a quota that is too small for any dairy farmer to eke out an existence. That is why the dairy farms improvement scheme was evolved when the Labor Government was in office.

Mr. Nalder: That has nothing to do with this question.

Mr. KELLY: It refers to the dairying industry, and the dairying industry covers all sections.

Mr. Nalder: The honourable member mentioned the butterfat section.

Mr. KELLY: He mentioned that specifically, but he also mentioned the dairying industry, and I am quite within my rights in referring to the dairying industry as a whole.

Mr. Nalder: He referred to the section you are mentioning as being a lot of plutocrats.

Mr. KELLY: I do not subscribe to that. What he thinks has nothing to do with me. I am giving the Minister my impressions of what should be done. The section he represents is the one nearest to him in that area. When he moved the motion he had in mind the whole of the industry in this State, and on that ground I think we are perfectly entitled to refer to the whole-milk section or any other section of the dairying industry, because they come within the same category in the present circumstances. In both cases there are

some who are doing well for obvious reasons and because of the conditions mentioned by the Minister. Those conditions are favourable in some instances and quite unfavourable in many others.

On its quota system this industry is quite unbalanced. This is disclosed by many of the answers that were given to the questions I asked the Minister. One of the questions I asked was—

Is he satisfied with the economic position of the dairying industry in this State?

The Minister's reply to that question was—

The general position of the dairying industry is satisfactory, but the returns to individuals vary with the extent to which overall development on their properties has been effected.

Of course they do! I suppose that could be said of any industry; that is, that various conditions affect the picture, and quite often the condition is man-made. In other circumstances the property is affected and handicapped by lack of finance, and there are many other factors which could be mentioned. I also asked the Minister a question on quotas in this State, and I think the answers he gave were very illuminating. I asked the Minister—

How many quotas are in excess of:
(a) 250 gallons?

The answer I received showed that there are six people in Western Australia who have a quota of 250 gallons or more and, of course, they are in a very good position; there is no doubt about that. They would not be included in the section of those who are feeling the pinch at present. I also asked the Minister how many dairy farmers had quotas in excess of 200 gallons, and he replied that there were 20. Of those with a quota in excess of 150 gallons there are 58; in excess of 100 gallons there are 164; in excess of 50 gallons there are 503; and there are 31 dairy farmers who have a quota less than 50 gallons. It is that section of dairy farmers who have a quota between 50 and 100 gallons who are feeling the pinch constantly. There is a total of 782 dairy farmers with quotas in this State, and of that number 534 are in the lower-quota bracket. They are the people we are interested in at present.

I also asked the Minister if this industry was going to be allowed to jog along in the position it is in at present when almost every branch of the Farmers' Union throughout the milk-producing areas is complaining week after week of the condition of the industry. They speak of how unsound the economics of the industry are. They speak of many factors, all of which lead one to the same conclusion—namely, that the industry is in a bad way—and I think that without more positive action the position is going to deteriorate further.

Western Australia at present is importing a large quantity of dairy produce from the Eastern States which should not be in a State such as this. If encouragement were given to those engaged in the dairying industry there would be no need for these imports, but we are increasing the importation of dairy produce as the years go by and, except for cheese, the imports are far in excess of what this State can stand in the interests of those engaged in the dairying industry.

The Minister has said that he considers the whole matter should be left in the hands of the Commonwealth. Already we have had two surveys of the industry made: in 1952 and in 1959. There may have been other surveys; I do not know. I know there was a committee of inquiry in 1960, of which we have already spoken, and there have been approaches to put this industry on a better footing than it has been on for many years. To the present time all the reports and results of each investigation have been pigeon-holed or shelved and no action has been taken. I know that departments do not like inquiries into an industry or anything that affects the department concerned, and that is understandable, because very often during these inquiries different viewpoints are expressed that do not line up with departmental thinking. So from a departmental point of view Select Committees or Royal Commissions are not very popular.

This industry is heavily subsidised to the tune, I think, of £13,250,000 or £13,500,000 per annum. At present we have the dairy farms improvement scheme, the expenditure on which up to the present is in the vicinity of £270,000 in an endeavour to raise the standard of sub-standard or underdeveloped dairy farms when application is made for assistance.

Both the State and Commonwealth Governments have spent a great deal of money on research. It should be appreciated that the dairying industry is not a small unit in the economy of Australia or from the State's point of view. I think it ranks third in importance in the group of rural industries. So, from a national point of view, apart from the one we are considering, successive attempts have been made to place the industry on a sound footing; but I consider many of the attempts that have been made have only scratched the surface in trying to achieve something; the reason being that the findings submitted have not been given the full importance they deserve.

I think that probably we have neglected the hard core of the problem; that is, that so many of these people are struggling to eke out an existence on underdeveloped properties and are finding great difficulty in carrying on. So over a period the dairying industry has declined considerably, despite the fact that more producers have

entered the industry. As the Minister has recited, we have cleared many thousands of acres for settlement. Of course, in every way production has increased, but the industry is on the decline at present after two very favourable seasons. That fact in itself indicates there is something entirely wrong with the industry.

Despite the industry continuing to enjoy the benefit of huge subsidies, research expenditure, protection in a small way from the production of margarine, and as a result of the restrictive-quota system under which the number of producers is kept to a very low figure; and despite the financial assistance obtained through the dairy farms improvement scheme, there must be some fundamental reason for the industry to lag as it is; there must be something wrong in addition to the problems that have been grappled with up to now.

If this or any other Government were to advance three times the amount of money that has been spent on the dairy farms improvement scheme we still would not have a complete and healthy industry, because it is so far behind that it has no immediate chance of catching up. I believe we will have to spend a great deal more money in this State to raise the under-productive farms to an economic level; because although, as the Minister endeavoured to tell us a little while ago, it is the right of every man to choose his own industry and to go where he likes, the dairy farmer is being driven out of the industry as a result of the harsh conditions he constantly has to face.

I think we have to come to the calm realisation that the industry is at the crossroads unless something better than the possible result from another Commonwealth inquiry is obtained. In any case such an inquiry would only discover what we probably know in most cases, because we are not going to achieve anything if we do not adopt and act on the recommendations of an inquiring body. That is something we have not done up to the present, so it is useless to continue pinning our faith on something of that nature.

When I say the dairying industry is at the crossroads, let me make it perfectly clear I am speaking of that section of the industry that is finding the pinch more than it can bear. There is a portion of the industry, as I have already mentioned, that is in a reasonable position and is satisfied and happy. But why have 20 per cent. happiness and 80 per cent. misery? That is what a lot of these people are facing.

I know that quite a number of quotas have been handed in during the last two or three years. I could name quite a few of them because I have a great deal to do with those people. These quotas

were handed in simply because the people concerned could not make ends meet. In a country such as this; and particularly in an area where an abundance of feed has always existed, the climatic condition is good, and every convenience is available on their properties to enable them to continue, why should these people give away their quotas? They cannot make a success of it under present conditions.

The Minister mentioned a letter which, I think, the honourable member for Warren read to the House. I do not intend to embark on the suggestions contained in that letter, but a small section of it I think would be well worth consideration and adoption. It is a suggestion advanced by the particular interest mentioned in that letter; and it is as follows:—

A new and constructive approach to the problems of the industry.

That is just what this industry needs—a new and constructive approach; and it will not get that if we are going to allow this matter to drift on and on by getting another report and another pigeonholed result. I think it is up to the State Government, apart from the scheme that is operating to the advantage of quite a few people, to double or treble without any fear of having any of that money lying idle.

Mr. Nalder: Do you mean double the clearing for new farms?

Mr. KELLY: I do not mean that at all. We are not embracing a sufficient number of farmers at the present time. I think many more could be included in this scheme. I think the Minister in his remarks said something about the applicants who could come along.

Mr. Nalder: That is right.

Mr. KELLY: But there are conditions that prevent certain of these people coming.

Mr. Nalder: They have to be fully engaged in farming.

Mr. KELLY: It will have to be put on a much broader basis than at the present time. I am fully aware of where this scheme started and how; but why should it embrace one section only? There is just as much sickness, and misery in the industry in other directions, particularly on the whole-milk side where quotas are low and the people are struggling with insufficient feed. I think the scheme could be extended very considerably, and this would alleviate a lot of the difficulty in the lower brackets, because that is where there is a considerable amount of trouble at the present time.

There are those who are in a good position, and there are those who are in a poor position; and the Minister must

realise that. I think the second matter mentioned in this letter is one which I just discussed with the Minister—

Finance on a long-term basis would raise the standard of development.

I think we as Western Australians, and the Western Australian Government, can bring about a tremendous improvement; and the investigation asked for by the honourable member for Warren is one that could have a very beneficial effect as a number of our producers are in a poor position at the present time.

I think the honourable member has in mind an inquiry of a local character. We know that any of these inquiries on a Commonwealth basis take a long time; so unless we can bring about something much faster I think this industry is going to be in a very bad way. I support the proposition of the honourable member for Warren that a committee be appointed on the basis he has suggested.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. I. W. Manning.

House adjourned at 10.35 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 15th October, 1964

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