

*In Committee, etc.*

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

*House adjourned at 11.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 30th October, 1974

The PRESIDENT (the Hon. A. F. Griffith) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTIONS (10): ON NOTICE

#### 1. HOUSING IN THE NORTH

##### *Fans, and Aluminium Materials*

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Has this Government changed the policies of the previous Government which restricted the installation of fans in northern State Housing Commission homes?
- (2) If so, what are the new policies?
- (3) If not, when are such changes likely to be made?
- (4) In view of the State Housing Commission policies under the previous Government which refused to use aluminium materials on SHC homes in the North on the grounds of high cost and unsuitability even though the SHC had designed and built Aboriginal houses with the aluminium materials in a cyclone area under that Government, will the Minister advise if the SHC has carried out a comprehensive study to compare the suitability, landed costs and construction costs of aluminium building materials against the suitability, landed costs and construction costs of timber in the North of Western Australia?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) A fan will be provided in all bedrooms and living rooms.
- (3) Answered by (2).
- (4) A study is currently in progress.

#### 2. KANGAROOS

##### *Shooting Permits*

The Hon. D. J. WORDSWORTH, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Did the Minister receive a letter from the Secretary of the Australian Wild Life Conservation Committee dated the 13th September in which she complained

that the kangaroo was becoming "a very costly liability" instead of "paying handsome dividends to the State's economy"?

- (2) Is such a statement typical of those coming from conservation groups on the handling of the kangaroo problem in Western Australia?
- (3) What are the present limits of shooting permits granted in the various regions of Western Australia?
- (4) What kangaroo population has to be established before such a permit is granted?
- (5) Is it a fact that a population of over 1 000 was established on less than half of one Esperance property, and that a permit to shoot 200 was given which was later reduced to 50?
- (6) Do kangaroo numbers have to be re-established after the granting of a shooting permit before another permit can be granted?
- (7) Are permits granted on a property basis rather than on a kangaroo population basis, and the size of the property is not taken into regard?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) No, but one was received dated September 7, 1974.
- (2) No.
- (3) The Kangaroo Management Programmes have been explained in the Winter 1973 issue of the Department's publication S.W.A.N.S. A more detailed explanation of the Grey Kangaroo Management Programme is contained in the Autumn 1972 issue of S.W.A.N.S. Under these programmes an annual total take for Red Kangaroos is set each year, and Grey Kangaroos may be shot under license if causing damage to property in areas of relatively low kangaroo numbers, and without a license in areas such as Esperance, provided commercialization is not involved. These areas are detailed in the Autumn 1972 issue of S.W.A.N.S., an extract of which is tabled. If a farmer wants to sell skins and carcasses royalty tags are required in addition to a license.

(The extract was tabled (see paper No. 293).)

- (4) The total kangaroo population in any particular situation is not determined. The Fauna Warden inspects the properties involved to substantiate claims of damage being suffered.

- (5) I am unable to provide an answer to this question until further information is obtained by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna.
- (6) The criteria for granting damage licenses is that kangaroos are causing obvious damage to property. Populations are not determined.
- (7) Answered by (6).

### 3. HEALTH EDUCATION COUNCIL

#### *Closure of Offices*

The Hon. LYLA ELLIOTT, to the Minister for Health:

With reference to a Press statement in *The West Australian* dated the 29th October, 1974, concerning the closure of Health Education Council Offices in Geraldton and Port Hedland, will the Minister take urgent action to prevent such closure by ensuring sufficient funds are made available to the Council to continue its work in these towns?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

Action is being taken to obtain further funds to continue this work.

### 4. HOSPITAL *Karratha*

The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is it planned that a major hospital be built in Karratha commencing in 1974-1975?
- (2) If so, where will funds come from for this undertaking?
- (3) If not, when it is planned that such a facility will be provided?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) No.
  - (2) Answered by (1).
  - (3) Planning has commenced and will be continued through 1975-76 if funds are made available. If finance can be arranged, construction could commence 1976-1977.
- To date the Australian Government has provided \$10 000 for preliminary planning and a request for additional planning funds is at present under consideration.

### 5. HIGH SCHOOL *Greenwood*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the construction of the Greenwood high school have a high priority?

- (2) Is it the Government's intention to establish the school during 1975?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) and (2) The need for a high school in the Greenwood area is recognised. However, after taking the secondary educational needs of other areas and the likely availability of future loan funds for school construction into account, it does not appear that a high school can be established in the area during 1975.

### HOUSING

#### *South Hedland*

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Will the Minister table the report of the State Housing Commission Officer who wrote a report on State Housing Commission housing after living in South Hedland for a period of time during 1973?
- (2) Will the Minister table the reports or comments of any individuals or committees who have made comments on the modified Radburn concept of housing used in South Hedland?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) and (2) There are no formal reports but as a result of information obtained by the officer referred to in question 1 and subsequent surveys at South Hedland and Port Hedland, executive officers of the Housing Commission visited South Hedland on the 21st to 23rd October last, to discuss with the Local Authority, the residents of South Hedland at a public meeting, and the Womens Action Group, various aspects of the Radburn concept and the design and amenity of Commission houses. The officers are to hold further meetings on these matters at South Hedland on the 11th and 12th of November next.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

#### *Government Policies*

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY, to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Premier received a communication from the Diocese of Perth advising of a resolution unanimously adopted at a recent Synod of the Diocese in the following terms—

That this Synod in expressing its concern about the dignity of man deplores the present rising unemployment and urges the Federal and State Governments,

unions and employers to unite in a concerted effort to bring about full employment by re-training and re-employment planning and not by tariff barriers against poorer countries?

- (2) If so, did the Diocese, in the same communication, request the State Government to initiate a programme of retraining and re-employment in co-operation with the Australian Government, the Trade Union Movement, and employers?
- (3) Will the Premier advise the Diocese that the Australian Government, on the 17th July, 1974, made the first statement on manpower policy for almost thirty years, the last such statement being the presentation of a White Paper on full employment by an Australian Labor Party Government in 1945?
- (4) Will the Premier refer the Diocese to the following reports on the subject that have been initiated by the present Australian Government—
  - (a) the Cochrane Report;
  - (b) the report of the Australian Government's interdepartmental mission to study overseas manpower and industries policies;
  - (c) the report of an advisory committee on Commonwealth employment statistics;
  - (d) the National Employment and Training (N.E.A.T.) system;
  - (e) the report on the Needs in Technical and Further Education (T.A.F.E.)?
- (5) Will the Premier inform the Diocese that the implementation of a number of the recommendations contained in these reports have been delayed because of the untimely Federal Election held in May of this year?

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Diocese, in its letter, sought the Government's support for any initiatives which may be taken to implement among governments, unions and employers, an integrated programme of re-training and re-employment.
- (3) to (5) As the Diocese advised that the resolution had been conveyed to the Prime Minister, it is considered that it is the prerogative of the Prime Minister to reply on actions taken by his Government.

On the part of the State Government, it can be affirmed that every support has been, and will continue to be given to any measures which will further re-training and create employment opportunities.

I have replied to the Diocesan Secretary explaining our positive attitude towards employment. It was also necessary, for obvious reasons, to point out that the initiative we were able to take in the 1960's which generated unprecedented levels of employment in all fields of academic, professional, technical, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled work, are currently denied us because of the resource, and other, policies of the present Commonwealth Government.

## 8. PILBARA STUDY GROUP

### *Natural Gas: Effect of Report*

The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Has there been any reaction from the Commonwealth Government to sections of the Pilbara Study report which seem to render completely illogical and untenable any possibility of the Pipeline Authority Act, Section 13 (1) (e) having application to gas from the North West Shelf?
- (2) If not, is the Minister pursuing the question as a matter of urgency with the Commonwealth Minister for Fuel and Energy?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (1) There has been no reaction as such to the questions raised in the report.
- (2) The Premier and the Minister for Industrial Development propose to discuss this matter with the Prime Minister and his colleagues as soon as a meeting can be arranged.

## 9.

### TRAFFIC LIGHTS

#### *Marmion Avenue-Warwick Road Intersection*

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many accidents have occurred over the past 12 months at the intersection of Marmion Avenue and Warwick Road, Dun-craig?
- (2) Has the desirability of installing traffic lights at this intersection been investigated?
- (3) (a) If the answer to (2) is "Yes" what was the result of the investigation;
- (b) if the answer to (2) is "No" will the Minister have the need for traffic lights examined?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER replied:

- (1) Since 1st July, 1973, eight accidents have been reported to the Wanneroo Shire Council as occurring at this intersection.
- (2) No.
- (3) (a) and (b) Traffic control signals are installed on a priority basis of traffic volume and degree of hazard. This priority list is reviewed regularly. The above intersection will be inspected to determine whether any modification or control is required.

#### 10. PILBARA STUDY GROUP

##### *Establishment of Authority*

The Hon. J. C. TOZER, to the Minister for Justice:

As the Pilbara Study Group has not fulfilled its task as defined by term of reference 4.80, which called for recommendations on the creation of a Pilbara Authority, will the Minister advise—

- (a) the main areas of difference of opinion between the Commonwealth and State Governments in respect to the need for and the composition and powers of a Pilbara Authority to administer future development;
- (b) whether the Commonwealth Government has defined its stance on this question; and
- (c) if so, what are the salient features of the Commonwealth Government policy on this matter?

The Hon. N. McNEILL replied:

- (a) I do not believe the areas of difference have been defined. My Government sees the need for an organisation to co-ordinate the development, but sees this as a State Authority closely aligned to the Department of Industrial Development.

The Premier has stated that he has requested a meeting with the Prime Minister to consider this and a number of other aspects affecting development in Western Australia.

- (b) and (c) Answered by (a).

#### BILLS (10): RECEIPT AND FIRST READING

1. Superannuation and Family Benefits Act Amendment Bill.
2. Perth Mint Act Amendment Bill.
3. Public Authorities (Contributions) Bill.

4. Liquor Act Amendment Bill.

5. Rural and Industries Bank Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

6. Stamp Act Amendment Bill (No. 2).

7. Rights in Water and Irrigation Act Amendment Bill.

Bills received from the Assembly; and, on motions by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), read a first time.

8. Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill.

9. Lake Lefroy Salt Industry Agreement Act Amendment Bill.

10. Dampler Solar Salt Industry Agreement Act Amendment Bill.

Bills received from the Assembly; and, on motions by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education), read a first time.

#### PHOSPHATE CO-OPERATIVE (W.A.) LTD. BILL

##### *Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and read a first time.

##### BILLS (2): THIRD READING

1. Soil Conservation Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

2. Alumina Refinery Agreement Act Amendment Bill.

Bill read a third time, on motion by the Hon. G. C. MacKinnon (Minister for Education), and passed.

#### COMMONWEALTH PLACES (ADMINISTRATION OF LAWS) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### *In Committee*

The Deputy Chairman of Committees (the Hon. R. J. L. Williams) in the Chair; the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1: Short title and citation—

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I simply use this opportunity to make an explanation for my bringing the measure before members today.

It will be recalled that, during the second reading debate, I indicated it was not my intention to proceed with the Committee stage at that time, because the subject matter of the Bill was one of the items listed for consideration by the Constitutional Convention which was to have been held in Adelaide next week.

A recommendation was to have been placed before the convention that this matter be referred to the Commonwealth for referendum purposes, and had the recommendation been accepted, the State legislation would have been redundant.

As members are aware, the convention will not be held, and consequently no purpose would be served in further delaying the passage of this legislation. The Act is due to run out in December of this year and it is necessary that we pass an amending Bill to provide for circumstances which may apply after that date.

Members will also be aware that the provision in the Bill will make the application of the legislation permanent, instead of for two years, as was previously the case, which was merely to bide time until action was taken at a Federal level.

I hope members will appreciate the reasons for my now dealing with the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

#### *Report*

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

### **INDECENT PUBLICATIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

#### *Third Reading*

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West—Minister for Education) [4.59 p.m.]: Members will recall that the third reading of the Bill was delayed to enable inquiries to be made about the reason the power to seize—

#### *Point of Order*

**The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON**: On a point of order, I was waiting to speak on the Bill, but was waiting for the motion, "That the Bill be now read a third time", before I rose to speak. I am wondering whether the Minister, by now speaking, will close the debate, because the motion has not been put.

**The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon**: I am moving the motion.

**The PRESIDENT**: The Minister has not moved the motion. When he does, I will put the question, and the honourable member may address himself to the third reading.

#### *Debate Resumed*

**The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon**: The question arose whether the words "and articles" should be inserted after the word "publications" in line 28. I am advised that very serious thought was given to this matter. It was decided that "articles"—that is, cinematograph film or other film,

video tape, gramophone records, and wire recordings—was included so that the police could take action under the parent Act. It was not included in proposed new section 12A, chiefly because that proposed section deals with the activities of the committee and the right of the committee to inspect and declare.

The committee is in fact in a situation where it simply could not deal with those articles at this stage. It is accepted that to one person certain material may appear to be obscene or pornographic while in the opinion of others it has artistic or literary merit. However, such is the volume of obscene publications which the committee must currently examine that it simply could not do anything about the other articles at the present time. There are other difficulties associated with it and on balance it was decided that "articles" would not be included. With that view I concur.

I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

**THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON** (North Metropolitan) [5.02 p.m.]: During the Committee stage I queried at some length the working of clause 8 and indicated that although I was not opposing the legislation I saw some serious difficulties in it. At the third reading stage very little can be done except to go over the position as I see it and ask the Minister to defer the Bill and even consider recommitting it.

The present situation causes concern to newsagents because they are never sure whether they will have on their premises anything which may become restricted and make them liable to prosecution. An effort has been made to find a solution to this problem. In the solution the Government has proposed I see no resolution of the difficulties which the newsagents will have. If it is necessary at this time for the police to move about and examine what the newsagents have in their possession, I cannot see that the situation will be any different if the newsagents become registered. Obviously the material will still be produced and it is felt there should be some control over it. So an inspection will have to be made to find out what is actually taking place.

That is the first point I make—that the present problem is that newsagents are never sure whether the material they have is such that it will become restricted and make them subject to prosecution, and with the passing of this provision the situation will continue.

Some periodical publications—weeklies and monthlies—are continually produced and not every issue is found to be objectionable. Perhaps only one will be found to be objectionable over a number of years. The newsagents will continue to receive them and may have them in their

possession before they are placed on the restricted list. They will still remain in that state of uncertainty.

On top of that, we are now introducing a provision that the newsagent must be registered. In this respect, an offence is created under subsection (7) of proposed new section 11A, and under subsection (8) a penalty of \$100 will be imposed if the newsagent does not register and is found with the objectionable material on his premises.

I suggest that newsagents would have to register in order to insure themselves against having to pay out \$100; so it is not voluntary registration. In its application it will become compulsory registration and will place a further burden on newsagents, because when they are visited by the law enforcement officers—I assume they will be members of the Police Force—those officers will want to know whether the newsagents are registered and will ask them to produce a certificate of registration. So in effect we leave the newsagents in much the same situation as they are in now and place upon them the requirement to produce a certificate of registration.

It is possible that newsagents who register will in fact be drawing the attention of the authorities to themselves. It could be believed that they are the retailers who are likely to carry pornographic material. To me, the situation is entirely unsatisfactory and is not likely to bring about any amelioration of the present situation.

I believe the best thing to do is to delete the provision entirely, which would mean the Minister would have to recommit the legislation. I brought up these matters previously but they were passed over and the situation has been allowed to continue; so I have very little hope that the Minister will take any notice of what I am saying. It is quite easy to believe this provision will assist newsagents by making it easier for them to receive the information, but we are not really making things easier for the people who are operating their businesses. It might be easier for the police to work with this provision, and it might be easier for the Chief Secretary's Department to send out the information, but I do not believe we are making it easier for the members of the public who are most concerned about the way the present legislation operates.

After all, when we first established a committee to examine these publications, we believed we would simplify matters, but it is quite obvious that we did not. I suggest the Government may think it is simplifying matters, but in fact it is not. I am very strongly opposed to clause 8 but I can do nothing about it at this stage. I simply ask that the Minister give some thought to delaying the Bill in order to see whether the Government can find another means to achieve what it seeks to do in this provision.

**THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF** (Metropolitan) [5.11 p.m.]: During the Committee stage we had a discussion about why there was in the Indecent Publications Act a distinction between publications and articles in respect of warrants and action which can be taken by the committee. It appears to be a fact that articles—which include “blue” films, wire recordings, tapes, etc.—are treated quite differently from publications.

Further research which I have made into this Bill quite clearly indicates that the word “articles” has been added for certain purposes and not for other purposes. In other words, it has been suggested that in the present form of the Bill the committee set up under it should have the power to determine whether a publication is obscene or indecent, but the committee will not have the power to decide whether a film—be it a video tape, a wire recording, a gramophone record, or any other type of article—is indecent or obscene. The committee can examine a publication but it cannot examine an article; that is, a “blue” film.

I was puzzled at this because it seemed to me that the reason we set up the committee when the Act was amended in 1972 was to interpose between the Commissioner of Police and the public a fairly reputable body which would comprise people who could decide whether or not something was obscene. Many complaints have been made that while the Commissioner of Police might be motivated by good purposes and reasons he might not have sufficient public sympathy or might not be sufficiently in touch with the public to be the best judge of whether something was or was not obscene. So a committee was set up which was to comprise not less than three and not more than seven persons, one of whom was to be a person with knowledge of art, literature, or science, another was to be a legal practitioner, a third was to be a woman, and the others were to be people of good repute in the community. One of the committee's tasks was to determine whether a particular publication was obscene or indecent.

I believe that was a very laudable move, and in fact the Bill received the general support of members, including myself, when it came before the House two years ago. We have now included films in the legislation, on the basis that they were not included in the original Act, or if they were there was some doubt about the exact scope of the legislation in relation to them. We have now included all types of recordings, which are not subject to the committee's views, so it will be left to the Commissioner of Police to decide whether or not they are obscene or indecent.

So, in respect of films, we are really back where we started. I would have thought that this aspect would have commended itself to the police commissioner—if he had any part in it—that he would

have considered it beneficial to himself to have somebody interposed between him and the public; someone who could consider whether or not a film was indecent or obscene and advise him accordingly. Eventually, of course, it is the Minister who receives the advice, but the police commissioner brings the prosecution.

In the case of publications, the police commissioner cannot bring any prosecutions unless he has the Minister's approval. This, however, does not apply to articles. So the police can take a prosecution in respect of an obscene publication after a recommendation has been received from the committee; but in the case of an obscene film there is no recommendation from the committee, because it is not one of the tasks of the committee to consider it; nor does the prosecution have to be approved by the Minister.

I know we have passed the Committee stage of the Bill, and that the Minister undertook to give this matter some further consideration. The Minister has discussed the matter with me. I believe, however, at some future date we will find that this legislation will require some further attention; that we will need to do exactly the same for films and recordings as we have already done for publications.

After all is said and done, there is very little difference between what is printed and put in front of someone and what is put on a permanent recording, or a tape which can be heard, or a film which can be shown. It can be just as obscene and just as indecent, for it to be in that form as it is for it to be in the form of a publication. I feel it is just as necessary to have a committee of reputable people decide whether or not the matter is obscene, because opinions will differ in these matters. What was considered indecent 10 or 15 years ago may not be considered so indecent today. My authority for this is none other than the Minister, whose speech on the 1972 legislation I have recently reperused.

There is definitely a change in approach and, while there should be no change in basic standards and principles, I believe there has been a change.

For these reasons I consider it will be desirable for this Bill to be amended. I hope the Government will bear in mind the commitments of the committee which may have more to do than it could reasonably handle. But I am sure it will be necessary for this legislation to be amended again in the near future.

**THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON** (South-West—Minister for Education) [5.19 p.m.]: I think the points raised by Mr Claughton were, in the main, made during the Committee stages of this Bill. Nevertheless, the matter will be on record.

In my reading of the Bill I have always understood that newsagents will, in fact, receive a greater degree of protection under the measure, because they will be provided with a list—the fact that they will be registered does indicate they will receive a list. Virtually none of them has received a list prior to this time.

There is a minor matter which I wish to mention. It concerns an amendment on page 11 of the Bill to which the Clerks may possibly attend. On the top of the page new clause 10 reads—

by deleting the passage "publication"

It should actually read—

by deleting the passage "publications"

It should be in the plural.

**The PRESIDENT:** I am informed that the amendment to which the Minister refers has already been attended to.

**The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON:** Thank you very much, Mr President. I merely wanted to make sure of the position. Knowing the efficiency of the Clerks, I felt this would have been done, but it is my duty to mention the matter to avoid any misunderstanding.

The points made by Mr Medcalf were well made. At this time it is purely and simply a matter of the committee being able to handle the particular aspect mentioned by Mr Medcalf. During discussions this morning I was surprised to learn that the committee meets once a week and is extremely busy examining the books and material it has to peruse. It must be quite a distasteful occupation for the members of that committee.

**The Hon. N. McNeill:** Tiresome!

**The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON:** Nevertheless in the light of experience it could well be that what Mr Medcalf says is likely to be correct and a solution to the particular problem may have to be found. After some experience with the measure in its proposed new form it could well be found that it may need some minor alterations to meet with this difficulty.

I thank members for their interest and I can assure them that their views will be conveyed to the Minister in charge of the legislation in another place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

## **POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

### *Second Reading*

Debate resumed from the 3rd October.

**THE HON. R. THOMPSON** (South Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [5.23 p.m.]: When he introduced this Bill the Minister mentioned various cases which, of course, would be well known to me, because I was Minister for Police

dealing with these problems faced by the Police Department in respect of fingerprinting.

I considered it was most necessary that the Police Department should be afforded at least this opportunity which was denied it when the Prisons Act was discussed a few years ago, when it was left to that department to prescribe the manner in which the police could obtain fingerprints.

When the Bill was introduced in another place the main clause contained the words, "if a person was apprehended". This has now been deleted and the clause now states, "when he is in lawful custody" which, I think, makes the position far better.

After discussion and negotiation between the Government and members of the Labor Party in another place, the words in the original legislation were changed to the form in which it is now before us and which, I think, is far better, because it gives more protection.

It could well be that a person is in a mental institution and would thus be in lawful custody; but any person who is apprehended for any reason could be asked for his fingerprints which, I think, would be an infringement of such person's civil liberties.

Members will agree that our Police Force does an excellent job. It is there to protect the public, and unless it is given some assistance in the form of fingerprinting, palming, photographs, etc. the modern form of crime detection cannot possibly be fully utilised.

This will particularly be the case when one considers that known criminals from all over the world could come to this State by means of air transport and other modes of transport. I think the illustrations given by the Minister in his second reading speech were with respect to the local scene and they are sufficient for us to want to see amending legislation introduced whereby known criminals such as drug peddlers, rapists, etc. can be apprehended.

New section 50AA will enable Western Australia to communicate with the Australian National Central Bureau, with international police organisations and other organisations to check out the fingerprinting of suspected criminals.

However, as much as we agree with that, we must also ensure that the civil liberties of the people are taken into consideration and protected. The Minister in another place did agree to have discussions with the members of the Labor Party with a view to having amendments prepared for this purpose.

We all know, however, that the Bill has been held up for some three weeks. Amendments have been suggested by

members of the Labor Party but have been rejected by the Minister. We only hope that the amendments to be made will ensure that the records of the person charged will be returned in the event of his being acquitted.

I feel the members of the Labor Party in another place also improved the Bill by having an amendment inserted to the effect that fingerprints, photographs, measurements, etc. cannot be destroyed until the time permitted for appeal has expired.

Although agreement was not reached between the Minister and our representatives as to further safeguards, I think we should give this Bill our support and consideration. We must, however, look at it with some caution in the hope that when people are acquitted for an offence every endeavour will be made to ensure that all prints will be returned. It was also pointed out that this might not be possible if the prints had been sent to Interpol. While this may be a valid reason I feel that if a major crime has been committed and the fingerprints have been checked out, the police should be interested enough to ensure their return if they were interested enough in the first place to send these prints to Interpol. At this stage I am prepared to go along with the legislation in the hope that it works. I do not think innocent people have anything to fear from this Bill.

I know that during a hunt for a mass murderer some years ago, a voluntary fingerprint centre was set up in the city. I volunteered my fingerprints and, probably, they are still on record.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: So did I.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would earnestly suggest that the Minister and the police examine this situation with a view, perhaps, to establishing voluntary fingerprint centres in Perth, in country centres, and provincial towns. I think this could be particularly beneficial to young children. We have all heard of the many occasions on which people have been killed but have been unable to be identified. Provided it was voluntary, such a scheme could be in the interests of the public; fingerprints are the sure and safe way to identify in a speedy manner a person who may be injured or killed in an accident, and I would urge members of the public and, in particular, parents, to avail themselves of such a facility if it were set up by the police.

I should like the Minister to ask the Minister in another place whether the Police Force is prepared to go as far as this in the interests of safety. Although we talk about civil liberties on the one hand, I believe it is also a civil liberty for a person to be protected by having his fingerprints recorded if he so desires.



The Hon. N. E. Baxter: It would not interfere with his civil liberties if the scheme were voluntary.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: No; as I say, it is his right to have his fingerprints recorded if he so desires. The innocent person has nothing to fear; it is the criminal element we are discussing and from whom we want to protect those who are innocent. It is the aim of Bills such as this to bring that element into custody.

The amendment to subsection (2) of section 65 of the principal Act is one which I sent along to the Crown Law Department to be repealed when we were in Government. It is a redundant section and, as far as I can gather—I instigated a full examination of our Statutes—it is the last remaining piece of legislation which discriminates against Aborigines. About 18 months ago, I sent a request to the Crown Law Department to repeal this subsection the next time the Police Act was amended. What it means is that any person not being an Aboriginal found in company with, lodging or wandering with an Aboriginal commits an offence. Of course, in this day and age we just cannot go along with such discrimination and it is good to see that this section has been amended.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: That was in the old days, when a person had to have a percentage of Aboriginal blood to be considered an Aboriginal.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I can remember when this subsection was put in the Act. It was not in the old days; it occurred while I was a member of this Parliament, if my memory serves me correctly.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: The Act was amended in 1955, 1956 and again in 1972.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It would not have been placed in the Act in 1972; probably, section 65 was amended in 1956. I know it came up for discussion during later legislation—in all probability, during the debate on the Community Welfare Bill in 1972.

Section 90A(3) is to be repealed and re-enacted to allow the Police Force to claim reimbursement of costs incurred in investigating false claims or charges. As rightly pointed out by the Minister, some difficulty has been occasioned because magistrates have held that the Police Force is not a person, and the amendment clarifies the situation. We have seen a few cases where people have given misleading information. One person claimed she had picked up an amount of money from the bank and that somebody was hiding in the back of her car and robbed her. However, although she was convicted of the offence, the police could not recover the costs of investigating the false claim.

We do not employ a Police Force to be hoaxed and led astray by false evidence. I believe its job is difficult enough without such false statements being made. Over the years, when someone is involved in an

accident a particular ruse has been to leave the vehicle and immediately report it stolen. This amendment may obviate that type of thing, because if the person making the claim is found to be misleading the police he will incur the costs of the police investigation.

I give my full approval to the amendment to section 94E (7) of the principal Act; this will bring the Police Act virtually into line with the Traffic Act, where an analyst's report can be taken as *prima facie* evidence. Under the Act as it now stands, a person must attend the court; the amendment will rectify the situation.

The Bill was fully explained when introduced by the Minister, an event which made me think back to the introduction of the fuel and energy legislation where, many times, it was said that we could not spell out clause by clause the meaning of the Bill. In this Bill, the meaning of every word was spelt out in the second reading speech. However, with the fuel and energy legislation, nothing was spelt out.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind the Leader of the Opposition that we are dealing with the Police Act Amendment Bill.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes, Mr President. I finish by reminding Ministers that when we have a Bill of this nature before us, it is quite possible to have a full and thorough second reading speech. When something is wanted to be hidden or not brought out into the open, it is deliberately not explained. I support the Bill.

**THE HON. N. E. BAXTER** (Central) [5.38 p.m.]: I thank the Hon. R. Thompson for his contribution to the debate and for his acceptance of the Bill. He gave the House a very logical explanation of his acceptance, but raised two or three doubts about the effect of the legislation on the civil liberties of the community. I believe that in an issue of this nature relating to fingerprinting and photographing, members of the Police Force are unlikely to interfere with the people's civil liberties. Police do not want the right to interfere with those liberties; they want to protect people from members of the community who commit crimes and who may have a record on the police files, or from people who may be in legal custody charged with indictable offences, etc.

The Hon. R. Thompson also referred to the retaining of fingerprints and photographs until after appeal. As he said, this is well covered in the Bill and I do not believe any worries exist in regard to this point.

He referred to the case where fingerprints may be sent overseas to Interpol and expressed the belief that it may be difficult to get them returned. I think everybody realises that if they go to Interpol, some difficulty may arise; however, I would say that in most instances,

the identification would be returned. I very much doubt whether any fingerprints or photographs would be sent to Interpol unless there was a very good reason and unless the person involved was recognised as possibly being a criminal from another country.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I did not say that. What I said was that if it is possible to send them to Interpol, it should be possible to get them back if a person is acquitted.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Minister for Police did state that if fingerprints went overseas, every endeavour would be made to get them back; however, he admitted that there could be occasions where such identification may be difficult to recover. I believe such occasions would be few and that there is little to worry about in that respect.

Mr Thompson also mentioned voluntary fingerprint. I agree with his sentiments. This was a very good scheme and I was sorry to see it phased out. When it was in vogue I, like the honourable member, voluntarily went and had my fingerprints taken. I believe such a scheme would be to the benefit of the community; if something happened to a person, he could be identified very quickly by means of fingerprints. In some cases, people lie unconscious for days and the police are unable to identify them. If such a voluntary system were introduced many problems of identification could be overcome and relatives could be advised sooner. Once again, I thank the honourable member for his contribution.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee*

The Chairman of Committees (the Hon. J. Heltman) in the Chair; the Hon. N. E. Baxter (Minister for Health) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Section 50AA added—

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: It has been brought to my notice that the Good Neighbour Council of Western Australia has objected to this clause. I quote an article which appeared in the newsletter of the council. It is headed, "Mr O'Connor, it's important" and states—

According to the West Australian—I imagine that refers to *The West Australian* newspaper—

a Chief Superintendent of the W.A. Police has said that it is "impossible to guarantee that fingerprint records of everyone who was arrested and subsequently acquitted would be destroyed".

That is nonsense, no matter who said it and, to re-emphasize the point made in last month's newsletter, it

is intolerable that our police should enable eastern states' and foreign police forces to build-up identification files of perfectly innocent Western Australians. Legislation ought to insist that no police force that will not guarantee to destroy such information on request shall be provided with it; and if Mr. O'Connor or the Chief Superintendent protest that the procedures they want to follow are necessary for effective police work the simple answer is that while the apprehension and conviction of offenders is very important it is not all-important. It is perfectly possible to pay too high a price even for such desirable results. Many migrants who fled to Australia from just such practices are disturbed at the proposals and so are many other Australians who believe that nothing is more important than the rights and freedom of the law-abiding individual.

The message we get from the Good Neighbour Council and from subsequent newspaper articles is that many migrants do not want their fingerprints to be taken and sent around the world, if they are picked up on minor charges. The sending of records of such people to overseas countries could have a serious effect on their relations in other parts of the world.

If it is possible to send fingerprint records to other places, it should be possible to get them back on request. I hope the police records section and the scientific branch will keep a complete record of fingerprints that are sent away, so that they can be returned if a request is made.

I am not now speaking about international criminals, or people with Australia-wide criminal convictions, but about the ordinary local person whose fingerprints are taken and who does not worry very much about the destruction of the records when he is acquitted.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I realise the concern of the Good Neighbour Council. We should have no great fear that fingerprint records will not be returned to this State. It is only for very special reasons that such records are not returned; but I should point out it is also for very special reasons that such records are sent overseas in the first place.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Not necessarily.

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: There have to be fairly sound reasons for fingerprint records to be sent overseas, such as the need to identify the person concerned; another reason for sending fingerprint records overseas arises from a suspicion that such person is a known criminal overseas.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Are you aware that in murder cases usually 20 people come forward and admit they have committed the crime?

**The Hon. N. E. BAXTER:** If such people admit to the commission of a crime, and as a result their fingerprints are taken, I do not think they will worry very much about the destruction of the records. These people are not worried about their civil liberties.

One reason that Interpol or overseas countries desire to retain fingerprint records taken in Australia is that the person concerned had resided in some overseas country before he came to Australia. There would be no hesitation in returning the fingerprint records to this State, unless the person involved was a known criminal in a particular country.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 5 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

### *Report*

**Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.**

## **RURAL AREAS**

### *Attitude of Federal Government: Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 29th October, on the following motion by the Hon. A. A. Lewis—

That this House deplores the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas and in particular its obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia.

**THE HON. S. J. DELLAR** (Lower North) [5.51 p.m.]: As members are aware this motion was introduced some weeks ago, and the subject matter has been bandied around for some five or six weeks. When Mr Lewis moved the motion he went to great lengths to substantiate it. On studying his comments I came to the conclusion on several occasions that the only compliment I could pay him was that the introduction of his motion was well timed.

As we are aware the motion was moved on one day, and on the next day the Federal Government brought down its Budget; and the introduction of the Budget gave Mr Lewis something to talk about, because I am sure he had nothing of value to say prior to that.

**The Hon. N. McNeill:** You admit the Budget gave him something to talk about.

**The Hon. S. J. DELLAR:** In his contribution the Leader of the Opposition answered most of the queries that have been raised in this debate.

**The Hon. A. A. Lewis:** He did nothing other than to read out a letter.

**The Hon. S. J. DELLAR:** Mr Thompson answered most of the queries that have been raised.

**The Hon. Clive Griffiths:** Will you answer the rest of the queries?

**The Hon. S. J. DELLAR:** There is none left. The Minister for Justice defended the right of the honourable member to introduce the motion. This is not surprising to me, because since September, 1972, when the present Australian Government was elected to office, the attitude of the members of the then Opposition in the State Parliament—and even after the change of Government, when they became the Government—did not alter a great deal.

Mr Lewis would not be aware of this, because he has been a member of this House for only a short while, but since September, 1972, the present members of the State Government took every opportunity to criticise the Australian Government. It came about that if a Bill were introduced a great deal of the time would be spent in criticising the Australian Government for something or other. Later those members got onto the Tonkin Government, and criticised it no end for every Bill it introduced.

**The Hon. Clive Griffiths:** We criticised quite justifiably.

**The Hon. S. J. DELLAR:** Perhaps one-third of the time was devoted to the particular Bill before the House. That action has continued over a period. Now that the same members are on the Government benches they take every opportunity to criticise the Australian Government. Perhaps, as Mr McNeill has pointed out, that is their right.

If a member introduces a motion in this House he should be able to present a clear case in support of it; but on this occasion I do not believe that Mr Lewis has done so. It appears to me that the motion before us is part of an overall attack on the Australian Government by members of the Liberal-Country Party coalition, whether they be in this State or elsewhere. It appears they still have to adjust themselves to the fact there has been a change in the Federal Government, after the Liberal-Country Party Government had been in office for 23 years.

Quite naturally when a political party is elected to office after an absence of 23 years there are bound to be changes by the incoming Government, especially when for the previous 23 years there was one type of Government in office. These remarks would also apply if Labor had been in office in the Federal sphere for 23 years, and a Liberal-Country Party Government was elected to office. The incoming Government would also have new ideas, after being away from the Treasury benches for such a long period.

**The Hon. N. McNeill:** Having been in the wilderness.

**The Hon. S. J. DELLAR:** I appreciate the problems that are experienced by the rural industries of this State. Perhaps they

are experiencing these difficulties because for 23 years there was only one type of Government in office in Canberra.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: The Prime Minister has said that we have not had it so good.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: In the two years that the Labor Government has been in office in Canberra we have heard from members opposite that the situation of the rural industries is in a shocking state. I agree there are problems in the rural sector which affect primary producers.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It is a pity you have not told that to the Prime Minister.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: It is a pity that the previous Liberal-Country Party Government at Canberra, which was in office for 23 years, did not implement a programme with some foresight to permit the rural industries to adjust to changing circumstances.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: The previous Liberal-Country Party Government did introduce a programme with foresight.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Not only members representing country electorates, but those who are familiar with the primary industries of this country, realise that production is dependent on many factors, such as climatic, market, and geographical conditions. In respect of climatic conditions I am sure that even if Jesus Christ and his disciples were to form themselves into a Government they would not be able to predict what the climatic conditions will be next year.

We have been told that the Labor Party, and in particular the present Australian Government, is anti-rural. I deny this, because that is not so. It is obvious that members opposite will say this, because they have not adjusted themselves to the fact that there has been a change of Government in the Federal sphere.

I might add that the Australian Government has introduced some measures which did not receive a favourable response from myself; similarly many other measures it has introduced would not meet with favour from members opposite.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Which ones did not meet with your favour?

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I am not happy about the removal of the petrol subsidy to country areas. I have expressed my views to the Federal members of my party with whom I have frequent contact, and they have conveyed my thoughts to the Government at Canberra.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Then you should support this motion.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I will oppose it with all the breath I have for a further half hour.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You will not have much breath left after another half hour.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I have spoken on a couple of other occasions for over half an hour, and it looks as though on this occasion I will be entertaining the honourable member.

The motion deals with the attitude of the Federal Government to rural areas, and in particular its obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia. It refers to the attitude of members to the rural areas. As was pointed out by Mr Claughton, many of the measures introduced by the Australian Government were introduced for the benefit of the whole population. Naturally such benefit would extend to the rural areas. As I have said, it has taken away some benefits from the rural area, but by the same token it has also taken away some benefits from the people in the cities.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Is the honourable member happy about the cut in the education allowance?

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I feel there is a motive behind the motion and a major portion of the motion refers to a lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers in Western Australia. I suppose we could ask what the present State Government has done in the way of showing appreciation of the problems which confront the primary producers in Western Australia.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It has paid lip-service only.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It was going to knock off the Lamb Marketing Board.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Does the State Government intend to do anything for the primary producers? Apart from telling the farmers that they have a sympathetic Government in Western Australia the State Government has done absolutely nothing to assist farmers in the rural areas of Western Australia. That applies particularly to Country Party members in this Chamber and elsewhere. The slogan before the election was, "Put us back and we will put things right for you".

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Why not? That is a good slogan.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Things have been put right—right up! I have made that comment previously.

I will refer to some of the actions by the present State Government to assist the people of this State.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member will relate his remarks to the motion, of course.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: The attitude of the State Government to rural areas is of concern. The State Government has many opportunities to assist rural areas, and we are talking about primary producers in Western Australia. What effect

did the 17½ per cent increase in rail freights have on rural areas? What about the increase in bus and rail fares, and road freight rates?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Who was responsible for that?

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I also refer to increased water rates, and electricity charges. These matters have been mentioned previously, but I consider they are worth mentioning again.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Tedious repetition.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Mr Lewis spoke for about an hour and said virtually nothing! Slaughtering charges were increased by 15 per cent for cattle and by 30 per cent for sheep and goats. As was pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, about the only two exceptions, where fees have not been increased, concern dog licenses and the TAB betting tax. Those are about the only two items which have not been increased in this State and which would not affect the rural areas.

The Treasurer has indicated, in the present Budget, that the charges to which I have referred will be increased. Of course, the Australian Government has been blamed for the need to do these things.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is right; that is where the blame lies.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: The first Premiers' Conference was held on the 6th June.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: We do not get many of them.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: However, it was not until after the special Premiers' Conference, which I think was held on the 13th August, that the Premier said he would have to increase charges because of the attitude of the Australian Government. I ask Mr Lewis: How many of those charges were actually increased prior to the 13th August?

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: The Premiers were told well before that date.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Government by stealth.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Many of the increases will further affect people living in rural areas.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: What has this to do with what the Commonwealth Government is doing to the rural sector?

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: The attitude of the Federal Government is mentioned in the motion.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That has nothing to do with the State Government.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: If the member opposite will just listen to me for a minute or two; the increases were

supposedly brought about by the attitude of the Federal Government towards primary producers in Western Australia.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What about telling us all about the cut in education allowances?

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Mr Lewis said he had told us everything so there is no need for repetition. Mr Wordsworth referred to the removal of the superphosphate bounty at the end of this year. When the Prime Minister, earlier this year, announced the decision to cut out the superphosphate bounty, he referred to the fact that particular areas in Australia could be affected and he made special reference to new land farming areas in Western Australia. Many of those areas are in the electorate represented by the honourable David Wordsworth, and I appreciate his concern of the effect the discontinuance of the bounty could have on farms in his area.

*Sitting suspended from 6.06 to 7.30 p.m.*

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Before the tea suspension I had referred to the removal of the superphosphate bounty to take effect at the end of this year. When the Prime Minister made the announcement that the bounty would be removed, he said that the facilities of the AIDC would be available to people in certain areas where the removal of the bounty could affect them more seriously than those in other areas. It is interesting to note that as recently as a few weeks ago the AIDC in Perth sat in on a hearing at which farmers from the new land areas of Western Australia made a submission for assistance if the bounty is removed completely. Of course, we do not know the result of that submission yet, but it can be hoped, in line with the Prime Minister's statement, that some assistance will become available to these people. I am sure Mr Wordsworth will be most interested in that report because many people in his area rely heavily on this bounty.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Unfortunately a lot of people were not included in that inquiry.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: If they were not sufficiently interested, perhaps they should have made it their business to be interested. I am sure Mr Wordsworth, as their representative—

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: He never said they were not interested in it.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You must have misheard what Mr Wordsworth said.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I am not aware of the circumstances leading up to the submission, but the Prime Minister said that the facilities of the AIDC will be available to people affected by the removal of the bounty. Of course, the Prime Minister's statement did not apply

to Western Australia alone—it applied to the whole of Australia as do any policies of the Government in Canberra.

The motion seems to blame the Australian Government for everything that has gone wrong, and for everything, in the opinion of certain people, that will go wrong in the future. I cannot follow the line of thinking which blames the Australian Government for everything.

As I said earlier, certain factors affect the economic viability and the performance of the primary producers in Western Australia. These factors include the country's economic situation, their own geographical and climatic conditions, and the available markets for their produce. At the moment there is a world-wide inflationary spiral, and this has affected the rural activities of the primary producers, not only in Western Australia, but in the whole of Australia.

In the Premier's policy speech he said inflation could be controlled within the boundaries of the State. I submit that the State Government has done nothing of a concrete nature to solve the problem. Of course, it is not the fault of the Court Government that inflation has continued; it is the fault of the Australian Government! In the opinion of the Premier, everything that goes wrong is the fault of the Australian Government.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That is right.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: It is interesting to note in a publication I received today from the Perth Building Society that reference is made to the fact that inflation has been with us for 2 300 years; civilisation has battled against inflation all that time. The booklet tells us that at present 50 countries have inflation of over 10 per cent, and 20 countries have inflation of over 20 per cent. So inflation is not restricted to Australia alone.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Australia, and 19 other countries apparently.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: At present it is Australia and 69 other countries which have an inflation problem in excess of 10 per cent.

When he introduced his motion, Mr Lewis could not support his contention that the Australian Labor Party is anti-rural, or that the Australian Government does not have an appreciation of the problems affecting primary producers in Western Australia. As I said earlier, certain factors influence the performance of primary producers, and one of the most important of these is the effect and the availability of overseas markets. I am sure any farming member of this House will agree with my statement.

I believe that the Australian Government does have an understanding of the needs of primary producers, and particularly with respect to overseas markets.

Many factors outside Western Australia, and outside Australia, affect the performance of primary producers, and the availability of overseas markets is very important. I just cannot support the views expressed by Mr Lewis.

It is interesting to note that the Premier (Sir Charles Court), when introducing his Budget, produced another document on the Western Australian economy. The Premier referred to the rural industries, and although I will not quote at length from this publication, I would like to refer to a section about the rural industries on page 16. It says—

Strong demand for most rural commodities in 1973-74, combined with generally excellent seasonal conditions, resulted in a substantial growth in the value of rural production in Western Australia during the last financial year. In 1973-74 the net value of rural production was 97% higher than the previous record level in 1972-73.

We are talking about the fact that the Australian Government has ignored the rural sector of Western Australia, with particular reference to the primary producer. Yet we see that since the Whitlam Government was elected in December, 1972, the primary producers in Western Australia have enjoyed a very substantial increase in the value of their products. The Premier went on to say—

Although the wheat situation remains favourable, the demand for meat and wool on international markets has fallen away sharply in recent months.

We all know that this is the case. To continue—

As a result, the outlook for the rural sector in 1974-75 is uncertain although the recent currency devaluation will improve marketing prospects for Western Australian rural produce.

We have been told it is the attitude of the Whitlam Government in Canberra, with its obvious lack of concern for the primary producers, particularly those in Western Australia, to ignore the fact that a problem exists. Certain actions have been taken by the Australian Government to assist primary producers.

In the period from 1969-70 to 1973-74, the net value of rural production in the agricultural field increased by almost 500 per cent.

The Premier then went on to discuss the wheat situation. All members will agree with me that the outlook for wheat in the forthcoming year is quite favourable. Overseas markets and sales contracts have been negotiated. I am not saying that the Australian Government has done all this, but a commission was authorised by the Government to enter into negotiations. The wheat farmer can now look forward to a reasonably successful year.

Another factor of the rural industry is the price of wool. In the last eight or nine months we have seen a very substantial drop in the price being obtained for wool. I would like to quote the remarks of the Premier on page 17 of this same document. He said—

Wool prices in the first half of 1973-74 continued at high levels although below the peak reached in March-April 1973. The average price of wool sold at auction during 1973-74 was 9.6% higher than the average for 1972-73.

We all know that this is not the present position as the price of wool has dropped considerably below that quoted. The average price per kilo of wool sold at auction in 1969-70 was 83.82c. In the year 1970-71, the price had dropped to 60.78c per kilo. There was a slight increase in 1971-72 to 72.39c per kilo, and a substantial increase in 1972-73 to 160.77c per kilo. A preliminary estimate is given for 1973-74 of 176.18c per kilo. I understand that the average price obtained at the last Albany wool sale was approximately 175c per kilo.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: That is clean, of course.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Yes, that is right. The Premier goes on to say—

It appears that over-buying in 1973 has contributed to a reduction in demand in 1974 and there appears to be little prospect of buyers returning in strength in the short term.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The Tonkin Government urged them to buy too much.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: We must have had the ability to talk them into it. As I have said, we rely heavily on overseas markets for wool. We all know that a few years ago there were substantial increases in the price obtained for our wool. Was this just a coincidence, or an upsurge in world demand?

I would like to quote an instance of a certain pastoralist who is operating in the area represented by me. At the time wool was selling for about \$80 a bale this pastoralist was visited by a group of people including a German textile manufacturer. He commented to the pastoralist that if he had any brains and could afford to do so, he should hang onto the wool for another 12 months. In the opinion of the manufacturer, the price of wool would go way up again. Of course, the pastoralist laughed at him, but this is exactly what happened. The price of wool went up to the record prices obtained late last year and early this year. Now of course the demand has decreased. Is this because the overseas buyers overbought in 1972-73 and 1973-74, or is it because of the world-wide inflationary pressures which have restricted money? Perhaps it is just that the woolbuyers are playing ducks and drakes again. When it suits them, will they come back to the market and buy?

Of course, we have seen the Australian Wool Commission set a basic floor price minimum of 250c a kilo for 21-micron wool. This was criticised by the Liberal Party, and the assertion was made that as the Australian Government said, "Righto, 250c is the price", the overseas buyers would say, "If that is all Australia wants that is all we will pay." As members know, the Wool Commission has attempted to maintain the basic floor price so that it does not fall below that level, and so that woolgrowers receive a return which at least is not dictated by overseas buyers and is not below the floor price. I realise the minimum price is for top quality wool and that other strains would not produce that price, but at least the Australian Government has seen fit to take that action.

I know Mr Gayfer will say, "It is our money, anyway"; but the Australian Government has still taken the action. Of course, a great deal of the taxpayers' money is used to support the basic floor price plan. In fact, the gentleman in Melbourne who invests the money on behalf of the Wool Commission is a personal friend of mine. In a recent discussion with him I was staggered at the amount of money that passes through his hands to permit the Wool Commission to have ready cash available to enable it to purchase at sales and to keep up the price.

The same situation applies, though to a lesser extent, in regard to the Lamb Marketing Board. A couple of weeks ago I visited the Midland saleyards and, in company with a buyer from the board, I walked around and viewed the activities. Although prices were not the best, they were roughly stable but nowhere near the prices growers were receiving some months ago.

The meat situation is heavily dependent on overseas markets, and we have seen a downturn in the availability of those markets. We have seen a lack of purchasing by the principal buyers—the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, and other countries. Of course, if we lose our traditional markets obviously we cannot sell our produce.

Let us consider the situation in the United States. I think the beef herd population there is in excess of 300 million, and it is estimated this year the calf drop will be 43 million-odd. That country also has in frozen storage approximately 300 000 tonnes of meat. A similar position applies in the EEC, where it is estimated approximately 200 000 tonnes of meat is in storage. These factors, coupled with the world-wide inflationary spiral, which means our markets have not the ready cash to buy the product, have caused some of the difficulties. It is obvious that, with the stockpiles they have, our market countries will not buy at a price higher than it is economical for them to offer.

Attempts have been made to open up markets in the Far East and in countries to the north of Australia. Criticism has been levelled at the export of live sheep. A couple of weeks ago I was at Fremantle when the first consignment of live sheep for Singapore or Bangkok was loaded on the *Kota Bali*. This was a trial shipment to see if the arrangements were suitable. I understand the facilities were acceptable and that shipment will be one of many shipments of live sheep. We know the wharflies' union has objected to the export of live sheep from Australia. I understand the union has said it will not accept live sheep under the weight of 104 lb. The sheep I saw loaded onto the *Kota Bali* had an average weight of approximately 128 lb. Obviously they were not suitable for the local abattoirs and market, nor were they suitable for export in other than live form, mainly because the country of destination would prefer them to be killed in accordance with the rituals of that country.

These are some of the factors which have played a large part in the impact on the primary production areas of Western Australia. I do not believe we can blame the Australian Government for all these outside factors which have such a great effect on the situation.

It is interesting to note the Premier in his comments made no reference to the fact that these problems were caused by the Australian Government; yet we have before us this motion by Mr Lewis which says the Australian Government has an obvious lack of appreciation of the problems confronting the primary producers of Western Australia.

Let us consider the annual report of Westralian Farmers Co-operative Limited for the period ended the 30th June, 1974. Many farmers in Western Australia are shareholders in this co-operative. In his address, the chairman had this to say on page 4 of the report—

Australia's greatest single problem today, and that of nearly all countries, is inflation, now running at rates which cannot be sustained in the long term. We must look to Federal and State Governments to set a climate to encourage increased productivity throughout the community.

I think that is a pretty fair comment. If a problem exists, one would expect the Federal Government to do something about it. It has already attempted to do something, and it will continue to act in regard to the matter because it is not anti-rural or anti-farmer as has been suggested by some members. I believe it is also incumbent upon the State Government to take a hand in the matter to see what it can do to assist rural areas and, in particular, primary producers.

Further, on page 5 of the report, the chairman said—

The year began with strong demand leading to high prices for agricultural

products. Stable domestic and overseas markets resulted in substantial increases in members' requirements of fertilisers, farm merchandise, machinery, finance and other services provided by your company.

So we come back to the point that unless we have stable markets, both within and outside Australia, we will experience problems. I do not think any member of the farming community will deny that without stable markets we cannot guarantee that if we have a good season next year we will receive X dollars and know exactly where we are going. The chairman then went on to say—

The contrasting conditions experienced during the past year emphasise the dependence of the Australian rural industry on its overseas markets.

That is what I have been trying to say. Without these markets primary producers will always find themselves in a difficult situation and will not be able to plan a year or two ahead.

However, there is another factor which I think was mentioned by Mr Lewis; that a scheme should be devised whereby in good times primary producers set aside part of their profits in anticipation that the money might be needed in two or three years' time if a bad season occurs. I think that is a logical exercise. People in all activities—and this applies particularly to primary producers because fluctuating fortunes are always with them—should make provision for bad times. Primary producers should set aside money to be used in time of need. In Kalgoorlie, the Hampton Plains Pastoral Company has had most of its property devastated by a bush fire. This has happened after two very good seasons which followed a six-year drought on the eastern goldfields. So whereas that company had expected this year to recoup some of its previous losses, it now finds itself in a situation in which the country will be devoid of vegetation for quite some time. A very good season will be necessary to bring the country back into production.

These are just some of the factors which influence the situation of primary producers. However, Mr Lewis contends everything that is wrong in the rural section can be blamed on the Australian Government, and I do not think he substantiated his comments in that regard. I believe his motion is ill-founded—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Now we are getting the strong words.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: —and unsupported by his remarks when he moved it. Certainly the motion was not substantiated by his Premier or by Westralian Farmers Co-operative Limited.



The Hon. A. A. Lewis: The Premier was not—

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I am sure the Premier would have known what was the situation when he presented his Budget two weeks ago. I believe this Chamber has not been presented with a case in support of the motion. Mr Lewis has not substantiated his claim that everything which is wrong with primary production areas is the fault of the Australian Government.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I think you are a bit biased.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I may be, but that is my prerogative. As I have said, I have been influenced by what I have read.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Where in the motion do I say that everything that is wrong in the rural areas is attributable to the Federal Government? I might have thought it, but I did not say it.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: Mr Lewis may not have said it, but he gave the impression that this is what he thinks the situation to be; that everything wrong is the fault of the Australian Government and it has no concern for the primary producers of Australia and, particularly, of Western Australia. That is a lot of hogwash, and Mr Lewis knows it. The motion is ill-founded and should be thrown out. I do not believe that will happen, because I am aware of the weight of numbers in this Chamber.

The only thing I can say in conclusion is that I think the Ministers sitting opposite will breathe a sigh of relief when we finally dispose of this item. I am sure Mr Lewis did not really expect the Opposition to present a constructive answer to his unconstructive criticism of the Australian Government. He did not present any proof of his case; he produced a great deal of hogwash and some hypothetical situations.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: So you say.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: So I say; and I point out the content of the motion is Mr Lewis' opinion, and was not supported by Western Farmers or by the Premier when he introduced the Budget. I believe what the Premier said in this regard is pretty right.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It comes to this: either Mr Lewis is right or Sir Charles Court is right.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: There may be a change in leadership!

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: The proof will be when we take the vote.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: This may be a very interesting exercise. I am sure the Premier would welcome it.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: I am sure Mr Lewis has convinced more members in this Chamber than you have convinced.

The Hon. S. J. DELLAR: I am sure he will have no trouble in convincing the Premier that he knows what he is talking about and that the Premier does not.

As I said before, I am sure the Ministers opposite will breathe a sigh of relief when we finally dispose of this motion. I repeat that I am certain the Government members did not expect answers to this motion to come from those of us on this side of the House who are members of the Australian Labor Party and who are supposed to be opposed to farmers. If Mr Lewis can convince me that this is not what he is driving at he will be doing a good job. I oppose the motion.

**THE HON. R. T. LEESON (South-East)** [8.01 p.m.]: I want to say a few words on this motion and I am sure that members opposite will enjoy sitting back listening to somebody who knows what he is talking about.

I suppose one of the major complaints that people in the rural industry have had to make—I have mentioned this briefly before—was against the revaluation of the dollar early in 1973. The dollar was increased by approximately 25 per cent on possibly two or three occasions which did have some bearing on the export of primary products. We all agreed with this dollar revaluation when it happened, although we know that members of the farming community were placed in some difficulty as were those who were engaged in the mining industry and in the export trade. But of course the dollar was revalued for certain reasons.

The Hon. C. R. Abbey: None of them good.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: The honourable member says that none of the reasons was good, but I maintain that a good deal of benefit resulted from the revaluation of the dollar because the cost of many commodities being imported into the country at that time were considerably reduced in price; there is no question about that. One would think that such a result would make some farmers happy, because quite a few of them own Mercedes Benz, Rolls Royce, and Jaguar cars, and there is no doubt that the cost of these vehicles has been considerably reduced. Also farming machinery that is imported into the country was reduced in cost.

I am not saying that all farmers drive Mercedes Benz cars; I admit that some drive 1958 Holdens. Nevertheless, we have to accept some bad with the good, and this is what the revaluation of the dollar amounted to.

There is no doubt that to millions of people the revaluation of the dollar was very beneficial. When the situation is examined we find there are 22 000 farmers in Western Australia, of which about

13 000 are engaged in wheat and sheep production. There are a few orchardists who probably make up the total, but there are only about 22 000 farmers in this State as against a total of about 1.1 million people within the State. The object of the Australian Government has been to try to give some benefit to the majority of the people.

The Hon. J. Heitman: To whom did the Australian Government give any benefit?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Here is a case of racism again!

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Mr Heitman knows to whom the Australian Government gave benefit. It was he, myself, and other members in this Chamber who benefited. Of course it had an adverse effect on some farmers personally in some ways, but do we hold one million people to ransom because of the interests of some 22 000 farmers?

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Do you think we should discriminate against the minority?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: The funny part about it is that since revaluation occurred the dollar has been devalued by about 12 per cent. Its value is roughly half of what it was before.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: It is 46 per cent.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: It is not 46 per cent. The honourable member is talking about revaluation overseas. The revaluation of the currency in Australia did not amount to 46 per cent or anywhere near it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The Chairman of the ANZ Bank said we were chicken for doing it, I know that well.

The PRESIDENT: So that I may maintain an interest in this matter will the honourable member please address the Chair?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Since the dollar was devalued by about 12 per cent, I can recall reading one newspaper article in which Mr Anthony was reported as having said, "That is not bad; it goes a little way to restoring what we had." However, I have not heard anyone else say anything like that. I do not think the revaluation of the dollar was as bad as many people thought it would be.

We have to be fair when considering this matter. There is no question about the fact, as I said previously, that the revaluation of the dollar hurt many people, but it also brought a great deal of benefit to many more people. One can fight for one's own selfish interests—that is only human nature—but at least some of us must have a little thought for other people.

During the debate mention was made of the reduction of tax concessions on education expenses. It has been noted that

the Federal Government has reduced this concession from \$400 to \$150. To somebody who is earning a fair amount of income the difference in the concession may amount to \$200 or \$250, but I wonder if those people think about the large sum of money the Federal Government is spending on education in rural areas. In the last two years expenditure on education in rural areas has almost trebled.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You make it sound as though the Federal Government had invented it; it is our money you know.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The Minister makes it sound as though we have no Western Australian members in the Federal Parliament.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: What is the most beneficial? The loss of, say, \$200 in one's pocket or the benefit of having our children taught in well-equipped schools with modern equipment and decent school teachers? This is the object of spending such a large sum of money on education in rural areas.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You think school teachers are not decent, do you?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Of course they are, but their proficiency can be improved if more money is spent on education. The figure spent is somewhere in excess of \$20 million in the last two years. This is the amount by which the Federal Government has increased expenditure in rural areas. Therefore the Federal Government should be commended for this, because it is achieving something in a field that has been neglected for many years.

What is the advantage of all this expenditure on education? Do farmers want to send their children to private schools?

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: It is not only farmers.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: No, but only the farmers are grizzling about this.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Don't you read the newspapers?

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Some just want to send their children to school but they still have to send them away, and this happens in the area represented by Mr Leeson, too.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Those who send their children to private schools—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Those who send their children to private schools and who are saving the Government a great deal of expenditure are no good at all, are they?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: If I send my children to an independent school I am quite prepared to pay for it. I have no alternative now, in any case.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: But we want a tax rebate.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Yes, I know the honourable member does. He also wants a gold brick with every bag of wheat, too; the Liberal Party knows that.

The PRESIDENT: Order, please! The honourable member will continue with his remarks.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Thank you, Mr President. I repeat that I believe this money is being spent in the right direction. There is no question about that. The reduction in the \$400 tax concession for education expenses has been opposed by many people. Mr MacKinnon said, by way of interjection, "After all, it is our money; we are entitled to spend it." However, the money has to be obtained from somewhere, and some areas of expenditure have been pruned to provide additional money for education.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: Were not some people denied the benefit of this additional expenditure because of their geographical situation?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Under the present circumstances I do not think this is so, because per head of population there is more money being spent now on education than ever before. I think the reduction in the \$400 tax concession is only peanuts and a great deal more money is yet to come from the Federal Government. Although we hear grizzles from certain people at the present time this is something we come to expect.

The motion refers to the attitude of the Federal Government towards rural areas and specifically mentions primary producers. Perhaps the motion could have included a reference to workers in primary industries, because there is no doubt that they are having a bit of a battle today. This motion purely relates to primary producers. Perhaps if mention were given to primary workers in it—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Do you think shearers are underpaid?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Yes, grossly underpaid.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: If workers in primary industries had been mentioned in the motion we may have given it greater consideration.

The Hon. T. Knight: Will you support an amendment to include workers in primary industries?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Members opposite are having a rough time and they do not like it.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: We are enjoying it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I am enjoying it.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: When I was visiting the Merredin area on Monday last I spoke to a few farmers there and they told me that they are expecting a bumper season, and everybody is really smiling.

Therefore if things are as bad as this motion would have us believe, I cannot understand it, because while it is acknowledged that meat prices are down, the consumer is not enjoying the benefit of any reduction in price.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That area has been neglected.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I think the honourable member might be right, because it has been neglected for a long time. The previous Federal Government neglected this area for 23 years; it neglected the area of the middle man for a long time. I feel that thought should have been given to the middle man many years ago because we hear innumerable grizzles. The other evening I saw Senator Wriedt appearing on a TV programme speaking to about 800 cockies in Queensland. He had a fairly rough time, as members can well imagine. At least he had the guts to attend the meeting, and most of the answers he gave to those present were "spot on".

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: They were an unruly lot.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What about the report on the Forrest Place incident?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I was sorry I attended the meeting held in Forrest Place when Gough Whitlam was hit by a can; but he was not the only one.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I saw Senator Wriedt on television in real "red neck" country on Sunday night in Queensland.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: That is the programme to which I was referring. He did a good job defending his policies, and anyone listening to him would know full well he had everything in hand and was on the right track. It appeared to me that many people did not have a clue as to what was going on in the Federal sphere.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It appears members of the Federal Government do not have a clue, either.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I would love to know what the Liberal Party would do if it got back. It has not said yet.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I want to hear Mr Leeson.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Yes, I am sure you do, Mr President.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He must be feeling pretty lonely!

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: The State Government has increased almost every charge which affects those living in rural areas. Even in places like Marvel Loch, which is a rural area in which wheat is grown and minerals are mined, not only were the farmers hit; those in the mining industry were also affected because of increases in water rates, and the like.

Again, those involved in the mining industry whose mines stand right in the paddocks of the wheatgrowing district have been affected by a 200 per cent increase in battery charges, and so on.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Over what period?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The period of this Government.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: In some cases, a period of 24 hours.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Are miners happy with the Federal Government?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: The Federal Government did not do it.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: But are the miners happy with the Federal Government?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: Of course they are.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: That's a joke.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: The miners are making more money than they have ever made before in their lives.

The Hon. N. McNeill: That is under a Liberal State Government.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: The mine managers are making more money than they have ever made before. It is recorded in tonight's paper that the price of gold is \$128 an ounce and the mine managers up there are really laughing. They have no grizzles.

The Hon. N. McNeill: They have a good State Government.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I seem to have run out of notes.

The Hon. McNeill: Good.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I jotted down all the shortcomings of the Federal Government and I did not require very much paper.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Since when did they stop?

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I needed only three or four lines to deal with them.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You will have more than that in the morning.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: I outlined all the problems facing the farmers in my first five minutes and all the good things done by the Federal Government in the last 15 to 20 minutes, and—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: You have only skimmed the surface.

The Hon. R. T. LEESON: —I am quite sure that after my speech members will oppose the motion, which I certainly do.

**THE HON. C. R. ABBEY** (West) [8.20 p.m.]: I certainly hope the motion will be agreed to, and I intend to support it.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Why? You are biased.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: The efforts of the Opposition to justify the stand taken by the Federal Government are incredible.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: So is the motion.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: The basic reason behind the motion and the present predicament of those in rural areas have not been studied by the Opposition. The real nitty gritty of the situation is that those in rural areas, not only in Western Australia, but in the whole of Australia, are finding themselves in the main in an intense depression and without finance. For the moment those in grain-growing areas are weathering the storm. Let us for the present forget about the farmer, although he does play a very big part in country life—

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: The motion deals primarily with farmers.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: —and consider the effects on country people in particular and in total because the "in total" is important. Every member who has spoken against the motion would know that country communities in Australia are becoming smaller and smaller and the situation is serious.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That has not occurred in the last two or three years only, but has been occurring for some time.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: In Western Australia in particular it dates back to the drought of 1968-69.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Before that.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: The rot certainly set in then. Members must not forget that rural activities, and primary-producing activities in particular, are all long term and one or two good years does not make for prosperity for the area. It is incredible that this fact seems to be forgotten.

The situation is worsening every month in country areas, except in a few large country towns, because jobs are just not available. I am sure that in the next few months young people in particular will find it extremely difficult to obtain an ordinary basic job in the country community in which they have lived all their lives. These are the serious effects of the present situation. It is worrying when people, with an ability to understand if they desire to do so, close their minds and put their heads in the sand, as it were. This is what the Federal Government has done.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: What proposals has your party made to overcome the situation?

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: It will make plenty.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It has made none up to date. It only formulates negative motions such as this one.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: The proof is in the eating. The situation was very good before the Federal Labor Party took office.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: You complained even then.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I was up speaking during the rural crisis when the previous Government was in office.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: All those comments are very interesting.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Give us something positive instead of being negative.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: Those interjectors have not understood the true situation at all. Let us forget about the city and the country at the moment. Do not let us think of a division. If any section of the community, whatever it may be, is prosperous, some of the prosperity rubs off. In my lifetime I have experienced several periods when the country areas have just gone flat because no work was available in the community. When the community is not prosperous those in the city and country alike are also affected.

I listened with interest to Mr Dellar who seemed to think that it was quite all right for the members of the Meat Industry Employees' Union to place a ban on sheep under 104 lb. live weight. What right have the couple of thousand workers in that industry to place a ban of that nature on a thriving trade? What good will it do them when the farming community reduces its sheep numbers because no demand exists for the product? What good will it do?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: About as much good as this motion, I presume.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: Yes, in the honourable member's estimation, that is the real situation.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That is the truth of the matter.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: I wish those in the Meat Industry Employees' Union had looked to the future to anticipate the effect of their action. What good will such a ban do when the Middle East countries—the oil-rich countries—which buy our meat go somewhere else in the world for their requirements? What good will it do Western Australia, or Australia as a whole, if we have plenty of sheep and mutton to be killed, but no market for it because of the foolish action taken and the restriction placed on a certain type of meat?

To anyone who can read it is evident that there is a demand overseas in the near Arabian Gulf countries for young, lean meat. The preference is for fresh meat followed by chilled and then frozen meat.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You are wandering a bit. You are blaming a trade union instead of the Federal Government!

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: I am submitting the facts and Mr Cooley knows very well that this is the situation.

The Hon. N. McNeill: Mr Hawke is trying to run the Federal Government anyway.

The Hon. C. R. ABBEY: Mr Cooley has only to admit the truth. We know that the Meat Industry Employees' Union has the backing of the Federal Government, otherwise it could not possibly make such a ban stick.

Something must be done about the situation because we have an untapped market for young, lean wethers in the main and, if this market could be filled, it would help lift the producer price and thus overcome some of the present difficulties. Why do not people face the facts?

I have no axe to grind with the Meat Industry Employees' Union in its efforts to preserve its members' jobs and conditions, but its objective will not be achieved at all by what it is doing at the present time. The union has no right to take a stand and decide the type of live wethers that will be exported. The union's action could well result in a clash between producer and union, and what good would that do anyone? If people become desperate they take desperate measures in an effort to overcome the difficulties.

I hope the situation can be resolved. I will not give a detailed examination of the rural industry because it does not bear repeating time after time. However, I think everyone should keep firmly in mind the true facts concerning all those in the rural areas—not just the producers, but all members of the community who are affected by decisions which will mean that instead of prosperity we will reach a situation from which we will not recover for years merely because of actions which will have had grave ill-effects. I certainly support the motion.

**THE HON. GRACE VAUGHAN** (South-East Metropolitan) [8.29 p.m.]: It is certainly surprising that a motion such as this should be presented in this House. It is a little unsporting because, after all, we do have 20 country electorate representatives here and only 10 city; and the substance of Mr Lewis' motion is that preference should be given to rural sectors rather than to other sectors in the Australian scene.

It must be emphasised that as we have on the Government benches 17 representatives of country areas and only four representatives of city areas, there is already a preponderance of interest in this House in regard to country matters. On

the Opposition benches, rather significantly, we have six members representing the metropolitan area and only three representing the country. This is consonant with the number of electors in Western Australia, where two-thirds of the electors are in the cities and only one-third in the country. It is therefore not surprising that we have a preponderance of interests from the country.

I have always emphasised in this House that I consider people who are disadvantaged should be compensated. I believe country people are disadvantaged in many respects and I would be the first to urge that they be compensated. I am suggesting the Government should recognise that there are other areas in the Australian scene which are due—in fact they are well and truly overdue—to be compensated. If some members of the Government would read a little about what has happened to our cities in the 23 years of Liberal-Country Party domination of the Australian scene, they would realise that the cities need a tremendous amount of money to be poured into them to relieve congestion and for area improvement, the establishment of facilities, etc.

If the Government looks at some of the facts which Mr Abbey asks us to look at in regard to union intervention in the export of meat, heaven help us. He is talking about a union, an autonomous body which is concerned with its own advantages. It is trying to gain advantages. Why not? The farmers are trying to gain advantages. I do not blame them. Every section of the community tries to gain advantages when it can. It is human nature to do so, but we must remember we are all Australians.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: The difference is that the farmer is not disadvantaging others or taking unfair advantage.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Mr Wordsworth might occasionally remember that as well as being a farmer and a Western Australian he is an Australian, and there are other people in Australia who need some consideration. This motion says, "Let us give more advantages to the country than to any other sector."

Several members interjected.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The mover of the motion says that, in spite of all the facts that are presented to him. I have here reams of information about what the Australian Labor Government, since its election in 1972, has introduced in the way of advantages to the country, but members of the Government do not want to listen. All they say is, "We want more."

When Mr Dans spoke about the age-old tendency of the farmer to want to individualise his profits and socialise his debts, he spoke very truly. He plagiarised Ben

Chifley, to whom he did not give credit. Ben Chifley said that. Of course, time produces some respect for people, and it is often said by the Government, "We should have someone like Ben Chifley in the Labor Party." What people on the Government benches are forgetting is that throughout the ages farmers have been bellyaching about their conditions. I do not blame them. City people also have a right to bellyache about their conditions. The meat workers have a right to bellyache—and they are not getting enough in their bellies, either.

Only 9 per cent of the people in the country are farmers, but it is the others whom the policies of the Australian Government are assisting. They are not being disadvantaged by those policies. Whether it be a supporting mother's benefit, a delivered meals subsidy, a subsidy to isolated children, or whatever one likes to mention in the welfare programmes of the Australian Government, the country people are being advantaged just as much as are the city people, and in many cases they are being much more advantaged.

In a few days' time an announcement will be made concerning some of the health programmes, and the bulk of the money allocated for home care services will go to the country. If we have a look at the research programmes being funded by the Education Department, we find the majority of them go to the country. We find that the amount of money being spent on research programmes in the country is 15 times that being spent in the city.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Where do you get all this information?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: There is plenty of evidence. Members of the Government may pooch-pooch what I am saying, but I am giving irrefutable facts, and if they would care to read anything other than *The West Australian* they would find these facts. If they would read the countries' newspapers—not the country newspapers—

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: What is wrong with *The West Australian*?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: In the main, it reports nothing which shows up the Australian Government in a reasonable light.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Do you think it is biased?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Everyone knows it is biased—even the reporters.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: If we just look at the matter of assistance to isolated children in the country, we find that every child who attends school is given \$350, irrespective of whether the father is earning \$10 000 or \$20 000 a year. Every child is given \$350 because it is recognised there are problems associated with

living in the country. I am in favour of that. I believe they should receive that money and that some compensation should be given to country children. I will certainly work to get more and more compensation for them to ensure they have an equal opportunity to be educated.

Somebody questioned me about the facts I gave in regard to educational research. In the information from the Minister for Education dated the 13th October, the only city allocation for research is for playground-game characteristics of Brisbane primary school children, and the amount is \$2 553; but there is an amount of \$30 834 in specific grants for—

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Would you quote where they are?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: —a longitudinal study of secondary/tertiary transition in rural communities—

The PRESIDENT: Order, please! If the honourable member is quoting from a document, would she please identify it.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Yes, Mr President. I have already mentioned it. It is from the Minister for Education.

The PRESIDENT: That does not state for the record what the publication is. Would the honourable member please identify the document.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: It is a media release to Press, television, and radio by the Australian Government Minister for Education.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: What is the date of it?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The 13th October.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Was that the only thing which took the \$30 000?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: On the 24th September the Minister for Education in the Australian Government (Mr Beazley) spoke about extra assistance for isolated children and said the Government had increased the means test on the additional boarding allowance. We heard a complaint from Mr Withers that people were being disadvantaged by the Australian Government as a result of the reduction in tax deductibility.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is correct.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: We find on figures released by the Minister for Education in reply to a question by Mr T. D. Evans in the Legislative Assembly on the 28th August, 1974, that something like 15 per cent of the places in the hostels in the country are not being used.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Do not believe that.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Most of those are in the north.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: There is only one in the north and that has a particular problem.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: What I have said can be verified on reading the answer to the question asked of the State Minister for Education.

The Australian Government's grants to local government authorities under the Grants Commission reveal that Western Australia received more than the national figure.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: When are they going to get it?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I now quote from a Press release by Senator Gordon McIntosh and Senator Peter Walsh in which they say—

WA has received more than its *per capita* allocation from the Grants Commission.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Are they the words, "has received"?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: It is to receive almost 9 per cent of the grant of over \$56 million, whereas this State has only 8.2 per cent of the total population of Australia. Rural figures are even more telling. The *per capita* allowance in Western Australia was greater than the overall Australian figure. The national figure was 4.29 and the figure for Western Australia was 4.64. For the metropolitan area it was only a matter of \$3.09 a head, whereas for the country it was \$8.75 a head. I am not saying that is wrong. I am stating what the Australian Government is doing for the rural sector.

In regard to requests for assistance, we find that five of the country local government authorities in Western Australia were so little in need that they did not bother to apply to the Grants Commission. Those authorities were Murchison, Mt. Marshall, Northam Town, Trayning, and Wyalkatchem. Apparently those five authorities have no cause to complain.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: What about the authorities which applied and got nothing?

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Which were they?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: There were certainly some authorities which did not receive an allocation. The decision in this matter was made by people in the Public Service—people who are paid irrespective of whether there is a Liberal-Country Party or a Labor Party Government in power. They are paid to analyse, dissect, advise, and recommend. Those people decided the matter on the facts presented to them.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They recommend to the Minister who makes the decision on a point of policy.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Those people are paid to do a job and they do it. People may rubbish the Public Service but the Ministers control it. Surely we

are not going to knock our political system. We have parliamentarians and public servants, and that is the way the system works.

If people are going to rubbish the system we have, perhaps they should introduce some other system. The support that Government members have given to the fuel, energy, and power legislation indicates the type of system they want to introduce.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: That is Western Australian law. It has nothing to do with the motion.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I would now like to refer to the concern of the Australian Government for the country people—not just for the 9 per cent of those who are farmers, but those who are living in the country and who help produce our very essential primary and agricultural exports. I must point out that there has been a very real effort and a very real sacrifice from the rest of the taxpayers of Australia to help with the installation of a country television service. We find there is to be a new ABC television station at Moora in Western Australia, planned by the Minister for the Media, who aims to ensure that at least 98 per cent of the public of Australia have access to television.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: Is it to be in colour?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What sacrifice do the city people make?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I do not consider that I or any other person in Australia am making a sacrifice when we pay tax.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: A few moments ago you said you were.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The concept of the Australian paying his tax so that all people in Australia might have reasonable and equitable access to all the opportunities and advantages that are available is what the Labor Party would like to see.

What the 9 per cent of the rural community would like to see, and what a very small and privileged percentage of their representatives in this House would like to see, is that these particular advantages go to certain and very particular people; because when we hear these representatives of the rural community talk about these people they seem to think of them as being in a different strata; they consider that some are more worthy than others; that they are in some sort of privileged position and entitled to maintain themselves.

The Hon. N. McNeill: You obviously do not know what the motion is all about.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: We are told that these privileged people are the salt of the earth, the pioneers; we hear

this *ad nauseam* and it is enough to give one a bellyache; particularly when we are told how important they are and how they have suffered.

The Hon. A. A. Lewis: You do not think they are important?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I think they are extremely important; but the man who collects the garbage is as important as the Chief Justice of Western Australia, because if we did not have the people to do these jobs—which need to be done—the whole of our system would fall apart. Australia and its people will not prosper until we have respect for one another and for the needs of others.

I condemn the motion. I think it is frivolous and selfish and it attempts to maintain a privilege among certain people who are well able to maintain that position for themselves.

I am appalled that Government members do not recognise the importance of maintaining equal and equitable distribution of opportunity and income in the whole of Australia. I think they are ignoring the needs of country people themselves, and if we look at some of the figures that have been compiled in the green paper these should surely please those who represent the country people.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: You want to read *Rural Credit in Australia*. You may get more facts from it.

The PRESIDENT: Order! This is not a place where books should be thrown about. Will the honourable member please continue her remarks if she has anything to add to those she has already made?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I did want to refer to some of the figures that have been compiled in the green paper to show that some 22 per cent of the wheat-growers in Western Australia who had a net income of less than \$2 000 a year received something like 10 per cent of total subsidies; whereas the 23 per cent of the wheatgrowers who earned a net income of \$10 000 or more per year received 40 per cent.

What sort of equity is this? What sort of fair go does it represent and how dinkum are the representatives of the country people?

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: What subsidies are you talking about?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The subsidies paid to farmers. The honourable member knows to what I am referring.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: What are they?

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There are miles of them.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Furthermore, Dr Schapper—whose name is anathema to the farmers because they do not like the truth of what he has said—indi-



cates that something like four times as much subsidy is given to the wealthy people as is given to those in real need.

The present Australian Government is continually attempting to bring about some sort of rationalisation within the rural industry. Instead of placing a blanket subsidy over everybody, it is attempting to assist that part of the industry and the people in it, who need the most help; those who are not doing very well.

What farmers want is a blanket subsidy. They do not mind if the bloke who is having a crook trot gets less than the fellow who is having a good time. As long as they get a blanket subsidy, they feel they are doing very well.

It might cheer up some of our friends to know that the Federal Government has decided it will increase the first advance on wheat from \$1.25 a bushel to \$1.50 a bushel for the year 1975-76.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Is that the same as it is for barley?

The Hon. J. Heitman: You do not get any interest on that money.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: You call that a subsidy?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: I feel the approach made by Government members to this motion is quite disheartening, because in the main the interjections and the speeches that have been made have been a personal attack, particularly on members of the Opposition, on the unions, and on other people. We even had the mover of the motion calling our Prime Minister an idiot.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: And a maniac. I am trying to work out the difference.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The policies that are being put forward by the Australian Government are helping all Australians. By its policies that Government is helping the majority of people who live in the rural sector. It may not be helping the 9 per cent of the farmers who are doing very well, but it is certainly helping the majority of the people. It is helping the children who are to be educated and the people who are living in country areas. This is where the money is being allocated.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: How are the pensioners being aided in the remote country areas?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: People do not always vote according to what they receive. The history of our system indicates that people usually vote for the Labor Party when they are down on their luck; and others become two bob capitalists when things are buoyant. One of the most severe social problems of the entire world concerns our Aboriginal infant health

problem. We still hear people complaining about money being paid to alleviate the Aboriginal health problem.

The PRESIDENT: One of my greatest problems is to try to keep the honourable member to the motion.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: We are talking about the rural sector, and the majority of the Aborigines live in that sector—they constitute something like 1 per cent of the population. These people account for 2 per cent of the births and for 10 per cent of the infant deaths.

I do not know whether these figures impress people on the opposite side of the House, but I think they are a pretty poor indictment of a group of country representatives who are not prepared to laud the Australian Government for what it is doing by allocating money to help solve the Aboriginal problem.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: You want to support the embassy that has been set up outside Parliament House in Canberra.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Mr Withers is too ill-informed and lacking in understanding to appreciate the plight of the Aboriginal people who are oppressed, miserable, and unhappy. They must do something to draw attention to their problems. I do not care one bit if they choose to demonstrate against the Australian Government. They have a right to demonstrate against the policies of the white people in this country. I hope they continue to demonstrate and they get somewhere by doing so. I agree entirely with what they are doing.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Then you should agree with this motion.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: If members in this House were to listen instead of talking so much about what they think they know; about what the country people are doing, and how they are suffering; and if they were to consider the problems of the underprivileged people, they will be doing Western Australia a very real service.

It is a fact that overall, 7.68 per cent of the population comprises those in Western Australia who are over 65 years of age. But the black people in Western Australia who are over 65 comprise only 5.38 per cent of the population. These figures might not be very significant to people in terms of the numbers of people who live and the numbers who die; but they are very significant, indeed, and they certainly should be more significant to those who represent the country areas.

It is very easy for people opposite to close their ears to that sort of thing. They are only concerned at the fact that the income of their property is not quite so high as it was last year.

At the moment we have a world recession, and there is no doubt that this has occurred because the capitalist system is running into problems. The reason it is running into problems is that the people who support the capitalist system are very lousy and poor capitalists. They do not understand the system. When we have a capitalist system in which we have to live—come the revolution—then let us work on proper lines. But the people on the Government benches do not want to do this; they want all the profits to go to them; they do not want to see profits distributed; they do not want to see fair competition.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: That is a load of tripe.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The people on the Government benches are more concerned with retail price mark-ups. When the Federal Government brings in restrictive trade practice legislation—which will make Australia a place worth living in—members opposite will find something to grizzle about.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Who in this debate mentioned price mark-ups?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: This was opposed in Canberra to the point where a double dissolution was necessary. Members opposite believe in taking everything for themselves. They want to preserve their privileged position. They are not thinking about themselves as Australians, or about the rest of Australia.

Quite often we hear people saying, "Western Australia would be much better off without the rest of Australia." The Minister said it. He said, "They are paying money for this and that but it is our money. We paid it". Just before the last election we heard one of our well-respected Treasury officials say that he would not want to stay in Western Australia if we seceded because we would be \$60 million a year worse off. What does that mean? It means that other Australians are taking \$60 million a year out of their pockets and giving it to Western Australia. I am not against that; it is very good. Western Australia consists of one-third of the acreage of Australia and we need more money from the rest of Australia until we reach a stage where we have decent roads and can provide our isolated people with reasonable conditions.

Do not let us say we can do without the rest of Australia. Firstly, it is morally wrong. Are we Australians or are we not? Secondly, it just is not plain, good economics to say that the rest of Australia can go and jump in the lake.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Is that in the motion?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: The Australian Government is attempting to administer Australia for Australians so that every person has an equal advantage.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: And it is doing a shocking job of it, too.

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: If the Minister for Education had a good look at this—he might be able to get some of his researchers to produce some figures, if he does not believe it—he would see what is said by the economists, who come from all ideologies, as he calls it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: What do you call it?

The Hon. GRACE VAUGHAN: Since when has ideology been wrong? Let us have a bit more of it if it is going to make us decent Australians and stop us thinking only about ourselves in our privileged positions. I condemn and oppose this motion. I think it is unworthy of this House and, again, I believe it is very unsporting that 17 supporters of the Government, representing one-third of the population of the electorates of Western Australia have the nerve to come into this place, use their privileged position gained under the Electoral Districts Act, and condemn the Federal Government.

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [9.03 p.m.]: After that, I have heard everything.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Not yet.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: I find it very unnerving to try to explain something about the motion to people in this Chamber who know nothing about the farming community and country areas. When I spoke on this matter during the Address-in-Reply debate, I put up reasons in support of my argument that the farming community throughout Australia was downtrodden by the Federal Government; I still think that to be the case. We have heard that the upward valuation of the Australian dollar was something like 25 per cent. When it was devalued by 12 per cent recently, Mr Crean said it was worth something like \$300 million to the rural community.

During my speech on the Address-in-Reply debate I said that it was costing the Australian rural community something like \$652 million and, on top of that, the withdrawal of subsidies has cost the rural community about \$260 million. However, this statement did not seem to have any effect on the Opposition in this House. Members opposite seem to think that the Australian rural community should lose something like \$900 million in one season and still prosper. Just because farmers have had one or two seasons which have helped to build up prosperity, members opposite seem to think they do not need subsidies of any sort.

The price of superphosphate today is around \$55 a ton. It increased by \$18 a ton in July, and we lose the \$12 a ton subsidy in December. This will mean that every farm in Australia will be paying an

additional \$30 a ton for its superphosphate. The Hon. Grace Vaughan mentioned that the small farmer—22 per cent of the rural community—received the least part of the superphosphate subsidy. This is quite correct of course; however, the little farmer uses very much less superphosphate. When a farmer must buy around 250 tons of superphosphate at \$55 a ton and pay excess freight, members opposite may realise that this is a particularly heavy item of expenditure with which the Australian rural community is faced.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: How many acres would 250 tons cover?

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: On my property we use about 200 tons; 240 tons covers about 4 800 acres. If the farmers do not use superphosphate they do not, of course, grow as much wheat. The rural community provides Australia with overseas credit and members opposite can imagine what will happen if they cut down on the use of superphosphate. It would also reduce the amount of overseas credit available to the community at large.

The Federal Government is also reducing the subsidy which applied to wheat consumers. We must look at both sides of the story; we cannot consider just one side.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: We are very fair.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: My sympathies lie with the rural community. It made me sick to hear Mr Cooley talking on this motion on behalf of the Opposition; all he mentioned was trade unions. He never mentioned once that they do not go to arbitration any more; they simply hold the community to ransom or blackmail to get the money for which they are looking.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: I must correct you there. I said nothing about trade unions; I referred to the position of workers in rural areas.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: Mr Cooley says he talked about workers in rural areas. Let us consider shearers. I have mentioned previously that it used to cost me \$43 a hundred to get my sheep shorn. Today, \$91 a hundred is the cheapest price I have heard quoted, and many farmers are paying more than that. Farmers just cannot keep on paying these increased sums and remain afloat.

I was talking to one of my sons the other day and he said that where it used to cost \$60 000 a year to run the farm, it now costs well over \$100 000; this is due to increases in the price of commodities. Last week I was up in Morawa, where a new bin is to be opened. Mr Gayfer would be able to tell members all about this. The men up there must buy tiptrucks, because that is the easiest and most efficient way to unload the products. Where six years ago a farmer could buy a truck for \$5 000, today he must pay

\$13 000 to \$20 000. Inflation has put everything almost out of reach of the rural community, yet we hear the tripe to which we have had to listen tonight.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Do you think that farmers are the only ones to be affected by inflation?

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: Of course not, but it is only natural that we growl about inflation. Members opposite growled about 23 years of Liberal Government, but inflation never increased above 3 per cent a year during that time. We are at the stage today where it is increasing at 20 per cent a year.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: It will soon be 100 per cent.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: Let us have a look at the upward valuation of the dollar. On top of the Australian dollar being increased on three occasions, bringing it up to an increase of 25 per cent, we have the devaluation of the yen and the American dollar which in turn affected the value of the Australian dollar. Would it not have been better for the Commonwealth Government to have floated the Australian dollar in order to allow it to find its own value? This was done with their currency by England, America and Japan. I contend that it would have come down a lot more than 12 per cent.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: That remains to be seen.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: The actual result of the decrease in value by the other countries I have mentioned brought the Australian dollar up by 45 per cent *vis-à-vis* the other countries.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: If they had done as you suggested, you would have still found fault.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: It would have been the right thing to do. We need not take notice of only one man and say that this is what we should be doing; we must take notice of what is done throughout the world and try to encourage inflation to remain in one spot for a while. We have only to look at Federal politicians to know the truth of this. Today they are saying, "We have made a mistake. We let wages get out of hand and that has helped to cause inflation."

I have some newspaper cuttings here that rather irked me at the time I read them. I received a letter from Canberra telling me about one of the newspapers over there which printed an article describing what was happening in Western Australia. If one is in Canberra or the Eastern States, one does not hear much about what happens over here.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We do not hear much about what happens over there, either.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: I think we do. The article is headed, "WA Premier reveals sales tax cuts move" and it goes on to state—

Steps would be taken to see if the Commonwealth Government could reduce sales tax, the leader of the Opposition in Western Australia, Mr Tonkin, said yesterday.

From the heading of the article it would appear *The Canberra Times* seems to be under the impression that Mr Tonkin is our Premier; it only goes to show how good our own newspapers really are.

I have a clipping from *The West Australian* of the 30th October which is headed, "Assurance by Wriedt on super". Senator Wriedt contended that, as the Queensland phosphate deposits were soon to be mined, cheaper superphosphate would be available to Australian farmers. This may be the case, but we do not know. It will cost a great deal of money to put this proposal into effect. Another clipping is headed, "PM tells farmers 'worst is over'". They can look forward to another six or 12 months and then things would be a lot better. However, he did not say what he was going to do to make things better.

Another clipping is headed, "Government bid for rural stability". The Federal Government has treated the rural community badly, yet we did not have one speaker from the Opposition in this debate who thought that the Federal Government should do something to help maintain stability in our rural community. If members opposite considered overseas credits they would see that it is the primary industries of wheat, wool, iron ore, and other mining ventures that provide overseas credit for Australia. Why should not the Federal Government help these industries if that would maintain overseas credits—something this country needs at all times and something we must look forward to in the future?

Mr Abbey mentioned earlier tonight that 1969 was a bad year. I point out that 1963 and 1964 were also bad years. I can remember in those years going to Geraldton and hearing traders say, "Money is tight. Farmers are not spending". But when farmers have money they spend it and this is what keeps communities in rural areas and the Perth metropolitan area going. We cannot afford to neglect the rural industry of this country. I think Mr Cooley said something about hate. Who stirred up this hate? We did not. Most of it was stirred up at Forrest Place but country people laugh about that today. People who attended the rally in Forrest Place and helped to stir up feelings have laughed with me about the episode.

Do not think for one minute that people in the rural community hate people in the metropolitan area. They know very well that they are the backbone of the metro-

politan area; they provide overseas credits so that people can live in the metropolitan area, and they are pleased about it. We heard members opposite say that people in rural areas are home on the pig's back and that they do not need to be helped at all. If we want to maintain a stable rural community, subsidies must be provided; it is not much good talking about anything else, because this must be done.

If we want to preserve the harmony on both sides of the House we should not talk some of the rubbish that has been talked tonight. That shows how much the members who made those statements know about road funds. I know that Western Australia is getting some money to which it is entitled under the Federal system, but I do not think there is any local authority in the State which is getting enough money to enable it to carry out its works programme each year. The reason is the high rate of inflation; and the increased cost of machinery, materials, and labour.

The local authorities have increased their rates by as much as they can. Every ratepayer in the country is paying not 20 per cent more, but 50 per cent more than he did four years ago. Yet some people despise the residents of the country areas, and complain that they do not do this or that to help the country by producing more. It seems that too many are not prepared to go out into the country to learn about what is going on; they do not seem to take any interest in that aspect.

I have before me the annual report of the Australian Wheat Board; these reports are not supplied free of charge, but I would recommend every Labor member to obtain a copy and study it in order to gain some knowledge of what has happened in the wheat industry throughout the years. The particular report I have deals with the prices from the 1930s until today.

I support the motion. However, many members have participated in this debate without having an understanding of the disabilities suffered in the rural areas, not only in Western Australia but throughout Australia. The rural industries in every State have been treated like scum by the present Federal Government.

**THE HON. D. K. DANS** (South Metropolitan) [9.17 p.m.]: I am at a disadvantage, because I have broken my spectacles; so I will not be able to quote reams of facts and figures, like many members did tonight.

I do not think that a great number of facts and figures are needed to deal with the motion, because almost without exception members spoke about one topic. In particular Mr Heitman did that, and he frequently used the word "producers". I do not believe in creating hatred between

sections of the community, and I pay due respect to the role played by the primary producers of this country—a role they played long before iron ore came on the scene.

Members of the House who were here in the term of the Tonkin Government will recall that in the past I have made speeches along these lines when the country was suffering some kind of rural recession. Today the boot is on the other foot. On the former occasions there were wheat quotas, and at one stage a very low price was obtained for wool.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: And bad seasons.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Yes, but at that time the beef producers were doing reasonably well and markets were readily available. One of the basic problems confronting the rural industries today also confronts every other section of the Australian community. Firstly I refer to the effect of inflation, whether it be the homespun kind or the imported kind, and secondly—this applies very much to Australia as an exporting nation—I refer to the need to find markets on which to sell our produce.

If Governments subsidise all the commodities that are produced in this country, and in particular primary produce, to the extent of 100 per cent, but there are no markets on which to sell the commodities, we would be in much more difficulty than we are in today. This is something like a trade union which obtains an award of \$1 000 a day for each of its members, but then finds there is no industry left in which to engage the workers. That is the problem which confronts Australia today.

One would be naive to think the rural industries are not being hit; one would be naive to think that the motorcar industry in Australia has not been hit; and one would be terribly naive if one does not consider the world scene. In a space of a few hours it was announced that 63 000 workers in the Volkswagen factory in Germany were being put off. This is one of the most prosperous countries in Europe, but it is now facing a problem of vast numbers of unemployed.

We can talk all we like about revaluation or devaluation of currency. Action was taken by the Australian Government at the behest of the best financial brains in the country, and this action would have been taken by the previous Liberal Government in the Federal sphere had it not succumbed to Country Party pressure.

At a certain point in time the Australian dollar was revalued. The Government received all sorts of criticism from the people. I have not the particular publication with me, but I recall that the Chairman of Directors of the ANZ Bank charged the Australian Government with losing its nerve, and he claimed that it could have kept the Australian dollar at the existing

level for a little longer. He said the time was not opportune to effect a revaluation of our currency.

Just as members who represent rural electorates are speaking for and on behalf of their electors—indeed, that is their responsibility—so the people who were advocating revaluation were talking on behalf of the people who traded in that commodity—money.

It is true that action has been taken to float the dollar. It is not simply a question of floating it here and there. Theoretically when currency is floated, inflation is not imported. However, if we turn to West Germany we see that some months ago this myth was exploded. Consideration has to be given to the markets on which commodities can be sold.

I agree with the comments that the vast majority of overseas reserves of this country are earned by primary producers, and to quote the figure of Senator Wriedt it represents some 53 per cent. In this case about 9 per cent of the work force engaged in rural industries contribute about 53 per cent of our overseas earnings. This is a fairly large contribution.

I do not know how this country can go on applying subsidies across the board. It is well to remember that, when the myth is put out that somehow or other we are anti-rural, the only inquiry that has been made into the primary industries was made by a Labor Government. The person who took a very prominent role in that inquiry was an ex-member of this House, the Hon. F. J. S. Wise. It was a most comprehensive survey, and out of it came the superphosphate bounty. I have had an opportunity to speak to Mr Wise, and I asked him what was the purpose of the subsidy. I discovered from him that the original intention of the subsidy was to pay the producer something until he could do without it.

Every section of industry and every worker in this country will face in the very near future—irrespective of whether he is a farm labourer, an office worker, or a manager—the moment of truth: that we are a part of the entire world.

The Hon. W. R. Withers: Each one of us is dependent on the primary industries.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: We are all interdependent on one another. I do not want to be a prophet of doom, but unless we can induce our people to pay four times as much for beef as they now pay, and to buy five or six suits, we will face a problem.

The Hon. J. Heitman: And work four times as hard for it. I thought you went white when I used the term!

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I was saying every one of us will have to face the moment of truth. This is one of the practical

problems of life. When the water in the barrel is running dry, a person does not drink so much of it but spins the water out over a longer period.

Some people in talking about farmers—and there are good, bad, and indifferent farmers—do not specify the category. It could be a dairy farmer, a potato grower, or a wool producer; or it could even be the rural community at large.

Let us look at some of the mistakes which were made in the past under both Liberal and Labor Administrations at the Commonwealth level. Mr Heitman agreed previously that if the wool growers had taken action similar to that taken by wheat farmers some years ago, today the wool growers might be in a much better position. Of course, the growers are individualists, and I admire them for that. One can trace the problems which confront the wool industry not back to the term of the present Australian Government or the previous Australian Government, but right back to the rum rebellion.

I would like to estimate the amount of freight which primary producers have been called upon to pay to the shipping line conference, in shipping mud and dirt overseas. The freight must have run into millions of dollars; that has happened because the wool industry has not been managed properly.

Despite efforts by all Governments to adjust the situation, it is human nature that when times are good no producer in the wool industry wants to have anything to do with the Government. The slogan is "Let us paddle our own canoe". This does not apply only to the people mentioned in the motion, but it applies right across the board.

Should it not worry people when mention is made of the drop in the productive level and the increased use of steel throughout the world? We have people of all political complexion saying there will be an uplift in the use of steel, but I cannot see what the steel will be used for. Has not the shipping industry been hit very hard?

Mr Heitman has raised the question of where the people should live and what they should do. This has a great deal to do with the attitude of the Australian Government. I believe that we live in the best country in the world. I suppose I am parochial in saying as a Western Australian that I live in the best part of the country. If one goes to the heavily populated cities and observes the stinking schools and habitation of the inner areas, one would shudder. It is to the credit of every Government in Western Australia, and of our very excellent educational system and its administrators, that the mistakes of the larger cities have not been repeated in Western Australia. However, that is not the case elsewhere in Australia.

I now refer to a term I do not like using; it is the national economy. It seems that many people look at the national economy as some kind of material. It has to be cut thinner and made to go round a little more. It is not the primary producers only who are grizzling. In this regard I quote the words of the late Ben Chifley who was a very practical person. He said the most sensitive nerve in the body was the hip pocket nerve. That applies equally to the farmer and the worker in the factory.

People have similar human traits. If one fills a pocket of a person with gold for working on a job, that person expects one to fill the other pocket the following week. Increased costs are affecting everyone in the community.

I now want to refer to something that has been said overseas, and it is germane to what has been said at the State and the national levels. We seem to be dodging the issue. The world is now entering a stable period, and stability can mean recession. Having due regard to the motion, I do not think any member of this Chamber has ever expected that an economy, based on constant growth, would go on forever. I think I know the members of this Chamber fairly well; I am sure there are no slow learners amongst us. Surely the people must realise that we will run out of puff. We cannot just keep on going as we are.

The honourable Grace Vaughan said the capitalist system was running out of puff. We are looking at the capitalist system not in terms of politics, but in terms of the economic situation. There are older members than I in this Chamber but I think we can all read and it is our duty to inform ourselves with regard to what is happening. I was horrified to read that President Ford, in an address to his nation, said that everyone would have to tighten his belt. Are not the shades of Sir Otto Niemeyer present? He spoke along similar lines when he came from England during the last depression.

The Hon. J. Heitman: I do not think the people agreed with what he said.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I do not think so, either. Even the Labor Treasurer, Ted Theodore, was almost laughed out of existence but eventually the whole world adopted his recommendations. Like most prophets, he was not accepted in his own time. It is all very well to be wise after the event.

I do not see any good in this motion at all. I am not attacking the right of Mr Lewis to introduce it. However, the motion will do as much good as would a motion to adjust the plight of the poor people of Poland—exactly nothing. To my way of thinking the motion is mischievous in its intent because it promotes the myth that there is some difference between country people and city people. I would point out

that we are all very dependent, one on another, and one section of the community cannot exist without the other. I agree that if the farmer is going bad, so is everyone else, but we must also remember that if the man in the city is going bad, so is the man on the land.

The immediate aim of the Australian Government is to somehow or other get some unity amongst the Australian people. If there is a change of Government—and there may well be one day—I predict that whoever becomes the Prime Minister, to whatever political party he might belong, will continue the present policy because there is a rocky road ahead, and this is the only way we will come through. We will achieve nothing by throwing brickbats at one another. The situation will not be changed overnight by simply saying this or saying that; it is not as easy as that.

Mr Tanaka, the Prime Minister of Japan, arrives in Western Australia within the next few days and some of us may well meet him. Why has he been invited here? Each member in this Chamber knows the reason, as well as I do. Somehow or other we will use our energy reserves as a bait and ask him to buy more beef from us. This is trade; it is part of the system. If Japan re-enters the beef market that will not solve all our problems. I suppose one could rightfully say—if one were an isolationist—that with a small country such as ours, now that we have discovered petroleum, we could well put a fence around it and live within it if the need arose. Perhaps "exist" would be a better term, but we would not be suffering the plight suffered by some people in other parts of the world.

I can well imagine the cry which will be raised by nearly every person in Australia—and we will probably be united in our action—if the Australian oil producers get an increase in the well-head price of oil. I will bet pounds to peanuts that no matter who is in Government the producers will get an increase in the price.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Then why decry Anthony when he defended it?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Of course, but at least we had two or three years breathing space.

The Hon. H. W. Gayfer: Good answer.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Why does not the Labor Government encourage more research and exploration?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: That is a very good question from Mr Wordsworth. A myth is being pedalled around that somehow or other the oil search is going away from Australia. However, let me inform members that irrespective of what Government is in power in Australia there is no place in the world where the conditions are as good as they are in this country when it comes to searching for oil. Other countries place more conditions and

restrictions on exploration companies—even the United States Government in the Gulf of Mexico—than does the Australian Government.

The Hon. J. Heitman: But they can sell the oil in those countries, can't they?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Cannot it be sold here?

The Hon. J. Heitman: No, not at the present time.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: It is confiscated at the well head.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I think the honourable member had better get his facts right. He is talking about gas as distinct from oil. I suppose that while talking about primary producers we can discuss oil exploration under that heading. However, gas is different from oil. It cannot be stored in tanks; it has to be loaded onto ships and taken somewhere and used. That point is often forgotten.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: Why cannot the gas be stored in tanks?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: It is a very expensive process to store gas. Each refrigerated tanker would cost \$160 million, and I can assure the member that it would be a very expensive pastime.

The Hon. J. C. Tozer: We can, and we will.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Mr Wordsworth referred to a well in the ocean. In some cases they are extremely deep wells. Platforms have to be built in Singapore, or Australia, and then floated to the position where the well is to be drilled. Perhaps members will be able to have a look at a film one day to see how it is done. Three films are available. The technique for floating platforms is still to be perfected.

The PRESIDENT: Does the motion cover that matter?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The interjector connected it to this particular motion.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the honourable member needed much encouragement.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I am at a disadvantage because I am not able to read notes. I am not even sure that I have the right notice paper. However, I do have the right motion. As I said, if the price of petroleum is increased we will scream "inflation" again, but yelling will not do any good.

Everyone will be called upon to make some sacrifices including those involved in farming. In some areas, those people are already making some sacrifices. The building workers who are out of work are making some sacrifices; the motor vehicle people are making some sacrifices and certain areas of the shipping industry are making some sacrifices, as are the coalminers and others.

Because of all those sacrifices our major task—whoever happens to be in Government—is to go out and find markets where we can sell our products at a profit. Any amount of our produce can be sold.

I will return to the question raised by Mr Abbey, and perhaps I would agree with some of his remarks. The meat workers are using the only weapon they have.

The Hon. J. Heitman: That is right.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: They think they are using the only weapon available to them.

The Hon. J. Heitman: The member agrees they should be allowed to use branding irons to wipe out their losses.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: They are using the weapon the farmers used when they withheld the supplies of meat from the market. They are all mistaken.

The Hon. J. Heitman: So are the slaughtermen.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: I think the member opposite can understand the English language. I used the term "all mistaken". The people are in the situation where they fear the future. The man on the land is fearful of his future, as is the man who is trying to pay off a mortgage. He is fearful for his children and fearful of losing his job.

It was not so very long ago that because of the floods in Queensland an insurance company in this State sacked a considerable number of its staff. The manager was caused a great deal of anguish. Some of those who were put off were in excess of 50 years of age and one can imagine how they felt.

It is unfortunate that the Australian Government, as far as I am concerned, is nowhere near finishing the job of planning our economy. The losses we are suffering are a by-product of unplanned economy. No-one denies that we have had unprecedented prosperity. Each one of us is equally guilty—the majority of us anyway—because we did not act like the squirrel and put something away for the future.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: And those who did look to the future will pay an extra 10 per cent tax.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: They can afford it.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The honourable member has his answer. However, I do not know what tax has to do with this motion. I have not strayed off the motion all night.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That is a matter of opinion.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: Is this not the real situation, and has it not been encouraged in the minds of the people? It is part of the Liberal Party philosophy and I am not denying that the Liberal

Party can have that philosophy or ideology. I agree with Mrs Vaughan that the word used to be "i-deology" whereas now it seems to be "id-eology".

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It depends on what school one went to.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: A feeling of well-being was generated in the boom days of the Brand-Court Government. It was good hot propaganda and we all basked in the sunshine. However, the screws are now being applied and we have motions presented to us such as this one which serve no useful purpose.

I would support a motion which set out the problem confronting the Australian people, and which set out what was required to be done. We should not be speaking only about the people in the rural sector, but of all the people because sooner or later this country will have to do what was done under the Curtin and Chifley Governments. Everyone will have to put his shoulder to the wheel and the people will have to act as one. There is no guarantee that we will come through unscathed.

When one observes the mounting unemployment overseas, one cannot believe that we will be untouched. No-one believes that by simply carrying a motion of this kind we will achieve some Canute-like attitude and say, "Inflation roll back". We would have as much success as did King Canute in his demands, and no section of the Australian community will get more out of the honey jar than it is entitled to.

There is a restructuring process in this country and it will continue under successive Governments. It is not easy to govern and a Minister on the other side of this Chamber would possibly agree with me, privately, that to be a Minister now is a far different role from what it was in the good old days.

The Hon. D. J. Wordsworth: Does the member think the Federal Government should be more careful in its spending?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: By removing the subsidies to the rural sector?

The Hon. D. K. DANS: The member has been answered. As a matter of responsibility, as a matter of dedication to the Australian people, and as persons who have been elected to the high position of members of this Chamber, we should at least be honest and throw this motion out on the basis that it serves no useful purpose whatsoever. The motion has not received much publicity. I was worried when I heard Mr Abbey say that it was generating hate and that there would be clashes. I would be horrified at such an incident, but it is possible it will occur in the very tight situation which will arise in years to come. A few years ago an organisation was formed called the argonauts and



surely we should do everything in our power to see that that situation is not repeated. As far as I am concerned motions such as the one now before us will cause further divisions between the sectors of the Australian people. For that very reason I could not support the motion and I hope members on this side of the House will vote in a responsible manner and throw it out.

#### *Point of Order*

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr President—

The PRESIDENT: The record that I keep indicates that the honourable member spoke on the motion on the 24th October.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I ask your indulgence to allow me to be heard a second time under Standing Order 76.

The PRESIDENT: Order please. Standing Order 76 says—

A Member who has spoken to a Question may again be heard to explain himself in regard to some material part of his speech which has been misquoted or misunderstood, but shall not introduce any new matter, or interrupt any Member in possession of the Chair, and no debatable matter shall be brought forward or debate arise upon such explanation.

Unless the honourable member wishes to explain something where he has been either misquoted or misunderstood, I cannot allow him to speak again.

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I ask to be heard a second time on the ground that I have been misquoted and misunderstood by the Hon. J. Heitman.

#### *President's Ruling*

The PRESIDENT: Order please. I cannot allow the honourable member to speak again. Mr Cooley, you may disagree with my ruling if you wish to.

#### *Dissent from President's Ruling*

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I move—

That the House dissent from the President's ruling.

I move this motion, Sir, on the ground that I have been misquoted and misunderstood by Mr Heitman when he was making his address.

The PRESIDENT: Will the honourable member put his objection in writing, in accordance with the Standing Order?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: I have submitted my reasons to the Clerk, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Order please. The Hon. D. W. Cooley has moved to disagree with my ruling. He has stated—

That the President's ruling be disagreed with based on the fact that the Hon. J. Heitman, in his address

to the Chamber, said I made a reference to hate in respect of people resident in rural areas. I submit in those circumstances I was either misquoted or misunderstood.

Is there a seconder to the motion?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I second the motion.

The PRESIDENT: Standing Orders provide that if any objection is taken to a ruling or decision made by the President, such objection shall be taken at once and in writing and the motion made, if seconded, shall be proposed to the Council, and debate thereon forthwith adjourned to the next day of sitting unless the matter requires immediate determination.

The Hon. N. McNEILL: I move—

That this matter requires immediate determination.

The PRESIDENT: Is there a seconder?

The Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I second the motion.

Motion (that the matter requires immediate determination) put and passed.

The PRESIDENT: Does the Hon. D. W. Cooley wish to address himself to the motion he has moved?

The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Yes, Mr President. I moved to dissent from your ruling because Standing Order 76 indicates clearly that any member who has been misquoted or misunderstood may be heard a second time to explain his position. I believe firmly that I was misquoted. I am rather sensitive about the remarks made by Mr Heitman, and I do not believe the comment he made was true. He misquoted me completely, and I feel in those circumstances that I ought to have an opportunity to speak a second time to explain to the House that I did not make those remarks about people residing in rural areas.

The PRESIDENT: Does any other member wish to address himself to the motion moved by the Hon. D. W. Cooley?

Before I put the motion, I explain merely that I do not think the request made by the honourable member is covered sufficiently by Standing Order 76. I feel that if requests of this nature are met, they will continually be made. When permission is sought to make explanations in the manner foreshadowed by Mr Cooley, I believe it is merely to give the member an opportunity to make another speech. I therefore put the question.

Motion (dissent from President's ruling) put and negatived.

#### *Debate Resumed*

THE HON. A. A. LEWIS (Lower Central) [9.53 p.m.]: As I was about to say, for a very weak motion it drew a great deal of comment from a number of speakers; some reasonably informed, some partly informed, and some completely misinformed.

The Hon. R. Thompson: As you were when you moved it.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: When I moved this motion I did not need to write to Canberra to obtain the answers. If the Leader of the Opposition will just wait a minute, I will deal with his speech as I feel I should deal with the speech of the Leader of the Opposition in this place. He said there was very little in my speech to comment on, but he took four pages of *Hansard* to comment on it. That either means that there was some substance to comment on, or that the Leader of the Opposition just felt like being verbose that night.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I was just pointing out where you were wrong all the time.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The Leader of the Opposition said I was wrong in my comments, but I would like to deal with the letter written to him by the Federal Minister for Primary Industry (Senator Wriedt) and which he quoted at great length. In the second paragraph of the letter senator Wriedt states—

Briefly stated, the Australian Government's policy recognises the great contribution made by the rural sector to the national economy both as a provider of food for our growing population and as a substantial earner of foreign exchange.

Later on Senator Wriedt said—

I note that Mr. Lewis also raised the question of rural credit and drew attention to the availability of rural credit in some other countries. I should say that while it is of interest to look at what other countries consider necessary in this direction, it is not always valid nor meaningful to make direct comparisons as the circumstances prevailing in Australia are often quite different.

If we try to balance this up by gaining foreign exchange, then surely we should not be dealing with countries that have the subsidies, and have the lower interest rates. We have to take into consideration that we are selling on foreign markets, and these other countries that we are selling against have, and have had for years, money and other subsidies. I do not believe that we should have many of the subsidies which other countries have, but any Federal Government should at least put us on an equal footing with other countries. I pointed this out when I introduced the motion.

I will continue with the story of what the Federal Government has done for the farmer. The Leader of the Opposition read from a long schedule of actions taken by the Federal Government. I will just quietly go through a few of the things he men-

tioned. If the Leader of the Opposition wishes me to go through all of them at this hour, I will do so.

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned the first advance to wheatgrowers. Now, is this a subsidy? It is a repayable guarantee, as I understand it, and the growers repay the lot.

The next item is the extension of the rural lending programme for the Development Bank—repayable again.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Did I say it was a subsidy?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The Leader of the Opposition said it was assistance given by the Commonwealth, as Senator Wriedt says here. However, I would like to point out to the House—

The Hon. R. Thompson: Don't you think the Australian Government should offer that assistance?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I believe it should, but the Leader of the Opposition seems to think, or Senator Wriedt seems to think that it is a subsidy. The speech of the Leader of the Opposition consisted mainly of what Senator Wriedt said.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: And your speech consisted of quotations from everything except the *Bible*.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am not as learned on that subject as the honourable member.

The Hon. R. Thompson: We know that.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The next point mentioned was the replenishment of farm development funds—another repayable item.

We then come to the commissioning of a green paper on rural policy. One wonders at times whether this has been of any value to the country, because it appears to me the Federal Government has taken little notice of the green paper. It has talked a great deal about it, but it has not taken much action. While we talk about something and set up commissions, something should be done to alleviate the plight of those in the rural areas. I agree with Mr. Dans that we are talking about the whole of Australia. I do not believe in dividing the city from the country, because city people, and the men in trade unions who work both in cities and major towns represent the best market for rural products.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: You are making a fairly good job of dividing the cities and the country centres.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If the Hon. Grace Vaughan had read my opening remarks when introducing this motion, she would have seen that I made some comment on how to put the rural industries back on their feet. I suggested that we should give employment to workers in country towns and in the cities. I believe the whole problem facing this

country stems from the lack of confidence shown by those in the rural sector in the present Federal Government. If that were done it would have an effect on people living in every city, every rural town, and every hamlet.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: Do you think a motion such as this will inspire confidence in the Federal Government?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: At this stage I was replying to what the Hon. Grace Vaughan said. Mr Cooley has made an interjection. What does he want to know?

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: How long you will be.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: About another two hours.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: That is good.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think I will leave and have a cup of coffee.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Let us look again at the price support for apples and pears exported to Europe during 1973-74. Members opposite want to know what the State Government did. It did exactly the same as the Federal Government; it supported that scheme with an equal amount of money. I now refer to the Australian dairy adjustment programme. Again the money advanced under that scheme was repaid. I refer also to the establishment of an animal health laboratory, interestingly enough, at a place called Geelong. I wonder if this is a growth centre. Mr Bill Morrison, the Minister in charge of the CSIRO, when opening this new animal health laboratory said—

The Labor Government is not prepared to leave the security of the multi-million dollar livestock industry to chance.

In the speech that he made at the opening of that establishment, he went on to say, "The Labor Party has set out deliberately to assist the rural industries by obtaining markets for Australian primary products, taking off production restrictions and, as in the case of the Animal Health Laboratory, investing in the security of rural industries."

We have heard several people say that it is a real task to get out and find markets, but on the other hand, Mr Morrison has said that the Federal Government has found markets. I wonder where it has found them, and in what manner. It seems that the Labor Party is in a bigger mess with the rural industry than it is with the rest of the industries in Australia. One wonders into whose back the knife is going.

Mention was then made by the Leader of the Opposition of the price support programme by the Australian Wool Corporation. Who eventually pays for this if it is not the wool grower? Reference is also made about the loans that

are made to farmers or the assistance that is given to back various programmes, but no real initiative has been shown. Members will recall when I first spoke that I did not say that the present Federal Government was the only one that was to blame. I laid the blame fairly and squarely on successive Federal Governments because I think that successive Federal Governments should accept a fair amount of blame.

Nevertheless the present Federal Government does not realise that by reducing incentive to rural producers it is crippling, and is still crippling, a great deal of the work force in this country. If members opposite do not believe that this is so then I worry greatly for our nation because, like Mr Dans, I do not want to be a prophet of doom.

I believe that if this trend continues, and the Federal Government continues to foster the trend, real problems are yet to come.

With some sort of order we may have a look at the rest of what Mr Wreidt had to say. He was really in doubt about what I mentioned, because he contradicted himself several times. Probably the matter was over his head. However, to save the House some worry I will move on to Mr Cooley's remarks. Apart from carrying on again about the half-drunken sons of well-to-do farmers, he spoke of the pressures on a man working eight hours a day at a bench and bringing home a pay packet of \$69. Let me assure Mr Cooley that there are many farmers in this State and in this country who are working more than eight hours a day and who are not bringing home \$69 a week. There will be literally thousands of them this year who will not bring home half that amount.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You say that, but you cannot support it with any documentary evidence.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If Mr Cooley would care to visit the various farms with me so that he may interview these farmers I am sure that they will be only too willing to show him their books. I am not in a position to conduct a survey, but I can assure the honourable member there are many farmers in this country today who will be battling by February or March, 1975, to have enough money with which to buy their commodities. Rural credit is so tight that reasonably successful farmers will have to walk off their farms to get a job somewhere else to provide food and basic commodities for their families. This is an aspect which members of the Opposition have not yet looked at.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: They just cannot understand.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: They have made no genuine attempt to understand.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: These are the people the Australian Government is trying to help, but you will not help them.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I might ask the honourable Grace Vaughan who will be giving this assistance?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: The Industries Assistance Commission.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is the most ignorant remark I have ever heard in my life. Has the Industries Assistance Commission ever come forward with any rural credit in the way it should be given?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: The Federal Government helps the rural industries through the Industries Assistance Commission.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am sorry the Hon. Grace Vaughan will not read even though she does not like *The West Australian* newspaper. I have been slated for saying certain things about the Prime Minister. I quoted a few of the remarks that he made yesterday.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: You made a statement without any backing in any shape or form. It was a disgraceful statement.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: If Mr Cooley will keep quiet I will do just that. He has asked me to do it and I will do it. If Mr Cooley keeps cool and does not get upset I will deal with him later, too.

The Hon. D. W. Cooley: It was a disgraceful statement, especially when you called him an idiot.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Did the honourable member call him an idiotic maniac or a maniacal idiot?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Only in this morning's issue of *The West Australian* is published an article in which appears the following statement—

The Industries Assistance Commission has been asked to examine ways of providing aid to reduce fluctuations in farmers incomes.

It has also been asked to support rural industries. I suppose members opposite will agree that this is what the Prime Minister said, because I would hate *The West Australian* to get into bad favour with those members again.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: We have a terrific influence with *The West Australian*!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The report went on to state—

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, announced the decision yesterday when he tabled the IAC's first annual report in Parliament.

The report recommended the inquiry.

The National Rural Advisory Committee asked the Government to urgently consider measures to stabilise after-tax farm incomes and the green paper on rural policy, released in

June, pointed out that instability resulted in a misallocation and under-use of agricultural resources.

That is a report of an announcement that was made in the Federal Parliament yesterday. Then, on looking at page 3 of this morning's issue of *The West Australian* there is another report of farmers being told by the Prime Minister that the worst is over. I do not think that members of the Opposition would want to argue with the statement made by their Prime Minister, would they? Part of the report on page 3 contains the following—

Mr Whitlam said that the concessions and subsidies were not really helping farmers.

They are certainly not helping farmers now, because there are none. The report continues—

They helped a few wealthy farmers and now had been replaced with more valuable benefits.

Mr Whitlam offered no apology for the Government's rural policies in what was seen as a major speech to win back the rural community.

The concluding part of this article reads—

He said he stood on the Government's record when he told them: "No government has done more for the farmers than mine."

Here we have the Prime Minister of Australia on the one hand telling a group of farmers that the worst is over and that he stands on the Government's record and yet, on the other hand, speaks of the Industries Assistance Commission looking at ways to help farmers. Both these statements were made on the same day. If that is not the attitude of somebody—to say the least—making rather unstable comments about the rural community, I would be extremely surprised. I am sorry that the honourable member who asked me about this has had to leave the Chamber.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: He was called away to answer the telephone.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It does not seem to matter if I am called away to the telephone; there are always some statements made about my actions in the House.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Who said that?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I think the honourable member is aware of some of the statements that are made when I absent myself from the Chamber.

Let me move on to another theme. I am dealing with Mr Cooley's remarks in sequence. He stated that I was told to move this motion.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I bet you weren't.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: A few members on this side of the House probably gained their greatest giggle from that remark—that I was told to move the motion. It

sounds like the ALP whose leader has told all his members to jump up and speak although they do not know anything about the subject. A couple had the good sense not to speak. The total ignorance shown by most of the speakers on the other side was evident right through their speeches.

I did not really take exception to the remark. I am not thin-skinned and I did not ask for withdrawals and all that type of thing. I assure members opposite that it is far from the truth that I was told to move the motion. When I want to make a statement or move a motion, I will do so. I would hope to have the backing of my colleagues, but if I did not have it I would still take the action I thought necessary. I am my own man and I am not motivated by peculiar guidance from up top.

Mr Cooley went on to speak about the \$54.5 million for land. He did not say what kind of land, but those of us who have been around know what sort of land it is—it is the same as that involved in the Salvado fiasco last year. It was to provide land developed by the Government under the terms established by the Australian Government and with no thought about any rights of any individuals. That was the \$54.5 million.

Mr Cooley also stated that his heart bled for the people—he said it twice—whose education concession was cut from \$400 to \$150. I remember reading a little time ago a letter from a person at Exmouth who claimed to be a tradesman. He wrote to *The West Australian* indicating that the rich would not be affected, but the tradesman would be affected greatly. I thought Mr Cooley and others opposite were meant to be on the side of the tradesmen and others, but obviously I was wrong.

Mr Cooley referred to people with huge properties sending their children to select schools. He spoke as though those select schools—the Roman Catholic convents and what-have-you—are places of ridicule instead of places—and to all Governments very handy places—to take a number of students for the great good of education in this community. It was rather saddening to hear a man of Mr Cooley's undoubted experience be so rude about people who try their utmost to give their children an education and damn them as huge landowners and what-have-you because they send their children to a select school. It sorrows me too much to continue on that subject.

Mr Claughton referred to farmers as being welfare recipients. That is one remark which would please farmers no end—that they were welfare recipients! Actually many will be before very long. They will be drawing unemployment benefits because they will not have enough money from their farms or the rural credit sources

of this country to feed and clothe their families, but this just does not get through to members opposite.

Some farmers may have a big house which has been in the family for several generations, but with a series of bad seasons or bad luck—not necessarily bad farming—they just cannot obtain rural credit today, and many good farmers will have to go onto unemployment benefits or off the farms to seek jobs. If they go off the farms to seek jobs, will they be successful and if so, who will they be putting out of jobs? This is the snow-balling effect of the Federal Government's attitude to rural communities. It will hurt everyone, as Mr Dans has said, and it will hit everyone right throughout the community.

The Hon. V. J. Perry: That does not worry Mr Cooley.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Claughton went on about tariff cuts. I am all for tariff cuts selected intelligently, but to make a tariff cut straight across the board without any reference to anything, just because the Federal Government decided it wanted to make them as a gimmick policy, is certainly detrimental. We have seen the result and I hope that by now the Federal Government has woken up to the fact that the tariff cuts and the way they were imposed has done no good to this nation, to the workers, or to the farming community.

He also mentioned the AIDC and co-operatives, but what he obviously did not realise because of his terrific lack of knowledge of the subject, is that in no way at all does the AIDC help many small businesses. It may help the odd co-operative, but it does not really help the small businessman. I suppose that to the Opposition he does not matter very much. He did not receive a mention. Members opposite referred only to the workers living in rural areas; but they will be without jobs if the present trend continues, because no one—no farmer or country businessman—will be able to employ them.

Production will fall and then I suppose that everyone in the ALP will be happy because if production falls, prices will soar. More people will be out of work and prices will increase at a flat-out rate. They are increasing at a high enough rate as it is because of the Federal Government's policies and its total lack of understanding of anything financial. It seems that with anything it touches, rural or city, it helps to compound the inflationary situation.

Among other things, Mr Dellar said that in his Budget papers the Premier did not make one mention of the downturn in agriculture and he wanted to know why. I seem to hear the cry from the other side of the House that the Federal Government is not for Charlie Court.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Sir Charles Court.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is the first time the honourable member has referred to him as "Sir".

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I always do.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I refer to him as chattering Charlie.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It has been stated in the past that he is always referring to the matter and this time he is criticised for not having referred to it. Do members opposite want two bob each way? I think they do.

I think that all I should say about Mr Leeson's speech is that it was very entertaining. He tried to oppose the motion but in doing so he seemed to support it in view of many of the comments he made and therefore I think the less said about his speech the better.

Mrs Grace Vaughan! It is wearying, isn't it? She tells us the cities need help. I agree that they do, probably to obtain some better members. She states that the farmers may try to gain an advantage. I do not think they are trying to gain an advantage. I do not think that they are bellyaching about their conditions.

Farmers are not trying to gain an advantage. Over the years they have contributed greatly to the cities by providing foreign exchange and the wherewithal to improve the cities. It is obvious that Mrs Vaughan's total lack of knowledge of the country scene has led her to say that the farmers are always bellyaching and trying to gain an advantage. The advantage they are trying to gain is for the whole of Australia, not for their own personal gain. Mrs. Vaughan would do well to travel around the country and talk to the people instead of at them. She should listen to what they have to say and inwardly digest it. It is obvious she has no idea of the conditions in the country either now or last year. I am sure that country people would not welcome her back with open arms, not according to the comments I have heard in the country, about certain things that were promised to rural communities by the great Australian Government, but which did not come off.

Funnily enough, people in rural areas are reasonably honourable, especially about money, and Mrs Vaughan would do well to go for a trip and talk to the people, to find out their financial situation, instead of criticising them for bellyaching.

Let me move on to Mr Dans' speech—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: This will be good.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I would like to comment on only a few of his remarks. In his usual way, Mr Dans blustered through and said that there are good farmers and bad farmers and some might have to be or should be put off the land.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I was trying to act my speech like you do.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I should hope he would also agree that there are good workers and bad workers and that some of them should not be employed.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I referred to all people.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The honourable member said that some farmers should be thrown off their farms but he does not believe that some workers should be thrown out of their jobs.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did not say that I believe that some farmers should be thrown off their farms. You misquote people too often.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: He then talked about the hip pocket nerve, which seems to fascinate him quite often.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I did not refer only to farmers on that, either.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is true. He referred to the hip pocket nerve of farmers and the bloke on the wharf, and then he mentioned that the capitalist system was running out of puff.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: In the economic sense.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is right. The farmers are running out of puff because they have been forced to run far too fast and there has been no help or shelter for them in their time of need. People do not run out of puff if they have a little help and shelter. He made another comment about people being put off at 50, and I feel very sorry for insurance companies.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There are hundreds of them.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: That is right; hundreds have been put off, and hundreds more will be put off at 50 if the Federal Government does not jump off its backside and do something.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Tell me how we will sell the produce? I am waiting for you to tell me that. I am prepared to eat all I can.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Many times in public, and several times in this House, I have mentioned that a normal marketing system would sell our produce. I do not blame only the Federal Government for that. I blame successive State and Federal Governments for their lack of initiative and knowledge of marketing and for not going out to sell a product as any other business would.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Would you explain what a normal marketing programme is?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Yes, if the Leader of the Opposition would like me to spend half an hour explaining it.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: First of all define the word "normal". That is an exercise in itself.

The Hon. R. Thompson: He would not know what the word "normal" meant.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I have not as yet abused people in this House. I would like to quote some figures. I have been accused of generalising. I will quote the Manager of Elders-GM. The figures relate to the Bridgetown market. I hope I have defined it well enough for members opposite. On the 15th January this year heavyweight steers brought between \$120 and \$145; on the 23rd October this year they brought between \$71 and \$100. On the 15th January lightweight steers brought \$90 to \$115 and they are now down to \$58 to \$79. On the 15th January heifer beef brought between \$70 and \$90, and on the 23rd October between \$43 and \$60.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: What has caused those prices to drop?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will just give the figures for heavyweight cows.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Why?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Because I think the honourable member needs them.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think you are an objectionable character at times.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: In January heavyweight cows brought between \$175 and \$195, and on the 23rd October between \$80 and \$90. At this time last year they were bringing about \$250.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: Tell us why the price has dropped. We all know what you are telling us.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell us why the prices have dropped and how we can put them up again. We are only too eager to help.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Dans is first in the queue. A lightweight steer dressing out at about 300 lb. has dropped from between \$90 and \$115 down to between \$58 and \$79. That gives an idea of what the market is doing. It shows that despite all the talk from the other side about inflation, falling prices are hitting the farmer more than inflation is. I grant that some wheatgrowers may do well this year despite the fact that the Government would not guarantee the money for second advances.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: What have the prices for beef got to do with this motion?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I would think they have a great deal to do with it if we are to have any sort of stabilisation, about which the Prime Minister talks. As late as yesterday he said, "The worst is over." Surely the honourable member does not think this is stabilisation. The Government should move swiftly to do something about it.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Tell us what it can do.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I will enter into a discussion on marketing in a moment. Mr Dans interjected a while ago and I have forgotten what he said.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I want you to tell me where you are going to sell the produce. It is important. If you have this knowledge up your sleeve you are not doing a service to your people in the country if you do not tell us what is a normal marketing situation.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Dans has asked me whether I can sell this product. What I call a normal marketing situation is when a marketing firm goes out, surveys the markets, estimates the consumption, and then refers the information back to the producers in this country. I believe it is a long-term affair and—

The Hon. D. K. Dans: I think we should sack the Australian Meat Board forthwith.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: "No Government has done more for the farmers than mine", says Mr Whitlam. He has been in office for nearly two years now. It shows an utter lack of confidence in Mr Whitlam when the whole of the Opposition has to speak about the previous 23 years and shout it from the rooftops.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: There is morality in debate, and honesty, too.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: If the Australian Government advises you not to grow beef you would say it is a socialist decision.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: And when has it done that?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: It has established an overseas marketing service.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: When did that take place?

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: It did not take very long considering there was not one previously.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: When we have a look at the marketing of Australian products since it was introduced, has the situation been any better than the situation which prevailed previously? The abysmal lack of knowledge of the honourable member worries me. I will not weary the House—

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: You have done that already.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: It is very interesting. Keep going.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: There has been much talk from the Opposition about the constructive measures which need to be

taken. Not having heard any from members of the Opposition, I will advise the House of some constructive measures which I think could be taken.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: How modest!

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: It is one of my virtues.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It is a pity you did not do so previously.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: Mr Dellar did not worry about Exmouth when he was considering wiping out the school concessional allowance.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What are you talking about?

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I am referring to something I said about Exmouth earlier.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I am sorry I was not here. Get your facts right.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: I shall.

The Hon. D. K. Dans: The rural sector is carrying a heavy load.

The Hon. A. A. LEWIS: The suggestions I make are—

- (1) That the Federal Government make a clear and unequivocal statement defining the place agriculture occupies now and will occupy in the future in the society planned by the Australian Labor Party.

I do not think that would be difficult but the Prime Minister has not as yet made a statement to that effect. My other suggestions are—

- (2) That the Prime Minister make a clear statement accepting or rejecting the responsibility of Australia, as a nation which is a potential major supplier of food and fibre, towards the rest of the world which is already undernourished and in which a major population expansion is taking place.
- (3) That finance be made available, as in the past with wheat, to enable countries which normally cannot buy our products to enter our markets and clear surpluses.
- (4) That a sincere effort be made at ministerial level to portray the primary producer in his proper perspective in relation to the Australian economy and to recognise the achievements of the Australian farmer.
- (5) That incentives be returned to farmers, rural businessmen, city businessmen, and manufacturers so that this country may continue to lead the world in the cheapness and diversity of its agricultural products and push forward

under any type of Government, realising that the rural communities are the backbone of the country.

There have been no arguments about that up to now. Members on this side of the House have explained to members of the Opposition why the rural producer is the backbone of this country, and I hope they will pass on to their Prime Minister some of the fairly intelligent suggestions which have been made on this side of the House so that he will not again get himself into a mess as he did yesterday by saying, "The worst is over", and then setting up a commission to see what can be done about it.

Before I conclude I wish to say that what has worried me more than anything else in this debate was an interjection which came across the House when we were talking about being like the squirrel which put a couple of acorns away for the future. The interjection was, "Because they can afford it, anyway." That really worried me because at the present moment the farming community cannot afford it. Because of direct Government policy members of the farming community do not have the opportunity to borrow, and one doubts whether at the moment they would borrow with the completely uncertain climate in business and industry in this country. No clear statements have been made about where we are going. There has been no decision, and I appeal to members on the other side of the House to realise there has been no leadership in the field of agriculture and rural affairs in this country for a little less than two years. It is a shame when people in this great country lose jobs because one sector of the community appears not to have the blessing of the Australian Labor Party.

We want action very quickly because, as I said in my opening remarks, I fear for the future of rural towns unless the Government acts, and acts quickly. We cannot afford the time to wait for another commission to bring in its report. In the Cabinet of this great country there must be enough men who can make decisions quickly so that thousands of people may retain their jobs and the farming community may get on with the job it has done since the country was founded; that is, produce agricultural products at a price which the world can afford.

#### *President's Ruling*

The PRESIDENT: Honourable members, before I put the question I would like to return for a moment to the early part of the debate when the Hon. D. W. Cooley rose to address himself to the House in accordance with Standing Order 76. Upon reflection, I feel I have misconstrued the substance of the Standing Order, and I would like to give Mr Cooley the opportunity to address himself to the House in accordance with that Standing Order.



The Hon. D. W. COOLEY: Mr President, I appreciate very much the opportunity you have afforded me to speak in accordance with this Standing Order. I assure the House I will not delay it for long. As I understood Mr Heitman's address, he made some reference to my speech to the House on the motion and said that I have some form of hatred towards people; at least he used the word "hate".

I make it very clear to this House that while I have been involved during my life with a large number of people and often in very intense situations, and while I might dislike the policies I have fought against, just as I might dislike many of the policies of members opposite, it has never been in my nature or in my mind to hate anybody. I have the utmost respect for most of the people with whom I have dealings, and even though they may not respect me at times I cannot bring myself to hate them. I would like to make that position clear and state that whatever I say in this House is not born of hatred.

#### Debate Resumed

Question put and a division taken with the following result—

##### Ayes—19

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. M. McAleer
Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. G. W. Berry	Hon. I. G. Medcalf
Hon. H. W. Gayfer	Hon. I. G. Pratt
Hon. Clive Griffiths	Hon. J. C. Tozer
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. R. J. L. Williams
Hon. T. Knight	Hon. W. R. Withers
Hon. A. A. Lewis	Hon. D. J. Wordsworth
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. V. J. Ferry
Hon. G. E. Masters	(Teller)

##### Noes—9

Hon. R. P. Claughton	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. D. W. Cooley	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. S. J. Dellar	Hon. Grace Vaughan
Hon. Lyla Elliott	Hon. D. K. Dans
Hon. R. T. Leeson	(Teller)

Question thus passed.

#### HOUSING AGREEMENT (COMMONWEALTH AND STATE) ACT AMENDMENT BILL

##### Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by the Hon. N. McNeill (Minister for Justice), read a first time.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

THE HON. N. McNEILL (Lower West—Minister for Justice) [10.50 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.51 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 30th October, 1974

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

#### QUESTIONS (31): ON NOTICE

##### 1. HIGH SCHOOL

##### Thebarton and Angle Park Designs

Mr A. R. TONKIN, to the Minister representing the Minister for Education:

Will the Minister arrange for a high school to be designed that will incorporate some of the features of the Thebarton and Angle Park designs?

Mr MENSAROS replied:

The concept of the Thebarton and Angle Park designs has been considered.

The Schools' Commission announced on 4th October, 1974, the formation of the community-school relations study group to assist in this area. Among the terms of reference is the statement "the implications for design, location and utilisation of school facilities in extending learning opportunities to all citizens".

It is considered desirable to await the investigations of this group before making a definite commitment.

##### 2. FOODS

##### Synthetic and Vegetable Protein Additives

Mr GREWAR, to the Minister for Consumer Affairs:

- (1) Are "synthetic" or vegetable protein materials being added to animal meats as fillers in any prepared human foods, e.g., pies, hamburgers, sausage rolls, tinned meats, etc.?
- (2) Could he list products and amount of synthetic or vegetable protein in each?

Mr GRAYDEN replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) These products could run into many thousands and therefore where foods do not conform to the prescribed food and drug regulations, the listing of ingredients and other labelling requirements are mandatory as prescribed under regulation A12 for foods not elsewhere standardised.