

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: When would they have been paid?

Mr. McPHARLIN: At the beginning of the school year, 1971.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: Does the member for Mt. Marshall remember the Government promising to build two bridges over the Swan River within two years?

Mr. McPHARLIN: That is a ridiculous statement.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McPHARLIN: People sent their children away to school thinking that the extra money would be paid.

Mr. J. T. Tonkin: That was a promise too.

Mr. McPHARLIN: The Minister indicated yesterday, in answer to a question I asked, that the allowance would be paid in 1972, but the people I am referring to will not believe that statement. That is the situation. People are commenting that the Premier has broken a promise, and that he will do it again.

I will now refer to the upgrading of the Mukinbudin School. On the 5th March I wrote a letter to the Premier concerning an adjustment to a school scholarship. The Minister made the adjustment and the scholarship was returned to the child. For that action the people concerned are very grateful, and I also express my appreciation. However, in a letter to me on the 24th March the Premier said that it had definitely been established that the Mukinbudin School would be upgraded in 1972 to junior high school status.

The upgrading was the result of a survey carried out when I accompanied three officers from the Education Department to the area to find out the needs regarding education. The north-eastern section of my area has no junior high school at all, and this fact was submitted to the Education Department. One recommendation submitted was that the Mukinbudin School should be given the green light to become a junior high school. When the Minister replied to the submission I naturally referred his comments to the parents and citizens' association and the shire council. I said how pleased I was and I knew how pleased those organisations would be to get that information.

The shire council wrote back to me asking if I could get more information so that the shire could envisage what would be necessary in the way of housing and so on for the staff. On the 9th June I received a letter from the Minister for Education stating that it was considered advisable to defer upgrading the school for another year. When I passed on the information that the school would be upgraded the parents were elated, but one

can imagine the reaction of those people when I had to inform them that the upgrading would be deferred for another year.

First of all there was the non-payment of the living-away-from-home allowance, and then the upgrading of the school was deferred. I can assure the Minister that the people concerned are not very happy about the situation. Perhaps the Minister will be able to give us the reasons in more detail. However, that is the sort of thing being done, and the people are not very happy at all.

There are a number of other matters I would like to mention, but there will be other opportunities to do so during the session. No doubt some members are anxious to get away, so I will conclude on that note.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Fletcher.

House adjourned at 5.40 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 27th July, 1971

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (6): ON NOTICE

1. EDUCATION

Meekatharra State School

The Hon. G. W. BERRY, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) Have tenders been called for additions to the Meekatharra State School?
- (2) If not, when is it anticipated they will be?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) About the middle of August.

2. PEACH CANNING INDUSTRY

Establishment

The Hon. V. J. FERRY, to the Leader of the House:

Will he confer with the Minister for Agriculture in regard to an article published in the "*Manjimup-Warren Times*" on the 26th August, 1970, in which he is quoted as having expressed certain opinions on the peach canning industry, and please obtain his present views in regard to implementing suggestions made by him on—

- (a) special loans or grants to growers with deferment of interest for a period of four or five years; and

- (b) the appointment of an agriculture co-ordinator to liaise with growers, the Agriculture Department, nurseries and a processing firm to be established at Manjimup?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (a) Mr. H. D. Evans (as Member for Warren) raised this matter in August last year when S.P.C. were known to be in serious financial difficulties but before they withdrew from the Manjimup venture. As the honourable member is aware the industry was not informed until October 1970 that S.P.C. would be unable to proceed with the Manjimup proposal.

The aim of the Member's suggestions on grower finance at that time, which were put to the Minister for Agriculture for examination, was to assist cannery economies to ensure the continued support by S.P.C., by providing for a quick build-up of production. The present cannery proposal is different in essence and calls for a different approach: it is a holding operation to maintain existing plantings although it is hoped arrangements for sales on the local market will allow for controlled expansion. The Government is guaranteeing a loan of \$180,000.

- (b) Since the emphasis is not now on rapid expansion the needs of growers in regard to advice have changed. Arrangements have been made, however, for liaison between the cannery and the Departments of Industrial Development and Agriculture.

- (5) Have many previous complaints been made regarding the operation of this quarry?
- (6) Are the quarrying operations considered as being satisfactory and not detrimental to the neighbouring community?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- (1) 3,366 lbs. ANFO, 500 lbs. conventional explosive. Total 3,866 lbs.
- (2) In No. 4 Bench on the southern side of the quarry.
- (3) Prevailing climatic conditions on that day combined with local topography accentuated the noise of the explosion.
- (4) No maximum.
- (5) Complaints have been received from five sources over the past six years. These complaints were investigated but operations at the quarry have been found satisfactory.
- (6) Yes.

4.

TRAFFIC

Congestion at Subiaco Subway

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON, to the Leader of the House:

Is any action planned to alleviate the traffic congestion occurring at the subway in Hay Street, Subiaco, during morning peak periods?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

Not in the immediate future. Long range planning provides for ultimate reconstruction and widening of the subway and approach roads. However, very high expenditure, including costly land resumption, is involved so the project does not have a high priority at present.

3.

QUARRYING

Explosive Used in Herne Hill Area

The Hon. F. R. WHITE, to the Leader of the House:

- (1) What size explosive charge was used on the afternoon of Thursday, the 15th July, 1971, by Pioneer Quarries at their Herne Hill quarry?
- (2) In which section of the quarry was the explosive used?
- (3) What explanation can be given to alleviate the concern expressed by the complainants contacting the Local Authority and others regarding this detonation?
- (4) What is the maximum permissible charge allowed for each firing?

5.

DROUGHT

Financial Assistance to Pastoralists

The Hon. G. W. BERRY, to the Leader of the House:

In view of the serious financial situation in the drought-stricken pastoral areas of Lower North Province, will the Government supply assistance until Federal finance becomes available?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

No official advice has been received from the Commonwealth that assistance will be made available to the wool industry, nor of the precise nature of any planned assistance.

Financing of a pastoral business is basically a responsibility of the pastoralist and his financiers. It is their joint responsibility to provide funds until the impact of any Commonwealth assistance can be assessed. The possibility of emergency State assistance is however being examined for special cases where, due to unusual circumstances carry on finance is not now available but the pastoralist with Commonwealth assistance seems to have prospects of continuing in the industry.

6. TRAFFIC

Accidents: Midland Crosswalk

The Hon. F. R. WHITE, to the Minister for Police:

Further to the reply to part (3) of my question on the 22nd July, 1971, relating to accidents on a Midland crosswalk, would the Minister advise—

- (a) the date of the two previous accidents; and
- (b) the number of accidents at this intersection, during the past two years, which were not of a similar nature but which caused bodily injury to a student?

The Hon. J. DOLAN replied:

- (a) (i) June 13th, 1966, and
(ii) February 12th, 1971.
- (b) No other accidents involving bodily injury have been reported.

FAUNA CONSERVATION ACT

Disallowance of Regulations 6 to 9: Motion

Debate resumed, from the 20th July, on the following motion by The Hon. G. W. Berry:—

That regulations 6, 7, 8 and 9 made pursuant to the Fauna Conservation Act, 1950-1969, as published in the *Government Gazette* on Wednesday, the 18th November, 1970, and laid upon the Table of the House on Thursday, the 19th November, 1970, be, and are hereby disallowed.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [4.44 p.m.]: During the adjournment of the debate on the motion moved by The Hon. G. W. Berry to disallow regulations numbers 6, 7, 8, and 9, promulgated under the Fauna Conservation Act, I have been enabled to confer with my colleague, The Hon. Ronald Davies, who administers the Act.

The regulations which I have mentioned hinge on sections 17 and 17A of the Fauna Conservation Act, which provide that no person shall take fauna for the purposes of sale and that a person shall not process fauna for the purposes of sale unless he is the holder of a current license. Section 28 of the Act provides the power to prescribe in the regulations the required licenses.

On reference to the Act, members will appreciate that the Department of Fisheries and Fauna has been required by Parliament—and has a responsibility—to prescribe regulations to control the exploitation of red kangaroos for commercial purposes. The regulations were introduced because the department recognised the need to have a group of professional shooters who would undertake the very necessary task of cropping the red kangaroo population year by year. This provides at the same time the basic source of supply for the pet food and kangaroo skin industries.

In the years prior to the introduction of the regulations, a group of hard core professional shooters had been developed and this group was augmented by a large number of weekend and casual shooters. As a consequence, the potential for increase in shooting pressure was large and pastoralists were concerned about the increase in the number of irresponsible part-time shooters.

It is fair to say, I believe, that the pastoralists were in agreement with the need to eliminate many of the late entrants into the kangaroo industry and to protect the responsible shooter of some years standing. I understand that the pastoralists would still prefer to have the professional shooter as the prime operator in the business of shooting kangaroos, as he is both efficient and responsible.

The department held the view that the professional shooter was the central figure in the kangaroo control programme. The regulations, the disallowance of which is now sought, were introduced to permit kangaroos to be taken, sold, transported and processed as a logical sequence of events.

The regulations also allowed conditions to be endorsed on the license, which provided for a control on the activities of each professional shooter. In addition, the regulations required each professional shooter dealer, and processor to maintain statistical records and furnish these to the department. This information is required by the department so that the programme may be reviewed from time to time and changed in the light of these reviews.

I suggest, Mr. President, that there is probably little in the foregoing to which anyone would object. It would appear that the real problem in the minds of the pastoralists and in the mind of The Hon. G. W. Berry is the implementation of these

regulations, taking into account the needs of the pastoralists and the concern shown by the community as a whole.

In relation to the opposing views, perhaps certain quotes are appropriate. The first is an extract from *Australian Conservation Foundation Viewpoint Series No. 1—Conservation of Kangaroos*. It reads as follows:—

Kangaroos are the largest native animals in Australia, and as they are herbivorous and occur for the most part on grazing land, they are the centre of a more or less continuous controversy. Of all wild life conservation problems, that posed by the kangaroos is the most obviously and urgently in need of solution.

There are several conflicting points of view on the place that kangaroos should take in the country's economy. Graziers, who see them as direct and serious competitors of their stock, feel that they should be destroyed as pests; others feel that as unique animals, and one of the most characteristic features of Australia, they should be protected from all deliberate destruction. An export industry in kangaroo meat and hides has developed, and some feel that this should be encouraged. Other groups abhor the slaughter of native fauna for any purpose.

Between those who want to see kangaroos killed off as pests and those who would not have them killed at all, there can be no satisfactory compromise. However, between landholders who want the numbers pruned down when they are over abundant and the ordinary citizen who likes to see kangaroos with reasonable frequency when travelling through the country, a practicable compromise is possible. It must be based on the recognition that kangaroos constitute a natural resource which should be managed to ensure its perpetuation and the provision of a continuing harvest, with main reliance being placed on professional shooters to collect the commercial crop and to provide the degree of local control required.

Further, Professor A. R. Main in *Native Animal Resources* said—

In arid Australia harvest of kangaroos for meat on a sustained yield basis appears to be unlikely. Harvest on an itinerant hunting basis is possible.

Hunting is likely to cause excessive mortality and population reduction when a high proportion of the stock is accessible, as at watering points during drought or in well fenced areas with many tracks. Under such conditions, the hunting induced mortality is incompatible with conservation of the kangaroo stocks.

I should mention that because of the Australia-wide concern felt for the kangaroo population of Australia, the Commonwealth Parliament appointed a House of Representatives Select Committee on Wildlife Conservation, with one of its terms of reference being a study of the kangaroo industry.

In this State the Department of Fisheries and Fauna, acknowledging the needs of the pastoralists and of the kangaroo industry, and also the concern of the community, introduced a red kangaroo management programme within the framework of regulations 6, 7, 8, and 9, based upon two major decisions. The first of these was that the number of shooters should be limited, and the second that the number of kangaroos which each shooter could take should also be limited. The main features of the programme may be summarised as follows:—

- (a) Forty-six shooters, with a take of 4,000 animals each, to be allowed. The names of each of these 46 shooters was submitted to the Pastoralists and Graziers Association for acceptance. These represent an allocation of 184,000 tags.
- (b) Seven shooters with a limited take varying from 500 to 2,000 animals per year were selected from pastoralists who have been substantially involved in the kangaroo industry as commercial shooters. These represent an allocation of 10,000 tags.
- (c) Four shooters, with a limited take of 1,500 or 2,000 animals per year, represent an allocation of 7,500 tags and account for the shooters who are pet shop proprietors who have relied on their own shooting for their supplies.

The total number of kangaroos allowed to be shot under this system during the first 12 months of the scheme, which commenced in February, 1971, was approximately 200,000 plus an indefinite number to be issued to pastoralists with special problems which could not be accommodated by the professional shooters, in a particular location at a certain time.

The number of red kangaroos sold each year since 1967 is as follows:—

1967—	173,000
1968—	174,000
1969—	344,000
1970—	262,000

When reviewing these figures it is apparent that the year 1969 is important in assessing the potential of the impact of shooting operations on the kangaroo population. It has been pointed out that biologists, both those in the Department of Fisheries and Fauna and those responsible to the Agriculture Protection Board, held the view that the kangaroo

population would not withstand a shooting pressure generated in that year when over 300,000 animals were sold. This view was supported by Professor A. R. Main of the University of Western Australia, who is acknowledged as a leading authority on marsupial population studies.

I am advised that the safe biological take is probably of the order of 150,000 animals per year. The present programme has allowed for a number in excess of 200,000 animals to be taken in the first year, and this figure is to be reviewed annually. The number of 48 shooters allowed to take a full complement of 4,000 head in the first year will also be reviewed at the end of the first year's operations.

One of the criticisms levelled at the scheme to date is that there are some shooters operating in areas where kangaroos are scarce, and not enough shooters operating in areas such as the Gascoyne, where kangaroos feed in large numbers. This is a fair comment and one of the difficulties still to be overcome completely. I am advised that shooters are being directed into the areas of greater kangaroo density.

It is of passing interest, I suggest, to mention that the Sydney newspaper, the *Sunday Australian*, in its issue of the 11th July of this year records some favourable comment on the system operating in this State by the Federal Parliamentary Enquiry Committee under a heading on page 3 which reads:—"W.A. Leaps Ahead in 'Roo Control'". The tenor of the article is praise for the control system now operating in this State.

It is worthy of mention also that both the Agriculture Protection Board and the Western Australian Wildlife Authority, which have kangaroo subcommittees, enjoy pastoralist representation. I mentioned earlier that the first year's operations would be subject to review; and in this respect I would add that an interdepartmental committee on kangaroos has been formed, with members from those two subcommittees. One of its functions will be the review from time to time of the kangaroo management programme set out in regulations 6, 7, 8, and 9. The committee will also consider major difficulties as they arise from time to time.

I would mention here that I availed myself of the opportunity, during the adjournment of this debate, to bring to the notice of the director of the department the views expressed by Mr. Berry on behalf of the pastoralists and the industry, generally.

In summarising my response to the motion moved by the honourable member, I would point out that if regulations 6, 7, 8, and 9 were to be disallowed by this House the place of the professional shooter would be in jeopardy. The statistical data now required to be furnished under those regulations probably would not be provided.

The control by the Department of Fisheries and Fauna would be reduced considerably were the regulations to be disallowed. As a consequence, the number of shooters would increase and, with that, the potential for taking kangaroos illegally. Existing provisions for the licensing of persons dealing in or processing kangaroos would disappear.

I submit that such a disallowance of the regulations would not be in the best interests of the kangaroo industry or of the community as a whole; and, in the long term, would not be in the better interests of the pastoralists. I oppose the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon.

SUPPLY BILL

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the 22nd July.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (North Metropolitan—Leader of the Opposition) [4.57 p.m.]: Each year legislation of the nature of this Bill is introduced into Parliament, firstly, of course, into the Legislative Assembly and then into this Chamber. The Supply Bill is of a formal nature and is usually explained by the Leader of the House with the barest of information.

The introduction of the measure gives members an opportunity—particularly during the second reading—to discuss any matter of interest, and I intend to avail myself of the opportunity of making some comments in connection with the financial position of this State.

With the formation of the present Government we have seen some changes made in the arrangement of some of the Ministries. I am not sure whether I am correct in saying that we in Western Australia previously have not seen the portfolios of Premier and Treasurer divided. I think this is the first time we have seen a separation of the two portfolios, and I wonder how it is going to work out.

I am sure that the Premier, having separated himself from the Treasury, will find it very necessary to keep an extremely close watch on the Treasury. I just cannot help feeling that in a State like ours the portfolios of Premier and Treasurer should go hand in hand. I know that is not necessarily the case—or has not always been the case—in at least one other State, but I feel it is a much better arrangement for the Premier to have control of the Treasury purse.

The passage of this Bill will provide the Government with \$210,000,000, made up, as the Minister said when introducing the legislation, of \$175,000,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, \$30,000,000 from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund, and \$5,000,000 from the Public Account. The last-mentioned will enable the Treasurer to make such temporary advances as may be necessary.

I think it will be agreed that \$210,000,000 is a great deal of money. In fact, it is \$30,000,000 more than Parliament was asked to approve last year when the Supply Bill provided for \$145,000,000 from the Consolidated Revenue Fund; \$30,000,000 from the General Loan Fund, and \$5,000,000 from the Public Account. The last-mentioned amounts of \$30,000,000 and \$5,000,000 were the same in the 1970 Supply Bill as they are in the Bill before us now.

The Minister explained the increase when he introduced the Bill. He told us that it was fairly well known that the wage movements for the financial year just concluded have greatly strained the Government's financial position. He informed us that this eventuated because the cost of award increases had exceeded the provision that was made in the Budget by no less than \$14,240,000. The Minister then went on to tell us that the Treasury had suffered one or two setbacks; namely, \$1,500,000 shortfall in the expectations for probate duty, and that stamp duty on conveyances, etc., was down by \$2,300,000. Further, mining royalties did not come up to expectations, they were down something like \$2,300,000.

Having said that, Mr. Willesee went on to say that the deficit had been held at \$4,368,000. The Revenue Budget and the Loan Estimates for 1971-72 are being prepared and later in the session Parliament will be presented with the appropriation Bills.

In due course, with the completion of the Budget, we will discover what surprises there are in store for the people of Western Australia. We have already heard rumblings of what these surprises may be. If we look at a report that appeared in *The West Australian* on the 2nd July, 1971, it will be seen that the present Government is already warning the people of a severe deterioration in the finances of the State. This report reads—

The Premier, Mr. Tonkin, warned yesterday that there would be increases in State taxation soon.

However, details had not been worked out.

The warning came after Mr. Tonkin announced that the State's deficit for the 1970-71 financial year was \$4.3 million.

He said that this was a better position than had been expected.

When the Labor Government took office in February the expected deficit was about \$12 million.

The article, which is quite a lengthy one, then goes on to state that the Premier could not say what the deficit for 1971-72 would be.

However, I observed that, on the 8th June, 1971, in an issue of the *Daily News* the Premier is reported as warning the people that he expected the deficit to be

of the order of some \$35,000,000. I also noted that the Leader of the Opposition in another place, The Hon. Sir David Brand, outlined the cost of the Labor Party's promises that were made prior to the last election. He pointed out that the present Government intended to abolish the road maintenance tax at a cost of \$3,500,000. The Leader of the Opposition also listed the following promises that had been made by the Government and what the cost would be to the State:—

	\$
Free school books	750,000
Receipt tax refunds	500,000
Uniform S.E.C. charges	500,000
Pensioners' free metropolitan transport	500,000
Students' living-away allowances	300,000
Probate and land tax cuts	250,000
University tuition fee subsidies	100,000
Students' allowances (over 15)	10,000

Sir David pointed out that these election promises made a total of \$9,500,000, and he said—

I presume that if the costs were taken out, having regard to increased costs, the amount would be substantially greater.

For the reasons that have been outlined in the Press we know that the Government's election promises have had to be shelved and that we concluded the 1970-71 financial year with a deficit of \$4,368,000.

A great deal has been said from both sides about the State's financial position. The present Government has said that it did not know the position was as bad as it is. It chided the previous Treasurer for not making known to the public that the State's financial position was not a happy one. The Hon. J. T. Tonkin stated that he had made his election promises based on the fact that the previous Government had put forward an almost balanced Budget for the 1970-71 financial year.

I felt I should satisfy myself that the previous Treasurer had or had not informed the public about the state of the Treasury and I found that Sir David Brand had informed the public. He wrote to *The West Australian* and had his comments published in the "Political Notes" column. Members know the column in that newspaper that is subscribed to by each of the political parties. Sir David Brand said—

The comments by the Premier, Mr. Tonkin, in the political notes last week and in a letter to *The West Australian* on April 20 are unfair to me and not really in the correct context.

As has already been pointed out, it is completely erroneous and misleading for him to suggest that he was not informed of the position of the State's finances before he assumed office. It

is patently obvious that Mr. Tonkin let his imagination run riot when he set out in his policy speech and various other comments in the respective news media, how his Government would meet and fulfil all the promises that were made.

I do not propose to read all the comments made by Sir David in this article—

The Hon. R. F. Claughton: What was the date of that newspaper?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This was published in the "Political Notes" column on the 22nd April, 1971. Sir David Brand went on to say—

In *The West Australian* of December 15, I said, *inter alia*: "The impact on the State budget of all the increases will be about \$12 million in 1970-71 and probably will total more than \$20 million in a full year. This would create a serious financial problem for the Government."

Again, on the 5th February, 1971, Sir David is put on record as saying—

There is still a lot of wage and salary decisions in the pipeline.

We know the previous Government made provision for a considerable number of these increases, but it was not enough. We also know that the Commonwealth came to the aid of the States, including Western Australia, and I think the Government could easily have finished in front—if I can use that expression—instead of having a deficit of \$4,368,000, if it had not been for one particular fact; namely, the retrospective payment of increases in wages and salaries the Government had agreed to make to the teachers and police.

I think that the money necessary to cover the total of these increases is something in the order of the amount of the deficit for 1970-71. I am sure the retrospectivity in one case applied back to July, 1970, but I am not certain about the other. The fact remains that the situation at present looks quite glum for the taxpayers of Western Australia so far as the coming year is concerned.

The Government intends to repeal the road maintenance tax Act. We read of this intention in the policy speech and in the Governor's Speech. This represents an amount of some \$4,000,000. I do not think any indication has been given to the public of the State as to how this money will be replaced. I venture to suggest, of course, that it must be. Another factor is that, apart from Tasmania, all the States are still imposing this tax, as Western Australia is at present, and if the Government of Western Australia waives the tax not only will we give it away, but also we will permit vehicles from other States to continue using our roads without paying for them. We must not forget, of course, the matching money that will also be lost to Western Australia in the event of the Road Maintenance (Contribution) Act being repealed.

From reading reports published in the Press we also know that some shire councils are opposed to the complete abolition of the road maintenance tax, and they have set out, fairly bluntly, their reasons. That is the position at the moment. Nevertheless, we will have an opportunity to discuss the merits and demerits of the amending Bill when it is brought down to abolish the road maintenance tax.

I could continue to talk of other things that have been foreshadowed such as increases in water rates, for instance. Already we have had a warning about such increases. We know that certain revaluations will continue to take place, that a new rate will be struck, and the water consumer will perhaps have some unforeseen surprises in that regard in store for him.

I will be interested to receive a reply to the question that I placed on the notice paper this afternoon and directed to the Minister for Police in connection with the proposed takeover of traffic control throughout the State by the Police Department. I am sure that the Minister felt entitled to come back at the comments made by a particular delegate to that conference which appeared in the Press. Whatever comments he made concerning the statements of that delegate appeared also in the newspaper. I thought it worth while to ask him what additional cost he thought the State would be involved in, because it does seem that at a time like this the Government should be giving due consideration to keeping costs down, rather than take on something else will be a very expensive operation. Suffice it to say that the days which lie ahead of us will, indeed, be difficult in relation to taxation.

I can only conclude my remarks this afternoon by saying that I support the Bill. As I said in my opening remarks, this Bill is of a formal nature; it is one by which the Government seeks the consent of Parliament to the passage of legislation to give it the necessary money to maintain the expenses for the operation of the Government and its services. I have nothing further to say at the present time. I am quite sure that the people of the State, generally speaking, have an unhappy feeling about the prospect of taxation.

I am one who, when standing in another place opposite in this House, has said that the Government must have money and must be able to tax the people in order to provide the services which Governments must provide.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: I have a feeling that you will be hearing that again.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have a feeling I will be hearing the same thing from the Minister on this occasion. In saying what he has to say to the President and to the members of the Chamber, I am sure he will have at the back of his mind these questions: What was my attitude when the

previous Government brought forward measures which taxed the people? Was the tax fair and equitable? The answer to the second question must be that, generally, the taxes were fair and equitable.

If those are the sorts of questions which the Minister asks himself when he introduces taxing Bills, perhaps he feels as I felt when I was sitting opposite; because I felt that no Government liked to tax the people, and no Government liked to introduce taxing measures. However, I must mention this: one member of this House who has retired accused me on one occasion of having a gleeful look on my face when I introduced Bills that taxed the people. That was far from the truth, because I never had a gleeful look on my face when I introduced taxing measures, and neither do I have a gleeful look on my face on this occasion when I realise what might lie in store for us in the next few months as a result of the action of the Government. I support the Bill.

THE HON. W. R. WITHERS (North) [5.20 p.m.]: I wish to speak in the debate on the Supply Bill, and in so doing I shall present some facts that show discriminatory charges by State Government offices and a denial of Federal grants to young families in some parts of the State. I have previously made reference to discrimination against non-Aborigines, but the discrimination I mention on this occasion applies to many Aborigines and non-Aboriginal families. I refer to Australians who are courageous enough, or maybe foolhardy enough, to participate in the Federal and the State policies of decentralisation.

First of all I refer to the Commonwealth home saving grants scheme which allows every young Australian a grant of \$500 towards the building of his home, if he meets certain conditions of qualification. Most of the parents of young families, under the age of 35 years, living in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and the southern part of Queensland, would be able to meet those qualifications; but young persons living in areas which cover half of this State cannot qualify, because of the vast areas of the State and the high building costs in those parts. I consider that such young families deserve a grant higher than that allowed to families in the more settled areas; but the inequity of the system is such that they are denied any grant.

Representations by organisations in the north have not achieved equity for these young settlers. This situation could be resolved by establishing a maximum building cost for qualification in the metropolitan area, and by allowing an extra cost for every 500 miles lying beyond that area. The extra cost allowances could be calculated by taking the State Housing

Commission contract prices in the various areas, and applying the price differences as a percentage of the base metropolitan cost.

I realise that this a Federal matter, but I am raising this anomaly so that the State Cabinet will become aware of the fact that a Federal grant which is made available to qualifying Australian families is not available to some Western Australians because of the vast areas of this State and of the associated high freight costs.

I have mentioned the discriminatory charges imposed by the State Government offices. I make reference to vehicle insurance. I quote the figures which appear in the handbook of the State Government Insurance Office. To insure a vehicle for \$2,000 with that office in districts A and B—these are areas of the State south of the 26th parallel, plus the town of Carnarvon which is slightly above that parallel—costs \$84.73 plus stamp duty. To insure the same vehicle having the same owner in an area above the 26th parallel costs \$112.98 plus stamp duty. This means that a northern resident pays approximately 33 per cent. more in the insurance rate than the resident in the other parts of the State. To aggravate the situation further, the State Treasury hops in for its share and charges stamp duty on the northern surcharge rate.

In my personal association with the State Government Insurance Office I have found the officers and the staff to be most efficient, helpful, and sympathetic to the northern dweller. I can only offer praise for the way those officers have conducted the business of the State Government Insurance Office. In fact, the S.G.I.O. will insure vehicles in the north when other insurance companies and other insurance associations, such as the Royal Automobile Club, will terminate policies of accident-free clients who have no-claim bonuses when they move to addresses north of the 26th parallel.

It should not be forgotten that this discrimination applies to communities that are not provided with public transport; so to those people a vehicle is a necessity and not a luxury. It is to be hoped that the State Treasury and the Minister for Labour and Housing will take steps to correct this injustice.

I have previously made reference to a report that was prepared in May, 1970, concerning living costs. I will now quote sections of this report so that the Treasurer and Cabinet may have reference in their deliberations to bringing fair play to the people of the north, and also so that members of the House may be informed.

The report is headed, "A Report on the Living Costs in the East Kimberley Compared to Perth Metropolitan Costs." If there are any variations in the costs I would ask members to bear in mind that this was prepared in May, 1970. Each section contains a comparison of the East

Kimberley and the Perth metropolitan prices, and where capital costs are mentioned comparative figures which have been reduced to an annual write-off value appear. A taxation excess figure has also been calculated to show that the present situation in the East Kimberley is unstable and inflated.

I will not burden members with a recital of all the comparative costs, but will mention a few to show that there is quite a difference. I shall quote the figures, firstly, for Perth and then for Kununurra—

	Perth	Kununurra
	C	C
2 lb. loaf of bread	20	32
Potatoes, 7 lb. sack ..	41	77 to \$1.05

The reason for the variation in price of the last mentioned item arises from the different modes of transport used to cart the potatoes to that area. The variation also arises from the fact that many of the potatoes arrive in very poor condition, and many complaints have been received from people in the East Kimberley and Pilbara about the poor condition. For that reason the price has to be increased to enable the retailer to obtain a fair margin of profit. The costs of other items are as follows:—

	Perth	Kununurra
	C	C
Onions per lb.	9	15
Butter per lb.	53	64
Eggs per dozen	66	91
Fresh milk per quart	20	42

Yesterday I was given some figures by a lady who came from Broome to Perth to attend the C.W.A. conference. I have compared her figures with those appearing in the Kununurra report and find they are slightly higher. That is caused principally by the inflationary trends since May, 1970, but basically her figures align with those I have given.

An average sample of four different families will be used to show a typical menu for a day, and from this I will establish a daily food cost. To some people it might appear that it is difficult to establish an average menu, and they might disagree with some of the items that have been taken into account. However, most of the people who were interviewed agreed that the following would be the average menu. Breakfast for a family of two adults, two children, and one baby consists of the following items, against which are shown the Perth and Kununurra prices—

	Perth	Kununurra
	C	C
Pineapple fruit juice	20	30
Cereal	7	10
Milk 1 pint	10	21
5 eggs	28	38
6 slices toast	5	8
2 oz. butter	7	11
2 oz. jam	3	4
4 oz. sugar	2	3

It will be seen that luxury items of food have not been included.

The average lunch for the same family consists of the following items, with the Perth and Kununurra prices as shown:—

	Perth	Kununurra
	C	C
2 tomatoes	10	14
½ lettuce small	15	25
4 oz. cheese	13	15
Cold meat	20	22
6 slices bread	5	8
2 oz. butter	7	11
1 tin peaches	34	42
1 tin baby food	10	12
1 pint milk	10	21
5 pieces fruit (apples)	25	40

The Hon. J. L. Hunt: You have given the Perth prices. How do they compare with the South Australian prices?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: This report was compiled without taking into account the prices of the Adelaide foodstuffs coming into Kununurra. The prices mentioned are the Perth and the Kununurra prices.

In the average menu for the evening meal the items shown are similar to the items in the breakfast menu and the lunch menu. The figures show that the total expenditure for food for that family for one day is \$5.08 for Perth, and \$6.82 for Kununurra. Converted to the annual rate for food, there is a difference of \$633.36 between the price in Perth and the price in Kununurra.

Regarding general household costs, because of the difference in climate it is obvious that a family in Perth would require a refrigerator costing approximately \$375, whereas a person in the tropics would require one costing approximately \$600 as he needs a larger unit with a greater capacity.

A refrigerator in Perth usually lasts 12 years, whereas one in the tropics has to be replaced within six years—and this is a very conservative estimate. I quote my personal experience. In the last four years I have had three sealed units in my refrigerator replaced, and my family is not very large. I have a wife and three children.

The freight on a refrigerator to the Kimberley would be \$35. Converting it to the annual cost over the life of 12 years and six years respectively for the two refrigerators, the depreciation for the refrigerator used in Perth amounts to \$31 and for the one used in Kununurra to \$106 per annum.

I will now refer to heating and cooling. An air conditioner in at least one room should be considered a necessity in the tropics. An equivalent heater should be necessary in the south. A heating unit to service a 15 ft. by 12 ft. room costs approximately \$200 and lasts for 20 years. An air conditioner to service the same size room in the tropics costs \$525, and lasts 10 years if it is serviced meticulously.

The annual cost after allowing for depreciation over a period of 20 years in Perth and 10 years in Kununurra is \$10 and \$52.50 respectively. Ceiling and personal fans are used much more extensively in the tropics, but ceiling fans have been partly included in housing costs, so the fans will not be costed at this stage.

Referring to furnishings, it is recognised that plastics, vinyls, leather, paint, polishes, and fabrics deteriorate faster in the tropics than they do in temperate zones. An average Australian home contains approximately \$2,000 worth of furnishings. The freight cost on this furniture to the Kimberley is approximately \$400. Similar furnishings will last 20 years in the south of the State, but only 12 years in the northern part of the State. The annual depreciation on furnishings over 20 years in Perth and 12 years in Kununurra is \$100 and \$200 respectively.

An estimate of the annual cost of detergents, soaps, polishes, brooms, etc., is \$75 in Perth and \$120 in Kununurra.

Newspapers in Kununurra are priced as follows:—*The West Australian* 15c; *The Sunday Times*, 12c; *Weekend News*, 17c and the *Sunday Independent*, 20c. If we allow for one paper per day for 360 days of the year, the cost in Perth will be \$18 compared with the cost in Kununurra of \$54. Taking into account the costs I have mentioned the Kimberley householder will pay \$268.50 more than his Perth counterpart.

I will now deal with the difference between housing costs as they affect a person living in the metropolitan area and a person living in the East Kimberley. All the figures have been obtained from the State Housing Commission records, with the exception of the estimate on depreciation for a timber frame house in the Kimberley, where there is an increase of approximately 25 per cent. on depreciation. The painting costs which I will mention are factual but the repainting time in the tropics has been reduced to five years instead of seven years as is the case in the metropolitan area.

Equivalent housing for Perth and the Kimberley is brick veneer and tile in Perth and fibro and iron in the Kimberley. This aggravates the difference in depreciation. In this case the minimum building standards allowed by the State Housing Commission in the Kimberley is used. In practice, the cost for a reasonable private home would be much higher, because the State Housing Commission homes have only one or two ceiling fans.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: I have not got any fans.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: Of course, the honourable member lives in a cooler climate, down around Carnarvon.

Referring now to capital costs and depreciation costs, a brick veneer and tile roof house costs \$6,900 in Perth, and depreciates by 50 per cent. in 40 years. Thus, the annual depreciation is \$86. As I have said, the figures I am quoting were obtained from the State Housing Commission.

In the East Kimberley a fibro and iron roof house, the same size as the example I have quoted for Perth, costs \$15,000 and depreciates by 50 per cent. in 20 years. It should be noted that the State Housing Commission records show that depreciation on this type of home is 50 per cent. in 25 years, in the metropolitan area. It is reasonable to assume that this would reduce to 20 years in the tropics. Thus, the annual depreciation figure is \$325.

Dealing now with maintenance costs, the State Housing Commission requires maintenance painting every seven years at a cost of \$300 in Perth. Thus, the annual cost is \$43. It can be assumed that in the tropics painting would be required at least every five years, and the average cost would be \$600. Thus, the annual cost would be \$120.

I now come to a very interesting exercise and I will refer to the extra interest paid, or invested interest lost, on excess capital costs. The difference in price between the minimum standard Perth house and a Kimberley house is \$8,100. For a householder to maintain a similar standard in either area it must be assumed that the Kimberley householder must borrow \$8,100 more than his metropolitan counterpart, or outlay \$8,100 more from personal funds. Either way he will be out of pocket to the extent of the interest paid, or lost.

Bank interest on a loan of \$8,100, over a period of 20 years, is \$4,455. When this is applied to a house which will be written off in 40 years we find that there is an annual penalty of \$111 on the Kimberley house owner. In actual fact, the Kimberley house owner would be loaded still further by a higher interest rate.

A summation of the situation shows that the difference between metropolitan Perth and Kimberley costs, reduced to an annual figure, is as follows:—

Capital and depreciation costs: \$239 per annum more in the Kimberley.

Maintenance costs: \$77 per annum more in the Kimberley.

Extra interest: \$111 more in the Kimberley.

Thus, the total extra cost to a Kimberley householder, over and above his metropolitan counterpart, is \$427 per annum.

Electricity and water costs are high. Because of the consistent use of ceiling fans, and the allowance for one small air conditioner or air cooler in one room used at night time only, it is shown that power consumption in the tropics is much higher than in the Perth metropolitan area.

Perth householders, in all-electric homes, have indicated that their electricity consumption averages 700 units per quarter. An East Kimberley householder, with one small air conditioner or cooler, uses 1,400 units per quarter. I think I should explain that these figures were obtained from people who had lived in Perth and who had shifted to the north and lived there for a period of at least six months.

A Perth householder will, therefore, pay 700 times 1.90c plus \$1 service fee. This would amount to \$14.30 per quarter or \$57.20 annually. A Kununurra householder will pay 1,400 times 4c plus \$5 service fee, which will amount to \$61 per quarter or \$244 annually. A Wyndham householder will pay 435 times 8c, plus 965 times 5c per quarter which equals \$34.80 plus \$48.28. The total is \$87.08, or \$348.32 annually. It can be seen that the figures are going up the scale, and the charges would be even higher in Halls Creek.

To be fair, and use the lowest figure in the East Kimberley—Kununurra—it can still be seen that when compared with a Perth metropolitan person, a person in the East Kimberley will pay \$186 more per annum for electricity.

Referring now to water, it is obvious that householders in monsoonal areas with short wet seasons and extended dry seasons must use more water than their counterparts in temperate zones. The reasons are as follows:—

- (a) Higher evaporation rates in the tropics. This can be taken in two factors of higher temperatures, and the length of time between falls of rain.
- (b) Higher usage for personal bathing because of perspiration.
- (c) Higher usage for the washing of clothing and bed linen, for the same reason as set out in (b).

A family of two adults and three children, with a quarter acre building block partly under lawn, will use 210,000 gallons of water per annum in the Kimberley and 110,000 gallons per annum in Perth. Using the respective charges and rates in each area, the Kimberley householder will pay \$76 per annum, and the Perth metropolitan householder will pay \$46 per annum. Therefore, water will cost the Kimberley householder \$30 more per annum.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Government will alter that situation!

The Hon. J. Dolan: Will not that situation alter when the Ord Dam is completed? Hundreds of thousands of gallons of water will be wasted if it is not used.

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: I am pleased to hear the remark from the Minister; I hope the Government will do something for us.

I would like to point out that the charge I have mentioned for water in the Kimberley applies only after one has become established. I know that from my own personal experience. Earlier this year, for a private home in Kununurra, my bill amounted to \$223 for a period of six months. That was at a time when I was establishing lawns and a garden.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Was that only for water used, or did it include rates?

The Hon. W. R. WITHERS: That charge was for water used, and for a sewerage charge. I think the sewerage charge was \$68, but the total did not include rates for the six months.

Dealing now with communications, the isolation of the Kimberley involves the householder in higher costs for postage on air mail packages, or to receive packages from business houses in the city. An allowance would be hard to calculate but it certainly would not be less than \$5 per annum.

Parts are sometimes required urgently for the repair of essential equipment such as refrigerators, stoves, fans, air conditioners, vehicles, etc. In Perth metropolitan the cost would involve one phone call to a supplier or repair shop at a cost of 5c, with delivery on the same day. The Kimberley householder would be involved in a trunk call—\$1.80—or a telegram averaging approximately 70c for a parts order with description and requirement. It would be realistic to assume that the average householder would be involved in at least two phone calls and three such telegrams per annum. The total cost would be \$5.70 per annum for the Kimberley resident as against 25c for the metropolitan resident. The cost would be \$5.45 more to the Kimberley resident.

A good quality radio suitable for metropolitan reception can be purchased for \$40. Radios suitable for national station reception in the Kimberley start at \$120, and if it is assumed that such a radio would have a life of 20 years, then it would cost the Kimberley householder \$4 per annum more for his news reception. The annual difference for the cost of communications is \$14.70 more in the Kimberley.

Travelling costs are also higher. Most Australians take their annual holidays and travel to a resort or city by private car. The travel costs for this type of holiday are listed in section 8 of my report under the heading of "Vehicle Expenses," and apply to a metropolitan family only.

Because of his isolation in torrid conditions, an East Kimberley resident is committed to travelling much further to achieve the benefit of a holiday. He is also limited to a period during which he can go by private car. For these reasons the travelling expenses can be listed in three sections: State ships; private car;

and aircraft. The costs have been calculated for a family of two adults, one adolescent, one child, and one baby, and are as follows:—

(a) State ships: To Fremantle and return, \$438.80 (North-West concession—October to May)	
(b) Private car: Fuel, repairs, tyres, etc., but not including registration, insurance, etc.—\$150.	
(c) By M.M.A. to Perth: Return fare—	
Two adults	\$422.40
Two children	\$211.20
Baby, gratis	
	<hr/>
	\$633.60

The cheapest method of travel is by car, but the seasons prevent the use of a car in most cases. During the dry season when a car is available for a holiday most private-enterprise families and employees of Government departments are experiencing their busiest periods at work and cannot be released for holidays.

During the wet season, when the work load is reduced and the major holiday period is available to students, the area is isolated by flooding rivers. Transport is only available by aircraft or by the State Shipping Service. The logical method of transport, in relation to time, is the State Shipping Service at a cost of \$438.80 per annum. This figure now becomes the excess figure for holidays in the Kimberley, less food, power, and water at metropolitan costs. Calculated on 2½ weeks travelling time the cost would be \$438 less \$88.92 for food and less \$4.25 for power and water, making a total cost of \$344.83. The annual holiday costs for a family living in the Kimberley will be \$344.83 in excess of the holiday costs for a Perth family.

For vehicle expenses, a vehicle was purchased new from a Holden dealer who allowed \$130 freight subsidy on the vehicle.

It is to be noted that this is not available from the other dealers at this stage. The vehicle has been kept for four years and resold at market value.

It is also to be noted that a metropolitan driver averages 40,000 miles in four years, which includes his holiday mileage. A Kimberley driver averages only 20,000 miles, but this does not include his holiday mileage. This is rather unusual, but it can be appreciated that a metropolitan driver who is home at the weekend will hop in his car and go to another suburb to see a friend; whereas Kimberley residents do not have to drive so far to visit their friends. Some of their friends are very long distances away, not just distances of three, four, or five miles.

Experience has shown that tyre and vehicle repairs are much higher in the tropics than in the city. They are caused by dusty conditions, high temperatures, and

rough roads. Proof of this can be seen in the records of the State Government Insurance Office.

Sales records show that comparable vehicles from the city and the tropics sell as listed in the following schedule:—

	Perth	Kununurra
New purchase price	\$2,488	\$2,588
Mileage in four years	40,000	20,000
Selling price after four years	\$950	\$900
Depreciation	\$1,538	\$1,688
Insurance over four years (S.G.I.O.)	\$331	\$430
Registration	\$240	\$240
Fuel	\$800	\$500

The lower cost of fuel is due to the lower mileage. To continue—

	Perth	Kununurra
Repairs	\$100	\$300

Even though the mileage is lower, the cost of repairs is trebled. To continue—

	Perth	Kununurra
Services (lubrication, etc.)	\$278	\$100
Tyres	\$100	\$200

The figure for tyres is interesting. Although the mileage in Kununurra is half that in Perth, the cost of tyres is double because of the wear.

The annual cost of keeping a car in the Kimberley, without holidays, and the annual cost of keeping a car in Perth, with holidays, shows a difference of only \$18 per annum more in the Kimberley, but the mileage costs show a far greater discrepancy. For example, they are calculated at 8.4c a mile in Perth, whereas in the east Kimberley they work out at 17.3c a mile.

I now deal with schooling costs. The nearest senior high school to the East Kimberley is at Geraldton, which is over 1,700 air miles away. Most parents with responsible attitudes towards education will endeavour to send their children to high schools so that the children will have a chance to enter universities and colleges. Such chances are considerably reduced if the children are forced to study under the present correspondence system.

The additional costs to a parent in the Kimberley as compared with costs to a parent in Perth can be calculated at a minimum if the Geraldton High School and hostel are used. It must be realised that most parents send their children to schools in Perth in preference to schools in Geraldton, and the costs are higher than the figures quoted below—

Three fares at \$105.50 less one rebate fare—\$211.

Hostel charges, \$230 a term less \$76 rebate a term—\$426 per annum.

It therefore costs a Kimberley householder \$673 per annum more than it costs the Perth householder for high school education at a State school, if accommodation

can be made available at the hostel. This figure will not be considered for an area allowance, but it should be included in annual costs for the calculation of the taxation excess figures shown in section 14 of my report. Federal income tax allowances for education costs should be increased for area "A" so that allowances are realistic.

As regards clothing costs, discussions with city dwellers and business people in the Kimberley indicate that the Perth householder requires a greater range of expensive clothing, but the Kimberley householder has to maintain some expensive clothing which is suitable for city visits. The Kimberley householder has less expensive clothing for day-to-day use, but the life of such clothing is reduced considerably due to the higher washing rate and the abrasive qualities of dust and perspiration on collars, socks, and underwear. To consider all factors would involve a lengthy and detailed treatise, which it is estimated would show very little difference in clothing costs in the two areas.

I now come to medical and hospitalisation costs. It is understood that the Medical Department is readjusting fees for hospitalisation in order that fees in public hospitals may be standardised throughout the State.

Kimberley residents will have the disadvantage of insufficient specialist consultation, which may involve them in higher costs if the authorities do not agree to subsidise fares for consultation; but these costs could not be taken into account in my report. It can be assumed that in the near future the costs in the metropolitan area and in the Kimberley will be similar.

It should be noted that Kimberley outpatients may be loaded with extra costs in the case of one-doctor hospitals where a matron or senior sister attends to the patient. These costs are not recoverable from the Hospital Benefit Fund or other medical benefit funds.

I now deal with entertainment. Because of the tropical climate in the Kimberley, it is obvious that most entertainment must be enjoyed in the open air. Open air picture theatres provide one avenue of entertainment, but this is insufficient for complete relaxation for all members of the community. Other forms of entertainment are night sports, barbecues and parties involving amateur entertainers, and singing and conversation groups. All of these forms of entertainment involve a high fluid intake because of the climate.

A simple explanation of the fluid requirement in entertainment can be given in three parts. Firstly, most people work in environments which lead to heavy fluid losses in sweat, and adequate fluid replacement is obviously necessary. The majority of this fluid is replaced as water, either iced or in cordials, canned drinks, tea, or

coffee. Alcoholic drinks such as beer account for a reasonable proportion. Therefore, the drinking of some form of high priced liquid is a necessity when living and working in this climate.

Secondly, in consideration of the type of people who are attracted to an area like the Kimberley, it is fair to say that the majority of them are robust, hardworking and adventurous people who would consider alcoholic beverages to be a natural component of life. For this reason alone, the *per capita* consumption of beverages would be higher than consumption in the metropolitan area.

Thirdly, the forms of entertainment previously mentioned involve the consumption of expensive beverages such as beer because of their tranquillising effect in conjunction with the fluid intake required. Relaxation is necessary in any community, and if this can be achieved in the Kimberley by the moderate use of beer to overcome the additional tensions caused by climate, isolation, accommodation, and costs, then it should be taken into account when entertainment costs are calculated.

Residents who have been interviewed in an effort to establish the differences in fluid intake and subsequent costs have shown that in Perth the consumption of beer, or the equivalent for a husband and wife, is 119 oz. of draught beer and three bottles of beer a week at a total cost of \$3.51. In the Kimberley the consumption has risen to 210 oz. of draught beer, or equivalent and six bottles of beer a week, at a total cost of \$9.03. It can be seen that although the fluid intake in the Kimberley is not quite double the intake in Perth, the cost is 158 per cent. greater. Therefore, the difference is \$287.04 a year more in the Kimberley.

I now deal with taxation. The previous sections of the survey prove that there is local inflation in costs, which is further aggravated by a taxation excess figure. This figure is the amount of taxation that is paid by a Kimberley householder in excess of the amount paid by his metropolitan counterpart on income which will allow him to match the metropolitan standard of living.

The summation of the Kimberley costs above the metropolitan costs in sections 2 to 12 of the survey shows that the cost to the Kimberley householder is \$2,671.43 more than to his Perth counterpart to live up to similar standards. If we assume that the Perth householder has a taxable income of \$2,500, then he will pay \$331.58 in personal income tax. This will leave a net income of \$2,168.42. To live up to this income, without saving, the Kimberley householder must have a net income of \$2,168.42 plus \$2,671.43, a total of \$4,839.85, or \$4,840 in round figures. To achieve this net income he must earn \$6,599 in taxable income and pay a tax of \$1,750.

It can be seen that the Kimberley householder pays \$1,427.42 more income tax than he should in order to live at the same rate as his Perth counterpart. To stave off local inflationary spirals a realistic zone allowance would be necessary. Consideration should also be given to allowing all education costs as a deduction.

I now wish to comment on a feeling expressed by Mr. Dellar in his speech during the Address-in-Reply debate. This concerned my request to the Minister for Education through the Leader of the House. Mr. Dellar felt that 12 months was rather short notice for the provision of facilities, particularly when the previous Administration had had 12 years in which to make them available.

I wish to point out that during those 12 years the North Province was ably represented in this House by members of a party which was in Opposition to the Government of the day. If implications are to be made that a previous Government has not provided a service when it was urgently needed, or that there has been lack of presentation by elected members in a province, then I would suggest that six years' notice would be too short. I suggest this because the bickering would take that long. The request made by me during the debate on the Address-in-Reply is valid and it requires urgent attention. I support the Bill.

THE HON. G. C. MacKINNON (Lower West) [5.58 p.m.]: Mr. President, the last 12 months have been momentous for this Chamber, and we have had more than our fair share of tragedy. I suppose all of us who were here before are extremely sorry at the death of The Hon. Mr. Lavery, The Hon. Mr. Garrigan, The Hon. Mr. House, and The Hon. Mr. Strickland, because it is a peculiarity of Parliament that after a few years one's closest friends are frequently one's political enemies. We are all extremely sorry when events like these occur among those whom we have known and respected for such a long time. We have also seen the loss of Mr. Brand, whom we all liked very much indeed.

On the other hand, there have been occasions for congratulations, not the least of these being to yourself, Sir. I trust that your changed state brings you happiness.

I would also like to congratulate the A.L.P. for its successful campaign. I do not congratulate the A.L.P. with wild enthusiasm; nevertheless, congratulations are in order. I would particularly like to congratulate The Hon. Mr. Willesee, The Hon. Mr. Dolan, and The Hon. Mr. Stubbs. They have inherited interesting but extremely arduous jobs. My personal view is that the arduous nature of their jobs is worth it for the great interest the jobs hold and the feeling that one can accomplish a great deal.

Before I continue, I would like to make a statement which has very little to do with the matter. It came to my notice that someone in some authority stated that Dr. Brian O'Brien, when he saw the environmental legislation, took something of a turn and reached for an aspirin. What I want to point out is that when Dr. O'Brien came to Western Australia, the first people he spoke to in this State were officers of my department and myself. I spoke to Dr. O'Brien on two occasions, as I spoke to all the other major applicants for the position of Director of Environmental Protection.

I have no intention of disclosing what Dr. O'Brien said about the legislation which he had studied, because this is his personal business. I am very conscious of the fact that Dr. O'Brien fully intends to remain in this State and, that being so, it is likely that he will, from time to time, work under different Ministers and, indeed, under different Governments, and I believe it is most unfair for anybody to imply that a senior officer has made a remark of the nature of this one with regard to the previous Government's environmental legislation.

The person who made the comment could not in any circumstances have known what Dr. O'Brien did or said when he saw the legislation; not under any circumstances could he have done so, because Dr. O'Brien was interviewed on the premises of the Minister for Health, a position which I held at that time, just having been appointed Minister for Environmental Protection.

I think this is an important matter, for I believe it was a calumny on Dr. O'Brien and it would not have mattered if the reported statement had not also been reported as having been made by a person of the eminence of the Minister for Works, The Hon. Colin Jamieson, M.L.A. From my personal experience of what Dr. O'Brien said, I wish to deny the comment because already one person has stated that if this were true then his opinion of Dr. O'Brien had gone down. I can assure that particular man—who happens to be The Hon. Charles Court—that it is not true and, therefore, I hope that The Hon. Charles Court will change his mind and will not allow his opinion of Dr. Brian O'Brien to go down; because, Mr. President, I say what I said at the time, that Western Australia is extremely fortunate to have secured a man of the calibre of Dr. Brian O'Brien, and I believe that it serves the purpose of environmental protection and the standard of our senior civil servants ill indeed, if their reliability to whatever Government happens to be in charge at the time is in any way denigrated. Enough of that.

Mr. President, I made some complimentary remarks to one or two people before. I am a little afraid that my next compliment may be taken to be facetious in nature, but I want to assure you, Sir, and members, that it is not, because I wish to compliment the Australian Labor Party on the fantastic efficacy of their campaign of bankruptcy since they became the Government.

It is amazing the number of people in different places who tell me that it is a pity that this cannot be done or that cannot be done because the Government is broke. I was advised—I do not know how true it is, but I would accept the veracity of the men who told me because they are men of unimpeachable character—that the Treasurer, at a meeting of school teachers, in effect said, "We cannot carry on education as well as the last Government because we have not the money," and these intelligent, well-educated people, the school teachers, accepted it. This is something which they never accepted from our Government but they accepted this.

I had a report the other day of a woman who had been a very strong advocate for equal pay and who said she was still equally as strong an advocate for equal pay, but, of course, she could not expect it now because the Government had no money. This is amazing, and I sincerely congratulate your Government, Mr. Willessee, on the efficacy of this campaign. But let us have a look at how true it is.

On the 15th December, the then Premier of Western Australia made a statement in the Press in which he said that there would be a deficit of \$12,000,000. The mathematics for working this out were simple indeed, because one only had to take the pay rises that had been granted and multiply them by the number of workers—granted this is an over-simplification—and one could work out the amount of extra deficit there was going to be in the Budget.

Mr. President, you sit in that Chair and hear members in this Chamber advocate from the other side of the House pay increases to the workers whom they claim to represent. They do not represent them all; we know that. However, they make this claim repeatedly. These very increases that were granted obviously meant a deficit of \$12,000,000. It is not \$12,000,000 now, it is \$4,300,000; so, on the figures stated at the 15th February, the Government's finances at the present moment are \$7,700,000 better than the Government has any right to expect.

If certain actions were taken immediately, as the then Premier intimated they would be, it was confidently expected that by the time these actions had been taken and the Commonwealth Government had been approached, we would, with luck, have reduced the deficit to \$6,000,000. It

has not been reduced to \$6,000,000; it has been reduced to \$4,300,000, so compared with the very best the previous Government hoped for, the present Government is still \$1,700,000 better off than it had any right to expect.

There was a history which was written up in the *South Western Times*, from which I will quote the factual statements for brevity.

Sitting suspended from 6.09 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: I said that for the sake of brevity I would quote from a copy of the *South Western Times* dated the 25th March. I will defer that for a moment, except to read a little bit which says—

I have no doubt Mr. Tonkin had in his possession at the time he prepared his policy speech the statements made by Sir David Brand when commenting on the national and State wage increases last December—well before policy speeches of any party had been drawn up.

In regard to the deficit facing the State and Mr. Tonkin's promises, it is interesting to view these statements, all taken from *The West Australian*.

In *The West Australian* of the 15th December the then Premier, Sir David Brand, said that the national wage decision would add \$2,250,000 to the Government's wages bill this financial year and about \$4,500,000 in a full year.

These figures are, of course, quite easily verified. Any party that faces an election must have its advisers who work out the implications of any rise that might occur and any effect this might have on the Budget. They make a forecast. I have no doubt the Labor Party did just this.

The article of the 15th December continues:—

This came on top of the extra \$10,500,000 that the State would have to meet this financial year because of the State basic wage increase and salary rises for the State public service.

The impact on the State budget of all the increases would be about \$12,000,000 in 1970-71 and probably would total more than \$20,000,000 in a full year.

This would create a serious financial problem for the Government.

The State public service is tied to Federal wage levels.

The Government and semi-government payroll also includes other employees covered by Federal Awards.

The secretary of the W.A. Trades and Labor Council, Mr. J. Coleman, said that the wage decision obviously had been based on the capacity of industry to pay.

He said that it was deplorable to hear some employers say that the increases would speed inflation.

We have the situation now—particularly if one listens to the propaganda so successfully put over by the A.L.P., for which I have already congratulated this body—of the A.L.P. directly contradicting one of the leaders of the affiliated unions—and I refer to Mr. Coleman—who said it would not have an inflationary effect. He further said—

There should be no increase in inflation because of the decision, which was based on the capacity of industry and the economy generally to sustain a 6 per cent. increase.

Mr. Coleman said that though the decision had not restored the true purchasing power of wages to the 1953 level, it was a step in the right direction.

He believed that the extra 6 per cent. would do little more than compensate for increases in the cost of living in the past year.

I will not continue with this quote, because this is generally known. Suffice it to say, however, that this view expressed by Mr. Coleman is directly opposed to the story that the A.L.P. successfully told the people of Western Australia.

This was known before any election speeches were made or any policy notes were prepared. This was verifiable—it is an easy mathematical exercise and I would like to prove that it is possible to verify the position.

I will now return to the *South Western Times* which contains a summary of the position. The copy in question can be found in the newspaper room. I quote:—

Sir David said the impact on the State budget of all increases would be about \$12,000,000 in 1970-71 and would probably total more than \$20,000,000 in a full year.

On the 12th February, 1971, Mr. Tonkin claimed that he could finance his promises. He admitted that his promises would cost more than the promises made by the then Premier, Sir David Brand, and knowing that the State faced a \$12,000,000 deficit this year he still claimed he could finance those promises. I quote his words as reported in *The West Australian* of the 13th February, 1971, which are as follows:—

I am confident that, without any increases in taxes, I shall comfortably meet all the promises that I have made.

He said this despite the verifiable statement made by the then Premier, Sir David Brand. I feel that all of us in this Chamber will admit that the ex-Premier, Sir

David Brand, is not given to lying, whatever the justification for it might be. On the 17th February, *The West Australian* had this to say:—

Opposition Leader Tonkin yesterday rejected the charge of Works Minister Hutchinson that Labor could not finance its election promises.

On the 10th March we find the following:—

Premier Tonkin said yesterday that the State Government's finances were in a serious position.

The penny had finally dropped, and this had taken half December, all of January, all of February, and ten days of March. On the 11th March, Mr. Tonkin said: "W.A. faces \$10,000,000 deficit."

I did not notice any apology for the fact that Mr. Tonkin had disbelieved Sir David. Mr. Tonkin admitted it would be difficult to meet all his election promises. On the 11th March Mr. Tonkin also said: "This means the State this financial year is faced with an increased wages cost which exceeds the provision made in the Budget by more than \$10,000,000." Mr. Tonkin also said that he could not comment at this stage as to the possibility of increased State taxes or charges next financial year.

We have heard plenty about that since. This is the history of the shortage of money. Nobody denies that the State is hard pressed for money. A State that develops in the fantastic manner that this State has developed is always short of money. For 12 years we have listened to various speakers talk along these lines when taxing measures have come before this House. We have heard these expressions made on the Supply Bill, sometimes once a year and occasionally twice a year.

You will know this to be true, Sir, because you have always taken a keen interest in the financial matters that have been debated in this Chamber. We have heard here and from reports in another place how wonderful it would have been if the Labor Government had but part of the extra money which the Liberal Government had. But the moment it is in this position and has the extra money it cries poor mouth.

The situation is no different today. Of course we are short of money. I have said previously that whether it be a family, or a Government, if the income received is £100 and the expenditure is £101, one faces bankruptcy. If, however, the income is £100 and the expenditure £99, one is solvent. I have used the expression of pounds for my example because a similar statement was made long before dollars were ever thought of.

The Hon. J. Dolan: If your income is hundreds of pounds and you spend a couple of thousand you become a financier.

The Hon. G. C. MacKINNON: That is so, and I know the sense in which Mr. Dolan means this. This is possible if one plays with figures which are large enough. The present Government has become a "stop everything and do nothing Government", because it wants to save a bit of money to meet at least a part of the promises it made.

To come back to what I said previously, in actual fact the present Government was told by an eminently honest man that it would face a \$12,000,000 deficit. The Government, however, was \$7,750,000 better off than it was told it would be. Mr. Tonkin said categorically and without equivocation that he could finance his programme without any additional taxation. He said this knowing what I have just said.

Now, however, just as categorically and without equivocation he says he cannot finance his programme. He fails to say that he was wrong; that he misled the public; and he has failed to apologise to Sir David Brand, even though there is justification for his doing so.

As various speakers have said from time to time during the past 12 years there is no solution to this problem of shortage of money in a developing State and there is not likely to be until the matters between the State and Federal Governments are changed to some extent. Those of us who have been here for some time know that this was never better said than it was by Sir Keith Watson.

The day must come when the people who are handling the finances of the State, of the Federal Government, and of local government, will have to stop talking about Federal money, State money, and local government money and start talking about the Australian taxpayer's money, because that is to whom it belongs.

The idea that every State cannot be treated individually when one State is progressing in one year and has a recession the next is quite wrong. That is all old hat, financewise, and it should have gone by the board long since. I think we could reasonably expect any party hoping to be the Government to know of this, and not to make the types of statements that were made and, having made them, to make a complete volte-face and go the other way. What fascinates me is the fact that the Government has managed to convince everybody that the whole thing was perfectly normal, right, and proper.

I return to the point on which I commenced and once more congratulate through you, Sir, Mr. Willesee and the Labor Party on the success of the party's propaganda. People have bought the story mainly I suppose because no-one has gone back and read the history of the situation as I have just recounted it. I repeat again that without any additional taxation whatever as an absolute minimum

this present Government is today, on its own figures, \$1,750,000 better off than it had any right to expect to be. According to the figures, although we cannot go on one Supply Bill, the Government has more money than the Liberal-Country Party Government had last year, despite the deficit.

I repeat we have heard *ad nauseum* the statement, "If only we had had anything like that amount of money when we had been the Government, what wonders we would have performed". The present Government has the money and yet we are apparently threatened by an ever-increasing avalanche of taxation. One is a little bemused as to whether this taxation is to be levied on all those over 18, whether it is to be selective, or just how it is to be levied; but it will be levied, because this Government inherited some very clever and I would almost say brilliant advisers and they will find ways and means. They must do this if the Government is determined to take the steps it has forecast. The Government originally said it would take them without any additional taxation, but we have all learnt that that statement is a myth.

The Government will do these things and it has said, "Okay; we have made a mess of it. We completely misled everyone and completely hoodwinked everyone at the election"—congratulations on a good effort!—"but now we must have taxation to carry out our promises. Find us a method." The Government's advisers will find a method. However, I doubt very much whether the method to replace the road maintenance tax will be one the truckies will be able to put on the bottom of their bill and pass on; nevertheless, it will be a tax that they, along with the rest of us, will have to pay, but they will not be able to pass it on any more.

I obviously have no intention of opposing this measure, but I leave on record the statements of fact—the statements that were made and the warnings given, and the true figures which were given and which apparently no-one bothered to check; and then I mention that finally, three months later, Mr. J. T. Tonkin said, "Well, ladies and gentlemen—voters of Western Australia—the information given to you on the 15th December by the then Premier (Sir David Brand) was absolutely honest and truthful!"

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [7.49 p.m.]: I rise to support the Supply Bill before the House. It is interesting to note that the total figure we are asked to approve on this occasion is \$210,000,000. To me this is a tremendous sum of money to keep the State in operation over the period referred to in the Bill and it affects our economy. This amount of money will flow into the economy and therefore it must affect the community at large; but I am more concerned on this occasion with,

and make reference specifically to, the effect on the economy of some of the rural industries. It is well that, during the course of my remarks members keep in mind the figure of \$210,000,000.

I am particularly concerned with the possible effect of the expected entry of the United Kingdom into the European Economic Community, commonly known as the E.E.C. or the European Common Market. As we well know, nearly every one of our rural industries today is beset with some problem or other, some great and some perhaps a little less. I do not think it is really necessary to mention such industries as wool and wheat, but I do so because they are perhaps the most severely affected in our rural economy today. However, there are others and they have just as much importance to those engaged in them.

It was with some concern that I noticed the Premier recently was quoted in the Press as not being worried about the effect on the economy of rural industries because of the prospect of the United Kingdom entering the E.E.C. He said, in effect, that he could not see that we were going to be so greatly disadvantaged—a very broad statement. However, I suggest that such a view would not be shared by those in the industries which are and will be very directly concerned should Britain enter the E.E.C., as it seems likely to do.

More particularly it would be appropriate if I were to refer to the apple industry of this State. Over a number of seasons now approximately half the apples exported from Western Australia have been marketed in the United Kingdom, but should Britain enter the E.E.C. it is unfortunately expected that our market there will be either lost or tremendously impaired.

There is no doubt that countries producing apples, either within the E.E.C. or more advantageously placed to supply the E.E.C. under the terms of Britain's entry, will take advantage of those opportunities. It would seem to me that once Britain has entered the E.E.C. set-up it would be almost prohibitive for us to send our apples to the United Kingdom, because a levy of between 50c and 60c per bushel will be imposed and this means we will be unable to export apples to that particular market, which has been traditional for our Western Australian growers.

To indicate the value of the apple market in the United Kingdom to the Western Australian growers I mention that for the year 1969 the value of apples exported through that outlet was \$2,135,000, or 43 per cent. of the total value of all apples exported from Western Australia. That figure could be perhaps a little low because, as I mentioned earlier, it has been a tradition that roughly 50 per cent. of our apple exports overseas have gone to the United Kingdom.

This means that the apple industry of Western Australia is on the brink of what could be disaster, and to find that the Premier of this State said as he apparently did off the cuff, that Britain's entry into the E.E.C. is of comparatively no moment is to me indeed alarming. I am sure that those engaged in the apple industry—whether they be producers, exporters, or transport operators—will be equally alarmed.

Other industries will be affected by the United Kingdom's entry into the E.E.C., and these are the lamb and mutton industry and, to a lesser extent, the cheese, honey, and beef and veal industries. Exports from Western Australia to the United Kingdom during 1969-70—the figures I am quoting are taken from the official statistics—indicate that the value of mutton and lamb, including offal, was \$1,360,000, and for the 11 months from the 1st July to the 31st May this year, the figure was \$1,767,000.

The full value of beef and veal exported to the United Kingdom in the year 1969-70 was \$886,000 and for the 11 months to the 31st May this year, the figure was \$955,000, which is a little higher. The value of cheese and honey exported is comparatively small, the value of the honey being about \$250,000, and the value of the cheese being something in the order of \$190,000.

I now want to make particular reference to the beef industry. It has been asked of me on a number of occasions in recent years, and more particularly in recent months, "What is the future of the beef industry in Western Australia and in Australia?" And that is a fair question. Very often we, as members of Parliament are criticised for not endeavouring to show the way and guide the producers in their thoughts, and I have consequently taken it upon myself in my own humble way to take a look at the beef industry and consider where it may or may not be heading. It is fair to say that at the present time the beef industry in Western Australia, and, indeed, in Australia is in a fairly healthy condition. It is probably one of the healthiest industries in these troubled times and we are all grateful for that.

The beef and veal production in Western Australia has shown an upward trend since 1966-67, but in 1969-70 it had not quite recovered from the record level of production of just over 1,000,000 tons which occurred in 1964-65. When I looked at the statistics I realised that the beef herd had grown rapidly in the three years ended March, 1970, and this increase appears to provide the basis of substantial increases in production in the future.

While the demand for beef is strong and rising in importing countries, import restrictions by our major overseas customers have placed a limit on the rate of expansion of exports. At the current good prices,

domestic consumption is unlikely to rise or expand by more than the rate of the population growth which is running at about 2 per cent., for the sake of the exercise. However, as the output seems likely to rise faster than the trend of the rate of market growth, increased supplies may need to be absorbed on the domestic market causing lower beef prices and some downward pressure on the prices of other meats.

Having said that I would now like members to consider the world situation in regard to beef, and particularly the situation in those countries engaged in producing beef for world consumption. The beef industry is dependent on both the domestic market and the overseas export trade, and this statement is probably true with regard to the world market, but it is certainly true about the Australian market.

In looking at the countries concerned with the E.E.C. I realise that most of the beef production comes from dairy cattle, as distinct from beef cattle. This may seem a little strange to us here, but apparently this has been the case. As a result of this, there has been a decrease in the dairy herds because a number have been killed off for beef purposes.

While there were fluctuations in cattle numbers over a 10-year period in the countries associated with the E.E.C., expansion in output over the longer term has been achieved chiefly through the retention of greater numbers of calves to maturity before slaughter. This is normal, but it was interesting to read. To a lesser extent, more imports of live cattle for slaughter assisted the cattle numbers to be stabilised.

Within the E.E.C., Italy appears to be a major importer of live animals. The Common Market countries appear to be supplied with live animals from eastern European countries in the main. I think it is important for us to recognise that, in August 1968, the Common Market for beef and veal came into operation and, from that point onward, it does appear that our Australian exports were affected. In order to maintain the Common Market for beef and veal in Europe, the domestic prices are maintained by varying the level of protection against imports. I will not go into the way in which that is achieved except to say that there is a regulating formula which determines how much beef will come onto the market and at what price.

Turning to some countries around the world that are beef producers, I would like to make some comments. I might add this is all relevant to Australia, because what happens in other countries will undoubtedly affect us in Australia, and in Western Australia, if we wish to market our beef overseas.

In Argentina estimates of cattle numbers indicate that great fluctuations have occurred over the last 15 years. A high proportion of the annual output is absorbed by the domestic market and this amounts to perhaps 70 per cent.; the other 30 per cent. is exported. In the main, Argentina supplies customers in the United Kingdom—where we have been active—the E.E.C., and Spain.

In respect of New Zealand, I find that there are some features which are worthy of note. For some years, the New Zealand Government has fostered expansion of the beef industry, for example, by providing loans to producers for the retention of calves. It was in July, 1969, that a new measure was introduced. At that time the Government of New Zealand brought in a scheme to provide a basic payment of \$10 (New Zealand) per dairy beef calf to certain dairy farmers. This means that the Government has been encouraging production of beef by people who were formerly dairy producers. Strangely enough, the domestic consumption of beef in New Zealand appears to be declining. This is contrary to what is happening in some of the other countries of the world, as members will see. New Zealand's traditional markets have been the United States, Canada, and Japan.

Turning a little closer to Europe, I should like to look at the Irish Republic. Also through Government encouragement, the Irish Republic has an expansion programme of cattle numbers. It is a Government sponsored incentive scheme to encourage beef herd expansion. The scheme applies only to owners of beef herds and not to dairy producers. This is contrary to New Zealand. Little beef is sold on the home market in the Irish Republic and most of it is exported. Here again, the main export trade has been with the United Kingdom under the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement in 1966. Not only does it export slaughtered beef but also live cattle. Its other major market is the United States.

Denmark is another country which has been fairly active in the cattle market in recent years—so active, in fact, that its cattle numbers are decreasing quite sharply. Perhaps its exporting effect on the world market may be a diminishing one. The decrease has been mainly attributable to exporting live cattle rather than slaughtered cattle.

In South America, Uruguay is another country which is an active participant in the beef trade. I find that the cattle numbers in Uruguay have fluctuated quite widely over the last 10 to 15 years. There is no marked trend as to where it is heading except that a high proportion of beef is consumed on the domestic market; it is quite a high ratio per person by international standards. In 1967 the rate of consumption of beef per person

in Uruguay was estimated to be about 147 lb. The United Kingdom used to be the main market for exports, but, in 1969, a ban was imposed and it has subsequently brought export to that country to a halt. However, since then, much heavier supplies have gone from Uruguay to the Federal Republic of Germany, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

A market which is of particular interest, I am sure, to us in Western Australia is that of Japan. I consider we must give a tremendous amount of attention to this area because Japan, with rapidly rising incomes and a changing pattern of food consumption, particularly during the 1960s and up to 1970, has increased its consumption of meat and dairy products very greatly indeed, and this has been accompanied by reductions in the consumption of traditional food such as fish and rice.

Whereas the consumption of fish and rice is on the decline, the rate of consumption of meat has substantially risen. Meat consumption per head rose from only 9 lb. in 1960 to 18 lb. in 1968. That is double the consumption per head of population. An increase of 9 lb. per person may not seem large, but we should stop to think of the rate of increase in the population in Japan. If we do, the figure is doubly significant. Most of the increased consumption of meat in Japan appears to be related to pork, poultry meat, and mutton. However, beef and veal also have their place, although the increase is only marginal. The consumption used to be 3 lb. per person in 1960 and it went up to 4 lb. in 1968, which is 1 lb. per head. It still is significant if we think of the population trend.

In respect of trade with Japan, Australia, together with other countries, is subjected to the Japanese global quota system which is imposed on imports of beef and veal. The quotas are set by the Ministry of Agriculture and are regulated, partly to influence domestic prices of beef and veal, and partly to limit competitive pressures on the domestic pork market.

I could mention here that imported beef is subjected to a tariff of 25 per cent. *ad valorem* in addition to a levy of 60 yen per kilo. Although Australia and New Zealand have been the predominant suppliers of this market, I think it can be exploited still further, and we will need to do this. I refer again to the system under which meat is imported into Japan; namely, the global quota system.

One market which interests us a great deal is the United States of America. I have come to realise during the course of my research that there is an upward movement in this country of production of beef and veal from domestic sources. Emphasis on the domestic market has shifted from manufacturing beef towards

the production of high quality beef based on feed lot operations, as distinct from open range grazing. This is a fairly concentrated exercise.

We find to our advantage—and to the advantage of other exporting countries—that domestic consumption of beef and veal in the United States is increasing. At the present time I understand the rate of consumption is something in the order of 114 lb. per person per year. So far as imports of beef and veal into the United States are concerned, there is a strong demand for beef suitable for processing, mainly in boneless form for manufacturing purposes. The United States also imports manufactured meats by way of canned, prepared, and preserved beef. Further, because population is increasing rapidly in the United States and it has a high consumption of beef per head of population, a significant quantity of live cattle is being imported chiefly from Mexico and Canada, two countries which are adjacent to the United States.

However, one event has affected us in Australia and other countries too; namely, in 1964 the United States passed legislation in part of Public Law 88,482, which referred to contingency quotas that can be applied to United States imports of beef, veal, mutton, and goat meat when imports are expected to exceed 110 per cent. of an adjusted base quantity. I do not intend to go into the ramifications of how that base quantity is arrived at, except to say that the law is in existence. It is well known and has been quoted before in export circles. I have mentioned it for the record, because it is pertinent to our endeavours to supply the market.

Turning to the European scene and again particularly to countries associated with the E.E.C., it is well to realise that, in the main, the consumption rate of beef and veal per head of population is rising steadily. This is contrary to what is happening in New Zealand, for some strange reason.

In 1968 the rate of consumption per head in Italy was about 42 lb. and in France it was something like 77 lb. which, I understand, is the highest consumption rate in Europe.

Could I say that from my examination of the beef industry it would seem that expansion of beef production in the E.E.C. may be inhibited by a decline in dairy cattle numbers in some E.E.C. countries? I mentioned earlier that dairy herds were being depleted because of the beef industry.

The development of a distinctly beef producing industry on a large scale would be difficult because of the structure of small farms in the E.E.C. countries and, then again, there is a shortage of animals for fattening. This will probably restrict the development of feed lot operations on the American pattern.

On the whole, the E.E.C. seems likely to continue to be a major importer of beef. Although the E.E.C. is likely to be a major importer of beef for a number of years to come, once Britain enters the Common Market it is difficult for me to see how we, in Australia, can take advantage of this situation. The availability of beef in other countries is one factor but, in addition, they have the advantage of access and, consequently, transport costs and other factors will have a bearing.

Having said that, I believe it is important for Australia that the E.E.C. should remain a major market for other exporters, as this reduces the degree of competition Australia incurs in third markets. These third markets—if I could use that expression—are the markets which we, as Western Australians, and Australians, must now take full advantage of.

It would seem that Britain will very probably enter the E.E.C. We are unlikely to benefit from it directly; but, indirectly, we must push for other third markets and not be so disadvantaged. This will be achieved through our own endeavours.

Having said all that, I would like to sum up in this way, particularly being mindful of the fact that questions have been asked of me as to where the beef industry is going: As I see it, the production of beef and veal in Australia has shown a rising trend since the early 1950s, despite fluctuations from year to year. Domestic consumption has fallen over the period and exports have risen by a greater proportion than production.

Prices for slaughter cattle have continued on a rising trend, and indeed today the beef industry is most favourably placed in that regard. The greatest influence on Australian cattle prices has been the high prices paid for imported beef in the United States. These United States prices have had the effect of diverting Australian beef supplies from other export markets such as the United Kingdom, and have been a principal reason for the rise in prices to Australian consumers and, hence, for the fall in domestic consumption per head.

High cattle prices, together with restricted market prospects for most other rural commodities, have caused an accelerated flow of resources into the beef industry since about 1967—some three years ago. During this period beef production has not been expanded to the same extent as cattle numbers, producers having concentrated primarily on building up their breeding herds. But the potential for beef production has increased considerably and the problem of finding sufficient markets to absorb a greatly expanded output could rise over the next few years.

I find that the demand for beef in Australia's main overseas markets could continue to expand and further rises in

exports to the United States, Japan, and perhaps the U.S.S.R. can be expected; but only if we pursue all these export outlets with the greatest of vigour.

It is reasonable to assume that the rate of increase in exports to these countries will be somewhat restricted because of their own expanding programmes of beef production and—with the exception of Canada—where the position is not quite the same—as a result of their qualitative and other import controls. Exports of Australian beef to either Britain or the E.E.C. appear unlikely to rise to any significant extent, and if Britain does in fact join the E.E.C. her imports of beef from Australia will probably decline. I mention that the E.E.C. will continue to receive a large quantity of beef from other countries and this is something which I repeat because I think it is well to remember it.

I find that Australian efforts to develop other export markets have had some success, but they require a lot of help and encouragement. However, over the next four or five years additional quantities shipped to these smaller markets are not likely to amount to a very large part of total Australian supplies. At current prices, the expansion of the domestic consumption of beef is not likely to be any greater than about 2 per cent. per year, which is the expected growth rate in population.

If export markets cannot absorb the greater part of the expected increase in production, producers may have to look for a considerable expansion in domestic sales and these would be at reduced prices. Apart from its effect on returns to beef producers, this could cause some reduction in the sales and prices of other meats, and I refer particularly to lamb, mutton, pig meat, and poultry meat. All those meats rely heavily on the domestic market, so the action we take in the beef field has an effect on the other meats in the competitive field of selling.

So I return to the point I made earlier, that I viewed with some dismay the action of the Premier when he saw fit to say, in effect, that Britain's entry into the E.E.C. would be of small moment. I think it has a bearing on the whole economy of the country and whereas there will be some adjustments as a result of Britain's entry into the E.E.C.—which seems most likely indeed now—that does not mean that we should say, "All right; there are plenty of other markets for us to tap." I think we should pursue other markets with the utmost vigour and with the strong backing of a virile Government.

I would like to refer, if I may, to the policy speech of the present Government, and I quote:—

Small farms are still economically viable in other countries and given the proper attention by governments they can continue to be so here.

I have yet to find exactly what are small farms. As we well know, a market garden can be relatively small in area but highly profitable in production. That applies also to apple growing and, certainly, to dairying. So I find it rather difficult to understand why the Leader of this Government sees fit to say, offhandedly, "We will perhaps not be disadvantaged."

I challenge the Government to adopt a most vigorous policy in respect of the needs of rural industries, and this must be done through the normal channels and with the goodwill of the organisations and the individuals involved. Until that is done I am afraid we will be somewhat behind the barrier in regard to competition that will come from other countries around the world.

I trust that my remarks tonight will help some people in regard to their worries as to just where the beef industry is going. I feel there is a definite future for beef. There will be some readjustments, but I would hope the Government would come in and help not only the beef industry but also, more especially, all rural industries in the export field.

THE HON. R. F. CLAUGHTON (North Metropolitan) [8.22 p.m.]: Like Mr. MacKinnon, I would like to congratulate the new members for the excellent start they have made in this Chamber with their maiden speeches. It is somewhat flattering to find our policy the subject of such close study by members of the Opposition. Of course, it is also somewhat pleasing to hear Mr. MacKinnon congratulate us on achieving the Government and on the excellence of our public relations. Likewise, I would congratulate him on the ease with which he has fitted into the role of Opposition and I trust that he will continue to enjoy that position for some time to come.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: I have been here before.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr. MacKinnon said, when speaking of the financial situation of the State—and he gave quotations from the Press—"This is a definitive statement of the history."

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Surely I do not have to spell out every detail.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: I am a little curious because I could find only two dates that were actually prior to the last State election, and they were the 15th December and, I think, the 13th February. However, at no stage did Mr. MacKinnon quote any statement by the present Leader of the Opposition in which the State was warned that it was likely to face rather serious financial commitments in the future, yet he claimed that the Premier should have been able to discern this. I find it rather difficult to reconcile these different concepts.

The Hon. J. Heitman: Perhaps he gave the Premier more credit than he gives you.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Mr. MacKinnon mentioned the 15th December, and that date refers to a wage decision. That decision was likely to cost the State \$12,000,000 if I remember correctly.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You remember totally incorrectly, because I said no such thing.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: Perhaps the honourable member could correct me if I misquote him. I would appreciate it.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It would take so much time the President would stop me.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The date in question was the 15th December, and the election was towards the end of February. On the 25th March, the present Leader of the Opposition was saying that the cost to the State of the wage adjustments was likely to be up to \$20,000,000. That was shortly after the elections, and the honourable gentleman did not give any instance of where the past Premier warned the State that this situation was likely to occur.

I would believe the honourable member when he said that Sir David Brand is a very honest man. I do not dispute that point; however, I would also say that Mr. Tonkin is an extremely honest man. I know that when he made statements to the people that if the Labor Party became the Government he would be able to finance his election promises, he made them on the facts as he knew them.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The only answer to that is that he just cannot add up.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The honourable member can say that to Mr. Tonkin if he likes, and perhaps Mr. Tonkin will demonstrate his ability to add. I repeat that Mr. Tonkin is an honest man if he said, on the facts available to him, that he would be able to carry the cost of his election promises then we must believe that on the information he was given he would be able to do so. Once more, I repeat no statement was made by the previous Premier that the State was likely to face a serious financial situation.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: He said on the 15th December that there would be a \$12,000,000 deficit.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: That is just one statement; one item in the Press.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do you want it every day for a month?

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: The then Government had every opportunity to repeat the facts before the election. It was saying what it would cost the State if

we became the Government and our promises were implemented, and yet no reference was made to this. I will leave the history as outlined by Mr. MacKinnon at that and let the public make up their own minds as to where the truth actually lies.

The Hon. V. J. Ferry: They have probably made up their minds already.

The Hon. R. F. CLAUGHTON: They made up their minds all right! I wish chiefly to speak on some matters concerning education. I try to avoid this subject if I can, but it has been my interest for so long that I find it difficult to do so. As we all know, wage increases are one of the costs which the Government has to bear and which will lead to a large deficit at the end of this financial year if no change occurs in the meantime. However, that is only one aspect of education.

We must have attractive rates of pay for teachers in order to maintain the supply of teachers. Obviously if the rates of pay in the profession compare unfavourably with those of other occupations, then we will not get people to fill the training colleges to keep the supply of teachers up to our needs. There is also strain within the profession in relation to the conditions under which teachers have to work, and this is causing numbers of teachers to leave.

As this was the situation when the previous Government was in office and is still the same now, I hope the present Government will do something to change it. One of the reasons is that for some years now in certain places teaching methods have changed which require different types of equipment and classroom organisation. If a teacher is expected to instruct in accordance with the new methods laid down he must have the necessary equipment. On the whole the parents and citizens' associations have done excellent work in supplying such equipment whenever they have had the finance to do so. The teacher must also have the necessary facilities within the classroom itself.

What a teacher can do with 45 pupils under the traditional methods of education is quite different from what he can do when he tries to teach under the methods used in the cluster-type schools. Previously the children were expected to sit in desks set out in rows. The teacher taught them *en bloc* and all the children did the same thing at the one time. One teacher could manage more than 45 pupils. In fact, a teacher can manage a class of 60 pupils, which I did at one stage, but that is not desirable.

Under the present system of education, where the subject allows it, there is no reason why a teacher cannot handle a class of 60 or more. It depends on what he is trying to teach. However, he certainly could not do that for the whole

teaching day. The methods that have been brought into the schools mean that teaching is becoming more individualised; they allow for the individual progress of students. To achieve this there is no longer a rigid pattern of children quietly sitting in desks set out in rows. The children can work individually or in groups and there is generally a certain amount of noise in the classroom. In some instances two teachers are in the classroom.

This is where the strains on the teacher occur, because there has not been a complete reorganisation. The two systems of education have become mixed, and they simply do not mix. If there is to be the rigid method of a classroom having desks set out in rows, then the teacher must teach according to the traditional pattern. If a school wishes to introduce the new methods that have been adopted, class organisation must be changed and the size of the class reduced to one that will allow the teacher to cope.

In those instances where changes are not made, the situation becomes very frustrating and nerve racking for many teachers and some eventually leave the profession because they cannot cope with it. This is certainly not desirable. A number of the old schools are not equipped to cope with the changes, particularly in regard to the provision of storage space; that is, the storage space allowed for so many pads, boxes of chalk, blotting paper, and so on. Today a school is expected to have a library which is not in the classroom. It is much more suitable to have a central library. However, there are also multiple sets of reading material. These, too, are not kept in the classroom but in a central spot, and as different groups take the books out and read them they are then replaced at that spot.

When the free textbook scheme is introduced by the Government a greater demand will be made on the storage space at the school. The Government will be required to look at the needs of the old established schools to ensure that their storage problems are resolved.

Briefly I would like to refer to the action of the Premier in revoking regulation 139, which prevented teachers from speaking out if they so desired. Education is such an important element in our society it is vital that those in the profession should be allowed to speak out and to indicate where the faults in education lie. No matter which Government may be in office, I think education is too important not to allow teachers to do this. I believe the notice revoking regulation 139 was published on the 10th June, but to date we have not had many examples of teachers exercising this new freedom. We should hear more from them by their speaking out on the needs of education and the direction that

new steps should take to effect improvements, because they are probably more aware of the problems than anyone else.

I should also like to see at the earliest possible moment the autonomy of teachers' colleges. This again would provide specialists in education with their necessary removal from the department itself. They are in the best position to criticise the system and to point to where it is falling down. Such criticism, of course, would keep the department on its toes. With those remarks, I support the motion.

THE HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [8.38 p.m.]: As this is the first time I have addressed the House this session I will take the opportunity, if I may, to congratulate those members who were elected at the last election. I hope they will have a very fruitful stay here. I also offer my congratulations to our new Ministers and wish them a long life, as they say, until the next election.

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: Good on you!

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: Only a few moments ago I was looking around this Chamber and I realised how rapidly changes take place here. I noticed that of the 30 members who were present in this House when I was elected in 1955 only six remain, and four of them are members of the Country Party. So during that fairly short time many changes have occurred.

Having said that, I would now like to make some remarks on the proposal to establish a fruit canning factory at Manjimup. As members know, the original estimate for the setting up of this cannery in the Manjimup area was \$320,000. At the same time a proposal had also been made for the cannery to be set up in the old flax mill at Boyup Brook for approximately \$160,000 which was considerably less. However, the original estimate of \$320,000 to establish the factory at Manjimup has now been pruned to \$209,000, of which \$180,000 will be provided by the Government by means of a guarantee.

The main reason for the reduction in the estimate stems from a decision to reduce the size of the building from its original area of 300 feet long by 80 feet wide to an area of 135 feet by 60 feet, which is a fairly large reduction. It is also proposed to equip this factory in part, at least, with obsolete machinery. When it was suggested that the canning factory should be established in the old flax mill at Boyup Brook it was never intended to be a permanent arrangement; it was to be only a stop-gap measure to gain time so that a cannery who was operating elsewhere and who had a captive market could be attracted to this State, because an established market is a very important factor in the canning industry.

I can only express the very sincere hope that this proposal has been researched with the idea of establishing the industry with a view to future expansion, because this must be done if it is to be successful. This must be done if only to keep abreast of the increasing costs which undoubtedly are ahead of us. This includes transport costs, which represent not a small factor in this particular industry. If the factory is to be established in Manjimup the cost of transport will loom large, because cans and sugar will have to be transported to the cannery and then, after the processing, the product will have to be transported to the nearest market. Transport has always been known to be one of the difficulties associated with the industry.

I know there is talk—I believe it is only talk at this stage—of the canning factory expanding to embrace vegetable processing. As a result of all the inquiries I have been able to make into the processing of vegetables, I believe it is not an attractive proposition, and therefore I have serious doubts as to the ultimate success of the factory expanding into vegetable processing, because it is a very competitive field.

On the question of establishing industries which in the first place are not researched sufficiently, an example can be cited in Boyup Brook where it was proposed to set up this industry on a temporary basis in the old flax mill. The flax industry at Boyup Brook was established during the war as a wartime necessity. After the war a very determined attempt was made to continue the industry; an attempt that was made without researching all the pros and cons associated with it with a view to ascertaining if it were a viable proposition under peacetime conditions. Had this research been carried out, a great deal of heartbreak to people in the area would have been avoided, because it would not have been long before it would have been proved quite conclusively that it was not a viable proposition in peace-time without great assistance from the Government. That Government assistance was not forthcoming and so the industry was forced to close.

What troubles me is the proposal to establish a cannery in the Manjimup area, which has already suffered considerable reverses. Many members will recall that when the tobacco industry closed down in the Manjimup area it was a serious blow to those engaged in the industry and to the community as a whole. The people suffered another severe blow when the S.P.C. canning company, which proposed to build a cannery in the district, withdrew from the negotiations.

If a viable industry can be set up for \$209,000 one wonders why S.P.C. pulled out after having spent the amount that it did spend. That leaves me in some doubt as to whether the feasibility of this industry has been researched properly.

I would not like to see people being encouraged to go into this industry under a false sense of security, in the belief that the industry will, no doubt, be a success. There is some doubt that it will in future be able to function without a great deal of financial help from the public purse. If that is the situation, I believe the time will come when this industry will fail as other industries, which were dependent on Government support, have failed.

If the feasibility of this industry has been researched sufficiently and it has proven to be a sound business proposition, then I question the wisdom of setting it up on a shoestring budget—as one newspaper in the district described it. That, undoubtedly, is the position.

If it is a sound business proposition, then I believe it should have been set up on a better basis than it has. The fact that the establishment of the industry has been pruned to the figure I have mentioned leads me to fear that its feasibility has not been researched or proven to be a sound business proposition. I would, in fact, be a lot easier in my mind if I could feel the industry was being set up as a sound business proposition, rather than as a political expedient; and I believe the latter to be the case.

I can only express the very fervent hope that my fears in regard to this industry will prove to be groundless; and nothing would give me greater pleasure than for my fears to be proved groundless. I do not want to labour the question. I felt I had to express my doubts about this proposition.

The next matter I wish to comment on is the proposal to abolish the road maintenance tax. I believe this proposal came about as a result of a highly decorated bandwagon set up during the last election, mainly by the Country Party, but it was a political bandwagon onto which the present Premier gleefully bounded without any real thought as to the ultimate result of that leap. Now we find the Government is stuck with it.

From what the Premier said in answer to a question it is apparent to me that the Government does not propose to tax anybody specifically for the purpose of compensating for the damage caused by heavy haulage vehicles on Western Australian roads. I can only deduce from the comment that any revenue which is lost through the abolition of the road maintenance tax will have to be met by John Citizen, who will be asked to pay the piper. Furthermore, John Citizen will be asked to pay regardless of whether or not he operates a rusty wheelbarrow on our roads. To my mind that is a much more inequitable set-up than the road maintenance tax ever was.

We will also have the ludicrous position where a transport operator from another State who has paid a license fee in another State will be able to operate in

this State without cost and will contribute exactly nothing. Incidentally those operators while operating in any of the other States, will be paying a road maintenance charge. Again, this does not seem to me to be a very equitable proposition.

I believe it is far better to continue with the road maintenance tax. I agree that nobody has ever thought for one moment that the road maintenance tax was an ideal tax, and no tax is ever likely to be one; but it would be better to apply this tax and to give consideration to further exemptions, such as the exemption on the cartage of livestock which was granted previously. This would be a far better way of handling the position than to abolish the road maintenance tax, with the results I have mentioned.

At this stage no good purpose would be served by my labouring this question. What I will do in the future in regard to the proposal to abolish the road maintenance tax I leave until such time as the particular piece of legislation is before this House. I support the Bill.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan) [8.52 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity in support of the Bill before us to say a few words on the subject of environmental protection. It is true to say that the last few years have seen an awakening by most peoples of the world to the necessity to preserve and protect the environment against man's depredations.

We have all seen examples which have occurred over many years in respect of the spoiling of the environment in the exploitation of the world's resources. In many cases this has happened quite inadvertently, without the people concerned intending in any way to spoil the environment. They did this simply in the development of their countries and in the normal course of progress. However, there has been an awakening of world conscience.

Perhaps two examples over the last century of inadvertent spoiling of the environment readily spring to mind. The first is the overstocking of pastoral properties which occurred in the north-west of this State. Due to a desire on the part of the leaseholders to get as much as they could, and as quickly as possible, many of them overstocked their properties to such an extent that their action eroded the soil and denuded the country of any useful vegetation. Some of those properties have been regenerated and are coming back into production, but others have been abandoned.

Another example of which I became aware is what took place in Queenstown in Tasmania. This was a company town which had been exploited for 60 or 70 years for the purpose of extracting copper and other minerals. A great hill of ore right behind the town had been removed,

and the spoil or waste was dumped into the river. The whole countryside around this town still looks like an area which has been blasted by an atomic explosion.

These things happened inadvertently. It was only in recent years that the world became aware of the fact that man could spoil his environment if he was not careful, and that there was a necessity for legislation to be passed to protect man from the effects of industrial progress. So, last year in this Parliament the then Government enacted a Bill which became the Physical Environment Protection Act, No. 93 of 1970. This was designed to lay down certain principles and guidelines for the protection of the environment in Western Australia.

When this Bill came before one of the Houses of Parliament it was suggested by the then Opposition that it required amendment, and it was contended that the provisions of the Bill were not strong enough. Subsequently the then Leader of the Opposition in his policy speech before the last election stated that a bigger and a better Act would be enacted in the following session of Parliament if his party won the election. The following appeared in the policy speech of the then Leader of the Opposition who is now the Premier:—

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

This Authority will administer the Act which we shall ask Parliament to pass and assume overall responsibility for environment protection and conservation notwithstanding provisions to the contrary in such Acts as the Mining Act. We shall appoint an Environment Protection Council and an Environment Protection Appeal Board.

I take it that in due course we will see before the House a new Physical Environment Protection Bill which will incorporate the proposals announced by the Leader of the Labor Party.

Nevertheless, during the last session of Parliament a Bill for an Act to protect the environment was passed, but that Act has not been proclaimed by the present Government. From the time of the passage of that Act until a new Act is passed by this Parliament, pursuant to the policy speech of the Labor Party, there has been and there will be a hiatus in environmental protection, as far as legislation in Western Australia is concerned.

I am quite certain that from the remarks made by the Premier it is clearly intended that a new and strengthened piece of legislation will be introduced. The existing Act, which has not been proclaimed, does

provide protection and, in my view, it should have been invoked so that it could be applied at the present time to certain activities which are taking place in this State.

I draw attention to section 23 of the Physical Environment Protection Act, No. 93 of 1970, which in essence states that a Minister of the Crown under whose administration any planning stages are being prepared for an industrial project, the nature of which requires the protection of the physical environment in relation thereto to be considered, shall as soon as practicable refer the matter to the Minister for Environmental Protection for his consideration and advice.

As I see it, there is a hiatus, because the Act has not been proclaimed, and this does seem to me to cast upon the Cabinet and the Minister for Environmental Protection a very serious responsibility to ensure that the hiatus is filled by appropriate action on the part of the present Government. Cabinet, by failing to proclaim the existing Act, has now assumed the mantle of the protector of the environment.

I draw attention particularly to the power line to be established along the Darling Range. It is proposed by the State Electricity Commission that the power line be built either along the foothills, or along the valleys behind the frontal area of the Darling Range. This matter has been mentioned in the newspapers, and there has been quite a lot of public comment on it.

I would like to make it clear that I do not know anything about the technicalities of this power line, nor am I criticising the necessity for a power line to be built or the good faith of the S.E.C. in putting forward its plans concerning the power line. I personally do not doubt for one moment that if the S.E.C. has put up the proposition that a power line should be placed in a certain position it has done so in accordance with its professional competence, to the best of its ability, and in accordance with the requirements under its Act.

I do not doubt for a moment that the S.E.C. has sufficient skilled engineers and administrators to properly put before the Government proposals in accordance with the Act which proclaims it as an instrumentality. However, the point I make is that there is a hiatus in environmental protection due to the Government's failure to proclaim the Act passed in the last session of Parliament.

In view of the proclaimed statements of the Leader of the Government, has the Cabinet given this matter of the power line the full and adequate consideration which it should have from the point of view of environmental protection? I am

not questioning the competence of the S.E.C., or the competence of the Minister for Electricity in putting forward his views, but I ask: Did the Minister for Electricity refer this matter to the Minister for Environmental Protection? Was that reference made? The reference was required to be made under the old Act.

It might be said that the old Act was not proclaimed and, therefore, such reference does not have to be made. However, in the absence of the proclamation I believe it casts an obligation on Cabinet to show that it has done something and taken some action. If no action has been taken, then the equivalent precautions should be taken to ensure that this particular matter is referred—on an environment basis—to environment experts for a report.

I wonder if the Minister for Environmental Protection called for any reports from experts. I know the experts do not exist under this Act, because the Act was not proclaimed; but was a report called for from any experts as to whether or not the environment would be affected by the power lines? If a report was called for I wonder what it disclosed and whether it recommended proceeding with the power line as proposed.

If no report was called for and there was no reference by the Minister for Electricity to the Minister for Environmental Protection, is Cabinet prepared to positively assert that the environment will not be affected by the power lines, and that alternative solutions have been thoroughly researched?

I believe that is an important requirement. It is something that cannot be hidden; it cannot be obscured in any words. If, in fact, that consideration has been given; if the proper references have been made; if the proper reports have been given by persons qualified to do so, then I think the Government should come out and say so. If Cabinet is not satisfied that all possible alternatives have been examined I think it should turn around and examine those possible alternatives. That is the simple question.

Having failed to proclaim the old Act, has Cabinet put itself in the chair of the Environment Protection Council? It must do so as long as there is no legislation in force in view of the proclaimed statements of the Leader of the Government, and in view of the action of the previous Government in passing the Act last year.

THE HON. G. W. BERRY (Lower North) [9.04 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new members to this House. I hope their stay is long and enjoyable. I also congratulate the Ministers now sitting on the Government benches, and I also hope their stay is pleasant, although not a long one.

I want to touch on the subject of the system of annual rental values for shire rating purposes. From my own personal experience I consider the system to be no very equitable. Of course, I appreciate that every one wants more money. This applies particularly to local authorities, Government departments, and individuals. I realise the shires have to adopt a system from which they will derive most money.

Under the present system of annual rental value, a person who builds in an improved area seems to be at a disadvantage, because he causes an increase in annual rental values and a subsequent increase in his rates. I am of the opinion that if someone is able to improve a particular area, he should not be disadvantaged as a result.

I have had the situation brought home very forcibly to me in the town of Carnarvon, where I recently built a house. I built in a new subdivision developed by the shire council, which is referred to as Morgan Town. In this instance the shire reinforced the existing levy bank for flood protection, and the blocks were subdivided and serviced. A country sewerage scheme was provided. The costs of the reinforcing of the levy banks, the building of the roads and kerbing, and the provision of power were included in the upset price of the blocks. The blocks were auctioned and sold at what would probably be considered a reasonable figure in another area, but at a figure which would probably be considered exorbitant in a township such as Carnarvon.

However, that was the fact of the matter, and the blocks have subsequently been built on to provide accommodation for persons employed at the tracking station, by Texada mines and by various Government departments. Also, there are some private individuals like myself.

Soon after the houses were constructed we received our rate notices. The first bill I received was for shire rates, including a charge for the country sewerage scheme, and including rubbish rates, and it amounted to \$220.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: It must be a good house.

The Hon. G. W. BERRY: It is a mansion or at least it should be! Half the amount of the account was for shire rates, and the other half was for the country sewerage scheme. I will start with the country sewerage scheme; and the area I am referring to is just one which is served by this particular scheme. The loan was to be serviced over 40 years. I think it would be a reasonable assumption that there should be a certain cost per block, and that cost should not be difficult to work out. In the case of power, the cost to each block included the power lines and the equipment involved.

However, under the country sewerage scheme one is rated under the annual rental value system. First of all I must state that I appealed against the annual rental value and it was reduced by \$200 with the effect of reducing the overall rates by \$60. Working on the amended figure I find that I pay \$80 per annum while a house within half a stone's throw is rated at the sum total of \$38. My house received no additional services to those supplied to the house across the street. The services were supplied to each individual block and yet in my case the rates are twice as much as those charged for the other house.

I fail to see that such a system could be considered to be fair and equitable, and I cannot reconcile the situation. I understand the situation has been brought about by the fact that the house which I built is considered to be one which would attract a rental that would be at least twice as much as that attracted by the other house to which I have referred. For that reason I had to pay twice as much for the sewerage rate. I was not charged twice as much for the power and other services.

Further, the annual rental value was applied to the water rates. The water which I use has no more value than that used on any other property. Under the present system I have to pay twice as much for my water rates—not the water which I use—as is paid in respect of the other house which is half a stone's throw away. I fail to reconcile this situation.

I will now refer to shire rating. Once again, under the system, I paid a total of \$78 while a house within half a stone's throw pays \$37.50. Again, I cannot reconcile this situation. I am unable to see what extra services I am getting by building a house which has an annual rental value in excess of the other houses in the vicinity. The annual rental values are determined on the rents which are being charged in the area. In the case of Carnarvon, the rents are inflated and this inflation is brought about by the demand caused by the construction of the tracking station, in the first place, and the establishment of the Texada industry. Also, the normal increase in population has an effect. The position is aggravated by the big industries that have been established there.

I receive no more than anyone else for the money I have to pay. I have the same road and the same kerbing, and I cannot see anything that warrants my contributing twice as much as anyone else.

I consider that the system of rating on annual rental values is quite inequitable; yet it seems to be the only system the shires can adopt in order to obtain sufficient money for their operations. The matter of shire revenues needs more thinking about, in an endeavour to arrive

at an equitable system whereby people are not penalised for endeavouring to improve their properties. Under the present system no-one has any incentive to improve his property. Probably the majority of the people who are renting houses have their rents subsidised. In the case of the tracking station personnel, this would be done through A.W.A., which in turn would be subsidised by N.A.S.A., through the Department of Supply.

The house I built is of brick construction and is considered by valuers to have a higher value than the timber and asbestos houses that have been erected. When I was about to have the house erected, I was contemplating building it of fibro and asbestos. The builder said to me, "Why do you want to build it of that?" I said, "Because bricks would be too dear." He said, "They would not be that much dearer. It would not cost you in excess of \$2,000 more, but you would find that bricks and mortar would be a much better proposition from the point of view of value and maintenance, and if you take my advice you will build it in brick." I took his advice, yet in that area the house attracts approximately twice as much in rates as another type of house which is quite comfortable and in no way objectionable, and which has withstood a cyclone, so it cannot be said that it is a jerry-built place.

This matter concerns all people who live in remote areas. Everything seems to be equated with the metropolitan area. We find that the annual rental value takes into consideration the rents that are prevailing throughout the area, but it must not be less than 4 per cent. of the capital cost. I can only assume that it is based on capital costs in the metropolitan area. No distinction is made as to where the house is built.

In the Carnarvon area the cost of servicing blocks and building on them is greatly in excess of the cost in the metropolitan area. Costs in Carnarvon are considered to be 40 per cent. above costs in the metropolitan area, and the further north one goes the greater the costs become. In the Kimberleys costs are probably 110 per cent. greater than costs in the metropolitan area, but the annual rental value is 4 per cent. of the capital cost, which includes the cost of land and buildings. Therefore, the further one goes from the metropolitan area, the more exorbitant the costs become.

I have no doubt that not everyone in the metropolitan area is satisfied with this system, and I think it is high time someone had a look at it with a view to devising a more equitable one, because the situation will arise where it will not pay anyone to build a house and one would be better off in a mia-mia or a lean-to. It certainly makes one think twice about whether it is worth while trying to do anything.

I would say that until such time as we can devise a system which will result in more equitable rates, there will be no incentive outside the metropolitan area, or in the more remote areas, to make places attractive. It is hard enough to live in some places. It is not hard to live in Carnarvon, but there are many places in which it is difficult to live, and some of the developing towns will be faced with the same situation.

I think someone should have a good look at this system of rating on annual rental value, and at the matter of shire revenues, generally, in an endeavour to devise a more equitable system. I support the Bill.

THE HON. J. HEITMAN (Upper West) [9.24 p.m.]: I rise to support the Bill. One of the things that are of great concern to me is the fact that the new Government is very keen to hand over to the Police Department the country shire councils' traffic authority. Wherever I go in the country I get the same thing thrown at me—that the country shire councils are doing a very good job—and I think I have had letters from all the local authorities in the area I represent asking me to do something about this matter. If I may, I will read one of those letters, which will give members some idea of what country shire councils are thinking. This letter is addressed to me, and it says—

Like most other country Local Authorities, my Council is most concerned at the attitude of the Government in respect to its expressed intention to transfer country traffic control to the Police.

The Minister for Police and Transport has indicated that he is not prepared to discuss the matter with Local Authorities and that he intends to carry out the Government's policy as indicated.

It follows that the Government believes that it has a mandate to carry out its policy, however my Council believes that this is questionable. It could hardly be said that the Government has a mandate from the people most affected, that is country people whom we believe in the main, returned Opposition members as their representatives.

If implemented, the Government's policy has more far reaching effects than simply control of traffic, which the Council believes is traditionally and rightly the function of Local Authorities. The effect on Council Staff would strike at the very roots of country towns. It would be inevitable that families would be lost from country centres and the consequent effect on school attendances, local business houses and community organisations would be disastrous

when one has regard for the effect of the current rural recession which is already affecting the majority of country towns.

The Council has asked me to place its thoughts in the matter before you, with the earnest request that at the appropriate time you use every endeavour to reject the policy of the Government and to safeguard the interests of country electors.

I think that letter fairly sets out the thoughts of country people, who seem to have the impression that the Minister is not prepared to listen.

The Hon. J. Dolan: My ears are still tingling.

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: Many of them have said to me that, evidently, he is either arrogant or ringing the chains of office.

The Hon. J. Dolan: Rubbish!

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: I am more charitable than that. I know the Minister very well. I know he is not arrogant, and I know he would not endeavour to ring the chains of office. I have explained to people that he is in an awkward situation because he has made up his mind that the police will take over traffic, if it is possible, and he is therefore not prepared to listen to arguments. I think that would sum up the situation reasonably well.

I could continue talking about what country traffic has done to police traffic over the years, but at this point of time, when the argument does not arise, I would like to say I am very interested in the question the Leader of the Opposition asked today as to how much it will cost to make the changeover. I feel that a great deal of this money could be spent on making things better for police officers in the country, with the provision of better quarters, police stations, and courthouses.

The previous Government did an excellent job in gradually upgrading police stations, courthouses, and so on, right throughout the country areas, but it did not finish the job, of course. It is a job that must continue. I was in Laverton recently, and I was very disappointed to see the police station there. As members know, that is more or less the last outpost before one gets into the open country. There are four police officers stationed there. I do not think there is much wrong with their living quarters. I think that aspect has been quite well looked after, but the police station and quarters are something atrocious for four men to work in.

When we were there, the police had six natives there who had bought a car somehow or other in Kalgoorlie. They had bought enough petrol to get to Laverton but were hoping to get as far as the Warburton Range. Of course, the only way they would have of getting enough petrol to get them there would be to sponge on the native pensioners and other natives

who are on the reserve and who had got odd jobs around Laverton. Of course, they were taken in and charged with vagrancy. It seemed rather pitiful that this had to happen, because I think the oldest of them was about 19 or 20, but they had to be detained there in confinement for a fortnight.

When we had a look at the accommodation, there were two cells that could be used and an exercise yard. They had their meals out in the open. I thought this was a pretty poor effort and that a lot of this money that would be spent on the change-over of traffic could be spent in making things more amenable for the people who have to work right out in the—

The Hon. J. Dolan: Can I just ask you how long that condition has existed? Has it just happened in the last few months since we took office?

The Hon. J. HEITMAN: I realise this, but I am just telling members that this goes on. The Government will need to spend money to rectify it, and I pointed out that the last Government did spend a terrific amount of money rectifying these anomalies but it takes a long while to get around to these things and I am just hoping the money that will be used in the changeover of traffic to police control could be used to improve these offices.

Let me quote from a South African publication. It is headed, "Arrive Alive!" I just want to read one little section of it, Mr. President. There is quite a lot which perhaps the Minister could read at his leisure. It says—

Various regional, provincial and national organisations concerned with road safety in South Africa have joined forces over the past few decades to find a suitable solution to this worldwide problem. These consist of municipal traffic authorities, provincial traffic authorities, the Institute for Advanced Motorists, the National Institute for Road Research and, last but not least, the South African Road Safety Council.

So here we have another country that has its problem of road safety and it is using country councils and everyone it possibly can to try to find out the cause of accidents. I think, like every other country in the world, it finds that many accidents are caused on straight roads, but it is hard to say that we will get any authority, whether it is police or country shires, that will be able to stop these kinds of accidents.

I know going home one weekend on a straight piece of road where I generally drive between 65 and 70 miles an hour, a married couple whizzed past me and I thought, "By jove, they are headed for trouble." About five miles further on I caught up with them where they had

skidded off the road into a tree. The chap was out to it on the front seat and the right side of the car was crushed up with a girl's broken leg sticking out where the door should have been. Everything was crushed up and there was just room for a leg to come out.

It took quite a while to get an ambulance and traffic inspectors there and enough workers to lever the car apart to get the girl out. We found that she was a learner driver and the couple were on their honeymoon. I do not care what type of protection we have for the motorist, we cannot stop this sort of thing.

I think that if we are going to look at it properly, we should look at the driver's license test in the first place. I think it should be made much harder to get a driver's license. We do not hear of the crashes in aeroplanes that we hear of in motorcars, because pilots are fully trained and made to understand the traffic laws. There are laws which prevent them from doing the foolhardy things which we see happen on the road every day.

I leave these thoughts with the Minister hoping that when he decides to make this changeover, Mr. President, it will come before the House and we will all have a chance to speak further on the subject; because I feel that by a great deal of discussion we would all learn just a little bit more on how to prevent accidents on the road.

I would like to go on now to what seems to be a very topical subject at the present time and that is the abolition of the road maintenance tax. The day it was decided that the Australian Labor Party had won the Government benches, I was at a shire conference at Yuna and the then Minister for Local Government had not turned up and I was asked to open it. Coming straight from an election, what else would one think of but politics? It is not often I bring politics into local government, but I pointed out that the abolition of the road maintenance tax could mean the loss of something like \$12,000 a year on an average; that the black tops we have on the roads, which are going further and further out, would possibly have to stop if the road maintenance tax was abolished.

I was accused that day of making the opening political, but there was nothing further from my mind. The fact is, I had always been very interested in local government, and if the Government was going to lose this finance, it had to be made up from somewhere and the main thing that was in my mind at that moment was, "Where is it going to come from?"

Since then, of course, I have spoken to many road hauliers and I find that they are not against road maintenance tax; and, as a matter of fact, most of the

haulage companies applaud it. At the present time they have a black top right up to the other side of Meekatharra and black tops are gradually opening out everywhere we look. I think the Main Roads Department is doing a very good job in that regard.

The ones who are against the tax are the subcontractors to the big road hauliers. To get the contracts they cut the price and they forget about the road maintenance tax simply because they feel, if they get an extra couple of tons on a load and get away with it, they have a chance of making up the road maintenance tax and they can make the job pay. They are the only ones whom I have heard say that the road maintenance tax is an iniquitous tax.

I feel that members should have another look at this. It is a tax which every State has except Tasmania. The States of New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria are much more stringent than we are here and I feel that members should have another look at this; and even if it means repealing some of the promises made by the Premier, I feel it would be a step in the right direction. It is a tax which would be very hard to replace unless we penalise someone else to make it up. It does mean in the overall \$6,000,000, \$4,250,000 or thereabouts being collected from those who pay the road maintenance tax and the balance being made up in matching money from the Commonwealth Government, and this is pretty hard to replace.

I was interested to hear Mr. Claughton have one more belt on education tonight. When he got up I thought he was going to say the crisis in education is still with us. All I want to say is that we have a great number of shortages in the case of senior high schools.

Mr. Withers mentioned tonight that he is something like 1,500 miles from a senior high school. He will not be quite so far when they get one at Hedland; but I know of one country district—Morawa—which is 100 miles from a senior high school, and that is at Geraldton, and it is of course overloaded with those who come from the north. I do feel we must put up more senior high schools in country areas. We have tried to get one at Morawa; there are enough pupils but it is a matter of money. I am told it costs something like \$600,000 to put up a building for a senior high school.

I think we should have a close look at this item in the Budget so that we do not get too far behind with the provision of this type of five-year high school—that we get lost and cannot catch up. It is a fact that we are not building as many school rooms today as we were 12 months ago.

I would like to make just one plea to the Government. This is one of the driest seasons that most country districts have had and if members will recall, only a few

years ago we had to get boring plants to provide water supplies for country people. In many instances at that time the Government was carting water up to 50 miles to try to help the people in country areas with water supplies, just to make sure that no-one had to cart water for more than 20 miles. We have had a season this year where in many areas there has been absolutely no run-off whatsoever, and this means that many areas will again be without water. I think the Government should look ahead in this regard, and in its forthcoming Budget it should make preparation for assistance to serve these areas with water for the coming year. I feel there is a great need for help in most country areas.

I recently had a trip right through pastoral areas where there has been a drought for something like three or four years and all the big mulga is dead and there is absolutely no green feed at all. Most of the stock numbers have been cut from 23,000 to 4,000; from 12,000 to 2,000, and so on. It is not very good. I know this is something that no Government can fix overnight but I do appeal to the Government when planning for the new Budget to do something and set money aside to assist these people over a bad period and to help with carry-on finance in these areas.

As we are going to deal with the Mining Act this year, we could perhaps provide that out of the \$75 paid for a lease, a portion should go to assist owners who have had their stations wrecked by mining companies—say, \$10 per claim—and that \$10 per claim could go to the local authorities in areas like Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, Wiluna, and such places where mining is practically the only thing that is keeping them going. They have to wait so long for these leases to be signed and sealed before they can be rated that they are collecting only a very small percentage in respect of those leases that are already pegged there. Even if the Government had to lift the rent from \$75 to \$85 or \$90 it should do this to help those pastoralists who have had their stations wrecked to such an extent, through mining companies cutting fences, leaving fences open, boring and mine drilling and whatnot, that there is just no chance for them to run sheep there at all.

I think it would be a great help if the Government could look at this particular problem when it is getting its Budget out so that the State will not suffer as it has done over the past couple of years through drought conditions and mining in these areas.

I support the Bill, Mr. President, and just hope that we can see some of the suggestions I have asked for incorporated in the new Budget.

THE HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [9.45 p.m.]: In supporting the Supply Bill to apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund the sum of \$175,000,000 and out of the General Loan Fund \$30,000,000 and to apply out of the Public Account \$5,000,000 for the purpose of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer, I would first like to express my sincere regret and sense of loss at the passing of four members of this House in the past year.

I refer, of course, to Harry Strickland, who entered the House the same year as I did; he was a person with whom I held a very great friendship; to Mr. House who was a colleague in my own party and with whom I was on very good terms; to Mr. Lavery, a friendly and kindly gentleman of whom I thought a great deal; and to Mr. Garrigan from Boulder who again was a very good friend of mine. To their widows and families I express, like other members, my sincere condolences.

I would like now to congratulate the Ministers in this House who have been appointed in the new Government. I trust that Mr. Willesee, Mr. Dolan and Mr. Stubbs will have a successful term while they carry out their duties as Ministers. I daresay they will experience many hazards and difficulties, but these are the things one must expect when one is in Government. There are times when things are not too bad but at times they can get pretty terrible. I also welcome the new members to this House. If my memory serves me right I think it is the biggest change we have had in the membership of this House. I feel confident that we will have some excellent contributions from those new members who have been elected and I feel sure these contributions will be to the benefit not only of Parliament but of Western Australia as a whole.

Talking in this strain takes me back to 1950 when I first entered this House. There are only three members left of those who entered the House in that year—they are Mr. Logan, Mr. Jack Thomson and myself. I think I can go one better than Mr. Willmott because the three members in question are Country Party members. It looks as though they are long stayers and long players.

Statements were made from time to time during the last election campaign that this is not a truly democratic House. This is something to which one must give the lie direct, if I may use that expression with your permission, Mr. President. Members of this House have been elected on an adult franchise since 1965. Representation has been reduced in the provinces from three to two and the number of provinces have been increased. We were elected by the vote of the people—those over the age of 18 years—and I do not think we can have anything more democratic than that.

Let us consider the provinces as they stand at the moment. Let us first consider the West Province where we have a Liberal representative and a Country Party representative. In the Lower North Province we have elected a Labor candidate and a Liberal candidate; in the North Metropolitan Province there is a Labor representative and a Liberal representative; in the Upper West Province there is a Liberal representative and a Country Party representative elected; in the North Province there is a Labor representative and a Liberal representative; and in the South Province there is a Country Party representative and a Liberal Party representative.

Surely that splits the parties up sufficiently to indicate a great measure of democracy in the election of candidates, particularly when we have representation in these provinces both from the Opposition benches through to the Government parties. I do not think anybody can say these days that this House is not democratic.

It has been my experience during the 21 years since I have been in this Chamber that if legislation is good we have no hesitation in passing it. If we consider the merits of legislation to be doubtful, we debate the issue and amend it if necessary. If, however, legislation is considered to be not good we use one of the many windows to throw it out. I do not think we can have anything more democratic than the position I have outlined.

This being a financial Bill I would like to refer to the financial statement for 1970-71 presented by the then Premier Sir David Brand. I feel that every member—particularly the new members—should study this little document and see what it contains. From it they will learn the financial state of Western Australia.

This type of document is issued by the Treasury each year and if members turn to pages 32 and 33 they will see at page 32 the revenue under the Consolidated Revenue Fund. It is evident that for the year 1966-67 the grand total of revenue was \$228,146,198, and the expenditure for that year was budgeted at \$228,173,692. In that year a slight deficit was budgeted for and the deficit was only \$27,494.

The same picture is evident in the following year—1967-68—when the revenue was \$250,000,000-odd dollars and the estimated expenditure was about \$249,000,000. In that year there was a surplus of \$828,636. In the year 1968-69 the revenue was \$275,000,000-odd and the expenditure was estimated at \$276,000,000-odd, showing a deficit of \$1,055,618. In the year 1969-70 the revenue was \$318,000,000-odd and the expenditure, which was \$318,900,637, resulted in a deficit of \$711,859. In 1970-71 the revenue estimate was \$359,886,000 and the estimated expenditure was \$359,886,000. So in that year the Budget was for a break-even figure.

Because of certain factors, however, we finished with a deficit, as was explained by other members who spoke to the measure and who gave reasons how the deficit came about. From the document to which I referred members will also see the amounts expended by the various departments and the estimates of expenditure for the various years. It provides a guide to the state of the finances in Western Australia. Besides this there are a number of departmental figures showing expenditure, estimates, and so on. In the front reference is made to what is done in the departments and the financial results that accrue. An indication is also given of the incentives offered for children to continue with extra education. I can recommend this as a document well worth reading.

I would now like to refer to the question of rural reconstruction. To some extent the necessity for this resulted from the very severe drought we experienced which was followed by the introduction of wheat quotas. The main factor for the recession, however, was the big fall in wool prices. This is one of the main factors that have affected the economy of the farmers of Australia.

The problem is a very serious one indeed and it will certainly not be easy of solution, particularly when we consider the innumerable facets that arise in the wool industry throughout the world. I believe that the only solution to the problem is a general acquisition scheme. This could be undertaken by the Government with direct selling through the representatives of the wool industry of Australia. While we have the middlemen in between gambling on the wool market the situation will revert to that which obtained with the wheat industry in the early days when we received nothing very much for our product until we evolved the type of marketing scheme to which I have referred. Unless we evolve a similar scheme for the wool industry I feel certain that we will not see much progress nor will we see prices rise.

Until growers recognise that, the sooner we introduce such a system the better it will be both for Australia and themselves. It has been necessary to introduce a form of rural reconstruction which, however, will not entirely solve the problem of the farming community of Australia. It will only be a temporary solution.

The recent agreement by the Federal Government to set the average price for wool at 36c per pound will also be only a temporary solution to alleviate the problem. Prior to the election campaign, and for some time earlier, the Government of the day was accused of not taking action in connection with the job of rural reconstruction.

Promises were made by the Labor Government during the election campaign that the Labor Party would hasten rural

reconstruction. They felt they were smart enough to do this and they said they would find the money quickly for the farmers.

Let us, however, see what has happened. During the last year the Minister for Agriculture, through the Government party, put in train the whole system finally working up to the rural reconstruction scheme. This sort of thing cannot be accomplished in a few days, a few weeks, or a few months, but it was built up prior to the election campaign in order that rural reconstruction might come into being.

The first approach had to be made to the Commonwealth Government and this was strongly pressed. That Government was requested to provide the necessary money for rural reconstruction. Eventually this was approved but unfortunately the legislation was not passed and the money was not available until after the State election. Even when the present Government took office it found that its hands were tied.

What stage have we now reached in rural reconstruction; and how quick has the Government been in allocating sufficient amounts of money to applicants to help them clear their debts and carry on with their farming?

To get an idea of the position that obtains at the moment it is necessary to refer to questions asked in another place in regard to the processing of applications in connection with the rural reconstruction scheme. At page 32 of *Hansard* No. 2 we find the following:—

- (1) How many applications for financial help under the rural reconstruction scheme have been—
 - (a) received;
 - (b) approved;
 - (c) refused;
 - (d) referred back to the applicant for further particulars?

The answers given were as follows:—

- (a) 458 (to close of business on 15/7/71).
- (b) 18 (to meeting held 12/7/71).
- (c) 49 (to meeting held 12/7/71).
- (d) 7 (to meeting held 12/7/71).

The next question was—

- (2) What is the average time taken to process each application?

The answer was—

- (2) Four to six weeks.

Members can gather from those replies that the bringing into being of this reconstruction scheme for farmers has been accomplished one might say just early this month. This would have been achieved whichever Government had been in power

—the coalition Government or the present Government. This indicates that these things cannot be speeded up to the extent alleged during the election campaign.

During the campaign, promises were also made concerning quick advances of money which was to be made available very quickly to farmers for carry-on purposes. How quickly was this made available? Also we should consider from where the money was to come. Did it come from the Treasury or did it come from delegated agency funds in the hands of the Rural and Industries Bank? I think if we delve into this we will find that the latter was the source of the money for quick advances.

In respect of this particular money the conditions under which the delegated agency funds are allocated were laid down many years ago by the Federal Government when the grants were made. This meant that some consent by the Federal Government was necessary before the money could be used for reconstruction purposes. Prior to the election the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Nalder) set in train means of trying to persuade the Federal Government to give its consent for the release of this money for the use of rural reconstruction; and just after the election a letter of consent was received allowing the money to be used until such time as the legislation could be amended. That is how fast these advances were made; that is, no faster than they would have been made had we been in office.

We heard a lot about the huge number of farmers who would be forced off their properties, but it is surprising the number who have been able to obtain carry-on finance from banks and other institutions; and it is surprising that we do not see any published figures concerning this huge number of farmers—I think 3,000 was quoted—who would be walking off their properties in a very short time. I do not deny that some will probably have to leave their properties, but we trust, and the Premier has assured us, that some help will be given to them so that they will not walk out completely destitute. However, we must remember that this help would have been given by the coalition Government because it was part of that Government's plan. The matter had not been forgotten.

Another subject also exercised the minds of those in the Country Party and, I would say, those in the Liberal Party too; that is the retraining of displaced rural personnel—farmers who had to leave because they could not carry on and rural workers who also had to leave the country because jobs were not available. This help was all set in train long before the elections. Many months before the elections these plans were framed. Discussions were held in our party with the Minister for Education over 12 months ago when he was

planning for retraining. Yet we were told we had done nothing. Some of our own people accused us of this and, of course, so did supporters of the other parties. We were told we were doing nothing, but it is remarkable what has been achieved as a result of our doing nothing.

Let people realise that a lot of work and hard thinking was put into these plans for rural reconstruction and retraining over many months by the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Nalder) and by members of the Country Party and other members of the Government at that time.

I do not wish to delay this Bill tonight, but I feel I must say a little about the road toll. Over the years we have heard of all sorts of plans for reducing the death toll and accident rate on the roads. Over the years we have increased penalties in our legislation for all sorts of offences on the roads and it is proposed that safety belts be compulsory and that the police take over country traffic. These proposals will not solve the road toll. After the experience over many years in every country in the world we should know that these measures will not solve the road death problem.

The problem remains because people just will not learn to drive carefully. They will not be observant enough; and until they learn to drive carefully the death and injury toll will increase in every country in the world. People must learn the simple fact that they must drive carefully and steadily. I am reminded of a slogan adopted by the National Safety Council some years ago. It went this way—

Young drivers are most skilled but most killed.

I think this was a very poor slogan and I would like the council to think about using one along these lines—

Drive too fast and you can be of the past.

Remember! you are a long time dead. I support the measure.

THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE (North-East Metropolitan—Leader of the House) [10.07 p.m.]: I would like to thank members for their support of this measure. A wide variety of subjects has been dealt with by the various speakers who have addressed themselves to the Bill this evening, and the subjects have been far too comprehensive in detail for me to reply to in the course of the debate at this short notice.

The opening speaker, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. F. Griffith) and his colleague (Mr. MacKinnon) dealt with finance and election promises and they dealt with these subjects at depth. I would not like to be involved in the question of pre-election and subsequent statements as they do not affect me particularly in this place, but are the subject of material emanating from another place. However,

as was indicated during the debate, the Government is dealing with the same set of advisers whether that Government be a Labor Government or a Liberal Government. I would refer to the remarks I made when introducing the Bill. I said—

As is now fairly widely known, the wage movements of the financial year just concluded have greatly strained the Government's financial position. Though substantial provision was made in the 1970-71 Budget for wage increases which were expected during the year, it eventuated that the cost of award increases exceeded that provision by no less than \$14,240,000.

A further adverse effect on Government revenue occurred during the financial year just concluded when probate duty fell short of expectations by \$1,500,000, stamp duties on conveyances and transfers were down by \$2,300,000, and mining royalties and rents failed by \$2,300,000 to reach the estimated revenue collection.

When dealing with the current market situation, and particularly in connection with the cattle industry, Mr. Ferry also dealt with a question which had been answered during the week. It was asked by Mr. McNeill and the answer appears on pages 74 to 76 of *Hansard* No. 2. I would like to draw attention to a certain portion of it which appears on page 76. I might add that the reply I gave was authorised by the Premier. The following is portion of a long answer:—

The adverse effects on Western Australian agriculture will be less severe than those likely to be encountered in other areas of Australian agriculture. Nevertheless, the loss of traditional U.K. preferences and their replacement by import levies presents a further difficulty at a time when many of the agricultural industries are faced with low prices and various import restrictions in major markets. In some cases, though, the U.K. market is no longer as important an outlet for Western Australia's agricultural products as it has been in the past.

The remarks by various speakers throughout the evening rather complemented each other. The subjects of education, north-west disabilities, environmental protection, and the like were dealt with. Mr. Berry introduced a new topic—that is, annual value rating—which is a subject with which we have dealt for a long time, but this is the first time it has been so trenchantly criticised.

Mr. Baxter, in defending the democracy of the Upper House, also raised the rural reconstruction issue which I think was recently debated in another place along almost the same lines as Mr. Baxter adopted on behalf of the leader of the Country Party.

I see no point in delaying this debate. I again thank members for their support of the measure and for having spoken so forthrightly and capably, and I commend the Bill to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the House), and passed.

House adjourned at 10.16 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 27th July, 1971

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

HOUSING FOR ABORIGINES

Emergency Measures: Petition

MR. J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Premier) [4.32 p.m.]: I present to the House a Petition addressed as follows:—

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, residents in the State of Western Australia, do herewith pray that Her Majesty's Government of Western Australia will recognise the urgent and immediate need for housing for the Aboriginal people of this State of Western Australia, and will enact emergency measures to combat this problem immediately.

Your petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that your honourable House will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.

I have signed the petition. It bears 361 signatures, and I have signified that the petition conforms to the rules of the House.

The SPEAKER: I direct that the petition be brought to the Table of the House.

QUESTIONS (42): ON NOTICE

1. RAILWAY LAND AT MIDLAND

Leasing or Sale

Mr. BRADY, to the Minister for Railways:

(1) What area of land, formerly Midland Railway property, is now available for purchase or leasing?