

Mr. BRADY: It is all very well for the Government to talk about attracting private capital to this State. It does not seem to be coming here; and in any case, I issue a warning to the Government in that regard. Rather than attract such capital I think it would be better if we could finance our own projects.

Mr. Brand: Tell me how.

Mr. BRADY: I would like to see the State Electricity Commission extending its activities in order that electricity could be provided in the far-flung parts of the State and then the people in those areas could improve their amenities.

This would have many advantages: the people would have better amenities and they would be able to effect economies and so increase production. As far as I can see, that is the only way this State will get out of its dilemma. I think we should do the job ourselves rather than look to overseas investors. As one of the judges in the A.C.T.U. case in Melbourne said, "It is all very well to talk about £200,000,000 coming to the Commonwealth by way of investments; we have to remember that £10,000,000 has to be found to go out of Australia when that money comes in."

I think the Government should try to effect economies in Government departments and try to create activity on the part of the State Electricity Commission and similar undertakings so that we can save money in Western Australia and reduce our production costs.

Mr. Brand: That is why we have changed over to contract work.

Mr. BRADY: There is also the question of water supplies in my electorate. If a water supply could be provided for the Caversham area it would enable the people in that area to produce goods which could be exported overseas and thus help us to meet our overseas commitments. I hope the Minister for Works can give consideration to the requirements of the people in that area and that a water supply will be made available at the earliest opportunity for the primary producers in my electorate.

It was a shocking thing to hear the Government state in reply to a question that it costs £7 10s. per week to keep a man in Fremantle gaol, whereas a man on social services gets only £3 5s. I think the Government should have a look at that matter to see whether it can create employment for those unemployed single men—and for the married men, too—to prevent them being incarcerated in Fremantle Gaol because they had to do something to help themselves. There is a good deal of concern in my electorate about the unemployed position; and as late as Friday of last week, some unemployed people were thinking of marching from Midland Junction to Perth to try to point out to the Government the serious position that is being created in the Midland Junction area.

The position is becoming more alarming now that the railways men are realising that work which should be done in the Midland Junction Workshops is being given to outside companies, when the workshops were built originally to carry out work for the Railway Department.

Mr. Brand: What do you think the other works were built for?

Mr. BRADY: I hope the Government will have regard for the serious position and try to do something along the lines I have suggested by building schools and hospitals, doing drainage and sewerage work, providing electricity and water supply extensions, opening up new quarries, and carrying out maintenance work so that men can be usefully employed rather than sent to Fremantle Gaol because they have endeavoured to get money by some illegal means.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee

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

Third Reading

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 11.41 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 5th August, 1959

CONTENTS

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Police Force, numerical strength, etc.	726
Road maintenance, Geraldton-Northampton and Geraldton-Yuna sections	726
Kalgoorlie express, curtailment of services	726
Oil search, further exploration of Rough Range area	726
State trading concerns, disposal of Wyndham Meatworks and Robbs Jetty works	727
QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE :	
Royal Commissioners' Powers Act Amendment Bill—tabling of file 281/56	727
BILLS :	
Supply, £21,000,000—	
Standing Orders suspension	727
1r., 2r.	727
Royal Commissioners' Powers Act Amendment—	
Com.	728
Report, 3r., passed	733
Cattle Trespass, Fencing, and Impounding Act Amendment, 1r.	759
Child Welfare Act Amendment, 1r.	759

CONTENTS—*continued*

	Page
ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, ELEVENTH DAY, CONCLUSION:	
Speakers on Address—	
The Hon. W. R. Hall	736
The Hon. J. J. Garrigan	741
The Hon. E. M. Heenan	742
The Hon. A. F. Griffith	745
Presentation	759
ADJOURNMENT, SPECIAL	759

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

POLICE FORCE

Numerical Strength, etc.

1. The Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister provide the House with the following information concerning the Police Force for the years ended the 30th June, 1957, 1958, and 1959 respectively—

- (1) The numerical strength at each of the above dates?
- (2) The intake of new members in each year?
- (3) The number of dismissals?
- (4) The number of resignations?
- (5) The number of retirements through age, or on medical grounds?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

	1957	1958	1959
(1)	970	988	1,056
(2)	27	40	110
(3)	1	2	3
(4)	17	11	18
(5)	7	9	20

ROAD MAINTENANCE

Geraldton-Northampton and Geraldton-Yuna Sections

2. The Hon. A. R. JONES asked the Minister for Local Government:

With reference to the roads from—

- (1) Geraldton to Northampton; and
- (2) Geraldton to Yuna—

will he advise the amount of money—

- (a) expended by the Main Roads Department during the financial years 1957-58 and 1958-59;

(b) allocated to be expended during the current financial year;

(c) necessary to complete the work to the standard required by the Main Roads Department?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) (a) Geraldton to Northampton:

1957-58	£21,740
1958-59	£62,270

- (2) Geraldton to Yuna:

1957-58	£68,660
1958-59	£25,730

- (1) (b) Geraldton to Northampton: £99,100.

- (2) Geraldton to Yuna: £32,020.

(c) At this date no firm estimates have been prepared.

KALGOORLIE EXPRESS.

Curtailment of Services

3. The Hon. J. J. GARRIGAN asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Is it the intention of the Government to further curtail the number of passenger trains from Perth to Kalgoorlie?
- (2) Will the Government give consideration to having the Perth-Kalgoorlie express on Thursdays restored to service prior to the forthcoming racing carnival at Kalgoorlie?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Arrangements have already been made to run the 4.55 p.m. Perth-Kalgoorlie express and 7 p.m. Kalgoorlie-Perth express passenger trains on Thursdays, the 20th and the 27th August, and the 3rd September.

OIL SEARCH

Further Exploration of Rough Range Area

4. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

In reply to questions concerning the discovery of flowing oil near Exmouth Gulf in 1953, the Minister advised that the deposit was proved to be very small; it was of no economic importance; the present leaseholders had ceased drilling operations in the locality two years ago; and he still considers the area is prospective.

With that information and the knowledge that Australian taxpayers do now substantially subsidise private enterprise in its

search for oil, will the Government take action necessary to allow other *bona fide* oil search companies to further explore the Rough Range area?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The present company has spent a vast sum in examining and exploring this area and has established that some oil exists therein. With its new partner, Shell, it is now reappraising all geological, geophysical and drilling data as a basis for future operations. Its outlay work and results warrant it being permitted to review and retest the area.

STATE TRADING CONCERNS

Disposal of Wyndham Meatworks and Robb's Jetty Works

5. The Hon. F. J. S. WISE asked the Minister for Mines:

As the Government is obviously evading a direct answer on the subject of any likely disposal of Wyndham Meat Works and Robb's Jetty Works, will he state clearly when and where the Government's policy on State Trading Concerns has been so clearly stated as to allow no misinterpretation of the Government's intentions in regard to the two concerns mentioned?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Government's policy on State trading concerns was clearly stated in the Premier's policy speech. The Government will announce any intentions it may have in regard to any particular concern when it considers the time is appropriate to do so.

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

ROYAL COMMISSIONERS' POWERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Tabling of File 281/56

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

Will he table the file containing the Crown Solicitor's opinion from which he quoted when we debated the Royal Commissioners' Powers Act Amendment Bill last night.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

I have no objection to tabling the file provided the honourable member is referring to file No. 281/56.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is the only one from which you quoted.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes.

SUPPLY BILL, £21,000,000

Standing Orders Suspension

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.39]: I move:—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended so as to enable a Supply Bill to be taken on receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly, and to have precedence each day before the Address-in-reply, and to be passed through all stages at any one sitting.

Yesterday, when the House sat, I gave notice of my intention to move for the suspension of Standing Orders to enable us to deal with the Supply Bill which, I had anticipated, would reach the Chamber some time today, or perhaps tomorrow. I understand that the matter is being debated; it may have even been concluded in another place last night, and it could come here by message shortly. It is the normal practice to ask the House to agree to the suspension of Standing Orders so that a Supply Bill may be introduced.

When the Bill arrives I propose to move the second reading and, if Mr. Strickland wishes to ask for an adjournment, I will have no objection whatever, because I realise members frequently take the Supply Bill as an opportunity to discuss a number of diversified matters, as is generally done during the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply. I do not think there is any necessity for me to say anything further. I believe that honourable members will consider the suspension of Standing Orders to be justifiable for the purpose of introducing this Bill.

Question put and passed.

First Reading

Received from the Assembly and, on motion by the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), read a first time.

Second Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.43] in moving the second reading said: I thought it appropriate that as I sat down after asking the House to agree to my motion to suspend Standing Orders to deal with this Bill, the message was brought to the Bar of the House by the Sergeant-at-Arms. I think the best thing would be to deal with it at this point of time.

There is little need for me to advise members that it is necessary each year to pass one or more Supply Bills to enable the services of the State to be carried on, pending the preparation and passing of the Estimates in another place. Last year, a sum of £21,000,000 was granted by the

first Supply Act. This year, the same amount is requested, and the details are the same. These details are—

	£
Consolidated Revenue	15,000,000
General Loan Fund	4,000,000
Advance to Treasurer	2,000,000
	<hr/>
	£21,000,000

The Estimates for 1959-60, which will give full details of the revenue and expenditure for the present financial year, are in course of preparation, and will be introduced in another place as early as possible. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Hon. A. R. Jones, debate adjourned.

ROYAL COMMISSIONERS' POWERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL

In Committee

Resumed from the previous day. The Hon. W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Sections 12-16 added:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on the clause after the Hon. H. C. Strickland had moved the following amendment:—

Page 3, line 12—Add after the word "provisions" the following words:—

and do not limit or abridge the provisions of sections one hundred and twenty-seven and one hundred and twenty-eight of the Criminal Code Act, 1913.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yesterday evening I asked that progress be reported so that I could obtain the opinion of the Crown Law officers in connection with this amendment. For the information of members I would like to read the opinion of the Parliamentary Draftsman, which is as follows:—

The portion of clause 12 (3) of the above Bill which is relevant to the proposed amendment provides—

... a witness ... before a Royal Commission ... is subject to the same liabilities in any ... criminal proceedings, as a witness in proceedings in the Supreme Court.

Clause 14 reads—

The provisions of sections twelve and thirteen do not limit or abridge any privilege, protection or immunity existing apart from those provisions.

Clause 14 in its terms neither expressly or by implication affects the criminal liability of a person who contravenes section 128 of the Criminal

Code, and a witness before a Royal Commission has no privilege, protection or immunity under clause 14. If he contravenes section 128 of the Criminal Code he is liable to the penalty therein imposed.

The effect of clause 12 (3) as I see it is that a witness before a Royal Commission is subject to the same liabilities in any criminal proceeding as a witness in proceedings in the Supreme Court. The effect of this subclause is that if the witness gives false testimony, section 124 of the Criminal Code would apply and under section 125 he would be liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years for perjury instead of being liable under section 127 of the Code. The penalty under that section is a maximum penalty of seven years.

The position is, as I thought it was yesterday, that proposed new section 14 has no relevancy to the amendment, but that sections 127 and 128 of the Criminal Code have relevancy to proposed new section 12 (3) inasmuch as the person concerned is subject to the same liabilities in any criminal proceeding as a witness in proceedings in the Supreme Court. The amendment is unnecessary as it will not make any difference to the Bill. I hope the Leader of the Opposition will see the point.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I am sorry I cannot agree with the Minister. I do not propose to put myself in the position of definitely disagreeing with the Parliamentary Draftsman, but having had some experience of the Crown Law Department, I feel that the opinions there are rarely unanimous. I am rather disappointed that the opinion of the Solicitor-General was not received, because he is the head of the department.

In my opinion, proposed new section 14 is a saving clause. In case the Parliamentary Draftsman, or anyone else, missed anything in the provisions of the Bill, this clause has been included to provide immunity; it has not been included to cover false evidence or to cover members of the public who may be vilified by false evidence. The purpose of introducing the measure is to make absolutely sure of the position with regard to the responsibilities and powers of anyone brought before a Commission. It was also introduced to deal with the powers of Royal Commissioners. That was the purpose included in the Crown Solicitor's minute of 1956, which the Minister read. It was admitted that there was a doubt, and in order to overcome the position in 1956, a request was made that the Act be looked into. If there is a doubt, and apparently there is because the Parliamentary Draftsman says he "feels," or something; he is not definite—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He is most definite.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: He said something about "feeling."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is a pity the Minister did not provide us with copies of this document.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Like you provided us with copies of the amendment that you gave me at 11 o'clock last night!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Minister was supplied with a copy of the amendment.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right, but there was not much time.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: To get back to my reasons for insisting upon my amendment, I say again that if there is a doubt, let us overcome it by putting this provision in the measure. I think that what Mr. Heenan pointed out last night proves conclusively that the Parliamentary Draftsman's version of the amendment—if I understand it correctly—is not absolutely right. The Parliamentary Draftsman dealt with Section 124 of the Criminal Code, whereas this section deals with perjury. The Crown Law Department also holds that a Royal Commission is not a judicial proceeding. To cover that point, the department, no doubt through the Solicitor-General of the day, had section 127 inserted in the Criminal Code. This section provides—

Any person who, in the course of an examination before a Royal Commission—

That is as clear as day—

—knowingly gives a false answer to any lawful and relevant question . . . is liable to imprisonment.

Surely if the original intention of the Bill is to protect everyone concerned in Royal Commissions, the Minister cannot validly object to the inclusion of this amendment, because it will protect the general public; or organisations; or anyone at all who may be vilified, but who would otherwise have no redress.

I ask the Committee to consider the matter in the serious vein in which it should be considered, because when we find written into the Criminal Code of 1913 a section to deal with perjury—which is distinct from false evidence before a Royal Commission—this provision should be written into the Bill before us. In each instance quoted by the Minister, of protection being written into the Acts of other States, the liabilities are also included. I remember the Minister definitely mentioning perjury in one of them. If it is held in the State to which the Minister was then referring—whichever one it is—that Royal Commissions are judicial bodies, then perjury obviously applies. But, in any case, it is written into the Act.

In Western Australia, however, it is not written into the Act; and it is necessary to look to other Acts. If the relevant Act is mentioned in the Bill—as my amendment suggests—people will know their responsibilities, and there will be no doubt about the position. The protection which the Government desires to give people appearing before Royal Commissions will be extended to cover everyone.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I respect the honourable member's belief in this matter, but I point out that in the opinion of the Parliamentary Draftsman, the honourable member's interpretation of the clause is not correct. I draw members' attention to proposed new section 14. The amendment that Mr. Strickland has put forward has no relevancy to this clause. The Crown Law opinion states that no privilege, protection or immunity is abridged in any shape or form. That is what I said last night was my opinion. The Parliamentary Draftsman goes on to say that the amendment which the honourable member has moved has no relevancy to proposed new section 14, but to proposed new section 12 (3). The last paragraph of proposed new section 12 (3) states—

Subject to this Act, a witness summoned to attend or appear before a Royal Commission has the same protection, and is, in addition to the penalties provided by this Act, subject to the same liabilities in any civil or criminal proceedings, as a witness in proceedings in the Supreme Court.

That is plainly the position. I apologise for this opinion from the Crown Law Department being so late, but the question was sent to the department this morning with the request that the information be given. I suppose that the officers of that department have other matters to attend to besides waiting around for questions like this.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I thought that was why they went to the legal convention.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I shall let that go. Obviously I am not able to convince Mr. Strickland that my view is the right one although, on this occasion, it happens to coincide with the opinion of the Parliamentary Draftsman. I realise that that does not make it perfect, either.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Yet you object to this going in.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, because it is completely unnecessary and would have no application to the section in which the honourable member seeks to insert it. I will leave it to members to judge for themselves, but I hope they will not agree to the amendment.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: This morning I spent considerable time looking at this matter and at first I was tempted to think Mr. Strickland's suggestion was a wise one. But I too came to the conclusion that his amendment might be relevant only if the new section in which he wanted to include his amendment had contained the word "liabilities" as well as "immunities." But so far as I can see the whole Bill is designed to protect and give immunity to witnesses and other people. If an individual who appears as a witness at a Royal Commission commits perjury, obviously he commits a criminal offence. I do not know whether the Royal Commissioner would lay any charges against him but the police certainly would have to act under criminal law.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It would be referred to the Crown Law Department, I think.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Although I am keen to see that the legislation is complete, and I dislike the idea of having to go from one Act to another to find out what is happening, I think that in this case the correct place to insert the provision is in the Criminal Code. Therefore I intend to oppose the amendment because I believe that what the Minister has said is correct.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Advice from the Parliamentary Draftsman is that proposed new section 14 is not relevant to subsection (3) of proposed new section 12.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: No. I said that in the opinion of the Crown Law Department your amendment was not relevant to proposed new section 14.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It will have no limit on the provisions mentioned in subsection (3) of proposed new section 12.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It has none at the moment.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Because the Parliamentary Draftsman apparently doubts whether the legislation is perfect, he has added the saving section.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Which is that?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Proposed new section 14.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I would not like to have you appearing for me.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: When the Minister introduced the Bill he said that it was something additional and that it extended the provision regarding immunities. How the Parliamentary Draftsman can claim that the amendment is irrelevant, and then further down in his opinion state that it is relevant to subsection (3) of proposed new section 12, I do not know. If anybody can work that one out he is pretty good. The Minister has said that my amendment is not relevant to proposed

new section 14, which refers to proposed new section 12, and yet he says it is relevant to subsection (3) of proposed new section 12. I cannot work it out.

I have known of differences of opinion in the Crown Law Department; there are always differences of opinion between legal men. All I am asking members to do is exactly what the Government set out to do—make perfectly clear in this legislation the exact immunities that a person appearing before a Commission is entitled to expect. I cannot see why the Minister or anyone else should object to that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Just in case I used any word in the English language which may have placed an incorrect interpretation upon the Crown Law opinion, I will read again what the Chief Parliamentary Draftsman has to say. He states—

Clause 14 reads—

The provisions of sections 12 and 13 do not limit or abridge any privilege, protection or immunity existing apart from those provisions.

In the opinion he has underlined the words "privilege, protection or immunity." His opinion continues—

Clause 14 in its terms neither expressly or by implication affects the criminal liability of a person who contravenes section 128 of the Criminal Code, and a witness before a Royal Commission has no privilege, protection or immunity under clause 14. If he contravenes section 128 of the Criminal Code he is liable to the penalty therein imposed.

The effect of clause 12 (3) as I see it is that a witness before a Royal Commission is subject to the same liabilities in any criminal proceeding as a witness in proceedings in the Supreme Court. The effect of this subclause is that if the witness gives false testimony, section 124 of the Criminal Code would apply and under section 125 he would be liable to a maximum penalty of 14 years for perjury instead of being liable under section 127 of the Code. The penalty under that section is a maximum penalty of seven years.

As that opinion conflicts with Mr. Strickland's opinion, I leave it to members to decide for themselves.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The ruling of the Crown Law Department, and the one accepted by the legal profession, is that a Royal Commission is not a judicial body.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That has nothing to do with it.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It has this much to do with it: Perjury applies only in proceedings before a judicial body.

That is why section 124 is in the Criminal Code. It deals expressly with false statements before a Royal Commission.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think you ought to read section 124 again.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It distinctly says, "Any person who in any judicial proceeding." A Royal Commission is not a judicial proceeding, and, therefore, perjury could not apply.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you mean that perjury cannot apply in the case of Royal Commissions?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It says so.

The Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: People give evidence on oath before a Royal Commission.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I ask Mr. Heenan to express an opinion; he could explain it better than I can.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That would not be hard.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There is no need to talk in that vein.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the Leader of the Opposition to keep to the amendment before the Chair. Most of the speeches have been bordering on tedious repetition, and I think some finality should be reached so that our business can be proceeded with.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: We are endeavouring to give the matter serious consideration because it is a serious matter. Persons who appear before a Royal Commission and give false evidence are liable to seven years' imprisonment, but a person who commits perjury while giving evidence in a major criminal case is liable to 14 years; or life if it is a murder charge. There is a great distinction between the penalties. For the reasons I have given I hope members will agree to my amendment.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Proposed new section 14 means that whatever statutes are in operation in Western Australia, the provisions of new sections 12 and 13 of this Act will not limit or prejudice those statutes. Mr Strickland wants to reduce the effect of those other statutes to two sections of the Criminal Code.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: That is incorrect.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is the effect of the amendment. Proposed new section 14 includes all statutes which are in force, as well as the provisions in proposed new sections 12 and 13.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Are you prepared to take out of the Bill the responsibility of witnesses?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: All the statutes in this State will apply. Mr. Strickland is trying to read into proposed new section 14 the two sections in the Criminal Code to which he referred.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The proposed new section will do all that the Minister says, and will not limit or abridge any privilege, protection or immunity existing apart, contained in sections 127 and 128 of the Criminal Code.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: The Bill says that, and it means everything will stand.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: All I am asking is that the Bill shall not limit any responsibility which already exists. The only sections in the Criminal Code referring to responsibility are section 127 covering false evidence, and section 128 covering threats to witnesses.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Are those the only two in the Criminal Code?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: If the honourable member knows of more, they could also be included in the Bill. Section 127 of the Criminal Code is designed to keep witnesses on the right track, while section 128 is designed to protect witnesses from being threatened or bullied. I can imagine opposition from members who are anxious to pass this Bill, because section 128 of the code provides that no person shall damnify other people. That word is pretty embracing. Every witness who appears before a Royal Commission should be made aware of his responsibilities. Had this Bill not been introduced I would not have known my responsibility if I had to appear as a witness; but I do now since the matter has been brought up in this Chamber.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We get to the point where the honourable member admits he is not concerned with proposed new section 14 in respect of immunity; he is only interested in the amendment from the point of view of liability.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: From both.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is debatable.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: At no time have I opposed proposed new section 14.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not intimate that the honourable member opposed it. There is in existence a section in the Evidence Act which covers witnesses appearing before Select Committees, and it prescribes what shall happen if they make false statements, although they are not under oath.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Why not include that provision in the Bill?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The fact that perjury can be committed only in a judicial issue is not correct. Perjury can be committed by a person giving evidence under oath. I am informed that witnesses appearing before the Royal Commission will be under oath. That being the case, whether the proceedings are judicial or otherwise, the offence of perjury is applicable to the Criminal Code. Proposed new section 12 (3) prescribes that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I am prepared to leave this matter to the judgement of the Committee. I trust that the further safeguard I have enumerated will be included in the Bill.

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

Ayes—10.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery

(Teller.)

Noes—14.

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. J. Cunningham

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. W. F. Willesee	Hon. H. L. Roche

Majority against—4.

Amendment thus negatived.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I move an amendment—

Page 3, line 29—Insert before the word "interrupt" the word "wilfully."

It is an offence to interrupt the proceedings of a Royal Commission under the provisions in this clause. It is thought that the word "wilfully" should be included. The Leader of the Opposition in another place mentioned during the second reading that he intended to move this amendment, and the Attorney-General said it was reasonable and acceptable. Evidently the amendment was overlooked, and I have been requested to insert it in this Chamber.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know nothing of the situation which arose in another place, nor do I think we should refer to it, whether it be in writing or implied. The Attorney-General did not indicate to me, when I was going through the Bill with him, that he was prepared to agree to the amendment now before us. It is unnecessary to include the word "wilfully" in this provision although it is necessary to include the word "wilfully" before the word "insult," because a person can insult another without doing so wilfully.

The best example I can give is this: I had no intention of insulting Mr. Strickland when I said something was not true. In saying what I said I did insult him, but not wilfully. On another occasion Mr. Wise stated that something I said was not true. He insulted me although I realised he did not do it wilfully. To insult wilfully is to commit an offence in the terms expressed; that is purposely or wilfully insult. The matter of interrupting the proceedings of a Royal Commission is altogether different. I can best illustrate this point by referring to our Standing Order No. 398 which states that no member shall

interrupt another member who is speaking. I do not think there is any need to discuss the matter further. It is unnecessary verbiage to add this word, and I oppose it.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The fact that the word is not incorporated in a Standing Order does not necessarily mean that it is right or wrong. I can conceive of occasions where proceedings could be interrupted, not wilfully, and of occasions when persons could insult someone innocently or wilfully. Only a little while ago, in the course of the debate—I did not hear the remark myself—I understand that the Minister insulted me, and I gather it was wilfully.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am sure it was not. Why should I want to wilfully insult you?

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I did not hear what the Minister said myself but I understand he made some remark concerning me which could only be regarded as an insult.

Point of Order

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: On a Point of Order, Mr. Chairman, I have not the slightest recollection of saying anything of an insulting nature about the honourable member. I have had no reason to do so, and if he could tell me what I said I shall withdraw it willingly, but I think he is under a misapprehension; or at least I hope he is.

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I did not hear it myself—perhaps fortunately.

Committee Resumed

The Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I fully agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the word "wilfully" should precede the word "interrupt," and we can all conceive of occasions when proceedings could be interrupted unwittingly. At present, the provision would apply. To remove any doubt the word should be inserted.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Minister is certainly most unco-operative. He absolutely refuses to accept any amendment. Whilst I did strain the latitude of the Committee by making an explanation when moving the amendment, what I said is printed in *Hansard*. However, the Minister says it is absolutely unnecessary. In section 104 of our Criminal Code is the provision that any person who wilfully interrupts, obstructs, or disturbs any proceedings at any election, is guilty of an offence.

Surely to goodness it is not at all out of order, or stupid, to insert the word "wilfully" before the word "interrupts" in connection with a Royal Commission. One can accidentally interrupt, not necessarily in the proceedings, but also outside. Someone can wilfully put a bag of sand amongst the proceedings, or something like that. There was a stone wilfully

thrown through one of these windows in 1930. I certainly feel there is a big difference between merely interrupting and wilfully interrupting. If the word is included in the Criminal Code, surely it is good enough to be included in connection with a Royal Commission.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It seems logical to me to accept the fact that the Royal Commissioner is in a parallel position to you, Mr. Chairman, or the President, or anybody else who is in charge of a House or proceedings. He must maintain order. We interrupt each other across the floor of this House and I should say that at times it is wilfully done. In our own Standing Orders it has not been found necessary to add this provision, nor has the Parliamentary Draftsman or Mr. Strickland found it necessary to move that the word be inserted in subsection (3); but the application is exactly the same.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Insulting language is insulting language without being wilful.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It need not necessarily be. I am frankly inwardly perturbed that—. I would not joke about this if I were you, Mr. Strickland, because I am not joking.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I was laughing about the "inwardly perturbed."

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Minister should continue the debate.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am perturbed to think that I may have unknowingly insulted Mr. Heenan, and I say to him, with all sincerity, that if he will have a private conversation with me concerning this matter I shall appreciate it very much, because I do not want to insult any honourable member in this House. This present amendment is definitely not necessary.

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

Ayes—10.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. R. F. Hutchison

(Teller.)

Noes—14.

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. A. L. Loton

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. W. F. Willesee	Hon. H. L. Roche

Majority against—4.

Amendment thus negatived.

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

Ayes—14.

Hon. C. R. Abbey	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. J. Cunningham

(Teller.)

Noes—10.

Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. R. Thompson

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. J. M. Thomson	Hon. G. Bennetts
Hon. H. L. Roche	Hon. W. F. Willesee

Majority for—4

Clause thus passed.

Clause 4:

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: When Mr. Watson was debating this measure he drew attention to the fact that it contained restrictions on criticism of either the Royal Commissioner or his report; and he was concerned as to how long those prohibitions of criticism would last. There will be other sessions of Parliament and honourable members, under the privilege of Parliament, will be able to criticise the Commissioner for his report; but people outside of Parliament will have to be very careful what they say in that regard, and will have to ensure that they do not, either by writing, speech, or any other act, bring the Royal Commission or any member thereof into disrepute. As that provision is to remain until December of next year, I thought the honourable member might have some views to express on the matter.

Clause put and passed

Postponed clause 2, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted

Third Reading

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [5.50]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Point of Order

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I rise to ask your ruling on a point of order, Mr. President. About one hour ago I asked the Minister in charge of the House whether a certain file would be tabled. The file has not been tabled, although in the meantime I have made two requests to view it and those requests have been refused. What is your ruling, Mr. President, in regard to the tabling of a file, when the Minister has already consented to table it?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Before you proceed, Mr. President, might I say that the honourable member asked would I

table the file and I said I would. If he was referring to Premier's Department file No. 281/56, I said I would table it at the end of the debate, and he accepted that undertaking.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I ask your ruling, Mr. President, on the point I have raised.

The PRESIDENT: I think it is in the hands of the House to determine that matter.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I shall table the file now; but when the honourable member asked for it, it was a document to which I was referring during the course of the debate.

The file was tabled.

Debate Resumed

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [5.52]: Before the third reading of the Bill is agreed to, Mr. President, it is my desire to draw attention to certain aspects of the debate which has taken place on this measure; aspects which to me constituted an affront to this House; and which were certainly far removed from the anticipated ethics of normal debate. This Bill, and the only other measure introduced prior to it this session, were claimed to be matters of urgency. All the members of this House, on hearing the explanation of the Minister in regard to that urgency, preferred to deal with those measures as urgent matters, as this House undoubtedly does when occasion arises from time to time—as such occasions undoubtedly must.

At any time when a Bill is acknowledged to be urgent, the House will agree to its being dealt with as such; and the onus is on the Minister in charge of the measure to prove the necessity for its being so dealt with, in the speech that he makes when introducing it. There is on him the onus to give in full all the knowledge he has in justification of its introduction; and the responsibility is his to tell all of the story at that time, and thoroughly to explain the Bill on the second reading.

In the case of the measure now before us, the only opportunity for members to know in detail what the Minister said, was for them to take copious notes of his speech; because there was no other opportunity afforded them. My Leader, the Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, was of course provided with the normal printed or typed copy of the speech—the typed speech which a Minister uses when introducing a measure; but that is not of necessity the speech the Minister makes.

In this instance the Minister departed from the typed words and so, when he chided my Leader with the fact that we had six days in which to consider the measure, I would reply that we did not

have any opportunity, during those six days, to know all the things he had said when introducing the Bill except, as I have said, by making copious notes; and we certainly had no idea of what were his imaginings in connection with the Bill, or any other matter that he deferred for later production. I say that the Minister would have been in a sorry plight had he not had that six days deferment of the debate; because he could not—if the matter had been properly debated immediately, as he desired prior to an adjournment being requested—have dealt with the matter as he dealt with it subsequently.

He could not have dealt with it in that way, because he either wilfully withheld matter which he introduced yesterday for the first time, or else had no knowledge of it when he introduced the measure. The latter alternative cannot be right, because this file was mentioned during the debate in another place. Of what avail was it that members such as Mr. Watson, Mr. Loton, Mr. Heenan, Mr. Lavery and others, dealt with the speech of the Minister as representing the purport and purpose of the measure when, as it were, in drawing a rabbit from a hat in his reply to the second reading debate, the Minister produced a file and quoted frequently and voluminously from it? He gave this House, then, the first indication of the existence of that file; and he endeavoured, with great smugness and self-satisfaction, to turn that fact against members who had produced arguments in opposition to the Bill—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I ask for a withdrawal of the words "smugness and self-satisfaction."

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I am sorry that the Minister is so sensitive—

The PRESIDENT: Is the honourable member going to withdraw the words to which the Minister objected?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I intend to say what I wish to say, Mr. President, and for that reason I shall withdraw the words. The Minister quoted from this file in an endeavour to rebut the arguments of the gentlemen I have named; and they had no knowledge at all that such matter constituted any part of the argument that the Minister had intended to present to the House. What had the House to go on but the speech of the Minister; when he introduced the Bill? I suggest that there is no relevance in harping on what was advised in 1956.

The Government of that day did not take any notice of the Crown Law officer's opinion at that time; and the Opposition at this moment—it was the Government then—is still consistent in that attitude. We do not want that advice now and we did not think it was right then; just as the Minister and other members of his Government will from time to time not take Crown Law advice.

The Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: The Opposition must have known the file was in existence.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That makes no difference at all. Times out of number any Government seeks outside advice. There is nothing new in that; and so there is no point in that part of the argument. The attitude of the Opposition at the moment is entirely consistent with its attitude as a Government. The Minister has asked for the co-operation of all members of this Chamber. I know of no member here who is not anxious to give him co-operation and the opportunity, with all the goodwill in the world, to add to his own stature so that he may conduct the business of this House in a manner that is above question. But the tactics of yesterday were not appropriate to the conduct of this House, in the course of a debate of that kind; nor were they becoming to the Minister.

I look around this Chamber and see here men who have been in Parliament even longer than I have—and that is 25 years. I see men who were in this Chamber when it was indeed a House of Review and a non-party House; when the Government of the day had seven members as against 22 in Opposition on the floor of the House; and when every Bill was given thorough examination, because even the simplest and most innocent-looking measures were, within the memory of all the members to whom I have referred as old members, subject to at least a week's adjournment. In that way the independence of this House was fully maintained; and, during that week's adjournment, not only had all members what the Minister had said, available in the printed *Hansard*; but, also, the arguments adduced in the course of the examination of each measure in another place.

If we are to be subjected to such tactics—whether wilfully performed or not—which are a sort of king hit, or if, in other words we say, "Let us brush your argument aside and we will produce this," that will not do. I suggest that all members of the Labour Party, including Mr. Heenan, will recall that in the past, no matter how trivial a Bill might have appeared on the surface to be, it was, by common consent, adjourned for a week; and if we are to continue to be subjected to the action committed by the Minister yesterday, and treated in that manner, I suggest that he cannot expect to receive co-operation.

I reiterate that I do not know of any honourable member who does not wish the Minister well in his office, but no member will be treated as if he is in a kindergarten class. So I repeat to the Minister, in case some of my words may have appeared to be severe because they were uttered in the heat of the moment, that if he wants help from the party to which I belong, I have the assurance of my Leader that he will

most certainly get it if he seeks co-operation in the proper manner. Rather than that this House should be affronted in the way it was yesterday, it would be far better for us to revert to the old order, even though we may have to take on some semblance of a House of Review in dealing with a certain measure after it is introduced.

THE HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [6.2]: There is quite a lot to be said for the sentiments expressed by Mr. Wise on the necessity for the Minister who introduces a Bill to introduce it thoroughly and to bring forward all matters for the consideration of members. On this occasion I feel that the file which was subsequently produced might well have been produced at the second reading of the Bill. At the same time, I consider that the Minister, in view of the precedent and example set by his predecessors—the two honourable gentlemen who last year sat in the seats at present occupied by the two Ministers in this House—can be excused for any shortcomings he may have shown when moving the second reading of the Bill.

For example, I recall that last session, when Mr. Wise introduced a Bill for the legislation governing the Health Education Council, there developed a position which was not dissimilar to that about which Mr. Wise now complains. I also remember Dr. Hislop and myself expressing regret that we had to wait for the Minister to reply to the debate in order that we might find out what the Bill aimed at.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines—in reply) (6.4): I am obliged to make a few comments on the speech made by Mr. Wise. I am sure members will recall that on not less than three occasions yesterday evening I sought to apologise to the House about the file that was mentioned. I agreed with members then—and I agree with them now—that it would have been better to produce it whilst I was making my second reading speech.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We are having a job to get it even now, because we have not seen it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is an unnecessary remark!

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is not!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is so! Because, as the honourable member knows, had I refused to table the file the only way he could have got it would have been to move accordingly.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You refused to lend the file.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was busily speaking to the measure, and when the messenger came he said that Mr. Strickland wanted the file. I said that I was going to quote again from the file.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: He must have taken the papers off it if he said that this afternoon.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Strickland likes to imply that I have said things which I did not say. I said I was going to quote from it, but it so happened that I did not need to quote from it again. The circumstances were these: I was supplied with notes for my second reading speech. When I made my speech last Wednesday evening, Mr. Strickland sought an adjournment of the debate for six days. Those members who wanted to address themselves to this debate could have done what I have done during the time I have been a member of this House; namely, go to the Chief Hansard Reporter and ask: "May I have a copy of Mr. So-and-So's speech?" In fact, there were not many members who spoke to this Bill. I provided Mr. Wise with a copy of the notes I had given to Mr. Strickland. However, one does not always stick closely to the notes that are provided. Quite often an interjection causes one to depart from the notes, and I think that occurred in this particular instance.

I did not affront the House in any way whatsoever whilst conducting this legislation through the Chamber, and I am sorry that Mr. Wise thinks he has cause to suggest that I did affront the members of the House, because I can assure him that I did not. I apologise for the fourth time for not producing earlier the file mentioned, but it was not made available to me when I introduced the second reading of the Bill. Having introduced the second reading of the measure and observed the amendments that were placed on the notice paper by Mr. Strickland, I studied those amendments, and, when conferring with the Solicitor-General about them and speaking of the debate that had taken place in another place, it was obvious to me that this file was in existence.

I therefore asked for it and it was given to me. That is the true position. There was no suggestion of any affront whatsoever, nor was there any intention on my part to do any of the things Mr. Wise said I endeavoured to do during the course of this debate. I have asked members for their co-operation and I have given them mine. So far as I am concerned, the adjournment of the debate on any Bill has been granted whenever sought during the short time I have been here. On this Bill, Mr. Strickland asked for an adjournment for six days. He said to me, "What about adjourning the debate until Tuesday?" I agreed. Everybody knows that is the case.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: No-one is complaining about that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Wise was complaining of the way I conducted myself during the debate on this Bill.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Not in regard to the adjournment.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not want to drag the debate on any further. I regret that the honourable member has considered it necessary to raise this question. I can assure him that I did not try to make a king hit. The occurrence concerning the late production of the file in question will no doubt be repeated should the need arise to produce a file in the course of the debate on any Bill before the House. Mr. Strickland was a Minister in the previous Government, and I am unaware whether he knew the file existed at that time; but that is the position.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: No; I did not know of it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The file contains the opinion expressed by the Solicitor-General in 1956. The only reason why I did not pass the file to the honourable member was that he still had amendments on the notice paper and I thought I might have occasion to use the file in connection with those amendments. I hope that my explanation has proved satisfactory.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Eleventh Day—Conclusion

Debate resumed from the 29th July.

THE HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [6.12]: I desire to associate myself with the remarks that have been passed by previous speakers in congratulating Mr. Griffith, the Minister for Mines, and Mr. Logan, the Minister for Local Government, on their elevation to the high offices of Ministers of the Crown. When one realises that the two men—whoever they may be—who occupy the seats that these two occupy today, perform all the work that is performed by eight Ministers in another place, one realises that they have a tremendous task; and I can assure you, Sir, that I do not envy them.

However, the inevitable does happen on occasions. I hope that the time may not be far distant when the two honourable members who occupy the front bench on the opposite side of the House will cross to this side and take up the positions in the Chamber that they held previously. The two Ministers now on the front bench are in the fortunate position that neither today nor at any time in the past has the Australian Labour Party had a majority in both Houses of Parliament, whereas the Governments of the same political thought as the one to which they belong have always held the majority in both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

I also wish to congratulate our new member, Mr. Ronald Thompson. I am quite sure he will make a great impression

upon the members of this Chamber. He has already contributed to the debates and I am certain he will prove to be a valuable acquisition to this Legislative Council. I hope he will perform his duties in the excellent manner that his predecessor, the late Gilbert Fraser, performed his; and that he will bring honour to the position that he now holds in the same way as that late honourable gentleman did.

I did not intend to speak to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply this session because for a number of years I have been reluctant to speak on this debate. I have held the opinion that little notice is taken of the remarks that are made by members. On this occasion I cannot let pass the opportunity to refer to one or two matters that concern the North-East Province which I have the honour to represent. A matter that has top priority is goldmining. The State of Western Australia would be in an extremely bad position today were it not for the goldmining industry. From the printed Speech made by His Excellency the Governor I have noted that he said—

Mining continues to be of vital importance to the State and a more virile policy of assistance to the industry will be put into effect, concentrating on geological survey and diamond drilling.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: As I was saying before the tea suspension, it is gratifying to know that the goldmining industry is, and has been for the last five or six years, producing gold to the value, in Australian currency, of very nearly £1,000,000 a month. In some years it has gone over £13,000,000 a year. I refer to the year 1954 and onwards. Even in 1958 the industry produced gold in Australian currency to the value of £13,639,149. That is a remarkable amount of money to come from any industry, and I hope that when the Government sees the opportunity to help this industry, it will make more financial assistance available.

I am well aware that the last Government gave assistance to the industry as far as it possibly could; and I am also aware that the present Government increased the prospectors' allowance by 10s. a week. But even so, that is not enough money to permit these men to go out into the hinterland of the State—into the auriferous country—and strive to find the elusive 'weight'. The position today is that the old prospector as we knew him has passed on.

The amount received from the Mines Department is insufficient to induce to go prospecting, those who are desirous of going out to look for shows or payable ore. Prospecting is a hazardous proposition, particularly when one considers the heat and the flies, and the other inconveniences

with which prospectors have to contend; and the allowance given them by the Mines Department is not enough to enable them to live in any sort of comfort at all. There are not too many men who would be anxious to take up a vocation of that nature today.

Recently I had occasion to make a trip to the North with the Minister for Mines, and I was able to visit some of the towns in my constituency. In one place I had an opportunity to look over the mine about which I spoke some time ago. This mine is at Cue and is called the Great Fingal. This was the mine to which I referred as having produced 1,000,000 ounces of gold from 1,000,000 tons of ore.

That is a remarkable achievement. Evidently the mine was given up some years ago, and was considered to be finished but a company came along and evinced interest in this mine, and the Labour Government saw its way clear to grant it payment on a pound for pound basis in an endeavour to find out, by diamond drilling, whether there was any value left in this mine, and whether it was worth while having it opened up by the company which was being subsidised. Only a few days ago I heard that the present Government had also granted a sum—approximately £10,000—for this work to be carried on. I understand that the whole amount expended will be in the vicinity of £90,000.

That is a great deal of money, and it is hoped that something comes of this mine as a result of all the diamond drilling that has taken place. Some of these bores are down 2,000 or 3,000 ft., but at this stage, it is difficult to say whether or not any good will come of what is being done.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: If they go further they might find oil.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: The position is that it will cost this company about £25,000 as its share, and the total cost to get the mine working could be in the vicinity of £2,000,000. That is a phenomenal amount of money for anyone to furnish in an endeavour to bring this mine into production. On the other hand, the expenditure is not much if one appreciates the great wealth and value that will accrue to the State by way of gold, if the project is successful, and the great benefit it will provide in employing men. I sincerely hope that something does come of this venture, in view of the money spent on it. I hope we get some return.

When one looks at the figures on gold-mining, it is hard to understand the attitude of the members of the International Monetary Fund in not seeing their way clear to permit a rise in the price of gold. Deputations have been introduced, and conferences have been held over a number of years. I have heard various people

make statements, both optimistic and pessimistic, in relation to this matter. Only recently it was thought that there was going to be an increase in the price of gold, but then one read that a prominent banker said there would be no increase.

That brings me to a couple of statements I read the other day concerning the different opinions expressed by people who consider they know something about the industry. By travelling widely, and by virtue of their jobs, they feel that they may be authorities on the position. I read an article the other day by a prominent Kalgoorlie mining engineer. In this article he said that the South African mining men believed that a rise in the price of gold was imminent. This engineer and manufacturer of Kalgoorlie said he had just returned from a business visit to South Africa and Rhodesia, and there was a general air of confidence that the gold price would be raised. He said—

Large-scale extensions were being made to plants by major mining companies and a new mine was being established on the Rand at a cost of £25,000,000. The investment of American capital in South African gold mining was regarded as significant. Mining men there appear to have something firm on which to base their optimism.

Some two days later one could pick up a further issue of the same journal that published the article to which I have just referred, and read the opinion of Germany's leading banker (Herrman Josef Abs) who said there was no chance of an increase in the gold price in the near future. He admitted that gold was the only commodity that had not multiplied in value since the pre-war days; and he added that there was no need for a price increase on the grounds of easing the world liquidity problem. He went on to say that the resources of the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, would be ample after the increase in quotas; but in any case the United States Congress would not agree to a lift in the price of gold.

This is something I cannot understand. I feel the industry is certainly entitled to an increase in the price of gold, but apparently the powers that be are not prepared to grant this concession. There is one direction in which I feel anxiety in connection with this industry, and that is with regard to employment. Going back as far as 1903, we find that 20,716 men were employed in the goldmining industry in Western Australia. Last year the numerical strength had dwindled to 5,352. When one considers these figures one will realise that the numerical strength of the men employed in the industry today has decreased considerably. If something cannot be done to engage more men, the industry will be affected considerably.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Would mechanisation have accounted for some of that?

The Hon. W. R. HALL: That is quite true. The big mines, particularly, are to be complimented for the manner in which they have lowered the cost of production per ton, particularly having regard to the low-grade ore they have to by-pass from time to time. We all, of course appreciate that machinery today is exceedingly modern. I believe there are two things responsible for the low cost of production: One is the Tungsten-tipped drill, and the other the air legs for rigging up. At one time there were three shifts sharpening the drills, whereas now this is not necessary. The mines now have a longer life during which to produce their returns, but unfortunately sufficient men are not employed in the industry. If the industry were granted an increase in the price of gold I wonder whether or not it would employ more men. I know that the large mines in Kalgoorlie are on a fairly solid foundation.

It is the man working on low-grade ore who is battling and has the job in front of him to make a go of it. If an increase in price were granted, there is no doubt that more men would be employed in the outer parts of the Goldfields where the auriferous ore is obtained. That is a matter which I think the Government should take into consideration; and at all times it should be prepared to stress it to the Commonwealth Government to see whether it is possible, having regard to the International Monetary Fund, for that Government to give some assistance to the industry so that it can employ more men.

I now wish to speak about the Sons of Gwalia mine to which I think the last Government loaned £250,000. I was pleased to see in the paper the other day that the mine is holding its own and looks like being a good producer in the not too distant future. The Hill 50 goldmine at Mt. Magnet is also in a healthy state. I have seen some good gold from that mine, and I have no doubt that it will have a long life and be of value to this State. Gwalia, with the Sons of Gwalia mine; and Mt. Magnet, with the Hill 50 mine, are the only mining towns of any importance north of Kalgoorlie. It is very sad to see some of the towns which have fallen by the wayside—regarding population and activity—as a result of the mines closing.

Recently a statement was made about the State hotel at Gwalia. I have been a regular patron of this hotel when visiting my constituency over a long period of years, and I was amazed to read and hear that it was the intention of the Government to dispose of the hotel. I am not going to let this occasion pass without saying a few words about that State hotel.

I traced the history of the hotel, and I think it was built in 1903 at a cost of somewhere around £4,300. It has been a goldmine to the Governments of the day. Whilst I cannot say very much about the other State hotels—I have not had the pleasure or otherwise of visiting them—this one has been sadly neglected. I say without fear of contradiction that it is in a shocking state of disrepair. The managers—from time immemorial up to the present manager and his wife—have done a particularly good job under difficult circumstances which are not experienced in other hotels, and which should not be experienced in a State hotel. I believe it to be true that this State hotel has, at times, been responsible for keeping all the other State hotels going.

If one were to stop at the Gwalia hotel today one would find that the linos on the floor were worn out and that the beds were very poor. One would think the Yanks had been living there for years! The glass in some of the wardrobes is cracked. This hotel is just a beer house, although at one time it catered for the public and visitors; and the manager did his best for them. The charges were very reasonable, and the catering is good. A year or two ago the tariff was raised to such an extent that the men who resided at the hotel left to stay at the mine's mess which caters for the men at a reasonable rate.

I have visited the hotel on several occasions during the last few years, and invariably I find that only myself and someone else has booked in. Furthermore, I say without fear of contradiction that the Government is lucky there have not been a few beer strikes. Not long ago a cooling system was put in and it was installed at such a height that it took me all my time to look over the top of it. There must have been something wrong with the person who took the measurements. This cooling system is in the main bar and it is considerably higher than the ordinary bar counter. It is where the beer is stored. Some people who are not as tall as I am cannot see over it at all. It is a great piece of workmanship by whomever was responsible for it.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: What do they keep underneath?

The Hon. W. R. HALL: There are some very small men at Gwalia; and I might say that the honourable member would never have a chance of looking over this bar. I know I have some difficulty. The late Mr. Fraser and I undertook a journey to have a look at this hotel, owing to its being in a shocking state of repair, but eventually it rained so heavily that we had to turn back. I do not think that a Minister has visited it for a considerable number of years. I have complained bitterly about the hotel. The blinds were in

shreds, and I am sure members would see better blinds thrown on to a rubbish tip. The only good thing about the hotel—and this has always been so—is the meals which are provided. There is always a good table. That has been the position for the past 20 years, and I have no complaints about that or the management. However, in regard to the points I have raised, the Government department administering State hotels needs to toe the mark.

I would add that if the Government decides to dispose of the State hotels—I can only quote Gwalia on this occasion—and calls tenders for them, heaven help the person who takes over the Gwalia hotel. It is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Licensing Court, and I believe that whoever takes it over will have to spend £10,000 to £15,000 to put it in good repair. There is only one lavatory and one bathroom in the hotel upstairs for men, and very few other conveniences. It is remarkable that the manager and his wife have been able to do such a good job in the face of so many difficulties. The population at Gwalia is cosmopolitan, and the manager and his wife do a good job in putting up with everything. I ask the Minister for Mines to convey to the Minister controlling the State hotels my suggestion that the Minister have a look at the hotel at Gwalia to see whether something can be done about it.

I now desire to refer to our railways. I have never been in the habit of criticising or castigating our railway services or those associated with them. At the present time, the service between Perth and Kalgoorlie is the best that I can remember since I first became a member of Parliament. I must also give credit to the men who are working on the job. However, if one or two small matters were rectified, that service could be further improved. I do not intend to criticise anyone about it, because I know that as time goes on, this service will get better.

I have heard other members criticise our railway system, but I have every good word for it and for those who work on it. You will remember, Mr. President, some years ago that I and my colleagues from the North-East Province were subjected to an audience in the President's gallery to hear what we had to say, and to see how we voted on the closure of certain railway lines. You would know, Sir, how the vote went because you were in the House at that time. The hullabaloo is now over, but it is marvellous how this propaganda goes on during an election period. After the election is over it dies. However, I have a vivid memory of those in the gallery that night, and I know the political party to which they belonged. They came to see what I and my colleagues were doing about the closure of the lines in the North-East Province.

Remembering what happened in regard to the closure of the Malcolm to Laverton railway line, I wonder what our Country Party members are going to do now that their party is in power with the Liberal Party. Will they restore the Malcolm-Laverton railway service? To some extent I think the congregation we had in the gallery was engineered; and now is the time for those people to show where they stand.

They were of the opinion that the line should not be closed. I was in a different category at that time, but I have not forgotten the occasion. I have heard nothing about it lately, but I do hope that the present Government will give serious consideration to the restoration of the railway service between Malcolm and Laverton.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: They were watching the way some of us voted, too.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: They might have done that also. At the same time I must inform the honourable member that the audience we had on that night came particularly to see what the members for the North-East Province were doing, because amongst the people who were here were some aspiring politicians. If the North-East Province members did not vote in a certain direction, then what those people were going to do was no-one's business! As a matter of fact they tried to influence me; and, as you know, Sir, that cannot be done under Standing Orders. Because of the way we voted, perhaps this Government, with the assistance of its Country Party members, will be able to restore the service to which I have been referring. I shall render any assistance in this direction that I can.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: A little touch of humour does improve a speech.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I agree with the honourable member.

The PRESIDENT: I think you are out of order listening to him.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I do not think there was anything intentional about the interjection; there was nothing wilful about it whatsoever! I have only two other railway matters that I wish to mention. I cannot understand—unless there is some specific reason for this—why the railway authorities want to have the Kalgoorlie express depart at 5 minutes to 5 p.m., and the Westland at 5 minutes to 7 p.m. Why they do not make the times 5 o'clock and 7 o'clock, is beyond my comprehension. Also, the Kalgoorlie train used to be due in Perth, in the morning, at 3 minutes to 9. Why do not the railway officials make the time for that train's arrival, 9 o'clock? It seldom got into Perth at 3 minutes to 9 anyway; it was generally later. If the Minister will convey what I have said to the Minister for Railways, some person

may be saved the experience of missing a train. I am sure that on many occasions people have missed trains.

I wish now to deal with the question of fruit-fly. Each year we have to pay a fee and register our orchards. The Department of Agriculture should give consideration to the matter of the department, itself, spraying the fruit trees, rather than forcing the owner of a property to spray, periodically, his fruit trees in order to eradicate the fruit-fly. In South Australia the Government, I believe, does the spraying. The spraying there is done in the same way as the spraying in connection with the exterminating of the Argentine ant was carried out here.

The two shillings registration fee that we pay each year is negligible, and, so far as I can see, it serves no good purpose. I spray my fruit trees, but the other residents in the area do not seem to spray theirs. Although I spray my trees, I seem to have more fruit-fly than one would expect to find in half of Perth. It is impossible for me to get an apricot from my trees, unless it is full of fruit-fly; and it is the same with figs. Apricots appear to be a pet diet of the fruit-fly; and the fly also seems to like figs.

No good purpose is being served by the present arrangements. It would be better if the Department of Agriculture carried out the spraying itself, and the persons whose properties were sprayed paid 10s. or £1 a year in order that the spraying might be done properly. This applies particularly to people who own quarter-acre blocks. Recently I drove overland to South Australia, and when I got to Ceduna I found a road block which had been established by the South Australian Department of Agriculture. The people manning the road block made a thorough search of my motorcar to see that I did not take any fly-infested fruit from Western Australia into South Australia. I think that is the right thing to do. I happened to have some fruit in the car on this occasion, and I know there was no fly in it; but those officers confiscated the fruit. Whether they ate it or not, I do not know.

This method could well be adopted by the Western Australian Department; and if it were, we would get somewhere. There appears to be more fruit-fly in Western Australia than in all the remaining States put together. We are well behind the times in Western Australia and we should do something about the matter. Today it is not worth while watering the trees, or to have a backyard orchard; we are lucky to find even an early apricot that is free of fruit-fly.

One other matter I wish to deal with concerns traffic. This could be a pet subject of mine. I have heard members make speeches about stop signs and other sorts of signs, and I readily associate myself

with the sentiments they expressed in regard to stop signs. It would be better if some of them were done away with altogether than for them to be where they are situated. The old traffic rule was one of the best; the motorist knew where he stood. He had to give way to the man on his right. Today in the metropolitan area there are some stop signs that are of no use at all; they are a hindrance to traffic rather than a help.

Our Police Traffic Branch does a remarkably good job, but we have not a sufficient number of men on bikes. The traffic would be better controlled if we had more police traffic constables on machines. These men have a vast district to cover, but, because of the small number of men who are on motorbikes, they cannot cover it effectively for a period of 24 hours. One way by which we could deal with a lot of the culprits, and perhaps minimise the number of accidents which have resulted in the loss of good lives in later years, is by having more men on the various shifts to control the traffic.

Our accident rate is very high in Western Australia, and, strangely enough, some of the restrictions we have in regard to the licensing of cars and so on, do not exist in South Australia; yet I believe less accidents occur in that State than in Western Australia. Whilst we may pat ourselves on the back in regard to our approach to the traffic question, I think we are well behind the times.

Quite a lag occurs between the time when an offence takes place and when the offender is prosecuted. This shows a lack of control, to some extent; and that lack arises because of one reason only, namely, the shortage of men.

Another point that has come under my notice concerns the fines imposed for the various offences that are committed under the Traffic Act. I fail to comprehend the set-up. I read in the newspaper of the number of cases—they run into hundreds on occasions—that go before the Traffic Court. How the magistrate arrives at what the fine shall be in each instance—the fines vary from about £16 down to about £2—I do not know. Many cases are heard each week, and I fail to see how any one magistrate can give consideration to so many cases, and decide when leniency or severity should be extended. Each week we see lists of traffic offenders; and the various fines that are imposed for speeding and so on are published. It is remarkable to notice the uniform penalties that the magistrates inflict.

This matter wants looking into. The average working man cannot afford to lose a shift—that might cost him £2 or £3—in order to appear in court. As a result, such a person merely endorses the summons and pleads guilty. He is then at the mercy of the magistrate or the court. Some cognisance should be taken of the criticism of the manner in which the fines

are imposed by the magistrates. I would like to see introduced some more equitable method of dealing with these people.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: You are not smarting yourself, are you?

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I may inform the honourable member that I have no reason to be smarting in connection with traffic offences.

The PRESIDENT: I think the honourable member had better address the Chair.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I will have much pleasure in doing so, Mr. President, and I bow to your wishes. I have already spoken about several other traffic matters. In my opinion the traffic problem in this State will get worse as the years go by. The National Safety Council can send out circulars to the public and can indulge in all sorts of different forms of propaganda, but I doubt whether it makes much difference. There is only one thing which makes me keep my eyes wide open and that is the sight of a policeman on a bike. I think he is the answer to the traffic problem.

I do not intend to delay the debate any further. I have dealt with several items which affect my constituency but, as I have said before, I have never seen anything much come out of the Address-in-reply debate, so I do not suppose I shall on this occasion. However, I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE HON. J. J. GARRIGAN (South-East) [8.16]: It gives me much pleasure to support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply to the Speech so ably presented by His Excellency. I also wish to take this opportunity of congratulating the two young and new Ministers in this House. I feel certain that they will carry out their duties with dignity and with credit to themselves, and that their labours will be of benefit to Western Australia. I should also like to extend the right hand of friendship to my worthy colleague, Mr. Ron Thompson. I am sure that his contributions to the debates in this House will be well received.

There is not much left for me to say because most members heard Mr. Bennetts take us for a trip throughout the South-East Province; in fact, I think he travelled all the way to Canberra. However, there are one or two matters I would like to mention although, as I have said in this House before, and will say again, there is so much said that means so little. I will deal mainly with roads in my electorate. I think it is up to everyone, irrespective of political colour, and irrespective of the Government in power, to give consideration to a link between East and West; by that I am referring to what is known as the Eyre Highway. Actually, there is no such highway; it is just a little yellow streak of dust across the plain.

In my opinion, it is the responsibility of this State Government, and the Government of South Australia, to see that something is done about this highway. For defence purposes we should have some decent means of communication. All we have today is a single railway track; what is called a highway; an air service; and a round-about sea route. I suggest that this Government and the South Australian Government confer so that pressure can be brought to bear on the Federal Government to do something about the Eyre Highway, even if only from a defence point of view.

Another road in my electorate that I wish to mention, is the one from Esperance through Ravensthorpe to Perth. I hope the Minister will request the Main Roads Department to give consideration to bituminising the road from Shark Lake in the east via the Dallyup River to Ravensthorpe. This road is through an ever-expanding district the products of which have to be carted as quickly as possible to market, and at present the roads are very bad.

If the farmers there want to send their produce by rail to Perth it means a very round-about route and thus involves extra cost and time. So I suggest to the Government that consideration be given to starting this bitumen section from Shark Lake in the east through to Ravensthorpe. Copper is mined at Ravensthorpe and the concentrate has to be taken to Esperance to be loaded into ships.

I would also like the Minister for Mines to give every possible consideration to the drilling of new goldmines in Western Australia. I am fully conversant with the mining industry as I worked underground for 26 years. Many of our old fields are practically worn out—although there is hope for some of them. However, I trust the Mines Department will concentrate on a drilling programme so that new fields can be opened up in this State.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the Hawke Government on the marvellous job it did while in office, particularly as regards water conservation, railways, roads, schools, hospitals and practically everything else. It set a very high standard, and I am certain that if this Government, during its term can attain and maintain the standard of the Hawke Government we will, at the end of three years, say that it has done a grand job. I support the motion.

THE HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [8.22]: I also wish to make a few remarks in support of the motion; and as the two previous speakers have had something to say about the goldmining industry, I propose to add a few comments in that regard. It might be worth-while if I refer to the official Year Book of

Western Australia for 1957 and read from it a number of references because they tell an interesting story. The first chapter in the book is a historical review of Western Australia; and these are a few of the extracts—

1885—First Discovery of Payable Gold—On Margaret and Ord Rivers in Kimberley district.

1886—Kimberley Goldfield proclaimed and townsite of Wyndham declared as its port.

1887—Discovery of gold at Southern Cross and elsewhere in Yilgarn district.

1888—Rich deposits of alluvial gold found at Pilbara Creek. Pilbara and Yilgarn Goldfields proclaimed.

1889—Discovery of gold at Ashburton River.

1892—Rich discovery of gold at Coolgardie.

1893—Discovery of gold deposits at Kalgoorlie and other areas east of Coolgardie. Dundas goldfield proclaimed following successful prospecting between Frasers Range and Southern Cross. Coolgardie townsite declared.

1894—Towns of Kalgoorlie, Kanowna, Day Dawn and Mullewa declared. Proclamations of Coolgardie and East Coolgardie goldfields. Port of Esperance Bay and municipalities of Coolgardie and Cue proclaimed.

1903—Completion of goldfields water scheme, and supply to Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie commenced. Peak of gold production—2,064,801 fine ozs.

There is an historical review of Western Australia from the years 1885 to 1903 as shown in the official Year Book. It bears eloquent testimony to the part that the goldmining industry played in the development of Western Australia in those early years. Since those days, in round figures, £425,000,000 worth of gold has been produced in Western Australia. As Mr. Hall pointed out, although the goldmining industry has suffered greatly from a number of causes well known to everyone, it is still producing over £1,000,000 worth of gold per month. It still employs over 5,000 men directly, and indirectly gives employment to several other thousands of people. In addition, it still supports a population of over 20,000 people at Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

The industry maintains a railway system northwards as far as Leonora and Gwalia, and it maintains towns like Mt. Magnet and others. I am referring mainly to the industry as it applies to the district I represent, although outside of the places I have mentioned there remain only Norseman, Southern Cross and Bullfinch.

I am not going to traverse the ground covered so ably by Mr. Hall, Mr. Teahan, Mr. Garrigan and other Goldfields representatives who have preceded me, but I mention that in our humble way, and in our comparatively small sphere of influence, we are attempting to impress on all concerned the valuable part that this industry has played in the development of our country. We also want to point out the difficulties confronting the industry at present, and we want to lay stress on the fact that if it is considered to be worth while, now is the time that it needs more assistance than has been given to it in recent years.

We know only too well that the gold-mining industry is influenced by factors more or less beyond the control of Australia. The price of gold is fixed by the International Monetary Fund. Practically the only country in the world which purchases gold is the United States of America, and the price is fixed and has remained stationary for many years.

In spite of the fact that countries like South Africa, Canada, England and Australia have used their influence to lift the price of gold, their efforts so far have failed. There are protagonists for and against the proposition that the price of gold be increased. The country which has to pay the piper for any increase is the United States of America. Naturally this country has the greatest influence when the question comes up for decision. Whether or not the price of gold will be increased in the foreseeable future is a question, the answer to which cannot be prognosticated with any degree of certainty.

In Australia we have to accept the view that in the immediate future there is slight prospect of an increase in the price of gold. Therefore we have to realise that it rests upon our own shoulders to determine whether or not this industry is to be supported in such a way that it will not only survive, but perhaps extend. That is the position with which we are confronted.

Western Australia is the greatest producer of gold in the Commonwealth. The amount produced by the other States is practically negligible when compared with our own production. This is a matter which mainly concerns Western Australia and its economy. My view, and I am supported by others, is that the Commonwealth Government has not been in the past, and is not at the present, fully appreciative of the importance and of the value of the goldmining industry, not only to Western Australia but to the whole of Australia.

The members for the North-West have ably presented their case for the development of that portion of the State. The development of the North appears to cause a lot of concern to everyone, and so far it has presented a baffling problem to statesmen and others. I applaud the advocacy of the members concerned, and I

hope that the constructive proposals they have submitted will be considered and acted upon.

I also want to point out to the powers that be that we have stretching northwards from Kalgoorlie to Wiluna, and westwards from Wiluna to Yalgoo, a vast area which, in the past, has supported a vigorous goldmining industry which provided employment for many thousands of men. Potentially it can do that again. Last year there was the tragedy of discontinued railway services in those centres. Practically all available Crown land is taken up by pastoralists, and good use is made of it.

The main hope of that vast area maintaining a population rests largely on a revival of the goldmining industry. Surely that is an important matter to keep in mind! If the Commonwealth Government appreciates the importance of spending millions of pounds in the North-West, it should also realise the importance of spending some reasonable amount in assisting an industry which has for years past maintained a population in many towns where there are already facilities in the way of schools and public utilities.

Everyone concerned is disappointed with the recent assistance which the Commonwealth Government has given to the goldmining industry; it really amounts to very little; it is so small that it is tantamount to an expression by the Commonwealth Government that the industry does not amount to much, and is barely worthy of support in order to survive. That is the position. We in this House have limited influence, but I hope that our persistent advocacy will have some effect on the Commonwealth Government, and on the Western Australian representatives in the Federal Parliament, so that they will not let up in their efforts to impress on the Government the need to give more assistance to the goldmining industry, and the need to increase the price of gold.

Coming nearer home, if the State does receive further funds from the Commonwealth Government to assist the goldmining industry, the Mines Department should encourage and assist the prospectors in every possible way. One of the first steps taken by the new Government was to increase the allowance to prospectors by 10s. a week. That was a good gesture, and it has increased the weekly allowance to £5 10s. and £6 in the two fields.

Although that increase is helpful and is more than what the prospectors have received in the past, it is the wrong method of approach. My idea would be to revive and modernise a scheme which operated some years ago when an officer was appointed to be in charge of the prospectors who were receiving assistance from the Government. He was skilled in the goldmining industry and had a wide knowledge of various fields. He was able to supervise and assist the prospectors with advice and direction. That is the way in

which the Mines Department should tackle this problem. It ought to say to the prospectors, "We are like the oil companies which are spending so much money trying to find oil in this country." The Mines Department should select capable and experienced prospectors, and then give them a generous allowance which will, in time, be paid back tenfold if they discover a mine. These experienced prospectors will, undoubtedly find new mines, just as Walls and Voumard who recently discovered a new mine at Ryan's Find.

Prospectors now have to use motor trucks in their search for gold; they have to be supplied with provisions; they have to work possibly months without any return; and meanwhile they have to support their families. Unless they have private means, the £5 10s. weekly assistance is not of much help. That is one of the reasons why there are so few prospectors and why very few new finds have been located.

If we are to revive Wiluna; if we are to put Meekatharra back on the map; and if we are to revive Laverton, Cue and similar centres, we must retain the schools, post offices and hospitals already there. If the prospectors can locate a new mine here and there, the industry will be resuscitated, and a good step will be taken on behalf of Western Australia by keeping communities in those centres.

I urge the Minister for Mines, who has shown enthusiasm and keenness in this portfolio, to try and break new ground as regards prospecting. What earthly hope would we have of finding oil in this country if the various companies prospecting for oil did not have enough finance?

We know that principle applies, although to a lesser extent, to gold. Let us ask ourselves, therefore, is gold worth finding; and is it worth maintaining those places I have just mentioned? Would it be a good thing for the State to revive the Murchison and the Eastern Goldfields and keep the population in those parts? If the answer to some of these questions is "Yes," we have to make a serious attempt to find new mines and revive an industry which has accomplished so much for the State in the past, and which can do so again if it only gets half a chance.

I will perhaps continue for a few minutes and mention the Licensing Act. I am very pleased to hear that the Government proposes to bring before Parliament this session a measure to do something about our outmoded liquor laws. We have just been discussing a statute which was enacted in 1902; and we all realise how out of date it was and how urgent was the need for a revision in order that it might meet present-day requirements.

Another Act which has a big influence on the well being of the community is the Licensing Act, and I hope that the proposed Bill will be submitted at as early a

date as possible so that we may all give it the thought and consideration which it undoubtedly deserves. I think, without hesitation, that most people would agree with the statement that our licensing laws are extremely out of date; that our whole approach to the problems which arise from liquor, urgently needs revising. We have too many hotels in some places—many of them are sub-standard—and at other places we have too few.

The tragedies resulting from the abuse of our liquor laws are apparent in many ways. They confront us day by day, and I think it is about time that a thorough review of the situation was made; and, as I said before, I am very pleased that the Government is giving consideration to the problem.

I hope that the Government will have the report of the Licensing Committee, which sat last year, printed. I happened to be the chairman of that committee and I would be the first to admit that the report is not the best document that has ever been put together.

But the committee in question was comprised of very earnest and conscientious men who travelled over many parts of Western Australia; applied themselves to the question very assiduously over several months; and had the benefit of the experience of men like Mr. Justice Maxwell (the chairman of the court in Victoria) our own licensing authorities, and many other bodies and individuals in Western Australia. The report, therefore, was eventually compiled after a lot of research. The members of the committee were not unanimous on all subjects, and the views for and against were all submitted. I believe it would be of considerable assistance to every member of this Parliament to have the opportunity of studying that document.

I forget how long the report is, but I think it is something in the vicinity of 100 pages. It will be appreciated that if members are to have the opportunity of studying the report it should be available to them as soon as possible in order that they may read it before the Bill is introduced for discussion. I think the Minister told me, in answer to a question, that it would cost £150, or in the vicinity of that amount, to print. If it makes some small contribution, and assists members to appreciate and understand the problems of our licensing laws in such a way that they will be able to formulate something better for the future, I think the £150 will be well spent.

In conclusion, I want to join with other speakers in offering my congratulations to our two new Ministers. May I wish them every success in the departments which they now have the honour to control. I also offer my congratulations to our new member, Mr. Ron Thompson, and I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [8.53]: I believe that I am the twenty-third member of this House to make a speech on the Address-in-reply on this particular occasion. That is a very good record I think. I hope this does not frighten members but I have here, as a result, a fairly large order in the way of a speech to deliver in reply to the speeches that have been. It is usually the prerogative of the Leader of this House to conclude the debate on the Address-in-reply; and, in so doing, I first wish to say that I propose to adhere to the custom of my predecessors—I understand it was originated by the Hon. J. M. Drew—in this House, of replying as fully and factually as possible to the various questions, criticisms, etc., posed by members in their speeches.

I would like to take the opportunity of thanking members very much indeed for the congratulatory remarks they have conveyed to me. I would like to tell them that I am indeed very conscious of the responsibility that I have and that I propose to do the very best I can in the work I have been given to undertake.

The information I will be supplying is subject, of course, to the amount of detail that I have so far been able to obtain. Naturally, I will not have any detailed notes on the three speeches made tonight. May I first say that when I became the Minister for Mines I was very anxious to visit some of the mining areas; and I have since travelled over a good deal of the State. I appreciate only too well, however, that there is much of the State that I have not had an opportunity of yet seeing. But I had an interesting trip right through the Murchison district to Pilbara in the company of Mr. Hall. I had the benefit of his good humour and company on that trip. I also met Mr. Willesee in Marble Bar and, his colleague in another place, the member for the district.

That particular trip was of great educational value to me because it enabled me to see for myself some of the difficulties and hardships which obtain in the mining industry today. I say, quite feelingly, that it was indeed a sorry sight to see that so many of the goldmining towns had deteriorated.

It was pitiful to see areas of land where previously there were people, and where prosperity had reigned. Now there are a few houses and slabs of concrete, which indicate that at one time there were people living in those places but, because the ore has been lost, the towns have gone down until in some cases they are almost ghost towns. I realise, as Mr. Heenan has said, that the value of the gold industry to Western Australia is of great importance and should not be forgotten.

I often wonder what the average person walking in the street thinks about gold, and what it means to the economy of Western Australia. I think the average person

thinks of gold as something nice and bright and golden in colour, but he has little idea of its true value; possibly because he has never had the opportunity of seeing what effort goes into the working of a goldmine and into the production of gold from a mine. When one visits some of the big mines, one realises the amount of machinery, capital, man power, and effort required to produce gold.

One can do nothing but admire the gold-mining industry, both from the point of view of the companies and the people who are employed in the industry. I repeat that the trip I had through those areas was indeed of great value to me.

I heard it said the other evening, and I am sure that it will come to pass—probably in the not too distant future—that 50 per cent. of the materials that we now use in our every-day life will not be used in the future; that substitutes will be found to take their place. I agree with Mr. Willesee when he said that there will come a time when minerals—including some of those already known but without any apparent monetary value at the moment—will grow in importance and, as a result, in value.

In that respect the Pilbara field has a great future, I am sure, as it is a highly mineralised area. I saw, going through that country, many of the difficulties that are met there; and one of the most serious was that mentioned by Mr. Wise—the need for the conservation of water. I found, in that area, circumstances that are becoming desperate indeed; as the last five or six years have been so dry that the water level in that part of the State is dropping gradually to danger point.

As Minister for Mines, I have endeavoured to do all I can to bring about a solution of that problem. I am having boring done at Marble Bar, in the hope that water will be found there. I am having boring and some shaft work done on a mine at Bamboo Creek, about 40 miles from Marble Bar, in the hope that the people engaged in mining operations there may be assisted. There are operative goldmines there, but as there is not sufficient water available to work the battery, they have closed down and the ore is carted to Marble Bar, where it is crushed in the State battery.

I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Garigan, in the view he expressed as to the need for a proper road connection between the Eastern States and Western Australia. If anything could be done to secure for us an all-weather road from east to west across Australia, not only would the road prove of great economic value to this State, but also it would prove of great military and national value in the event of hostilities occurring in the future—something which we all hope will not happen.

During the last war, it was common knowledge that it would have taken some three or four months to move any large

number of men from Queensland to Western Australia, had there been the necessity to do so. I commend the honourable member for putting forward his suggestion. I may not be in a position to reply as fully as I would like to the various points raised by all honourable members; but wherever possible, if I cannot deal with those points, I will communicate by letter with the members concerned.

I want to assure members that, irrespective of whether or not I refer to their remarks, I have submitted to the Ministers concerned all criticisms, suggestions, etc. contained in their speeches.

I take pleasure in adding my felicitations to those conveyed to the Hon. Ronald Thompson on his election to this House. I am sure his contributions to the business of the House will be of a valuable and interesting nature. The honourable member has taken the place of a previous Leader of the House, a person for whom I had a deep personal regard and admiration, even though I may have crossed political swords with him on several occasions. I had a deep appreciation of his value and of what he gave to Western Australia during the period over which he was a member of this House.

I reiterate my assurances earlier in the session that, in the conduct of the business of the House, it is my desire and intention to be as co-operative as I possibly can. I regret that some small misunderstanding has taken place so early in the piece; but I do not think it was all my doing.

I congratulate Mr. Abbey on his very fine speech in proposing the Address-in-reply. This duty is an onerous one and I thought the honourable gentleman acquitted himself with distinction. His comments on the agricultural economy of the State were full of interest. In discussing storage of grain, the honourable member mentioned that the underground method of storage, which is in use in the Argentine and which prevents infestation by insects, could be used in this State. I understand that this method has already been tested in C.S.I.R.O. laboratories, and that funds have been provided from Commonwealth contributions to wheat research to enable the C.S.I.R.O. to experiment, on a commercial scale, in New South Wales during the coming year. It is not possible to comment concerning application of the method to Australian conditions until the proposed trials have been completed.

During his interesting discourse on Goldfields matters, the Hon. Mr. Teahan, deplored the fact that the local policeman was not equipped with a two-way radio. I am advised by the Commissioner of Police that provision has been made in this year's Estimates for a radio and that it will be installed as soon as it is acquired. The honourable member said

that prospectors might be encouraged to greater efforts if State batteries were kept up to date and efficient by the use of the latest production methods. In this regard, I emphasise that State batteries are kept as up to date and efficient as is possible with plants which are built with the object of treating all types of oxidised ore. Some of these mills operate only for very limited periods in the year, being dependent on the efforts and activity of prospectors and small mine-owners.

The State batteries in actual effect subsidise prospectors, as the cost of crushing charged a prospector averages 9s. 6d. per ton; while the actual cost to the Mines Department is 56s. 8d. per ton. These charges have not been increased for many years. It will be seen that State batteries are definitely a service which is extended to prospectors and small gold producers. When one considers the fine margin of return which the Mines Department receives for the work it does in this regard, one realises why the activities of this section of the Mines Department show on the red side of the ledger.

Since taking office, my Government has increased the assistance given to approved prospectors by 10s. per week, bringing the weekly sustenance rates to £5 per week in the Eastern and Murchison fields and to £6 per week in the North-Western and Northern fields. Following on Mr. Heenan's remarks, I realise that to give prospectors a rise of 10s. per week in the assistance afforded them is not the answer to the problem, nor was it intended to be the answer when I recommended it to Cabinet. But having visited these fields and talked with a number of prospectors, I realised some of the difficulties they were operating under owing to the increased cost of living. I returned to Perth determined to do something to obtain immediate relief for these men; and I asked the Government to grant this small increase in order to assist them to meet the increased cost of living.

The honourable member made reference to the old methods of prospecting. I am informed that it was found unsatisfactory many years ago to put one man with practical experience in charge of seven or eight other men and send them out to prospect as a team. The difficulty encountered was, to begin with, that of enabling one man to understand the others, as prospectors are individualistic types of beings.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: That was during the depression years, when the Goldfields were invaded by many men who knew nothing about prospecting. You must have experienced prospectors in charge.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The average prospector is an experienced person and a rather unusual type. He has to have a great deal of courage and patience to

go out into those areas and work, sometimes for long periods, without reward. Not all prospectors are as fortunate as Mr. Jock Walls has been in recent months. If any means can be brought forward to put prospecting on a better basis than has obtained for a number of years past I shall be very pleased to do whatever I can to put it into operation; because I am indeed conscious of the part that prospecting plays in the discovery of gold.

The Government has also drilled holes at Marble Bar for water for the township, and proposes to try to obtain battery water supplies at Bamboo Creek. A mobile drilling unit for hire to the public in the Pilbara field is under consideration, and a valuable compressor unit is being purchased for use by prospectors in the Murchison. I am examining geological and other data in order to ascertain the prospects of different goldfields from a diamond drilling viewpoint. The drilling for gold undertaken to date has not been particularly successful, unfortunately, in that new ore bodies have been very difficult to locate.

Mr. Hall mentioned a sum of £10,000, made available by the Mines Department for a company to do some diamond drilling in one part of the State. All I did in that connection was to authorise the expenditure of that money, in the hope that it would complete an experiment carried out by the previous Minister over a long period of time. I sincerely hope that the cores brought up by that diamond drilling will prove the existence of further ore bodies; because the town in which this mine is located needs a boost such as would be provided by the rediscovery of the ore bodies.

It was suggested by Mr. Teahan that the water problem in the Murchison might be solved by means of a hydrological survey. Surveys of this nature have been undertaken by the Mines Department in agricultural areas, particularly the drier ones. It may be some considerable time, however, before work of this nature could be contemplated for the Murchison. Then Mr. Jones suggested that the cost to the Government of boring for water might be lessened and more water found if the boring plants were leased to private owners. In this connection, I must state that the primary duty of the Mines Department's hydrological section is to explore the drier agricultural areas with a view to obtaining the fullest information as to the existence and the extent, or the non-existence, of underground water supplies. It was not originally intended that the section should serve as a water-drilling organisation for individual farmers. Its objects are scientific and exploratory, and once it is able to prove that water supplies exist, the information will be published so that farmers and others can then engage drilling contractors to put down bores for individual requirements.

When the project was first mooted, there was such a demand from farmers in the dry areas for water that the Mines Department was somewhat side-tracked from its original responsibility. At the present time, we are back on the main objective; that is, geological examination of difficult water areas, followed by drilling in order to define water accumulation and quality.

Difficulties he had experienced in Busselton and Margaret River were instanced by Mr. Jones in regard to obtaining information about a visit to the Yallingup Caves. I have reported this to the appropriate authorities, who mentioned that the tourist bureaus at Busselton and Margaret River are subsidised by the Government at the rate of 10s. for every £1 raised by the local bureau, with a maximum subsidy of £750 in any one financial year. Management of these bureaus is by a local committee and the Government Tourist Bureau itself is not represented on the committee of management.

It was suggested to me that Mr. Jones might have been referring to Lake Cave and Mammoth Cave, both of which are held on lease by the Augusta-Margaret River tourist bureau from the State Hotels. All revenue from caves' inspections at Margaret River belongs to this bureau, which is responsible for maintenance and guiding fees. The Main Roads Department has been constructing a new road in the vicinity of these caves, and perhaps this was the cause of the lack of sufficient road direction signs. The question of adequate signs will be taken up with the Augusta-Margaret River tourist bureau. The new cave at Augusta will be ready for public inspection before the next Christmas holiday period, and adequate road direction signs will be erected.

I now return to the speech made by Mr. Wise. I congratulate Mr. Wise on his interesting and constructive speech on the North-West, particularly in regard to the problem of water. I handed a copy of the speech to the Minister for the North-West who, I might say, has taken it with him to read on his present trip to that part of the State.

The honourable member suggested it would be of benefit to members and Ministers if the House were to periodically adjourn for a week. On this suggestion I would like to make a few comments. It would be of great advantage to Ministers if this were done as I am sure the honourable gentleman who made this suggestion would appreciate from the experience he has gained whilst holding the various portfolios he has held in the past. Mr. Strickland, too, who held the position of Leader of this House for quite some time, would also know what a week off would mean to those who occupy the seats held by Mr. Logan and myself.

In these positions a Minister works as long as 16 hours a day in his office. I have discussed this matter with Mr. Logan, my colleague, and he agrees with me that it would be appreciated if the Legislative Council could adjourn for a week from time to time because it would enable us to accede to the many requests that are made from the country for us to visit those parts. It would also enable private members to deal with the work they are called upon to do; more particularly those members who represent provinces in the country.

So whenever it is possible to adjourn this Chamber—at the convenience of all members, of course—I will make it my business to see that it is done. However, if such action is taken I hope it will not be used as evidence against us in that some people may criticise the Legislative Council for the reduced number of sittings. In that vein I would say that no comparison can be made between the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. In this Chamber there are 30 members whilst in another place there are 50.

Further, the business of this House is quite different from that in another place. For example, we do not deal with Estimates here, which saves a great deal of time. As a result we can deal with legislation more expeditiously than members in another House are sometimes able to do. I will indeed be pleased to adopt the suggestion put forward by the honourable member whenever the opportunity affords itself.

Mr. Watson suggested that I might examine the royalties charged on certain minerals, which, he said he had been informed, represented in not a few cases the difference between a profit and no profit. I advise the honourable member that the royalties charged under the Mining Act are in every case extremely nominal. Authority also exists for such royalties to be waived or suspended at will, and this has been done in the cases of minerals which are not at present entirely profitable.

There are other difficulties which bring about a situation of this nature such as transport costs and the like whereby a company requests the Minister to waive the royalty for a time and I have been able to accede to some of these requests periodically. Nevertheless I believe the State should be entitled to receive a nominal royalty from the operations of such companies. Two companies can go into the field and hold exactly the same area of land and yet whilst one company is struggling the other is making wonderful profits; and if a small royalty is imposed no harm is done to the struggling company because the royalty is charged only on a production basis.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Not on the basis of its profits?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No; on the basis of its production generally. The honourable member can rest assured that I will not impose royalties which will seriously affect any operations.

The honourable member raised two issues which, in themselves, are separate, but which are related through their joint effect on the Consolidated Revenue Budgets of the States. These were the abolition of stamp and probate duties, and the abolition of interest charges to the States on loan monies provided from Commonwealth revenue. In general terms, it may be said quite fairly that neither of the honourable member's proposals would bring any advantages to the States or their citizens.

Taking the seven Australian Governments as a whole, there is a certain amount of money required to maintain their services and public investment programmes. This requirement can be found from one source only—the people of Australia—and if it is not raised directly by one Government, it must be obtained by another. In general, any reduction in the amount available to the Commonwealth means either less Commonwealth services and less transfers to the States or, alternatively, an increase in Commonwealth taxation in order to offset the reduction in other income. There would appear to be no constitutional bar to the proposal to abolish State stamp and probate duties and replace them by a Commonwealth reimbursement. However, ever since the States lost the power to levy income tax, the constant argument of all State Premiers has been that Commonwealth reimbursements are too small, and that flexibility in raising State revenue to provide funds for implementing Government policy has been drastically reduced.

We know only too well how convenient it is at times for Governments to kick the political football around when dealing with loan funds. The abolition of stamp and probate duties would further reduce the capacity of all States to raise their own revenues and, in consequence, there would be a further reduction in the financial independence of the States. If carried to its logical conclusion, the argument of Mr. Watson would lead to the abolition of all State taxes and greater financial dependence on the Commonwealth, which is not altogether desirable.

Although principles of equity are difficult to apply consistently in any taxing measure—it having been said there is no equity of treatment in taxation—it would seem much fairer to levy taxes, as at present, on people who enter into various transactions according to the frequency of those transactions, rather than spread the burden on other sections by an increase

in Commonwealth direct or indirect taxation so as to finance the additional reimbursement to the States.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: That does not answer the problem of the difference between the States.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, perhaps it does not. It is difficult to see how abolition of interest on loan money provided from Commonwealth revenue could be of any advantage to a State. In the first place, the existing Commonwealth revenue assistance to the State is in large measure determined by the budgetary position of those States and already takes account of the total interest charges to be met. If these interest charges were reduced, the first consequence might naturally be a reduction in Commonwealth transfers to the States.

The Commonwealth Government has argued in favour of its current practice by pointing to the fact that the interest recoveries are credited to a trust fund and used towards the redemption of unremunerative war debt. If this interest were not available for that purpose, the redemption would need to be financed from Commonwealth revenue. This would mean that there would be less revenue available for transfer to the States, either as revenue grants or support to loan market raisings.

Taking the two factors together, and assuming Mr. Watson's argument that the annual interest charge on revenue funds is roughly equal to the collections from stamp and probate duties, there could be no real advantage to the States. Less money would be raised from the public and there would, therefore, be less available for the seven Governments. This must mean either a reduction in the services given to the public or an increase in other taxation in order to allow continuance of the services at their present level.

Mr. Watson also suggested that the Industry (Advances) Act should be reviewed with the object of clearly defining to whom assistance under the Act shall be given. The Chairman of Commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank considers this is a matter for submission to the Crown Law Authorities to whom I have referred the honourable member's remarks.

That honourable member, and Mr. Mattiske, expressed concern that some terminating building societies had been formed not for the primary reason of applying Commonwealth-State housing agreement funds to the entire benefit of home builders, but with the intention of making a profit for those persons who had formed the societies. Both those members suggested that I should have a close investigation made of the activities of these societies. I might mention that I am conscious of the shortcomings of this position. I might say also that I received a deputation on the 26th July from the permanent building societies and undertook to discuss this

matter with the Chief Secretary on his return to office. As members know, the Chief Secretary, who is the Minister administering building societies, has been unable to attend his office recently because of ill-health.

A recommendation has been made for the adoption of new legislation, the intent being to provide a legal framework within which co-operative building societies might operate, rather than have the present unsatisfactory procedure of registration under the Building Societies Act, which was not really designed for such societies. It appears that, so far as the few terminating societies which are operating are concerned, the existing law is being observed. However, I would agree that the whole position is not entirely satisfactory.

Members may be interested to hear a brief history of the allocations to building societies under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Act of 1956. This agreement operated from the 1st July, 1956, and, when allocations were considered, negotiations were made with the existing societies; six permanent and two Starr-Bowkett. The conditions of the allocations were the subject of agreement between the State Housing Commission and the Federal Minister for National Development. Allocations for 1956-57 were made to seven societies, including the W.A. Starr-Bowkett, which, at that time, was registered as a terminating society. The Fremantle society, the Swan society and the mutual society later declined their allocations of £62,620, £20,320 and £33,220 respectively.

An amount of £54,160 of the declined allocations was transferred to the Rural and Industries Bank, making the bank's total for the year £174,160. The Thornlie No. 1 Building Society was allotted £65,000. This society was the first of the new terminating societies, and all the loans were granted by the society to erect homes at Thornlie.

The 1957-58 allocations were again made to the four permanent societies, and £40,000 each to two societies sponsored by the Thornlie group. A further £40,000 was set aside to be allocated to a new terminating society. This amount was later allocated to another society sponsored by the Thornlie group.

Allocations for 1958-59 were made to the four permanent societies, ten terminating societies and the Rural and Industries Bank. The terminating societies were mainly sponsored by builders and agents at that time.

For 1959-60, applications were received from the four permanent societies plus one new one, and 48 other terminating societies. So members can see how these societies grew over a period of 12 months. Allocations were discussed, as in previous years, with a representative of the Federal Department of National Development, and it was decided that allocations would be

conditional on a written undertaking that directors were not directly or indirectly associated with a building firm, land agency or land development firm. And that was done at my request, because I felt that the original intent of the formation of the terminating building societies was not being fulfilled and, in order to

try to fulfil what was intended in the first place, I gave advice to my Housing Commission officers, that they were to sort these applications on that basis. As a result, allocations were made to the five permanent societies, seven terminating societies and the Rural and Industries Bank.

Details of allocations in each year are—

	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60
	£	£	£	£
Permanent Societies	360,840 (4)	390,200 (4)	375,000 (4)	495,000 (5)
Terminating Societies	65,000 (1)	120,000 (3)	441,948 (10)	380,000 (7)
Rural and Industries Bank	174,160	89,800	106,000	50,000
	<hr/> £600,000	<hr/> £600,000	<hr/> £922,948	<hr/> £925,000

Mr. Jeffery waxed caustic regarding the amount of space devoted in *The West Australian* newspaper in support of the Liberal-Country Party combination during the election campaign. We enjoyed the benefit of a very humorous speech when the honourable member suggested that Mr. Logan and I were close bed fellows, or words to that effect. The honourable member's remarks pale into insignificance however when it is remembered that the Labour Government had the temerity to charge to State trading concerns the amount of £795 8s. 8d., it spent on political advertising in *The West Australian* and *Sunday Times* newspapers; and this was the taxpayers' money!

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: The Minister's clerks have mis-read my speech.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is still interesting to relate the expenditure of £795 8s. 8d. This cost was charged equally to the State Engineering Works, State Hotels, W.A. Meat Export Works, Wyndham Freezing Works, State Shipping Service and State Building Supplies.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Good advertising for them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was a political measure in connection with the election campaign; and the Labour Government saw fit to charge it to the taxpayers. That amount was not paid until after the 21st March, which was the date of the election.

The provision of additional beds at the Swan District Hospital to provide for patients other than maternity patients was suggested by Mr. Jeffery. I advise the honourable member that this is a matter which is now under consideration, and it is hoped that funds will be made available this financial year to provide for the necessary extensions for some general beds. Another proposal of the honourable member was that a room be set aside in each Government high school for use as a surgery for school dental officers. The Commissioner of Public Health has advised that the school dental staff is insufficient at present to cope with the needs of children in primary schools. Examinations have

to be spaced out at intervals that are too long and, in the larger schools where there are dentists in private practice in the neighbourhood, no treatment is carried out on certain age groups.

Mr. MacKinnon's thoughtful comments and suggestions in regard to the work and responsibilities of the courts have been referred to the Attorney-General, who has advised me he has read them with interest.

In referring to the construction of the Serpentine main dam, Mr. Murray expressed the hope that this Government would be able to provide farmers on the Serpentine River with a greater supply of water from the river than did the Hawke Government. I have obtained a report in this connection which indicates that, as a result of representations in February last year by the honourable Sir Ross McLarty, arrangements were made for the daily release of water from the pipeline for the benefit of farmers. A similar release commenced in January this year, a quarter of a million gallons daily being released from just below the "falls." This amount was increased later in January, it being found that settlers along the upper reaches of the Serpentine obtained the lion's share of the release, leaving very little for those on the lower reaches. The construction of the dam cannot be blamed for the settlers' water shortage. The recent long dry summers reduced to a minimum the flow of water courses, including those streams below the pipe head dam which, under normal circumstances, would have supplied the farmers' needs.

The dry conditions also reduced to a negligible quantity the flow into the dam. Notwithstanding this, water was released from the dam to the farmers. This provided a supply which, because of the cessation of the stream flow, would not have been available in the same circumstances prior to the construction of the dam.

The Hon. J. Murray: That is not true.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know whether that is an insult, wilful or otherwise, but I will check that up for the honourable member. Mr. Davies referred, in his speech, to an ex-employee

of the Public Works Department who, on being retrenched, found private employment which he soon left for the reason that he was being underpaid. I do not wish to pursue the matter of this underpayment but to mention that, in view of the honourable member's remarks during the amendment to the Address-in-reply, I obtained the appropriate Public Works Department file.

This file discloses that the man in question, together with a number of other plumbers and carpenters, was discharged from the Public Works Department on the 30th April last. This was not only before the present Government's policy of retrenchment commenced, but was prior to any decision made as to the policy to be introduced in carrying out the retrenchments. These men were put off because, at that time, there was insufficient work to keep all hands employed. Those discharged were the men whom the works managers considered the least satisfactory workers.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: I do not believe that so far as this man was concerned. He had been there for 18 years.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am supplying the information provided to me. One foreman reported that this man had never been much good since his apprenticeship days and showed no energy in his job. Another foreman bore with him for a long time, and finally asked that he be transferred because it was too hard to keep him working. His work did not improve after transfer. It will be seen, therefore, that the man himself was mainly to blame for his discharge, which was nothing to do with my Government's policy on day labour. Mr. Davies further said the man received only two days' notice and no long service leave payment. This is incorrect, as the man was paid £133 16s. 4d. for pro rata long service leave.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: He had not been paid when I made that statement, but I understand he was paid later.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am the last person to doubt the honourable member, but I will find out when the payment was made.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: I appreciate the fact that you have made inquiries.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Davies asked that the provision of additional sheltered anchorage areas for fishing boats at Fremantle be dealt with as expeditiously as possible. There is no doubt that the provision of additional facilities is desirable and urgent, but there is not unanimity of thought on technical aspects; and the various matters are actively under consideration. I can assure the honourable member that the matter will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible. Mr. Davies urged that something be done to arrest the erosion that is taking place on the foreshore between the City of

Fremantle and South Beach. It is realised that there is a real need to arrest this erosion, and proposals for constructing groynes and renourishing areas by dredging have been propounded.

In this connection, the engineering aspects have not been finalised, but the matter is being attended to with the least possible delay. Mr. Willesee referred to the high cost to residents of the North-West of transporting furniture to their homes. I quite agree that the cost of items is increased substantially by the addition of freight charges. However, this applies not only to furniture but to all other commodities. In view of the importance of the State Shipping Service as an aid to the development of the North-West, some loss is expected. As the honourable member stated, this loss amounted to £924,000 for the year ended the 31st December, 1958.

Sitting suspended from 9.45 to 10.7 p.m.

The magnitude of the loss on this service and the fact that the freight schedule incorporates many concessions, makes it particularly difficult to reduce any further the freight on individual items such as furniture.

My Government is deeply conscious of the need to assist residents of the North-West area of the State. The subsidy on the aerial transport of perishable foodstuffs has been provided in the past in an endeavour to alleviate one of the more difficult conditions, and this subsidy will still be available in the future. For isolated inland towns, and places where cultivation is impossible, the subsidy is available throughout the year. However, where ports can be served by regular transport on State ships and in places where gardens can produce green vegetables locally, the subsidy is available only during the hotter months.

In recent months, the State Arbitration Court heard evidence for the purpose of reviewing the district allowance paid in the northern area of the State. Full details of the freight subsidy on the aerial transport of perishable foodstuffs, including the period for which it is available, were presented to the tribunal. In the light of this evidence and the conditions of living, the court decided upon new district allowances amounting to practically twice the rates payable previously. These increases, which were effective from the 21st January, 1959, are:—

Wyndham	from 38s. to 70s.
Onslow to Derby	from 30s. to 60s.
Carnarvon	from 15s. to 30s.

In the light of this very recent consideration of conditions in the North, I doubt whether further variations could be made at this stage.

Information was sought by Mr. Willesee regarding a proposal that a barrage, similar to that at the mouth of the River

Murray in South Australia, be constructed at the mouth of the Gascoyne River for the purpose of cutting off salt water from the ocean and conserving additional storage of water in river sands from small flows. I can inform the honourable member that this matter has been investigated and is not, because the cost would be extremely high, favoured by Public Works officers; even if investigations indicated that it would be possible to retain water at any site. Also, the amount of water conserved would, in any event, be very limited, and the risk of flooding the town would be increased.

Experience—after some two-and-a-half years of the clay barrier constructed some distance upstream of the mouth—is that there is no sound evidence that any overall improvement in supply has been effected.

It was suggested that if the construction of a barrage at the mouth of the river is not favoured, investigations be carried out with a view to ensuring additional supplies of water. In this connection, investigations are in train, the object being to assess the possibility of obtaining additional supplies from a basin located one-and-a-half to two miles upstream from the bridge.

Several members spoke on the problems attendant on the efforts needed to obtain a secure tourist industry for Western Australia. Efforts are in train for the acquisition of suitable tourist bureau accommodation in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. A number of premises have been offered and inspected but, so far, finality has not been reached. In developing a theme that our beauty spots have been neglected, Dr. Hislop quoted as an example, South-West rivers such as the Frankland and the Deep Rivers at Nornalup, and the Blackwood at Augusta. He mentioned how, owing to fallen trees and snags, these lovely waterways were becoming less navigable as the years went by. He said that on the Blackwood River it was difficult to take a boat past Molloy Island, if as far. I agree with most of the honourable member's remarks.

I am informed that many years ago Mr. Tom Swarbrick, of Walpole, snagged and marked with beacons a portion of the Frankland River above the Nornalup Bridge. Over the years, fallen trees have not been removed, and today the river above the bridge is navigable only by local people. Last year a report was sought from the Public Works Department as to the cost of removing fallen trees from the Frankland River to restore it to its condition of 30 years ago. Mr. Swarbrick agreed with the Public Works Department to make an examination of the Frankland River in the latter part of last summer, when the water was clear, and then to submit a price for removing snags upstream from the Nornalup Bridge for a distance of four miles. Mr. Swarbrick has not yet submitted a price, and further enquiries in this connection are being made by the Public Works Department.

There is no doubt that the Frankland and the Deep Rivers are picturesque, and that every effort should be made to make them freely navigable and of attraction for the visitors and local residents. I have been advised that, contrary to Dr. Hislop's assertion, the Blackwood River is navigable for many miles beyond Molloy Island and that it is possible to take small launches as far upstream as Alexander Bridge, a river distance of about 21 or 22 miles.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You have to know the route darned well.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Work is proceeding on deepening the channel across a bar about one mile upstream from the river mouth. When this work is completed and a few navigation beacons are erected, the river should prove most attractive to holiday-makers. It is possible, of course, that use of the river will reveal hidden hazards that will require attention. The Premier has given notice in another place of his intention to introduce a bill for the creation of a tourist development authority. Intensive efforts are to be made to increase tourist activity, and this may lead to assistance to local authorities in the clearing of river hazards.

In discussing accommodation for Empire Games athletes and officials, Dr. Hislop suggested that assistance might be given for the construction, at an earlier time than anticipated, of dormitories at the new Hale School site. I am informed that the Hale School authorities are hopeful of being in their new premises by the end of 1960. Quite apart from the fact that I think Hale School could not accommodate many athletes, I think there would be certain attendant difficulties in accommodating these people. One must understand athletes. They are highly trained people. The athletes with whom we will be concerned, will have to be in such a state of training that they will be able to go through the period of the games in Perth, in November, 1962.

At the conclusion of games such as these, forces are unleashed which might make it necessary to do a certain amount of maintenance to the buildings. I do not want that to be construed, in any way, shape or form, as criticism of any of our visitors. From the inquiries I have made in Melbourne, and in other places, regarding the manner in which athletes at these games should be housed, it appears that it is best to house them in homes built in an area such as that which has been offered to the Government by the Perth City Council. It is only in houses such as are envisaged that athletes can get the protection they require over their training period. When the games are finished the houses are a readily realisable asset.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: I should say, subject to your maintenance.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is so. As Minister for Housing I have gone very carefully into this matter with the officers of the State Housing Commission. The original estimate of the requirements for the Empire Games is very much out of line so far as the previous Minister for Housing is concerned. I am led to believe from Press reports and correspondence that he thought the Empire Games village could be built for something like £300,000. But let me assure members that it cannot possibly be built for that amount, if the land at Floreat Park is to be used. The Housing Commission is satisfied that the cost will be in the vicinity of £750,000, a sum very much in excess of the original estimate.

I have been to Canberra and I have interviewed the Minister for National Development (Senator Spooner). I put the particular problem in which Western Australia finds itself to him, and the Premier has now written to the Prime Minister asking for a special loan to be made available to Western Australia for the purpose of constructing the Empire Games village. It will be appreciated that it is not my desire—and I have been assured by the Commonwealth Treasury that it would not be a good idea—merely to get an additional loan in our housing funds for that particular year and repay it in the year following, because, under the Commonwealth-State rental agreement, we are now allocated about £3,000,000 each year, and with the additional £1,000,000 we would have £4,000,000 for that year.

In the following year we would have only £2,000,000 and that would have a far greater impact on the building industry in this State than it could stand. I have asked the Federal Minister for Housing for this loan to be in addition to our normal housing requirements, and I am impatiently awaiting a favourable reply from the Commonwealth Government in this regard.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: What about taking a leaf out of my book and asking for £1,000,000 interest free?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not know whether I have taken a leaf out of the honourable member's book but I have asked for the money to be interest free up to a period of three months after the completion of the games.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: That is chicken feed.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I think it is a reasonable approach to the situation.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It could be a grant out of surplus revenue.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The Commonwealth gave much more than that to the Victorian Government for the Olympic Games.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is not quite right. The Victorian Government built the Olympic Village out of its normal

housing loan allocations. I made exhaustive inquiries into this matter because of the problem we have here, and I found that the Olympic Village was built, and, over the period that the athletes were there, nobody else occupied the houses; but as soon as the games were over the Victorian Government was able to allow people to move into them. On that basis it did not make any difference to the Victorian Government's housing loan allocation beyond the fact that the Premier of Victoria was granted an additional £800,000 for that particular year, which gave him an expenditure of £10,800,000.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Wasn't a loss incurred?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, but I do not know to what extent. My discussion in this regard is limited to the question of housing as all the other matters are outside my portfolio. All I have to do is ensure that the athletes are housed. As regards the money being interest-free, I have asked for it to be paid by progress payments over a period of three years, as we require it, and for no interest to be charged until three months after the games have been completed.

The money will then be repaid, not in one lump sum but by a gradual process. I hope if that is done it will be a satisfactory conclusion to the whole matter. The houses cannot be built for letting because, on an economic basis, taking into account the land on which they are built, the price would be far beyond the means of the average person. This is brought about by the value of the land, and the only logical thing to do is to sell the houses when the games are over.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The land belongs to the Perth City Council?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The council is not selling it to the Government?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The council is making the land available to the Government for nothing, and in return the Government has agreed to provide the essential services and build the roads. Construction of the houses will be on a contract basis.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Are you likely to have the position arising that a house of a comparatively low value will be built on land the price of which is out of all proportion to what it ought to be considering the price of the house?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No. To the best of our ability we have given an assurance to the council, and to the people who live in the area and who are concerned about the question of the value of the houses to be built, that the houses will be in conformity to the general value of the other houses in the district. I am not suggesting that they will cost £7,000 or

£8,000, but the average will be about £4,500—some will cost less and some will cost considerably more.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Plus the land.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The land is not included in that figure because the cost is not calculable, the land having been handed over to the Government.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: When you are selling—

The PRESIDENT: I think the Minister should proceed with his speech and address the Chair.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: These interjections—

The PRESIDENT: They are highly disorderly.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: —are helpful in informing members of what is going on. As regards the value of the land, it will be absorbed in other ways, which is not usual with the normal construction of a housing area. For instance, in a normal housing area all the Commission is required to do is build the roads and provide the other services such as electricity, gas and so on. But on this occasion, to conform with the Perth City Council's specifications, the road construction will be greater than is normally the case with Housing Commission projects. Also, there will be the cost of grassing certain areas; and it is my desire that the houses in the subdivision shall be built on a competitive basis in order to give private enterprise more encouragement and more particularly to advertise the fact that the Games are being held in Western Australia.

Because of the maintenance factor, the cost of grassing, and the necessity to put down bores to provide water, I think we will find that most of the value of the land will be covered. Nevertheless, it is still a reasonable and I think quite generous offer on the part of the Perth City Council.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: How many houses do you envisage?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Approximately 150.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: That is 10 at least to a house.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, that will be the average.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Is a cook to be supplied with each house?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The athletes will only sleep in the premises; they will not eat in them. Within the confines of the whole planned area the Perth City Council will construct mess huts which will be taken down and removed when the Games are over, and that particular area will become a park or reserve. I sincerely hope that an attractive residential area, with a park in the centre, will be the result.

Dr. Hislop mentioned that it had been announced that plans were in mind to build a hostel in Wellington Street to house certain types of patients from the country. The position is that the Royal Perth Hospital Board of Management has not yet considered the matter in any detail; nor has any finance been set aside for the proposal to provide hostel accommodation for patients who need the special methods of investigation available at the hospital, but who do not require full nursing and other care. When the time comes for this plan to be put into operation, all factors, including those mentioned by Dr. Hislop will be taken into consideration.

He stated that it was a great mistake that "C" class hospitals were not graded, and he said that they should be transferred from local to departmental control. In this regard, the department considers "C" class hospitals satisfy a real need in hospital care for those patients needing nursing care under medical supervision, but not requiring the full resources of a general hospital. I am advised they are privately owned and are not under the control of local authorities.

The Hospitals Benefit Fund has given an assurance that if a doctor certifies that any such patient should rightly be treated as an "A" class hospital patient, (that is, a patient needing some but not all, of the higher grade facilities of a general hospital), the fund will pay a benefit in addition to that of the Commonwealth Government. A considerable responsibility therefore rests on the doctor giving such a certificate.

The honourable member said that the proposal to build a 60-bed hospital at Osborne Park was not an economical proposition. However, the need for additional land, and a recent decision by a religious body to build hospital additions at Wembley, have resulted in a decision to redesign and re-site the Osborne Park hospital.

Dr. Hislop in his contention that it would be much better to provide for a larger number of beds than a mere 60 or so when constructing new hospitals, may not have taken into account one factor in hospital planning. This is related to the initial capital cost, which is always a problem. As is the situation in other States, loan funds are inadequate. This applies particularly to Western Australia, and makes it impossible to plan in the way indicated by the honourable member.

He said that the siting of the South Perth Community Hospital was a mistake. However, this hospital of under 50 beds is not run at a loss. It has a very able local committee of management, and, so far, has required no annual subsidy from the State. The committee is to be congratulated on the public-spirited enthusiasm which the local people have for their hospital.

I have been closely associated with the construction of the South Perth Hospital since the day when I was one of the members of Parliament who persuaded the McLarty-Watts Government to provide the sum of £45,000 for its construction.

That amount was given, together with a contribution of £45,000 from the Lotteries Commission over three years at the rate of £15,000 a year. I say without fear of contradiction that if there were more communities like South Perth, in which many of the residents are prepared to do much for the district, then the problem of providing hospitals would not be as great as it is. That building in South Perth is a tribute to the efforts of the people of South Perth, who maintain it at a high standard.

Dr. Hislop feels that there is no reason why the Public Health Department should inaugurate a pathological branch at the Chest Hospital when there is a very capable Pathological Department at the Royal Perth Hospital. I am advised that between 1948 and 1954, the laboratories in the Royal Perth Hospital were planned and conducted by the Public Health Department. In 1954 they were reported on by an eminent Sydney Hospital pathologist at the request of the hospital board, and he expressed the opinion they were the best equipped of any hospital laboratory in Australia.

From 1954 onwards, they have been progressively handed over to the control of the hospital board. Of course, the advent of the Medical School two years ago has meant an enlargement of their scope, but the spadework had been done long before this.

It is a responsibility of a Public Health Department to ensure that essential laboratory facilities necessary for the treatment of disease are available to the people of the State. In areas where it is not practicable for this to be done by well-trained and adequately qualified pathologists in private practice, then the department must supply them itself. Modern medical and surgical treatment necessitates the immediate availability of certain laboratory investigations, the need for which is pressing and urgent. They must, therefore, be available on the spot 24 hours a day. Hence the need for small branch laboratories in certain country hospitals. The question of competition with private practice does not arise.

At the same time, the Public Health Laboratory service must perform a great many laboratory investigations for specific public health and epidemiological needs, and some of these may well be done in these country laboratories.

The department finds it difficult to understand Dr. Hislop's reference to the laboratory in the Perth Chest Hospital. The departmental officers state that that important hospital needs its own laboratory service, and that it is sensible and

economic for this to be provided by the Public Health Laboratory, which is housed in the hospital, and so avoid duplication.

The Royal Perth Hospital laboratory now exists to service primarily its own hospital needs. The heads of its various departments are already finding that their accommodation and staff are barely sufficient for this purpose. They have also willingly agreed to undertake certain selected consultative work at a high level, which is as it should be. Therefore, all the laboratory work of the Royal Perth Hospital is performed in its own laboratories and in none other.

The remarks of Mr. Cunningham regarding reduction in income suffered by police officers as a result of the conversion to a 40-hour week have been submitted to the Minister for Police. In the meantime, I can say that it was by direction of the previous Government that the Police Force is progressively being brought into line with other sections of the community who work a 40-hour week.

The police award has, for many years, provided for a 40-hour week for its members but, due to difficulties in building up the strength during the war and post-war years, police officers have been required to work a 96-hour fortnight, and have received payment at the rate of time and a half for two days in each pay period; in other words, they are paid for 17 days in each pay period.

It is expected that the change to the 40-hour week will be completed by the end of this financial year. The honourable member stated the force had not obtained the intake of recruits needed. However, I am advised that applicants of a very good type have applied for admission to the force in greater numbers than is required to recruit to the establishment necessitated by the change; namely, 76 in the first period which was to reduce the force to a 44-hour week and which was completed as at the 1st July, and 90 in the current period—including allowance for wastage—to have the force on a 40-hour week by the end of the financial year.

The applicants are from all walks of life and include many fully-trained and qualified tradesmen. When employed for a 40-hour week, the lowest-paid police officer, immediately following his recruit training, would receive at the present time a weekly salary of £20 15s. 9d., including lodging allowance. In addition, he is provided with uniform clothing and receives free medical attention throughout his service. In each eight-hourly period of duty a police officer is permitted a forty-minute meal break in departmental time.

Salary rates increase by periods of service, a constable going from £20 15s. 9d.—including allowance for quarters—to £24 9s. 4d. at 20 years' service, for a 40-hour week at the present scale. Sergeants receive—including lodging allowance—an amount of from £25 17s. 8d. to £27 9s. 11d.

per week of 40 hours. Inspectors, for whom no hours of duty are specified, receive from £38 15s. 3d. to £41 5s. 8d. per week, which includes allowances for clothing and quarters only.

The honourable member also referred to the shortage of vehicles for police work. I am told that at the 30th June, 1958, the Department had in service 248 motor vehicles, including motor cycles, or one for every 3.9 officers. In addition, 95 officers were authorised to use their privately-owned vehicles on departmental service; and they received payment at the rates prescribed in the award. This would work out at one vehicle to 2.8 officers.

I can assure the honourable member that the matter of the need for departmental transport at outstations is continuously under review, and vehicles are being made available in accordance with that need. Two outstations, at which the mileage required is high, are being supplied with departmental cars in the present financial year.

In regard to bicycles, these are made to special specifications to meet the particularly heavy usage to which normally they would be subjected, and they are assembled by the staff at the transport section of the Police Department. Stocks of spares for these machines are held there. Minor repairs or replacements are invariably carried out at the station to which the cycle is supplied. Cycles are sent to Perth only when they have become so aged or worn that replacement may be necessary, or a major replacement of parts is called for.

Mr. Cunningham unfavourably compared the exterior appearance of schools on the Trans-line with the interior condition. He explained this by stating that as the Commonwealth Government owned the buildings the outsides were nicely painted and clean while the insides, which were a State responsibility, were drab and dirty. He is not entirely correct as, of the schools on the trans-line, only Zanthus is the property of the Commonwealth. The Teachers' quarters, however, are the property of the Commonwealth for which the State pays rent.

Although the schools, with the exception of Zanthus, belong to the State Government the Commonwealth Railways carry out maintenance at their convenience. In regard to these schools, Coonana was painted externally in February, 1958. Internal renovation will be considered for recommendation at the next inspection in November, 1959. At Haig, internal maintenance was due in August, 1958, and external maintenance will be due in October, 1960. At Zanthus—which is rented from the Commonwealth—the parents and citizens' association is prepared to carry out the work if the Public Works Department will supply the necessary paint. The district superintendent reported in November, 1958, that internally the Rawlinna building was very good, and that the Reid building was in good condition.

Mrs. Hutchison, in her perennial attack on the Legislative Council, made reference to the cost of the House to the taxpayers. As I have already advised the honourable member, the cost of the Legislative Council, excluding *Hansard* and printing expenditure, was £86,921 in 1958-59. It is of interest in studying this figure to note that the thirty members of the Council and the five staff pay £65,000 a year in taxation. So it can almost be said that the Council pays for itself.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is self-supporting. That is a new angle!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There is nothing new under the sun.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: As the President once said, "Except you."

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mrs. Hutchison expressed disappointment at the decision not to proceed with the erection of single-unit flats in South Perth. In this regard I desire to make some explanation for the benefit of this House. This project which was to cost in the vicinity of £400,000 was brought to my notice shortly after the Government changed hands and I became Minister for Housing. It was put to me that a prompt decision was required, because it was desired to go on with some of the work.

I obtained the relevant file, asked some questions and made some inquiries. I found that the land upon which these flats were to be erected cost the commission some £4,500. I also learned that in order to provide stormwater drainage and filling, and in order to beautify the site of some three acres, a cost of £20,000 would be involved. That was before the building was commenced. I was not disposed to make a decision which would enable this work to go on as quickly as that.

If it is possible to assure the honourable member, I will assure her that there was no political influence in the decision arrived at to stop the building of those flats. It was a decision by the Government that it was better to spend that money in providing houses for men and women and their families in private units, and I share that view. Therefore it was decided, instead of proceeding with that project, to expend the money in building private units of housing.

It is interesting to observe that the architect who prepared the plans for these flats at South Perth received £1,749 15s. 6d. from the State Housing Commission, but the plans were thrown to one side and a new set of plans prepared by the Commission itself. The point of interest is that £1,750 went down the drain.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: At one time your Government paid a large sum which went down the drain.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know nothing about that. This money was spent but nobody seemed to obtain any benefit

but the architect. Mrs. Hutchison objected to the decision of the Government, because she said the project was to include single-unit flats which could have been occupied by single persons. The other day I received a deputation from a women's organisation representing 34,000 single, widowed or divorced women who were left to their own resources. They asked if it were possible for the Government to provide housing for single women. It was a very difficult matter to deal with. It resolved itself into a question of whether the Government was to take on the responsibility for housing the people of this State. I do not think that is really intended.

However, I am anxious to do something for those people who saw me, and who are in need of single-unit accommodation. In a few days I hope to make an announcement which will be pleasing to some of them; namely, the widows who are unable to pay high rentals for accommodation. I hope to bring that matter to a culmination within the next few days.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I am interested.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did want to explain the situation in regard to that matter. There was nothing political whatever in it. As Minister, I recommended to the Government that that was what I thought was the best thing to do. I may be wrong, but nevertheless I am acting in the manner I think correct.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: We are lucky that the Wandana flats are there.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is questionable also. I am not now going to criticise Wandana. It is a very large block of flats housing a good many people. The rents are not cheap although they are not as high as some rents of private enterprise flats would be. They are purely on an economic basis and not built under conditions of rebates of rents. They are run very strictly, and they have to be on an economic rent.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I remember your fears when it was first proposed.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: The flats are still there.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Now that they are constructed, who am I to criticise? It was decided that they were to be built and they have been. But let me say they cost a terrific amount of money, and whether some Government in the future will find that they are always economic I am not in a position to say.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: They are economic now.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, their margins of profit are all right because they are built with money borrowed on the cheapest rate of interest that can be obtained.

Mr. Bennetts urged the development of rock catchments for water supply purposes in the Narembeen and Westonia districts, and suggested that departmental officers should inspect development work carried out by a farmer near Narembeen. In this connection, Public Works engineers reported that experience has shown that rock catchments do not possess a high degree of reliability, as sources of supply, for schemes to serve extensive areas of farmlands.

Investigations of rock catchments as potential sources of water supplies in areas outside the boundaries of the comprehensive water supply scheme have been made in the districts of East Narembeen, South East Merredin, Westonia, East Dalwallinu, Koorda, Mt. Marshall, Mukinbudin, and Newdegate.

Some 23 large rock catchment areas have been surveyed and many others have been inspected. Of the total investigated, only four showed promise of being capable of development as sources of supply for areas of any extent. Some rock catchments might be developed as sources of supply for very limited areas—say one or two farms—or as points from which water might be carted. For example, departmental engineers inspected a rock catchment supply developed by Mr. Crees near Koonadgin. This might be the supply referred to by the honourable member. The engineers found that the water supply as developed was a good one and very satisfactory for the property concerned, but was too limited for consideration as a district supply.

Mr. Lavery drew attention to the lack of free air treatment available at the Chest Hospital, and said that seating accommodation for patients was not available on the flat roof of the hospital. The honourable member is evidently unaware that the Chest Hospital is not a sanatorium, but is an acute hospital where the patients are admitted for bed rest and for appropriate forms of treatment. For those other patients who are commencing convalescence, there are day rooms with seating accommodation. Additional chairs are on order for seating on the roof. When renovations have been completed at Wooroloo, there will be more beds there for patients who are up and about and who can be transferred from the Chest Hospital.

There was a matter raised by Mr. Thompson in connection with the rents charged to pensioners. He asked me, as Minister for Housing, to ensure that there would be no further increases in rents of State houses, such as he said had been experienced during the regime of the previous Government. I would, for his benefit, like to state that the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Act, No. 25 of 1945, provides in clause 11 of the schedule to the agreement made under that Act,

that rental rebates be granted to those families whose income precludes payment of an assessed economic rent.

Clauses 11 and 12 are further amplified by a code of practice issued by the Commonwealth and accepted by all States which details how rental rebates will be determined. The code provides that rents are to be charged according to income irrespective of its source and nature. For example, pensions for age, invalidity, etc., are, definitely scheduled as income and the amount of rent is based on the amount of pension received.

The extent of the benefit which is accorded a pensioner-couple can be appreciated from the fact that the code provides that each pension shall be treated separately. Thus two pensioners residing together and each receiving a pension of £4 7s. 6d. per week are only obliged to pay a rental of £1 3s. 0d. per week. Had the income been recorded as £8 15s. 0d. per week, the assessed rental under the code would be £1 10s. 0d. per week. As pensioner-couples are already receiving considerable benefits from the State by the provision of special housing for elderly couples—I am referring to the cottage flats that have been built, both in the country and the metropolitan area—the Government feels it cannot alter the present scale of rent charges should a pension increase occur.

It is pointed out that apart from accommodation built under the 1945 Housing agreement with the Commonwealth, Western Australia has extended the rebate concession with regard to all the houses built under the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement Act of 1956—only Victoria has followed suit—and the houses built under the Act of 1952—dealing with the Anglo-Iranian Refinery agreement. These extra concessions are not, to the best of my knowledge and belief, matched by any other State in the Commonwealth.

Therefore, it is not a matter of deliberately increasing the rent in connection with age pensioners; the rents must be based on some sort of income because they are already very heavily rebated. In any case, I do not know whether the honourable member is aware that there are in some places in the metropolitan area houses that have been occupied by tenants since the years, say, 1945 and 1946, which are being rented at a weekly rate of something like 28s. to 32s., while many other people are paying sums much greater than that.

If those people who are paying the 28s. or 30s. a week stay in those houses until the breadwinner becomes 65, the rebates allowed to the pensioner will reduce that rent to 23s. a week. I think that the honourable member will agree that that is more than a fair and equitable way of dealing with people.

The Hon. R. Thompson: I appreciate the Minister's answer. I was aware of the facts as related.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member said he hoped there would not be any increase. They must be tied to the basis of income and the basis, with a pensioner, is the pension. Therefore it does look as if on one hand we give and on the other hand we take away, but that is not the case. The increase in rent is fractional on the increase in pension, but it is necessary to have it done. Unfortunately, the position exists where the State Housing Commission, at the time I became the Minister, had on its books £110,000 worth of bad debts—money owing by people who occupy State rental homes but who do not think they ought to pay their rent.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Out of how many?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Frankly, I do not know the number.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: What is the fortnightly income?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: To be perfectly frank I cannot give the figures off-hand, but I would supply them if the honourable member would like me to. The point I am making is that over a period of years this £110,000 has been built up, and the Commission is obliged to do something about it.

The Hon. A. R. Jones. Hear, hear!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Commission has to tell rent collectors that they must collect the rents. I have received numerous requests by members in this House and members in another place when people have been subject to an eviction order by the members of the State Housing Commission. Understand that they are the ones who deal with these things! The Commission is the administrative body dealing with these matters, and members come to the Minister to ask for attention to particular cases.

I will not mention any names but the other day I had one such request about which Mr. Thompson knows. A fellow owed a considerable amount of money and had been given five opportunities previously. Five eviction orders had been issued against him and on five occasions the bailiff had been called off. I was asked what could be done about him. Well, the man had five children and he was not paying his rent. There was only one thing to do—give him another opportunity. But I just wonder how long this can go on.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: Why did he deserve another trial?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is compassion on behalf of the children, of course, that weakens my—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Soft heart!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes; that brings out my feelings on the matter. No one wants to see someone with a large family put out of a house, but these people are left no alternative in some cases. In some instances large amounts of rent are owing—even up to £120 and £130. Some of the people who owe these amounts have articles on time payment. For instance, they are buying cars or fridges, or such like.

The Hon. H. C. Simpson: The particular instance you mentioned, is he unemployed?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, he is, but he has been a bad tenant all the time. The situation really concerns me. I do not want to see the Commission being hard on these people, but there is the necessity to take some action because the officers of the Commission are giving attention to the problem. They want to see the Commission keep its head above water, and it can only do that if it gets the rents that accrue to it each week. It amounts to the fact that when, for instance, rebates are given to pensioners, the other people have to continue to pay rents in order that those rebates may be granted.

I think that, to the best of my ability, I have covered most of the points raised by members. If there is any matter which I have omitted, and the honourable member concerned would communicate with me personally or by letter, I shall certainly have pleasure in looking into the problem for him.

Question put and passed; the Address adopted.

Presentation of Address

On motion by the Minister for Mines, resolved:

That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the President and such members as may desire to accompany him.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING

1, Cattle Trespass, Fencing, and Impounding Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Hon. A. L. Loton.

2, Child Welfare Act Amendment.

Introduced by the Hon. L. A. Logan, (Minister for Local Government).

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines). I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.30 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 5th August, 1959

CONTENTS

	Page
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE :	
Sale of TV sets, inquiry re W. J. Lucas	760
Government commitments, inheritance from previous Administration	760
Midland Junction High School, change of name	760
Hazelmere, land for school and date of erection	761
"C" class hospitals, number and departmental policy	761
Manganese, tonnage of deposits	761
Kalgoorlie express, accommodation on the 7th and 8th August	761
Local authority elections, alternative method of counting votes	761
Government instrumentalities, proposed dissipation	762
Civilian land settlement, Hay River-Denmark area	762
Forest reserve, land between Hay River and Mt. Barker Road	762
Prisoners' rehabilitation, payment of allowance on release	762
Reservoirs, conditions on trout fishing	762
Nursing profession, Arbitration Court review	763
Broome School, new classrooms	763
Railway road buses, arrival times at country centres	763
Crosswalk, establishment in Hay Street near Outram Street	763
Betting Royal Commission, remuneration of lawyers	764
Amalgamated Collieries, road to serve new mine	764
Glen Eagle land, bulldozing and clearing	764
Cloud-seeding technique, approach to C.S.I.R.O.	764
Dental technicians, examination of proposed legislation	764
LEAVE OF ABSENCE	764
ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, TENTH DAY—CONCLUSION :	
Speakers on Address—	
Mr. Lewis	765
Mr. Toms	769
Mr. W. Hegney	774
Mr. May	779
Mr. I. W. Manning	786
Mr. Andrew	787
Mr. J. Hegney	792
Mr. Rhatigan	798
Mr. Jamieson	802
Mr. Lawrence	809
Mr. Brand	811