

I say this because we know that in the area extending from the Woodman Point outlet there is to be big development in what is called the Cannington-Armadale corridor; and no doubt the houses to be erected under this development will be connected to the sewerage, thus extending still further the date for the connection of homes in the Belmont district. The people in my area are afraid that the development at Cannington and Mullaloo will spread still further, thus extending the time at which their homes will be serviced.

We know that Hamersley and other parts north of the city are being developed, and we also realise that sewerage extensions are largely a matter of economics. I am hopeful, however, that the Government, when releasing land along the proposed route for the outlet at Mullaloo, will provide for corridor development rather than block development near the beaches.

The SPEAKER: The honourable member has another five minutes.

Mr. TOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is hardly long enough, but I will have to make it do. The people in my electorate are afraid that the development taking place at Hamersley, and in other areas, and the possible opening up of other land in between districts already developed, will once again delay the connection of sewerage to homes in the Bayswater, Swan, and Midland areas.

The people in these districts have paid their rates and taxes over many years and they have helped to pay for the sewerage connections on the western side of Perth, which is now almost fully sewered. Yet in the area in which I live, which is only four miles from Perth, only 25 per cent., approximately, of the shire is sewered. That is why I said I am hopeful the Minister will give consideration to corridor development along the sewerage lines to which I have referred so that people who have been waiting for many years for their homes to be connected to the deep sewerage will be provided with this necessary amenity.

While talking about sewerage connections, let me say that in my view the various services provided for the public by the Government should be allocated on a priority basis. For example, in Bayswater the gas mains are being extended but the people in the district already have one form of fuel which they can use—I refer to electricity. In my view it would have been better, and probably more economical, had only one means of heating been used—electric power—instead of extending the gas mains. Thus, instead of having a dual service the money used for the extension of the gas mains could have been used for sewerage extensions.

During my speech I have covered quite a few problems confronting my area. I have spoken of them generally, as I have done for a number of years now. Previously I have not found it necessary to speak so harshly about the problem of cement dust in my electorate, but we are fast reaching the stage where something will have to be done about it; and I am hopeful that the Government will take notice of what I have said in this regard.

As I mentioned, too, town planning seems to be getting out of hand. We seem to be adopting the American method of using bypass roads, overways, and freeways which, in many cases in America, have proved to be things of the past—they are not working as effectively as the engineers or planners thought they would. Those engineers and planners now seem to have shifted from America to Australia and are putting into operation the same ideas they had when they were in America some years ago. I hope I will not have to go on for a number of years more referring to the requirements of my district before some notice is taken of what I am saying or before some relief is given to the people concerned.

MR. BURKE (Perth) [7.40 p.m.]: It is just over 12 months since I first rose to speak in this Chamber after having been elected to my first term in the Parliament of Western Australia. At that time I drew the attention of the House to the fact that the Opposition would draw the Government's attention to problems which face the State and I was hoping to encourage the Government to undertake projects which we felt were in the interests of the people; that is, of all the people of Western Australia.

I indicated that it was our bounden duty to promote the welfare of all Western Australians, and I regret that there are still sections of our community, and areas in our community, where families are still living in very poor conditions and circumstances, and under a stress to which they should not be subjected in this so-called affluent society.

I made reference to the heart of Perth and I have continued to refer to it at every opportunity since. I would like to feel that at least in some degree I have played a part in forcing the Government to switch its course from giving this land away freehold to half a dozen American investors—

Mr. O'Connor: What land is this?

Mr. BURKE: This is in the heart of the city—railway land.

Mr. O'Connor: Did you say we were giving it away?

Mr. BURKE: Giving it away freehold to half a dozen American investors—at this stage giving them a leasehold interest in

it. I hope—and I feel quietly confident at this stage—that we will not get even that far and I am sure that when received on the 31st of this month the proposals of the W.A.D.C. will be completely rejected.

Mr. O'Connor: You have done all you can to damage it.

Mr. BURKE: I have done everything to retain the heart of the city for this generation, and for posterity. In my view we have to look at this proposition in the long term. That is the only way in which we can consider this proposal. A lot of things were said by the Minister—

Mr. O'Connor: You are talking a lot of rubbish.

Mr. Graham: No he is not. He is right on the ball.

Mr. BURKE: He and the Government have tried to hoodwink the people into believing that this proposal is in their interests; but I am firmly of the opinion—and I will have more to say about this in a moment—that it is not. I believe that we are here to serve the interests of the people generally. We are not here in the interests of any minority—certainly not in the interests of half a dozen American investors.

Mr. O'Connor: It has over a two-thirds Australian shareholding.

Mr. BURKE: I am afraid that if the Government had its way—

Mr. Bertram: How many of them are Australians?

Mr. BURKE: —as is evidenced by some of its other dealings, this very valuable property—probably the most valuable piece of real estate available in Western Australia today—would be given—literally given—to the W.A.D.C..

Mr. O'Connor: It is not being given to anyone.

Mr. BURKE: I referred to the traffic problem just prior to my election. In a broadcast over the A.B.C. I made reference to the fact that the only action taken by the Government in regard to our traffic problem was a reference to another inquiry. In the short 12 months since my election, from my observations—and it is generally admitted—it is obvious that the problem is as bad as, if not worse than, it has ever been. The latest move by the Government, of course, is to appoint "Mr. Transport" in its attempts to sidestep the issue.

Mr. O'Connor: You are being politically dishonest, and you know it.

Mr. Graham: I think the Minister should learn to control himself more.

Mr. O'Connor: Like you do sometimes.

Mr. Graham: Like I intend to do tonight.

Mr. O'Connor: At least I am being honest.

Mr. BURKE: Also, when I spoke on the Address-in-Reply debate last year, I referred to the problems of young married people, and there are many of these people living in my electorate. I would say that many of them moved there four or five years ago not expecting to be there for very long. However, while they are there I will do my best to promote their interests and look after their welfare. As I maintained 12 months ago, they are the hardest hit by the present critical housing situation. Many of them are having to live in what virtually amounts to a 20th century cave. Many of the buildings have been erected for some years but none compare with the pokey little flats going up all over my electorate.

This is not advantageous to their health, physically or mentally. In my opinion it will cause social problems. As I have said in the past, these problems are the cause of an increasing incidence of post-natal depression in young mothers. I have spoken to doctors and have referred their opinions, together with my own, to gynaecologists. I have also referred this matter to officers of the Mental Health Services and they have confirmed my view.

I made reference to immigration and to our senior citizens who are acutely hit because of their minimal incomes. They are being pushed hither and thither by landlords who are demanding the maximum rent for their properties. I made reference to native welfare and, at this point, I would like to compliment the department for providing homes for aboriginal families and for the good job it has done over the past 12 months. I said at the time that there must be as much give as take on our part; I encourage the Department of Native Welfare to keep up the good work.

During the year I made reference to the crisis in housing and the prices which are being paid for land. Of all members, I am probably subject to most appeals for housing assistance. There is not a day of the week on which I do not receive several appeals in regard to housing. In my opinion, the appeals made to me are genuine and, in 95 per cent. of cases, should be considered emergent. Of course, the incidence of my successes has been in the region of 5 per cent!

Over the past 12 months I have taken the opportunity to learn as much as I can. It is an onerous task to represent one's people properly and to make a contribution. However, I can honestly say that I have made every effort to represent my people and to play at least a small part—or as much as expected of me—in regard to legislation.

One of the methods of deriving information in the House is to ask questions. I am afraid that I have been most frustrated in this regard as it is extremely difficult to get reasonable replies to questions.

Mr. Craig: Ask sensible questions and you will get sensible answers.

Mr. BURKE: I raised this matter in an informal way with two members on the opposite side of the House and they shared my sentiments. In fact, they said they had reached the stage, because of their years, of giving up the ghost, but they said there was some hope for me because of my youth.

I feel I must make reference to the housing difficulties that are continuing. As I have already suggested, I do not wish to belt the Minister for Housing any further, as I do not think he is totally responsible for the present position. I think it is the Government that must take the blame in regard to housing, generally, as I am still not convinced that it has an attitude to the problem. I do not think it is completely convinced that we have a housing problem at this stage.

In 1968, in reference to single units, we had something like 1,700 applications, but only 32 units were built. I made reference earlier to the fact that young married people, in many cases, are being forced to live for years in small flats. I also mentioned the effect this has on their families. I would also like to make reference to high-density living, which is O.K. by me. However, every family needs a certain amount of privacy. By that I mean every family needs a small area to call its own in which it can find seclusion.

The Minister for Housing has indicated that the State Housing Commission is giving quite a deal of attention to the matter of selecting neighbours so that the incidence of social problems will not increase. On that point, I think it is pertinent that I should read a letter from one of my constituents, as I do not know that the State Housing Commission is equipped to judge the position. This letter is worth quoting to the House and reads as follows:—

I am somewhat disturbed at the bureaucratic structure which has been created so that "File Technicians" read off the needs and problems of people from incidents and letters going back to antiquity. There is no trained Social Worker, or even a good qualified Welfare Worker on the staff, and therefore no one is really qualified to look at the situation from the individual's point of view. It appears to me that a Department which is dealing with case histories in the lower strata of society needs to be better equipped in its staffing than mere clerks, and so called inspectors.

I would be quick to add that I am not knocking the public servants who are employed in the State Housing Commission. The parliamentary liaison officer is to be complemented for the manner in which he handles the problems confronting him and for the manner in which he deals with members' problems. Enough said, at this point of time, in regard to housing.

I feel I should make reference to education. This subject was raised when an amendment was moved to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply during which debate, the Minister, when speaking, mentioned the need for priorities and made reference to the fact that the Minister for Child Welfare and the Minister for Police needed funds for rehabilitation and for child welfare. But I would point out that this Government has been in office for over 10 years, during which time it should have got its priorities straight. Had it maintained the housing programme of the Labor Government—it gave housing top priority—there would not now be the need for extra money for child welfare and rehabilitation in connection with the Police Department.

The Minister for Education seemed content with an increase in the number of married women in the work force; but I would point out that the bulk of these women do not work because they want to, but because pressure is brought to bear on them as a result of this Government having its priorities mixed. It neglects things like health, housing, education, and social welfare, and forces these people to go out to work.

We have achievements in industrial development. I would not deny this, but, at the same time, I would say the Government was not completely responsible for this. At the other end, there are insufficient houses, there is chaos in education, there are not enough hospital beds, prisons are over-crowded, and there is an increasing incidence of crime.

On the subject of law, the other day I asked a question as to when a public defender was to be appointed, and I was surprised to hear the Minister say that such an appointment had not been considered. Legal aid in Western Australia is close to non-existent, especially at the present time when the legal profession is overworked and—without going into the criteria for the giving of legal aid—would rather avoid giving legal aid if at all possible.

In Western Australia I would like to see a system of public defence whereby leading practitioners were retained by the Government to assist persons who needed legal aid. From my understanding the best possible system for legal aid in common law countries is that which applies in the United Kingdom where a presiding justice examines the prosecution and questions the defendant to assess his case

and his means. He then decides on the merits of the case, whether legal aid is warranted, and, if it is, he issues a certificate. This method is quite viable and could easily be implemented. It is a system that is most worthy of investigation.

Our prisons are overcrowded—and this is something that is admitted. In relation to the need for a public defender or system of public defence, I would say that in many cases, especially with first offenders who are undefended, convicted, and committed, the people concerned will use everything at their disposal to defend their actions. Such people have only to convince themselves that the system is weighted against them to mitigate in their own minds the seriousness of their actual offences.

Further, in mitigation of a sentence, if a young man—I am dealing with first offenders, but this does not necessarily apply only to first offenders—had the assistance of a legally qualified man to put forward his case in mitigation, I suggest that in many cases the sentence would not be quite as great. Again, dealing with first offenders, I think there is a thin line between the point at which a man takes advantage of his mistakes and reforms, and when he becomes an habitual criminal. I think this is something that would be worth while investigating to ensure a case in mitigation of sentence is properly put.

I am putting this forward from the point of view of the rights of the individual and the need for equality before the law, but if this does not appeal to the Government, then I remind it of the cost each year of keeping men and women incarcerated; and when it gets down to considering its priorities, I ask it to consider the cost of replacing penal institutions. On that point I would remind members opposite that in the Fremantle Gaol we have men and women, human beings.

I would mention that during the recess I visited the Fremantle Gaol and I must admit that it is clean and well run. Its staff is very philosophical and realises that it cannot do much about the overcrowding. I found it interesting to note that there were about 300 prisoners in the woodyard, and about five axes. If one were serving a three months' sentence, one might have a chance of using an axe. Getting back to the point I was making previously, the Government has been obtaining legal aid on the cheap for far too long.

As I gleaned from an answer to a question the other day an extension of the present legal aid system is proposed; but we have to go further than that if only to ensure that the man in the dock has a fair trial regardless of his financial circumstances.

I proceed now to speak on what has become my hobbyhorse in the last few months; that is, the heart of Perth. I am interested in maintaining the beauty of my area and in achieving the sort of environment that was referred to by the member for Darling Range, in relation to his electorate, earlier this evening. The ideal, of course, is to lower the railway line and retain the area of 37 acres in the centre of our city, which will become the heart of the city, for the people.

In my opinion this is for the present generation and for future generations. How do we achieve it? By sinking the railway at the expense of the Government. The Minister has supplied me with a couple of quotes. The first quote was for \$10,000,000, and then last week the second quote was for \$10,100,000.

Mr. O'Connor: How about being honest about these things for a change?

Mr. BURKE: Well, the Minister for Railways confirmed a statement he made to a ratepayers' meeting some time last year when I asked him whether he had, in fact, said that the cost of sinking the railway line was estimated to be \$10,000,000.

Mr. O'Connor: Approximately.

Mr. BURKE: Approximately; the Minister confirmed it was. Last week, in reply to a question I asked, the Minister said he had referred the matter to valuers and the estimate was \$10,100,000.

Mr. O'Connor: That is right; the valuers stated that figure.

Mr. BURKE: The quote has ranged from \$5,000,000 to \$6,000,000, and has now gone to the premium of \$10,100,000. In my opinion the Government could, over a period, meet the cost of lowering the railway line. The Commonwealth grant for roads this year placed the accent on urban roads, and at least part of the development will deal with roads and bridges. Surely part of the cost of this work could be met from the grant for roads.

Public amenities will be provided and, over a period of years, could be paid for. In fact, some of them would be paying propositions. I do not think the Minister, or anyone else, would argue the need for areas of recreation. We are all aware that the areas which are available are, in fact, diminishing. The projects being undertaken by this Government are consuming recreational areas and although the demand may not be great at this point of time it will not diminish. Increases in population will increase the demand for recreational areas.

Referring to a question on valuation which I asked the Minister some months ago, I requested some further information on the figure of \$10,000,000. I asked the

Minister who valued the land. The Minister told me that the preliminary valuation was done by the Town Planning Department in 1966, and the value was \$7,000,000 for 37½ acres of land, approximately.

Mr. O'Connor: That was in May.

Mr. BURKE: Yes, the 1st May. Then, secondly, the Public Works Department valued the area at \$8,500,000 for 24.6 acres, which was the area of the project.

Mr. O'Connor: That would have been just before the final valuation.

Mr. BURKE: The latest figure was supplied by Justin Seward & Co. and Mr. Dudley. The value was \$7,625,000 for 24.6 acres. On Thursday last I asked the Minister whether, in fact, the railway trench of approximately 65 chains in length by one chain to one and a half chains wide was included in the valuation. At that time he indicated he would ask the valuers and advise me. I received a letter today in which it is indicated that the area of the railway trench—with a surface area of 8.4 acres and valued on a *pro rata* basis at \$2,600,000—is not included in the valuation.

So we look at the valuations again. The first one came from the Town Planning Department and was supplied by De Leuw Cather & Co. That valuation was \$7,000,000 for 37½ acres of land. The second valuation was supplied by the Public Works Department. That figure was \$8,500,000. Add to that figure \$2,600,000 for the area of the trench and the valuation is \$11,100,000.

Mr. O'Connor: That also includes land which is not going to be used.

Mr. BURKE: I am referring to the surface area of the land. Taking the value estimated by Justin Seward & Co., and Mr. Dudley—\$7,650,000—and add \$2,600,000 we have the valuation of \$10,250,000, which is near the figure of \$10,100,000 quoted by the Minister. I think we are getting close to the figure of the minimum value placed on the land.

There is another point involved here. Everyone agrees that the existence of the railway line at its present site inhibits the natural development of the city to the north. It is interesting to hear the Government mention this point because the Government is responsible for plonking the Mitchell Freeway in its present position and limiting the natural development of the city to the west. However, that is the argument used.

In my opinion buildings would, in fact, prove a greater barrier—or more of a barrier—to the natural development to the north than would a park. It is a lot easier to go across a park—the maximum width of which would be no greater than the length of Forrest Place—than to go around a building.

Another factor is that at the present time there is enough land, in the central city area, capable of development, to satisfy commerce and industry until the year 2000, approximately.

Mr. O'Connor: On whose assumption is this?

Mr. BURKE: Approximately.

Mr. Graham: It is well-known public knowledge.

Mr. BURKE: The development available for commerce will, in fact, satisfy all demands in advance. By allowing the development of commercial enterprise on this area of land, the demand would be more than satisfied and, on top of that, the building would inhibit development to the north because there would be no need for that development.

We agree that there is a need for recreational areas. I spent some time in trying to arrive at an estimate of how much land would be left for recreation after the company had taken advantage of the situation to invest its money. I asked consecutive questions of the Minister for Railways as to what area would be allocated for open space, but I received no replies. We can glean that an area of 24.6 acres was the basis of the plan. By the lowering of the rail, an additional 13½ acres would be released for parks, roads, and open space. So there would be an area of 24.6 acres plus 13½ acres for parks, roads, and open space. Subsequent questions revealed about the same amount of information.

As a consequence of the questions I asked last Thursday, and from the information contained in the letter I have received, the surface area of the railway trench which is 65 chains by one chain to one and a half chains is 8.4 acres. If the project is based on 24.6 acres, and the Railways Department requires 8.4 acres, that is a total of 33 acres, which leaves 4.5 acres for open space.

Out of the 4.5 acres, allowance must be made for the widening of Roe Street and Wellington Street, which leaves precious little for open space.

Mr. O'Connor: I ask, do you agree with the proposal?

Mr. BURKE: I ask the Minister to put that question on the notice paper. My general attitude is that we should learn from other people's mistakes.

In Melbourne the authorities have recently purchased a large area of land to provide open space in the centre of the city. The situation here, of course, is not as complicated as in cities like Melbourne and Sydney, but we will be faced with a similar problem. We have to look at this and approach it realistically and form a long-term plan for the future. Although it could be argued that the demand for open space is not as great, or

not as obvious as it possibly could be. I can assure members opposite that there will be demands for open space. This can be proved by reference to other cities within Australia, and to cities overseas.

We should take advantage of the foresight shown by the forefathers of some of the leading cities overseas. With reference to this matter, and with your indulgence, Sir, I will refer to Central Park in New York and quote from the *National Geographic Magazine* of December, 1960. At page 792 appears the following:—

There it lies—840 verdant acres, a maharaja could not buy.

Asphalt-jaded New Yorkers flee to this area for renewal. To continue—

Around it roars the busiest, richest, maddest, gayest city the world has ever known. On all sides, wreckers tear New York apart and builders put it together again, reaching ever higher with brick and stone, steel and glass.

Unruffled by all this noisy hustle and bustle, the park goes the way it has gone for about a century. Serenely it offers harassed millions its one great gift—room to breath, refuge from the pressures and tensions of big-city living.

That is the basis on which I develop my argument for the retention of the centre of the City of Perth for this generation and for succeeding generations.

Mr. Dunn: Do you agree with the council plan?

Mr. BURKE: I have not seen it. I think that this Government has the opportunity to give to the citizens of Western Australia—and succeeding generations—probably the finest city centre in Australia. Perhaps, with ensuing development, it will be the finest city centre in the world.

It is incumbent on the Government to consider the project in relation to the interests of all Western Australians, and not in the interests of a few foreign investors who cannot get land in the centres of cities in their own countries. Those investors come here to try to take advantage of what could, in fact, amount to naivety on the part of some people.

In conclusion, looking at the past year I think we can fairly say that it has been a bad year for farmers; a bad year for teachers; a bad year for policemen; a bad year for young marrieds—forced to live in flats because they cannot secure a home of their own; and a bad year for young and old in general.

It has been a very good year, of course, for land speculators and a good year for private developers of spec homes and flats. It has been a good year for unscrupulous landlords and for foreign investors. In 1967 the extent of foreign investment—or ownership—in our mineral resources was in the region of 63 per cent. I can imagine

that in the year 1969 it will be in the region of 70 per cent., a large part of that contribution having been made by Western Australia.

I can see no relief at this point of time, for, as I have said in the past, I do not think the Government has a genuine attitude to social welfare. Many words pass, but there is precious little action. Of course, I think what we have to remember here is that the Government is looking after its own. This boils down to the point—and I make it my final point—that the fact of the matter is that democracy in Western Australia in 1969 is Government by the privileged for the privileged to the advantage of few—those few who least need it—and to the great disadvantage of many.

MR. GRAHAM (Balcatta — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [8.16 p.m.]: Whilst we welcome back the Premier after his sojourn overseas, we nevertheless remind him that he returns to a Government which is run down and which ever-increasingly gives examples of its having lost touch with reality. One might almost liken members of the Government to being Rip van Winkles, as I propose to demonstrate shortly. Suffice to say at this stage that it is not my intention during my remarks to lavish praise upon the Government, because I have been unable to discern actions on its part which would deserve words of commendation from me.

It is, of course, fresh in the minds of all members that only a fortnight ago tonight the Leader of the Opposition drew attention to a lack of Governmental interest by virtue of the fact that not one single word appeared in the Governor's Speech during the opening of Parliament in relation to the farming community and the problems besetting it. When the word "drought" was used, my leader was chided by the Acting Premier and was accused of seeking to create panic. Miraculously within 24 hours, and ever since, it has been a subject which is on the tongues of almost all members of Parliament and the great bulk of the community, because we are conscious of the situation. So the Leader of the Government considers all is well when in point of fact the farmers in the eastern and south-eastern wheatbelt and grazing areas are faced with dire peril.

The Minister for Housing, as we are all aware, says there is no housing crisis; there are only "pressures". But the housing situation is in a critical condition and is getting worse. I propose later in my remarks to demonstrate how serious is the situation and how complacent is the Government notwithstanding that fact.

We had assurances from the Minister for Education that there was no crisis in education; that everything was under control; that it was in hand. However, we are