The PRESIDENT: Mr Perry, will you continue your remarks, please, and ignore the interjections?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Thank you, Mr President. I must say, however, in reply to one of the interjections made by Mr Clive Griffiths, that the Press report at the time bears out Mr Thompson's statement. It is headed, "Satisfied", and it says—

> Mr Thompson said that he and the Premier, Mr Tonkin, were satisfied with the way the police had handled the situation.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Yes, I know.

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: Tedious repetition!

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I come from a farming family, and I have mixed all my life with country folk. I remember back as far as the depression years when the lot of the farmers was a very hard one. As we move around this building we see evidence of men who have come from the land and who have contributed tremendously to the prosperity of Western Australia. I can think of Lord Forrest, Sir James Mitchell, and past-Presidents of the Legislative Council. When the history of the day and age in which we are living is written, and it will be recorded accurately, Sir David Brand will go down as the greatest Premier Western Australia has ever had.

Government members: Hear, hear!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: What has that to do with it?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: I am speaking about men who come from the land. We have heard such a lot or rubbish about farmers and the farming community.

The Hon. Grace Vaughan: From whom? Who said anything nasty about the farmers?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Read next week's copy of *Hansard*, or even last week's will do.

I made the statement in this Chamber that it is the Labor Party's policy to abolish State Governments. This is the avowed declaration made by Mr Whitlam. I would like to read to members from *Labor and the Constitution*, and I am sorry that Mr Cooley is not here at present. This book was written by E. G. Whitlam, QC, MP, and under the heading "The Role of State Members" he said—

> Much can be achieved by Labor members of the State Parliaments in effectuating Labor's aims of more effective powers for the national parliament and for local government. Their role is to bring about their own dissolution.

I was challenged on this point last night, but that statement appears in the book, *Labor and the Constitution*.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Anyhow, his actions leave no doubt about what he is doing.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: Members know what is going on in Canberra.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: You do not have to read the book.

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: His plans are not all working out satisfactorily. Last Saturday we saw an article headed, "PM says faith in Government Shaken" in *The West Australian*. It commences—

> The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, admitted yesterday that public confidence in the Government had been undermined by disagreements by ministers and the Labor caucus.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: That was the understatement of the year!

The Hon. S. J. Dellar: No, that would be in *The West Australian!*

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: The words quoted were the words of the Prime Minister. I have no doubt that not only is the faith in the Government shaken as far as members of the Labor Party are concerned, but also as far as the whole of Australia is concerned.

The Hon. Lyla Elliott: I would love to quote some of the Press statements made by Mr McMahon when he was Prime Minister.

The Hon. Clive Griffiths: Mr Mc—who?

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: We have the worst Federal Government since federation.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What a joke! The people have just re-elected it.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. T. O. PERRY: The people of this day and age will live long enough to see the truth in my words. I support the motion.

THE HON. M. McALEER (Upper West) [7.53 p.m.]: I would like to take this opportunity to join with other members in congratulating you, Mr President, on your appointment to your high office in this House. I congratulate the Leader of the House, his fellow Ministers, and also the Leader of the Opposition. I take special pleasure in congratulating the Hon. Jack Heitman on his election as Chairman of Committees. He is my colleague in the Upper West Province, and because I owe so much to his help and advice, I would like to thank the officers of the House and the staff for their help to me and to other new members.

Mr President, these are very uneasy times for us all. Inflation is such that even those who are able to ride the wave

and take advantage of it to get ahead are concerned about their destination. It is an alarming time for those who are left behind, whether they are people on low incomes, retired people on fixed incomes, pensioners, or people living in disavantaged areas.

In varying degrees it is an anxious time for farmers and for all people in the country, whether they work on the land or in the towns. By extension it is an anxious time for those people who live in the metropolitan area but who work in businesses which service the rural community.

The Upper West Province which I represent is a very large one, but it has only one town of any size—Geraldton. Apart from the important fishing industry and the mineral sands development at Eneabba and Jurien, the people of the province are dependent almost entirely, directly and indirectly, on the farming and grazing industries. Their problems and their hopes can be duplicated in many parts of the State.

Twelve months ago, with some months of extraordinary wool prices behind them, an enormous wheat quota to fill, cattle at premium prices, and high prices predicted for barley and for the new crop of white lupins, growers in my electorate, like growers throughout the wheatbelt and pastoral areas, saw daylight for the first time after four years of depressed prices, a heavy and increasing debt burden, and some very real hardship. Because the Federal Government chose this moment to foreshadow the termination of the superphosphate subsidy and to remove or reduce taxation concessions on plant, clearing, farm housing, water and soil conservation, these measures had at least an air of plausibility and in some respect lessened their impact. There were, of course, vociferous protests but they went unheeded.

Of almost equal importance at that time was the fact that shortages had developed in supplies of new machinery, parts, fencing materials, and in practically all the things that were needed to make up the backlog of maintenance which had accumulated over the four depressed years.

Fortunately the season was, in general, a good one. Prices were generally good although wool declined and lupins were disappointing. However, so much of the money which should have been put back into the land was not put back, partly because of the shortages, partly because provision had to be made to meet the increased taxation, and partly because much money had to go towards repaying the debt.

Now many of the bright prospects have vanished with the virtual collapse of the wool market and its uncertain future, with increased costs, particularly as a result of the new shearing award. Lupins now have a big question mark against them and they are the hope of the light lands, because they are the only practical alternative commercial crop to cereals. They have this question mark because they are heavily dependent on superphosphate and the market for them is uncertain. Beef and mutton prices are depressed; grain markets certainly remain, but with the prospect of reduced profitability, because all charges have risen, particularly fuel. Added to this will be the almost tripling of superphosphate prices which will occur when the bounty is removed.

A great deal of publicity has been given to the high world prices for wheat. However, it must be remembered that the only benefit the growers obtained from last season's crop was the extra 10c on the first advance, bringing the payment to $1.20. The proposed second advance in August has been deferred largely because of the slow turn-around of shipping in the Eastern States. This will erode the ultimate price.

The immediate effect has been a contraction of bank credit, and farmers who took the proposed payment into account for budgeting purposes have found themselves in an embarrassing position.

It is no wonder that, given the conclusion of an unsatisfactory wheat stabilisation agreement, interest still remains in a State wheat marketing plan. While it is possible to show advantages for a national as well as a State scheme, I hope the Government will press on seriously with its study of a wheat marketing scheme for Western Australia so that we may in times to come have a feasible alternative.

I welcome the Government's intention to support the retention of the superphosphate bounty. I welcome its intention to examine and review the organisation and techniques of marketing rural products. The land in Western Australia is one of our few permanent or renewable great natural resources. Apart from minerals, it is our only great natural resource that we have been able to develop extensively although our soils are poor by world standards. We believe that its preservation and development are in the interests of the nation as well as those of the State; but we are certainly dependent on world markets for all our products.

It is important that we do not price ourselves out of those markets which exist and that we should not rest in seeking to improve our position in such a competitive situation. I hope that with other matters the Government, beset though it is with budgetary difficulties, will bear in mind that country people—not simply farmers—are very vulnerable to rises in all sorts of charges, but more especially to increases in freight rates.

It may be that our small rural population could hardly ever justify the large investment needed to provide it with facilities

and amenities enjoyed by people in the city. But, looked at as an investment for the development of the country for the benefit of all, it can be justified. When I say "development", in this sense I mean not simply the development of primary industries, rural, mining, or fishing as they may occur; I refer to the establishment wherever possible of light industry and concentrations of industry where circumstances favour it. It is not possible of course to establish even the lightest of light industry if we do not have the basic facilities of transport, water, power, and good communications; and given our geographic circumstances I believe that a far greater incentive may be necessary in Western Australia than that which the Government already offers. I have in mind something substantial such as concessions in pay-roll tax.

However, industrial development apart, I think we all face the fact—heaven knows, it is said often enough—that people will not remain in the country if they are not given these basic things and other amenities such as housing and medical care, because the expectations of people everywhere have risen. They are no longer content to spend endless years of deprivation in the bush when they could be comfortable in Perth.

In the northern end of my province, the Government has honoured its promise to deepen the existing harbour at Geraldton and I believe very little more can be done to improve the harbour as it exists today. But the people of the area look forward to significant mining developments in the Murchison which would jusitify the provision of a deep-water port, and to the associated processing industries, accompanied by tertiary and service industries. This would benefit the whole area. Even without this development, the very size of Geraldton and the number of people it serves as a town and in the vast hinterland behind it must justify a strong claim on the Government's attention.

All the same, in the Greenough and Moore electorates—that is, in the northern, central, and southern parts of the province which stretches, as members would know, from Kalbarri to Gingin and from Goomalling to Pindar—the day-to-day needs of the people are served by the small agricultural and fishing towns. There is a school of thought which contends that we should abandon the struggle to maintain small towns and concentrate our resources on the development of large centres, but in this province the distance between such possible centres would be so great as to defeat the whole objective of the exercise—at least, while we are confined to our present modes of transport.

In the small coastal towns in the Shires of Gingin, Dandaragan, Coorow, Carnamah and Northampton, development is being delayed by the lack of many essential services. Money is an object and it is a question of priorities. Many of these towns are fishing villages with a population that comes and goes with the season. Still, once we discipline people into townsites rather than let them squat at will, with all the problems that that brings, we incur a responsibility for them and this creates pressure points. The coastal towns, from north to south, essentially have the same problems. In fact, they are part of the one coastal region. Some of them have distinct tourist possibilities.

Jurien and Eneabba—which is not exactly coastal but is related to the coastal area—have a future as centres of mineral sands development. In every case, the problems are beyond the resources of the local authority and the local shires, where they are located and whose rate revenue is based almost entirely on farming land. The only satisfactory solution is to have close co-operation between all the Government departments involved, the shires and the local people. It might be said that this is already so in principle and partly in fact. I know of cases where very strenuous efforts have been made by individual departments. Nevertheless conditions change and plans have to be changed, and personnel in departments change. There is a lack of easy communication between all the parties involved and this causes delays and breeds dissatisfaction.

It often seems that people who pioneer the area, take the early risks, and suffer the hardships are those who lose out, and that starting in almost virgin circumstances, opportunities for the best possible development are lost. I support the suggestion of Sir David Brand—I hope it is the Government's intention to do this—that a small co-ordinating committee should be established to oversee and help plan the development of Eneabba and Jurien Bay and, further, I believe that a close look should be given to the entire coastal area as one entity.

Now is a particularly good time to do so because we seem to be at a turning point in the fishing industry. Perhaps members will have read the article written by Mr Kailis and published in last Monday's *The West Australian*, and are aware of the disabilities now being faced by the rock lobster industry through revaluation, inflation, and a declining market. While it is true that there is quite a lot to be learnt about the rock lobster industry and a vast area of research to be covered, at this time we cannot expect any expansion of that industry. This development has led to an expansion in the search for other avenues in the fishing industry, such as, for instance, prawning as far south as the Abrolhos and purse seining. However, this area of fishing requires large capital investment and special efforts must be made if the industry is not simply to become the preserve of a few large companies.

Throughout the many districts in the country people have a strong desire to preserve their local identity and local institutions, and a degree of local autonomy. Sometimes, they defeat their own purpose by bypassing their own small towns, but it is not merely a pious sentiment. They work hard and freely on shire councils. They work for their kindergartens, their schools, and, if they are lucky enough to have one, their hospital, their churches, sporting bodies, and clubs. Some districts are developing as cultural centres for the arts and crafts and nearly all are seized with enthusiasm for historical remnants and records. All these things are good; they stabilise people in the country and add to the attractiveness of country life and they need to be encouraged.

However, if there is one thing that destabilises people in the country more than the lack of work opportunities it is limited education opportunities. These days, people in the country are not willing to allow their children to lose education opportunities, knowing that when they leave school they will have to compete with city children. As in the days of the Brand Government, when the great expansion of junior high schools took place, there is now hardly a town of any size in the country which does not aspire to having a senior secondary high school with all the attendant cost of building with the need to supply staff, for a suitable range of courses and a high quality of teaching. This great upsurge of interest in secondary education has come at a time when the problems in the primary schools and the old established junior high schools are not yet solved. There is a continuing need to renovate, repair, and extend old buildings. There is a lack of classrooms, resource centres, adequate storage space, adequate space for staff and—this is always a problem—a lack of teacher housing. Finally, there is the problem of hostels, which seem to be required because of the distances children travel, yet which suffer from fluctuating numbers, and which must be run by somebody but still not be too great a drain on the community.

Of course, the Government is aware of all these problems and is pressing on with the provision of new classrooms and resource centres. But the list is very long and resources are limited. It is hard to eliminate waste and in the past at any rate there has been some reason to believe that metropolitan schools have skimmed the available money. I believe that the increasing availability of technological aids such as cassettes and videotapes will go some way towards solving the problems of the small and remote schools. I welcome the Government's initiative in planning to lower the school entrance age to the year in which the child turns five because I believe that in time this will be of as great an advantage to country children as it will be to metropolitan children, especially to those in disadvantaged areas.

There are many problems in the technical and tertiary areas which trouble the country, and I will not labour them now except to say that I hope the experiments in open education which the universities and the Western Australian Institute of Technology are undertaking will be of great benefit to the country and will not overlap each other wastefully.

In conclusion I should like to turn briefly to the problems of another generation and to those members of it who are pensioners. Pensioners in country areas do have disadvantages not experienced by those in the city, particularly in the field of transport, because in country areas there is very little public transport. In a town like Geraldton which is widespread and straggling but which has only one main business and professional centre it is simply not possible to walk to it from many parts of the town, and it is equally impossible just to stay in one's own small neighbourhood. There is no bus service because it cannot be made to pay, and the only choice is between taking taxis, keeping a car, or relying on friends. Further out in the country, of course, the choice is narrower. I hope the Government will give consideration to this problem because I think it is a sad state of affairs when people are forced to leave their environment and move to the city in their old age for want of suitable transport. I think the people of the country are poorer for it.

If it is not possible to provide subsidies for bu·es, perhaps it may be possible to provide a fortnightly taxi subsidy. In any case I am sure that some immediate relief could be given by allowing reasonable concessions on car licenses, and I was glad to hear that the Government was considering such a course. I have touched on a few aspects of the life and problems of the people living in my electorate. Some I have not mentioned. Most of the problems to which I have referred are well known to members. But unless we consider these things, we will miss the opportunity to solve them when it occurs.

I thank the people of the Upper West Province for electing me as their representative. They may not be as many in number as electors in the metropolitan provinces but they are scattered over a very wide area: and many of the handicaps and disadvantages outlined by the Hon. Grace Vaughan are suffered by people in my electorate. These are compounded by the distances they must travel and their remoteness from institutions and agencies which could help them. For those and other reasons I believe that they place more reliance on their members of Parliament than do city people. In any case, I cannot think they are over-represented. I support the motion.