

The Premier: The landlord would have done that, would he not?

Mr. HILL: I do not care who would have done it. The board should have refused to have granted a licence. The centre of the town is the town hall. There is an intersection at Gray-st. and York-st.; the town hall is in the north-west corner. South of that there is the Commonwealth Bank, which is being completed at a cost of £30,000. East of the town hall there is a site that has been resumed by the Commonwealth Government for a post office. On the fourth corner is the hotel and near the hotel is the betting shop.

Mr. Heal: That has been there for years.

Mr. HILL: Not in the main street. The third betting shop is near the monument, and this area is rapidly growing as a business centre. Why have these betting shops in the main business centre of the town? One day while I was travelling in the train I was talking to the conductor and he said, "You know, before this starting-price betting we had no trouble in getting a cricket team together, but to-day it is impossible to do so. Young fellows go to the betting shops instead." On one occasion I was at a football ground and a lot of young fellows were getting ready to play. I was very glad when one of them looked up and said, "This game is a long way better than starting-price betting." It is the duty of this House and of the Government to do all it can to discourage starting-price betting.

In conclusion, I wish to point out that Westralian Farmers is not the biggest co-operative business in this State. The biggest co-operative business in this State is the business of Western Australia Unlimited. There are about 650,000 shareholders and the youngest is the latest-born baby. That baby will remain a shareholder until he or she dies. As it comes into the world that poor little kid has to carry a debt of £257 11s. 9d. as at the 30th June last. If it is the third child in the family, poor old Dad has £1,287 as his share of that family in the debt of this State.

The Minister for Housing: That new-born child inherits a lot of privileges.

Mr. HILL: I admit there are a lot of assets, but we want to make the most of those assets and not squander them. Members of this House must realise that they constitute the board of directors of a big business. We have a tremendous responsibility and we must ask ourselves how we are going to face up to our youngest shareholder when he or she has the right to vote. The time has arrived when instead of wasting time on unnecessary and fiddling legislation, we should concentrate on running the State as a big business. I hope the Treasurer will bring

down his Budget early and that with the Budget we will have, as we had before, a financial statement.

The Premier: I will do my best.

Mr. HILL: I hope the Premier does this to enable members of the House to pay more attention to the Estimates and to the administration of this wonderful State of ours which, as the Minister for Housing has just indicated, provides a lot of assets. Let us make the most of those assets. Do not let us spend all the money on the Swan River. Let us spend it in the outlying parts of the State so that we can develop the country and make future generations proud of it.

On motion by Mr. Wild, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 18th August, 1955.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**EDUCATION.***Killarney and Innaloo Schools, Extra Rooms.*

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Education:

As the Killarney and Innaloo schools are overcrowded, can he indicate when the extra four rooms at Killarney and the extra four rooms at Innaloo, will be—

- (a) commenced;
- (b) finished?

The MINISTER replied:

The schools mentioned are not overcrowded. To prevent overcrowding, two classes from North Scarborough are temporarily accommodated at the old Innaloo school.

The erection of additions at both of these schools is entirely dependent on the amount of loan moneys available. Dates of commencement and completion are, therefore, not yet available.

HOUSING.*Demolitions at Collie.*

Mr. MANNING asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is it a fact that partially built houses being erected by the State Housing Commission at Collie are being demolished?

(2) If so, how many houses are involved?

(3) What is the reason for the demolition of these partially built houses?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) and (3) Answered by No. (1).

NARROWS.*Effect of Flooding.*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What was the width of the Narrows at South Perth—bank to bank—prior to reclamation being commenced?

(2) What will be the width when the present reclamation is finished?

(3) Has consideration been given to the possibility of flooding in upper reaches of the Swan River as a result of the reclamation referred to?

(4) Will he state what is believed will be the result in flood periods in the areas between Upper Swan and the Causeway?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 870 feet.

(2) 750 feet.

(3) Yes.

(4) Possibly one inch on the Perth Water side of the Narrows and diminishing upstream.

BETTING CONTROL BOARD.*Position of Female Applicants.*

Mr. BOVELL asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Is he aware—

(a) that a printed information sheet issued by the Betting Control Board of Western Australia stated that no licences would be granted to female persons;

(b) that notwithstanding this instruction four female persons (as reported in "The West Australian" of the 30th July, 1955) were granted licences by the Betting Control Board;

(c) that in view of this instruction at least one woman withheld her application for a licence?

(2) As the information sheet referred to was grossly misleading and unfair to would-be female applicants, will he take up the question with the Betting Control Board of calling applications from females desiring to become licensed off-course bookmakers?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Such a printed sheet was issued by the Betting Control Board. It is in accordance with Regulation 32 of the Betting Control Regulations, 1955.

(b) No such licence has been granted to a female. The hon. member may have confused the granting of registration of betting premises with the issue of a bookmaker's licence. The list published in the "Government Gazette", No. 64 of the 29th July, 1955, and reported in "The West Australian," referred to registration of premises in which betting may be carried on.

(2) The information on the sheet issued by the board was in accordance with Regulation 32 which confirms the issue of bookmakers' licences to males over the age of 21 years and was not misleading.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT.*Provision of Crossings.*

Mr. PERKINS asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Does the Government Railways Act provide that when a railway line is constructed, crossings must be provided at departmental expense at all points where the line crosses a surveyed road; but that if further roads are surveyed after the original construction of the line, such further crossings are provided at the expense of the local authority?

(2) How many crossings have been provided at departmental expense on Western Australian Government railway lines since such lines were originally completed?

(3) At what points and on which lines?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The position is covered by the Public Works Act.

(2) A great deal of research work would be necessary to answer this question and there is no certainty that the earlier records would be complete.

(3) Answered by No. (2).

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

Margins and Awards.

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Labour:

(1) Is he aware of the fact that great dissatisfaction exists at the Government Printing Office over the margins issue and that this dissatisfaction does not stem from a minority group?

(2) Is he also aware that, apart from the country jobbing award, the Federal graphic arts award, which members of the Government Printing Office have had to accept, is the lowest wage standard for printing tradesmen in Australia, and that until their margins decision, employees of the Government Printing Office always enjoyed higher and more satisfactory margins?

(3) What other State Government departments, besides the Government Printing Office, as a result of the margins issue, now have a State basic wage but only a Federal award margin?

(4) Is he further aware of the fact that machine compositors at the Government Printing Office who were receiving a margin of 52s. in 1937 under a State award are now receiving 97s. 6d.—a Federal award margin—which is 32s. 6d. less than the 2½ times formula?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) No.

(3) These employees are in receipt of margins awarded by the State Arbitration Court with a State basic wage which is 16s. 5d. more than the Federal basic wage.

(4) There was no State award covering the Government Printing Office in 1937. The machine compositors under the recent decision of the State Arbitration Court in their second year of service receive a margin of 107s. 6d.

RETAIL SHOPS.

Hours of Closing.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Labour:

(1) Is it intended to bring down a Bill this session to make Saturday afternoon closing of shops uniform throughout the State?

(2) Is it permissible for shops in those districts not closing on Saturday afternoon to observe a late shopping night?

(3) Has the matter of a five-day working week for retail shops, with provision for a late shopping night on a Friday to compensate for the Saturday closure, been investigated, and if so, what were the conclusions arrived at?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) This matter is still under consideration.

(2) and (3) The majority of shops are governed by awards of the Arbitration Court or registered industrial agreements which specify the hours of work of assistants. The provisions of the Factories and Shops Act make the hours of work prescribed in an award the limit of trading hours.

WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) Comprehensive Scheme, Representations to Federal Government.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Premier:

(1) Adverting to the question asked by me on the 11th August, did the previous Government make representations for an increase in the amount of Commonwealth contribution to the cost of the comprehensive water scheme?

(2) If so, on what dates were these previous communications sent?

The PREMIER replied:

No written representations were made, but a search of Public Works Department files has revealed that in June, 1950, a verbal request by the then Premier to the Prime Minister during discussions in Melbourne on problems associated with Western Australia's development, was made, and some time prior to the 8th May, 1951, the then Acting Premier, in verbal discussion with the Minister for National Development during the latter's visit to Western Australia, dealt with the matter.

(b) Objection to Reticulation, Wyalkatchem and Bruce Rock.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is there any record in the department that the residents of either the Wyalkatchem or Bruce Rock districts, at any time, rejected or indicated their opposition to any proposals for a reticulated water scheme in their respective areas?

(2) If so, on what dates, approximately, were any such objections made known to the department?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A search has failed to reveal any record of opposition.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(c) *Details of Pipeline, Wellington Dam-Narrogin.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) What distance of pipeline is required to complete the line from Wellington Dam to Narrogin?

(2) When will this work be completed?

(3) What was the date of the laying of the first pipe?

(4) What work was completed in each full year since that date?

The MINISTER replied:

I wish to thank the hon. member for asking these questions, the replies to which are as follows:—

(1) 15 miles 77 chains as from the 12th August.

(2) This financial year.

(3) The 19th August, 1949.

(4) For financial years—

1949-50—9 miles 60 chains.

1950-51—19 miles 20 chains.

1951-52—6 miles — chains.

1952-53—from the 1st July to the 28th February, (8 months)—1 mile 32 chains.

From the 1st March to the 30th June, (4 months)—3 miles 54 chains.

1953-54—5 miles 76 chains.

1954-55—16 miles 9 chains.

The Minister for Education: That will make him pipe down.

Hon. D. Brand: The Minister must have missed out some work.

TRANSPORT.

Private Bus Fares and Government's Intention.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) What proportion of the 6 per cent. tax on bus proprietors' takings would need to be waived to keep private company bus fares from increasing as at present under discussion?

(2) What amount per annum would be involved if a waiver took place?

(3) Does the Government propose to make any waiver to assist the present position?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Only the more prosperous operators running lucrative routes pay 6 per cent. of gross earnings to the Transport Board. Fees payable by a number of operators have already been reduced to 3 per cent. or less—even down to $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.—in order to maintain services which would otherwise have to cease or at least be very severely curtailed. In these cases complete waiver

of fees would not cover increased costs. In the past years some operators realised net profits of over 70 per cent. and even over 100 per cent. per annum on funds invested. It is considered reasonable that they should now bear at least some of the increased costs of today's operation.

Assuming that the public through the various local authorities was compelled, by reason of reduced licence fees, to bear the extra wages costs, the rates of those operators now paying 6 per cent of gross earnings would need to be reduced to figures varying in individual cases from 2 per cent. to 3 per cent. of gross earnings.

(2) It is estimated that operators now paying 6 per cent. would, through such reductions, contribute £38,800 less on the present fare basis. Assuming the existing fees of the remaining operators, totalling £9,137 per annum, were waived entirely, they would still need a subsidy estimated at £6,600 to keep their services running on the present schedules. The total effect would amount to approximately £54,000 per annum which is more than the amount available for distribution during the past year to local authorities for road maintenance purposes. In that event, the contribution to local authorities would be completely eliminated.

(3) The matter of the increase of costs and the effect on operations is still under consideration.

HOSPITALS.

Alterations to Maternity Ward, Carnarvon.

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Health:

Is it the intention of his department to carry out the alterations to the maternity ward at Carnarvon hospital as was suggested to him during his inspection of that institution?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

FIREARMS.

Third Party Insurance.

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Is he aware that there are cases where innocent third parties have been injured by firearms resulting in serious and permanent personal injury and the owner of the weapon has been unable to meet the financial responsibility for medical expenses and compensation, thus causing great hardship to the injured party and dependants?

(2) Would he give consideration to a scheme of third party insurance attaching to a licence to carry firearms similar to the automatic protection given with a motor-vehicle license?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The Police Department is aware that there have been a few accidents with firearms in which innocent third parties have been injured, seriously or otherwise. Nothing is known of the ability of the persons responsible to meet the financial responsibilities for medical expenses and compensation to the injured parties.

(2) Due to the small number of accidents that have occurred, in comparison with the number of persons licensed to possess firearms, it is not considered that a third party insurance scheme, as suggested, is justified.

In the year ended the 30th June, 1954, a total of 63,509 firearm licences was issued. In that period 27 accidents with firearms were reported. Six of these were fatal, the remaining 21 resulting in minor to serious injuries.

In the year ended the 30th June, 1955, the corresponding figures are: 67,111 licences issued; 24 accidents; 5 fatal; 19 injuries.

Most of those injured would be the person using the firearm. It is not possible to give the number of third persons injured without a perusal of all files relating to these accidents, but the number would be very few.

BETTING CONTROL ACT.

Licensing of Shops and Bookmakers, Merredin.

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Police:

Will he lay on the Table of the House the applications and other relevant papers dealing with the licensing of both shops and bookmakers at Merredin, under the Betting Control Act?

The MINISTER replied:

No. But the hon member may peruse these papers in my office.

RAILWAYS.

Effect of Dieselisation at Mullewa.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What effect will the dieselisation of railways have on the numerical strength of the railway staff at Mullewa?

(2) Is there any truth in the suggestion that certain staff will be transferred to Geraldton?

(3) Will Mullewa be retained as an engine depot?

(4) When will the commission be in a position to hand over, for town supply, the water-dams now held by them?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Strength has been reduced by 11 permanent and 2 casual workers.

(2) No.

(3) Yes.

(4) As soon as experience shows that it may be safely done, the dams that can be spared will be handed over subject to safeguards necessary to cover departmental requirements.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion for the adoption of the Address, as amended.

MR. WILD (Dale) [2.30]: This is one of the few opportunities that members have of ventilating matters affecting their own electorates and also of discussing subjects relating to State affairs. In opening my remarks this afternoon, I wish to say a word or two about Professor Stephenson's report on town planning, which has recently been laid on the Table of the House and which I think all members of Parliament, irrespective of the side of the House on which they sit, should accept. I have not even looked at the report and I am only going on what I have read in the Press about it.

I think it was some five or six years ago that the Government of the day decided that it would obtain the services of a man who was most expert to investigate into and report upon the future town planning of the metropolitan area in this State. As members know, Professor Stephenson visited Perth on two occasions. He was here for some time on his second visit and, after much consultation with our own Town Planning Commissioner, Mr. Hepburn, and, I have no doubt, after much discussion with many local authorities, he formulated a plan.

In the few years that I have been in Parliament I have observed that we are too prone—I suppose it applies to me as it does to other members—to think, "How will this plan affect my electorate, and how will it affect me?" On this occasion I think we have to get above that. I only hope that if his plan upsets the people in the electorate of Dale, I am going to be man enough to say, "If certain land has to go, and it is definitely in the interests of the State, the plan must stand."

If we are all going to have our own little prejudices and say, "I do not want this here or that there," we will never get anywhere. Western Australia has reached the position with its town planning where it has to do something before it is too late. Therefore, I hope that all members will recognise that this plan has been prepared and submitted by probably one of the most eminent town planners in the world and it is up to us, if we have the interests of Western Australia at heart, to see that it is carried out.

While the Premier is in his seat—I understand that he may have to leave shortly—I want to mention something

which to me, to him and to many other people is rather disturbing news, and that is that the Seaforth Reformatory Home is to close. Accordingly, I have given notice of a question to be placed on Tuesday's notice paper inquiring whether this is correct because if it is, it must be the decision of the Government. Only 12 months ago when a report was submitted by a person from the Eastern States, the Premier said that he did not agree with the criticism of the Seaforth Home which was contained in that report.

We now find—and I believe it is correct—that it is not intended to send any more boys there and that the headmaster has been transferred to some place in Stoneville. Therefore, it seems that after 35 years' excellent service by this Salvation Army Home, the boys are to be taken away from it and, might I say, rather peremptorily. For a moment or two I want to touch on a subject that was discussed at some length last night by the member for Victoria Park and to a degree I want to endorse what he said.

I also want to go a little further in dealing with this problem of traffic and, in particular, that part of the problem connected with the Causeway. I do not know who is to blame for the traffic congestion at that point, but it seems to me that there are too many Government departments dealing with the problem. I know that when we were in power as a Government, it was difficult to pin anyone down. I was informed that it was the responsibility of either the police or someone else and apparently no one was to blame.

Like the member for Victoria Park, I have to cross the Causeway every morning and evening, and the stage has now been reached where I think it can be said that traffic congestion has become much the same as it was in the dark days before the new Causeway was constructed. I am not a traffic expert, but it seems to me that what is required is for one or two men to visit the Causeway to ascertain what is causing the traffic to slow up as it traverses the bridge. Purely as a layman and an observer, I am of the opinion that, whilst I agree with the member for Victoria Park that the people have not yet become accustomed to using the roundabout, the main fault seems to be traffic breaking into each of the main lanes as one goes on to the Causeway itself—I am now referring to the Victoria Park end—because if, for instance, one is travelling to Armadale it is necessary to cross the Causeway, and one should move into the centre lane, weave around the roundabout and then go along Albany Highway through Victoria Park.

If people from Belmont wish to go into the city or to South Perth, they have to get their nose in front of the stream of traffic that is travelling from the city on to

Albany Highway or round into Canning Highway. Then, as such persons move around the circus, they meet with traffic travelling from Albany Highway to Perth and also that traffic which is moving from Canning Highway on to the Causeway to go to Belmont. All this is necessary for a person who is coming from Belmont in order that he may travel only a matter of yards.

The same applies to a person who is travelling from South Perth and who wishes to go along the Great Eastern Highway. At the point of entering the circus he meets traffic travelling from Albany Highway to the city, and vehicles travelling from Belmont to the city. Therefore, there are three lines of traffic each travelling in its own direction and, in attempting to do so, each and every one of them is holding up the stream of traffic which is going in its own particular direction. I know that it is not an easy problem to solve, and the only solution—the long-term plan—is the introduction of the clover-leaf principle which, of course, I understand is going to be very expensive.

It seems to me that, in order to maintain that steady flow of traffic—which we must have—we have now reached the stage where the traffic which is travelling from Belmont to Perth, from Albany Highway to South Perth, or that which is travelling from South Perth to Belmont, must be diverted a couple of streets back from the Causeway. Those members who remember the difficulties we experienced with the old Causeway a few years ago will recall that a similar step was taken to relieve the congestion on the Causeway by the Traffic Department, the police or whoever was responsible. Traffic was forced to travel along a side-street about 200 or 300 yards south of the existing Causeway and, as members know, it alleviated the difficulties to a great extent.

However, here we are in the same position again, and nobody seems to be taking any steps to overcome the problem. I know that the Minister will probably say that meetings have been held with the R.A.C. and other bodies to find a solution. They may have had some discussion, but action must be taken because the congestion on the Causeway has now reached a stage where, between 5 p.m. and 5.30 p.m., it takes a motorist from 20 minutes to half an hour to traverse the Causeway. If someone would devote some deep thinking to overcome this problem, I am sure it could be done. It is a matter of considering it long enough and deeply enough, and then taking some action.

I will now say a few words about the through-routing of buses. This subject has been discussed on several occasions but we still do not seem to be getting very far with it. I read in the Press the other day a report on one of the meetings that were

held to discuss the problem at which it was suggested that through-routing could be done by certain bus companies but not by others. But is there any reason why we should not make a start? We must start somewhere. Whilst I recognise that some suburbs only require a limited bus service, I also realise that once in the city, a service twice or three times as great is required. When one sees that great line of buses in the evening and in the morning, with people either embussing or debussing it makes one realise that it is about time we got our thinking caps on and did something to alleviate this matter.

There is one aspect on which Western Australia seems to concentrate, and which I submit is very much against a through-flow of traffic. I say this because I am not the only one who has seen this happen. Other members have also seen it, and particularly has the Premier. In every other country they endeavour to move traffic along as quickly as possible; they do not impede its movement. The principle seems to be that as long as one's driving is not a danger to the public, the traffic can be kept moving. But with all these stop signs and other hindrances one comes across in this State, the flow of traffic is stopped and this, of course, in turn intensifies the traffic problem, rather than alleviates it in any way.

The Premier: The safety factor is very important.

Mr. WILD: That is so, but we must educate our drivers to the fact that while they have a lethal weapon in their hands, there are certain limits to which they can go before it becomes a danger. I realise it does not apply to all of us. Some of us may have quicker brains than others, and while for some 40 miles an hour may be a safe speed, for others who may possibly be more ponderous in their thinking, a speed of 25 miles an hour constitutes a danger.

Mr. Yates: A lot of them are not aware of the traffic regulations.

Mr. WILD: We must not stop people; we must try to get them moving, or we will not show any progress with our traffic problems.

I am sorry the Minister for Water Supplies is not in his seat because I want to express on behalf of the people of Canning Vale their great disappointment in being told, last evening, that Canning Vale is not to get further funds for its water scheme this financial year. I have no doubt that they will join with me in saying, "If you can dip into trust funds and find £1,740,000 for housing, surely you can find £5,000 or £6,000 for this scheme." Apart from this disappointment I would like to point out that I was asked to go round and observe the work on the Canning Vale water scheme in operation two

months ago, and my main criticism is directed at the loafing that was apparent on the job. I was not asked by one, but by three or four residents, to "come round and have a look".

Accordingly I went around on two occasions. One morning I stood at the property immediately opposite where the men were supposed to be working. On this occasion there were 11 men and I would say that they took three-quarters of an hour for their mid-morning tea. I do not deny any man his right to have a cup of tea at 11 o'clock or thereabouts, but surely 15 minutes is sufficient for this purpose. But it is different when people draw one's attention to what is going on, and when one sees these things with one's own eyes.

I do not exaggerate when I say there were 11 men standing up; they were not even striking a blow. They were obviously mostly foreigners but that should not make any difference. Those men are still working for the department and accepting money provided by it. It is not fitting for the people of Canning Vale to be told that there is no money to carry on the scheme, particularly when this sort of thing goes on. I would like the Minister to go out himself and have a little yarn; he need not be accompanied by me. Let him go down Royal-st. and ask the residents about the amount of work that was being done on the scheme about two months ago.

Another matter that affects the Water Supply Department is the treatment being meted out not only to the residents but to the Gosnells Road Board in relation to the repairs to the main water line coming down the Albany Highway. I do not know what the technical term is but I understand they are re-ringing the joints of the pipes because over the years they have apparently become worn out. This necessitates having to flood the area with water and then having to pump it out before they can get on with the job. Complaints have been made as to the state in which the drains are being left.

In company with members of the Gosnells Road Board, I have waited on the Commissioner of Main Roads who has denied any responsibility for keeping these drains clean. When one considers the origination of the Albany Highway one feels that somebody must have accepted responsibility at the time for that highway, and the widening of the road; and to the best of my knowledge there has been no alteration of that policy since. Firstly, I would like to refer to the "Government Gazette" of the 17th June, 1927, where, under the Main Roads Act of 1925 there is a declaration of "main road." The portion to which I wish to refer is as follows—

... hereby declares that the road specified in the schedule hereto shall be a main road within the meaning of

"The Main Roads Act, 1925," and that the footpaths, if any, of such road be excluded from the main road.

There is then the schedule which includes the Canning, Gosnells, and Armadale-Kelmscott Road Districts after which we find the following—

A strip of land, one chain wide, commencing at the junction of Welshpool Road

and they declare it up as far as Armadale. I think, therefore, that that proves conclusively that the main road from fence to fence, being a chain wide, is the accepted responsibility of the Main Roads Department.

The Minister for Works: From fence to fence?

Mr. WILD: Yes, from fence to fence, being a chain wide.

The Minister for Works: That excludes the footpath.

Mr. WILD: Exactly! The only part therefore that is not the responsibility of the Main Roads Department is the footpath. I think the Minister will concede that. They say it is a chain wide and they take the responsibility, that is of the main road, with the exception of the footpath.

Of recent years the department has denied any responsibility for keeping these main road drains clean. Yet we find that the matter goes back to the 17th June, 1929, when the Main Roads Department wrote to the Gosnells Road Board and asked if it would clean the drains out. I have sighted the correspondence and also the receipt of that time, which was the first occasion on which the department asked the board to do the work. At that time it was done at a lower cost—for only a matter of £66. But the secretary of the road board has been there for 27 or 28 years and he has considerable knowledge of all that has transpired, and he tells me that during the depression years—and again I have sighted the correspondence—year after year either the Gosnells Road Board wrote to the Main Roads Department and asked the department if it wanted the board to do the work, or the department wrote to the road board and asked it if it would do the work.

So it would seem that over the years the department has accepted the fact that the drains along the main road are its responsibility. Recently, however, in the last two or three years, it has denied all responsibility in connection with these drains, and I want to tell the House that they are in a shocking state. It would do the Minister some good to look at the strip that was recently dug up.

The Minister for Works: I shall have a look tomorrow.

Mr. WILD: I hope the Minister will look at the strip between Austin Avenue and where the men are now working, just

over the Maddington railway crossing. About three months ago when the department was asked if something would be done about the drain, it replied, "We do not accept responsibility for this work, but we will put it back into the condition it was in originally." It sent a grader out. I am not a main roads engineer but the work which the grader did surprised me, and when the Minister goes out tomorrow he will be able to see what happened.

The grader ran over the area and knocked the collar off one side, with the result that now there is an angle of dirt going into the drain falling away from the main road and making it impossible to get the water away because the drain is half filled. When the Water Supply Department men came out and commenced work on the pipeline, instead of seeing that the drains were clean and able to take the water away, they set about doing their work. I suggest that the Minister looks at Della's property on the left hand side about 500 yards beyond the railway crossing going towards Armadale. Because the drains would not take the water away, the men pumped it on to that property to such a degree that Della had to remove his stock from it.

All the way from Austin Avenue to Pitchford Avenue, nearly every culvert has been rendered unusable and there is virtually a sea of water all along the road. We are also not satisfied in the Armadale-Kelmscott district with the water connections. I spoke on this matter during the Estimates last year but we have not got any further forward. Up to about two years ago, the policy in regard to subdivisions was that before the Town Planning Board would agree to a subdivision, an applicant had to satisfy it that both water and electricity would be available.

At the time we had many battles with that board to subdivide land and we used the argument then that if we could get a subdivision, no doubt the blocks of land would be sold and then water and electricity would be laid on by the two departments. Now the position has been reversed and a subdivision is granted by the Town Planning Board without any assurance from an applicant that the two services will be available. People buy blocks, particularly those close to existing services, on the understanding that they are to get those services. Now there is a battle lasting from six to 12 months before the blocks are actually connected. Regarding water supplies, we are continually told—

The Minister for Works: Since when has it been the policy you are referring to?

Mr. WILD: To my knowledge, the change was made after the battle to get Painshorpe's property subdivided. The

Town Planning Board would not give permission until the two authorities assured them of water and electricity connections. There have been subdivisions since.

The Minister for Works: In what year was the most recent one?

Mr. WILD: The subdivision of Mauritz's property was carried out last year.

The Minister for Works: I cannot understand this. I have received complaints recently that subdivisions were held up because water could not be connected.

Mr. WILD: I shall be pleased to make all the files available to the Minister. I have the originals, but I did not bring them with me. I can assure him that was the position in regard to Mauritz's subdivision of his property situated on the main highway about 1,000 to 1,500 yards this side of the Narrogin Inn. Five houses are erected on the subdivided lots which were sold between one and two years ago. I am still battling to get a water service for some of the occupants of houses on the main highway. In the case of electricity, it was only two months ago that I was able to get the department to erect two poles on someone else's property so that the people affected could get electricity.

This is not peculiar to that subdivision. I know of two other subdivisions which have followed the same pattern, namely, the Abbey-rd. and the Railway-rd. subdivisions. There is much talk about decentralisation, but this is done with the tongue in the cheek. I am not suggesting that the various departments should construct unpayable long leads because it costs a lot of money, but when people build on approved subdivisions, in some cases in the heart of a township, or in others, as in Mauritz's case, right on Albany Highway alongside of which electricity and water run, surely the department should see that they are connected.

I seem to be full of complaints this afternoon, and my next relates to the quality of electricity available in the Kenwick-Gosnells district. I suppose that is not the only district from which a similar complaint is made. Over the years the public have been asked to invest money in the electricity loans and the Government has supported the appeal. The public were told that money had to be found to pay for the South Fremantle power station and for transmission lines all over the place. Of course, money has to be found because these provisions cannot be made with fresh air. In Gosnells we have a very disappointing electricity supply.

Very rarely in this House do I touch on subjects that affect me personally, but on this occasion I have to. I am referring not to the amount of electricity available, but to the continuity of supply. It was so bad last year that I had to spend £100 to

buy kerosene brooders because I could not rely on the electricity. It was not as though the supply went off at odd moments. In the best regulated systems we know that breakdowns inevitably occur, but the supply between Kenwick and Gosnells has the unhappy knack of going off very frequently. The Minister can confirm this information from anyone else who is engaged in the same industry as I am in my district.

One simply cannot trust the electricity supply, so that when a person is breeding chickens in this district, he is frightened to leave them even for five minutes because he might find that the power will be cut off for two or three hours. Not only I, but the other poultry farmers in my district who use electricity for brooding purposes are called upon in these enlightened days with a modern power station at South Fremantle, to put up with these breakdowns.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I suppose the reason is the poor quality coal used.

Mr. WILD: I do not know. I have been told, but I do not know if it is correct, that the power line along Albany Highway was previously controlled by a separate authority and not from East Perth. That is merely hearsay. I learnt that it was looked upon as a very bad line. The department is only gradually replacing it now. What I want to draw the attention of the Minister to is that the continuity of electricity supply to the district is pretty rotten. In no other district that I am aware of is the continuity of supply as poor as in Kenwick and in Gosnells.

Mr. Lapham: How far are you living from Perth?

Mr. WILD: Seven miles, and a matter of only 100 yards off the main transmission line and about 750 yards from the transformer. I am not complaining of the quality of the power; what I am complaining of is that we never know when it is going off.

I wish to congratulate the Government upon the astronomical figures that appeared in the paper of the betting on Saturday last at Hawke's betting shops, which showed a turnover of £200,000. In view of those figures on a day like that when there were not many favourites in front, I am wondering what sort of an argument the Premier will use when he tells us that the man in the lower income group has not sufficient money to live on.

Mr. Moir: Is it only the man in the lower income group that bets?

Mr. WILD: The men in the higher group probably go to the racecourse and help provide the turnover there. I had a look at one of the betting shops and saw the seething mass of humanity gathered there. Now I have a final word to say on betting

—and I address this to the Minister concerned—the people of Armadale and Gosnells—the member for Canning can speak for himself—are very disappointed at the fact that no local resident was selected as a bookmaker. I am not holding anything for or against that because these people had to submit their applications.

I had a look at the file, thanks to the Minister in making it available, and I would be the last to say that this man or that man should have had a licence, but the strange thing is that in each of those districts a local man was not selected. In the case of Armadale, the successful applicant was a new Australian who came from Aberdeen-st., in Perth; at Gosnells a man who has lived there a month was selected and at Cannington, while there has been a local man operating for 26 or 28 years, whom I am told is a reputable man, he missed selection and a man from the city got it. It seems very peculiar that people from outside those districts should be brought in to conduct betting shops.

MR. MOIR (Boulder) [3.2]: At the outset I wish to join with other members in expressing my regret at the passing of Mr. Bob Boylen who was a member of the Legislative Council. He had represented the people in his province for many years and had given them very good service indeed and we all regret his passing. I also wish to associate myself with the expressions of regret at the death of Mr. Henning, who was also a member of another place, though I did not know him very well beyond meeting him in Parliament House.

I wish to make reference to certain remarks passed by the member for South Perth a few nights ago when speaking on the Address-in-reply. He mentioned the industrial relationships in this State. I agree with the hon. member that it is very necessary and desirable that amicable relations should exist between the workers on the one hand and the employers on the other hand, but the hon. member displayed a lamentable lack of knowledge of the facts when he extolled the virtues of the Employers' Federation and, in effect, attributed to the efforts of that body the conditions that have prevailed for some years, namely, less industrial trouble here than in some other parts of the Commonwealth.

Quite a lot of industrial unrest could be avoided in this State if the Employers' Federation adopted a more realistic approach to some of the problems that crop up in industry from time to time. I have a personal knowledge of this subject and can say that on quite a few occasions the federation has adopted deliberately obstructive tactics. On one occasion on the Goldfields a certain proposal was put before the representatives of the employers—the Chamber of Mines—by the mining

division of the A.W.U. and an agreement had been reached when, much to our surprise, a representative of the Employers' Federation intervened and tried to compel the Chamber of Mines to drop the proposal.

Hon. D. Brand: Has the Trades Hall ever interfered with the decision of a union?

Mr. MOIR: Never, to my knowledge.

Hon. D. Brand: It would not bear looking into.

Mr. MOIR: I assure the hon. member that as far as my industrial experience goes—and I have had quite a few years of it—I cannot recall any interference by the Trades Hall with a union. I can imagine how such interference would be received by the union with which I am associated. In the instance I am referring to, a leading official of the Employers' Federation came to Kalgoorlie and tried to bring pressure to bear on the Chamber of Mines not to grant a proposal of the union. A conference took place at the union office, and when the parties were on the point of reaching an agreement, the representative of the Employers' Federation told an official of the Chamber of Mines that he could not do what was contemplated as it would have repercussions in other industries. The official of the Chamber of Mines told him quite bluntly in front of us that he did not care what the federation thought, he was going to agree to it and that the federation should look after its own affairs. I give that as an instance of the tactics of the Employers' Federation.

Hon. D. Brand: What was the proposal?

Mr. MOIR: It was quite a simple proposal concerning sick leave. At the time the award provided for five days sick leave a year, which terminated on the 31st December. This meant that if a worker had taken no sick leave during the year, he lost his entitlement to it when the 31st December arrived. The proposal was that the sick leave should accumulate for three years—a reasonable proposal that was agreed to by the employers and is operating now. This goes a long way towards promoting industrial harmony in that industry.

Hon. D. Brand: Do not you think that sick leave was originally instituted with the intention that a man should take it straightaway and not accumulate it?

Mr. MOIR: The hon. member has entirely missed the point. The position was that if a man had not had sick leave during the year, his entitlement to it expired on the 31st December, and he started the new year with no entitlement until he had worked a certain length of time and then qualified for his first sick leave. Under the present arrangement he goes into the

second year with five days behind him so that if in December of the following year he is taken ill and is off for ten days, he is paid ten days' sick leave. If he takes no sick leave in that year he carries ten days into the third year so that towards the end of that year he has 15 days accumulated. At the 31st December of the third year, he drops off one year's sick leave, or five days, and goes into the following year with ten days. The workers appreciate that they have an insurance if they become ill.

Hon. L. Thorn: If a worker is never sick, does he cut out his sick leave?

Mr. MOIR: No. The qualifications for sick leave are that the worker must be sick and lose time as a result. The Employers' Federation does not do what it should to promote harmony. I have had experience, and I know other union officials have, too, of the delays that occur in arriving at decisions on proposals put to the employers. Sometimes the cases drag on for months and, of course, the workers become restive.

With regard to the welfare of the workers, they owe the conditions and rates of pay that they have to the activities of the officials of their unions through the cases that are prepared and placed before the courts. The decisions given by the courts are not always acceptable, but generally they are accepted. In the main the employers' attitude is to get as much as they can for as little as they can possibly pay. I say in the main, because there is the exceptional employer who will give a man a decent reward to encourage him to give decent service.

Hon. D. Brand: Is not there the tendency in certain cases to give as little as you can for as much as you can get?

Mr. MOIR: That probably operates in all walks of life. I think it would apply greatly to some of the traders in this State and in the Commonwealth.

Hon. D. Brand: I was only making the point that it was a very natural tendency and did not apply to only one section.

Mr. MOIR: There are exceptions, of course, but generally the Australian workman compares very favourably with workmen anywhere in the world as far as the giving of effort is concerned and with respect to workmanship. The member for Greenough, having been associated with the mining industry for some little time, would know that it has a work force that is without parallel in the Commonwealth.

Hon. D. Brand: I agree.

Mr. MOIR: We could not find fault with the return those workers give. One has only to look at the increased production over the years to realise that. Where the employer has made himself efficient and given the workmen the tools necessary to

do the job, they have produced the results. We hear a lot from various people and from members on the other side criticising the workers in this State and attributing many of our losses to the fact that the workers do not produce enough.

In certain industries, of course, there is not sufficient production, but it is not the fault of the worker but of the people conducting the operations and trying to carry on with inefficient machinery and methods. That is an old story, and it still applies today. The hon. member will know of certain industries to which that applies. Where we have inefficient methods, not only can the worker not give the best production figures, but the article becomes more costly than it should be, and that cost is passed on to other industries, the primary producer and the consumer. Therefore we have a chain reaction from it.

Mr. Court: Would you say the general attitude of the trade unions in Western Australia today is in favour of greatly increased mechanisation?

Mr. MOIR: If I understand the question aright, it is this: Would the workers be in favour—

Mr. Court: I did say, the trade union movement. Would it be in favour of greatly increased mechanisation?

Mr. MOIR: In the mining industry we have for years advocated increased mechanisation. I could never see the sense of giving a man a shovel, placing him in front of thousands of tons of ore and telling him to bog it out and on to a truck with the shovel and then push the truck some long distance to get to the place where it is hauled up the shaft. The union officials and members, generally, were very loud in their advocacy and pointed out in their arguments when they met the employers in conference that they, the employers, should increase efficiency.

At one time in the goldmining industry the companies, when they found themselves in trouble, used to do like a lot of other people—the first thing that occurred to them was a subsidy from the Government. That sort of thing is widespread throughout the country; there is too much of it. As soon as people find they are up against a problem, they say "Let us get a subsidy from the Government;" and they are the very same people who hold up their hands in horror at the mention of socialism! They think it is a terrible thing, but they are not averse to it when they think it will put some money in their pockets. So, instead of increasing their efficiency and getting down to the root cause of why their industry or project is not doing as well as it should, they apply to the Government for a handout. The goldmining industry did the same thing.

I remember a conference in Kalgoorlie which was attended by union officials and at which we were asked to join with the

employers—the mining companies—in an approach to the Commonwealth Government to ask for a subsidy on gold, but we refused to do so. In effect we said to them, "Examine your industry and do something to make it more efficient. If the industry still requires assistance when you have cut out your inefficient methods, we will give you support, but we will not be a party to assisting you to put your hands into the pockets of the taxpayers of the country," because that was what they were trying to do. They received no assistance and had to get down to more efficient methods of working or go out of business.

Hon. D. Brand: In what year was that?

Mr. MOIR: About 1947. A great change came over the goldmining industry and we saw efficient methods being adopted, together with the complete reorganisation of some mines, greatly increased mechanisation and the installation of more efficient machinery. The result of the change that has taken place in the industry is that the large producing companies which were previously struggling are now paying bigger dividends than ever before.

The Minister for Mines: The introduction of the tungsten-carbide tipped steel has had a great effect, too.

Mr. MOIR: That is so. What I have said about the goldmining industry could be applied, generally speaking, to many other industries. We hear on all sides a cry as to what is to happen to the dairy farmer and butter producer, yet among them we know there are some who are carrying on their operations in a most inefficient manner. Though this may not always be their own fault, as they may lack the wherewithal to be efficient, again we have the cry for subsidies.

I understand that the Commonwealth subsidy to the dairying industry of Australia was £19,000,000 last year. The efficient producers are taking advantage of their portion of that subsidy, but it is my belief that when a subsidy is given to an industry such as this, the assistance should be applied where it is required and should not be available to those who are already able to produce efficiently. Some of our butter producers are struggling to develop their properties against almost hopeless odds, and the improvement of pastures, the clearing of further land and so on, present a great problem.

Mr. Hearman: Whose job is it to sort that out?

Mr. MOIR: The member for Blackwood can tell us about it when he speaks. On the 13th August there appeared in "The West Australian" a paragraph under the heading of "Expert Says 'Don't Blame the Worker.'" It reads as follows:—

Bluff, burly American, Jack O'Neil, the man who built the £20,000,000 Altona oil refinery ahead of schedule,

told master builders frankly today that they were "not spending much to get much" from Australian workmen.

Mr. O'Neil, addressing members of the building industry congress, said he began his career with a pick and shovel.

"When we started the Altona project, one American could do what it took four Australian ironworkers to manage," he said.

"But the Australian workman is not the culprit for the high cost of construction in Australia.

"You might not have supplied him efficiently with tools, or you don't adequately supervise him, or you are not giving him the materials he requires. And certainly look at the designs and drawings you give him to work from.

"Since we began the Altona project wage rates have risen by 25 per cent., yet the Australian workers' efficiency has improved so much that the overall cost to the employer is lower.

"You might not be getting as much efficiency from the Australian as the American worker but you are not spending much to get much."

Mr. O'Brien: It takes the O'Neils and the O'Briens to show them.

Mr. MOIR: I think the paragraph I have read out is very illuminating, because Mr. O'Neil is not telling us anything new. He is simply emphasising what a lot of us have known for a long time—that it is not the worker to whom we must look for increased efficiency, but the people who conduct the business and those who set out the work for him. There is also the point that the employers are not spending much to get much, and that brings me back to the interjection of the member for Greenough, who asked did I not agree that there are a lot of people who try to give as little as possible for as much as they can get. A lot of employers give as little for as much as they can possibly get.

Hon. L. Thorn: That applies in reverse, also.

Mr. MOIR: The Arbitration Court lays down the minimum standards, but the majority of employers look upon them as the maximum standards and say, "We are not forced to pay more than that, so that is all we will pay."

Mr. Court: It is not fair to say that about the majority of them.

Mr. MOIR: I say without hesitation that it applies to the majority of employers. I know there are some to whom it does not apply, and I am always pleased when they adopt that attitude. That is the policy of the employers on the Goldfields and it repays them handsomely. Although some workers in the goldmining

industry earn very good wages, the employer is happy to pay them because he knows he gets a good return for it, but unfortunately there are other employers who abide by the letter of the law and will not pay one penny more than they are forced to pay.

In fact, there are some employers who, if they are not watched closely, will pay less than the law lays down, and the unions, from time to time, have to take up cases on behalf of workers to compel employers to pay the prescribed rates. That happens almost every day. We have a type of person, as was illustrated by the remarks of the member for Dale, who seems to think, when he sees a working man with a fiver in his hand, that he must be getting too much money and is obviously overpaid. There is too much of that attitude and the employers in this country ought to be pleased to pay decent wages and give an adequate reward to the worker, because of the effect that has on the economy of the State.

When there is full employment and plenty of money circulating among workers they do not put all of it in a hole in the ground. It is spent with the business people of the community; and when the worker is prosperous, the business community is prosperous too. We had an illustration of that during the depression when thousands of people in this State did not have the wherewithal to buy the necessities of life. There was an immediate reaction among the trading community because they could not sell their goods, and business became almost stagnant.

Mr. Brady: It is getting that way now.

Hon. L. Thorn: Lots of employers today are having great trouble in providing parking space for the employees' motorcars. You will find that at Midland Junction and many other places.

Mr. MOIR: That was a most profound interjection! I cannot see anything wrong with a workman owning a motorcar. Why should not he be permitted to own a motorcar?

Hon. L. Thorn: I cannot see anything wrong with it either.

Mr. MOIR: Why should it be the prerogative of the friends of members opposite?

Hon. L. Thorn: If it were not for s.p. betting, they would all own motorcars.

Mr. Brady: If it were not for the big returns to Holden shareholders, they might, too.

Hon. D. Brand: Possibly they are Holden shareholders.

Mr. MOIR: Members opposite think that the worker should be kept down. Do not let him have anything at all!

Hon. D. Brand: Do not talk rubbish!

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: That is just what you preach—hatred.

Mr. MOIR: We know the position in this House when Bills aimed at improving the lot of workers are introduced. We know the opposition that there is to them, especially when we have measures to increase the payments to injured workers under the Workers' Compensation Act. We have to fight tooth and nail, not to get a Bill through, but merely to have a few crumbs thrown to us when we meet in conference.

Hon. L. Thorn: No.

Mr. MOIR: We have a conference of managers and we have to accept what they throw to us.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You are referring to yourself. They are the crumbs you throw to yourself.

Mr. MOIR: The member for Mt. Lawley knows all about it because he has been a member of these conferences and he knows how tough his colleagues are.

The Minister for Railways: He knows something about Holdens, too.

Hon. L. Thorn: He knows all about workers' compensation Bills because he brought down several measures to improve the lot of workers.

Mr. MOIR: It is time we had a change of heart among some people and a realisation that workers are like everyone else. They give of their best when they are receiving an incentive and when they are getting what they feel is a just and due reward. Nobody gives of his best when he feels that he is being deprived of something to which he is entitled.

Hon. L. Thorn: I agree with you that that is only human nature.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: The same applies in reverse.

Hon. D. Brand: Yes.

Mr. MOIR: We must realise that the worker is in an entirely different category to other people in this community. After all, if the worker wants an increase in wages he has to go to a tribunal—in this case, the Arbitration Court. His representatives have to put up a solid case and prove beyond all doubt that the workers are entitled to an increase; then, and only then, is the increase granted. Other sections of the community are not confronted with that necessity. If they think that they are entitled to a higher reward, they increase the prices of their goods. It is as simple as that.

Hon. L. Thorn: There are plenty of consent awards.

Mr. MOIR: For some considerable time the wages of workers in this State have been pegged and we have had the spectacle of other sections of the community having an open go and charging exactly what they like for their commodities.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Of course, a good many workers do that too, and rightly so.

Mr. MOIR: I would not think so.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Yes, you would.

Mr. MOIR: I do not think the hon. member would know because he would not associate with workers.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I associate with them.

Mr. MOIR: The hon. member would not associate with them.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I associate with them as much as you do.

Mr. MOIR: That is a funny one!

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: It is not funny at all.

Mr. MOIR: Can the hon. member imagine what tribunal some of these company managers, and deputy managers appear before to get an increase in salary.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: What tribunal do you appear before to get an increase in salary?

Mr. MOIR: I am not a worker.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: That is all right. Now we know!

Hon. D. Brand: He will have to get "Hansard" to erase that.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: The hon. member and I belong to the same union.

Mr. MOIR: Members opposite seem to be getting a little upset and apparently the truth hurts. I have pointed out that one section of the community is bound by rigid laws so far as the money it shall receive is concerned, and the other side, which comprises the other section of the community, is allowed to follow Rafferty's rules regarding its reward.

Mr. Manning: Under what section is the primary producer placed?

Mr. MOIR: I think he might be in between. We know that the primary producer does not lag behind in asking the Commonwealth Government for protection and, of course, he receives it.

Mr. Manning: What protection?

Hon. D. Brand: That would include the Minister for Works, too.

Mr. Hearman: Workers in industry get protection too.

Mr. MOIR: I do not know whether I, or members opposite, am making the speech.

Hon. L. Thorn: You are drawing the crabs.

Mr. MOIR: Evidently members opposite do not like these facts being placed before them.

Hon. D. Brand: Facts, question mark!

Mr. Hearman: I think Sir Ross McLarty's speech upset the Government.

Mr. MOIR: Now I want to touch on the question of mining leases. Many people are concerned about the fact that certain mining leases are held under exemption, and have been for some considerable time. Like many of these people, I think that those who hold the leases should be forced to do something with them. I refer particularly to a lease at Porphry, which is on the north-east side of Kalgoolie. It is a low grade proposition but could be worked economically today. The company which has the lease is well equipped with all sorts of machinery and could produce within a short space of time. The owners of the company have been receiving exemption for the last eight years on the grounds of shortage of labour. A few years ago that would have been a valid reason for exemption but it is not the position today.

At present there is unemployment in the mining industry, I am sorry to say, and in the course of the next few months, due to amalgamations of various companies on the Golden Mile, men will be thrown out of work. I refer to the amalgamation that has taken place between Gold Mines of Kalgoolie, South Kalgurli, the Perseverance and the Enterprise. While in the long run it will be beneficial, its immediate effect will be that certain men will be thrown out of work. Unfortunately, the Big Bell mine closed down recently and its employees were thrown out of work, although a great proportion of them were absorbed by other mines. However, all the operating mines in the State have now their full complement of men and any retrenchments that occur on three or four mines, will mean that there will be quite a number of workers unemployed.

I think the Minister for Mines should investigate that position and seriously consider whether his department is going to continue to grant exemptions from the conditions to these mining companies on any grounds whatsoever. After all, when the Mining Act provides that certain conditions must be observed, the company concerned should abide by them within a certain time or else forfeit the lease. I thank the Government for the work it has done on the Goldfields since it has been in office.

An excellent job has been done in the erection of school buildings, the renovation of existing schools, the facilities that have been provided in the way of septic tank installations and so on. As a result of the assistance it granted to the people of Boulder, it was also instrumental in bringing to fruition the establishment of an infant health centre in that town. The Government has also granted large amounts of money to improve the Goldfields water supply scheme. I am pleased to mention that last summer was the first we have experienced on the Goldfields for several years without being subjected to

water restrictions. This relief was greatly appreciated by Goldfields residents because nothing is more disheartening than to establish a garden or a lawn and then to see it wither and die as a result of water restrictions during the summer.

Therefore, I am sure that those people will support me when I express my gratitude to the Government. At present there is a 25,000,000 gallon reservoir under construction which will be filled before next summer, and this will mean that there will be no further talk of water restrictions on the Goldfields for many years to come, unless, of course, there is a major breakdown on the pipeline and the water is cut off for some period whilst it is under repair. There is no doubt that the Government deserves every commendation for the work it has done on the Goldfields on the erection of school buildings, improvements to public buildings generally and on many other public works.

Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.5 p.m.

MR. MANNING (Harvey) [4.5]: I desire to touch on one or two matters briefly. Firstly, I refer to the passing of the late Hon. Charles Henning who, for the past four years, represented the South-West Province in the Legislative Council. Although his parliamentary career was a short one, he proved to be a very able member and his passing is very much regretted in the South-West Province, and, in particular, in the electorate of Harvey. I would also like to express my regret at the passing of the late Hon. Bob Boylen, whom I came to know very well.

The next matter I wish to refer to is the indication by the Minister for Fisheries that his department has in mind the establishment of a fauna reserve in an area stretching from Goegrup Lake to south of Lake Preston. There are some 50 square miles of country covered by that area and it includes many thousands of acres of private property. If it is the proposal of the Government to establish a national park there, it would involve costly resumptions and the tying up of much good agricultural land. That area includes a number of self-contained farms. In the main the country is regarded as coastal runs for farmers from the clay areas, which are near the railway line and the South-West Highway. The country involved is better known as the Coastal-rd. area.

The Main Roads Department has in mind the resumption of land a chain in width on either side of the Coastal-rd. with a view to establishing a major highway. The country is in course of very rapid development through the use of new fertilisers and mineral elements. It is made to grow clover. At this time of the year in particular many hundreds of head of cattle run on that coastal strip. The Government and the Minister for Fisheries should

examine this country very closely before reaching any decision to turn it into a national park.

It is the opinion of some people that such a national park would be a breeding ground for vermin. It is very nice to establish a national park in reasonable proximity to the metropolitan area, but I would point out that in the upper South-West, which covers the country between Dard-anup and Mundijong, there are some 800,000 acres of State forest. Quite possibly this land could be set aside as a fauna protection area or a national park. Very few people at present enter that area. It is under the control and supervision of forestry officers who are also fauna protection wardens. That is one angle which the Department of Fisheries and the Minister could examine closely. It would be far better to use the State forest for the dual purpose than to tie up agricultural land that must inevitably be needed for cattle-raising and market gardening because it is the same type of land as the strip from Spearwood right through to Australind.

Another point I wish to raise is the repeated plea of lack of finance for essential requirements. I have previously touched on this subject when speaking here and expressed concern at the lack of finance available to the Public Health Department. The Harvey District Hospital is urgently in need of buildings. The staff quarters have been condemned by the health inspector. Some three years ago plans for a new building were approved, but the department and the Minister continually tell us that they have not the money to enable them to go ahead and provide those buildings.

This indicates that the Treasurer is starving the department for finance, and the sooner that is rectified, the better it will be. The hospital is overcrowded. If we are going to be told continually that the department has not the money to go ahead with new buildings, I suggest to the Treasurer that he should closely scrutinise the money allotted to the department with a view to increasing the Estimates. Much consideration is given to the housing problems of the general community, and it is very necessary that the housing of the nursing staffs at country hospitals should be considered for priority.

The policy of the Transport Board is often criticised. In my opinion, more of the cases that are presented to the board should be considered on their merits. I should like to mention the instance of a stone-mason who wished to transport by road to Bunbury marble that had been imported from Italy, former consignments of which, on many occasions, had suffered considerable damage when transported by rail. Repeated representations have been made to the

Transport Board for permission to cart this material by road but on each occasion it has been refused. This is a case that should be considered on its merits, and road cartage should be approved so that this costly material might be taken by road and receive the careful handling it requires. So far as I can judge it is almost impossible for the Railway Department to handle it successfully. Any further comments I have to make I shall reserve until the Estimates are under discussion.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland) [4.15]: I wish to touch upon a number of matters mentioned in the Governor's opening Speech. First of all His Excellency spoke of the fact that as a result of the conference of world leaders held recently at Geneva, international tension had eased and the outlook for world peace was much brighter. Doubtless we are all looking forward to results from this meeting of the Powers because for most nations it presents hope of a brighter future in the international sphere.

If the various nations can reduce their expenditure on armaments and defence from many millions of pounds down to a few millions, it will permit of much more money being spent for the furtherance of production and the provision of other requirements, thus making life better for everybody. I feel that Australia and particularly Western Australia could do with additional spending power rather than have money spent on defence. We all hope that the outcome of the conference will prove beneficial and permit of peace reigning for many years.

Another matter mentioned in the Speech was the fact that nearly 100,000 migrants have arrived in Western Australia since July, 1947. That is a colossal number of people to be received into this young State in a matter of about seven years. It postulates that in a few years' time the responsibilities of government will be tremendously increased in order to provide essential services such as hospitals, schools, etc., and will prove to be a very great drain on the Government's resources. From the Commonwealth point of view it would appear that in 10 or 15 years' time, the claims on social services will be tremendous.

While it is encouraging for a State to receive such a large number of people from overseas, we must also bear in mind that we, as members of Parliament, as well as the Government, will be faced with many big problems and be called upon to shoulder greater responsibilities. I hope that there will be a bit of looking forward to devise ways whereby essential services such as hospitals and schools may be provided or some way of overcoming the need for hospitals, at any rate. I do not intend to go into details as to hospitals because the Government and its officials

are quite capable of judging what should be done. It may be that preventive medicine and improved pharmaceutical practice and such-like activities may lead to an appreciable reduction in the number of patients that will need hospital treatment.

It may be that children, instead of receiving a general all-round education until they reach the age of 16 or 17, could be given such education up to the age of 14 and then trained along specialist lines. In other words, a boy or girl could start training as a specialist from the age of 16 instead of leaving school at 18 and then going on to the University. I mention this because everyone recognises that specialisation is one of the main needs of the modern world. Thus it seems that we shall have to do a great deal of forward thinking.

The Speech also referred to the fact that the Government, together with all concerned in the coal industry, is giving earnest attention to the problem of meeting competition from other fuels in order to ensure the best economic use of our coal deposits. When he referred to other fuels, I recalled that the members who attended the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association meeting in South Africa last year were treated to a pre-view of a factory designed to manufacture oil fuel. In the book "South Africa, 1954," issued to those representatives, the following appears:—

Uranium and oil fuel: Two outstanding events between 1951 and 1954 are likely to give an even greater impetus to all forms of mining enterprise in South Africa within the present generation. One is the commencement of uranium extraction already mentioned; the other the establishment of a great factory for the production of oil fuel from vast deposits of low-grade coal on the Vaal River. Now known by the term "Sasol," the scheme was launched with the co-operation of the Government through the Industrial Development Corporation of S.A. Ltd. When the plant, which will cost well beyond £20,000,000, is in full operation, it will also be an important source of currency saving as it will eliminate the need for South Africa to spend about £5,000,000 annually for the importation of natural oil. It is reckoned to take about another year to complete the scheme—

That is to say, it will have been about completed by now.

and it is hoped to produce up to 60 million gallons of petrol and 6½ million gallons of diesel and fuel oil a year.

If South Africa can convert its low-grade coal into oil fuel, it may be that the Government, through the Minister for Mines,

could consider the idea of having a pilot or test plant erected at Collie with a view to producing similar fuel from our coal.

This Excellency, when opening Parliament, also referred to the fact that the Government was building homes for natives who were now occupying them. At Eden Hill, in my electorate, two or three native families have entered into possession of these new homes, and, to all intents and purposes, they have been accepted into the community as if they were white citizens. As far as I know, there has been no undesirable reaction as a consequence of their taking possession of the homes. I have visited them on two or three occasions and they have met me at the front door just as white people would meet me. The children go to the school in the district. These people pay their rent and have their gardens, and they appear to be leading normal lives like the white citizens.

I hope the Minister will continue to help these unfortunate people. I am not unmindful of the fact that they cannot become civilised as we are, overnight. It may take one or two generations before that is achieved, but this is a start. They have a roof over their heads and the young people are given some inside information as to what it is like to live under a decent roof. The Government is to be congratulated upon its good work in this respect.

Furthermore, I was pleased to read in His Excellency's Speech that railway passenger and freight train time schedules have been considerably reduced by the introduction of diesel locomotives and railcars. The faster and more frequent services have resulted in increased suburban patronage. This is good news to me because members will recollect that over a number of years I have advocated the stepping up of the suburban service from an hourly service to at least a 20-minute or quarter-hour service.

We are approaching the stage now when we can, about every 20 minutes, catch a train to travel in the eastern section of the suburban area, and even more frequently to Fremantle. This means that people are looking to railway transport rather than road transport to take them to the city. The community will gain many advantages from this because the railways will get more of the natural revenue that should go to them rather than to the road transport organisations that have been established, and we will be saved the need to import overseas vehicles and fuels because we will be able to use locally built passenger cars and steam engines as well as local fuel. The Minister for Railways and the Railways Commission are to be complimented.

I believe that a lot of the congestion in the metropolitan area and on the suburban roads is unnecessary and would not be

evident if the people would only support the natural transport to the city which is that provided by the railways rather than by road transport. Since the improved railway service has taken place, I have had many approaches made to me, by people in the outer suburbs, for new sidings. I can recollect four different places where I have been told new sidings should be established, because it is considered that there is sufficient patronage for them.

One of these places is the marshalling yards near Midvale between Bellevue and Midland Junction. I would say the potential passenger traffic there is about 500 fares a day. The marshalling yards are the centre for all railway employees working there; for all ordnance employees working in the Defence Department; for all the employees working in the abattoirs; for the 300 or 400 people living at Midvale and for those living near Bellevue. A new siding could be put in at the marshalling yards with great advantage to the railways as well as to the residents in that area.

Another site mentioned to me is near Swan-rd., at Bassendean, close to where the new Children's Home is established just this side of the Guildford railway bridge. A petition has been taken up in regard to this site. Another place is between Guildford and East Guildford near the premises of Douglas Jones and the flour mill. I hope that in due course the Railway Department will see its way clear to building new sidings in these areas because I feel that they would pay for themselves in a short time.

I was pleased to read in His Excellency's Speech that the Government, through the Minister, is about to introduce a Bill with a view to maintaining the Swan River in a clean and healthy condition. The introduction of such a measure is long overdue. The Labour Government of 1955 will be entitled to be given the fullest possible credit if the Bill becomes an Act. It may be that there will be slight disabilities if a small rate is raised under this measure to pay for certain of the activities of the board, if one is required, but I feel that some of the board's activities, which will be many and varied, could be of a revenue-producing nature and that ultimately the board would pay for itself even though in the initial stages it required a rate to enable it to be established.

Some of the matters with which such a board, if established, could deal, would be soil erosion along the Swan River, the reclamation of areas to enable industrial establishments to be set up, the compiling of correct and permanent records of soundings of the river, the removal of weeds from the river, the location of shallows and the making of permanent records of them and of their movements from year to year in flood time, the removal of algae, the general planning ahead for

river activities and investigations of the effect that the Narrows bridge will have on upriver flooding—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: And the matter of depositing sewage in the river.

Mr. BRADY: It is well known that two factories are at present depositing a lot of water in the river, allegedly from their cooling plants—but I think more than water is going into the river.

Hon. D. Brand: What firms are they?

Mr. BRADY: I have mentioned them so often in this House that I do not wish to name them again as it might appear that I had some prejudice against them. In the vicinity of Belmont oil is being flushed into the river at night and I was asked to bring the matter to the notice of the Swan River conservation committee. The person who told me about it said that it occurred only at night, which would seem to indicate that the aerodrome or some motor firm in the vicinity was taking the opportunity of flushing an oil sump into the river at night.

There is also the matter of reclaiming river sand for building drainage pipes, cement bricks, and so on, and that could be a source of revenue for the board. The board would also naturally give consideration to recreation facilities such as swimming, boating, fishing, etc., and their encouragement. It is well known that 30 years ago the "Val" boats which run between South Perth and Perth used to go as far up the river as the Middle Swan bridge, with passengers, but today they could not get past Maylands, which indicates the tremendous amount of silting that has taken place and the many hundreds of snags that come down.

In February I had an opportunity of going up the river two miles beyond the Swan Boys' Home and there I saw across the river a tree with a girth of about 8ft. It would be of ultimate benefit to the metropolitan area and even to the viticultural industry—which the member for Toodyay represents—if the river were cleaned up. I saw millions of gallons of water pouring into the river in February, together with many tons of rich topsoil, and I am sure that is having a bad effect on the vineyards and pastures between Midland Junction and Northam. All these matters could be given consideration by the board, if appointed, with benefit to the State.

His Excellency's Speech made reference to the considerable development that has taken place in technical education. Mention was made of the fact that a heavy metal trades school is in the course of erection at Wembley, but I do not think sufficient is being done in relation to the metal trades at the Midland Junction Technical School. Admittedly, for the last five years there has been a shortage of accommodation in this regard, but the

time is overdue for extending the metal trades instruction at Midland Junction. I hope that when the high school is opened next year or the year after, there will be greater opportunities for technical education at Midland Junction. I am convinced that another 400 or 500 children could be instructed at the technical school if the facilities were available, thus saving them the journey to Perth.

The member for Nedlands dealt recently with the matter of profits and the activities of General Motors Holdens Ltd. He made some accusations and I think he was carried away by his enthusiasm, because he made some references that were not justified, and on occasions he was quite off the beam. In "The West Australian" the other morning the hon. member was reported as having made reference to supporters of the Government making extravagant and malicious statements and scathing attacks on free enterprise. During this session I have heard no member on this side make any scathing or malicious attack on free enterprise or even on General Motors Holdens.

At the opening of Parliament I did ask a question as to whether the Premier would give consideration to trying to get the products of that firm sold cheaper in this State, but that was not a malicious attack on free enterprise. I will now quote from remarks that appeared in relation to General Motors Holdens in a non-Labour paper, as I think they give food for thought. The journal I refer to is "The Financial Review," of the 4th August and I do not think that by any stretch of imagination could it be deemed a Labour paper. I think it is a publication which would take up a middle of the road position in this regard. Under the heading of "Provocative Profits," it said—

Perhaps the impartial thing to say about the \$9.9 million profit by General Motors Holdens Ltd. is that it is controversial. It represents an earning rate of 560 per cent. on the issue of ordinary capital and has provided a dividend of 260 per cent. to the American parent company.

Here I would say that I have strained my eyes trying to find any other company engaged in Australian industrial or commercial activities which got anywhere near that return on the amount of capital invested.

Mr. Court: It is to comments like those that I took exception the other night, because they are not fairly related.

Mr. BRADY: If the hon. member will wait until the article is finished I think he will see how off the beam he is. It goes on—

The 1954 accounts of this giant enterprise have, in fact, provoked an inevitable response from official Labour. The Leader of the Federal

Opposition, Dr. H. V. Evatt, says it is a fair question whether such a "gigantic" profit is excessive and one of the major factors contributing to cost inflation.

If the member for Nedlands would care to go to the trouble to do a little research, he would find that a Labour Government actually encouraged this industry into Australia and had a good deal to do with its establishment. This article continues—

Whether such sentiments are echoed among the company's 13,000 employees is an interesting speculation. Their average earnings last year were £981, or a fraction under £19 a week, compared with a fraction under £16 a week for all the male wage-earners of Australia.

It would also be pertinent for the company to point out that in 10 years it has handed over nearly £30 million to the Government in taxes and Customs duties and has paid £193.6 million to a host of suppliers.

A long-term assessment will also give due weight to the company's reminder that the American-held equity capital got no dividend at all for five of the last 10 years.

A short-term view, and particularly a critical one, may question the wisdom of abandoning that moderation in the last two years to the tune of dividends totalling 360 per cent.

Having regard to the comments of the member for Nedlands, this is the important aspect—

For these years have covered in Australia a period of unprecedented wage restraint, of struggle against rising costs, and towards the end, of growing exasperation over the prices of nearly everything, including motor-cars.

Mr. Court: These people reduced the prices of their products during the year.

Mr. BRADY: That was an article from a most impartial paper, and I think the last paragraph was a fitting commentary of the overall picture. I am amazed to hear Liberal Party supporters getting up in this House and justifying profits of that kind and in the same breath asking the Government to assist the dairying industry. Many people in that industry are using products of General Motors Holdens, trucks, utilities, cars and other accessories. Where does the consistency come in? If the agricultural implement makers, and the dairy machinery firms were to take the same attitude as General Motors Holdens, our primary producers would all be forced out of operation because they would not be able to carry the strain.

The Premier: Surely the hon. member does not expect the Liberals to be consistent!

Mr. BRADY: Probably they are consistent with their inconsistencies.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: The Labour Party in New South Wales is not very consistent.

Mr. BRADY: Yet Liberal members get up in this House and try to justify high profits such as those made by General Motors Holdens, and, at the same time, say that the Government ought to help the people who are forced to pay such high prices for their products. They ought to have another look at companies such as that.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: You know how to reduce the price, do you not? Reduce the tariffs.

Hon. D. Brand: Could they buy cheaper utilities anywhere else?

Hon. D. BRADY: I thought, after listening to the comments of the member for Nedlands the other evening, that the other side of the picture ought to be presented.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You have fixed him.

Mr. BRADY: There is another aspect of the overall social and economic picture in Western Australia which should be brought before members: I refer to the 1871 Superannuation (Public Servants) Act and those who are receiving pensions under that statute. I want to be restrained in my comments on this matter even though one could say harsh things about all Governments regarding the treatment they have meted out to these pensioners.

Last evening a case was presented to me in the strangers' room at Parliament House and in this regard I want to be fair to all members by saying that the same case has been presented to members of the Liberal Party, the Country Party, the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier. The deputation which waited upon me yesterday said—

It is generally admitted that the 1871 Act was conceived, compiled, accepted and passed by the Imperial Government, as an inducement to secure the services of suitable persons for administrative, specialised and general work as required throughout the Empire.

When Responsible Government was established in W.A. this Act and all the responsibilities pertaining to it were taken over by the State Government.

These responsibilities have been honoured by each successive Government right up to the present time and no doubt will continue to be honoured until the last Civil Servant to come under the jurisdiction of the Act ceases to exist.

In April, 1905, this Act by an enactment of the State Parliament ceased to apply to persons entering the

Public Service after that date, but continued to apply to all persons already in an established capacity in the service.

The Operation of the 1871 Act:

When seeking employment a young man looks to the prospects offering. One would be condemned by his fellows if he neglected to do this. Between the years 1871 and 1905 salaries throughout the Public and Civil Service were low—very low indeed. After paying ordinary living expenses one could visualise making but meagre provision for old age. There were, however, certain compensating advantages. Provided one gave good and faithful service there were security of position, chances of promotion and on retirement, deferred pay in the form of a pension. These in the aggregate were the remuneration guaranteed by Act of Parliament for services rendered. To say that that part of the remuneration viz. pensions "was not subscribed to by the employee" is a distortion of fact. It is a very definite part of his remuneration solemnly assured and contracted for by the compilers of the Act, in return for good and faithful services rendered. To say that these pensions were not subscribed to by the recipients of them is implying that they, the recipients, are getting something for nothing, a most unworthy and unfair assumption. There can be no doubt that these pensions were definitely a part of the remuneration—a deferred addition to the comparatively small salaries the positions carried, say, towards the end of the last century when even high officers such as inspectors of schools received salaries round about £300 per annum.

Interpretation of the Act:

It is readily admitted that since 1871 each successive Government has strictly administered the Act according to the letter and has paid to those fortunate enough to reach the retiring age the pensions prescribed. During the last decade, as everyone is aware, there has been a tremendous economic upheaval—wages, salaries, prices and costs of living generally have spiralled tremendously. Those on fixed incomes are amongst the most acute sufferers and these include pensioners under the 1871 Act. Justice induces the question—"Should this 1871 Act under the extraordinary economic conditions ruling today be interpreted according to the letter or according to the spirit of the Act? What was the intention of the Government in compiling and passing this Act?

In effect the Government, through this Act, said to certain of its servants—"Give good and faithful service—qualify yourselves for higher positions and your reward will be

higher salaries while employed and a pension on retirement commensurate with the standard of living you have justly earned." No one with a sense of justice will deny that this was the intention of the Government when passing the 1871 Act and they, the Government, as well as most people, recognised the basic wage as the standard measurement, for the standard of living. It was not L.S.D. alone that was in their minds. It was standards of living.

If the Act, under today's inflationary conditions, is interpreted and applied according to the letter, then the intention or spirit of the Act is being defeated and a great injustice is being done particularly to those whose pensions were assessed before this inflationary spiral began its giddy ascent about 1945.

To emphasise the position, let one actual case be stated. What applies to this case will apply to all in principle. Take the case of a man, high up in his profession, who retired in 1946 and note how his standard of living which he honestly and industriously earned has been reduced below the basic wage standard.

At this stage I interpolate to say to members that I want them to consider what has happened to a man who retired in 1946 on a pension and the shocking position he is in today. Continuing with my notes, I would summarise by saying that at that time his pension was approximately double the basic wage of £5 1s. 1d. With the inflationary spiral through the years of 1949, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955 the difference between the pension and the basic wage has gradually diminished until today the pensioner whose case I have just outlined receives £11 13s. 10d. per week when the basic wage was £12 6s. 6d. a week and now it has been further increased by 5s. 11d., making a round total of £12 12s. per week.

Yet, when this pensioner retired in 1946 the amount he was receiving as a pension was approximately double the basic wage. It must be brought home to members of this Chamber the great injustice that has been done to such people who, in all sincerity, were assured, when they joined the Public Service 40 or 50 years ago, that they would get an adequate pension. Continuing to quote from my notes—

From a study of this scale it will be observed that in 1946 when the economic position was about normal and had been comparatively stable from the passing of the 1871 Act until the year 1945 or 1946, the pensioner's weekly income was just over twice the basic wage and that from 1951 his pension began to fall rapidly below the basic wage. Thus was his standard of living, earned by him and

promised through legislation, halved and even brought below the basic wage standard of living—the lowest standard recognised by the Arbitration Court.

During the period under review the basic wage rose from £5 1s. 1d. to £12 6s. 6d. This represents a rise of £7 5s. 5d. to meet the increased cost of living. In contrast to this increased cost of living the pensioner whose case is quoted received in 1952 an increase of £1 per week and in 1954 a further increase of 10s. per week and nothing at all over the preceding years to counter the increased cost of living. In other words, over the period under review (10 years) the increased cost of living had to be covered by 30s. as against £7 5s. 5d. added to the basic wage. His standard of living was reduced by more than half.

So, on behalf of those many people who are now on a pension granted under the provisions of the 1871 Act, I ask the Government to consider the serious position in which they are placed, having regard to the original promise that was made to them. They have supplied me with much more material, but time does not permit of my quoting it all this evening. However, as similar information has been sent to the Premier, I feel that he will give due consideration to the matter and that ultimately we will hear of the plight of these unfortunate people being substantially relieved.

After all is said and done, they are a worthy section of the community. Many of them are retired railwaymen who held responsible positions in that department and they performed excellent service in the early days of the railways which they continued during their 40 years' service. There are also many retired teachers and inspectors of the Education Department.

Mr. J. Hegney: How many would there be left today?

Mr. BRADY: There are several hundreds of them, but their numbers are gradually being diminished. It was said to me that if the whole of their superannuation payments were brought up to £7 12s. per week per person, such increases would total £109,000. We have to ask ourselves whether, with a total general and loan revenue of our own of something in the vicinity of £60,000,000, it is justice to hand back to these people £109,000 in order to supplement their existing pensions. I consider that they are entitled to a substantial portion of that increase, if not all.

There is no doubt that this matter must be faced in all seriousness. Some members of Parliament will probably have to meet a similar position within the next 10 or 15 years. Those members who will retire at the end of that period will receive a pension of £7 to £10 per week as the

case may be. They are probably visualising that pension in the terms of being approximately three-quarters of the basic wage. However, if the present inflationary spiral continues, it could be that the amount of £7 or £10 per week may not be 25 per cent. of the basic wage. Therefore, it is quite easy for members to visualise what a position they would be in if that occurred.

I consider that we must be honest with all sections of the community. What value can be placed on a Government's assurance on pensions and superannuation benefits if ultimately the face value of the pension is going to be half that amount or even less? I make this appeal for those people concerned without being difficult, and I am of the opinion that all Governments, whether they be Liberal, Labour or Country Party, could well give consideration to granting a substantial increase in the pensions paid to those recipients.

There is one other matter to which I wish to refer, but I am not sure whether I am competent to do justice to it. I believe that the Government should issue a warning to the community that there must be a tightening up of finances generally. I think it is evident, with the decline of overseas credits, with the falling off of many of our overseas sales of primary and secondary products, that there will be a tightening up of money all round. The Government, therefore, should give a lead in this matter. Luxury trade should be discouraged and abolished completely.

At present we find that the Commonwealth Government is trying to raise about £35,000,000 by public loan and is offering an interest rate of 4½ per cent. over a period of 10 or 15 years, but at the same time a number of credit organisations are offering from 6 to 6½ per cent. interest for relatively short periods. Naturally, the people will tend to invest their money with those who will give a higher rate of interest. The unfortunate feature in regard to the investment of this money, however, is that most of it is going into luxury trades. In some cases it is used for the purchase of expensive motorcars, radios and radiograms, refrigerators and so on.

During this week I was speaking to a land and estate agent and I was telling him of the difficulties I had encountered in raising money for people to try and complete their half-built homes. I was also telling him how the banks had tightened up. He said he had had the following experience in the previous hour when he had gone to collect rent in a place for which he is the agent. The lady came to the door and said she could not pay the rent because she had to pay an instalment on her radiogram. He spoke to the lady and said, "I am surprised you cannot pay the rent, when you tell me

that you have to pay an instalment on the radiogram! Surely your household payments should come before the payments on a radiogram!" The lady replied, "Well, the children wanted the radiogram, and I had to buy it on the instalment system, because that was the only way I could get it."

That is typical of how some people in Western Australia are dealing with the financial position. I read in "The West Australian" recently that there is £35,000,000 less in the hands of the community to spend at the end of July than in the previous quarter. This is having an adverse effect on trade generally. Many traders are today dispensing with employees, and, as a matter of fact, I have had more people over the age of 45—and they were all good types of people—approach me for work in the last six months, than I had had in the previous three or four years. They have comprised shop assistants, truck drivers and clerks; some have been time-payment clerks in different firms, and they are all out of employment. That would indicate to me that there is a tightening-up all round.

I feel that there should be some discouragement of firms like International Acceptance Corporation, General Credit Limited, Cox Bros. and Woolworths who are competing in the loan market against the Commonwealth. I hope the Loan Council is able to see some way of recommending to the Federal Government that there should be a tightening-up all round; that is, if justice is to be done to all the community. I went through the depression from 1929 to 1935 when at the Trades Hall at Midland Junction, and I do not wish to go through another one. Unfortunately the people who carry the burden of the day during the good times have to carry it in the bad times. It is possible that this is sometimes due to a lack of education; they may not be educated to the standard where they appreciate values as more educated people do.

May be, it is possible they have not the mental capacity to appreciate what economics in the household mean. It may be because they have family difficulties to contend with and are confronted with other financial difficulties right along the line. If there is to be another recession, I would like to see all sections of the community bear their share, rather than have people with cash investments in big firms get their huge dividends whilst the working man—whether he be a small farmer or a small businessman, a retailer, or a wage-earner—suffers unemployment or wage reductions.

In conclusion I would like to say that I hope something will be done through Government channels—either through the Loan Council's activities or through the State Government's operations, be it

through price-fixing or some other way—to try to get some form of justice. There may be a way of discouraging these time-payment firms and the luxury trades from competing with the Government. One way that may be possible is for the Government to bring in a Bill whereby these people will have no protection in the event of a financial crisis.

If they had no protection, they would not be rushing into the market and charging 12½ and 15 per cent. interest on time-payment sales. There are people in the metropolitan area who are actually advertising through the local papers and agreeing to pay 12½ and 15 per cent. on debenture money. If they are agreeing to pay that, they must be passing it on. I hope those activities will be suppressed and that something will be done through Government channels. I have much pleasure in supporting the adoption of the Address-in-reply, and I hope that the optimism expressed by His Excellency is not ill-founded.

MR. LAPHAM (North Perth) [5.51]: Over quite a number of years it has been common to read in the local newspapers, and to listen to wordy discourses as to how the inflationary spiral may be arrested. To my mind at least, those who have expounded their views have generally done so with more bias than thought. As a consequence of hearing their views, and of reading their own articles over and over again, they have, parrot-fashion, grown to believe it, in their wisdom or lack of it, as the case may be; they have come to believe that theirs is the true merit of the case.

Out of this effort one point has emerged, and it is that there is a definite cleavage and a definite divergence of view; and that irrespective of what each section says about its particular case, there does not appear to be any way of reconciling opposing views. In an endeavour to arrest this inflationary spiral, authority pegged the basic wage. As a consequence of that, the small monetary assets the average individual had at that time were soon spent in the normal activity of keeping the home together. That had an effect on business and within six months of the pegging of the basic wage, business took a downward trend.

There was a languishing in the business industry in this State; it stayed for a while but was overcome by the creation of finance and credit companies. Who introduced this free-and-easy method of hire-purchase? To my mind, hire-purchase, conducted reasonably, is an asset to the community; but hire-purchase, conducted in the manner that it has been carried on and is still being conducted throughout Australia, is an absolute curse to the community. Through these credit and finance companies hire-purchase

made available those articles which the average individual over the years has grown to consider as his right to own.

Perhaps they do have the right to own them, but I feel they should pay a fairly substantial deposit if they are procuring them on hire-purchase, or they should preferably pay cash for the articles. But under this hire-purchase scheme, a small deposit, or in some cases no deposit at all, is asked for. As a matter of fact, quite a number of organisations that work on a hire-purchase basis, have salesmen going from door to door selling articles, and the salesmen themselves put down the deposit to enable them to sell these articles because the commission they receive is greater than the deposit. As a consequence of that they earn good money. They induce many womenfolk to commit themselves to the purchase of articles which the womenfolk cannot really afford.

Mr. Court: Is this being done locally or in the Eastern States?

Mr. LAPHAM: Locally. The purchase of articles by this method is usually presented to the customer in such a way as to make him think that he is paying a fixed rate of interest for the convenience of his purchase. Actually, the interest which the customer pays has very little bearing on the amount indicated to him. On most hire-purchases the interest rate goes as high as 14 per cent., but it is represented to the average customer that he is only paying 5 per cent. This has the effect of artificially bolstering sales.

Sales of manufactured articles have reached a normal high level, and even gone beyond that level, so that industry appears to be fairly buoyant. At the same time, these sales have placed a fairly heavy burden on the economy of Australia by forcing it to shoulder the strangling influence of what is, to my mind, excessive usury. As a consequence of hire-purchase, which is merely a device for effecting sales, the pegging of the basic wage by learned judges for the purpose of arresting inflation was, to a large extent, defeated. Prices continued to rise until the court, in fairness to the average wage earner, decided that a halt should be made to the pegging of the basic wage and that the peg should be lifted.

Quite recently the basic wage was increased in Western Australia and this coincided with marginal increases. As a general application, marginal increases have not been granted for many years in this State. To my mind, this increase represented muddled thinking, because, in the first instance, if increases in margins and the basic wage were the reason, as has been generally indicated by the judges who are officials of high standing, for the inflationary spiral, is it not reasonable to assume that the recent basic wage increase will start off and help to increase the inflationary spiral?

It is not, however, my intention during this debate to delve into the question of inflation but rather do I ask members to consider what steps this House should take in an endeavour to stop inflation by reducing costs. I want to see a stabilisation of economy by eliminating, wherever possible, sources which tend to increase costs. Almost simultaneous with marginal and basic wage increases, the bus proprietors' association stated that increased fares would have to be charged the travelling public and that an approach had been made to the Transport Board to approve an increase. Yesterday's newspaper contained a report of an approach to the Transport Board for an increase of bus fares, but the Transport Board had not agreed up to that moment, but was considering the application.

Such an approach perturbs me very greatly because the fares charged today for transport are already far too high. I feel that they are strangling transport itself. Whatever justification there may be for an increase in omnibus fares under the present system of dual transport services, that is Government and private transport, there would be no justification at all for any increase if the present system were altered. As Professor Stephenson recently said when he was addressing the Perth City Council, this curious system of transport in Western Australia could not operate anywhere else except in this State and ultimately must be replaced by something else.

This is the most appropriate time when we should give consideration to altering the transport system of the State, and that brings me to the whole crux of my contribution to this debate. I feel that we should institute a metropolitan transport trust; I feel that members should apply themselves to the problem in this regard. There are a few difficulties, but not a great many. I am suggesting that such a trust be formed on a similar basis to that applying to Amalgamated Wireless of Australia. That concern operates on a 49 per cent. share from private enterprise, and a 51 per cent. share from the Government, thus giving the Government the controlling right.

Today there are extreme difficulties associated with transport in this State. Irrespective of whether members agree or disagree with private operators, whether they agree or disagree with Government transport, it must be admitted by all sections of the community that the transport system is up against difficult times because this State is rapidly developing new suburbs and those areas must be served by transport. They must be given some transport facilities, although they may not be very highly settled areas. Some might be sparsely settled, but even so I consider that the people who reside in them, and who in effect are going further away from the city, should be given some means of transport.

The formation of a trust should not present insuperable difficulties. For a start no money would be needed. Private concerns could be taken over by agreement and I do not think there would be any difficulty on that score. I have had informal discussions with quite a number of the private bus operators and I am satisfied that they would welcome a change over from the present system to one of a metropolitan transport trust. In taking over their assets, the trust would issue the bus companies with interest-bearing debentures, and the same would apply to the buses taken over from the Government Tramways Department. Some small monetary adjustment might be necessary to ensure that the Government held 51 per cent. of the shares so that it could exercise control, but I see no difficulty in arranging that. The change could be brought about over a period of time. For instance, the Metro Co. and the Scarborough Co. might be allowed to continue operating for the present, but gradually each company could be absorbed in the trust, which would then operate the vehicles over the various routes.

When new housing areas have been opened up, it has been the general experience of the private operator that, in order to serve the new community, he must purchase new vehicles. Whereas at one time a bus cost about £1,000, today the cost is £9,000, and, believe me, the capital requisite to purchase a number of these vehicles takes some finding. A lot of operators are having extreme difficulty in obtaining the finance necessary to enable them to add to their fleets for the purpose of giving a service to the people in newly-settled areas.

Apart from a private operator finding it difficult to increase his fleet or replace old buses and keep his vehicles up to a reasonable standard, he could lose a considerable amount of money when operating in a new area. He has a fairly substantial amount to pay by way of transport fees. In addition, his licensing fees payable to the police amount to £70 for a 40-passenger vehicle. Quite a number of operators paid an average of 5 per cent. for licence fees to the Transport Board, in 1953-54; the Government tramways pay 1 per cent. and the Fremantle Tramway Board $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. On top of that, there is sales tax to be paid by private operators on the vehicles they purchase, while Government and semi-governmental instrumentalities are not charged sales tax. This represents a big concession to them.

The present system is most inequitable in that it does not apply fairly to the people living in different areas. Where a private bus company operates in one area and licence fees, sales tax, replacement charges and so forth have to be met, the fares charged must of necessity be higher than those charged by Government vehicles because those vehicles do not pay

sales tax and they pay 1 per cent., instead of 6 per cent. to the Transport Board and do not have to license the vehicles with the Police Department. Consequently, they ought to be able to charge a lower fare than can the private operator. I believe that the Government vehicles do charge a lower fare, and in that event, the people who are fortunate enough to live in an area served by Government buses are getting an advantage over those who live in an area served by a private operator. I do not think that is fair and it should not be allowed to continue.

The Minister for Transport: I do not think it exists; there are standard fares.

Mr. LAPHAM: It is hardly possible to have standard fares when they are operating over different routes and mileages, though I admit that some of them cover a lot of unnecessary ground. I find that mileages are duplicated under our transport system. Quite a number of buses go from St. George's Terrace, over the hill and along King's Park rd. to Thomas-st. Among the companies operating there are the Metro Bus Co., the Emu Bus Co., the United Bus Co., as well as a Government bus. They all cover at least two miles from St. George's Terrace to Thomas-st., which is dead mileage. The same thing applies in the Scarborough area. Through Mt. Hawthorn we have the Scarborough bus, the trolley-bus, the North Beach bus and, I think, a Government bus running. I cannot see any sense in all these vehicles running over the same ground. We have no intersuburban service with our present systems. They all operate from suburb to city. The need for intersuburban travel seems to be entirely lost sight of.

Mr. Bovell: There is one intersuburban service.

Mr. LAPHAM: I am not sure whether it exists at the moment. It was operating under rather difficult circumstances.

Mr. Bovell: It runs from Inglewood to Nedlands.

The Minister for Transport: It is still operating.

Mr. LAPHAM: If it is operating successfully, it only indicates that there is a crying need for intersuburban travel.

Mr. Yates: I think it is battling.

Mr. LAPHAM: I admit that is so. If we had a transport trust, it would mean that all the vehicles would come under the direction of one controller.

Mr. Yates: Cannot the Transport Board co-ordinate them now?

Mr. LAPHAM: No, not in the way I mean, because each transport operator must have a certain number of spare vehicles for the purpose of breakdowns or if there happens to be an excessive number of travellers at various times. Therefore

from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. these buses, representing £9,000 each, are lying idle. If inter-suburban travel were inaugurated we could have another peak period between 10.30 a.m., when the womenfolk could travel from suburb to suburb, and 3.30 in the afternoon when they could return home. Unfortunately I do not think that inter-suburban travel warrants the formation of a new bus company, but it would be sufficient to assist in bringing in extra money to the companies that operate normally from suburb to city.

In addition, it would be carrying out a policy which I feel transport really should be doing, and that is giving a service to the community. For many years our transport systems have not given service. I once waited at Nedlands—admittedly this was many years ago, but I think the same position still applies—on a rainy night and buses went by, but I was not allowed to catch them. I was a little peeved about it. I understand that today these buses can stop, but there is an arrangement between them that one does not encroach on the other's preserves.

While I waited in the rain in Nedlands, private buses went by, but I had to stay until a trolley-bus came along. I do not think that was giving service to the public. What was being said to me was, "Lapham, it is not legal for you to catch another bus. You stay in the rain until the right one comes along." I think that is a foolish attitude. We should induce people to travel by giving passengers all the convenience they want. Let us not make travelling inconvenient. If we made it convenient, we would not have the number of motor-vehicles licensed that we have today.

One of the main reasons why so many vehicles are licensed is, in my opinion, because it is far cheaper and more convenient for a man to take his wife and family out in a car when visiting friends or going to a theatre than to use public transport because the fares are so high and the service at times is not regular. Another point is in regard to minimum fares. In my opinion the minimum fare is far too high. People should be induced to catch a bus, even if they want to travel only a few streets. But with the present minimum fares, they are hardly likely to catch a bus if they want to travel only a short distance. Consequently, a bus that is going along half empty, due to the high minimum fare, is losing patronage that it would get if we encouraged people to travel.

What is the prime purpose of public transport? It is to aid people to travel from one point to another. Whilst we are operating these vehicles, we may as well run them full as half empty. It costs just as much to run a half empty bus as it does to run a full one. I feel it would be far better to have a small minimum fare to induce people to use these vehicles whenever possible. I seriously recommend to

the Minister, and to members, that considerable thought be given to the formation of a metropolitan transport trust. I admit it is not easy, although I do not think the difficulties are insuperable.

The Minister for Health: What about the reaction from private enterprise?

Mr. LAPHAM: Private enterprise is in real trouble, and I think would welcome it today. I think this is a most opportune time for the Minister to make an approach because I feel sure that the suggestion that a metropolitan transport trust be established would fall on fertile ground. Everyone must agree that almost anything would be preferable to the system under which we operate today.

The member for Guildford-Midland said this afternoon that the diesel system had stepped up the railway timetable so that the railways were catering for a large number of the travelling public. This is very good, but at the same time there are bus services running parallel with the railways—railway buses at that—and this seems to me a complete waste of money and effort. It is mileage covered which has no value. I would prefer to see feeder services operating.

A bus service is run right into town from quite a number of our smaller suburbs. That does not appeal to me because whilst the people in the smaller suburbs need transport, they could easily be taken from their own locality by feeder service to a change station. For instance, at the corner of Main-st. and Scarborough Beach-rd. there could be a change station where the people living at Osborne Park could be brought, and the buses operating from the change station could pick them up and take them into Perth. There is no need for the Osborne Park bus to go all the way into Perth, half empty.

The Minister for Health: What would you do with the trolley-buses?

Mr. LAPHAM: They could operate under the same system. I believe there are spare trolley-buses today, and where we have lines laid down for them it would be a simple matter to give them the right to operate there exclusively. We do not want competition between the vehicles. They are all wasting money because of this competition. I recommend to the Government, and especially to the Treasurer, the proposition I have put forward, because it does not require any money. We have the necessary assets. We have plenty of men in Western Australia with the ability to handle this matter; and we have plenty of staff. As I said before, the time is most opportune for something to be done. The private operators would welcome the idea of some system other than the one under which they are operating today. I leave it to members to give it serious thought.

On motion by Mr. Sewell, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.39 p.m.