

obligations which the parent Act now imposes on them. In any case, even if that were desired by members, it would make an entire farce of the Bill because it has been brought forward to remedy a state of affairs which experience has shown badly needs correcting. It would also rob the rank and file of protection against militant union leaders, which the Bill seeks to give them. I will vigorously oppose the new clause if the hon. member does not decide to withdraw it.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member wish to proceed with the new clause?

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: No, I do not wish to proceed with it, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Has the hon. member leave of the Committee to withdraw the proposed new clause? There being no dissentient voice, the amendment, is by leave withdrawn.

Proposed new clause, by leave withdrawn.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

### *Third Reading.*

Bill read a third time and passed.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:  
(Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 16th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.10 a.m. (Friday).

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 4th September, 1952.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m. and read prayers.

### PRIVILEGE.

Mr. Rodoreda and Monte Bello Island Tests.

Mr. RODORED A: As you, Mr. Speaker, are the guardian of the rights and privileges of private members, I want to bring under your notice certain things that have happened in the last couple of days. I have a cutting here from "The West Australian" dated the 3rd September, 1952, and it is headed, "Sharp Attack on Atom Test Site." It goes on—

Criticism of the Government for not having objected to the use of the Monte Bello Islands as a site for atomic explosions was voiced by Mr. Rodoreda (Labour, Pilbara) in the Legislative Assembly last night.

The Press published a resume of my remarks but headlined one of the most unimportant parts of my speech—at least as far as I was concerned. I am informed that last night the Premier replied to my statement, his reply being broadcast over the radio. I did not hear the Premier's remarks because I seldom listen to broadcast news but I was informed that that was the case. Then, in this morning's Press we find an article headed, "Premier Replies on Atom Test Site." That article states—

Some of the statements made by Mr. Rodoreda (Labour, Pilbara) in regard to the selection of the Monte Bello Islands as the atomic test site were either without foundation or extremely exaggerated, the Premier (Mr. McLarty) said last night.

It is coming to a pretty pass when the Premier of this country has to descend to those tactics to refute charges made in this House.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Hear, hear!

Mr. RODOREDADA: What chance has a private member to reply to those allegations? What chance has any private member of getting his statements put over the air? He is not in the race. The remarks some members make in this Chamber are broadcast but that is only because the ABC consider those remarks to have some news value. If a private member approaches the ABC in an effort to have a statement broadcast in refutation of something that the Government, the Premier or Ministers have said in Parliament, he has no chance at all. I object to the adoption of such tactics, and if you, Mr. Speaker, have any influence with the Ministry I hope you will see that they cease. The Premier should reply in this House to any charges made here.

Mr. Brady: Hear, hear!

Mr. RODOREDADA: That is where the reply should be given. The Premier should not take advantage of his influence with the Press and his position in this State, to have statements broadcast like that. So I hope that these tactics will not be used again, and if the Premier wishes to descend to that sort of thing and he wants to play the game of politics with Rafferty's rules—boots in style—I am prepared to put on a guernsey and join in, too. I certainly hope that this complaint will bear some fruit.

The PREMIER: There is nothing improper in the statement I made and which appeared in "The West Australian" this morning. That statement was broadcast

over the radio last night and was given out in the usual way. The member for Pilbara made certain statements in this Chamber, statements which I think were calculated to bring about a certain amount of alarm and I thought that they merited an immediate reply. I did not have a chance of saying anything during the Address-in-reply debate but members will recall that the hon. member said that the passage for ships would be unsafe, that the ocean bed would be altered and made a number of other similar statements. That would naturally cause alarm.

Mr. Rodoreda: You have to prove otherwise.

The PREMIER: I think we have.

Mr. Rodoreda: You have a statement from a man who does not know any more about it than I do.

The PREMIER: That is not so. I thought it only right that the earliest opportunity should be taken to let the people of this State know the exact position.

Mr. Rodoreda: You could have spoken here yesterday.

The PREMIER: I could not. What difference does it make to the hon. member so long as his allegations have received a reply? He can come back again and I am sure, if he has anything to say, the same channels which were available to me would be open to the hon. member.

Mr. Rodoreda: You do not believe that?

The PREMIER: I certainly do believe it.

Mr. Rodoreda: I am not going to indulge in newspaper controversies. The place to do it is here.

The PREMIER: This is not something new. Over the years I have been here I have seen statements made by the Leader of the Government in reply to certain criticisms that have been levelled at the Government.

Mr. Rodoreda: But surely Parliament is the place to debate those questions.

The PREMIER: I thought this was a matter that warranted immediate attention because the public wanted to be reassured on the statement made by the hon. member.

## QUESTIONS.

### TRAFFIC.

*As to Eyesight Test in Accident Cases.*

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Is any check made of the degree of vision of persons involved in traffic accidents?

(2) If not, is it possible for a check to be made to ascertain to what degree bad eyesight contributes to accidents?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) An eye test is made if there is reason to believe that the person concerned has defective eyesight.

(2) Applicants for a driver's license have to pass an eyesight test before being issued with a license, and are required to undergo further eyesight tests if considered necessary by the Commissioner of Police at any time.

#### KALGOORLIE POWER CORPORATION.

(a) *As to Use of Coal and Effect on Employment and Mining.*

Mr. MOIR asked the Premier:

As the Minister for Housing, in replying on behalf of the Minister for Mines to questions asked by the member for Collie recently, has indicated that coal is to be supplied to the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation, and that this will mean the elimination of the supplies of firewood from the Lakewood woodline, will he inform the House—

(1) What provision this Government made, if any, to provide alternative employment for the woodline company's 500 employees, and the 40 employees of the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation who will be retrenched as a result of the change-over from wood fuel to coal?

(2) As it will be impossible for these people to be employed in industry in Kalgoorlie or Boulder, where employers have recently been reducing the number of their employees, has any arrangement been made for the housing of these workers and their families in other localities where employment may be found?

(3) Is he aware that this change-over will have serious repercussions on the production and supply of mining timber to the mines on the Golden Mile?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) The owner and operator of the power supply at Kalgoorlie is a private company which made its own decision to change over from wood to coal fuel. It is understood that no definite date of change-over has yet been fixed and until this is done no reliable information will be available as to the position of the employees referred to.

The Government has no way of providing alternative employment for large bodies of men who may be retrenched by private industry, but naturally should this occur everything possible will be done to assist them in obtaining other employment and housing.

(3) Closure of the Lakewood Woodline would affect the supply of mining timber to some extent. In the past, however, a

large proportion of such supplies has come from around Southern Cross and Norseman, and these areas will no doubt be further exploited by the users.

(b) *As to Haulage of Collie Coal Supplies.*

Mr. STYANTS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) What is the freight rate per ton mile being charged for coal hauled from Collie to Boulder for the Goldfields Power Corporation?

(2) What is the estimated cost per ton mile of same?

(3) What is the estimated tonnage that will be hauled per annum?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING replied:

(1) 1.26 pence.

(2) It is impracticable to segregate haulage costs of different commodities.

(3) Requirements are understood to be 1,100 tons per week.

#### RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Providing Skeleton Suburban Service.*

Mr. BRADY (without notice), asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) Concerning the railway service in the metropolitan area, will the Minister have inquiries made to see whether "D" class engines available in the metropolitan area cannot be immediately used to run a skeleton service?

(2) Failing "D" class engines being used, would it not be possible to use "W" class engines? I understand there are engines available, and a skeleton service could be run immediately if the department so desired.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) and (2) I will take the matter up with the Minister for Railways so that inquiries can be made.

(b) *As to Bus Fares and Workers' Trains.*

Mr. BRADY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) Is he aware the bus companies are charging fares in excess of those usually charged by Railways?

(2) Is he also aware that the non-running of workers' trains from Midland to Perth is causing workers great expense?

(3) Will he state when the Railways will be running regular services to enable workers to go to and from city employment, and thus reduce the financial strain?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Efforts are being concentrated on the return of locomotives for country services, but consideration will be given to a partial restoration of suburban services in approximately a month's time.

#### ARBITRATION COURT.

(a) *As to Dismissal of Apprentices' Examiner.*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Attorney General:

Why was Mr. H. W. Cole dismissed by the Arbitration Court from the position of workers' representative on the panel of examiners of apprentices indentured to the trade of coppersmithing, especially as he had been an apprentice examiner for eight years and was given no advice of the termination of his appointment until after it had taken effect?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

Regulation 30 (a) of the Apprenticeship Regulations places the responsibility for this appointment on the Arbitration Court, which exercised its discretion in the present instance. The information requested by the hon. member, therefore, is not available to me.

(b) *As to Reasons for Dismissal.*

Mr. GRAHAM (without notice) asked Attorney General:

Following that question, will he endeavour to obtain the information from the Arbitration Court? If I might say a few words—

The Minister for Education: You cannot make a speech on the question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can only preface his question.

Mr. GRAHAM: I was going to remark that that would be for you to judge, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Coles was a member of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, of which organisation quite a number of men were on strike. He gave full and entire satisfaction in that position, I understand, and there is a feeling that this individual has been victimised because of the activities of certain members of his organisation. For a person to be summarily dismissed and for the dismissal to take place prior to receipt of the notice, is, I suggest, a most extraordinary occurrence. Accordingly, while the Minister may not have the information available himself I ask that he endeavour to obtain an expression from the Arbitration Court. This, of course, may be entirely satisfactory. Will the Attorney General inquire from the Arbitration Court the reason for the dismissal of this man?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

The answer to the question is no. The courts of law exercise their own jurisdiction in the statements they make. It is not customary to explain the conduct of the court by way of answers to parliamentary questions.

#### PRISON SENTENCES.

*As to Comparative Lengths.*

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Chief Secretary:

Can figures be supplied to show the comparative lengths of sentences imposed by the Supreme Court during the month of June, 1952, on persons committed to prison for offences—

(a) against the person,

(b) against property;

(c) other offences?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Yes. Figures supplied hereunder.

(a) *Offences Against the Person*

Nature of Offence.	No. of Charges.	Sentence.
Indecent dealing ....	2	3 years and 2 years cumulative = 5 years in all.
" " ....	1	5 years.
" " ....	1	4 years.
Indecent Assault ....	1	9 months.

(b) *Offences Against Property*

Robbery	3	7 years, 4 years, 4 years concurrent = 7 years.
Breaking and Entering	2	18 months on each count and concurrent with above = 7 years in all.
Breaking and Entering	1	18 months.
" " " "	1	2 years.
Stealing as a Servant	1	9 months.
" " " "	1	2½ years.
" " " "	1	Released on bond of £8 and to come up for sentence when called upon.
Unlawful use of motor vehicle	1	2 years.

(c) *Other Offences*  
Nil.

#### HARBOURS.

*As to Dredging Operations, Albany.*

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Has the dredge Sir James Mitchell carried out any dredging work in connection with the Albany harbour development works?

(2) If so, what was the cost per yard of such dredging operations?

(3) If not, what was the cost per yard of dredging operations carried out by the Sir James Mitchell dredge when it was last engaged on dredging operations in some other part of the State?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Field cost, 3s. 3d. per cubic yard, which does not include amortisation charges of capital cost.

(3) Answered by (2).

### HOUSING.

*As to Assistance for Building, Geraldton and Northampton.*

Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) How many applications for assistance to build homes under the State Housing Act have been received by the commission from—

(a) Geraldton;

(b) Northampton?

(2) Have any contracts been let to build homes under this Act in Geraldton or Northampton?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Seventy-four.

(b) Nine.

(2) No contracts have yet been let, but both towns are included in the programme for this year.

### WINE AND BEER LICENSES.

*As to Number and Premises.*

Mr. SEWELL asked the Attorney General:

(1) How many Australian wine and beer licences are in existence in this State?

(2) Where are they situated?

(3) What are the names of these premises?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

(1) Two (2).

(2) Perth and Geraldton.

(3) The Alhambra Bars, corner Hay and Barrack Streets, Perth. Murchison Inn, Geraldton.

### HOSPITALS.

*As to Regional Building, Bunbury.*

Mr. GUTHRIE asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is it still the intention of the Government to erect a regional hospital in Bunbury?

(2) If the answer to No. (1) is in the affirmative, will she inform the House when a start is likely to be made on the work?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) This depends upon the availability of loan funds and cannot safely be forecast.

### FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT.

*As to Declaring "Noise" a Nuisance.*

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Labour:

Will he take the necessary steps to include "noise" as a nuisance under the Factories and Shops Act?

The MINISTER replied:

No. It is considered that it would be quite impracticable to define "noise" under the Factories and Shops Act.

### KWINANA OIL REFINERY.

*(a) As to Dredging Contracts.*

Mr. LAWRENCE asked the Premier:

(1) Is there any truth in the rumours that the deposits lodged by the tenderers for the dredging contracts at Kwinana have been returned?

(2) If so, will he make a public statement on the true position of the Kwinana oil project?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes, some have been returned.

(2) There is nothing to report at this stage beyond what is already known.

*(b) As to Return of Tenderers' Deposits.*

Mr. LAWRENCE (without notice) asked the Premier:

Were all the deposits lodged by all tenderers for the dredging project at Kwinana returned?

The PREMIER replied:

In my reply to the hon. member, I indicated that some of them had been returned.

*(c) As to Rumoured Return of all Deposits.*

Mr. LAWRENCE (without notice) asked the Premier:

Is there any truth in the rumours that all the deposits lodged by all the tenderers for the dredging contracts at Kwinana have been returned?

The PREMIER replied:

I have just told the hon. member that they have not all been returned.

*(d) As to Delay in Starting Work.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Premier:

In view of the answer given to my question yesterday regarding the Kwinana project, would I be right in assuming that the trouble is that the company is waiting to acquire the Commonwealth Government's interest before proceeding with the work?

The PREMIER replied:

I said yesterday that some difficulty had arisen between the Commonwealth Government and the Commonwealth Oil Refinery. But I also told the hon. member that I did not think it would have any effect on the project and that it would continue. I am more firmly of that opinion today than I was yesterday; that is, that the project will continue.

**CAUSEWAY, NEW.***As to Commencement of Dredging Work.*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Works:

When was dredging work commenced at the site of the new Causeway as a preliminary to the actual constructional work?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

December, 1946.

**STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION.***As to Inquiry and Charges.*

Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Will he cause an independent inquiry to be made into the administration and general ramifications of the State Electricity Commission before a loan is floated by it?

(2) Can he give particulars to what increase in—

(a) electricity charges;

(b) gas charges,

for domestic purposes would follow an increase of

(a) 5s. per week;

(b) 10s. per week  
in the State basic wage?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) No.

(2) Electricity—Increase in basic wage of—

5s. = increase of .02d. per unit.

10s. = increase of .04d. per unit.

Gas—Increase in basic wage of—

5s. = increase of .01d. per unit.

10s. = increase of .02d. per unit.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Seventh Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. BOVELL** (Vasse) [2.55]: In the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, Lieut.-General Sir Charles Gairdner, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E., His Excellency was pleased to refer to the matter of primary production. With reference to the mirth expressed by the member for East Perth in regard to the decorations I have just mentioned, and which were won by the honoured gentleman, I would say it is entirely out of place.

In his Speech His Excellency said that the expansion in primary production is becoming of increasing importance to the Australian economy and producers in this State are being encouraged to increase substantially crops of wheat, oats and tobacco and the production of meat and

dairy products. We must all agree that the basis of our sound economy is that of primary production. Over the past seven years, however, there has been, unfortunately, a grave recession in the dairying industry. In 1945, at the close of the second World War, 13,028 producers were engaged in the dairying industry and in that year they produced 9,282,761 gallons of wholemilk and 31,133,239 gallons of milk for manufacturing purposes. This equalled 12,453,295 lb.

In 1950-51 the number of primary producers engaged in the dairying industry had decreased by 902 to 12,126. Although there had been a reduction of primary producers in the dairying industry of almost 1,000, to their outstanding credit the production figures were greater than they were in 1945. The production figures for 1950-51 are: wholemilk, 12,967,784 gallons; milk for manufacturing purposes, 38,322,325 gallons; equalling 15,328,528 lb. This reflects great credit on those at the present day engaged in the dairying industry. I can find no other industry, either primary or secondary, where there has been a decrease in the numbers engaged in the industry, while at the same time there has been an increase in the products that industry has made available to consumers.

The alarming decrease in the numbers engaged in the dairying industry must cause both the Commonwealth and the State Governments very grave concern. For some time past I have advocated in this Chamber that assistance be given to this industry. Some two years ago the State Government evolved a scheme to assist in the clearing up of partially cleared land. This has been carried out more or less successfully, but I regret to say that that proposal was totally inadequate. Further representations were made by those concerned in the industry to have some assistance made available to dairy producers who are at present engaged in it. Recently the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture in the Commonwealth Government visited this State and also went down to the South-West. In "The West Australian" dated the 27th July, 1952, there is a report headed "McEwen Sees Big Prospects" and there is the following reference to the dairying industry headed "Dairy Needs:—

The Minister's attention—

That is to say, the attention of Mr. McEwen.

—was directed to the uneconomic level of many dairy farmers who, it was said, were operating on properties developed to the point where they could carry not more than 20 cows whereas it was recognised that 35 cows was the economic minimum.

To bring these farms to an adequate level would involve capital expenditure on total clearing far beyond the ability of settlers.

Assistance in meeting this cost was requested and it was urged that more locally made galvanised piping and fencing materials should be allocated.

As reported, the financial ability of the settlers who have built up their herds to only a 20-cow standard, could not provide for the cost of future clearing out of income. They must receive some assistance if the dairying industry is to progress, as is urged, in order to feed the people of the Commonwealth and to provide for export commitments. In view of the position, I asked the Premier some questions a few weeks ago and in the course of his replies in this House he stated that proposals to assist the industry were—

(a) To assist dairy farmers to increased cleared areas up to 150 acres.

(b) Farmers to pay £10 per acre for clearing or part clearing.

(c) Loans for clearing would be repayable over 16 years, being interest free for three years; interest only for the next three years at 4½ per cent.; capital and interest over next 10 years. Repayment could be made earlier if desired.

(d) This proposal is limited to backward dairy farms in heavily timbered areas.

In the main, those proposals are satisfactory to the dairy farmers, but some adjustments should be made. One relates to the suggestion that farmers shall be called upon to pay £10 an acre for clearing or part clearing, and I think the proposal under that heading should read: Farmers to pay up to a maximum of £10 an acre for total clearing. In some portions of the dairying areas part clearing can be carried out at a cost of, say, £5 an acre, yet the scheme provides that the dairy farmer must pay £10 an acre. That matter needs some clarification before it could be accepted by the producers, and therefore should be amended. There seems to be some delay as regards the completion of the scheme.

By interjection last evening when the member for Warren was speaking, the Minister for Lands said that a decision had not yet been reached by the Commonwealth Government regarding the proposals the State Government had submitted with a view to assisting dairy farmers to increase production. I emphasise the point that it is vital to the dairying industry that the arrangements be completed forthwith, and I suggest that if the Minister cannot secure a reply to the Government's proposals he should make a special trip to Canberra in order to see the Federal Minister and endeavour to reach finality.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOVELL: Mr. McEwen was in Margaret River, and I attended a meeting with him there.

Mr. Graham: Was the water wet? You said he was "in the river."

Mr. BOVELL: Margaret River is a very important township and I did not say he was in the river itself. The member for Warren knows that it is a town of considerable size and importance, although, naturally, the member for East Perth would not know that.

Mr. Graham: There is no need to be nasty. I have been there and stayed there for a while.

Mr. Griffith: That is what is wrong with it.

Mr. BOVELL: When Mr. McEwen was told of the difficulties confronting the existing settlers whose properties could carry only approximately 20 cows, he agreed that if proposals were submitted to him he would investigate them and do all within his power to have financial assistance made available so that the carrying capacity of the properties could be improved.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That will be very helpful.

Mr. BOVELL: The Commonwealth Government has announced plans for improvements in the dairying industry.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Not another one!

Mr. BOVELL: This is a matter of vital importance, and I urge the Government to take immediate steps to have effect given to the scheme. The dairying industry cannot wait much longer.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The way the Commonwealth Government is acting, the industry will be planned out of existence pretty soon.

Mr. BOVELL: I do not want the Leader of the Opposition to indulge in party politics in connection with this matter. He should rise above that plane when dealing with matters relating to primary production.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: You must face the facts.

Mr. BOVELL: Not the facts as the Leader of the Opposition would like to put them. We need an immediate decision on this matter so that producers will have some encouragement to carry on. I emphasise the fact that there are almost 1,000 fewer primary producers engaged in the dairying industry today than there were in 1945. They are contributing their part towards the State's economy by producing more than was done by a greater number of farmers in 1945, but that cannot go on indefinitely. The present farmers are experienced in the industry. An alarming phase of the situation is

that young people are drifting away from it because there is no encouragement or inducement for them to remain, seeing that they have greater chances of success in other spheres. This trend is becoming very dangerous because the right people to engage in any industry are those who have been reared in it.

Several members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! There are two members interjecting at once. There must be only one interjection at a time.

Mr. BOVELL: While the number of those engaged in the industry has decreased, the population of Western Australia has increased from 490,000 in 1949 to 600,000 in 1952. This increase in population necessitates the production of more butter, milk and cheese than was required before. The member for East Perth proposes to overcome this difficulty by increasing the production of a substitute.

Mr. Graham: That is the proposal of the Government.

Mr. BOVELL: That would not be a solution of the problem. Our State economy is bound up with primary production, and we must ensure that the primary industries are encouraged and assisted so that the State economy will not be endangered. When speaking last night, the member for Warren referred to certain difficulties associated with war service land settlement. I agree that there are some difficulties in connection with the scheme, but never yet has there been a major land development scheme that has not been confronted with great difficulties.

Mr. Hoar: Do you not think that those difficulties could be attended to?

Mr. BOVELL: They are being attended to.

The Premier: All the time.

Mr. BOVELL: My experience is that when soldier settlers have an opportunity of consulting their parliamentary representatives on frequent occasions, as they have had, the difficulties can be overcome. The member for Warren spoke of the failure of the Minister for Lands to visit a portion of the district I represent. The Minister at intervals has visited the area south of Margaret River where the major part of the war service land settlement in the Vasse electorate is taking place. I have been asked to request the Minister to visit the area again, accompanied by the Director of Agriculture, and no doubt this will be done.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Will Mr. Freeth, M.H.R., also be invited?

Mr. BOVELL: I wondered why the member for Warren is taking such an active interest in what is happening in the Vasse electorate.

Mr. Hoar: I told you last night. I was trying to help the people you are doing nothing about.

Mr. BOVELL: I have a great personal regard for the hon. member and I am rather surprised that he should have acted, as I feel sure he has done, at the instigation of the endorsed Labour candidate for Forrest, by asking in this House questions relating to my electorate.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What about the Federal member for Swan?

Mr. BOVELL: Without indulging in undue egotism, I feel that I have the confidence of the soldier settlers in my electorate. I have visited Mr. O'Connor's property several times and he has received me very hospitably. On each occasion we have discussed the problems of these soldier settlers and he has been satisfied with the efforts I have put forward on their behalf. The action of the member for Warren in raising these questions in the House savours of party politics. I recall that another member on the Opposition side, just before the last Federal election, asked questions in this House regarding the Karridale area, questions that were sponsored by the same gentleman. For the member who asked those questions, I also had the highest regard: I refer to the late Hon. A. H. Panton. However, I am quite capable of attending to the requirements of my own electorate, and I do not need the assistance of the member for Warren.

Mr. Hoar: I had no intention of giving you any assistance.

Mr. BOVELL: No, but the hon. member is adopting this course with a view to improving the chances of the endorsed Labour candidate for Forrest at the next Federal election.

Mr. Hoar: I should like you to understand that my interest in soldier settlement is State-wide.

Mr. BOVELL: That is all right, but the hon. member might have had the courtesy to consult me before raising the questions in this House. I repeat that there are certain difficulties associated with soldier settlement and I am sure the Government is fully alive to them. These settlers are receiving constant attention and I have no doubt that my efforts on their behalf have been more or less successful.

Mr. Hoar: You seem to be a little uncertain about it.

The Minister for Lands: Let him make his own speech!

Mr. Hoar: The Minister might learn a lesson or two from the hon. member. There is room for it.

Mr. BOVELL: I again emphasise the need for the assistance to existing dairy farmers to be put into operation without further delay and finalised. The endur-



ance, patience and fortitude of the dairy farmers have been long tried, and these men cannot continue much longer unless they receive practical assistance along the lines submitted by the Government to the Commonwealth.

There is a further scheme for the development of the area south of the Blackwood River and extending from Augusta to Nornalup: This is a long-range scheme and must of necessity wait until the earlier scheme is put into effect but, immediately the size of the herds of the present settlers has been raised to an economic level, I suggest that the Government should carry on with the proposal to develop the land south of the Blackwood River for dairying purposes. A soil survey of some of this land has been completed and it has been found to be equal to the best dairying land in the State, but its development must of necessity be delayed until the scheme for assisting existing dairy farmers has been put into effect and the herds they are now running are built up to an economic size.

**MR. PERKINS (Roe) [3.21]:** With other members, I would like to take this opportunity to express regret at the passing of our late Sovereign, King George VI was a very vital influence in keeping together the Empire, and particularly the English-speaking peoples at a very difficult time in our history; and I think his reign brought out the fact that although the executive constitutional functions of the monarchy have progressively decreased over the years, the value of the monarchy in maintaining the British way of life and government is greater in these days than it has ever been at any time in our history. I believe that we have every reason to expect that Queen Elizabeth II will carry on the best traditions and follow the example set by her late father.

I listened with a great deal of interest to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say in his speech. As I understood his remarks, he pins his faith to a very much closer exercise of price control and a cutting of profit margins to restore the economic position of Australia in general and Western Australia in particular. I am prepared to agree with him that both Western Australia and Australia as a whole are facing something of an economic crisis. We have arrived at the point when primary production is almost static. There has been a very small increase in the total volume of primary production for some considerable time and Australia has relied on primary production to establish her export balances.

At the same time, there have been very steep increases in costs within Australia which are very rapidly closing the gap between the external price level and the price level within Australia, and what that means to a great many of the mushroom industries that have sprung up since the

end of the war is rather unpredictable at this moment. I think, however, there is reason to fear that a considerable number of those industries have not been established on a very firm foundation and this increase in costs could very well bring about a major crisis.

It appears that we are getting back to the position that existed before the recent war, when Australia had to depend almost entirely on her primary industries to build up the external balances which are vital to pay for necessary imports, and industries within Australia will have to face real competition from imports which they have not had to face in recent years. Because of the devastation caused by the recent war, goods simply were not available overseas and in some of those countries costs were fairly high but, with the build-up of industry in many of those places which traditionally have supplied a large number of our imports, and the indications that costs have fallen, it seems that the Australian manufacturing industries will have to face real competition unless they are going to receive very heavy tariff protection. That has been tried in the past with all sorts of results; but, at present, I think Governments have to face up to a realisation of just where they are going and to understand that, if we raise costs to primary industries, we will make the position that much worse and it will be correspondingly difficult to build up necessary external balances.

I have here a circular prepared by a very old-established and reliable firm of stock and share brokers of Melbourne. I propose to read a very short extract which puts into a few words the point I have been trying to bring out—

The Commonwealth Government recently decided that food, coal, power and transport are the industries in Australia that need the greatest encouragement and that the most urgent priority should be given to food production.

The need for rapidly developing our food resources is now becoming urgent because the stimulus provided by immigration schemes and an improving birth rate is increasing our population almost as rapidly as in any country in the world. It has been estimated that by 1960, if our population continues to increase at the present rate, it will be necessary to expand output of fat lambs by 23 per cent., beef and veal 40 per cent., milk 37 per cent., mutton 58 per cent., pig-meats 78 per cent., sugar 28 per cent., and citrus fruits 61 per cent. in order to maintain exports at the present level.

Apart altogether from the needs of our own population there are important reasons why a big effort should be made to expand Australian primary production. In the first place,

in retrospect, national development over the last two or three decades appears to have been a little lopsided with too much emphasis on secondary production. It would surprise some people perhaps to learn that on a per capita basis Australia is much more heavily industrialised than the U.S.A. A more balanced approach to future development would therefore envisage an increase in the number of rural workers with a levelling off perhaps of those engaged in manufacturing industries.

Mr. Needham: You will have to improve the conditions of rural workers before you get much of an increase in their numbers.

Mr. PERKINS: I think the member for North Perth should have another look at that particular point before he makes any criticism in that regard.

*Sitting suspended from 3.30 to 4.15. p.m.*

Mr. PERKINS: Just now I read a statement prepared by a reliable firm of stock and share brokers in Melbourne which indicated that some fundamental changes were necessary in the immediate future in the Australian economy and setup. As I was saying earlier, the Leader of the Opposition seemed to pin his faith on a more rigid enforcement of price control, and general tinkering with price structure, to rectify the ill balance which has developed in the Australian economy. If the Leader of the Opposition thinks again I submit he will realise that it requires something very much more fundamental than a mere tinkering with price control to overcome this ill balance. The suggestions which he made really only tinker with the position; they do not deal with the fundamental difficulties which have developed in the Australian setup since the war.

To illustrate that point a little bit! Most members will recall the difficulties which arose in Kalgoorlie during the rigid enforcement of the price control of meat there. Certainly those of us who were members of the Select Committee which inquired into meat supplies realised that Kalgoorlie was one centre where price control had been rigidly enforced, and the effect of it was to drive supplies off the market. It is no solace to the consumers to have a lower price fixed if the product they want to consume is not to be available in sufficient quantity. That particular difficulty which developed in regard to meat at Kalgoorlie would, I submit, develop in other branches of the Australian economy if price control were enforced with 100 per cent. efficiency. It would result in a shortage of goods which were rigidly controlled in price.

Hon. E. Nulsen: Meat on the hoof was not controlled.

Mr. PERKINS: I do not see that that interjection has any particular bearing on the point I am endeavouring to make: obviously price control can only go so far. At no stage have the Prices Commissioners attempted to do this, nor has it been suggested that all items of every nature should be controlled in price. It has been realised that that is an impossible position to arrive at, and the result has been that the luxury and semi-luxury industries have not had their products controlled in price because they have not directly affected the basic wage. The ultimate result has been that there has occurred a flood of capital and labour to those particular industries at the expense of the basic industries, and accordingly we have had this ill balance developing in the Australian economy for some considerable time.

Mr. Graham: Does not that indicate that price control should not have been removed from those other commodities?

Mr. PERKINS: Which other commodities?

Mr. Graham: Those that have been decontrolled.

Mr. PERKINS: I would remind the member for East Perth that there were a great number of commodities which were never controlled in price, namely the luxury and semi-luxury goods and services. If he stops to think he will realise the difficulty of controlling the price of every single article sold in Australia.

Mr. Graham: There were not too many that were not controlled.

Mr. PERKINS: The truth of the matter is that once we get caught up with this idea of controls it would be difficult to know where they are going to end. The fact of the matter is that one control begets another and, if we are going to have a fully controlled economy, we must go the whole hog and control everything and everybody as well. I remember being in Sydney, just after the war, and meeting some of the economists who were advising the then Commonwealth Government. I could give their names if necessary, but I do not think it is. In the discussions with those economists, I remember that we tried to view this question dispassionately. They were firmly of the opinion that it was necessary to maintain manpower control, otherwise other controls would prove ineffective. I do not think any political party would have attempted to maintain manpower controls after the war, even if it had the power and facilities enabling it to do so.

Mr. Styants: The abolition of capital issues directly contributed towards the difficulties of the position.

Mr. PERKINS: I am talking particularly about manpower control. The opinion of the economists was that, if controls were

to be continued effectively, it was necessary to maintain manpower control. I think members generally would consider such a course would be impracticable among people with the democratic outlook possessed by British communities.

Mr. Styants: You mean among British-ers.

Mr. PERKINS: Yes, I refer to the control of manpower and labour. I suggest that those who are pinning their faith to the redressing of the ill-balance that has developed in the Australian economy should have another think. I am perfectly certain that if they follow that line of thought to its logical conclusion, they will realise there is no halfway house. I believe we must either control everything and everybody or else resort to subterfuges, and we will be confronted with difficulties such as those that have arisen in these days. I realise the difficulty the Leader of the Opposition referred to, and appreciate the hardship that could be caused to people in the lower income groups because of the unnecessarily high prices charged for goods and services they require.

I am afraid I have very little faith in the desirability of Government action to redress that phase. While probably some such action might be necessary in the transitional period, there is a great deal more that people themselves could do to overcome the difficulty. I have had a good deal to do with the co-operative movement. In other parts of the world, particularly in Great Britain, that movement has been the bulwark upon which the working class have relied to a great degree to avoid exploitation by any particular group or individual firms with respect to the charging of higher prices that have been necessary for goods and services supplied by them. Some action has, in fact, been taken by certain sections of the Australian people, but, strange to say, it has been more apparent among the farming communities than in the industrial sections. Wherever it has been tried in industrial circles it has proved conspicuously successful. Rather than advocate asking the Government to play such a large part in the control of prices it is desirable that the people themselves should adopt lines of action available to them, which have proved most successful where they have been resorted to.

The seriousness of this basic difficulty that has arisen in Australia's economy cannot be questioned. In the period since the war, when there have not been the goods available overseas to import to Australia and when overseas prices have been considerably higher than those prevailing in Australia, the position has been camouflaged to a great degree. I believe the time has arrived when it becomes necessary that there shall be some kind of industrial

stocktaking. In my opinion, a greater number of firms in Australia will have to mend their ways and increase their efficiency considerably or else the future will be black for them and their employees.

Mr. Needham: You mean there must be more efficient management.

Mr. PERKINS: Yes.

Mr. Lawrence: Hear, hear!

Mr. PERKINS: Side by side with that, is the necessity for greater efficiency in the labour sphere. I do not blame labour for that, because management has the responsibility of seeing that industry is efficiently conducted. In my estimation, the time has definitely arrived when an industrial stocktaking has become necessary, otherwise the condition of ill-balance that is apparent now and has caused difficulties and hardships within the Commonwealth will obviously continue. That is one side of the picture. The other side is the necessity to increase the production of goods for export in order to build up our overseas balances, and to permit of the importing of those capital goods in particular that are absolutely vital for the future development of Australia on a proper and ordinary basis. That applies to all our industries that have produced for export in the past. It would include, I take it, gold, the mining of which is a primary industry.

Hon. E. Nulsen: It certainly is.

Mr. PERKINS: As to the processing industries, a very small percentage of their output has been exported, but these also affect the overseas trade balances.

I do not propose to give a resume of all our exporting industries, but I would like to make particular reference to the wheat industry because at present Government policy towards the wheat industry is under consideration, and this House in the not distant future may be asked to consider some legislation to deal with its immediate organisation. I propose to quote an article published in "The West Australian" on Wednesday, the 21st May. It reads as follows:—

"Wheat has been singled out too conspicuously for anti-inflationary treatment, so that rates of taxation bear too harshly on the farmer, who either neglects wheat for other crops or finds it impossible to cultivate anything but his best soils."

This is stated by "Corn Trade News," published in Liverpool, England, in discussing Australian official policy on the wheat industry.

The journal says that two major reasons were advanced by the Commonwealth Government for failing to pay the grower the full world price for food. The first was the need to combat inflation and the second was to help Britain.

"We doubt very much whether either the one or the other of these objectives is helped by artificially reducing the price of wheat to the grower," says the journal.

"It is true that overhead costs have a habit of adjusting themselves to increases in controlled prices, but that is more an argument for freeing the market than for delaying an increase of the controlled price when production costs have got out of line.

"When the price is allowed to fluctuate freely, it adjusts itself naturally to all factors; the uncertainty of any one season's remuneration discourages the automatic rise in overhead costs which seems to be an inescapable accompaniment of a stable controlled price.

"If the controlled price proves by experience, to be too low and leads to a big decrease in production, as it has done in Australia, then it is difficult to see how its retention can be anti-inflationary.

"So far as helping Britain is concerned," the journal says, "we are reminded that, because of her failing food production, Australia has an external balance of payments problem, and has felt impelled drastically to reduce her imports of British manufactured goods; she has thus contributed to the most appalling depression in our textile industry that the country has known for many years.

"Australia restricts our imports, causes immense hardship and unemployment and then 'helps' us by not increasing her prices for a rapidly diminishing supply of food.

"On the one hand, we are deprived of money to pay for Australian food and, on the other hand, we receive less food at the same price as formerly.

"Would not a more statesmanlike decision have been for Australia to grant as many facilities as possible for the importation of British manufactures, and to charge us an economic price food such as would increase the supply?

"Surely it is in Britain's interest that Australia should develop her food industries as rapidly as possible," the journal adds.

"If because of labour costs, monetary inflation, the need for breaking new ground, etc., average production costs are to be increased, at least temporarily, then the sooner we all face up to the fact, the better.

"Very few countries of the world have suffered more than Australia from false and dangerous theories of controls. Never has there been such a demand for Australian food; never so little inclination to produce it."

I believe that article from the Liverpool "Corn Trade News" adequately sums up the failure of the recent policies of Australian Governments towards the primary industries of the Commonwealth. In chasing the shadow of stabilisation and a fixed payable price for the producers, we have brought about a situation where we are having difficulty even in supplying our own home market, without thinking of building up those export balances that are so vital for the economic good health of Australia.

The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the export wheat surpluses in what were originally two of the major exporting countries—Argentina and Australia—have gradually dwindled until they are only a fraction of what was available in pre-war years. Argentina, where prices for the grower were originally controlled and he received very much less than world parity, was forced into the position of actually importing wheat. If the Australian situation continues to deteriorate, Australia could in the event of a very poor season easily arrive at the same position as that in which Argentina found itself.

The position has now developed where practically the only source of supply of wheat for the deficiency countries of the world is the North American continent—Canada and U. S. A. It is highly significant that the countries that have built up that surplus are those whose producers have had least interference from Governments and least tinkering with price levels. We arrive at this position: That either we can have this tinkering with price levels and resultant shortages for the population and a decreased amount available for export, or we can let the position level itself out and have a proper and prosperous economy generally.

Where, in the United States, the growers of wheat receive from 22s. 6d. to 23s. 6d. per bushel, the Australian grower on the same basis has been receiving about 11s. or 12s.; and the result in this country, as I think has been stressed in this House often enough, is that we have an alarming decrease in production. In the very near future the policy in regard to wheat production will be up for review. The policy in connection with other primary produce has been under review recently and will have to be considered again in the immediate future. Meat and dairy products are the two items of which I am particularly thinking. The one products with which there has been least interference—that is, wool—is the only one in connection with which the position is satisfactory. Surely it is highly significant that that is the one avenue of production which is still expanding, whereas the others are either static or decreasing.

This subject must be given a great deal of attention by all members of the House as it ultimately affects the bread and

butter of every resident of this Commonwealth. If the present ill-balance in the Australian economy is allowed to develop still further, anyone who pauses to think must realise that it will have dire consequences on the stability of business and ultimately on employment throughout Australia. The suggestions I have heard from those who have criticised recent Commonwealth policy have done little towards overcoming the basic difficulties of the situation. I do not think members on either side of the House will deny that an ill-balance has developed in the Australian economy, and that there is too little labour and material in our basic industries and probably too much in the mushroom industries that have developed owing to the artificial conditions obtaining since the recent war.

But as soon as any Government does something towards restoring a proper balance we hear howls from those whose toes are trodden on, whether they are unionists or industrialists. The problem must be faced unless we wish to be met with a real crisis at some time in the not distant future. There must be a shift from less essential industries to the basic industries, if the position is to be righted. People will have to be prepared to pay higher prices for foodstuffs than they have been accustomed to paying in the past.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Higher prices?

Mr. PERKINS: Yes.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Save us from that.

Mr. PERKINS: I have not prepared figures to show the range of food prices here as compared with prices in other countries of the world, but I think sufficient has appeared in the Press to indicate that the prices of foodstuffs in Australia are lower than in any other country.

Mr. Styants: Nonsense!

Mr. PERKINS: I am referring to comparative prices—the prices of food in comparison with prices of industrial goods.

Mr. Styants: England has a basic wage of £6 10s. per week. How could food be as dear there as it is here?

Mr. PERKINS: The hon. member should look at some of the other prices that are charged for goods and services in Great Britain. Quoting mere money prices does not mean much; one has to relate them to the actual units in the economy of the country referred to. In the U.S.A. food prices are extraordinarily high, judged by our standards, and yet America is able to send industrial goods here at prices that can more than compete with the produce of Australian factories. I ask the member for Kalgoorlie to explain that anomaly. If we are to have that increase in food production which I think members will agree is necessary even to feed our own population—without building up surpluses for export—it will be necessary for some encouragement to be given to those engaged in our primary industries.

The position in the past has been largely camouflaged by the existence of what I would call dual standards in the community. The member for North Perth referred to one aspect of that some little time ago. It was customary to think that because people lived in country areas—in the towns and more particularly on the farms—they should be content to put up with somewhat lower standards of living and wages than were enjoyed by those employed in the metropolitan area and in secondary industries, but that day has gone.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Who suggested that?

Mr. PERKINS: It was the accepted position in years gone by, but now both employers and employees in rural industries demand standards at least equal to those of people living anywhere else in the Commonwealth. It is to the credit of the present Government that there has been a great change in attitude towards the provision of public buildings in country areas. There are no dual standards now and the kind of public building provided in the country is the same as that in the metropolitan area, which is as it should be. Further steps must be taken and if we are to achieve the necessary increase in primary production something must be done to increase the attractiveness of country life and provide a monetary inducement for people to leave the metropolitan area and go to the country districts.

I have previously quoted figures in this House which indicate that from the 1932 census up to the 1947 census practically all our country districts were losing population, while the number of people in the metropolitan and urban areas was increasing. We cannot produce without manpower and that is a problem that must be overcome.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: But you do not want manpower in the country areas. You have no jobs offering at present.

Mr. PERKINS: We must have manpower if we are to produce. In reply to the member for Fremantle, I believe that if he thinks again he will realise that jobs do not appear overnight out of the blue and that it is necessary to effect some fundamental changes in our economy in order to reach the stage where there will be jobs offering in rural areas. Up till the present Australia has largely depended on her more fertile land—particularly in Western Australia—and there is a great amount of slightly less fertile land available of which full use must be made if we are to increase the production of foodstuffs. To do that it will be necessary to obtain better prices than were acceptable for the products of the better soils.

That is a further aspect that must be given consideration. If the right policies are followed in the immediate future there can be a great many jobs available in the country areas and it is to be hoped there will be people willing to take them. In conclusion, I submit that it is absolutely necessary to redress this ill balance which has appeared in the Australian economy, to develop those primary industries, and not only provide employment for a greater number of people in rural areas, but also to build up those oversea balances which are so vital if we are to maintain our economy on a sound basis.

**MR. READ** (Victoria Park) [4.51]: The Speech of His Excellency the Governor contained many features of interest to those who have the welfare of the people and the progress of the State at heart. Mention was made of the untimely death of His Majesty, King George VI, who did wonderful work for the British Empire. Our new Queen Elizabeth II. will carry on the traditions and bring much fame to our Empire.

I have a few random thoughts to express on some subjects mentioned in His Excellency's Speech. In primary production lies our only hope of great national development. We have travelled along the lines of secondary industry to the detriment of primary industry, and large areas of land capable of producing food for other peoples of the world have been neglected. Certainly we must have secondary industry to provide the needs of those engaged in primary production and to manufacture the machinery for development of works in our State. At Wundowie, wood charcoal, for the manufacture of iron-ore, is produced from timber growing on Crown and private lands, and for this we pay a royalty.

After seeing the work that the bulldozers were doing in Rocky Gully, it occurred to me that, instead of cutting the trees 6 to 12 inches above the ground and leaving the stumps, it would be more economical, in order to bring some of those lands into cultivation, to use that machinery there, and so uproot the whole tree. This could be followed by cultivation and the growing of pastures on that land and, in general, would make more of the area available for production. I know some people who have land in that vicinity and am assured by them that the fertility of the soil is equal to anything in Western Australia, particularly in the valleys. In cutting the timber as they do now, there is a secondary detrimental effect, because the land has to be gone over again to rid it of the second growth and the roots.

There is one holding, under subterranean clover, that is able to carry eight to ten sheep per acre. Perhaps not for the whole year but at some periods 20 to 30 sheep per acre have been carried and at other

periods two or three sheep per acre. A company which holds 8,000 acres has estimated that from 16,000 to 20,000 sheep could be pastured there in eight to ten years time after cultivation.

When we consider that this land is available for cultivation and well within 50 to 60 miles of the metropolitan area, such a proposition is well worth consideration. Although the land will have to be cleared at great cost, we must accept that knowing that it will be a national asset.

As to traffic and planning, I am not always in agreement with the member for West Perth. We all have our own ideas of what should be done in this fast growing city, and one of the many problems is the great congestion in Hay-st., between Barrack-st. and King-st. I think that instead of setting back the frontages of the shops in that section so that the second storey overhangs the street, making an arcade, which would entail a large outlay by the Perth City Council, shop-owners and private individuals, that section of Hay-st. should be closed altogether to motor vehicles, with the exception of those which service the business establishments.

**Mr. Totterdell**: What about trams?

**Mr. READ**: As we know, trams will cease to run there, just as we visualise that the railway station and the railway line through the city will be transferred to East Perth.

**Mr. Totterdell**: Hear, hear!

**Mr. READ**: That is something for the future. I consider that portion of Hay-st. need not be used by private cars. Commencing from Riverside Drive traffic has four main streets, and the provision of parking spaces must certainly be taken into consideration and put into effect at some time, we hope in the near future, by the civic body. If that were done, I visualise that the whole of that congested section of Hay-st. would be an arcade for pedestrians only. On Fridays, the congestion of pedestrians is difficult enough now, with policemen stationed at five or six points between Barrack-st. and King-st., but it would be much more difficult if people were allowed to park cars in that section.

We should have only one body set up for the control of traffic. At present we have four different authorities controlling traffic, and none of them is doing the job properly. There is the Police Traffic Department, the Traffic Advisory Committee, the Perth City Council and the Transport Board. The time has arrived when we should set up one authority to deal with the traffic problem. To my mind the Perth City Council, if given authority by Parliament, would be the appropriate body to undertake that work. At present its duty is to provide parking spaces for people coming to Perth. It has the neces-

sary organisation and already 13 or 14 inspectors. That number could be increased and a special branch established to deal exclusively with this phase. In the large American cities special traffic authorities are in control and offenders against the regulations find tickets attached to their cars. No summonses are issued, but when an offender finds a ticket on his car he simply goes to the Traffic Court, which sits continuously, and waits his turn to be dealt with. In consequence the traffic in the American cities is kept on the move all the time.

In Perth one branch of the Police Department participates in traffic control. No business person is attached to the branch, and certainly no private concern would adopt some of the methods that prevail in the department. For instance, during the last few weeks I have noticed that at intersections the old sign of "X walk" has been changed to "Pedestrian Crossing." The latter sign involves more lettering, more labour and twice as much expense and paint. I think the change was unnecessary because people of every nationality in the world know the significance of the sign "X walk." I think it must have been an oversight that enabled the department to relinquish the simple method in favour of the more expensive system.

I am surprised that the authorities have not taken action regarding another matter. I refer to the parking of large trucks and trailers alongside the roads in various parts of the metropolitan area. That practice has caused numerous deaths and much damage, yet nothing has been done. The number of deaths caused in this way is absolutely appalling. In one week there was a report in the paper showing that the mother of two young children had been killed and her husband seriously injured. Their car ran into the back of a truck at Nedlands. During the same week another fatality occurred in Nedlands when a woman was killed and a man badly injured as the result of a small sedan car crashing into the rear of a parked truck in Bruce-st. This is a serious state of affairs, and it would be a very simple matter to overcome merely by prohibiting the parking of trucks and trailers along public thoroughfares.

Then again I noticed reports in the Press indicating that enthusiasts were still providing free milk to children at some metropolitan schools. That practice has caused heart-burnings among the people on the Goldfields whose children do not participate in such free hand-outs. It was pointed out in the Press not long ago that this practice was entirely unnecessary because children were able to get sufficient milk at home, seeing that their parents had the necessary money with which to purchase supplies. Australia is spending about £1,500,000 on the supply of free

milk for children, while at the same time our hospital finance is going back to the tune of millions. I feel sure the money could be better used in assisting the hospitals.

In Western Australia, when the Minister for Health first made available milk supplies at schools, it was not provided free and mothers paid 6d. or some other small sum if they desired their children to participate. It was not a compulsory scheme. The member for Boulder, during his contribution to the current debate, pointed out that the children attending schools in his electorate were not participants in the free milk scheme and he suggested that they should be provided with an apple or an orange daily. To my mind, that was a splendid suggestion, because all the necessary health-giving properties are contained in the fruit and such a supply to the children in outback centres would enable them to receive an article not always available to them.

I noticed a report in "The West Australian" dealing with the whaling season. It was stated that the 600th catch at Carnarvon took place on Tuesday. While the whaling industry is of great economic value to the State, the question arises as to how long it will last. The report said that the last shot for the 1952 whaling season had been fired and soon afterwards the 600th whale had been taken in tow en route to the Babbage Island processing factory. Last year the catch was 651. I do not know the life history of the whale. Some of these creatures are 48-ft. long and I should say that obviously the rate of reproduction must be very slow. We should take steps to see that the whaling industry can be continued, and to that end I think more supervision should be exercised and a greater volume of information gleaned respecting the rate of reproduction with a view to conserving the harvest and revenue for all time.

On former occasions I have spoken along similar lines with respect to the taking of crayfish. While we all appreciate the dollar position in relation to the crayfishing industry and what the export of hundreds of tons of tails to America means to this State, we should know more about what we are doing. I recollect that in speeches delivered in this House by the member for Merredin-Yilgarn he has informed us of the stringent supervision exercised by the Fisheries Department in Tasmania. In that State the quantity of tails to be exported each year is definitely provided for. I believe that the export trade in this commodity brings a return to Tasmania of something like £45,000 a year and, because of the supervision exercised, that revenue can be anticipated for all time. On the other hand, in Western Australia we are taking some millions of pounds of crayfish out of the ocean each year without any adequate

supervision, or without the requisite knowledge of the life history of the crayfish and their reproductive capacity. We should halt before the indiscriminate taking of this wealth from the waters around our coast brings ruin to the industry. I have several other items I intended to deal with but shall wait until the Estimates are under consideration.

**MR. YATES (South Perth) [5.12]:** Over the years since the inception of Responsible Government in Western Australia, members of both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council have, from time to time, advocated the adoption of a policy applicable to the North-West of this State. The member for Pilbara, when he spoke on the Address-in-reply, made many interesting observations, not only as regards what he considered would be best for the future of the North-West but he gave details of its activities, which, if not of interest to the House generally, were of interest to me and some other members.

Some three years ago, I spoke in this House of a scheme for populating a certain portion of the North-West. I envisaged the Commonwealth Government, in collaboration with the State Government, bringing migrants from overseas and establishing them at Fitzroy River in an area suitable for the cultivation of certain products. One object was to assist in establishing during summer months, supplies of fodder for stock, the absence of which is so devastating to cattle in the North-West during certain periods. Although the member for Pilbara criticised my speech, he did not dispute what I had said. In fact, he spoke to me afterwards about the text of it and mentioned other speeches made in the House by members who had represented the North-West over the years.

One strong advocate of the North-West was Hon. G. W. Miles who represented the North Province for many years as an Independent member. Another was Hon. F. J. S. Wise, the former member for Gascoyne, and I must also mention the member for Kimberley, Hon. A. A. M. Coverley, and more recently we have had Hon. C. W. D. Barker giving his views on what he considered would be best for the North-West. Naturally those gentlemen would take an interest in that part of the State. It is right that they should do so; it is right that their voices should be heard in Parliament, and it is also right that the Government should take more notice of them.

From the defence angle, the North-West is a danger spot in the over-all position. It has always been so and has caused concern on the approach of war or when war has been in progress. Western Australia has always occupied a peculiar position in respect to the defence of the Commonwealth. It is well-known that during World War II., this State was practically

written off because of its isolation from the more populous areas in the East and because of the inability of our small population, especially north of Geraldton, to hold such a vast section of the Commonwealth.

Anything that can be done by members to assist in establishing more industries there and to assist in forcing the hands of Governments to provide the requisite finance for the opening up of the North would be all to the good. The member for Pilbara was critical of the interest being displayed in the North by members of the present Government. I suppose he would have been critical also as a supporter of previous Governments because, from a survey I have made and from many records I have investigated, I have found that very little has been done over the past 50 years by a Government of any political creed.

I am afraid that one of the main reasons why Governments have not shown more interest in the North-West is that there has not been a department created for this purpose. The member for Pilbara suggested the creation of such a department. I believe that if we desire the North-West to show an expansion of its industries, an increase in population and an improvement of the position from the defence angle, the Government of the day must take a more vital interest in the welfare of that part of the State. I suggest that such a department be called the Department of the North-West and I should say that the Government Tourist Bureau would be the best to administer it. The bureau controls many tourist resorts but, outside of tourist activities, it can have little to do, and could well incorporate in its activities a department of the North-West and should have allocated to it annually by the Government finance to expend on its activities there. Until such a step is taken or such a department is created, I fear that very little progress will be made, notwithstanding that members may often rise in their places and speak of the many difficulties confronting the people of the North.

The same position obtained in the Northern Territory, a portion of the federated territories coming under Commonwealth control. For many years the Northern Territory was a lone State in the wilderness because it was sparsely populated and had no voice in the Commonwealth sphere. It was left to a department to administer its affairs, a department that really did not have its welfare at heart. Only in recent months when it is needed for the production of minerals required for atomic weapons and atomic warfare and for various scientific discoveries has the Northern Territory gained real significance in the scheme of things. The Commonwealth Government is now waking up to the possibilities of what the soil there can produce to assist the country as a whole in its future activities.



American finance has been offered, not only to make further investigations, but also to exploit the Rum Jungle uranium field so that the product may be sent to America. I believe that the amount suggested for a start is a hundred million dollars, which will be forthcoming as soon as it is required. This will be the fore-runner of much other finance from the same source to develop the mineral fields not only in the Northern Territory, but also to a lesser degree in the North-West of this State, for I am certain that similar mineral deposits exist there.

Mention was also made by the member for Pilbara of the likelihood of oil being discovered in the North-West and he made passing reference to a big company that is exploring certain parts for oil. Experts agree that favourable indications do exist that oil may be produced in parts of the North, and any private syndicate should be commended for spending money in exploring for so valuable a commodity. To explore for oil is definitely a gamble. The reward might be great, but the risk is greater, and any money spent by the Government or by outside interests must redound to the ultimate benefit of the State, even though oil may not be discovered in large quantities.

However, the company is hopeful that in future Western Australia will be a producer of oil that will assist in building up the stocks of the British Empire. What a wonderful thing it would be for the Commonwealth if oil were discovered! It would be the salvation, not only of this State, but also of the Empire. Though the North presents a very big problem, its very isolation makes it safe from immediate attack by any enemy. The people of the North would have a chance to prepare themselves in the event of war suddenly occurring, quite unlike the people of Great Britain or France or one of the European countries that could be attacked overnight.

To demonstrate the interest that one outside organisation has taken in the North-West, let me quote the Returned Servicemen's League. Two-and-a-half years ago, members of the State Executive of the league were concerned about communications received from sub-branches at Broome, Port Hedland, Derby and other North-West towns regarding the apathy and lack of interest displayed in that part of the State. In fact, the over-all position of the North-West at that time was neither bright nor encouraging. The State Executive decided to form a North-West committee which, in the 2½ years it has been in existence, has done quite an amount of good work in collating information and maintaining communications between those sub-branches, road boards and others interested in the welfare of the ex-Servicemen as well as of the State.

The work of this committee has been commended by the Treasurer and, at a recent Congress, congratulations were

showered upon its members for the work they had done. If similar interest were displayed by members of this House, we could be quite sure of awaking the people of the State to a realisation of the wonderful heritage which we have and which we have been doing our best to destroy. Let us assist the member for Pilbara, the member for Kimberley and others interested in the future of the North by giving ear to their requests, even at the expense of denying the people of the metropolitan area, who enjoy better conditions, some of the necessities they desire in order that the North may have first priority. I trust that the efforts of the member for Pilbara to secure housing and water schemes will be given priority over all other parts of the State. This view, I believe, would be shared by most right-thinking people. Only by denying ourselves amenities and necessities can we hope to overcome some of the difficulties confronting the people of the North-West.

Reference was also made by the member for Pilbara to the fact that the cargoes being handled at North-West ports showed an increase. If the volume of cargoes were decreasing, we would have cause for greater concern but, if inward and outward cargoes are increasing, it is an encouraging sign and greater pressure should be brought to bear upon the Government to ensure that the increase is maintained, that the State Shipping Service gives the right service and even a better service, and that the experts of the Department of Agriculture, the Works Department and other Government departments extend their activities to the North-West and not remain in the lower part of the State only to make our future development lopsided. Unless the Government makes a bigger sacrifice than it is doing today in providing amenities for the people of the metropolitan area and near country districts at the expense of the North, we might be in danger of losing our country altogether. Certainly we shall lose the faith of the people who otherwise would go to the North and assist in its greater development.

I wish now to say a few words on my electorate. It is only rarely that I speak about my own district because I am generally able to overcome most of the difficulties that confront me by direct approach to the various departments. One matter which is causing concern to the South Perth Road Board is the reclamation of a certain area between Mill Point Road and the river. At one time a large number of Chinese market gardeners were growing vegetables there, but in recent years the land has become overgrown with weeds and bamboos, and the small tin shacks have become dilapidated. The road board eventually decided to resume the area and evict these market gardeners.

This was done, and the board now intends to beautify this part. It wanted to do this some years ago, but was held up

by a shortage of materials as well as being confronted with many difficult problems. It approached me, as the member for the district, some three or four years ago, to secure the use of a Government dredge in order to take the silt from the river and pump it across the bank into this low-lying land. The idea is to make parks, gardens and playing fields there, and to build a river road from the Causeway to Mill Point, where it would connect with the road to Canning Bridge. This would mean that there would be a river drive from the Causeway to Canning Bridge. Later, I believe, it is intended that the road shall be continued from Canning Bridge around the river to Attadale.

When I first approached the Minister for Works I was told that the dredge was being used for Government purposes and could not be released for some months. That was a reasonable answer, and satisfied me. I approached the Minister some time later and was told that the dredge was being sent to Bunbury for certain work in the harbour, and that it would be there for approximately two years, but that on its return to Perth the South Perth Road Board would be given some degree of priority in regard to its use. This went on for approximately three years. Eventually the dredge "Stirling" came back to Perth and was moored at the foot of Mill-st. It has been there now, unused, for many months, so that barnacles are growing on the hull and it is beginning to look very sorry for itself.

The dredge cannot be used by the South Perth Road Board, and the reason given by the Government is that there is no finance. When finance is available, the Government wants the dredge, and when finance is not available the Government does not want it, and no-one else can have it. It looks as though the area that the South Perth Road Board wants to reclaim will never have the silt pumped into it because the dredge will not be available. The estimated cost of the work is £37,000. It would be better for an asset such as the dredge to be working rather than deteriorating in the river because it would give employment to men, not only on the dredge, but later in preparing the ground and building the road.

What is £37,000 when all said and done, when work such as this is required not only to beautify the suburb, but to add to the dignity of the metropolitan area? It is vital work. Some years ago the low-lying foreshore between Mill Point and Como, which was always an eyesore, was reclaimed by means of the dredge, and we could not now find a better spot along the river. In the same way, the area between Mill Point and the ferry at Mends-st. was reclaimed. All that is now required is to deal with the area between Mends-st. and the Causeway. I suggest to the Govern-

ment that before it uses the dredge again for some job requiring four or five years' work, the South Perth Road Board be given it for a period of three or four months so that it can complete this job.

Another matter of importance to the South Perth people, and also to many others in the metropolitan area, is the establishing of a community centre hospital. It would be the first of its kind in Western Australia. This scheme has received the blessing of the Government and of many organisations including the Department of Public Health. Some four or five years ago a committee was formed in South Perth to investigate the possibility of building a small emergency hospital, mainly to assist the medical men in the district who found it impossible to get hospital accommodation for people requiring urgent medical attention not necessitating a long stay in hospital. I quote instances such as a child breaking an arm at school, or having tonsils removed. In these circumstances the patient would not stay in hospital for more than one or two days.

It is not the intention for this emergency hospital to have people remaining in it for any length of time. A hospital of 12 to 14 beds might turn over 30 or 40 patients a week and so relieve the casualty ward at the Royal Perth Hospital of that number. This would assist the local doctors by providing the correct facilities for the carrying out of small operations. Medical men are averse to performing emergency operations in people's homes where there is not the necessary equipment. Their instruments have to be sterilised, and they like the operating room to be free of any germs or disease. But in many cases they have had to perform operations on injured or sick people in homes because there was no hospital to take them to.

The committee decided to seek donations from the residents of South Perth. It has worked very hard, and over a period of three years has raised nearly £6,000 in small donations—in some cases, 1s. a week. At least 70 per cent. of the population there has contributed to the scheme. During this period the committee made investigations through the Public Health Department and the State Housing Commission as to the correct procedure for drawing up plans to comply with regulations; in connection with the site on which to erect the hospital; and the many other small details to be attended to before the hospital could be established.

We had the guidance of the Public Health Commissioner, Dr. Hensell, who on occasions visited South Perth to investigate certain localities selected to be the site on which to erect the hospital. In all cases he disagreed with the sites selected because of their proximity to homes or because of the low-lying nature of the ground. Eventually, however, the committee selected a site which met with his

approval. We then submitted plans and specifications to the Public Health Commissioner which were rejected because they did not comply with the regulations of this department. We later amended them until finally he was satisfied that they complied with the regulations and, too, that the building would be an attractive one and of assistance to the medical profession. This all took time—some years in fact.

Persistent as we were, it was not possible, because of the housing shortage and the building of hospitals in the country, for us to obtain approval from the State Housing Commission and the necessary support from the Government. Finally, however, we reached the stage when we were ready to go ahead with the building. But the Public Health Commissioner then decided that the cost of building a 14-bed hospital had reached such staggering proportions that it would be preferable to increase the accommodation to 26 beds and so break down the over-all cost. It is much cheaper, in proportion, to build a 26-bed hospital than a 14-bed hospital; and in addition the larger hospital will provide accommodation for a greater number of people.

We agreed with what he said, and drew up plans for a 26-bed hospital with foundations of sufficient size and strength to allow of a further two storeys being put on the hospital at some future date. The cost of the building will run into the vicinity of £80,000, completed. We held a meeting of the builders of the district, and approximately 15 of them were present, representing all sections of the building industry—builders themselves, carpenters, plumbers, bricklayers and so on. We formed a sub-committee of the builders, and there will be a leader for each trade section. They have agreed to do their share of the work on the hospital at cost, plus out-of-pocket expenses which will mean a saving of between £7,000 and £10,000—a commendable effort on the part of the builders of South Perth. We have also been offered quite a lot of the furnishings at cost. In fact, I would say, when the hospital is completed, it will be the cheapest modern hospital built in the State because of the community spirit and effort put into it.

Mr. Moir: Did you say it would cost £18,000 or £80,000?

Mr. YATES: I am quoting the figure of £80,000. Some members of the committee think it can be built for less, but quite a period will elapse between now and when the hospital is completed, and there are sure to be a few rises in the basic wage, and in various commodities.

Hon. E. Nulsen: You will do well to build it for £80,000.

Mr. YATES: We are convinced that, on present costs and with the assistance of the builders we can erect the hospital, as

shown on the plan, for £80,000. Some say it will cost more. We have approached the Government, but unfortunately today it is faced with a shortage of Loan funds, and of money in other directions, so that there is a restriction on building activities because of lack of finance. So today we are filled with trepidation at the idea of approaching the Government for financial assistance. We have already seen the Premier on the matter and have been promised certain support, and we have now reached the stage where we are going to make further approaches to him. The people of South Perth have put in six years of work—one of the finest communal efforts that has ever been instigated in this State—and I hope the Premier will see his way clear to assist in the establishment of this hospital which is so vital not only to the residents of South Perth but also to all the people south of the river.

The only hospital of note, south of the river, is the St. John of God Hospital at Belmont. There is a small 12-bed maternity hospital in Canning Highway, and that is all. There is an urgent need for hospitals in that area and this building will be open for everybody. It will not be restricted only to residents of South Perth but naturally the people living there will have first call on it. The hospital cases there could fill the building many times over, because a large number of cases go from that area into the city hospitals each week.

The community centre has engaged in many other activities and the work has been so outstanding that we have had communications from various organisations all over the Commonwealth asking for literature so that they could be informed as to what work our community centre has done. We have 58 affiliated bodies attached to the community centre and we have approximately 8,000 members. There are four groups, north, south, east and west, each under a group leader and deputy group leader and committees. These bodies engage in all forms of activity which is for the betterment of the district. The organisation is non-political, non-religious and unbiassed on any matters that take place outside the sphere of its own suburb.

I would say, with pride, that South Perth has set a lead which many other parts of the State could follow. The residents have voluntarily subscribed £6,000 and this will reach a much higher figure once the foundations of the hospital are laid. This money has been collected from time to time without the people knowing whether the hospital would ever be built. We had hopes in that direction and we have been egging the residents on, but now we have reached the stage where plans and specifications have been prepared and we have approached the Government for

assistance. Rather than break faith with the people, I think the Government should go on with this scheme because it is most vital that hospitals should be constructed, whether in South Perth or in any other part of the State so long as they provide the necessary accommodation for the sick and injured.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What does the Treasurer say about it?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Silence is golden.

Mr. YATES: There is one other matter which was brought up in the House tonight when the member for Leederville asked the Minister for Police the following questions:—

(1) Is any check made of the degree of vision of persons involved in traffic accidents?

(2) If not, is it possible for a check to be made to ascertain to what degree bad eye-sight contributes to accidents?

The replies were as follows:—

(1) An eye test is made if there is reason to believe that the person concerned has defective eye-sight.

(2) Applicants for a drivers' license have to pass an eye-sight test before being issued with a license and are required to undergo further eye-sight tests if considered necessary by the Commissioner of Police at any time.

An astounding thing happened to me at the Traffic Office a few weeks ago. I wanted to renew my driver's license which I have had for 20 years. It has been in and out of my pocket during that time and consequently it has become rather threadbare and the two parts of the cover are almost falling apart. I waited in the queue to renew my license and eventually reached the desk. I told the constable that I would like a new cover for my license and he said "You will have to fill in a form and go through an eye-sight test." I said "I have not broken the law or anything. All I want to do is to get a new cover for my driver's license." He said, "That does not matter. You must fill in a form and go through an eye-sight test." I said, "I have waited for half an hour to renew my license, so is there any objection to putting a new license on my old one?" He said, "No", so I gave him my old license and he put a new piece of paper on it.

Has any member heard of anything so stupid! That is not the right way to go about testing the eye-sight of car drivers. Why should the Police Department wait until a man wants to renew an old license before they test his eyes? That is just making a farce of it. There should be some policy regarding eye-sight tests for car drivers. I would say that the replies to the questions asked by the member for Leederville were not what he wanted. He asked—

Is any check made of the degree of vision of persons involved in traffic accidents?

The answer was most evasive. Any person who is involved in an accident should have his eyes tested.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That is not the only question that has been answered in an evasive manner. The Government will not give a straight-out answer. We cannot get one.

Mr. YATES: That is frequently the case.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They tell us just as much as they want to.

Mr. YATES: If the department wants eye-sight tests taken of people who drive cars, it should be done on a proper basis. Tests should be taken once a year or once every five years; the department should not wait until a man wants to renew a worn-out license once in 20 years—especially if that person has not been injuring anybody—before an eye-sight test is taken. If the department is going to continue in that way it will take a thousand years to check the eyes of every car driver. That is a most haphazard way of conducting eye-sight tests and I strongly recommend to the Minister for Police that the practice be discontinued immediately. Men and women who have to wait in a queue for half an hour to renew old licenses should not be told that they must have their eyes tested before their old licenses can be replaced. The police should have their eyes tested to see if they have read their duties correctly.

If the department tested the eyes of every driver involved in an accident it would soon clean up the position, and it would not be long before a large number of drivers had had their eyes tested. That would be one way of overcoming the problem and the other way would be to call up drivers, say once every five years, for eye-sight tests. After a man or woman reaches a certain age he should be called up for an eye-sight test once in every 12 months. It is no use penalising one section of the motoring public and not the other. The system used must be fair and just and I suggest that future eye-sight tests for motorists should be done under strict supervision, and that the Government should have some policy so that a procedure can be laid down for the Traffic Department and all the outlying stations where motor drivers' licenses are issued.

Mr. May: Has the department any record of accidents caused as a result of bad eyes?

Mr. YATES: It was not mentioned in the answers to the questions asked. The second answer was to the effect that applicants for drivers' licenses have to pass eye-sight tests before being issued with licenses. I agree that that is one way of

overcoming the difficulty, but for many years people did not have to pass eye-sight tests before being issued with licenses and the department is now trying to catch up with the thousands—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: There are other States and countries that do not have those tests.

Mr. YATES: —of drivers who have never had their eyes tested at any stage of their driving careers. The policy adopted by the department is a weak one and should be inquired into by the Minister for Police. Some new form of investigation should be introduced or the present practice cut out altogether. We should not play about with a problem like this.

There is one other matter that I want to deal with and that has reference to the defence of Australia. I bring up this subject because over the years I have taken a keen interest in the defence of this country, and am still a serving member of the C.M.F. As members know, I have been absent for the last fortnight because I have been in camp at Northam where I undertook the normal fortnight's training which all members of the C.M.F. must undergo to complete the year's programme. For the first time in camp I saw a large number of youths who had been transferred from the National Training Scheme to the metropolitan units of the C.M.F. After completing their national training these lads are transferred to the various metropolitan and country units. They complete their national service training by going into camp once a year and attending the normal weekly parades.

I spoke to a large number of these boys and in not one instance did I hear a lad say that he did not like the life. They were all very keen to carry on with the C.M.F. Some of them were disappointed at first because they were homesick and the conditions were completely different, but after settling down they slipped into the routine of things and liked the life. I have never seen a keener lot of lads. They learnt a lot in their three months' training and in that regard I think the scheme has done a lot of good for the youth of Australia—that is those boys who come within the age groups called up for national service training. Some families might be affected from the point of view of income but the overall gain is greater than the individual hardship that might be inflicted. In any case, those aspects are considered by a higher authority if a lad does not want to undergo his three months' training and makes application for exemption.

As the future of the Commonwealth is vitally concerned with defence it is only natural that the navy, military and air force authorities should be keenly interested in their particular establishments.

For instance, it is very difficult to run an army establishment if it is understaffed; it is most difficult to put a battalion into the field if it is understaffed by 15 or 16 officers; and it is most difficult to provide adequate training for the lads coming on unless sufficient senior officers are available. It has been most difficult to fill senior appointments and that is one of the reasons why I am still serving. But with the national training lads coming along, and the room for promotion, they will be able to take the place of these older men who will then be able to be placed on the reserve list.

At present there are quite a number of men in the C.M.F. who have been to the war and are over the age of 40—some are over 50—and are still serving and doing their bit until such time as the positions can be better filled by younger men. The defence of Australia is very vital. The Leader of the Opposition referred on the 7th August to the extravagant expenditure the Army has undertaken; I presume he means in the past. It is certainly big spending. I said it was not extravagant spending and, while in camp, I took particular notice to see whether there was any extravagance at all. I would say that the details of expenditure in this last camp were very strictly supervised. In fact, the G.O.C., Western Command, called the brigade officers together and gave them a lecture on the control of finance, the use of vehicles, and the wastage of petrol. The officers were also told to try to make any money given to them spin out as much as possible.

The avenues through which we have to obtain finance in the Army are so strictly watched that a good case must be made out before a grant of money is made for the job for which it is required. If there is any extravagant spending in the Army, it is not done in the brigades and battalions. It may be done by the authorities higher up, with whom we have no contact. The expenditure could be made on items of clothing and equipment for which tenders have been called and a high price given for the tender; it is possible that that could be referred to as extravagance. Within the establishments themselves, however, there is very strict control. In the kitchens, where food is prepared, warrant officer supervisors move around and see that the men get the best food.

I saw some criticism in the "Daily News," but I do not think members should take too much notice of that. I thought the food in the last camp was better than that in any previous camp. The standard of cooking was high and no man went hungry, irrespective of the cost of food. It is the one expense about which the Army does not worry. A set standard is laid down in the department controlling rations and a close study is made of the details of food given to the troops; the price

does not enter into it at all. It does not matter whether butter costs 2s. 3d. a lb. or 4s. 3d. a lb. the men are given the same amount in the same proportion to which they have been accustomed.

Mr. McCulloch: What does it cost to feed a man?

Mr. YATES: I could not tell the hon. member the exact amount in cash because it has altered recently. It used to be 1s. 8d. a day, but now I think it is over 2s. 6d. The Army has to feed so many people that it buys large quantities at cost price, and is naturally able to provide food cheaper than it is possible to get it at restaurants. So, although the daily cost has increased, the amount of food never alters; it is worked out to scale. I would say to the Leader of the Opposition, therefore, that in the Army establishments, in this State at least, the matter of extravagant expenditure is being watched very closely. Strict instructions have been issued by the G.O.C. to see that no waste occurs within his command.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I hope you are right.

Mr. YATES: Following my reply to the Leader of the Opposition about extravagant expenditure, the member for East Perth interjected and suggested that I was "copping" some of it myself. I thought that was a very nasty interjection, coming as it did from the hon. member. I can assure him that I have put more into the Army than I have got out of it. I spend quite a lot of my time, and have done so for the last 26 years, in the Army. I have always taken great pleasure in doing my bit for my country, without any thought of reward and, though it was not very worthy for the hon. member to suggest that I was "copping" my share, I feel sure that he did not mean it, and only said so by way of a quip.

Mr. Graham: Quite right.

Mr. YATES: I had intended to ask that the hon. member be requested to withdraw that remark, but then I felt that he possibly did not know anything about the Army, and probably never would.

Mr. Graham: I have been in uniform.

Mr. YATES: In the Boy Scouts, possibly!

Mr. Graham: In military uniform, you mug!

Mr. YATES: At the opening of Parliament, I was very pleased to listen to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. It is very pleasing to see the good impression he has created so soon after his arrival in Western Australia. I had quite a lot to do with him because, during the last camp, I acted as his driver for the day when he inspected the troops at Northam. I drove him in a jeep around the country between Toodyay and Northam. He is a most remarkable man, and

finds great pleasure in doing all that he has been called upon to do since his arrival in Western Australia. He has a happy way of making people feel at ease when talking to them. His knowledge of the military side of our defence system is very wide. He mentioned some of his exploits in the desert, and he certainly is a man who in time of trouble would be of great assistance to this State. I would say that Her Majesty's choice in appointing him as Governor is very wise.

Mr. J. Hegney: Her Majesty did not appoint him!

The Premier: Of course she did!

Mr. J. Hegney: His late Majesty did!

Mr. YATES: I stand corrected. This appointment made by His late Majesty is a very wise one, and will do much towards keeping the bonds of Empire together between this State, the rest of the Empire and Great Britain.

Mr. May: I think they are a bit shaky!

Mr. YATES: That is all I have to say on the Address-in-reply, though I propose to address the House again, when the Estimates are brought down, with a view to dealing with certain items of expenditure and certain work which will be done in my electorate.

On motion by Mr. Brady, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 6.8 p.m.*