

excess profits, I was talking of industry. One hon. member twisted that around and used the hire-purchase finance set-up to have a shot at me. I would like him to understand that hire-finance companies do not form an industry. They deal purely with finance and I agree with what that hon. member said.

Personally I have no time for hire-purchase companies as they are operated today. I think they are like an octopus in the community, especially when it is realised that the purchaser, on terms, of a refrigerator which cost £150 has to pay 31½ per cent. per annum over three years. This has gone beyond decent business proportions, and it is high time that the Government took action in checking or legislating for a limited interest rate. Almost in every newspaper that one picks up one finds advertisements by such companies offering 12½ per cent. interest to investors. The rate of 12½ per cent. to the businessman, the farmer, or the home purchaser is deadly at any time.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That completely takes away the borrowing power of the Government.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: In addition it makes it impossible for Government borrowing to compete with the interest rates. Not only that; but it engenders a belief among the investors that they can get 12½ to 15 per cent. anywhere. Being fortunate enough to have money to invest, they expect this high interest rate. Apparently they care little for what happens to the State. I say that the present economic position has been aggravated by the hire-purchase system; and if the Government desires to introduce legislation to restrict the interest rates, I assure the Minister and members that I shall support any Bill that restricts those rates to a fair and reasonable amount.

I believe in the right of an individual to conduct his business as he wishes, but I do not believe in usury. The present set-up in hire-purchase finance is usury. Anyone who is aware of what is going on in hire-purchase finance today should do his best to see that the high interest rate is stopped; otherwise it will lead to an increase in the interest rate in every other avenue of borrowing. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. R. C. Mattiske, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 21st August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.57 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 15th August, 1956.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Electoral, swearing-in of member	188
Questions : Tractors, calling of tenders and purchase	188
Electricity supplies, payment of country subsidies	189
Housing, ministerial statements regarding homes to be built	189
Corneal grafting, performance of operation and supply of corneas	189
Railways, transport of petrol and insurances	189
Potatoes, comparative yield and profit, W.A. and Eastern States	189
Coal, supplies under cost-plus agreement	190
Children's playgrounds, provision in Killarney-Innaloo and South Doubleview	190
Water supplies, conservation scheme for Gribble Creek area	190
Bunbury harbour, commencement of dredging work	191
Constable Hardy, amount of Government grant	191
Gaol sentences, number of remissions and procedure	191
Address-in-reply, fifth day	193
Speakers on Address—	
Mr. Hearman	193
Mr. Gaffy	203
Mr. Grayden	205
Mr. Potter	209

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

ELECTORAL.

Swearing-in of Member.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to swear-in the member for Mt. Marshall.

Mr. Cornell took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

QUESTIONS.

TRACTORS.

Calling of Tenders and Purchase.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) How often have tenders been called for wheel tractors for land settlement over the last 12 months?

(2) What was the result of the calling of such tenders, and what makes and numbers of tractors were purchased?

(3) Does the Tender Board have the final say with respect to the purchase of such machines?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** (for the Minister for Lands) replied:

(1) and (2) No tenders were called over the last 12 months, but six Fordson Major kerosene tractors were purchased from Lynas Motors Ltd. through the Government Stores Department following Tender Board approval.

(3) Yes.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.*Payment of Country Subsidies.*

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

Now that the £72,000 is no longer paid as a subsidy to the South-West power scheme, will he recommend subsidies be paid to country town electricity suppliers in other parts of the State to help off-set the high cost of current?

The MINISTER replied:
No.

HOUSING.*Ministerial Statements Regarding Homes to be Built.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Was he correctly reported in the article which appeared in the "Sunday Times" dated the 5th August, 1956, in which he stated that the State Housing Commission could plan for only 310 houses under the State Housing Act for this financial year?

(2) If so, how does he reconcile that statement with his reply to parliamentary Question No. 18 on Wednesday, the 8th August, 1956, to the effect that the final allocation of loan money for workers' homes had not yet been made?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Although the final allocation of loan moneys for purposes of the State Housing Act is not known, the building programme has been drawn up in anticipation.

CORNEAL GRAFTING.*Performance of Operation and Supply of Corneas.*

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Has he had a report on the corneal grafts being performed in Perth?

(2) Is there a sufficient supply of suitable corneas available?

(3) Is the supply restricted because of the lack of amendments to existing legislation?

(4) If so, will he take urgent action to enable those who are waiting for grafts to be operated upon?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. The recent Press report has been seen but, other than that, no corneal grafts have been performed in Perth, although the necessary surgical skill and equipment are available.

(2) No.

(3) Yes.

(4) A Bill to make material for corneal grafts available is at present on the notice paper.

RAILWAYS.*Transport of Petrol and Insurances.*

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

(1) Is rollingstock used for the transport by rail of petrol and other liquid fuels to country areas the property of the Railway Department or of private oil companies?

(2) What is the system of insurance on such rollingstock and its contents?

(3) Do the oil companies insure each consignment of liquid fuel?

(4) What insurance in regard to each consignment is undertaken by the Railway Department?

(5) Does the State Insurance Office participate in any business in the insurance of rollingstock carrying liquid fuels and their contents?

(6) If not, would not State Insurance Office cover be such as to result in cheaper liquid fuel for country areas?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

(1) Both departmental and privately-owned tankers are used.

(2) Under the conditions of carriage the commission is relieved of all liability in respect of the consignments and is indemnified by the sender against all loss or damage to railway property or injury to persons.

(3) No form of railway insurance is available.

(4), (5) and (6) Answered by No. (2).

POTATOES.*Comparative Yield and Profit, W.A. and Eastern States.*

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

In answer to a question on potato black-marketing on Wednesday, the 8th August, he stated in relation to local prices—

... and has given a greater net return per acre to the growers of this State during the past five years than any other State in the Commonwealth:

(1) Can he say—

(a) how the average yield per acre in Western Australia compares with yields in the Eastern States;

(b) how the average profit per ton in Western Australia compares with profits in the Eastern States?

(2) He also stated that the Potato Marketing Board gave the grower an assured price. Will he explain whether or not he meant to infer this was an assured price for the whole of the crop?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied:

(1) (a) The average yield per acre in Western Australia for the past five years is 6.42 tons per acre as compared with:

	tons per acre.
New South Wales	2.97
Victoria	3.63
Queensland	2.97
South Australia	5.79
Tasmania	3.99

(1) (b) It is not possible to assess the profit per ton and compare it with results in the Eastern States. The return per acre is another matter. Only occasionally does the wholesale price in Sydney exceed that in Western Australia and as the yield per acre in Western Australia far exceeds that of the other States, it is reasonable to state that the net return per acre to the Western Australian grower has been greater than that of Eastern States growers during the past five years.

The other Eastern States base their price on the Sydney price less the cost of transporting to Sydney.

(2) The assured price is for potatoes marketed within the State. No guarantee can be given regarding the price obtainable for any surplus which has to be exported.

COAL.

Supplies Under Cost-Plus Agreement.

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Will he inform the House of the companies that are still supplying coal to the Government under the cost-plus agreement?

(2) Will he inform the House of the companies that are supplying coal to the Government on the fixed price basis?

(3) What are the respective prices per ton?

The **MINISTER FOR LABOUR** (for the Minister for Mines) replied:

(1) The agreement between the State Electricity Commission, the Western Australian Government Railway Commission and Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd., expired on the 31st December, 1955. This company is supplying coal to the two commissions under the same conditions as applied under that contract.

(2) The Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd. and Western Collieries Ltd.

(3) Amalgamated Collieries of W.A. Ltd.—the price paid to this company is subject to a check of costs which has not been completed for the six months ended the 30th June, 1956.

Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd., 68s. 6d. per ton.

Western Collieries Ltd., 68s. 6d. per ton.

CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS.

Provision in Killarney-Innaloo and South Doubleview.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Will he indicate if any areas of land were allocated for the provision of children's playgrounds in the Killarney-Innaloo and South Doubleview housing estates?

(2) If so, where are they situated?

(3) If no such areas were allocated, will he consider doing so in any future State housing projects?

The **MINISTER** replied:

The following sites have been vested in Perth Road Board free of cost as Class "A" Reserves for recreational purposes:—

Double View (South):

Lot 112. — Bounded by Weaponess-rd., Scalby-st. and Hayburn-st. Area: 2 acres, 0 roods, 5 perches.

Lot 429.—Bounded by Byland-st., Hillcrest-st., Scalby-st. and Shearn Crescent. Area: 13 acres, 0 roods, 17.6 perches.

Innaloo (North):

Lot 291.—Bounded by Langley Crescent and Langley Way. Area: 1 acre, 0 roods, 13.4 perches.

Lot 292.—Bounded by Langley Crescent and Birdwood-st. Area: 13 acres, 1 rood, 17 perches.

Lot 445.—Bounded by Shaw-st., Battress-st., Bates-st. and Beatrice-st. Area: 11 acres, 2 roods, 25 perches.

Lot 634.—Bounded by Huntriss-st., Hodges-st. and Farris-st. Area: 2 acres, 2 roods, 32 perches.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Conservation Scheme for Gribble Creek Area.

Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Has the Water Supply Department acceded to the request of the Kalgoorlie Road Board to supply the board with a report on the advisability of a water conservation scheme for the Gribble Creek area at the west end of Kalgoorlie?

(2) If the department is favourable to the Kalgoorlie Road Board scheme, would the department be prepared to assist the board in an advisory capacity throughout the undertaking?

The **MINISTER** replied:

(1) The department has investigated a scheme for water conservation in the Gribble Creek area and an engineer will discuss details with representatives of the Kalgoorlie Road Board within the next few days.

(2) The scheme appears to be unattractive financially, but the department is prepared to continue acting in an advisory capacity.

BUNBURY HARBOUR.*Commencement of Dredging Work.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it a fact that urgent dredging works in the Bunbury harbour will not be recommended before at least the 30th June, 1957?

(2) If the answer is "Yes," is the reason lack of suitable equipment?

(3) If the answer to No. (2) is "Yes," is it the intention of the Government to proceed immediately with the acquiring of a new dredge to replace the recently scuttled dredge "Governor"?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Further dredging work in the Bunbury harbour cannot be undertaken before the 30th June, 1957.

(2) The dredge "Sir James Mitchell," which has suitable equipment is engaged on important dredging work associated with the development of a new berth in Fremantle harbour.

(3) No.

CONSTABLE HARDY.*Amount of Government Grant.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Is it a fact that a grant of £450 was made by the Government direct to Constable Frederick John Hardy?

(2) If it is a fact, was the grant of £450 the total amount received by Constable Hardy from the Government?

(3) Will he table in the House the file appertaining to the Government's decision to contribute to Constable Hardy's costs?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes. The file will be tabled for seven days.

GAOL SENTENCES.*Number of Remissions and Procedure.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Justice:

(1) What is the procedure for considering and deciding remissions of sentences?

(2) What remissions have been granted in the last 12 months to the 30th June, 1956, and the period since the 30th June, 1956?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Each case is considered on its merits after receipt of an application for remission. Where it is decided to make a recommendation, such recommendation is made to His Excellency the Governor.

(2) Details are attached. In a number of those cases shown, where the balance of sentence has been remitted, it is not possible without further investigation to show the actual amount of the remissions.

Date. 1955.	Name.	Period.
7th July	Edward McCorry	1 month.
29th July	Percival Allan McCracken	Remainder as from 9th August, 1955. (Due discharge on 15th October.)
3rd August	Kevin Leslie Murray	6 weeks.
10th August	Ernest Lawrence Trevena	3 months.
10th August	Selina Waddington	Balance.
12th August	John Charlton Johnston	Balance (conditional on bond).
24th August	Thomas Douglas Shields	3 months.
29th August	William Henry Ferguson	6 weeks.
29th August	Vinko Kroselj	Balance (approximately 4 months).
31st August	John Scott Moore	1 month.
31st August	John Gabriel Ryan	Balance after 23rd September, 1955. (Approximately 4 months.)
1st September	Brian Lindsay Power	3 months. (Sentence imposed by J.P. exceeded sentence permitted.)
1st September	Ross Samuel Hobley	3 months. (Sentence imposed by J.P. exceeded sentence permitted.)
2nd September	Lindsay John Wallis	2 months.
9th September	Ljubo Milosiev Vukovich	Balance after 16th December, 1955. (Due for discharge 24th April, 1956.)
13th September	Charles James N. Reynolds	Balance after 19th September, 1955. (Due discharge 17th October.)
13th September	Robert Thackrah	2 weeks.
13th September	Robert Steele	51 days.
21st September	Michael Joseph O'Connell	1 month.
15th September	Albert Strathmore Larsen	1 month.
16th September	Barbara Patricia Groves	Balance after 28th September, 1955. (Approximately 1 month.)
23rd September	Leslie Desmond Semmens	Balance after 2nd October, 1955.
23rd September	Gysbereus Buitenhuis	Balance after 7th October, 1955.

REMISSIONS—continued.

Date. 1956.	Name.	Period.
23rd September	George Thomas Boston	Balance after 3rd October, 1955. (Due discharge 3rd December.)
3rd October	Terrence Dawson	Balance after 8th October, 1955. (Completion half sentence 2 years.)
23rd September	Douglas Henry Booker	Balance after 23rd December, 1955. (Due discharge 31st January, 1956.)
11th October	John Samuel Phillips	1 month.
12th October	Ronald Harry Hill	1 month.
12th October	Zygmunt Harenda	2 months.
12th October	Raymond Cecil Gordon	3 months.
1st November	F. Dziechcioronek	Balance after 17th November, 1955. (Due discharge 17th January, 1956.)
1st November	Ross Dickson Copp	Balance after 20th December, 1955.
3rd November	John Joseph Williams	Balance.
17th November	Brian John Osborn	Balance after 9th December, 1955. (Due discharge 23rd January, 1956.)
17th November	John Percival Anderson	Balance after 9th December, 1955. (Due discharge 23rd January, 1956.)
21st November	Brian Langley Scates	2 months.
24th November	Frank Morley	2 weeks.
28th November	Fritz Gronli	1 month.
2nd December	Robert McKnight	Balance.
2nd December	James Arnold Anderson	2 months.
29th November	Albert James Dewell	Balance. (Approximately 4 weeks.)
2nd December	Jeffrey Maxwell Penny	2 months.
13th December	Aubrey John Stewart	Balance after 21st December, 1955. (Conditional on bond.)
8th December	Ronald John Bradshaw	Balance after 15th December, 1955. (Due discharge 29th August, 1956.)
8th December	Sherwood Owen Bonser	Balance. (Approximately 3 months.)
16th December	Christopher G. Grayson	Balance after 21st December, 1955. (Due discharge 8th January, 1956.)
21st December	William Thos. O'Donnell	Balance. (Default maintenance order)
21st December 1956.	Ronald Lindau	Balance.
12th January	Johannes Jacob Kokje	11 days.
26th January	Joseph Silich	Balance after 7th March, 1956. (Approximately 3 months.)
26th January	Allan John East	Balance. (Approximately 2½ weeks.)
26th January	J. Fitzhenry	Balance after 31st January. (Default payment of fines.)
1st February	Andy Kickett	Balance. (Due discharge 19th July, 1956.)
3rd February	Raymond William Young	Balance after 1st May. (Approximately 7 weeks.)
3rd February	Lynn Gerald Richards	Balance. (Approximately 2 weeks.)
3rd February	Ronald Joseph Carroll	6 weeks.
3rd February	Alan Brae Katel	Balance after 31st March. (Approximately 2½ months.)
15th February	William Baxter Harrower	2 months.
February	Ernest Gordon Fudge	1 month.
7th March	David Michael Waltham	2 weeks.
6th March	William A. Kenny, @ T. A. Murray	Balance.
7th March	Stephen Doyle	23 days. (Time held on remand.)
9th March	Beatrice May Taylor	Balance. (Conditional on bond.)
9th March	Jimmy Williams	Balance.
19th March	James Moffat Williams	Balance. (Approximately 2 months.)
19th March	Patrick Mondrone	Balance. (60 days, default fine £20.)
26th March	Brian Toohey	6 weeks.
26th March	Theodore Joseph Dunleavy	Balance after 27th April. (Approximately 6 weeks.)
17th April	Edwin Bruce Smedley	2 weeks.
13th April	Ronald Frank Chilcott	Balance. (Approximately 1 month.)
20th April	Leonard Arthur Sowry	Balance. (Default maintenance order.)
24th April	Rose Margaret Martain	Balance. (2 months.)
26th April	Lorna May Hollett	Balance. (Approximately 2 months.)
2nd May	Beryl Nancy Humble	Balance. (Approximately 3 months.)
3rd May	Arthur Bertram Rose	Balance after 20th December, 1956. (Due discharge 17th January, 1957.)

REMISSIONS—continued.

Date. 1955.	Name.	Period.
3rd May	Bernard John Haskett	3 months.
May	Keith Warren	45 days.
9th May	Terrence James Milberry	Balance. (Approximately 1 month.)
9th May	Raymond J. Woods	Balance after 11th May. (Approximately 2 weeks.)
8th May	Joe Morris Hicks	Balance. (To allow of deportation.)
8th May	Ernest Augustine McCartney	1 month.
16th May	Emil Paskulich	Balance. (Approximately 3 weeks.)
9th May	Bernard Ivor Trinidad	Balance.
16th May	Douglas Hermer Cook	1 month.
24th May	Algio Liubinskas	1 month.
24th May	Ronald Edward Marks	14 days.
23rd May	William Lot Stevens	14 days.
31st May	Frank Marville	1 month.
8th June	Ronald Samuel Adams	Balance.
12th June	Leonard Calder Freeman	Balance.
25th June	Robert McLean Wilson	Balance. (Return to Colombo.)
28th June	Frank Joseph O'Brien	6 weeks.
28th June	David McQuillan	Balance after 6th August.
2nd July	Giovanni Baptista Lamberto	10 days.
4th July	Lawrence O. Murray, @ Tuffin	Balance. (Approximately 3 weeks.)
4th July	Edward William Brown	Balance.
4th July	Lancelot Pauli	1 month.
5th July	Robert Jamieson Dallas	1 month.
4th July	James Thomas Merrey	Balance after 16th July.
3rd July	Frederick John Dunn	Balance after 2nd September.
10th July	Malcolm George Isaacs	Balance. (Unit leaving Australia.)
24th July	Arthur William Bowman	2 months.
24th July	Walter Henry Trowhella	1 month.
18th July	Frank Edward Douglas	6 weeks.
23rd July	Barry Parker	Balance after 22nd September.
7th August	Lucy Florence Collins	Balance.
14th August	Nicola Colangelo	14 days.
14th August	William James Roberts	2 months.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. HEARMAN (Blackwood) [4.40]: I have privately congratulated you, Sir, on your appointment as Speaker. Today I wish to discuss the transport problem with particular relation to the part that the railways play in our transport system. At the outset I would like to say that, in my opinion, this is a much more urgent problem than a good many people seem to appreciate.

There are two aspects, both of which I think indicate the urgency of the position and which concern us in Western Australia. The first one is the aspect of the Grants Commission. I think most members of this Chamber and a lot of other people are well aware that, in broad terms, the Grants Commission says to us in Western Australia, "Keep your fares and freights at a level comparable with those of the non-claimant States and we are prepared to finance your railway deficit."

Members will appreciate that there are two phases of that. The first is that there is no incentive on the part of the State Government under those conditions

to develop an efficient railway system. If we know our deficiencies are going to be made up from outside sources, naturally there is a tendency to let them slide, and I think that is just what is happening in Western Australia. I ask myself, particularly in face of the present economic position in Australia and the tendency for money to tighten up, just how long the Federal Government or the Grants Commission will permit this state of affairs to continue.

It would seem to me that the Grants Commission will have to take a much more realistic approach to this question because it seems to be purely a matter of subsidising inefficiency. I do not think anybody on this or the other side of the House, from the Premier downwards, would suggest that our State railways are a model of efficiency. In answer to a question on Opening Day, the Premier indicated that there was some redundancy and overlapping in the railway system, so it seems to me that the Grants Commission is likely to take a much more realistic approach in the future. It cannot continue to subsidise an inefficient service without question.

I think it is quite possible that in time the Grants Commission may put us on a budget respecting our railway deficiency.

It may say, "We will be prepared to finance your railway deficit up to £1,000,000 and above that amount you will have to carry the burden yourself." The total railway deficit for last year was £4,500,000. It does not require any detailed consideration to realise how disastrous for the Western Australian economy such a decision by the Grants Commission would be.

Questions would arise regarding the provision of schools, hospitals and all the other works that are so urgently required and the problem involved would be very much in the forefront in the trouble that would result if the Grants Commission put us on a budget. There is an obligation on the part of Western Australia—I use the term "Western Australia" because it is of sufficient importance to warrant Parliament and not merely the Government itself taking this problem into consideration in an endeavour to make a constructive suggestion as to how the position could be rectified.

There is another aspect of urgency and that is the state of the railway track in many of those areas where the very uneconomic lines operate. I know that there is one line extending over quite an appreciable distance which the Railways Commission recommended in 1951 should be re-sleepered at an estimated cost then of approximately £250,000. Since that date very little, if any, re-sleepering on the line has taken place and in 1954 there was a £10,000 derailment there. A speed restriction of 15 miles an hour has been applied to the line and I believe the Railways Commission will have to reduce that to 10 miles per hour.

Obviously if we have any further trouble on that line, it may well be that the commission will report that the line is unsafe for traffic and the Government of the day will then be faced with the railway system in that particular area having broken down. It will have to take steps to keep faith with the people affected. It is possible that such a position could confront us in any particular area at any time from now onwards. There are many lengths of line that are in poor condition as regards the state of the permanent way.

There is another aspect of the policy of the Grants Commission in agreeing to finance the railway deficit providing the State keeps up its fares and freights comparable with those applying in the non-claimant States. I would not mind so much if the non-claimant States were running efficient railway services. I do not subscribe to the suggestion put forward last night by the member for Leederville who said that our approach must be comparable. There are two reasons for that.

First of all, the railway systems in the non-claimant States are by no means efficient. If they were, I would agree that there was some justification in using them as a yardstick. As they are not efficient,

then I suggest that their systems do not represent a suitable yardstick for measuring ours in Western Australia. In this State we have 4,100 miles of railway line and New South Wales has 6,154 miles, according to my figures. In other words the track they have open for traffic is approximately half as much again as we have. On top of that they have the advantage of being a State that has been settled much longer; they cart a much greater tonnage over their lines; and they have a considerable interstate traffic between Victoria, Queensland and so on.

I think it is reasonable to suppose that, generally speaking, the problems confronting the railways in New South Wales are not as formidable as those confronting our own railways. If we work on the basis that for an equal mileage of track there should be about an equal loss, then the deficit of the railways in New South Wales for this last financial year should be something under £7,000,000. Actually, despite the fact that those railways received a subsidy amounting to millions from the Treasury for serving developmental areas, the deficit for the New South Wales railways this year is £10,000,000.

If this is to be the yardstick by which our freight levels are to be measured, then I suggest it is a very poor yardstick and one which offers very little hope for us in Western Australia. It is quite obvious that such an unfair proposition is not likely to be continued indefinitely by the Grants Commission. Surely to goodness, the Grants Commission does not intend to subsidise us until we get to the stage where we are as inefficient as the New South Wales railways.

Another reason why I feel that this idea of a comparison with the Eastern States is not a practicable one is that the farmer in Western Australia is not competing with the farmer in New South Wales, Victoria or Queensland, but with farmers overseas. If we really want to find a comparative freight level, we have to see what the farmer's overseas competitors are paying in freights because they are the people with whom the Western Australian farmer is competing. It is difficult to get figures from overseas because of the different systems and conditions under which they operate, but I have ascertained that in the United States, for the year 1953, the average earnings of the American railways in Australian currency, amounted to 2½d. a ton mile.

Those railways are operated by private companies and are expected to make at least working costs; in fact, they are expected to make a profit. We know they have been having something of a struggle, but none the less, those companies are still operating. If they are able to operate and show a profit at 2½d. a ton mile—and that is the average yield from all goods hauled—it is quite obvious that the farmer in

Western Australia, where we have a miscellaneous freight rate by which his super and wheat are hauled at just on 4d. a ton mile, is at a distinct disadvantage with his competitors in the United States.

The Minister for Health: The comparison is hardly comparable, though.

Mr. HEARMAN: I have said it is difficult, but that is approximately what the farmer must be paying in the United States.

The Minister for Health: That is a pretty thickly populated country.

Mr. HEARMAN: I am not suggesting we can do the same here. The point I am trying to make is that the farmer here has to compete overseas in world markets with people paying as low as 2½d. a ton mile. Even if the comparison with our railways is not a fair one—and I agree with the Minister for Health that it is not—none the less that makes no difference to the aspect of the competitive side of it in world markets. Obviously, there is an obligation on the part of the Government to enable the Western Australian farmer to compete as advantageously as possible on world markets. This has nothing whatsoever to do with the question of whether the railways in New South Wales are running at a loss or whether they are not; or what their freight rates are.

The farmer in Western Australia, from the point of view of overseas competition, is not concerned with the freight rates in New South Wales. Quite obviously, we have an obligation to the farming community to look into our railway problem to see just what we can do towards putting the farmer on a better basis to compete in world markets, because it is self-evident—it is not disputed anywhere in this House—that our own prosperity will depend to a large extent on the capacity of the farming community to compete in world markets. There does appear in Western Australia to be an idea that we should pass repressive Acts of Parliament; that over the years the railways must at all costs be protected against competition from outside.

We still have in operation some amazingly inefficient lines. I do not want to get into a district argument; I do not want to start a town versus country or a Goldfields versus South-West argument, or anything of that nature, but I have had made available to me, through the courtesy of the Minister for Railways, a file which contains the figures for various sections of line for the year 1954-55; and some of these figures are most illuminating. Under the system whereby the Grants Commission makes good our deficits, which is quite all right, we have the spectacle for the year I have mentioned that over one line—I am not going to say what the particular line is for the reasons previously stated—that is 50 miles 31 chains in length, a total of

4,195 tons of goods was carted, and the earnings amounted to £838. The total receipts of that line are not sufficient to keep one fettle employed. By the time the fettle's wages have been paid, and he has been provided with transport and equipped, etc., the total cost would be far more than the £838.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What would you do about that?

Mr. HEARMAN: I will come to that in due course. I do think that any system which permits a Government to regard a matter of that nature with indifference is a system which wants looking into. Another section—certainly only a short section of 8 miles—earned £461 for the year, so it would not pay for the length runner. I think the Grants Commission is not likely to tolerate this sort of thing very much longer. In fact, it is open to question whether it is fair to ask the taxpayer of Australia to finance such a system.

In these two cases the total tonnage handled was very small, and certainly alternative means could be found to carry the freight at very much less cost, I feel. I just mention these instances because they do underscore the type of thing that we are up against with this railway problem. The member for Fremantle wanted to know what we were going to do about it. Perhaps he feels we should do something about it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Some countries run the railways out first and then let people take up the land afterwards.

Mr. HEARMAN: That is true, and it used to happen here, but we are not doing it with our land settlement projects today. If we could find other more satisfactory methods for our new projects it is possible that they might be adopted in the circumstances I have mentioned.

There are two other aspects in connection with losses on sections that I want to point out. The first is that there are sections of railway lines in the country system that are showing a working profit. What is the position of the farmers in those areas where a profit is being shown? If the district generally is providing sufficient goods to enable the line through that district to operate at a profit, should there be a further increase in freight rates in those areas? Obviously, it does throw into the ring the idea that perhaps we could approach this thing from a different angle altogether and say that where the lines are meeting working expenses, or something like that, there should be no freight increases.

But obviously if we generalise over the whole system—and I am afraid we must do that—the farmers in those areas who feel that they are paying high freight rates now, will have to pay still higher rates for the benefit not only of the farmers but

also of those who live in places such as Kalgoorlie, and those living further out. It is an extremely knotty problem and simply to say that the answer is to increase our freight rates to a figure comparable to that paid in the non-claimant States, or to satisfy the Grants Commission, is by no means a fair answer. I think that the approach to transport problems generally has, as is so often the case, been very much more realistically tackled by private firms and by private enterprise generally than it has been by successive Governments.

There are instances in the timber-milling industry where the old system of building railway lines out into the bush has been discontinued and road haulage has been substituted because the millers have found that the cost of construction of a road which is capable of standing up to the haulage requirements, and in effect replacing the old railway line, is very much less than the cost of building a railway line.

Also, the cost of haulage over the road is still less than would be the case if a railway line were built. I would point out to the House that what might be termed fantastic loads are being carted under those conditions. There is one particular instance at the Donnelly River mill where Bunning Bros. have built a road 20 ft. wide, with 8 inches thickness of gravel, into the bush in their new concession, and they are hauling the whole of their timber over that road. The cost of operation and haulage is very low.

I was down there recently and I asked the mill manager what loads he was carting. He said, "Of course, in the winter-time we reduce our loads," which is understandable. I said, "What are you carting now?" and he said, "We tell the drivers to cart 40 tons; but if they put on more than 44 tons, we tell them to be a bit more careful." I have seen the road and it is in remarkably good condition; far better than a great many of our own roads. I know that it can be said that this is an unfair comparison and that it is not a complete comparison. I will agree that that road has no fast traffic running over it; but, on the other hand, it does indicate that it is possible to haul considerable tonnages economically over relatively lightly constructed roads, and I think that as a State, Western Australia will have to try to learn some lessons from what private enterprise is doing in this matter.

Personally, I have no actual knowledge of what W.A. Petroleum are doing in the North. But members up there have told me that that company is building new roads and is carting tremendous loads over them successfully and economically. That firm is not building light railway lines all over the place.

Mr. Norton: What does it cost them to build the roads?

Mr. HEARMAN: I still think they would be cheaper to build than railway lines. If the hon. member wants to know what it has cost Bunning Bros. to build this road, in heavy karri country which necessitates heavy clearing costs, I can tell him. They were able to build the road to their requirements for £900 a mile and I do not think they could buy the rails only for that sum, much less lay them and do all the earthworks required. If Bunning Bros. can build their road for £900 a mile, obviously it becomes attractive by comparison with railway construction. I think that may well answer the interjection of the member for Gascoyne.

As a matter of fact, this development is not unusual or unexpected and it is not a problem that is peculiar to Western Australia; it is a world-wide problem. Vehicle design all over the world has outstripped road standards, as is only to be expected. Vehicle designers throughout the world have met the problem by designing vehicles that can cart heavier loads with a reduced impact on the roads. They have incorporated more axles and they use bigger tyres on the vehicles; they have reduced speeds when carrying heavier loads. All these things have enabled motor-vehicles to carry very much heavier loads more economically than was previously thought possible. Other countries are taking advantage of this form of transport and obviously if we in Western Australia do not take advantage of the latest developments in vehicle design we are placing an unnecessary restriction on primary producers particularly and industry generally.

Mr. Court: What types of vehicle are they using for the 40-ton loads?

Mr. HEARMAN: They are relatively old vehicles—prime movers that the firm bought from the tank transport section of the Army. They are tandem axle trucks and they have tandem axle jinkers. They are equipped with 12-inch tyres and these vehicles have operated successfully for a number of years. The original vehicles are still in use and considerable tonnages are carted with them. The permissible cut for that particular mill, I understand, is 90 loads a day; but I have been informed by the Forests Department that over the last twelve months that has been exceeded and the firm has been averaging 100 loads a day.

For the information of those members who do not know anything about timber, 100 loads of timber represents about 175 tons in green karri. A considerable tonnage of timber is going over that road five days a week and for about 50 weeks in the year. Approximately 800,000 tons of goods are being carted over that road whereas the railway line I mentioned is earning only £800 a year and only 5,000 tons of goods are being transported over it. So it makes one realise that there are economic possibilities in substituting road transport in certain areas.

The Minister for Transport: Of course, the major sawmilling companies contribute towards those roads; in other words, they carry out the maintenance in very many cases.

Mr. HEARMAN: I agree. They build the roads, operate the vehicles that use them and maintain the roads more cheaply than the cost of putting down a railway line.

The Minister for Transport: Quite right.

Mr. HEARMAN: I agree with the Minister. These companies look after their own roads; they keep down the speed of the vehicles using them, and that sort of thing. That is half the secret of the success and in the case of these large vehicles, I think they are governed to a speed of 21-25 miles an hour. The Minister may be able to correct me if I am wrong.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Would you close the line that you spoke about a few moments ago?

Mr. HEARMAN: I think it is obvious that something has to be done and it could be done by substituting road transport. I am glad the member for Fremantle is listening to what I am saying.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The next thing you will want will be a subsidy for carting by road.

Mr. HEARMAN: That may not be such a bad idea; it might be cheaper to do that than to keep the present railway line operating. I did not tell the hon. member what it costs to operate the line, about which I have been speaking, but it might interest him. This line cost £18,406 a year to operate and it earned £838 for the year. Would it be possible to subsidise a road haulier and still show a profit in the operation of such a line?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I suppose you remember when that was done once, without authority?

Mr. HEARMAN: I do not remember that. In any case I still think there are economic possibilities of subsidising road haulage in this particular area. I would say that just as good a service could be given. I do not know how often the trains run over that line but if it is once a week, I will be surprised. It is not as though the railways in a number of these areas are giving a particularly good service. I do not know whether that answers the query raised by the member for Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That answers it, but it does not satisfy me.

Mr. HEARMAN: Then I suggest that the member for Fremantle is incapable of satisfaction if he thinks that we should still keep that railway line operating. I would point out to him that it is affecting everybody in this State, even the city-dwellers. These railway losses and increased freights are responsible for increasing costs everywhere. Do not let members think that

they affect only the people in the areas concerned! If there is any inefficiency in the railway system anywhere—either in the northern end of it or anywhere else—it affects somebody right at the other end as well as those living in between. Do not let us try to dodge the question and suggest that it is not “my pigeon” or “your pigeon”!

That brings me to this point: I think members of Parliament have a responsibility in this matter. Firstly, I believe that they should make sure that their own electorates are informed as to the position of our railways and, in particular, as to how that position affects each individual area. I have made a study of this problem over a number of years and I have introduced certain reforms or new ideas into the railway services in my own electorate. Those improvements—and they are improvements—have led not only to a better service but also to an increased volume of traffic over those particular lines.

Last night the member for Moore mentioned that he had some demurrage troubles in his area. The whole of the superphosphate on the line that previously used to give me trouble has not been the cause of a complaint over the last two years. There has not been a single demurrage query from the people using that line, and, on inquiry, I find that not a single demurrage charge has been raised. The reason is that under the system which has been operating for about three years, in the cartage of super, special trains have been used and trouble from demurrage is non-existent.

The average turn-round for trucks on the Bunbury-Kojonup or Picton-Kojonup line used to be about 10 days, during the height of the season. The trucks now go twice a week to Kojonup; out with super, back with barley, out with super again, and then back with barley once more. Obviously, if we can get that sort of turn-round, the economics of operating a line are greatly enhanced, and I believe that that sort of thing can be brought about if members themselves set out to achieve that end. It can be done by getting the necessary co-operation from the various people concerned. I do not say that railway employees are always the most difficult people to deal with. If the member concerned has the will to do something about it, he will get a very much better service in many cases.

Fruit, which is carted to Perth, is another case in point, and a new system has been introduced in that instance. It was used firstly in the South-West and has since been extended to other areas. Not only has the general handling of fruit improved tremendously but also the actual quantity of fruit being sent has increased considerably, at rates reduced to the grower. In fact, in my home town of Donnybrook last year, on some occasions,

up to 37 tons went into the market from that centre on one day alone. In view of the fact that the average saving in freight under the new system is about £2 a ton, it can be readily seen what that means to producers in that area in one season.

Another way of illustrating this point is that, when we went into this question of freight handling, the railways decided to put on a special train to Bunbury and to run it straight through. They were going to run that train twice a week and make up loadings with timber and other traffic. During this last year it has run on six days and, on occasions, they have had to put on two divisions.

This indicates that provided the railways give a good service, there is some prospect of their getting support. That is why some of the lines are not working at a loss in those places where the railways are running good services and where there is a degree of co-operation between the people who use the line and the railways themselves. That is a most important point if the line is to be run at a profit. People have to realise what the problem is and how it affects them and they should say, "We do not want this railway line," if they do not require it. On the other hand, if they do want a line, it is up to them to ensure that they get good service from it.

My own experience in my electorate has been that it is possible to get a far better service from the railways nowadays than was the case previously, but that only applies if the member concerned sets his mind to making sure that a good service is obtained and does not merely make political capital out of the inefficiency of the railways. Each member has an obligation on himself to do that regardless of his party or the Government in office. We simply cannot continue putting our heads in the sand on this question because salvation does not lie in that direction.

I realise that the member for Fremantle has been trying to get me on to the subject of what I would do with uneconomic lines. I am quoting only a platitude when I say that all political parties in Western Australia fully recognise the obligations and responsibilities of a Government to supply a satisfactory transport service at the cheapest possible cost to the people who have taken up land in an area that is at present served by a railway line. I am not suggesting, in any shape or form, that those people should necessarily be either inconvenienced or placed at a disadvantage by the action of the Government. I do not think it is necessary to place them at a disadvantage. It could quite easily be that they could eventually enjoy considerable advantage if the railway line broke down and reached a stage where it was unsafe. That could easily happen if we allowed the present position to drift.

In my opinion, one of the several difficulties associated with our railway deficits is the question of uneconomic lines. I do

not mean to suggest that that is the only difficulty, in dealing with that particular question. On this point perhaps, I will reach some agreement with the member for Fremantle. Having conceded and agreed that we have to provide a service in those areas, the question arises: What sort of service are we to substitute for the rail service? That seems to be the 64-dollar question. It is the one that has confronted Governments continuously over the years, and we are no nearer the solution today than were Governments many years ago.

There is no Government instrumentality that has the experience of operating heavy rail haulage units commercially. There is an extremely wide divergence of opinion as regards the best type of road to be built, or the most effective use of vehicles that travel on it, and so on. These are problems which are not peculiar to Western Australia alone. Similar problems are being met by Governments and railways in other parts of the world. To my knowledge there is a section of test road on the Geelong-Melbourne road on which the question of road haulage and road building is being tested. In the United States a great degree of experimental work is being conducted along similar lines.

I happen to have information of a particular test that was conducted recently in America and which is termed the "Washo" test. This is one of those abbreviations that have become so common. That test was conducted by the Western Association of State Highway Officials. The preamble to the article, which has been extracted from the spring, 1956, copy of the "Road International," is rather interesting and it reads as follows:—

The road test sponsored by the Western Association of State Highway Officials, and called "WASHO" for that reason, was initiated to determine the effect of heavy traffic on bituminous pavements (i.e. road foundations and surfaces) and the behaviour of various pavement designs, with soil and weather conditions typical of much of Western America.

That indicates that they have much the same sort of problem that confronts us. They do not really know what is the best combination of road and vehicle to use to get the cheapest haulage per ton mile in any particular set of circumstances.

It was with the thought of endeavouring to gain for ourselves some data on these lines that I gave notice of motion yesterday for the appointment of a select committee, the suggested terms of reference for which appear on today's notice paper. I consider that if such an experimental test road were constructed and the performance of vehicles and the road itself placed continuously under observation, we could produce data which would enable us to determine what sort of road should be

built to handle economically a given tonnage every twelve months in any particular area. We could then be in the position of being able to say what the construction costs and the cost of haulage per ton mile were likely to be.

I suggest that if we only had that data it would be possible for the Government of this State to approach the Grants Commission and possibly beat it to the punch, as it were, by submitting a counter proposal rather than waiting until the axe dropped—if I may put it that way—by the commission saying to us, "We are not going to continue subsidising the inefficiencies in your railways any longer and it is up to you to put your house in order." I believe it is high time that we set about the task of accumulating the necessary data to determine what sort of a road is necessary and what the economics of a particular railway line or a road may be.

If we had that information I consider that we would have not only the basis of a sound case to put to the Grants Commission or the Commonwealth Government, but we would also have some very sound facts to produce in any particular district in an endeavour to convince the settlers and the community generally to be so served that we were not leaving them out in the cold, that we had a good and tried proposition in our hands, that we knew where we were going with it and that we were able to state what the advantages of the better service would be.

I do not think there is anybody in this State, or even in Australia, who can supply the real answer to that question. That is, an answer that will correlate the cost of haulage per ton mile and the cost of road construction and maintenance. Those are the questions we have to answer before we can go forward with any degree of certainty with any proposition to build such a road. I think there are roads in this State—I have one in mind—that could be used for this purpose at no great cost to the Government and which would have the tonnage of goods travelling over them which would be necessary to produce some very useful data fairly quickly.

Obviously, when one talks in terms of roads that carry 4,995 tons of goods a year, it is easy to realise that it is going to take quite a long time to ascertain what the cost is going to be if we are to put the road through that area, because there is insufficient traffic travelling over the line.

The Minister for Transport: What is the length of that railway?

Mr. HEARMAN: Fifty miles, and it earns £850 a year. The Minister knows that there are roads in the South-West which are carrying considerable tonnages every year. It is a type of road such as that which would supply the data that would enable us to determine what economies would be effected by replacing any railway line with road transport. As

I have said before, that seems to me to be the 64-dollar question and when we got the answer to that one, I think that we would have a case which would enable us to approach not only the Grants Commission but also the Commonwealth Government itself. I believe that it is very likely the Commonwealth may be prepared to co-operate in a project, properly handled, of this nature.

I am convinced that it is not a problem peculiar to Western Australia alone and the question of the best possible use of road transport is one which obviously is of importance to the whole of Australia generally. Furthermore, I point out that the intention behind the thinking here is not that we desire to take all the traffic away from the railway lines and put it on to the road. The object is purely to concentrate traffic, particularly in areas of low traffic density, at the railhead where economic loadings for trains can be obtained and thereby enable the railways to operate at least less unprofitably.

The intention behind this thinking is not that we are going to suggest that immediately we should run tremendous trucks over all our State roads, but it is an honest effort to try to get the best and the most economical service possible in these areas which present a problem by virtue of their low traffic density. Any economies that can be achieved as a result obviously must benefit not only the farming community, but also the whole of the community generally. I would like to break away completely from this idea that our freight rates have to be based on those that operate in the Eastern States.

The Minister for Transport: I think the greatest obstacle to anything new are local pressure groups.

Mr. HEARMAN: I think the Minister might be right and the answer would be to produce sufficient factual data which can be obtained in this State on this particular question. I think the Minister will agree with me that it is more than a question of just building a road; it is a question of maintaining it and handling the traffic. In the United States they have the pick-a-back system and this, together with other ideas, could be tried and perhaps incorporated on an experimental test road.

The Minister for Transport: But even people who do not use the railways scream at any suggestion that the railway is to be removed from their own locality.

Mr. HEARMAN: I am prepared to go this far if it will help: We have to recognise the fact that the Government cannot provide an efficient and cheap rail service to everyone in this State, and at the same time allow the people to send goods anywhere they like by other means of transport. We must be a bit realistic in this matter.

The Minister for Transport: If the Government technical officers suggested the closing down of certain lines on a certain date when roads would be in a position to handle the traffic, would the member for Blackwood support the Government in this experiment?

Mr. HEARMAN: I would want to know what the proposition was.

The Minister for Transport: This is based on technical advice.

Mr. HEARMAN: I do not think the technical advice is available in this State. In America the advice has not yet been obtained in all cases. The quicker we can produce the data, the better it will be. The suggestion in the motion on the notice paper is that we should set about getting the information. We can get it fairly quickly.

The Minister for Transport: There may be more of this information here than you imagine.

Mr. HEARMAN: In which case the Government should produce it. I can readily understand the view of a person who is served by a railway line and who is told that it is to be taken up. He would want to know the alternative form of transport and the cost.

The Minister for Transport: He is usually the type who sees his member of Parliament to try to bring about transport by road.

Mr. HEARMAN: I agree. I would point out to the Minister that I have always persuaded the people in my electorate to use the railway lines. I do not want to see the lines pulled up in my electorate and I make no bones about that. If they are available the people should use them. Over a number of years that was the stand I took and I am not going back on it.

The Minister for Transport: We have reached the stage when we must make a decision because there is not sufficient offering for both forms of transport.

Mr. HEARMAN: That is what it amounts to. The railway lines were put in during the horse and buggy days, and the buggy was used as a feeder. Now we have roads running parallel to the railways in areas which do not warrant even one form of transport. We cannot do that sort of thing without having to pay for it. People in all parts of the State are paying for it, including those living in areas where the railways are showing a profit. They are also penalised. It is not as though those people all live on Perth's doorstep. Some of them are 200 miles away where there is not even a water scheme. Some have not received a great deal of assistance from the Government, as compared with the settlers under large project schemes. The former battle on their own.

It is not as though my proposal will cost the Government a great amount of money. Those people are deserving of some consideration when there is talk of increasing the freights. What about the consideration for the person who is playing the game with the railways? I have covered as fully as I intend to the desirability and need for an experimental road. I hope the Government will give this matter some consideration. It will be further debated on the private members' day. I hope the matter is treated on its merits then and not as a party matter. Previously I discussed this matter with the Minister for Railways and he is well aware of the fact that mine is an effort to be helpful.

There is one aspect of railway management to which I draw attention, and that is where Government policy comes in and this House should be made aware of it. It relates to the tremendous loss on the metropolitan-suburban rail service. This service has been increased appreciably during the term of the present Government but losses are becoming very great. For the year 1954-55 the losses on the suburban line—by that I mean the line between Fremantle, Bellevue and Armadale—was £1,046,000. This loss was sustained on passenger traffic.

Perhaps the system of railway accountancy can be described as peculiar. Quoting this figure in the bare manner, I queried whether it gave a correct picture because, to be fair, this figure does not take into account the freight hauled in the metropolitan-suburban section. At any rate it shows that the coaching traffic on that line for 1954 sustained a very substantial loss. It is not quite fair to put the whole maintenance charge for this section on to the coaching traffic, because obviously some of it should be debited to goods haulage. I am not criticising the system of accountancy. In my view the figure, without giving a completely accurate picture, illustrates that the losses on the metropolitan-suburban service are very considerable, and that in the aggregate overall picture they must play a big part in the total railway deficit.

The Minister for Transport: The metropolitan railway line would carry more goods than the other lines in the State.

Mr. HEARMAN: I agree. It would not carry any more were it not for the existence of the other lines. The products must be grown in the country before they can be sent to the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Transport: The damage done by the trucks and the consequent maintenance would not be caused so much by the passenger trains as by the goods trains.

Mr. HEARMAN: This is a technical question and speeds come into it. I am not competent to argue on that and I doubt whether the Minister is, either. Viewing

the figures intelligently, I agree that they do not truly represent the position, but they do show a substantial loss in coaching traffic. In the aggregate they become an appreciable part of the total deficit.

In effect, the Commonwealth Grants Commission policy has enabled us to provide a losing passenger service in the suburban area. It has enabled us to put on extra trains and to increase the maintenance cost for the line and to keep our fares at such a rate that a lot of passenger traffic has been taken away from private omnibuses, so that now the private bus companies are having difficulty in making ends meet, and thus the way to socialise them is made easy.

That, obviously, is the result of the Government not concerning itself very greatly about the loss sustained on the coaching traffic in the metropolitan area. If it had to consider this loss, then I suggest its policy might have been very different. If it felt it had to meet some of the financial losses, it might not be so prepared to build up traffic which shows a loss. I am informed that generally in railway systems, passenger traffic does not pay. There are certain centres, such as the underground in London, the subway in New York and Paris, where there is electric traction and where there is a heavy city population running into millions, in which passenger traffic does pay. But under the circumstances in this State this cannot be done.

The Minister for Transport: In the places you mentioned, if rail transport is paying then road transport is not.

Mr. HEARMAN: That might be so. The point is that this State is in no way comparable to those cities. What can be done in those cities is not of very much use to us here.

The Minister for Transport: The point is that overall metropolitan-suburban passenger services show losses in practically every part of the world.

Mr. HEARMAN: That is possibly true. I go further and concede that at one time I advocated cutting out completely passenger traffic on the suburban lines so as to eliminate the losses, but Professor Stephenson said that, from a town-planning angle, passengers cannot be transported by road indefinitely, and the time will come when we must get back to the railway line to handle at least a portion of the passenger traffic.

It may well be that additional charges ultimately will have to be paid for transport by rail, and will be imposed on country communities. The position will arise where the country communities will subsidise the metropolitan area unless the whole position is kept in balance. There are some sections of the line in the country which are paying, but there is no section in the metropolitan area that appears to be profitable. This is a wide problem and

there are many facets to it, and the question of marshalling yards, goods yards, chord lines and the like arises.

The people in the country have a very definite stake in this matter. I would like to hear what the Government proposes to do so as to ensure that the metropolitan area at least bears a fair share of the losses that are sustained on the metropolitan-suburban service.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member's time has expired.

Mr. BOVELL: I move—

That the hon. member's time be extended.

Motion put and passed.

Mr. HEARMAN: I thank members for the extension. I did not intend to speak at such length, but the Minister for Transport has kept me going. The Government has adopted a carefree attitude and soon after it came into office, it increased the number of metropolitan-suburban services. In answer to a question asked, it was stated that the cost was £1,500 a week to put on additional trains over the weekend. If that sort of thing is allowed to continue when the financial position generally is in such a grave state, when it is at the stage where it can have a most serious impact on the overall economic position, it can easily affect the works programme and provisions of that nature. If it is good enough for the Government to ask the country communities to bear the extra impost, which appears inevitable, then it is good enough to expect the people in the metropolitan area to carry their fair share of the burden.

After all, there are certain disadvantages for people living in the country, and they are entitled to some consideration; and if there is to be any sort of weighting at all and sharing of the cost, it should benefit the country community generally rather than the city dwellers. When all is said and done, even over a year the actual amount that the metropolitan-suburban passenger pays is relative chicken feed by comparison with what the man in the country pays. Last night the Leader of the Country Party submitted some figures with regard to certain items from Perth to various destinations and there was an amount of £24 on the smallest item.

This question of freight is a very important one to the country dweller, and I feel that our whole railway system must be considered under a completely new concept. If we continue thinking that we should tack ourselves on to the Eastern States, and that everything is right because the Grants Commission says so, we will find that we are living in a fool's paradise.

If the Government is somewhat ahead of me on this matter and can show me that it already has the data that I suggest should be collected, I shall be very pleased to have

it produced and to see the Government do something about it. But if the Government is not in that position, I hope that it will give consideration to the suggestion I have outlined on the notice paper.

I would like to reiterate that I think we must be realists about this matter, and we cannot properly and decently ask that lines should be maintained which are not even paying the wages of one single fettler. When we have to keep 50 miles of line in operation and do not get from it the wages of one fettler, one wonders how silly we can get.

We have to be a little more realistic about this business, and I believe the Minister for Transport is thinking along the same lines. It is true that we already have some information in regard to some of these lines; but just how far are we prepared to go and where are we prepared to draw the line and say that one railway system can be replaced by road haulage and that it would not pay to adopt that course in regard to another? How far that has been determined after taking into consideration all the facts is a question to which I do not think we have the answer. If we have, it seems inconceivable to me that any Government would allow the present position to continue. Therefore I think it is highly doubtful whether the Government has all the detail it really needs to enable it to draw that line of demarcation. I hope that the member for Fremantle is now a little more convinced.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I thought you were going to be progressive. A helicopter would shift all that stuff in a few days.

Mr. HEARMAN: I think the hon. member might have something there.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: There is only a handful of stuff to be shifted.

Mr. HEARMAN: I agree. But it is costing this Government £18,000 to shift it. I do not know whether the member for Fremantle is prepared to justify that and say it is a good thing. I do not know whether he is ready to get up on the Fremantle hustings and say to the unemployed, "We cannot find money to keep you employed, but we can find £18,000 to cart a few thousand tons of goods per year." I do not know whether he is prepared to stand up and say that. But that is what he should be saying, because that is what his Government is doing.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It could be shifted by helicopter.

Mr. HEARMAN: That is a possibility, and I would welcome any suggestion from the hon. member to include that in the terms of the inquiry envisaged in the motion on the notice paper. It is a point he might remember when he says that the Government has not enough money to find work for people out of employment. That is one of the reasons the Government has not sufficient money.

If the Government were to adopt a more realistic view of this matter and put its own house in order so far as the railways are concerned—I have mentioned only three or four aspects of the matter, and there are many more—it might have a case with which to go to the Federal Government. It might be able to say that it had a sound business proposition which it needed money to implement. But to go along and say, "We are in trouble financially and we want some more money," when this sort of thing is going on, is not quite fair on the taxpayers of Australia, any more than it is on the users of the railways. That is a not unimportant factor.

If half of what the Premier told us about the economic position and the unemployment position in Western Australia is only half true, then obviously it behoves the Government to get into this question, which is the biggest single financial headache it has, and take a more realistic view of it by showing a tendency and willingness to deal with the matter. The Minister for Transport asked whether I would be behind the Government. If I thought the Government were going to do this, I would be behind it.

The Minister for Works: How far behind?

Mr. HEARMAN: I think I am a bit in front of the Government at the moment, and I would like it to catch up with me. That would be a step in the right direction. I do not think the Minister's interjection was completely fair, though I do not resent it. He knows perfectly well what I have done in my own electorate in connection with the railways. He knows that I have not always just simply bowed to popular clamour; and I would remind him that the previous Minister for Railways was generous enough to say so on the floor of this House. I think the comment of the Minister was not quite fair; but it does not worry me. He can easily find out how far I will be behind the Government—in my opinion I am ahead of it—by giving it a go; and that might put quite a lot of members in the position of saying where they stand on this matter.

As a matter of fact, I thank the Deputy Premier for his interjection; and I would add that I think the whole problem has been inquired into, because we have had select committees and inquiries into the subject from the top and from every conceivable angle. The Minister can say what he likes and can play politics on it or not; but ultimately the responsibility gets right back into this House, and if members are prepared really to face up to it, we can do something.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You do not expect to get anywhere with select committees and Royal Commissions, do you?

Mr. HEARMAN: I suggest that if we were to appoint a select committee we would make members accept a modicum of responsibility.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: Hope springs eternal!

Mr. HEARMAN: Yes.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I remember there was a select committee which was not viewed favourably by the hon. member and that was the one on potatoes. The hon. member was against that.

Mr. HEARMAN: The member for Fremantle may be the oldest member of the House, and I revere and respect him as such; but his memory is starting to go, because I was not a member of the House when that select committee sat. He is mixing me up with the member for Vasse. I think I won that round.

Mr. Court: The member for Fremantle did not get very far with his motion regarding Fremantle harbour.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You were against it, too.

Mr. HEARMAN: I would remind the member for Fremantle that he has made many attempts to have something done about Fremantle harbour—and the bridge. I think he has opinions about the bridge at Fremantle, too. He still keeps on battling.

So far as the transport and railway problem is concerned, we have no option. There is far less time to deal with that matter than many might think. I believe the axe is poised over us even now and might drop even within the next 12 months. It is time to stop shilly-shallying, and it comes down to the degree of responsibility that members themselves are prepared to take. If I felt that the Government were really prepared to go ahead in this matter, I would be willing to help it, and I make no apologies for saying that.

The Minister for Health: The railways in England are showing a deficit.

Mr. HEARMAN: I know.

The Minister for Health: They have not closed any lines.

Hon. L. Thorn: They have been nationalised.

Mr. HEARMAN: Yes. They used to provide a nice taxation return for the Chancellor of the Exchequer in England when they were operated by private companies. They do not do that now.

The Minister for Health: You know the reason they had to nationalise the railways, do you not? The private companies could not carry on.

Mr. HEARMAN: That might be and it might not be.

The Minister for Health: It is true.

Mr. HEARMAN: In any case, that is a bit like the flowers that bloom in the spring.

Mr. Evans: The flowers that bloom are a little brighter than this argument.

Mr. HEARMAN: The hon. member probably knows the rest of the quotation—

The flowers that bloom in the spring,
tra la,

Have nothing to do with the case.

I've got to take under my wing, tra la,
A most unattractive old thing,
tra la,

With a caricature of a face.

That is the position of this railway problem. It is an unwanted baby; and if we go on with it long enough, it will not die a natural death but become a problem that could easily embarrass people on both sides of the House.

We could continue to meet railway deficits from our own revenue, but I am appalled when I think of the effect of that on the general works programme; and from that point of view I think the Minister for Works would like to see something done about the problem. He knows it is not an easy one. The Government has shown that it does not know where it is going because, prior to the election, it said it would not increase freights; but as soon as it was elected, it said that it must put them up. And now it does not know when it will do so.

Mr. O'Brien: The Government said that it would keep them at the lowest possible level.

Mr. HEARMAN: What frightens me is what the lowest possible level will be. That frightens the hon. member, too, or it should do, and I am afraid it will do when he hears what it is.

Mr. O'Brien: You are speaking now; I will speak later.

Mr. HEARMAN: I will be very pleased to hear the hon. member. In fact, I will give him his opportunity now.

MR. GAFFY (Canning) [5.58]: I think it is proper at this, my most privileged hour, that I should thank the electors of Canning for the confidence they bestowed in me at the recent elections; and I assure them that I will not consciously betray that confidence.

Next, I would like to join with other members in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, upon your elevation to your high office. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking the Leader of the Opposition for the kindly thought which prompted his advice to new members on the financial situation as debated here and the gesture tending to draw us all within the orbit of the House. I would like to thank him, too, for his congratulations to new members, his concluding remarks on that occasion notwithstanding.

We are indeed fortunate, I feel, to be possessed of the amenities we now enjoy; and having regard to this, I think we should do much more than give a passing thought to those to whom we owe so much. I refer to the senior citizens of Western Australia, to borrow a term which has been applied to these people. I would borrow that phrase from the Minister for Justice—the senior citizens of Western Australia—because when we realise that in many cases the very nature of their work precluded them from establishing and enjoying the comforts of a home such as we all hope to enjoy, we must agree that we should give them something concrete, something that is their undeniable right, and not just charity. I hope that this may be achieved.

I was happy to learn from His Excellency's Speech that the economic and social advancement of the natives is continuing throughout the State. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that this is a project that should be given a high priority. Every effort should be made to fit the younger ones into our economic structure and not let them, after schooling, just revert to the bush, as was pointed out to us by the member for Narrogin.

With the object of their employment in trades after leaving school, a religious order has erected in Riverton a building costing many thousands of pounds and containing single rooms with washing facilities in each room. The building is to be used as a hostel for suitable boys from missions, serving apprenticeships in the metropolitan area and it is to be hoped that every assistance will be given these people to achieve their ambitions. The Government could assist here by having Government workshops employ some of these lads.

Dealing with industry, I believe that the introduction of works committees in workshops would give a great boost to production both as to quality and quantity. In England I understand they have such committees, the complement being equal numbers from administration and employees, plus one from the latter. I believe that such committees would bring about greater understanding between administration and employees and therefore lead to greater harmony. I would like to see the Government appoint a committee to investigate this aspect of industry.

While I agree that much good has come of the recent drive to purchase Western Australian goods, I feel that were the manufacturers to label their goods more attractively and more boldly, so that shoppers—in many cases elderly people—could see more clearly that the goods were made in this State, an even better result would be achieved. I believe that every effort should be made to attract tourist trade to Western Australia and I suggest that an earnest endeavour be made to publicise our numerous attractions and to

add to their number. With the object of advertising Western Australia and attracting tourists I think that no stone should be left unturned to have the Empire Games in Perth. There is indeed much merit in the suggestion that unimproved land adjacent to existing railways should be cultivated. This is a question similar to that of the light land and land of poorer quality in assured rainfall areas, but when, and if, this step is considered, it would be wise to have exhaustive laboratory tests made of these lands to ascertain the most suitable and economic crops that could be grown thereon.

There can be no denying the fact that there is great potential wealth in our inland in the North, the North-West and our mineral belt. Much wealth has been won from our auriferous country, and there is every reason to suppose that much is still to be won, but, because of the overburden and other factors, it is beyond the resources of the average prospector to thoroughly test the country and I believe that deep drilling is the answer. There is no reason to suppose that where good occurrences have been found and lost, they cannot be found again, or that they do not occur again in the same line of country or that other payable lodes may not be found at depth.

At the risk of being considered parochial, which indeed I am, I would like to draw the attention of members to the needs of my electorate. Although in Canning our needs are few and our blessings many, nevertheless those needs are vital. In Riverton, a district of some 9 to 10 square miles, home development to date has been carried out by the residents themselves, both physically and financially, without any outside assistance, but to further that development we need, in the eastern end, drainage. Because of the physical features of the country, this work would not, in comparison with other districts, be costly.

At the western end we have the opposite problem, in that we need water there. Many homes have so far been built in that part of the district and a large number of them are waiting for the water scheme to be proceeded with. The installation of that scheme would increase the population in the area. The next requirements are an improved bus service and the presence of a medical practitioner to practise there. This is something which is badly needed because the few doctors who are willing to visit patients at their homes are well off the bus route, making it difficult for those who wish to do so to attend the surgeries. I trust that the Government will give earnest consideration to the questions I have raised.

In Manning the need of facilities for hospitalisation is great. A general purpose hospital there would serve a vast area and relieve the congestion on other already overcrowded hospitals. Failing this—for the time being—a maternity hospital with

from 10 to 12 beds is urgently needed and again I appeal to the Government for help. I trust that when the road from the proposed Narrows Bridge goes through the Como-Canning Bridge area, the existing beauty and accessibility of the Como foreshore will not only be retained but also enhanced.

In the Applecross-Mt. Pleasant-Brentwood area the need is for a high school, which is vitally necessary for the whole of the Canning electorate and beyond, in view of the number of children who are already at or approaching high school age. This school is a must and should be situated somewhere centrally between Kent-st. High School and the John Curtin High School as it would then relieve the pressure on those two schools and would also mean a great deal of relief in regard to our school transport problems.

Believing, as I do, that education is the basic formula from which the solution of many of our problems may be calculated, I must press firmly for this school. Knowledge is power and in view of the recent rapid expansion of automation, I am glad to know that the Government contemplates the raising of the school leaving age. I trust that this policy will be implemented at an early date as if any sacrifices are to be made, they should be made by the parents and not the children. In conclusion, I thank members for the manner in which they have received me.

MR. GRAYDEN (South Perth) [6.10]: There are several matters affecting South Perth with which I intend to deal but I desire first to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election to the Chair. You have served for many years on the floor of the House and it must be gratifying to you that your services have been recognised in this fashion. I am sure that all who have known you in the past will rejoice at the fact that you have been elected to your present position. I think all members feel sure that you will carry out your duties impartially and ably. I take this opportunity, also, of congratulating the Chairman of Committees on his election to that post. His is a particularly difficult task but we know it will be performed with ability and to the satisfaction of members generally.

I agree with the member for Nedlands who said, the other night, that he did not believe in criticising for the sake of criticism, and that he did not believe in merely criticising destructively but felt that praise should be given where it was due. I echo those sentiments and although I am opposed, politically, to the Premier and his Government, I feel that praise should be given where it is due and that those on this side of the House should be able to make sufficient political capital

out of simply pointing out necessary improvements in Government administration. If we cannot criticise constructively and give praise where it is due, I feel we do not deserve the confidence of the people of the State to whom we look for support in our endeavour to gain the Treasury bench.

Mr. May: I can see you have been through a good school.

Mr. GRAYDEN: I congratulate the Government on its decision to proceed with the Narrows Bridge project, which I am certain will receive the support of about 98 p.c. of the people of South Perth. Naturally, many residents of that area must have experienced some regret at the thought that the splendid peace and quiet which has been characteristic of South Perth for so long will be disturbed, but we hope that anything lost in that direction will be more than offset by increased accessibility to the ocean beaches and the City of Perth.

Anyone who has travelled over the Causeway at peak periods must realise that it has reached saturation point and that if the construction of the Narrows Bridge is delayed any longer, the position will become absolutely chaotic. The Government is to be commended also on having decided to allow private enterprise to construct the new bridge as I am sure it will be built more economically and in a much shorter space of time in that way than if the Public Works Department were to do the job. I do not wish to imply any criticism of that department but, by its very nature, the Public Works Department must plan a continuity of work and, in addition, it probably has on hand many projects that might be of even greater priority.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GRAYDEN: Before tea I think I concluded on the note that we in South Perth hoped that the benefits which will accrue from the new Narrows Bridge will more than outweigh the disadvantages. We do not take a selfish view; we realise the bridge will be of great benefit to the people throughout the metropolitan area, and indeed to the State. We also realise that the requirements of the majority in a matter such as this must be paramount. The bridge is, of course, being built to serve as a river crossing for the proposed Perth-Kwinana Highway.

The highway is to run along the foreshore adjacent to the existing Melville Parade. I would like to emphasise to the Minister for Works that we are concerned that the highway should not run too close to residential areas. The residents of South Perth have already presented a petition in regard to that matter to the South Perth Municipal Council and the municipality endorsed the principle of it. I think they

have communicated with the Minister for Works and they are whole-heartedly opposed to any roads—and there may be another one subsequently from the Causeway to Mill Point Road—which would run too close to the houses. On the other hand, a certain amount of reclamation could be done and the road could be put well away from the homes. We ask the Minister to keep that point in the forefront of his mind. It might cost a little more to reclaim a certain portion of the river foreshore, but it would be more desirable from the point of view of the residents of South Perth.

The new highway between the Narrows Bridge and Canning Bridge will also cut right across the present Como beach. Again, I would like to stress to the Minister that that beach serves not only the people of South Perth but also those from Manning Park and Victoria Park and suburbs even more distant. Many thousands of children use the beach each year and accordingly we are anxious to see a beach at least equal to the present one built at Como, when the present road is completed.

The Minister has already given an assurance that this will be so and we are also pleased to hear that the engineers of the Public Works Department feel that such a beach will not require constant work to keep it in reasonable order. While I am on the subject of the Como beach, may I ask the Minister to proceed with the work in a manner which will cause the minimum of disturbance to the business community adjacent to the present beach? I think the road could well be built in such a way as to cause a minimum of dislocation. For instance, the beach itself could be left this summer and the remaining portion completed. Then, say, next winter it could be reclaimed and in that manner the business community there would not have to more or less cease operations for a year or possibly two years. If the Public Works Department gave that aspect some consideration, it would not only leave the beach open for children who are using it but it would also assist traders in that area.

There is another matter which again concerns South Perth, and to some extent the metropolitan area, and which has received some attention. I refer to the question of the botanical gardens. Recently it was suggested that an area should be set aside in the Floreat Park district for a botanical gardens, and I understand that the Perth City Council and the then Perth Gardens Board had some discussion on this question. No agreement could be reached, however, and I believe that only the other day one of the Perth City councillors suggested that the botanical gardens should be situated on the new Heirisson Island which is halfway across the Causeway.

On the other hand, I believe that the Government has already made a decision to establish botanical gardens in the new John Forrest National Park in the hills. I hope that decisions has not been made because I do not think that that site is suitable. It is probably an admirable setting for Australia flora and fauna but as far as botanical gardens are concerned, I suggest it should be situated where the present zoological gardens is located.

There is some criticism of the zoo, but I am sure most people hope that it will remain in South Perth. Over the years the number of animal exhibits could be reduced, but the area itself should be preserved either as a park or a botanical gardens. It is a wonderful site for a botanical gardens because it is extremely accessible, being served by a very good bus service and the ferries. In addition, we will shortly have the Narrows Bridge. Apart from that, the South Perth zoological gardens have hot mineral waters that are peculiar to the site and they would be of great benefit to hothouses and the like; no other means of heating would be required. Accordingly, if the Government has not made a firm decision in regard to the botanical gardens, it should seriously consider the benefit such a garden would be on the site of the present South Perth zoo.

I do not suggest that everything should be established in South Perth but there is another matter which is also causing some interest at the present time and that is the question of an Olympic pool. It was suggested that it be sited in King's Park and there has been a great deal of criticism on that score. I understand the Perth City Council has more or less made up its mind that that is where it should be. They were the sponsors of the programme and therefore their views on the subject should be considered very seriously. At the same time, I understand that the council is considering raising possibly only half the finance and the Government will be called upon to provide the other half.

Accordingly I suggest that consideration should be given for that establishment to be sited in the vicinity of the South Perth Gardens because, as I have already pointed out, the area is extremely accessible. There are also, of course, other reasons. People on the north side of the river have not got far to go to the beaches, and I do not think they would patronise an Olympic pool to the same extent as would those on the south side of the river. In addition to that, the King's Park site is served by a road that is fairly congested. On the other hand, as I have pointed out, at one corner of the South Perth zoo, namely, the junction of Angelo-st. and Labouchere-rd., there is no heavy traffic and it would be an admirable site.

Hon. D. Brand: Do you think the South Perth municipality would share in the expense?

Mr. GRAYDEN: I cannot speak for the South Perth municipality but I should imagine it would. There is no question that the site is an extremely accessible one, and it will be even more so when the Narrows Bridge is built. It would provide swimming facilities for a large number of people who at the present time have to attend Como beach. That beach is a wonderful place for small children but it is not so satisfactory for teenagers; it is certainly not as suitable as the sea.

There is only one other matter with respect to South Perth that I would like to bring up and that relates to the traffic hazards on Canning Highway. The Minister for Transport has already given consideration to the installation of traffic lights at the particularly dangerous intersection of Mill Point-rd, Berwick-st. and Canning Highway. We appreciate the reasons he enumerated in pointing out that the site is not suitable for traffic lights at the present time, but we hope he will keep it under consideration, as we feel sure he will, and install the lights at the earliest possible opportunity. There are other places along the highway between the Causeway and Canning Bridge that are extremely dangerous and some provision should be made for pedestrian crossings or crosswalks. The hazards are very real as the residents in the area will testify.

May I get off these rather parochial matters and on to one which is of State-wide importance? There may be no justification for my expressing fears concerning it but I asked some questions of the Minister for Native Welfare today and he said he would provide the answers next week. I thank him for that, but nevertheless I would like to touch on it because I think it is a matter of some importance. We know that atom bomb tests are to be conducted at Maralinga very shortly and in a spot reasonably close to the South Australian-Western Australian border. In a recent official statement it was said that the bombs would be exploded when favourable prevailing winds existed so that the atomic cloud would be taken either out to sea or to the uninhabited inland. The word "uninhabited" was specifically mentioned. I should imagine that if these tests are carried out it would be most unlikely that those responsible for the tests would choose a time when the prevailing wind would be going south, because this part of the range is very close to the trans-Australia railway and it is comparatively close to the shipping lanes across the Bight. Therefore, I think what is going to happen is this: They are going to wait for a wind which is blowing into the so-called uninhabited inland.

I would like to point out that we in Western Australia have always worked on a policy of non-interference so far as our bush natives are concerned, and I think this is a wise policy because, until such

time as we are going to offer them something better, we should not interfere with their present existence—even if it is only an existence. It is better not to touch them until we can offer them something better. What we are doing is this: We are depriving them of a very large area which they normally include in their tribal grounds.

Some three years ago, I happened to be on the Warburton mission and the mission was agog with the news that soldiers were at work on the South Australian side of the border. They asked me if I thought that the natives who had brought the news had travelled as far as the Woomera rocket range, but I discounted the reports because the range was too far away. They were insistent, however, that the natives would not be wrong. Apparently, the natives had watched the soldiers building the road to the Maralinga atom bomb site.

What I want to emphasise is this: These natives travel north from the Rawlinson and Warburton Ranges and they then drift back south and east across the border far into South Australia. Over 800 natives each year visit the Warburton mission where they may stay for possibly a week or so. But after that they have to go because there is insufficient food for them and it would mean starvation for these natives. It would be extremely difficult for the natives if we are going to step in now and possibly deprive them of half their tribal grounds. The situation as far as these 800, or more, are concerned, is extremely serious.

As I was saying, this is only one aspect of the problem. Another is this: It was mentioned that the inhabited portions would be in no danger from this test, but I understand that a certain danger zone has been declared around the Maralinga atom bomb site. What I want to know from the Minister is this: What assurances have been given by the Commonwealth to him as Minister for Native Welfare in Western Australia, that steps have been taken to see this particular danger zone has been cleared of natives and what steps to ensure that after the test the area is not contaminated, and to see that the natives do not wander back to the area after the tests.

I want to know whether the Minister is satisfied with the assurances given. It is difficult to contact the nomadic natives particularly as some have never been to the mission. There are others who have taken young children away from the mission. These children were not ill-treated, but did not like attending school, so their parents took them away to the Rawlinson Ranges, where they stayed rather than go back. What chance would a patrol have of contacting these people? A search in the danger zone would have to be extremely wide indeed. I consider that a patrol searching for these people must be maintained until all the danger is passed.

In addition, I would say that during the recent tests in the North-West, when an atom bomb was exploded, no aircraft were permitted to approach within 600 miles and no ships within 150 miles, in order to prevent danger from radio active particles from the fall out. At Maralinga they are waiting for a prevailing wind from the south or north, which will blow the particles to the so-called uninhabited areas. But there are thousands of natives living in those parts. It is not possible to travel anywhere there without seeing the smoke from native fires on the horizon.

There may be no danger at all from a drifting atomic cloud but if there is what would happen? There would be a radio active fall out and the water supplies would be contaminated. There are very few gnamma holes in the area and I presume they would be affected and the consequence could be extremely serious unless adequate precautions were taken. I am not suggesting that these tests should be stopped as I am in complete agreement with them, provided adequate precautions are taken.

However, if we have to interfere with the natives, let us not deprive them of their tribal grounds from which they obtain their livelihood without providing them with a satisfactory way of life. It is up to the Government of Western Australia to obtain special assistance from the Commonwealth and to do something for the natives. That is what I suggest. The Government should provide natives in those areas with alternative accommodation, adequate water supplies and officers to provide medical attention. These are really the three essentials. I have not a great deal of time so I will speak on something else which is of considerable importance to Western Australia.

I would ask the Government to give serious consideration to the building of a new highway through the centre of Western Australia. That sounds a very ambitious proposition, but it can be achieved at a cost of probably less than £20,000 simply by building 150 miles of road. Then we would have a new central highway to Alice Springs. Over the last year the Commonwealth has built a graded road 500 miles from Fink, which is just south of Alice Springs, to the Rawlinson Range. In Western Australia we have a good graded main road from here to Laverton and from Laverton there is now a road to the Warburton Mission. From the Warburton Mission to the graded Commonwealth road the distance is less the 150 miles—probably 130 miles. It is country over which we crossed some years ago. The 130 to 150 miles of road required could be constructed extremely cheaply.

There is a mining company in the north with which I am particularly familiar that built 125 miles of road in one year by taking a grader over once and coming back with it. The company built the road

for at least a quarter of the money necessary in grazing areas where the road I suggest would go. It should be possible to build a good road, at least the equal of this, in the agricultural areas by running a grader over it once or twice.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What type of country is it? Spinifex?

Mr. GRAYDEN: Spinifex and mulga country. I would further point out that such a road would not only provide a direct route with Alice Springs, Darwin and Queensland, but it has other advantages. For instance, it would have considerable defence significance. During the last war troops were concentrated in the Northern Territory and Queensland. To move them to the West they had to go down to Adelaide or Melbourne and across the Trans line to Perth. The direct route would obviate that. At present people going to Alice Springs and Darwin have two alternative routes—either they go by the Northern Highway and across the Fitzroy Crossing or by the Eyre Highway to Adelaide and then a 1,000 miles or so North to Alice Springs. They are the only two routes at the moment. I do not know what the figures are but the mileage would be very much shorter by the road which I have proposed. In addition a road through the centre would be much less vulnerable to attack than the Eyre Highway.

The Minister for Health: Is there any water on that central route?

Mr. GRAYDEN: There is no permanent water at present and it may be necessary to provide water catchments similar to those between Geraldton and Carnarvon.

The Minister for Health: Is there any underground water?

Mr. GRAYDEN: There are occasional soaks and it would be no trouble to find suitable sites for wells. Quite apart from the defence angle, which is I think of extreme importance, such a road would open up vast areas of country suitable for pastoral holdings.

There is an annual rainfall of 8in. over much of the area, and water for stock could easily be obtained. In addition to opening up these new areas of land it would also provide the Government of Western Australia with a means of contact and consequent upon that, a means of succouring these nomadic natives whom, as I mentioned earlier, exist on the verge of starvation.

If the Government provided water catchments along the road at a very low expense, similar to those on the Eyre Highway and those between Carnarvon and Geraldton, or if the Government put down wells every 20 miles, apart from making water available for those traversing the road, they would provide something of tremendous advantage to the nomadic natives in the area because there is no permanent water anywhere, and they are

completely dependent upon a few gallons usually in gnamma holes. There are many soaks. In places the natives have bored down more or less in the way of a rabbit warren or burrow, to a depth of 30 or 40 ft. in their search for a few gallons of water. If we provided water on that road it would make water available for the natives in the area, and that would be a tremendous benefit to them.

Strangely enough, most people seem to be under the impression that that country is abounding in game. Actually game is extremely scarce. There are very few kangaroos. A person might see four or five in hundreds of miles, whereas the pastoral areas in the north of this State are more or less alive with them. They abound there simply because the pastoralists have provided water. So, if we provide water for the natives the provision of that water will, in turn, attract game.

Another thing is that by providing a means of contact we could at least be able to give these natives some medical attention because it is an extremely common thing there to see children of three and four years leading their aged blind parents or others about at the end of a stick. These people look after their aged ones to a greater extent possibly, than do the white communities. In these places, where the struggle for survival is so grim, children who would not be old enough to go to kindergarten in our community, lead the blind about at the end of sticks.

The Minister for Health: Are they suffering from trachoma?

Mr. GRAYDEN: Yes, most of them. Blindness is only one disability. The smallest ailment causes untold suffering and death. We saw a child lying in the red dust and it was, because of its emaciated condition, obviously going to die. It was in that condition simply because it had an abscess on a tooth. In our community, with modern drugs, and foods such as eggs and milk, an ailment of that kind would be nothing, but there it could mean death. We saw another native who had lost a foot. That was caused by a tropical ulcer or some other trouble. The stump had not healed but he attempted to keep up with the party he was travelling with by vaulting along with a pole, because crutches are unknown to these people.

On this particular occasion it was a bitterly cold day. All the other natives were passing fire sticks over their bodies to keep warm, but this particular chap was bathed in perspiration. The nights there are bitterly cold—far colder than we experience here. Members can imagine the suffering this particular native went through. He would sit all night, with the ragged end of the stump unhealed, without any protection at all. I mention these matters only to emphasise that if this highway went through the centre, it would provide a means of access to these people

and we could give them some medical attention and provide other requirements for them.

I do not want to dwell any further on this subject except to suggest to the Government that it give serious consideration to it. Only 150 miles or less—possibly 130 miles—of road is involved, and that would provide the link between the road on the western side and the good graded road which the Commonwealth has now built to Sladen Waters in the Rawlinson Range. The Commonwealth Government has built that road for one purpose, namely, to service the weather station there which is to give reports for the Maralinga atom bomb site. The Commonwealth wants reports, and for that reason, and undoubtedly at tremendous expense, it has gone out of its way to complete 500 miles of road to Sladen Waters, and this now makes a central highway for Western Australia a practical proposition.

MR. POTTER (Subiaco) [8.6]: First, I should like to join with the other members in congratulating you, Sir, on your elevation to the position of Speaker of this House. On this, the occasion of my first speech here, I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor, Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver, who represented Subiaco for a period of over 20 years. This, I feel, justifies the high regard in which she was held by the electors. I can only say that I hope I will be held in such high regard after representing the same constituency for a similar period.

As a newcomer to this House I should like to express my appreciation for the courtesy shown me by members of all parties. I also would like to express my appreciation of the courtesy and co-operation shown me by the staff of the House. As a new member I must say that their help has been invaluable. Last, but not least I would like to thank the electors of Subiaco for the confidence they have placed in me, and I hope I shall be able to fulfil that trust. I say without qualification that I shall serve them irrespective of political party to the best of my ability.

I wish to touch upon a few local matters to which I desire the Government to give some attention. Although representations and communications have been made on several of these matters, I feel there is no harm in mentioning them here. First there is the question of the Axon-st. bridge which is in a poor state of repair. A new and wider structure is required—possibly of steel and concrete—to replace it. Then there are the trams in Rokeby-rd. They are very noisy, and representation has been made to me for their removal.

Now I turn to the question of cleaning up the King's Park frontage to Subiaco. I suggest the widening of Thomas-st. along the park frontage to conform with King's Park-rd. Thomas-st. would then

have two driveways with lawns, and gardens in the centre. I point out that the levels have already been taken, and this would reduce the expenditure for the job.

Another subject that has been exercising my mind, as well as the minds of many of my constituents and the members of the Subiaco City Council, and the minds of the people living adjacent to the areas I am about to mention, is the development of the university endowment lands, and other areas lying between Jolimont and Daglish, and immediately to the rear of those places. In fact, there is a wedge-shaped area of country covering many acres, stretching between the railway line at Daglish to the coast, with no lateral or north-south means of access. People living, for instance, in Wembley, Floreat Park, Innaloo and Double View, who desire to travel to Nedlands, Claremont or Fremantle, must travel either by the West Coast Highway, or by Railway-rd., Subiaco. These two means of access are several miles apart. Therefore, I visualise lateral roads through the extension of such thoroughfares as Jersey-st., Jolimont, to Daglish; Peel-st., Jolimont, through to Salvado-rd., and Selby-st. Wembley, to Nicholson-rd. subway in Shenton Park. I also suggest the extension of Hay-st., Jolimont, to the beach. This would create a new beach, but, with my colleague, the member for Wembley Beaches, I believe there should be some overall beach authority responsible for their development because not only would they be a boon to the local inhabitants, but a joy to visitors and a source of revenue in connection with our tourist trade.

Returning to the extension of Hay-st., this could be another means of relieving the traffic congestion by giving people a further means of access to and from the city. Much of the land itself is good residential country, and it seems criminal that it should be tied up within three miles of Perth whilst new housing areas have to be developed in the outer districts, far removed from the workers' place of employment. I have, since my election, often been approached for accommodation in Subiaco as it is close to the place of work of many people. Of course, not all of this land lends itself to housing.

I am not suggesting that housing projects should be undertaken in swampy places and the like. In those parts we could have parks, gardens, tree parks, playing fields, recreation grounds and the like. There are other matters that I would like to touch upon, but I feel I have made a few modest claims for the Government's consideration.

The Government is to be commended for its action in fostering the Trades Promotion Council as it is representative of all shades of political opinion as well as industrial, commercial, producer and consumer interests. Despite his absence,

I congratulate the Premier on making available £15,000 for the purposes of publicity for our local products. I feel that this should appeal to our local public, particularly to the housewives; I appeal to them to start buying our local products from the stores. The Western Australian public must realise that this is the only way to make ourselves comparable to the Eastern States. Every man, woman and child in the State must realise that it is only commonsense that every pound spent on Western Australian products is giving employment to Western Australians—the husbands of the housewives, their children and people with families.

If we are to hold this country, industries must be encouraged here and it is the patriotic duty of every citizen to support such industries. An American speaking to me a short while ago commented on the indifference of some housewives to the purchase of local products. He thought it was lamentable and he said that it was the bounden duty of every housewife in America to purchase articles produced in that country. I think if we look at American development we will find that that has been largely the case.

I have no fear that my constituents will not support this drive, because they have been encouraged to think of buying locally through the local paper and through the local trades association. Thus, it is only one more step to the purchase of locally made articles. Furthermore they are intensely loyal and they are generous when it comes to worthy causes, no matter what the charity may be. This also applies to State or Commonwealth appeals and I should like to quote an extract from a letter I received from the Deputy Director of Commonwealth Loans. I quote—

The Pennants have been awarded for the district's successes in the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th Commonwealth Security Loans, details being as follows:—

Security Loan	Quota Allotted	Amount Raised	
		£	£
22nd—March 1955	35,000		38,870
23rd—August 1955	26,000		63,110
24th—November-December 1955	26,000		26,700
25th—May 1956	28,000		76,340

In the 25th Commonwealth Security Loan Subiaco raised more money than any other district in this State.

I feel sure you will be interested to know that in all Commonwealth Loans since 1941 Subiaco has raised a total of £1,500,000, and during that period has been awarded a total of 24 Pennants by the Commonwealth Government for over-subscribing Loan quotas.

So I feel that the Trade Promotion Council, in its drive for support of locally produced products, will have the whole-hearted support of the residents of Subiaco.

Naturally, as the representative of a constituency in which there is a rather large industrial area, I am interested in the development of trade and the industrial expansion of our State, and I listened rather attentively to the member for Narrogin when he spoke of the processing of our primary products. I agree that every encouragement should be given in that direction, and I feel sure that the Government will be most sympathetic to any practical scheme of that description. I might suggest, too, that this is largely a matter of private initiative. But I can also point to the need, and indeed necessity for the processing of many of our minerals. In fact, much of our research should go into the economics of the marketing of our raw materials, of the processed and of the manufactured article, in regard to both primary products and our mineral wealth.

During his speech, the member for Narrogin also talked of trade with our Asian neighbours. With this I agree; but I feel that we must have some reorientation of our ideas of trade, not only with regard to the marketable price obtainable in those countries as against our own internal cost of production, but we must also show our willingness to share our material blessings without ulterior motives, as a friend and co-operator—help them to help themselves. Indeed, we should be prepared to give them technical and administrative education and advice as well as trade with them in the orthodox concept. We could take some of their raw materials for the purpose of manufacturing them here into the completed articles. I believe there is some parallel in Germany's trade with Pakistan at present, where they supply not only the goods and the equipment but also the technicians. Since boyhood I have listened to this subject of trade with our Asian neighbours. There has always been a sharp divergence of opinion as to whether individuals and British companies should not set up plants in Western Australia and trade with Asia in preference to the establishment of factories in those countries, in view of the general insecurity and probable political instability.

In the light of recent events we can say that this view has some merit. I would say to the British, Dutch, Western European countries, Americans, and those who have had dealings with Africa and Asian countries, that Western Australia is the place to invest their capital and erect their factories in order to trade with those countries. I would say further that now is the time because we are prepared and we are equipped to expand. We have an adequacy of power, water, transport, roads, docking facilities and the like, and we have available to us coal and many other raw materials. So the task should be easy.

To the Australian people and to the Australian Governments I would say that it is time we had a reorientation of our thinking on matters of trade, foreign affairs and defence and looked both ways as other countries do. Let us not only say "Australia and the Pacific" and "Australia and America" but also "Australia and the Indian Ocean" and "Australia and Africa" and "Australia and Asia" and include all those countries of the British Commonwealth which bound the Indian Ocean.

I could speak for some length of time on this subject and the need for a reliable agency in many of these countries; of the need for direct shipping, and so on, for it takes less time to travel to many of these places than it takes, by sea, to go to Sydney or Melbourne. The same thing applies in regard to our marketable products. It does not matter what type of political economy we may or may not embrace; the difference will lie only in our approach. Whilst many of the matters I have mentioned may not directly concern this House, we as Western Australians are most vitally concerned and must give some thought to them. I would say to the member for Narrogin, in regard to this Asian outlook, and this African, Asian and Australian relationship, that if we do well for ourselves, we do well for everybody. If we do not give some impetus to it, we will leave a chink in the Australian armour that we may well live to rue.

Never perhaps has there been a more appropriate time to speak of such matters with the Suez Canal crisis darkening our horizon. The insecurity of tenure of our naval bases at Trincomalee and Singapore; the rise of nationalism in those countries; the overthrow of Asian feudalism and the moves to overthrow the white man's domination fostered by communists and individuals within those countries who wish to further their own ends, must give us all a good deal of food for thought.

Without speaking on the merits or demerits of the position, but rather looking objectively at the scene and saying "Where do we fit in?", I would say to our people and to our Governments, "Never has the time been more propitious to push this matter of trade with our near Asian neighbours." Also, we should push our State's claim in this regard and ask the Commonwealth Government to take a greater interest in Indian Ocean affairs.

This is one of the matters which I think should concern us when we look at the position. It is not only a matter of defence but also a matter of survival of this and future generations—the matter of trade with our Asian neighbours. We look east all the time; we visualise Canberra and we do not look towards our north and the African continent. Almost an ocean of land separates us from the east and

sometimes Canberra could well be termed the capital of the Eastern States and Perth the capital of the West.

There is another feature I would like to mention, too. Since I have been in this House members opposite have spoken about trade and the other day I listened to the Leader of the Opposition make some mention of the lack of news coverage given by our local papers to parliamentary business and the affairs of the State. I may be forgiven if I did not report him correctly. He did set me thinking of the role played by the newspapers, the radio and the news coverage generally; the part that is played with regard to inviting foreign capital and industries here. Before I condemn them, however, I should like to commend West Australian Newspapers Ltd. for making available to reporters from interstate and overseas newspapers the opportunity of seeing and reporting on the North-West of our State.

I condemn the tendency on the part of many of our newspapers to depreciate the Australian workers. I feel this must militate against investment of capital in Australia. After all it is from the worker that the investor expects to obtain his return. From my own knowledge, I have in the past had references made as far apart as Yokohama, Capetown and London to Australian disputes and the general misconception that the Australian cannot work. I sprang to his defence on those occasions as I will spring to his defence in this House.

So many of our industrial troubles are reported and given an importance far beyond their actual significance. We are proud to feel that the Australians are foremost among the sportsmen of the world; they are fighters of some renown, and as workers I would say they are second to none; they excel. When we sit here and reflect upon the vast and rapid developments of our State from east to west from north to south, upon the miles of country cleared for agricultural purposes, and the thousands of miles of fencing, pipelines, railways, roads and the like; the factories, mines, housing projects and so on and the invisible things, the goods produced and the markets supplied, and when we make a comparison with the working forces of other countries, we may well justly swell with pride at the achievements of our workers.

When we see our shearers with sure and certain movements shearing the struggling sheep to reach such formidable tallies, and our miners in the hot ends of drives, winzes and rises, or in dangerous stopes covered with water, dirt, grease and sweat, taking out their fathoms a day to reach such a colossal tonnage per man; or when we see our waterside workers working six to a gang when in other English-speaking countries they work eight to a gang and

about 20 to a gang in Asian countries; when we consider our men on the roads, on buildings, clearing and fencing the country, tilling the soil, harvesting the crops and working in the extremes of climate in cutting winds and tempestuous weather, or in the heat when tools are hard to handle and the water boils in the water-bags; when we think of the rhythm of our axemen in the timber forests, of our timber men in the wet bush and draughty mills; when we consider our fitters, turners, moulders, furnacemen, boilermakers in cold and draughty galvanised structures in winter which are intolerably hot in summer; yes, when we have seen these things and considered them, we are proud to know such men.

They work hard. Is it any wonder then, that they play hard and fight hard, if need be? When one considers his working conditions and the amount produced per man together with the very little industrial unrest compared with that elsewhere, I believe members will agree that the Australian worker is comparable with any other worker in the world. This false propaganda, this trend towards sensationalism by certain newspapers has militated against the investment of foreign capital here and also against the creation of new industries in Australia. Remember also that all our economy is based on the home, and whatsoever the worker in this country or any other country in the world with which we have dealings takes home in his pay envelope helps in the development and expansion of our industries.

There is another point relating to newspaper propaganda and that is the malicious linking of the Australian Labour Party's socialist platform to that of communism. Whilst it may be all right for internal consumption, and it certainly does not disturb the Australian voter, from an overseas point of view it does have a militating effect on the investment of capital here. As you could well imagine, Mr. Speaker, if you were overseas and had capital to invest and you read these scare headlines from time to time magnified in the papers, you would certainly not be desirous of investing any capital here. Accordingly it has a boomerang effect upon the people who utter it. The perpetrators of such canards are either knaves or fools, because members know as well as I do that there is no parallel between communism and the Labour Party's objective.

The philosophies are different. We believe in more individual freedom; not the freedom to exploit. The methods are different. We believe in constitutionalism; we believe in democracy—that is, the counting of heads, and not the cracking of them as is the practice under a dictatorship. So, whilst rival political parties may have their little game for political purposes, it would be as well if these were used purely for internal consumption and not world consumption.

The other point on which I would like to touch is our economic instability, which should act as a deterrent to the would-be investor. This brings me to a final point and I feel a most vital one. I refer to the manoeuvring of the present Commonwealth Government. Twice in the last four years it has brought about an economic crisis. That Government seems to have no ability at all to manage the economic affairs of our country. This would certainly terrify investors from overseas who are not wholly aware of our political set-up and the system of checks and counterchecks which lie in the hands of the State Governments.

Last night the Premier brought the matter up. He referred to South Australia where they have managed their economy controlling not only wages but prices, rents and the like. There I suggest they have perhaps as much foreign investment as anywhere, and that is principally because they have the ability in that State to control the economy. The Government of this State is unfortunate in that it has no control of the other Chamber of this Parliament.

I have endeavoured to point out three matters of propaganda by which news coverage can adversely affect the investment of foreign capital in Australia. The first is the depreciation of the Australian worker; the sensationalism given to industrial disputes appears to have been a little modified in recent years. The second point, too, I feel is becoming no longer a matter of much value. The third remains one for the Australian people.

There are a number of other subjects I would like to mention but I am afraid I will have to be brief. I listened attentively to the experts on our economic ills, especially from the other side of the House. I do not wish to enter into a debate while speaking to the Address-in-reply, but I would suggest that the Premier would be very remiss in his duty to the State if he did not ask for more money from the Commonwealth Government; and even then more; and if he could get that, more again. I would further suggest that, in the interests of Australia, he would be failing in his duty because I believe that money advanced for public works is in the main an item of defence; as if it went to the defence vote. The same would apply in an advance for industrial expansion, because in modern warfare unless countries are equipped industrially, they are not ready for war.

I have listened to the age-old argument on economics. It seems to me that we need to bring our economic thinking into line with this jet-propelled and supersonic age. After all, economics is a day-to-day affair subject to stresses and strain and to change and variations. We have

heard much play and much mention of the subject of inflation and I have asked myself, "Have we got inflation here?" I am only speaking, of course, from the point of view of the State. Of recent years I have not been in the other capitals, but I feel that we need some flexibility in our economic outlook as between the States.

After all, the capitals of the other States are as far away from Perth as London is from Moscow, and I sometimes believe that they are as far apart in their thinking. But inflation, as I understand it, is not high prices, although they may be a symptom. It is an increase in the amount of money people have to spend without a corresponding increase in the commodities they can buy. Looking around, I cannot see that we are in that position. Other people may have a different opinion, but I see an abundance of things to buy, with insufficient money with which to buy them; and I consider that that is deflation.

Candidly, I cannot agree with the contention that we are combating inflation. I consider that the present crisis has been caused by the dwindling of our overseas credit, and the variation in our import and export balances; and I would suggest that had a Labour Government been on the Treasury bench in the Commonwealth Parliament, these crises would not have occurred twice in four years, especially with Labour's commonsense view of a managed economy both internally and externally.

One could almost visualise this crisis a few years ago when people barnstormed the countryside with the cry, "Put value back into the pound!" Is there anything more bereft of economic thinking than that, when one considers that money has been losing its value ever since the Battle of Waterloo? Look at the rise that has occurred in old-age pensions since the Act was first brought into force! The money paid for a shirt in 1900 would hardly buy the buttonholes today! Prior to World War I, houses cost from £200 to £400 to build. Prior to World War II, they cost from £800 to £1,000. Today, the cost is between £2,000 and £3,000, and even more. What rot it is to say, "Put value back into the pound!" What else can one expect except a crisis when there are such diatribes?

Similarly, we look in the paper and see sensational headlines about wages and salaries. There is the cry, "Peg wages and all will be well." That, too, is stupid. In this modern age of ours, members on the other side, and the interests they purport to represent, would be bankrupt and out of business in no time if we started to do that sort of thing.

I suggest we should try to manage our economy. I know that controls are distasteful, but at least they are the means

of stabilising our economy. After all, the housewife has to resort to controls when she starts managing housekeeping, so I do not know why we cannot do the same on a larger scale. When I use the word "controls," I do not mean something rigid and inflexible. Rather let us manage our economic affairs in keeping with the times in which we live. Let us look not only at wages and salaries, but also at prices and rents, interest, capital issues, credit and the like.

There is another matter—and that is the role of the banks. If we look into the past, we find that banking procedure has largely altered. Nevertheless, in the time of Britain's industrial expansion and in the time of America's expansion, we find that the banks played a very vital role in the economies of those countries. I made a lot of play on the matter of the investment of foreign capital, and I know that that has certain advantages in that it supplies us with equipment and technical know-how. At the same time, I suggest that perhaps one of the best means of giving impetus to progress within our own country is to promote through our banks advances to start and move on our own industries with a view to achieving some of the ends I have suggested. We must have these economic props if the banks are to do their job—and after all, they can only be called economic props.

It was suggested by the member for Nedlands that the Minister for Housing had rushed his job, and had spent the money available to him in seven months instead of using 12 months to carry out the erection of houses. For my part, I congratulate the Minister on having done so, and I only wish that he had had more money with which to make houses available. Whereas a few years ago people with families were seeking homes, today young married couples are desirous of starting housekeeping and need accommodation. The Minister is to be congratulated on having taken so many people out of back rooms and away from places that were not conducive to the raising of families, and I regret that he was not able to shorten the time from seven months to three-and-a-half months and thereby alleviate some of the strain and the emotional upsets that took place amongst certain families.

I congratulate the Government on its intention to bring before this House many vital Bills, and I feel that during this session a worthwhile contribution to the affairs of the State will be made. I thank members for the attentive hearing they have given me on the occasion of my first speech in this House.

On motion by Mr. O'Brien, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 16th August, 1956.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : Railways, (a) number employed in accounts branch	215
(b) petrol tanker freights	215
(c) number of paying passengers, etc.	215
(d) passengers, revenue and operating costs	215
(e) cost of overtime, 1955-56	215
(f) availability of information	215
University students, (a) Government employment during vacation	216
(b) available employment facilities	216
Wheat, (a) railway haulage	216
(b) comparative freights	216
Department of Native Welfare, number and duties of officers	217
Water supplies, (a) consumption in metropolitan area	218
(b) enlargement of Lake Grace town dam	218
(c) reticulation of Dumbleyung town-site	218
Botanical Gardens, establishment and site	218
Bunbury area, works for unemployed	218
St. Clair's hospital, Bunbury, resumption and compensation	218
Tram services, No. 22 route	219
Electricity supplies, (a) South-West power scheme subsidy	219
(b) capacity, etc., of smallest type transformer	219
(c) Karridale-Augusta-Flinders Bay area	220
Narrows Bridge, allocation of main roads funds	220
Aquatic centre, establishment in King's Park	220
Coalmining, (a) Stockton open-cut, cost-plus system, etc.	220
(b) money owing by companies, and cost-plus system	221
(c) price per ton to Amalgamated Collieries	221
Roads, (a) Welshpool-rd. and Lesmurdie Hill deviation	221
(b) allocation of Federal aid roads funds	221
Air services, (a) merger of airlines and role of Transport Board	222
(b) benefit to Kalgoorlie from merger	222
(c) transport of perishables, and freight rationing	222
(d) demand for aircraft in the North	223
(e) MacRobertson Miller Aviation Co. Pty., Ltd., shareholders	223
(f) complaints in the North	223
Shipping, interstate consignments direct to Geraldton	223
Beer, alcohol percentage	224
Dairying industry, assistance for under-developed holdings	224
Fremantle harbour, depth at low tide	224
Agriculture, Esperance land settlement scheme	224
Address-in-reply, sixth day	225
Speakers on Address—	
Mr. O'Brien	225
Mr. Perkins	231
Mr. Rhatigan	237