

Whilst ordinary political issues are outside the scope of local government, when the safety of the Realm is endangered, as it undoubtedly is, by the disruptive measures of Communism on behalf of Russian Imperialism, it is the concern of every individual and organisation in the Commonwealth.

The same grim ruthless violence exhibited by Communist activities in Europe and Asia is becoming apparent in this country, and when the ordinary decent folk of Australia are repeatedly denied coal for lighting and heating, and essential commodities are held up by foreign imported agitators, it is evident that something more sinister than political philosophy is involved.

When 16,000 people can cause such a fear complex in nearly 8,000,000 people that it is impossible to find anyone to give definite information about the Communists, it is time that this State Government was up and doing. I believe members on the other side of the House are just as interested as is anyone on the Government side, and I think such a step would receive support from all members, irrespective of party. I ask the Premier to do something in this matter, and again I ask the Minister for Education, for the information of members, to lay on the Table of the House the report I have asked for.

On motion by Mr. Needham, debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of sessional committees appointed by that House.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £3,800,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 29th July, 1948.

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

QUESTION.

ROYAL COMMISSIONS.

As to Government's Appointments, Cost, etc.

Hon. G. FRASER (for Hon. G. Bennetts) asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many Royal Commissions have been authorised by the present Government since it obtained power on the 1st April, 1947?

(2) What has been the total cost to the taxpayers of those Royal Commissions and the separate cost of each?

(3) On what specific business did each Commission investigate?

(4) Has the Government acted on the findings of those Royal Commissions? If not, why not?

(5) What was the total number of days on which each Royal Commission took evidence?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Six.

(2) (a) Railway Administration and Midland Junction Workshops, including Coal and "S" and "DD" locomotives, £6,420 15s. 10d.; (b) Workers' Compensation, £1,021 12s. 6d.; (c) Milk, £120 8s. 2d.; (d) Housing, £578 2s. 8d.; (e) Betting, £1,624 5s. 2d.; (f) Municipal Boundaries (incomplete); Total, £9,765 4s. 4d.

(3) Terms of reference published in the "Government Gazettes of:—(a) 4th July, 1947, and 5th September, 1947; (b) 25th July, 1947; (c) 7th November, 1947; (d) 7th November, 1947; (e) 19th March, 1948; (f) 12th December, 1947, and 21st May, 1948.

(4) In some cases action is already being taken. In others it is under consideration.

(5) Railway Administration and Midland Junction Workshops, including Coal and "S" and "DD" locomotives, 47 days; Workers' Compensation, 27 days; Milk 14 days; Housing, 32 days; Betting 32 days; Municipal Boundaries, 8 days (incomplete) excluding private meetings, inspections and investigations.

Honoraria to Royal Commissioners concerned have been fixed so as to conform to standards adopted over many years, and have regard to professional or other status of Commissioners, importance, duration and extent of inquiry, and other relevant factors.

Fees to counsel are certified by the Taxing Master of the Supreme Court.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. A. C. DAFFEN (Central) [4.37]: I desire to support the Address-in-reply. At the outset I wish to congratulate those members of the Council who were re-elected and also new members in the persons of Hon. H. Hearn, Hon. H. K. Watson, and Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham, who were elected at the last biennial elections for this Chamber. It is a great pleasure to have our old friends back again and I am sure we all extend a hearty welcome to the new ones. I am glad of the chance to endorse the very handsome tribute paid by Hon. E. H. Gray yesterday when speaking of Sir Hal Colebatch, and I thoroughly agree with his sentiments.

At this stage I would like to congratulate Hon. Sir Frank Gibson on the recognition of his good work for this State and for his home town of Fremantle. For very many years he has enjoyed the confidence of the people of Fremantle, and I am pleased to see he has been suitably rewarded. I wish also to record my hearty congratulations to Sir Charles Latham on his preferment as I have taken an interest in his career since about 1921, and I feel that the reward for the faithful application of his abilities to the benefit of his country has been thoroughly deserved. I trust he will long be

spared in health and strength to give this State the benefit of his knowledge and experience.

The successful return of our President also affords me very great pleasure. At the time of my entry into this Chamber as a new member, the President was absent through illness, but I quickly discovered the very high esteem in which he was held by the constant inquiries as to his health and the general concern felt for his speedy recovery. I soon found the reason for this. His unfailing good humour, his strong sense of fair play and his exhibition of downright commonsense furnish the information. I re-echo the sentiments that have been expressed by other hon. members and I wish you, Mr. President, a continuation of good health that will enable you long to carry on your high office with credit to yourself and harmony in our deliberations.

Turning to the question of railways, when Parliament adjourned we knew we would have some very big problems to face up to during this session and that the biggest of these would concern the railways and transport generally. We have had an opportunity to study the report submitted by the Royal Commissioners. While much useful information is set forth and tabulated in that document, we, as members of Parliament, will have to make the big decision as to whether we will continue with the 3ft. 6in. gauge or change over to the 4ft. 8½in. gauge and just how far we should go with complementary road transport facilities. Because of the two Bills brought down last session, I feel sure that the tramways and metropolitan bus services will be separated from the railways and placed under different managements. I think that change will be just as well because, even if handled separately, they will still furnish us with much food for thought and ground for debate.

From the point of view of the Central Province, the railway problem holds the major interest, but all the issues involved are great and have to be dealt with. Taking the long view for the future, I would favour the broad gauge in assisting towards achieving the ideal of a unified system throughout the Commonwealth, but I do not think we can see far enough ahead at the present time to know what the trend of transport facilities will be in the future and I doubt very much whether at this stage we

could afford it. Something like £20,000,000 will be required to meet the expenditure involved in re-building and modernising the present system. The fact that we would find it practically impossible to raise such a large sum ourselves would suggest that we should fall into line with the Commonwealth broad gauge plan and the expenditure of £30,000,000, which is apparently involved. I say "apparently" because that figure represents only a rough estimate.

We must not let ourselves be misled by the idea that if we adopt the standard broad gauge we can proceed with the change-over immediately. We would still have to continue maintenance and renewals in connection with engines and rollingstock to enable the present system to function. That could easily cost us another £15,000,000, and the whole matter is wrapped up in the financial problem. Whether or not the broad gauge system is adopted, we shall still have to put our present railways on a business footing because we cannot continue incurring the present heavy losses without severe reflection upon ourselves. For my part, I think we shall have to continue with the 3ft. 6in. gauge, even if we have to extend the Trans. railway through from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle.

When we are carrying out reconstruction undertakings in connection with the railway system, I hope steps will be taken to remove the present central railway station at Perth to a more northerly position and make the present site available as a starting point for buses and as a general parking area. The approaches right from East Perth to Subiaco would provide a very good main through road and make available access to and escape from the city block, where the traffic is continually growing more congested and dangerous. The bridges at Beaufort-street and William-street and the subway at West Perth could be retained, although possibly modified, to enable the free flow of traffic to continue as it does at present. Perhaps that is looking too far ahead at the moment, but it is a phase that should be included in any general plan for the future.

The effect of the Government's allocation of £1,500,000 for education has been reflected in many parts of the Central Province by the letting of contracts for the erection of schools, additions to existing build-

ings and for repairs and renovations. In some instances there have been subsidies for school libraries and visual training equipment. More teachers are passing through the Training College but not as many as we would like, although those coming forward are tending to relieve the staffing position. The amendment to the Superannuation Act that was passed by Parliament last session gave teachers, among others, a 25 per cent. addition to their pensions without any increase in contributions, and it was also provided that if in any one year interest on the trust fund concerned did not amount to £3 15s. per annum, the State would make up the difference.

This, with other considerations of interest, shows teachers that the Government is tackling the problem with energy and understanding and the Minister for Education is certainly to be commended on what he has achieved in so short a time. There are still many schools to be built and renewals to be effected throughout the province and the problem of housing for teachers has still to be taken in hand. There is every evidence that this problem will be dealt with. The provision of a school hostel at Geraldton to serve the great area extending from Ballidu to Wiluna and from Coomberdale to some portions of the North-West is still badly needed, and it is hoped that attention will be directed towards its establishment very soon. If provided, it would mean that accommodation under proper supervision would be available for school children and other pupils from inland districts.

Turning now to the question of water supply, it has been noted with considerable interest in the Central Province that the Government has made money available for exploratory work in connection with northern rivers and it is to be hoped that the Irwin River and one of the tributaries of the Murchison will be included. Throughout the Central Province water presents a real problem. In Geraldton, the existing scheme cannot meet all the demands made upon it owing to the rapid expansion of industry, and as every effort is being made to expand such activities, a study of the water problem there is a matter of some urgency. To bituminise a catchment at Wicherina, the source of the present supply, would be exceedingly expensive and would certainly only meet requirements

for a few years. The provision of a larger supply will soon have to be faced and possibly this might be solved by impounding some of the millions of gallons that flow out to sea every time the rains are heavy enough to bring the rivers down. If it were possible to carry out a big scheme in this connection, a very wide area could benefit from it by wise and judicious reclamation.

In most parts of the Central Province the price of water is shocking; in the Murchison it is even as high as 6s. 8d. per 1,000 gallons. By way of comparison, the Nedlands water rate, as an instance, is 2s. 4d., and 1s. for excess, per 1,000 gallons. At the annual meeting of the Murchison District Road Board, held at Cue last May, and attended by Hon. C. H. Simpson and myself, a motion was passed to the effect that a uniform general water rate of 3s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons and 2s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons for excess, be applied over the Murchison goldfield. That is an indication of the just ground for resentment of country people that they should have to pay so much more for water than do the city folk, who enjoy a plentiful supply provided as a State undertaking.

It is only bare justice that uniform charges for water should obtain throughout the State; but it is essential that more and cheaper water be made available in the country if we are to retain the present population and build it up substantially. The greatest objection to living in the outback today is the high cost of water and, generally speaking, the unreasonable charge for it. This matter will have to be remedied if we are to populate the State.

With reference to coal, the Premier is to be congratulated on the firm stand he took at the Premiers' Conference early in the year, in refusing to allow this State to be involved in the Eastern States coal agreement. I trust he will adhere to that attitude, for I feel that any such agreement will militate against us. Coal is of very great importance to us, and keen disappointment was felt in Geraldton and the surrounding districts when it was found that the Eradu coal deposit, though of low grade, was uneconomical to mine owing to the large quantity of water encountered. However, there are other exposed outcrops of coal reported along the banks of the

Greenough River; and, in view of the great saving it would be in freight to the railways and the enormous value it would be to the Geraldton district if good coal were found there, I suggest that the country between Eradu and Irwin be thoroughly prospected by boring. It is asserted by many of the older people still living in Geraldton that a vessel, the s.s. "Rob Roy," which plied between Geraldton and Fremantle, in 1889 made a return trip using Irwin coal, so it must be of some value. In the seventies of last century, three seams underlying one another were found at Irwin. One was opened up and found to contain a seam of good coal 6 ft. wide. It was described as of good quality and fully equal to Collie coal. It is recorded that Mr. John Robyns, a director of the Gregory's Irwin Coal Mining Co., reported as follows:—

At the outset let me say that your efforts to discover marketable coal in payable quantities have been crowned with unqualified success.

Further on in his report he says—

Unlike any Australian coal that I know, but like one class of Cardiff or Lanarkshire, in the Old Country, your coal is practically smokeless, only a small whitish smoke occasionally. It will be in great demand for the use of the Navy of the Pacific and Indian Oceans and for furnaces in large towns.

However, the Government cancelled the lease because of a dispute over the title to the land. It is high time that this coal of proven quality, should be properly prospected and assessed, and the many years of neglect of this valuable asset remedied. If the present owners of the lease are not prepared to develop it after 75 years or so, then it should be resumed by the Government for the benefit of the progress of the State.

The prices of wheat and wool are slowly returning to normal and more stable levels. The high prices have given general satisfaction, but it is unfortunate that, although the income of the country has been greatly increased thereby, the producers themselves have benefited only up to a limited point because taxation is so heavy and absorbs most of the return. Owing to the scarcity of materials, badly needed repairs cannot be effected and the result is that the producers are being taxed on a false basis of profit, a profit which they are not actually making. Provision should be made for a suspense account for repairs when these

cannot be carried out under present conditions. It is satisfactory to note that the woolgrowers are to continue their joint organisation, the Wool Realisation Scheme, which has proved so successful.

Unfortunately, the wheatgrowers are not so well placed yet, but because of the legislation passed last session for a State Wheat Pool, they have every confidence that they can fall back on that organisation if they cannot make more suitable Federal arrangements. The Australian Wheatgrowers' Federation has worked hard to secure a satisfactory marketing organisation for wheat based on grower control, stabilisation, a reasonable guaranteed price to vary according to the index of production cost, and a reasonable home consumption quota. The success achieved so far has been due in no small measure to the clear-sightedness and sustained persistence of the Honorary Minister for Agriculture (Hon. G. B. Wood).

The Honorary Minister: The wheatgrowers' newspaper does not say that.

Hon. H. A. C. DAFFEN: I am not the editor of that paper. There is one point on which I find myself in disagreement with Mr. Gray, as I think it is a great pity that this strong and courageous stand by the Honorary Minister did not receive more support from the Ministers of Agriculture in the other States. The greatest difficulty to overcome is grower control; but the Commonwealth Minister for Commerce (Mr. Pollard) adheres consistently and uncompromisingly to Commonwealth Government control. It would seem now that there is little likelihood that he will give way on this vital point, and so it will soon be left to the growers themselves to decide whether they will place themselves under his unsympathetic jurisdiction, or take advantage of the projected State scheme. From reports, it seems hardly likely that the present harvest will reach last year's figures. Despite a late start, however, there appears to be a possibility of securing good returns in some parts of the State, providing we soon receive good rains. It is of no use blinking facts—as things are in the wheatbelt at present, we cannot look for much of a harvest unless we receive good general rains.

As to regional hospitals, for some years the matter of hospitalisation has been

occupying the minds of the people of Geraldton. They are concerned to find that no progress has been made with the regional hospital there beyond the selection of a site and the carrying out of a contour survey. That there are other centres clamouring for regional hospitals we are well aware, but the claim of Geraldton for earlier attention must be conceded when the district's isolation and the great area it serves are taken into consideration. There is no assistance nearer than Perth, over 300 miles away. The old Government hospital, built in 1887, can give only a limited service to the large area of several thousand square miles behind it. There are many small hospitals located throughout the district, but even they are suffering from shortage of equipment and lack of size and staff.

Because of these circumstances, Geraldton is entitled to generous consideration in her claims for a new building with up-to-date equipment. With these provided, specialist services would soon be made available and long and expensive journeys, often made in pain and suffering, obviated because of those services being available so many hundred miles closer. In a critical case of fairly recent date, a man was brought from the North suffering from a gunshot wound in the body. If, instead of wasting one and a half to two hours' travelling time by plane, he could have been treated at Geraldton, his life might have been saved. Now that the main part of the Royal Perth Hospital has been completed, it should be possible to turn attention to the requirements of this large province, which is entitled to up-to-date hospital premises and equipment.

I agree with Mr. Gray in regard to fish marketing, that all is not well with the fishing industry, and that fishermen are very concerned about the present method of fish marketing. This country has, as a matter of duty, generously assisted many of its ex-Servicemen and women to establish themselves in civilian life. Not least among them are those who have undertaken fishing as their livelihood. After launching those people, we appear to have forgotten them. They have loyally done their part by producing fish in good quantities, but, unfortunately, the success of the whole scheme has fallen down in the marketing. Despite the fact that there is at present a fixed wholesale price for fish, I am reliably in-

formed by a man actively interested, that it is not always honoured, but that quite usually offers are made to fishermen who have little option but to accept them. These offers, as members might expect, are not as a rule above the fixed wholesale price. Fishermen with no storage facilities have no recourse but to accept the prices offered.

The large importations of fish, particularly from South Africa, are severely aggravating the position. The projected imports from Norway will, although not to the same extent, further depress the market for fresh fish. The fact that fish is imported shows that there is room for an expansion of the industry here. An orderly marketing scheme would be well worthwhile to help the fishermen to secure proper prices for their catches, and ensure the extension of distribution to many centres that at present seldom see fish as an item of diet.

The possibilities of the development of the fishing industry are indicated by an illustration contained in "The Fisheries News Letter" of February last in which the Pacific area is shown as being divided into four, and the fishing activities of each section compared. Australia and New Zealand are included in the illustration, together with the coasts of China and Japan, the west coast of Canada and North America, and the west coast of South America. The quantity of fish caught in the Australian quadrant was shown to be one per cent., and one per cent. in the South American quadrant. The quantity in the North American quadrant was 20 per cent., and it was 78 per cent. in the Japanese quadrant. That surely shows the extent to which the industry can expand here, and it proves that it is well worth protecting and fostering.

I come now to gold. Gold production is one of the main activities of the Central Province, and must, as an export, be classed with wool and wheat in importance to Western Australia. Unfortunately, production is dropping. Receipts at the Perth branch of the Royal Mint for fine gold for the first half of this year show a decline of 23,080 ounces. The half-yearly figure was 299,018 ounces. With the exception of June, receipts for the other months of this year are behind those for the corresponding months of last year. This is due to the shortage of labour and the steadily rising costs, includ-

ing the impact of the 40-hour week. The producers have no remedy against this rise in costs as the price of gold is fixed. Mainly due to the strong representations by the Premier, the gold tax of about £550,000 per annum was lifted late last year and that gave a little relief to the smaller man, but the mines, particularly those working on low grade ore, got none, as there was in operation a rebate of the tax to the extent of their losses, up to the amount of the tax. But now all concerned are faced with stringent times due to the overwhelming rise in costs.

As recently as the 5th July last a meeting of a branch of the Prospectors' Association deplored the "Federal Government's hostile attitude to the goldmining industry" in its refusal to grant a substantial subsidy on gold production. Some of the major companies are finding it increasingly difficult to continue operations, for they cannot keep costs within limits. Some are fortunate enough to be able to mine selectively, but obviously that is wasteful from the State's production point of view. Canada has recently recognised these disabilities by subsidising her goldmining industry. Southern Rhodesia, I believe, has taken similar action. Gold is a first-class export as most countries need it, but it has lost its relation to other goods. This must be restored by an increased price to enable higher costs to be met and production to continue. The remedy is a bonus of £2 to £2 10s. per ounce, and it is imperative that this be provided without delay. Gold speaks all languages, and, because gold means export credits and more dollars, the declining gold yield will seriously affect our national income. Immediate and pressing representations should be made to the Commonwealth Government to apply the suggested assistance to the industry.

Besides goldmining, in the province there is considerable activity in leadmining north of Geraldton, at Protheroe, Baddera and Galena. With the attractive price offering for lead, these old leadmining areas have been revived, and with the prospect of the price remaining firm, the industry can be expected to expand. The world is experiencing a general shortage of lead, and it is likely to be some years before the demand is satisfied. At Protheroe, a new shaft has been sunk over the old workings to facilitate

the extraction of high grade ore, and many men are constantly employed there. At Buddera, a company has overcome many difficulties to establish an efficient plant, which is profitably treating the old sands while proceeding, with the development of its equipment to mine fresh ore which, old records show, consists of two good lead channels joined by about 20 feet of lower grade galena. Further north, at Galena, on the left of the Carnarvon road and just before reaching the Murchison River bridge, another company has erected a substantial plant. It is also treating sands while assembling equipment and proceeding with the developmental work. While the main shaft was being sunk, it was taken through an unexpected patch of galena and about 100 tons were recovered.

This experience suggests what might easily be present under the ground in these areas, and indicates that thorough prospecting by boring would be handsomely repaid by a proper assessment of the field and the discoveries made. There are several prospectors operating at Galena, but, due to the absence of suitable equipment, they are only mining the best ore. However, this is about to be remedied by the erection of another privately-owned plant, which will cater for this want. Great assistance for the mining of ore by these prospectors could be given by the provision of portable compressors, including a rock-drilling machine which costs about £600 at present. It could be hired from one prospector to another and, besides speeding up drilling compared with the old hand method, it would encourage the mining of lower-grade ore and provide more lead for export. Both Buddera and Galena, good prospecting areas, are locked up in what are known as Imperial Grants, and an effort is being made to have them released for development.

As this is a good opportunity, I might be forgiven for mentioning, with some pride, the war loan record of the Geraldton district. In a Western Australian all-time record, which greatly assisted the outstanding success of the Fifth Security Loan, Geraldton was first with its quota; secondly, it more than trebled its quota, and, thirdly, it achieved the highest per capita result, thus earning the special red pennant and the championship purple pennant. With a population of about 7,000, Geraldton has

now raised over £500,000 in loans and £100,000 in savings certificates. The effort has been recognised by the awarding of 17 pennants, which is a State record. For this result much of the credit is due to the Mayor (Dr. J. McAleer), Messrs. L. W. Shephard and F. Pearce, chairman and secretary respectively of the Geraldton Loan Committee, and the committee's public-spirited members.

I will now deal with national defence. While many of us believe in compulsory military training as being the fairest and best way to put our young manhood in possession of the basic principles of warfare and to prepare them for any sudden defence requirement, we have to be content, for the present, with volunteer militia forces, and it behoves everybody to render all possible encouragement and assistance so that they may be successfully launched. It is a matter of keen disappointment locally that Geraldton should have been left out as a centre for the establishment of a unit, and as the district's past record is well known, it is surprising and deplorable that it was not included. The last volunteer unit to operate in Geraldton was formed in 1936 and was known as "B" Company of the 11th Battalion, which was the City of Perth Battalion. The Perth City Council donated a cup for competition which was awarded each year to the best company in the battalion, based on administration, training standard, musketry, etc., and during the three years of its existence, the Geraldton "B" Company won it three times. The strength of this company varied between 90 and 100 and there was a particularly high percentage of enlistments on the outbreak of World War II. With a single exception, when it was resolutely refused, the men all received promotion, one as high as the rank of Lieut.-Colonel.

Members can be assured that the Geraldton people are very proud of this record, and there can be no doubt that if a unit were established there, it would receive a keen response. With the war record of her sons and daughters in the three branches of the Services, as well as the Merchant Navy, the fine name the people earned for themselves by the way they looked after Servicemen and Servicewomen in the Geraldton area during hostilities, and their record of outstanding support of the savings certifi-

eates and loan campaigns, it is amazing that the town has been left out. It is all the more amazing when it is realised that this is the most northerly of our large towns and, besides requiring naval defence as a port, it is a strategically placed air defence centre and airport.

In view of the splendid war record of Geraldton, and also its strategically exposed position, I trust an early effort will be made to remedy the omission by the establishment of a unit at that centre. An official statement, published in the "Geraldton Guardian" of the 17th July makes it clear that only two infantry battalions were allotted to Western Australia instead of four included in the previous pre-1939 scheme, and the explanation given is that it is desirable to raise the whole battalion in the one area because of the present day complex organisation. It is suggested that adjustments might be decided upon after investigations, and I shall strongly support any move to the Commonwealth Government for increasing the number of training units in Western Australia of the new C.M.F. Army.

Finally, there is the matter of immigration. There is no doubt that the best immigrant is the Australian child, and, after considering the importance of encouraging an increase in births and making it economically possible for young people to marry years before they feel they safely can now, I make the suggestion that the baby bonus be increased to £100 per child.

Hon. G. Fraser: Out of the State Government's treasury?

Hon. H. A. C. DAFFEN: No, out of the Commonwealth Government's treasury. I feel that the money could easily be found if the globe-trotting of Ministers, their families, and private secretaries and staff were a little less frequent. It was very satisfactory to learn that the programme for the Prime Minister's mission to England early this month included a large immigration plan, and I trust new settlement is envisaged for the North and North-west of the State. This problem must be tackled with urgency, earnestness and courage.

In my address today I have touched on many aspects that indicate the possibility of absorbing into industries and public works in the Central Province many thousands of people. The extraordinarily fine record held by Geraldton and other towns

in the province in regard to Commonwealth loan subscriptions indicates the richness of the area, and is evidence in support of this view. I have no doubt that, unless we get on with the job of populating our State, and particularly the northern portion of it, we shall not be able to hold it. This has been said with such monotonous regularity that we soon go to sleep again after agreeing that something should be done about it. Even the severe jolt we suffered by the near approach of the Japanese to our shores only jarred us momentarily from our lethargy. We must bring this matter forcibly before the Commonwealth Government with a view to securing assistance in the development of our northern areas to help in the preservation and protection of our national heritage.

But let me urge upon all concerned that we see to it that we get the right type of British immigrant, remembering always that other Europeans have no Empire consciousness. I feel we have experimented too far in that direction already, and I strongly advocate bringing to this country people of our own way of life, who understand the meaning of justice, social orderliness and loyalty, and who will be a strong influence in our own British outlook, thus helping to preserve the high place the British still occupy in the eyes of the world today. We must use all our influence to draw the ties of Empire tighter, and a sound immigration policy would do much to bring this about, as well as assist in the populating, development and defence of our country. I support the motion.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [5.25]: I sincerely congratulate the new members who have been elected, and to you, Sir, I extend my congratulations on your return to this Chamber. I also wish to commend the Premier for having made a trip through the North-West and the North. I join with Mr. Gray in expressing my regret at the defeat of Sir Hal Colebatch, with all due respect, and extending a very warm welcome to his successor. Sir Hal has had wonderful experience in the political life of this State and Australia generally, and he will be missed from the precincts of this House.

Last year I did not have an opportunity of speaking on the Bill for the redistribution of seats. The Minister kindly deferred

it at that time to give me an opportunity of speaking to it and I now wish to thank him for his action. Unfortunately, however, I was indisposed and I could not be present to express my indignation at the Government of the day stealing one of the northern electorates by Act of Parliament.

Hon. G. Fraser: Too late now.

Hon. G. W. MILES: It might be, but I now want to state what I did not say last year, but, of course it will not alter the result. Originally, in 1890, the North Province included seven seats in the Legislative Assembly in a House of 30. Then the Kimberley, de Grey and Pilbara seats were amalgamated, and eventually it got down to four members in another place, whom we have had for about 40 years. At this stage, when the North should be priority No. 1, it is regrettable that another seat should be given to the metropolitan area.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is the Government you support.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I object to what it has done. I am not a blind follower of the Government like some members were of another Government. I regret that some older members will probably say, "We have heard this before." I know that, because I have been saying it for the last 30 years. I assert that the people in the southern portions of Australia have been like ostriches with their heads buried in the sand, and have overlooked the value and richness of the North and the necessity for populating it if we are going to hold the south, east and west of Australia.

If we lose the North, we lose the whole of Australia. Through neglect in the past and lack of interest by our party politicians, we were nearly in that position. The only thing that saved us in the last war was the mad act of Japan in going to Pearl Harbour, which brought the Americans in. That is the one thing that saved Australia from being under Japanese rule today, and prevented Germany from winning the war in Europe. I want people to show a little vision and not think of the present only. Our grand-children will have to live in this country, and if we are going to hold Australia for the British and white races, the day of talking must be a thing of the past. We have to get busy and tackle the job now.

During the Premier's trip to the North, I had the privilege of listening to his address at Wyndham, and congratulated him upon it and upon the good impression he had created, but I also said that I had heard practically the same speech delivered 28 years before at Derby by Sir Hal Colebatch after a trip through the Kimberleys, and yet nothing had been done. I wish to reiterate that cattle and sheep are not going to hold Australia for the Empire and keep it white. Unless we take a broad view of the future and adopt a bold policy for developing and peopling all that country, we shall lose not only the North but also the whole of Australia. The coloured races have been increasing at the rate of 5,000,000 a year, and yet it took us over 100 years to get 5,000,000 people in Australia.

It is ridiculous to think that we can go on holding this country unless we people and develop it. Such a country is worth peopling and developing, and when I refer to the North I include the Kimberleys, the Northern Territory, and the northern part of Queensland. In that northern region we have one of the richest parts of Australia, but the value of the assets is not realised. At Yampi Sound there are 90,000,000 tons of iron-ore above sea level, and the harbour is sufficiently spacious to accommodate two navies of the size of Great Britain's. That one asset alone makes it worthwhile to hold Australia, apart from the other resources and the wool and other primary products that can be raised.

My voice has been as that of one crying in the wilderness. When I brought these matters forward on entering the House 30 years ago, I was laughed at. When I mentioned that peanuts could be grown in the North, it was suggested that Tom Molloy and the monkeys in the Zoo would be the only consumers. That was the attitude. It is time that people woke up to the fact that this is no laughing matter. When I spoke about producing butter, cheese and bacon in the North, I was again laughed at. I have made three trips to England in efforts to convince people there of the necessity of holding this country for the British and white races. I made a trip to Queensland before my last visit Home in 1948, to see how it compared with the Kimberley country, and I found that in a latitude farther north than that of Wynd-

ham, there were butter, cheese and bacon factories. Wherever these commodities are produced, refrigerated space must be provided, and it is no more difficult to provide that space in the North than it is in the South. A British visitor, Sir Henry Turner, was told about pigraising in the North. For the last 50 years there have been pigs in the Kimberleys, and notwithstanding that they have become inbred and have had to live on roots and natural grasses, they have scaled up to 400 lbs. dressed weight. When I was a boy I remember my father's returning home from the De Grey River and telling us about the pig shooting.

I have been spoken of as a visionary, a man living with his head in the clouds. I was even told by one official that I had been talking 30 years ahead of my time. I shall not be here in another 30 years, but while I am here, I intend to raise my voice and tell people the facts. I realise what can be done in the matter of pigraising in the North. When I went to England in 1922, the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell, was urging the matter of group settlement for the South-West. Here again I say that interstate jealousy and party politics are bringing this country to ruin. I pointed out that pigs could be raised on large areas and would only need to be brought into pens for topping for market. England alone was importing £68,000,000 worth of pigs and pig products. I asked Sir James why not try to get some of the demobilised Army officers to take up pigraising in the North and also urged an Empire man of the Cecil Rhodes type to interest demobilised officers in pigraising. There were 30 of them undergoing training, but instead of coming here, they went to Africa and to the Argentine.

This missing of opportunities must stop. We have to get down to serious business. In addition to the iron-ore deposits at Yampi Sound, there are the asbestos deposits at Wittenoom Gorge, and there is as much value in those deposits as in the gold that has been produced in this State, £250,000,000 worth. The project for conserving water in the Ord River should be proceeded with. Something is being done there experimentally. Coming back to the Roebourne district, at Millstream 40,000,000 gallons of water are running to waste daily. An experiment with market gardens is being undertaken there to

supply Wittenoom Gorge with vegetables. That Millstream water could be used for irrigation. This is a work that should be done and done now, but there is still a tendency to ignore the need for such work and to treat the proposal as a joke, as there has been for the last 30 or 40 years.

Referring to the Kimberleys again, droughts do not occur there as they do in the North-West and the Murchison from time to time. Some figures were taken out by a surveyor and a draughtsman of the quantity of water running into Walcott Inlet. Three rivers—the Isdell, the Chandler and the Calder—drain into that inlet, and these men took the area of the watershed and the rainfall, and after making liberal allowance of 50 per cent. for evaporation and seepage, they found that 300,000 million cubic feet of water ran into the inlet annually. God has given us the country and the rainfall, but we have allowed the water to run into the sea for over 100 years until recently when irrigation was started in the southern portions of Australia.

The harnessing of the tide in the North must eventually come. I advocated this at Home in 1922. It was said to be not a practical proposition at that time, but it could be done now. Once that were done, we could generate current at the lowest possible cost. There is a rise and fall of tide of 20 to 30-odd feet, and once the tide were harnessed, it would be no longer necessary to depend upon striking coalminers to keep our industries going.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Can white people live there?

Hon. G. W. MILES: I recall that a Scottish friend ran away from a ship at Darwin 60 years ago and drifted down to the Pilbara district, and from there he had not come South in 30 years. Mr. Craig spoke of not sending his sons to the North. Many people have made the whole of their money in the North. Before the gold discoveries, the only people in the State who had money were those with interests in the North, and they used it to develop the South.

Hon. L. Craig: Did you send your sons to the North?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig: They are not there now.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Never mind that! Two years ago I advocated using the aerodromes, which had been constructed in the North at a cost of millions, for transporting beef by air to the South so that we should not have to put up with tough meat as we do now. I mentioned the idea to Mr. McLarty at the time and recently he said, "When you mentioned that to me two years ago, I thought you were talking through your hat." But it is within the realm of practical politics today, in proof of which I quote the following from "The West Australian," of the 20th July:—

The MacRobertson-Miller Aviation Co. and Australian National Airways were co-operating in a bold plan to transport 3,000 carcasses of beef by air from the Kimberleys, 190 miles to the Wyndham Freezing Works, in five months, beginning next April, the Managing Director of the A.N.A. (Captain I. N. Holyman) said on arrival in Perth last night. He was sure that air transport could economically develop the sparsely populated areas of Australia. Captain Holyman said that on each trip a DC3 freighter air-craft would transport 4½ tons of meat. Sixty bullocks would be slaughtered each day.

On the 22nd July reference was made in "The West Australian" to cattle droving wastage. This is a matter I have mentioned scores of times—

Wastages and death of cattle in droving to coastal abattoirs would be eliminated by carrying carcasses by plane to the coast, said the Managing Director of Australian National Airways Prop. Ltd. (Captain I. N. Holyman) yesterday. He predicted that this would provide at least 10 per cent. more meat for export.

In my opinion it would provide over 50 per cent. more meat for export within a period of 10 years if this scheme were applied to the Kimberleys, the Northern Territory and Northern Queensland. Some of these cattle are driven 200 or 300 miles, and one should see their prime condition when they arrive at the ship. There is no hand-feeding or spoon-feeding there as in the South-West, where the taxpayers foot the bill for irrigation schemes. Mr. Craig is a wealthy man as a result of being able to grow baby beef made possible by irrigation.

The Honorary Minister: I do not think you ever advocated in this House the transport of beef by air.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I did.

The Honorary Minister: Then I do not remember it.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I should not expect the Honorary Minister to do so. At the

time he was sitting behind me. The report continued—

Cattle could be slaughtered when at their prime and received in first-class condition at the Wyndham Freezing Works. Airstrips at inland abattoirs would not cost more than £5,000. The MacRobertson-Miller Aviation Co. and A.N.A. were co-operating in a plan to begin in the Kimberleys.

Now here is the important point—

He would like to see some enthusiasm about the project to ensure that the plan would be carried out next year. It had already been delayed from last April.

If this scheme were properly carried out, eventually we would be flying meat from those areas—from the Roy Hill country and the Kimberleys, from the Northern Territory and from North Queensland—to each of the capital cities in all the States in Australia and people would be getting decent meat instead of the tough product they have to eat today.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What about the baby beef from Dardanup?

Hon. G. W. MILES: We can get it from the Kimberley country. The Victorian Government is doing this and it is proposed for the South-West here. There is no vision here; I cannot understand it.

The Honorary Minister: I think Mr. Blythe thought of it first.

Hon. G. W. MILES: He did nothing of the sort. But it does not matter twopence who thought of it first.

The Honorary Minister: Mr. Blythe was the first to instigate it.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Give him the credit, then! I do not want the credit for it.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You want to see it done.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. I was glad to hear Mr. Daffen talk about marine wealth. I have spoken about that often. Mr. Dedman said a few years ago that there was not sufficient to feed the Australian people. That is the man that Mr. Gray was boosting last night! There are plenty of edible fish in Australia; and there should be at least 500,000 men employed directly and indirectly around the Australian coast obtaining those fish. I agree that the retail price needs to be reduced so that the consumer can get the benefit, and those engaged in the industry here should be able to compete with those providing the imported article.

The North, like other parts of Australia, has suffered through the Commonwealth policy of depopulating the back country. Forty years ago we had 20,000 people in the North. It is down to 6,000 now, and if the present state of affairs continues much longer there will be no-one left at all. It is good to know that the Premier approached the Commonwealth in an endeavour to have taxation reduced. But the Commonwealth cannot differentiate between State and State. As a matter of fact, though, it gave us a rebate of up to £120 and if it could do that, it can give us further rebates. The best way to develop that area would be to have a separate State from ocean to ocean, from east to west. I was glad to hear Mr. Daffen refer to the price of gold, and endorse all he said.

Yesterday Mr. Thomson referred to some questions he had asked about electricity supply and his experience with Government officials. We have had a similar experience of officials in the matter of water supply. One of these men went from here to Marble Bar in connection with a water supply for the town and the installation of septic tanks and said that four gallons per person per day was sufficient for the people there. Instead of the Government taking a serious view of what was put before it by those who knew, it swallowed this estimate and installed two 5,000-gallon tanks instead of sufficient to hold 50,000 gallons, which is what would be required for septic tanks. Again, last year this Parliament passed a Bill which extended the operations of the Licensing Act to give provisional certificate holders until 1952 to put necessary work in hand. This was done because of the shortage of labour and material; but now, notwithstanding this legislation, people of the back country are instructed to carry out certain improvements at practically double the cost that should be necessary.

The 40-hour week has been responsible for some black marketing. A man at Mundaring employed some men to do a job on which they earned £10 each by working night and day on Saturday and Sunday. They paid no tax on that and were too tired to continue the job on Monday in return for wages on which they would have had to pay tax and the employer would have had to pay the payroll tax. The present system is making rogues of hon-

est men. The object in view is being defeated and the cost of work is being increased by 50 to 100 per cent. Mr. Daffen spoke about averaging the water rate throughout the State and quoted figures. I would point out that at Port Hedland no less than 30s. a thousand gallons is paid.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Scandalous!

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Government has promised to give us a water supply, and I hope that it will show its bona fides by forwarding material and getting on with the job. There is another point. I have heard the Premier speaking about shipping for the North. If this Government is going to continue the policy of the previous Government and favour State enterprise instead of encouraging private enterprise, and if it is going to conduct a shipping business, it needs to order two new "Koolindas" because if it orders only one, by the time that one is built the present ship will be ready for scrapping. The Government has also said it intends to take the "Kybra" off the run. The number of passengers has been reduced. It carries 12 passengers and should be kept on the run until the new ship is secured.

But the management of the State Shipping Service runs the "Koolinda" for the benefit of tourists and not for the people of the North. When I came down the last time I reserved a berth two months ahead and advised the shipping authorities of my intention to travel, but when I got to the wharf at about 1 a.m. I was told there was only a shakedown for me. There were 10 of us with shakedowns, but the tourists were there, filling up the ship. This tourist business must be reduced or cut out until there is enough accommodation for passengers from the North.

The Honorary Minister: You are not a resident of the North.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am not like the Minister, who was a jackeroo for about five months and regards that as constituting sufficient experience! I lived for four years at Marble Bar, without seeing the ocean, and for seven years without coming south. Now men want a holiday every six or 12 months! It is silly interjections like those of the Minister that keep people out of the country. The Minister is as bad as

the Press, which insists on publishing the temperature figures for Marble Bar.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think the hon. member might address the Chair.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes, I think I had better do so. The Press publishes the number of consecutive centuries recorded at Marble Bar. What is the news value in that? The same heat down here would kill the whole community. At Marble Bar it is another proposition. The heat is different there, and the climate is healthy. But these statements in the Press keep people out of the country.

Two years ago I wired down to the editor of "The Daily News" and said that it was 39 degrees and freezing at Marble Bar. He sent me a wire in which he told me he was forwarding me some Russian sheepskins to keep me warm! That is the sort of thing one gets—damn silly things like that. I beg your pardon, Sir! I congratulate the Premier on what he has achieved up to date and hope he will take every opportunity to confer with the Commonwealth Government and the British Government with a view to stimulating Empire trade and migration and securing capital for this country the same as in Queensland. I talked privately with our Chief Secretary, and he said, "What will it cost?"

The Chief Secretary: When?

Hon. G. W. MILES: What does it matter what it costs?

The Chief Secretary: You never put it up to me!

Hon. G. W. MILES: We should spend money to open up our harbours and to establish water supplies. I have put forward these schemes before and have been laughed at and told I was a visionary. If these things had been done then, the cost would have been considerably less.

Hon. A. Thomson: You were not laughed at. You were merely ahead of the times.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes, the same applies today. By getting an increased population, and thereby increased income, the burden of taxation would be spread over a greater number of people and would be considerably reduced. In my opinion, however, there is no law and order in Australia. The country is run by anarchists. I had the pleasure of talking to Billy Hughes for

two hours last January and I said to him, "You were born 50 years too soon. If you had been on deck in these days you would have deported the Communists and anarchists of this country and you would have licensed wharf labourers as you did after the last war and established law and order." As a matter of fact, Mr. Hanlon put up a fight in Queensland, but what support did he obtain from the Commonwealth Government? None!

Two years ago an old pearler said to me, "Ned Kelly was a gentlemen compared with those b——s who are running Australia today." No truer word was ever spoken. They have robbed the woolgrower and they have robbed the wheatgrower. They have practically given away wheat to New Zealand by asking only 5s. 9d. a bushel for it. They have robbed every taxpayer, every individual worker and employer and everybody else. Mr. Chifley, who handles this money, has put 100,000 extra bureaucrats in jobs so that they will vote for him. We have had egg boards and other boards and the individual is being driven off his head as the result of these controls. The sooner they are eliminated the better it will be for Australia.

If it goes on much longer the building position will be aggravated, because the Government will have to erect mental homes to house the taxpayers that this Commonwealth crowd has driven mad. I propose to read a quotation from the publication "Hard Comment" of May, 1948, and I hope that members will pay careful attention to it and that the Press will publish the figures I am going to quote. The paper states—

High taxes in Australia will inevitably cause inflation. That conclusion has been reached by Mr. Colin Clark, Queensland Government Economist. Writing in the "Economic News," a bulletin of the Queensland Bureau of Industry, he shows that the Federal tax-grabbers take over 30 per cent. of the national income.

A diagram shows that in Australia the taxes for successive years represented the following proportion of the national income:—

						Per Cent.
1942	..	..	..	..	..	24
1943	..	..	..	..	..	25
1944	..	..	..	..	..	24
1945	..	..	..	..	..	28
1946	..	..	..	..	..	29
1947	..	..	..	..	..	30

The article compares the position in the U.S.A. It states that because of exchange differences it is difficult to compare actual wages and prices, but the buying power of money in the two countries can be compared by taking the time worked to get enough to buy something, adding "The true cost of an article is the time worked to get it." The taxes in U.S.A. for the years 1942 to 1947 represented the following proportion of national income:—

	Per Cent.
1942	20
1943	14
1944	11
1945	15
1946	15
1947	14

Prices in that country are high, but that is all that is taken from the taxpayers. The quotation continues—

In U.S.A., where the Government helps the businessman, the workers are much better off than here. In Australia, where the Government controls the businessman, the worker has to work much longer to earn things.

Then there is given a comparison of the times the average worker in each country has to spend on his job in order to get enough money to buy certain ordinary goods. That comparison is as follows:—

	U.S.A. (No controls)	Australia (Socialist controls)
Bottle of Beer	12 mins.	32 mins.
Shoes	4 hr. 50 mins.	8½ hrs.
Shirt	2½ hrs.	4½ hrs.
Bread, 1 lb.	6 mins.	5½ mins.
Petrol, 1 gallon	12 mins.	48 mins.
Milk, quart	9 mins.	14 mins.
Soap flakes	4 mins.	15 mins.
Movie ticket	22 mins.	45 mins.
Sedan car	155 8-hr. days	560 8-hr. days
Cigarettes, 20	0 mins.	34 mins.

The Socialist's answer to this is to recommend more controls which mean less production, and more Government bureaucrats, which mean more and higher taxes.

My conclusion is that to save the situation in Australia we must reduce taxation by 15 to 20 per cent. and eventually 50 per cent. to come to the American level in order to give the employee an incentive to work and the employer an incentive to produce, which is the only thing that will keep the country solvent. We should also cut out the payroll tax, the most iniquitous levy ever perpetrated. The man who finds work for thousands of other men now has to pay a tax on the money he pays to those men, which is absurd. It should come out of ordinary income tax. How many men do

doctors and lawyers employ, as compared with a firm like Boans Ltd.?

We should simplify the taxation return forms so that the workers and others could understand them, instead of having to employ experts in order to know how they stand and what they have to pay. If the suggestions I have made were put into effect, there would be some incentive for employers and employees to go on working and to increase production, which would be the salvation of Australia. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. G. Hislop, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 29th July, 1948.

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