

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 25th August, 1953.

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

OBITUARY.

The late Mr. Hastings Carew-Reid, O.B.E.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to take this opportunity of expressing on behalf of all members of this House and of the parliamentary staff our deep regret at the untimely death of the Chief Hansard Reporter, Mr. Hastings Carew-Reid. I feel we should express our very deep sympathy with the late Mr. Reid's widow and with his family, and I ask members to stand in silence as a token of such sympathy.

Members, accordingly, stood in silence.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

As to Expansible Homes Uncompleted.

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What is the total number of expansible homes built and left as a doubtful legacy by the previous Government?

(2) When is it anticipated that completion of all of these types of homes will be accomplished?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) One hundred and forty-nine expansible type houses have been built by the Commission, but of these, nine have been purchased by the tenants.

(2) In addition to the houses purchased by tenants, 15 houses are being expanded to full size and provision has been made to expand a further 25 this financial year. Additions will be made to the balance as loan funds become available.

FORESTS.

As to Advisory Committee and Compliance with Act.

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Forests:

(1) Has Mr. A. C. Harris, chairman of the Forestry Advisory Committee, disposed of his interest in a private sawmill, as mentioned in evidence before the recent Royal Commission on Forestry?

(2) If the answer to No. (1) is "Yes," when did he dispose of this interest?

(3) Has he any other interests which would prevent him, under Section 17 of the Forests Act, from being a "forest officer" within the meaning of the Act?

(4) What arrangements have been made, if any, for the financial remuneration of members of the Forestry Advisory Committee?

(5) Are members of the advisory committee officers of the Forests Department, as provided for by Section 13 of the Forests Act?

(6) Are all members of the advisory committee acceptable to Section 17 of the Forests Act?

(7) Can he tell the House the reasons for the withdrawal of tenders recently called for large areas of land?

(8) Were any representations made to him to withdraw these tenders, and if so, by whom, and how many, if any, of these people had given evidence before the Forestry Royal Commission expressing dissatisfaction with the administration of the Forests Department?

(9) Were the tenders mentioned in No. (7) called at his direction, or with his knowledge?

(10) If the answer to No. (9) is in the affirmative, did the tenders conform to his directions?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No, but this mill draws its timber supplies from sources that are not under the control of the Forests Department.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) No.

(4) The chairman receives 40 guineas monthly and the other two members 20 guineas each monthly.

(5) No.

(6) Members of the advisory committee are not forest officers under the Act.

(7) Tenders were withdrawn substantially because of complaints about conditions of tender and short time for consideration of areas by interested parties before closing date.

(8) No.

(9) No.

(10) Answered by No. (9).

BUSSELTON JETTY.

As to Improvement and Maintenance Expenditure.

Mr. BOVELL asked the Minister for Works:

What amount of money was expended separately on (a) improvements; (b) maintenance, and (c) repairs to the Busseilton jetty during the periods—

(a) 1933 to 1946;

(b) 1947 to 1953?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Works) replied:

	1933 to 1946.	1947 to 1953.
(a) Improvements	£ 691	£ 12,387
(b) Maintenance	19,944	24,491
(c) Repairs	1,593	2,137

TAXATION.

As to Revenue Under Uniform and State Systems.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Treasurer:

(1) What is the estimated amount that the State would have raised in the financial year 1952-53 in respect of those fields of taxation available to the State prior to uniform taxation, and not now available to the State as the result thereof, assuming that pre-uniform taxation rates of tax as applied in this State under State legislation, were still assessable, and having regard to the increased individual and "national" incomes?

(2) What were the estimated amounts similarly calculated in respect of the years between 1946-47 and 1951-52, giving each year separately?

(3) In each of the years mentioned in Nos. (1) and (2), what were the amounts paid to the State by the Commonwealth under uniform taxation?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) and (2) Figures are not available and could not be supplied without lengthy investigation and analysis.

In a report dated the 19th January, 1953, prepared by the Treasury officers of the Commonwealth and State Governments on the problems that would arise if income taxation powers were resumed by the States, much useful information was provided.

For example, tables showed the amount of income tax that would be payable in 1952-53 at various incomes by the appli-

cation of the States' rates operating in 1938-39 compared with the amount of tax payable under uniform tax rates in 1952-53. On an income of £800 per annum, a taxpayer in this State with a wife and two dependent children would have paid in State income tax £55 5s. 2d., whereas under uniform tax he pays £46 6s.

Under the uniform tax system in 1952-53, the Commonwealth Government retained for its own purposes about 75 per cent. of total income tax collections, amounting to £557 million, paying to the States by way of tax reimbursement and supplementary grants only £135.9 million.

If uniform taxation had not been in operation in 1952-53 and assuming that the Commonwealth Government had required to raise for its own purposes the equivalent of 75 per cent. of uniform tax, then the taxpayer in the example cited above would have paid to the Commonwealth 75 per cent. of £46 6s., or £34 14s. 6d. In addition, he would have paid to the Western Australian Government £55 5s. 2d., making a total income tax payment of £89 19s. 8d., compared with £46 6s. actually paid under uniform tax.

(3)—

	£	Equivalent in 1952-53 Money Values as Measured by "C" Series Index Numbers.
1946-1947	3,384,000	6,675,817
1947-1948	3,807,000	7,098,600
1948-1949	4,494,632	7,552,731
1949-1950	5,834,110*	8,891,770
1950-1951	7,176,426	9,630,052
1951-1952	9,400,000	10,370,025
1952-1953	10,854,544	10,854,544

* Including £661,677 being State's share of £8 million distributed by the Commonwealth on account of coal strike losses.

TRAFFIC.

(a) As to Road Accidents and Drunken Driving.

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Police:

(1) Are the figures of 103 persons killed and 1,880 persons injured as the result of road accidents in this State for the first half of this year, as recently published in the Press, the correct figures?

(2) What numbers of these persons were killed and injured, respectively, as a result of drunken driving?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The figures quoted agree with those furnished by the Government Statistician to the Police Department.

(2) So far as has been ascertained, there were two persons killed and 14 persons injured as a result of the intoxication, in some degree, of the drivers of the vehicles involved in the traffic accidents concerned.

(b) As to Advisory Committee and Recommendations.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) On how many occasions has the Traffic Advisory Committee met during the six months ended the 31st July last?

(2) How many of its recommendations have been—

(a) accepted by the Government;

(b) put into operation by the Government;

(c) rejected by the Government?

(3) Will he lay the recommendations on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

(1) On four occasions—4th March, 27th May, 24th June and 22nd July.

(2) (a) Eight.

(b) Six.

(c) Two.

In addition to the foregoing, two accepted recommendations have not yet been put into operation and five other recommendations are still under consideration.

(3) Details of recommendations will be laid on the Table of the House today.

BETTING.

As to Tax Revenue.

Mr. YATES asked the Treasurer:

(1) What amount of revenue has been received since the introduction of the betting tax?

(2) Has an allocation from the tax been made to the clubs? If so, how much was paid to—

(a) the W.A. Turf Club;

(b) the W.A. Trotting Association?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) The amount paid to the Treasury from the 30th June, 1953, was £64,844.

(2) Yes. The Act provides for the clubs to deduct 20 per cent. before paying tax collections to the Treasury. Amounts retained to the 30th June, 1953, were—

(a) W.A. Turf Club	£	6,495
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(b) W.A. Trotting Association	£	6,067
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BUS SERVICES.

As to Additional Route, Floreat Park.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Will he inform the House when the proposed passenger service for residents of Hackett Estate, Floreat Park via Salvado-rd., Alderbury-st. to Brookdale-st. will commence?

(2) Is the delay caused by lack of buses?

(3) Will he inform the House who is responsible for the delay?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Probably by the end of December.

(2) No.

(3) Local authorities, who have not to date been able to include the widening of Alderbury-st. in their approved works programme.

STATE FINANCE.

As to I.O.U's for Goods and Equipment.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) To what moneys did he refer when he mentioned 2½ million I.O.U's. during the course of my speech on the Address-in-reply?

(2) What goods and/or equipment had been obtained for these I.O.U's.?

(3) To what extent (if any) have the I.O.U's. been met out of 1952-53 financial year fund?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) The Treasury advises that the amount originally deferred on account of payments due overseas in 1952-53 for railway contracts was £2,338,000.

During the year, however, deliveries in respect of certain contracts slowed down considerably due to difficulties in maintaining the anticipated production schedules and accordingly the total deferment which would otherwise have been necessary was reduced to £1,134,000. This remaining deferment was extinguished by cash payments in June, 1953.

The deferment was on account of progress payments on uncompleted contracts for steam and diesel locomotives, diesel railcars, wagons and underframes for wagons.

GOVERNMENT STORES.

As to Value of Stocks.

Hon. D. BRAND asked the Treasurer:

(1) What was the value of stocks held in Government stores (including the Railway Department) as at the 1st July, 1952?

(2) What was the value of the same as at the 1st February, 1953?

(3) What was the value of stocks acquired in the intervening months and put into store?

(4) What was the value of stocks held in Government stores (including the Railway Department) as at the 30th June, 1953?

(5) What was the value of stocks taken from Government stores and used in works of various kinds, or otherwise used in Government departments, during the period from the 1st July, 1952 to the 30th June, 1953?

The TREASURER replied:

- (1) £5,519,198.
- (2) £5,300,762.
- (3) £7,547,658.
- (4) £4,346,537.
- (5) £14,123,024.

PRESS ADVERTISEMENT.

As to Inquiries.

Mr. NIMMO (without notice) asked the Premier:

Will he make inquiries and report to the House on an advertisement that has appeared in the daily Press on several occasions, as follows:—

Listen for your Telephone
The Pot of Gold

may call you
If you are called you can get £10
worth of value for a 27s. service
charge.

Listen for the Pot of Gold—you may
be called!

The PREMIER replied:

Yes. I will undertake to have this matter closely inquired into.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Seventh Day.

Debate resumed from the 20th August.

MR. YATES (South Perth) [4.46]: This is the seventh time I have taken part in an Address-in-reply debate. On each occasion I have done much research into many problems that have confronted me in my work as member for South Perth; and when speaking on the Address-in-reply, I have voiced my sentiments and opinions on the matters I wished to discuss, always bearing in mind that it was with the Ministers of the Crown most of the points were raised and that it was from them that I expected replies. Like many other members, I have been bitterly disappointed over the years at the lack of results obtained from the submission of problems to this House. It is well known that most members go to a lot of trouble and undertake a good deal of research before speaking on this motion, and express sincerely their sentiments on the subjects with which they deal.

I, for one, have on occasions brought up some very momentous problems. I have submitted to this House several schemes that I thought would be of benefit to the community, and have sought the assistance of various Ministers in the implementation of those schemes. They included Ministers of the Government which I supported. I am sorry to say that there was very little result. That is what has happened to all members of this Chamber for many years; and if things continue as they are, members are likely to receive the same lack of assistance in the future.

Mr. Lawrence: Your Government was in office at the time.

Mr. YATES: I agree. I have said that all Governments in the past have adopted the same attitude. I have heard members speak on problems affecting their electorates, and they have raised some good points; but, on most occasions, the Ministers concerned were absent from their seats. That happened when the previous Government was in power, as well. The very Ministers one desired to listen to one's speech were not present.

The Minister for Housing: Ministers of this Government can read, though.

Mr. YATES: Wait until I finish! When this matter is brought to the notice of Ministers, they say that "Hansard" is read by officers of their departments, who receive that publication each week, and go through it to decide what is to be done concerning members' problems. I do not know whether they read very much, because in the six years that I have been in this House I have never been approached by any departmental head nor have I received a request from any Minister to come to his department and discuss problems that I have raised in the House. I therefore believe that most of our utterances fall on deaf ears.

Mr. J. Hegney: If they do not read "Hansard," why not have our debates broadcast?

Mr. YATES: That brings to my mind the suggestion put forward by the member for Leederville. I did not oppose it at all. I will depart a little from the usual practice during the debate on the Address-in-reply, of speaking of matters affecting my own electorate, and will deal instead with wheat and wool and how the prices of those commodities affect the farmer who has to pay such heavy charges for the transport of his goods and produce. I think we agree, in the main, that the people of this State rely to a large degree on successful seasons enabling the maximum production of wheat and wool. I would go as far as to say that if we analyse the total production of this State into secondary and primary industry, our primary industries contribute approximately 75 per cent. of the income of Western Australia. That is a big thing and affects every person in the State.

How often have we heard, especially in recent times, that the farmer is making a fortune—that he has a fine home, filled with all modern conveniences, a big new motorcar and so on—and that Governments have given in too easily to him? Let us go back to the beginning of farming in this State and see how easy was the lot of the farmer then. The life of the pioneers of the farming industry in Western Australia was one of the hardest that any Australian citizen had to endure. The farmer of those days was not assisted as he is today by the various

schemes that Governments have introduced during the intervening years. Firstly, he had to find his own finance. Admittedly, goods were much cheaper then than now, but, of course, money was not plentiful.

Those who pioneered agriculture and dairying in this State were men of real courage and did not complain. They had not the time to so as they did not work a 40, 50 or even 60-hour week. In some cases those men worked well over 100 hours per week, and on seven days of the week in order to make a success of their holdings and produce the real wealth that has been the foundation of this community. In spite of all the difficulties that beset them, our pioneer farmers managed to survive and eventually it became apparent to British and other interests that the production of primary commodities in this State could be greatly expanded. That development took place due to the added assistance given to the men on the land together with advances in the building of machinery and the adoption of better methods of sowing wheat, with the use of fertilisers to enrich the soil.

Today we find that Western Australia is one of the most successful wheat-producing States in the Commonwealth and compares favourably with any other wheat-producing country in the world. That is due to the stability of our farming community and the sympathy that it has received from Governments of all political colours—both Commonwealth and State—together with the fact that people in general realise, although they complain at times, that the real wealth of the community is wrapped up with a successful and vigorous farming policy.

The position of the wool industry is much the same and our woolgrowers suffered from similar disabilities though they were not so marked as in the case of the wheatfarmer who had to till the soil and run the risks of hail, fire, rust in the wheat and many other hazards. In those areas where it was possible for the sheep to pasture on the natural feed and where huge areas were available to the woolgrower, it was possible for him to stabilise the industry without running the same risks as the wheatfarmer.

Even in a drought year, with lack of feed and water, the woolgrower was often able to move his stock to some more fortunate area, and he was able always to sell his produce on a high market when such was offering. With the introduction of high quality pedigreed rams from overseas the woolgrower was able to improve his flock with benefit to the industry as a whole. In 1840 the total amount of wool exported from this State was 50,000 lb., valued at approximately £2,500. In 1952 the export of greasy wool from Western Australia reached the record figure of 102,808,312 lb., valued at

£33,839,794. That is a remarkable achievement, in a period of about 80 years and in a State with a total population in the vicinity of 600,000.

The Minister for Lands: Are those State figures?

Mr. YATES: Yes. That is not the total of our wool production, as I have quoted only export figures and have not mentioned the great quantity of wool that is used locally. With the £33,000,000 odd received in return for our wool, we can purchase overseas goods that are urgently required in this State, whereas if we did not have such overseas funds, we would not be able to buy on those markets. The farmer has therefore performed a great service in building up an industry which can export a commodity to that value annually.

The wheat industry has similarly had a meteoric rise, wheat production in this State having climbed steadily since the beginning of the century. Until about 40 years ago it was not realised what the possibilities of wheatgrowing in this State were. Prior to that time it was not considered that Western Australia could produce sufficient wheat to provide for its own needs and for export as well. However, through expert supervision and advice obtained not only from Governments within Australia, but also from experts overseas who have studied in the Argentine, Canada and other producing countries, we, in this State, soon realised the possibilities of a wheat export trade. I will quote some figures so that members may compare them with those from other States if they so desire. During the five-year period up to 1924, the wheat yield was approximately 18,000,000 bushels per year. In the succeeding seven years from 1924, as a result of the rapid advance that had taken place with the new ideas that had been introduced and implemented, the yield, in 1931, rose to 53,500,000 bushels. Thus it was nearly three times greater than the yield seven years before.

Then followed several years of uneconomic prices and poor seasons of which we are well aware, and because of them Australia suffered a depression, which is firmly imprinted in the minds of older members of this Chamber. Not only did the people in the metropolitan area suffer during that period, but also the farming community itself. At that time the Agricultural Bank was faced with great difficulties in providing finance to keep the farmers going, and what a great job the Government of the day did to assist those farmers to keep solvent! In fact, countless thousands of pounds were written off against many farming properties because it was felt that to try to recover the money would result only in preventing each individual from again finding his feet and entering into the production field, to the benefit of the people generally.

So the Government of the day and succeeding ones helped not only the farmer financially, but also endeavoured to boost his morale so that he could again lift his head in the community and, what was most important, produce much needed wheat for home consumption and export. The wheat production for 1940-41 dropped to approximately 21,000,000 bushels for an average yield of eight bushels per acre. The period 1941-42 produced 37,500,000 bushels from 2,650,000 acres, with an average of 14.1 bushels per acre, which showed that not only production was increasing, but also the yield per acre.

During the war years and subsequently, owing to an agreement entered into with the Commonwealth Government, the wheat acreage was reduced, but because of the world-wide shortage of grain, the increased population in Australia and many other factors, it was realised that more farming properties would have to be opened up and existing farms would have to produce more. So once again the farming community was called upon to assist in stabilising this State. The wheat acreage for 1942-43 increased to 1,516,000 acres which yielded 15,900,000 bushels, but with the removal of restrictions on sowing, and increased labour facilities, plus the use of fertilisers, the farmers were able to increase their sowing in acreage. At the end of hostilities the acreage area rose to 3,039,000 and in 1951-52 when the yield was 40,000,000 bushels, the average yield per acre was 12.93 bushels.

We must realise that in the last season a great deal of the new acreage sown was on light land and in areas where it was not possible to obtain a great yield per acre, so the average yield of nearly 13 bushels to the acre can be considered as most satisfactory and beneficial to all concerned. Any farmer who can produce to the benefit of others and who can return to the community wheat at a price of not much more than that which it cost to produce, is doing a wonderful job for the community. The farmer is the only member of society that is putting something worth while back into it. There is not one section of the community that can compare with the farmer in regard to what he is doing for the people of Australia.

Mr. Lawrence: What about the man that works for the farmer?

Mr. YATES: I am not talking about individuals but about groups. The man that works for the farmer is well paid for what he does. If he does not work on a farm, he will work somewhere else. That question has nothing to do with what the farmer does for the community. If his employee gave something back to the people, he, too, would deserve some praise.

Mr. Lawrence: Does not the farmer make a profit?

Mr. YATES: Of course he does; he would not be able to keep going if he did not. The hon. member makes a profit too. He profits on his brains, I trust, otherwise he would not be in this Chamber. So the farmer is entitled to the profit that he gains from his production, because he works very hard and takes great risks. Today he may have a crop ready to be taken off in the morning, but during the night it may be flattened to the ground by a storm. He has trouble with fires, frost, rust and many other hazards that he dreads so greatly. So it is only to be expected that he should receive more in remuneration for the gamble that he takes in working not only for himself, but also for others.

The more successful the farmer is and the more money he makes, the better it is for the community because that money will be spent, in the main, in this country. Not many farmers go overseas to retire and, in fact, in most instances, they spend their last days in the district in which they were born and reared and in which they have made their mark and progress. It is to the benefit of this community that we should applaud the farmer instead of running him down, as so often occurs. When such questions as increased fares and freights come before this Chamber, we must bear in mind that the farmer has suffered a great deal in the past and is also, even today, beset with many difficulties.

Although the farmers very often have big incomes these days and have increased their yields through the use of fertilisers, their expenses are enormous and the gamble that they take is greater than ever before because if they do have a bad season, it is very unlikely that they will be able to cover their expenses.

Mr. Lawrence: Has the hon. member had a look at the value of the estates of deceased farmers lately?

Mr. YATES: I could say quite a lot about that, but in about 90 per cent. of the cases, the values shown are fictitious; it is not hard cash.

The Minister for Education: One does not pay duty on a fictitious value. What nonsense that is!

Mr. YATES: I may not have expressed myself quite correctly; the value of the property itself might be there, but the actual cash is not. A farmer's land might increase in value because of the fencing and other improvements that have been made to the property and because land is becoming more difficult to obtain, especially in the wheat areas, but it does not mean that the farmer is wealthy purely because he has a property worth £30,000 or £40,000. He wishes to work it until he dies, and it is only then that the value is taken into account.

Mr. Lawrence: But the probate duties are assessed on values much less than the true values.

Mr. YATES: Oh no, they are not! Probate duties are never assessed on less than the true values. I am certain of that because I have been dealing with that question recently, and I will have more to say about it later. Members should not run away with the idea that when a farmer dies his estate is valued at a certain figure, because the widow and sons of the farmer have had great difficulty in paying the amount of the probate duty and, in some instances, people have had to sell their properties against their wishes because they did not have sufficient finance to meet the probate duties.

Mr. Lawrence: The same thing applies when a property in the metropolitan area comes up for probate.

Mr. YATES: Of course! Because a valuable property is assessed for probate that does not mean a farmer is a wealthy man. It is not cash in the bank. If he had his £30,00 in the bank, it would be a different matter, but not many deceased farmers today leave very much cash. I have read a great deal about the estates of deceased farmers and I think the hon. member will agree with me that they do not show that there is much cash in hand. All the money that a farmer earns generally goes back to improve his property, and not many farmers are really wealthy.

Mr. Lawrence: How many firms in Perth do not work on an overdraft?

Mr. YATES: I am not talking about firms at the moment; they can work on any system they like. I know that most of them do work on an overdraft to keep going, and so does the farmer. If the latter has increased the value of his property and he dies leaving an estate worth £30,000 or £40,000 which in the early days he had procured for £1,000, that is sufficient proof he has been a good farmer and citizen. He has worked for the community through all those years and because he dies and leaves a property worth £30,000 or £40,000, is it fair to say, "Look at so and so who has died and left an estate worth about £30,000 or £40,000"? It is not. True, an asset has been built up, but it is not actual hard cash. The member for South Fremantle is the only one that would regard it as hard cash and to argue with him is very difficult. Evidently he does not know much about farming.

It is very interesting to note the fluctuations in the value of wheat since the year 1900. The average price per bushel f.o.b. was then 4s. No wheat was exported from Western Australia in 1901 to 1903. In 1904-05 the price dropped to 3s. 5d. and in the following years it went up to 6s., back to 4s. 10½d. and up to 7s. 4d. That was in 1920-21. In 1930 the price was down as low as 2s. 3½d. and in 1933-34 it was 2s. 11½d., while in 1939-40 it was 3s. 0½d.

During the war years the price was reasonably stabilised at about 4s. 1d. In 1944-45 it increased to 6s. 4d.; in 1946-47 it was 13s. 2d. and in the following year 17s. 6d. Then in 1948-49 it dropped to 15s. 3½d. and in 1951-52 it rose to 17s. 1d. Thus through the years the farmer has had to face many fluctuations. Members know only too well what the farmer had to suffer in 1928-30 owing to the very low price of wheat, and their employees, too, had a very hard time.

Mr. May: Whose fault was that?

Mr. YATES: Probably the fault of the unions. The unions seem to take credit for anything they do, so they might well take blame for what they do not do.

Mr. Lawrence: You referred to the unions.

Mr. YATES: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will address the Chair.

Mr. YATES: I am afraid the hon. member is still wandering in his mind.

Mr. Lawrence: Well, he has a mind anyhow.

Mr. YATES: As a city member, I have endeavoured to show that I take an interest in the farming community, as I am sure other members do. I trust that the wheat and wool industries will continue to enjoy the prosperity experienced by them in the last seven or eight years. Only by a stable economy, by increased production and by the export of commodities of a high standard can we in this State hope to enjoy security and progress that will enable us to play our part in the welfare of the Commonwealth. Western Australia, even taking into account the recent large increase of population is in a position to export more wheat than is New South Wales, or Queensland. This shows that the policy adopted over the years has been sound and that our farmers have not gone haywire. They have not to any extent changed over from the growing of wheat to the production of other cereals, as has been done in South Australia for instance.

In that State wheat production has dropped alarmingly, because a large section of the farming community has switched over to the growing of cereals other than wheat. Last year New South Wales, which had been an exporting State for many years, had to import supplies of wheat, some of it from Western Australia, for internal consumption. I trust that that will never be our experience, but that Western Australia will always be able to produce sufficient, not only for internal needs but also to supply other parts of the Commonwealth and oversea countries that may require it.

It is encouraging to find that we have such stability in this field as well as in other avenues. To be successful, we must have a sound agricultural policy accom-

panied by constant research and the provision of fertilisers, which are required not only by wheatgrowers, but also by those engaged in the potato and dairying industries. In this way, all of our agricultural pursuits may enjoy consistent and successful yields, and we shall be able to hold up our heads and claim that we have played our part in producing for the benefit of people in Australia and abroad that have need of our commodities.

I wish to refer to the National Safety Council. Last year the member for Leederville, the member for Darling Range and myself were invited to become members of the executive of the council, since when we have attended each of the monthly meetings, and I am sure they will agree with me when I say that our eyes have been opened to the value of the work being done. Not much publicity is given in the Press to the activities of the council, but I am satisfied that it is doing excellent work. This body functions in close co-operation with the Police Department, the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Andersen, and the head of the Traffic Department, Inspector Richardson, being members of the executive. They attend the meetings and discuss the many problems of traffic, including dangerous and drunken driving and anything else incurring traffic hazards or likely to endanger life and limb. Month by month such items are discussed, suggestions are made, and the council carries them into effect to the best of its ability. On occasions, visits are paid to the other States where conferences are held between the various council groups, and much good has resulted.

The safety council was, I believe, responsible for the installation of the first traffic light that was placed outside of Foy & Gibson's for test purposes some years ago. I learnt only last week the result of that test. It was said that the pedestrians acted as if they had been accustomed to watching and obeying the lights for years, and there was proof that such lights could be of benefit, not only to the motoring public, but also to the pedestrian. The only disadvantage about that test was that the light was placed between two streets and tended to slow up the traffic a little owing to the way in which the hand moved around the clock face.

That experiment proved conclusively that traffic lights could be operated to great advantage at danger points. Since then the National Safety Council has evinced a close interest in the proposed introduction of traffic lights in the metropolitan area and has pursued its investigations to ascertain the system most suited to our conditions. We have read in the Press recently that provision has been made for the installation of traffic lights in William-st. and, I believe also at Fremantle. I could name many danger points in the metropolitan area where

such lights would be beneficial. In my electorate at the corner of Berwick-st. and Canning Highway, a dense volume of traffic occurs and many fatalities have resulted. Even though Stirling Highway is a major thoroughfare, there are spots where traffic lights would be of benefit. I am satisfied that they would be a boon in the city, but only if we reduce the parking hazard.

If we continue to permit vehicles to park for long periods on both sides of Barrack-st. and Hay-st., we shall have traffic banking up behind the lights and the traffic problem would not be alleviated at all. Parking on both sides of a street within the central city block should be banned for all time. It would make no difference which side of the street was made available for parking, but if parking on one side or the other were banned, an extra line would be available for vehicles and thus there would be a much better flow of traffic.

I also suggest that the parking of large trucks to take up or deliver merchandise should cease at 9.30 a.m., and they should not be permitted to re-enter the city until some time such as may be prescribed late in the afternoon. A system of this sort operates in many notable cities of the United States of America. Trucks are required to pick up or deliver merchandise before a stipulated time in the morning, say 9.30 a.m., and are not permitted to return until about 4.30 p.m. But before and after those hours they are permitted to stop at selected places to drop and pick up their merchandise. That system could well be adopted in the City of Perth. How often do we see in Murray-st. outside a well-known butcher's shop or near a well-known store, a big meat truck, much wider than the average truck, with a ramp on to the ground and men unloading meat and carrying it on their shoulders into the shop?

We can see that vehicle there for long periods, assisting to obstruct the traffic. Alongside of it are a couple of cars that have been parked there for one or two hours. The right-hand side of that vehicle should be against the footpath. If we banned the parking of vehicles on the right-hand side of Murray-st., facing east, facilities could be provided for these heavy vehicles to have temporary space for the purpose of delivering their merchandise. After 9.30 in the morning they would not be allowed to park. That would alleviate the heavy traffic problem within the city.

The heavy vehicles with merchandise of all kinds cannot get into the kerb but have to park out in the street, thus preventing motorists from driving through the city. A motorist seeing a small opening on the left of a truck, attempts to go past, but he might run into another vehicle on the left of the road. So these

parked vehicles, which have no right to park except close to the kerb, are creating a traffic hazard which is being permitted by the authorities at the moment.

Only today I saw a constable in St. George's Terrace mark the tyre of a car but not that of a truck which was eight or ten feet out from the kerb. The driver was not there. The constable marked the tyre and went on to the next car. He looked at the truck but did nothing about it. That proves to me that the police are sympathetic to the truck users; and I do not blame them. These men have to unload their goods, and so the police are sympathetic and do not touch them. Knowing they are immune, they sometimes remain for longer periods than they should. That hazard could be removed if we stopped parking on one side of the city streets.

There is not room for all motorists in the city. We know that because the Esplanade, Malcolm-st., Harvest Terrace and other short streets are filled with cars every day. Another 300 would not make much difference to the parking in these streets, but if one side of each of the main streets of the city were kept clear, the heavy-duty vehicles could operate there for a stipulated period each day. Another suggestion I have to make is that we should cut out the turning around the constable within the city block. The pointsmen allow the heavy vehicles to bypass them. In some cases big trucks cannot get around, and so they are waved alongside. If we adopt the principle of allowing the motorists to cut the corner, we could have two lines of traffic going around the corner at the same time, because they would not have to go around the constable. That would save quite a lot of time in dispersing traffic.

I have not heard of nor seen an accident caused by a truck cutting the corner with the connivance of the constable on point duty. I have seen, though, a motorist who was behind a truck, follow the truck around the corner and be roundly ticked off by the pointsman for breaking the law. The motorist has been tricked by the vehicle in front and, not seeing the policeman, has followed the line of least resistance. How easily it works for the trucks, and how easy it would be for the cars because there would not be the same problem of swinging a big vehicle in a narrow street.

This would assist in alleviating some of the traffic problems in the city. It would allow of a quicker flow of traffic, and an extra flow at the same time. If a motorist could cut the corner without turning around the constable, we would have a flow of traffic in two directions at the same time. It is something the Minister for Transport might take up with those in authority.

The Minister for Railways: It does not come under my jurisdiction. I do not administer the Traffic Act. The Chief Secretary does.

Mr. YATES: Unfortunately he is not in this Chamber.

The Minister for Railways: I shall draw his attention to your remarks.

Mr. YATES: This is not done in other parts of Australia, I think, but according to some overseas journals I have read, it has been successfully tried out in other parts of the world. The use of the pointsman has been done away with entirely, especially where they have the traffic lights.

Another traffic hazard is the parking of vehicles in Adelaide Terrace, which is not a very wide highway. In the morning and in the evening it is most difficult to find a parking-spot between the Causeway and the city, because motorists coming into town in the morning park their cars in that area as they know they cannot do so in the city itself. Now that we have closed the eastern end of Adelaide Terrace near the Causeway and made a one-way traffic street of it, the hazard is all the more dangerous near Plain-st. when the big buses turn out of Plain-st. into Adelaide Terrace. Without exception they have to cross the centre line which, in itself, makes a traffic hazard.

I have frequently seen vehicles parked near the two corners, and this makes it most difficult for a bus to turn the corner if other vehicles are approaching. I believe the corner is to be altered to make it easier for them to turn. Once this flow of traffic enters Adelaide Terrace it means that other cars cannot pass the line of traffic which has commenced from Plain-st. because of the parking of vehicles on the left and right of the main road. With two lines of traffic parked, it allows of only two lines of moving traffic with safety.

So the motorist who was at one time able to pass vehicles in Adelaide Terrace, and so speed the traffic along, cannot do so now, especially in the busy periods. I suggest that Adelaide Terrace, being such a busy thoroughfare and becoming more hazardous each day, should be declared a no-parking area as soon as possible. That would not only alleviate the difficulty of heavy traffic—especially buses—but would tend to speed up all traffic and so assist in rectifying one of our major problems.

The Minister for Railways: During the peak periods or all the time?

Mr. YATES: I think all the time, because today Adelaide Terrace is a very busy street most of the time. Now that we have nearly all the bus traffic coming up Adelaide Terrace it is a real hazard to have vehicles parked there at all. There are many cross-streets. If a motorist desires to go to one of the business firms or

a house, he can park within 50 or 100 yards by parking in one of the cross-streets, and so keep the highway clear. Most business places in Adelaide Terrace have a drive-in for the use of vehicles.

It is becoming a real hazard to drive out of the Royal Automobile Club premises. One has to be most careful to see that the highway is clear. In some instances the motorist has to wait quite a long time before he can get into the line of traffic. I would say that Adelaide Terrace is the busiest piece of highway in the whole of the metropolitan area, and the most dangerous. There have been more accidents at the corner of Bennett-st. and Adelaide Terrace than anywhere else in the metropolitan area, and more deaths in Adelaide Terrace than in any other highway. The statistics would be most interesting if we could obtain them. From my reading in the Press of the number of accidents in Adelaide Terrace, I think we should remove a lot of the hazards, and we can do that by preventing future parking there.

I did have quite a lot to say on the annual report of the Commissioner of Police but my time is nearly up. The report which was submitted to us recently deals with the year ended the 30th June, 1952. In some directions, the report is alarming. I shall deal mainly with the concern felt by the Commissioner of Police at the conditions under which members of the Force have to work. It is admitted that some attempt has been made by both the past Government and the present one to alleviate some of the difficulties of housing the members of the Police Department so that they can do their work in reasonable comfort.

Hon. L. Thorn: Are you dealing with housing?

Mr. YATES: No.

Hon. L. Thorn: I thought you spoke of the housing of them.

Mr. YATES: The housing of the staff. On page 5 the Commissioner states—

The premises occupied by the Scientific Bureau of the Criminal Investigation Branch are becoming very cramped. They are in large part, portion of the lockup cells at Central Police Station; are small and dark and most unsuitable for such important work. There is no room whatever for the expansion which is urgently needed.

The Traffic Branch is also urgently in need of additional floor space to enable its administrative section to function satisfactorily.

With the growing need for extra Court room in the Police Court building, and the general expansion of the Police Force (the Criminal Investigation Branch of which is housed in the building mentioned), provision

must be made in the near future for a suitable building to house the various components of the Force.

This is something I do not like very much—

Since the police gymnasium has been converted into offices, no amenities exist for the benefit of the staffs at Headquarters, Criminal Investigation Branch, or Central Station, nor is there any possible means of providing such in the existing buildings.

What has the Police Union done about that? Nothing! An amenity was taken away from the worker, but I did not hear any squeal about it, and the space was converted into office accommodation because of the cramped conditions in the main buildings. When is something going to be done about this?

The Minister for Railways: What was done during the last six years?

Mr. YATES: Not very much. Some three years ago, I asked the previous Minister for Police a question about this matter when I wanted to know what provisions were being made for the extension of the present police court buildings. The vague reply received was that owing to building restrictions, and so on, the matter was under consideration.

The Minister for Railways: It is finance now, not building restrictions.

Mr. YATES: I want to see the present Government do something about this. I know it is hard pressed for finance, but if we are going to increase the numbers of the Force, as we do each year, how can we have increased efficiency if the members of the Force have to work in cramped conditions, and do not have any amenities? Those they had have been taken away from them. We are not now able to call on the men who used to go through the school and who lived at the barracks. It was possible to call on 20 or 30 men at any time, but no provision has now been made for the housing of the Police Instructional School. The men who attend that school for three months are billeted, in many cases, at private homes, and consequently they do not get together and cannot be reached in an emergency. The Government broke it up by using the gymnasium for office accommodation.

The Minister for Railways: You say that the Government broke it up.

Mr. YATES: It was done because of the housing needs of the Force. Further office accommodation had to be found.

The Minister for Railways: But the Government did not do it.

Mr. YATES: Of course, the Government had to agree to it.

The Minister for Railways: It was not consulted. The Commissioner did it without consulting the Minister or the Government.

Mr. YATES: Did not the Commissioner ask the Government for further accommodation? He was compelled to do it. The only other part of the report I wish to quote reads as follows:—

The women police are also accommodated in a room in the courthouse, but the plainclothes staff are obliged to carry out their office functions in a shed abutting on to Henderson-st.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. member will have to leave his other comments until the Estimates, or some later stage.

Mr. YATES: So, right through the report we find that the Commissioner is faced with shortage of accommodation for his staff and he is crying out for something to be done. When speaking to the Estimates, I will have something further to say on this matter.

MR. OLDFIELD (Maylands) [5.46]: In speaking to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I would like to comment on an item which appears on page 7 of His Excellency's Speech. I quote—

The replacement of tramways with trolley-buses on the Newcastle-st. route is planned to coincide with the installation of traffic control lights in William-st.

I do not know what is happening at the Tramway Department, but I am afraid that the staff there are tram-minded, or trolley-bus-minded, and they do not realise how much cheaper it is to operate diesel motor buses as compared with trams and trolley-buses.

The Minister for Railways: They told you the saving. You did not know till you asked the question and received the answer from the department.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I was able to work out what it was in 1951-52, but I do not know the 1952-53 figures because the report has not yet been tabled. From the answers I received the other day, one can see that, by using trolley-buses on the proposed Newcastle-st route, it will cost £12,500 for the overhead wiring and £48,000 for six trolley-buses. That is a total cost, for capital equipment, of £60,500. A diesel bus carries an average of 42 passengers, while a trolley-bus carries an average of 38 passengers, so I will assume that a diesel bus, with a carrying capacity of 42 passengers, will do the same work as a trolley-bus carrying 38 passengers.

Six diesel buses would cost £39,000, at a cost of £6,500 each, which means a total saving in overhead wiring installation and bus purchase of £21,500. We must also add to that figure a saving of .71d. per seat mile and a saving in vehicle miles of 24.68d. per bus mile. The proposed Newcastle-st. route is approximately two miles from the city to the Leederville

terminus, so that the return trip would be approximately four miles. This means that 8s. 3d. would be saved on every trip made if diesel buses were used instead of trolley-buses. So, in my opinion, the Minister should instruct the Tramway Department to abandon any ideas it may have of opening up further trolley-bus routes, and that the department should use diesel buses in their place.

In answer to previous questions, the department has said it proposes to put a trolley-bus route along Beaufort-st. and Walcott-st. to Blake-st., and another route from Beaufort-st., along Bulwer-st. and Fitzgerald-st., to North Perth. It is approximately 2½ miles from the Barrack-st. Jetty to Charles-st., and from the corner of Bulwer-st. and Beaufort-st. to Blake-st., via Walcott-st., is approximately 1½ miles, making a total of 4½ miles from the Jetty. With the return route, it would make a total of nine miles and, according to the Minister's figures, at a cost of £3,500 per mile—with wooden poles—it would cost £31,500 for overhead wiring. Diesel buses will do the same work in a given time and on a given day as trolley-buses, but have a greater seating capacity—42 passengers for diesel buses as against 38 for trolley-buses.

If the North Perth route via Bulwer-st. required 13 buses and the North Perth route via Walcott-st. 11 buses, it would make a total of 24 vehicles. If we purchased 24 trolley-buses at a cost of £8,000 each, it would make a total of £192,000, and, with the cost of overhead wiring, would make a grand total of £223,500. On the other hand, to carry the same number of passengers over the same distance, and at the same fares, it would cost £156,000 to purchase 24 diesel buses; in other words, an immediate saving to the department of £67,500.

If we liked to continue this argument to the Newcastle-st. route, the same results would be shown, and there would be a saving on every bus-mile travelled. If we added together the costs for the proposed trolley-bus route along Newcastle-st. and the two North Perth routes, the State would save approximately £90,000 if diesel buses were used instead of trolley-buses. The cost of overhead wiring and purchase of trolley-buses on the William-st. route would be £60,500 while the diesel buses would cost £39,000, and thus there would be a saving of £21,500.

On the North Perth-Walcott-st. route, the cost of wiring would be approximately £31,500, and 21 trolley-buses at £8,000 each, making a total of £192,000, or a grand total of £223,500. Twenty-four diesel buses, at £6,500 each, would cost £156,000, and so there would be a saving on that route of £67,500, which, when added to £21,500 saved on the other route, makes a grand total of £90,000, plus a continual saving of 24.68d. for every bus-mile travelled.

I have here the report of the Tramway Department for the year 1951-52, and all I can do is to use the milages and earnings given in this report, because as yet the latest report has not been tabled. It is interesting to note, when comparing the figures for that year with the figures given by the Minister in answer to questions asked the other day, that, whereas in the year 1951-52 working expenses per tram-mile were 62.44d., today they are 83.54d., or an increase of approximately 33 per cent. In 1951-52, working expenses per trolley-bus-mile travelled were 40.64d., but today those costs have risen to 49.45d., an increase of approximately 24 per cent. In 1951-52, costs per mile travelled by diesel buses were 24.55d., and today they are only 24.86d. per bus-mile.

Operating costs for trams have increased by approximately 33 per cent., trolley-buses by about 24 per cent., but diesel buses have increased by only one per cent. The figures given by the Minister the other evening would be correct and it is only reasonable to assume, using last year's report as a guide, that the number of tram-miles and passengers carried would be approximately the same as this year. The trams ran a total of 1,285,899 miles, with 64 seats per tram, which gives us a total of 82,297,536 seat-miles. If the diesel buses carried the same number of passengers—with a diesel bus carrying 42 passengers as against a tram carrying 64—the diesel buses would have been required to run a total of 1,959,465 bus-miles.

The Premier: Is that on the basis of their being full on each trip?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I think the Premier will agree that one rarely sees a tram full up unless it is at a peak period. However, the Premier's interjection is added weight in favour of diesel buses because normally there are only eight or nine passengers on each tram and, during peak periods, anything up to 30 or 40. A bus can still handle all those passengers and the cost per mile is so much less. The trolley-buses ran a total of 1,546,638 bus-miles. If the trams ran a total of 1,285,899 tram-miles at a cost of 83.45d. per tram-mile, the cost would be £447,600. If the trolley-buses ran a total of 1,546,638 bus-miles at a cost of 49.54d. per bus-mile, it gives us a total of £319,252.

Mr. J. Hegney: I did not know that you were a mathematician.

Mr. OLDFIELD: We still do not know what the hon. member is! If diesel buses had been used, they would have travelled the 1,959,465 bus-miles at a cost of 24.86d. per mile, which gives us a total operating cost of £202,970, or a saving of £244,630 to the State. If diesel buses had been used also in lieu of trolley-buses, they would have travelled 1,546,638 miles at 24.86d. per mile, a total cost of £160,206, or a saving of £159,046, because the trolley-bus operations would cost £319,252. In

other words, if, during the last 12 months, using the present cost of operations as a basis, the diesel buses had been used to carry the passengers conveyed by trams and trolley-buses, the department would have saved £403,676.

The Minister for Railways: What is the comparative working life of a trolley-bus and a diesel bus?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am glad the Minister asked that question, because the other day I asked him the cost per seat-mile and the cost per vehicle-mile of operating a tramcar, a trolley-bus and a diesel motor-bus. In his reply, the Minister said that the cost per seat-mile for a tramcar was 1.31d., for a trolley-bus, 1.30d., and for a diesel motor-bus, .59d.

The Minister for Railways: What mileage will an electric trolley-bus run in a lifetime compared with a diesel bus? You must take that into consideration, too.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I also asked the Minister some questions about the cost of installing overhead lines. If one wants to operate a motorcar, one does not say, "I can do 30 miles on a gallon of petrol and I can buy a gallon of petrol for 3s. 5d., or in Maylands at 3s. 4d.—

Mr. McCulloch: It was 3s. 5d. today.

Mr. OLDFIELD: —so that it would cost 3s. 5d. to travel 30 miles!"

The Minister for Railways: We want to know for how long you can travel.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Is depreciation allowed for in those operating figures?

Mr. Lawrence: You have been asked a question.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The other evening I asked a question about the cost of operating these vehicles, and I was given the answers I have quoted.

The Minister for Railways: Why did not you ask for some information about the comparative life or the mileage travelled by a diesel-bus compared with an electric trolley-bus? You must have that information if you want to make a comparison.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Surely, depreciation and maintenance and all those factors are taken into consideration when comparing figures like these! Surely they are taken into account when assessing operating costs, and I am working on operating costs!

The Minister for Railways: You are trying to dodge the issue. You are trying to slide out the back door, because all your calculations are fallacious.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am working on the figures supplied by the Minister, and I took them to be correct. I asked for the operating costs of these vehicles, and those are the answers I was given.

The Minister for Railways: You did not ask anything about the comparative lives of the two vehicles.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Yes, he did.

Mr. OLDFIELD: That does not make any difference; that is allowed for in operating costs.

The Minister for Railways: I will give you the comparative lives, and other figures as well, when I reply.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Comparative life! One sees trams 50 years old.

The Premier: That is the Minister's argument.

The Minister for Railways: Have we any diesel-buses that are 50 years old?

Mr. OLDFIELD: Do operating costs include depreciation?

The Minister for Railways: Do not make excuses! You have used fallacious premises, and you are trying to get out of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The Minister can have his say later.

Mr. OLDFIELD: The Minister is most unfair. I assume, when I ask questions in this Chamber, that everything is given in the reply, and when I asked for the operating costs, I assumed that all the other costs were taken into account. The cost of operation includes depreciation, interest, petrol, tyres, track maintenance, overhead wiring maintenance, and everything else. That is the only way one can get a proper operating cost. If the figures I have quoted are incorrect, then I can only blame the Minister because I am working on the figures he supplied in the answer to questions asked the other night.

Mr. Lawrence: Rubbish!

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am sure the figures supplied by the Minister are correct because I know he is honourable and most diligent, and he would not supply incorrect figures to the House.

The Premier: The Minister cannot deny that.

The Minister for Railways: You have me there!

Mr. OLDFIELD: It is obvious, from the figures I have placed before the House, that for the Tramway Department to proceed with any scheme of establishing overhead wiring for running trolley-buses along Newcastle-st. and the other proposed routes in Beaufort-st., Bulwer-st., and Fitzgerald-st., is just a waste of public money.

Mr. J. Hegney: It was approved by the Minister in your Government.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am not criticising the present Minister.

Mr. J. Hegney: And you supported that Government.

Mr. OLDFIELD: I am not accusing any Minister. The Minister sprang to the defence of his department, and I appreciate his actions, because the members of the department are not here to defend themselves.

Mr. Lawrence: Talk to the Minister; he is in charge of the department.

The Minister for Railways: If you had made this speech 12 months ago, it might have had some value.

Mr. OLDFIELD: There are certain portions of the report I wish to quote. I feel that the use of diesel buses should be the policy of the Government and that the present trolley-bus and tram services should be progressively replaced by diesel buses. If we look at the balance sheet for the year ended the 30th June, 1952, we will see the earnings of the trolley-buses and the tramways as compared with the earnings of the diesel buses. We must remember, however, that the diesel buses are operating on all routes going to the outlying areas. The member for Middle Swan will agree that the diesel buses operating through Beechboro, Caversham and Morley Park are covering long distances with very little loading to provide a service.

The trams, on the other hand, have the cream of the loading and they are of course, operating through the centre of the city to Hay-st. East, Hay-st. West and to Subiaco. At peak periods trams have the advantage of being able to accommodate 100 people. They also have the advantage of handling the trotting crowds on Saturday nights, and these facts will tend to boost their figures. The trolley-bus services are also operating in densely populated areas; at least, more so than the diesel buses are.

The Premier: Does that apply to Mounts Bay-rd.?

Mr. OLDFIELD: It will be seen from the 1951-52 report that the working expenses on cost per hundred seat miles for omnibuses was only 65d.; for trolley-buses, 104.39d. and for trams, 98.64d. Let us consider the figures for the tramway operations only. We find that working expenses per cent. of earnings were 97.12. The surplus of earnings over working expenses was £9,906. For trolley-buses the working expenses per cent. of earnings was 112.59. The earnings were £232,617 and the working expenses £261,902. The excess of working expenses over earnings amounted to £29,285.

That was in 1951-52. Since then the cost of operations on trolley-buses has increased by about 24 per cent., and the Tramway Department is recommending that a trolley-bus route be run along Newcastle-st. and later to North Perth! The management of the Tramway Department has only to read its own report to see the futility of such a policy. Let us consider the figures for motor-bus operations only. Surplus earnings over working expenses amounted to £45,893 and the working per cent. of earnings was 88.68. That is the position in spite of the fact that the tramways have the cream of the loading and the trolley-buses are also able to get better loading than the diesel buses.

The Minister for Railways: Would you put diesel-buses on Hay-st. instead of trams?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I think they would be much better than trams, and we would be saving money. It would also assist our traffic problems in the city to a great extent. If we look at page 10 of the Government Tramways and Ferries report of 1952 we see that the earning on tramway operations was 35.06 per cent. of the revenue of the department, and its working expenses were 35 per cent. of the total working expenses of the department. The loss was 21.62 per cent. of the department's loss. The interesting point is that the trolley-buses which are allegedly new modern transport, only earn 23.68 per cent. of the revenue and their working expenses are 27.4 per cent. of the total. But the loss on trolley-bus operation was 64.6 per cent. of the total sustained by the department. So, although they only earned 23.68 per cent. and their working expenses were 27.4 per cent., their loss was 64.6 per cent. of the total.

Mr. J. Hegney: The member for Mt. Lawley worked hard to get it up Walcott-st.

Mr. Bovell: The member for Mt. Lawley works hard at any time!

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Prior to the tea suspension, I was pointing out the difference in percentage of earnings and losses incurred by the three types of vehicles used by the Tramway Department in moving the travelling public. After allowing for depreciation and interest, in the operation of the trams, the department lost £24,081 in 1952. The loss on trolley-bus operations was £71,936 and the loss on motor-bus operations was £15,328. Before tea, by way of interjection, the Minister for Transport endeavoured to intimate that I was working on figures supposed to be for operating costs as supplied by himself, but that I was forgetting certain things. I think he meant interest and depreciation.

I understood that in all forms of accounting and costing in any department of commercial life, when one worked out the cost of operating a vehicle per mile or per seat-mile, all maintenance, depreciation and interest charges were included in those figures. However, I went to the trouble during the tea interval of examining the depreciation and interest charges in respect of the operation of these vehicles. I find that on page 6 of the report it is stated that the department has available for service 63 trams, 75 trolley-buses and 117 omnibuses. The depreciation in regard to tramway operations was £22,178, or approximately £352 per vehicle. The interest was £11,809 or approximately £187 per vehicle. I take it that those figures represent depreciation not only in respect of vehicles but in respect of the track and overhead wires; and likewise with the trolley-buses.

In connection with the latter, the depreciation was £26,682, or approximately £300 per vehicle; and the interest was £19,969, or £266 per vehicle. With regard to motor-bus operations the depreciation was £41,859 for 117 vehicles, or approximately £357 per vehicle. The interest on motor-bus operations was £19,362, or £165 per vehicle. So the depreciation and interest combined on the operations of the whole three types of vehicles was: Trams, £539; trolley-buses £566; and diesel buses, £522. Thus the loss in respect of diesel buses is still lower, even if those charges were not included in the cost of operating per mile as supplied by the Minister.

I feel there is only one sane approach to this subject of metropolitan transport. I do not suggest that the Tramway Department should order sufficient buses tomorrow to take over the other services immediately, and scrap the trams and trolley-buses; but I do suggest that there should be no extension of trolley-bus and tram services. I consider that there should not be any relaying of tram tracks or replacement of trams. As far as is economically possible, and as soon as possible, trams and trolley-buses should be replaced by diesel buses.

Next I shall pass on to our railways. I have studied with interest the report of the Railway Commissioners for 1951-52. I want the Minister to bear in mind that when I am dealing with reports of the department, I am not dealing with those that cover the period of his regime, but that of the preceding Minister. When a member of this House takes the trouble to investigate these matters, points out what is happening, and suggests how the department might alter its policy, the Minister is at fault if he wants to stonewall and declare that things are going along quite all right.

There seems to be a lot of trouble regarding railways and road transport. Nobody seems to be very happy about the situation. The railways appear to go on losing money, and the amount lost is increasing each year. Road hauliers are not getting sufficient work to keep their trucks operating. Any commercial firm in Perth engaged in bringing down commodities by rail will say that there is a stage between a distance of 80 and 120 miles when it is economically cheaper to transport by road than by rail. That was proved during the railway strike when firms could not get railway trucks and had to use road transport. They found that over a certain distance it was cheaper to bring their goods to Perth or send them from Perth by road than it had been to transport the goods by train.

That was brought about by the cost of handling. When goods are conveyed by rail, a truck has to be loaded at the warehouse in Perth and proceed to the railway yards. There the truck has to be

unloaded, and by the time the man gets clear of the railway yards and back to his starting point a couple of hours have passed since he left the warehouse. With a truck running to Northam, Cunderdin, Meckering, or any centre at a handy distance such as that, the destination is reached in the time it would take the man to clear the railway yards if the goods were being conveyed by train.

When goods are hauled by rail, they have to be taken from the train at the other end and loaded on to motor transport for delivery round the town, whereas when road transport is used, the goods are loaded at the warehouse, and in a couple of hours have arrived at their destination and have been unloaded. I suggest that the policy of the Railway Department should be altered. The department should not worry about haulage over 80 to 120 miles. I am not well enough versed in the matter to assess the distance accurately, but I do think that the railways should give away the idea of trying to grab all the short haulage. Goods trains are held up. They do not run to timetable. The department does not bother to make a time-table. Trains with 40 to 50 trucks and a large engine will stop at every little siding to pick up one or two trucks.

I consider that the department should utilise modern engines for goods haulage. I refer to diesel engines. There is no doubt that diesel power is far cheaper than steam. In recent years the railways have spent enormous sums carting water for locomotive use, especially in the Wongan Hills district, the territory of the member for Moore. I think I have heard him on numerous occasions talking about the water situation in his area. I do not advocate the scrapping of steam engines overnight, but a long-range policy whereby they would operate as close as possible to the centre where coal is found. If diesel engines were used in areas far removed from coal supplies, the railways would be relieved of the burden of carting water on many occasions, and coal in all instances, into outback areas for fuelling purposes.

We can see how that would operate at Geraldton and Albany. Tankers could pull in at those ports and discharge the necessary diesel fuel into tanks at the railway yards adjacent to the wharves. Then the engines would pull in and fill up with fuel as required. With fast diesel engines, trains could be made up at outlying areas 100 to 150 miles away and could run non-stop to Perth. Some of the engines are capable of hauling goods trains at the rate of 40 to 60 miles per hour. There would be a great saving in labour costs in view of the fact that a train would take only a couple of hours to cover the distance as against eight to 10 hours now.

Take place like Merredin, on which several lines converge from outlying districts. Smaller diesel engines could be used on feeder services, picking up trucks at various sidings and running to a timetable. If a farmer wants his goods to travel by a certain train he must have them ready at his siding at a stipulated time. If they were not there, they would have to wait until the next train. These smaller diesel engines could draw trucks along various feeder lines into a centre like Merredin, and the goods could then be whipped through to Perth by a big diesel engine in a matter of say, four hours, where possibly it now takes 26 hours for a goods train to reach Perth from Merredin.

Mr. May: Cut that out!

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes, it does.

Mr. May: How often do you travel?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I know how long it takes to reach Perth from Grass Valley. Every country member is aware of the time taken by goods trains to reach Perth from country centres. I think it would be good policy on the part of the Railway Department not to worry about building any more steam locomotives but to replace them with large diesel engines. I do not think anyone will deny that the Commonwealth railways have made a great improvement on the Trans line through the introduction of the diesel electric engines, thereby cutting in half the time taken for the journey. In addition to that there has been an enormous saving in the cost of labour as engine maintenance crews are not required along the line and also there is no need to haul the huge amounts of water or coal previously necessary to keep the trains running. I was agreeably surprised to see, in the report of the Railway Commissioners, that the excess of earnings over operating expenses in the case of the railway road service was £61,946 for the year.

Mr. Ackland: Does that allow for depreciation?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I cannot tell from the balance sheet now before me. Some years ago the department took over the railway refreshment service, which had previously been run by private individuals who paid the department a rental for the right to operate it. That rental was profit as far as the department was concerned, but for the year ended the 30th June, 1952, the operating expenses of the railway refreshment service were £262,016 and the revenue only £260,689 or a deficiency of £1,327 for the year. That, in spite of the fact that the service was formerly operated by private enterprise at a profit.

Mr. May: What a service it was!

Mr. OLDFIELD: From my experience, it is not much of a service now. Before the department took over, the service cost the State nothing whereas now a further

burden of £1,372 has been imposed on the taxpayers of Western Australia. The amazing thing about the deficiency is that wages account for £63,536 and so the remainder of the outgoing on the year's operations is in excess of the salaries and wages paid to the staff operating the service.

The Minister for Labour: For what year are the figures quoted?

Mr. OLDFIELD: For the year ended the 30th June, 1953, the wages and salaries were £63,000 and I am dealing with the loss for the previous year. The operating expenses for 1952 were £262,016 1s. 7d. and the revenue received was £260,689. The sooner the department ceases fiddling with things that can be run at a profit by private enterprise, the better. I would like to see the Metropolitan Transport Board adopt the system of through-routing of all passenger vehicles as today anyone desiring to travel from the eastern to the western suburbs by bus has to alight from a vehicle on the northern side of the Beaufort-st. Bridge and walk through the city probably to St. George's Terrace, west of William-st. We are supposed to be living in an enlightened age and we talk of the congestion and traffic problems of the city, yet we force people to walk from one side of the city to the other at peak periods in order to continue their journey.

Through-routing is the only sensible policy to adopt under present-day conditions. A service that has proved a success is that from Bayswater and occasionally Belmont through to Dalkeith. I can see the Minister shaking his head and smiling, but that service has been a boon to many people and I have previously said in this House that the Tramway Department should adopt a similar policy on certain of its routes. One suggestion that has been mentioned several times and has the support of the member for Middle Swan is that the Carrington-st. bus service be carried along Beaufort-st. and through to link up with the Francis-st. Government bus service. If that were done it would be of great help to people living in the eastern districts.

At present the Egg Board deducts 10d. per dozen from the return from eggs to the grower. I believe 4d. per dozen goes to the stabilisation fund, the other 6d. being absorbed in administrative costs. I am not the only member in this House who is in favour of something being done about the Western Australian Egg Marketing Board, a body that is not much appreciated by either the producers or consumers of eggs. I think many growers would be glad to see the end of that board.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do you think it should be abolished?

Mr. OLDFIELD: I think many producers would, and I believe they were much happier under the old system where they paid

a commission and were encouraged to produce eggs at the time when they fetched the best prices. I trust that during its term of office the present Government will investigate the question why the administrative costs of the Egg Board are so high.

The Premier: I think we have too many boards.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Yes. We have the Potato Board, for example. Another board that could well be done away with is that responsible for price-control.

Mr. J. Hegney: What about the Onion Board?

Mr. OLDFIELD: That is another. It is interesting to note that since 1939 Australia has, for most of the time, been subject to severe price-control and during that time the cost of living has risen by 159 per cent. while during the same period in America, where there has not been nearly so much control, the cost of living has risen by only 89 per cent.

The Premier: That is not right.

Mr. OLDFIELD: Members opposite should be sure of their information.

MR. SEWELL (Geraldton) [7.57]: I wish first, Mr. Speaker, to join with other members in congratulating you on your elevation to your high office and I hope that you will grace it for many years. I deplore the attitude of the present Commonwealth Government towards the States in the matter of finance and I believe it is the duty of any Commonwealth Government to see that the States have sufficient finance to implement their loan programmes and complete their most urgent public works. Our most important public works in this State are, in my opinion, the provision of water supplies, housing for the people and higher production. On those grounds alone I feel that the Commonwealth Government should reconsider its attitude towards the needs of this State.

There is much that requires to be done in the Geraldton electorate under the category of new works. I refer to harbour improvements, water supplies and the bitumen surfacing of main and feeder roads, together with the provision of homes under the State Housing Act and under the programme commenced by the Railway Department for housing its own employees. I understand that the concrete wharf is in urgent need of repairs and I ask the Minister to make provision for that work to be done at an early date. It is also necessary to remove the bar of rock at the entrance to the harbour. Those are the works most important to Geraldton and its hinterland.

For the improvement to the water supplies at Geraldton we must thank the previous Minister for Works, although last year we were greatly upset because his loan money was restricted and urgent works in our districts had to be curtailed. Pro-

gress is being made with the new water main to the town, the installation of a new engine for the pumping plant and arrangements for two new bores have also been made. This year the reservoir has filled to capacity and I believe that, with the additional provisions that are being made, consumers connected to the scheme may have hopes that there will be no water restrictions this year. However, I urge the Minister to preserve the new holding tank in Geraldton, which is necessary to maintain the water pressure and the supply to the west end of the town.

The people in the Geraldton electorate depend mostly on agriculture for their livelihood, and at present the officers of the Agricultural Department are doing excellent work in the district. I refer principally to the experimental research work that has been done with wheat and other cereals on the State farms. Those officers have performed a wonderful service by ridding the district of rabbits—which were a great pest a few years ago—by the use of myxamotosis, and I believe similar results could be obtained in other areas if the same care were taken there as was evidenced in the Geraldton district.

A large industry is springing up from the production of tomatoes and beans, and again the agricultural officers have given the growers excellent service by assisting them to combat the various tomato pests and diseases. To illustrate how the representatives of the tomato-growing industry in Geraldton appreciate the work that is being done for them, I will read the following letter, addressed to the Minister for Agriculture, dated the 20th August, 1953—

Field Day.

Control of Black Spot in Tomatoes.

Following the Field Day conducted on Mr. J. Henneberry's property at Utakarra on Wednesday, 12th August, I am instructed by the Management Committee to convey their appreciation to your Department for a very interesting and instructive afternoon.

The tests under progress confirm the good results obtained by the use of Phygon in last year's trials, but the most striking were obtained with the use of Dithane. The economic importance of an effective control of the Black Spot disease in tomatoes cannot be over-emphasised and the apparent effectiveness of the Dithane treatment has led the members of this Association to request that your active assistance be requested in the matter of securing Dithane in Australia in commercial quantities.

We have been advised that I.C.I. may be prevailed on to enter into the manufacture of Dithane in Australia, or alternatively to arrange for its importation in the light of an assured demand for this product.

We would also like to express our appreciation at the presence of the Senior Departmental Entomologist, Mr. Forte, whose talk on insect pests of tomatoes was very interesting and instructive.

The feeling of our members, arising from the results apparently forthcoming from these experiments, is that an intensification of this class of work, with relation to tomato production in Geraldton, should benefit the industry considerably. I am, therefore, instructed to request that you give favourable consideration to the permanent appointment of a full-time departmental employee to conduct experiments in the Geraldton district under the direction of your department's officers. It is felt that such an arrangement would enable the continuous conduct of experiments in disease control, fertilizer and variety trials, without incurring the expense of the frequent visits to Geraldton by your officers.

Again thanking you for the results already achieved by your officers and trusting that you will give full consideration to the request for more extensive research work into the production of tomatoes and other vegetables in Geraldton.

I whole-heartedly agree with the contents of that letter. I would be pleased if the department would establish a research station in Geraldton to assist the growers to overcome the tomato pests. It would be money well spent and the Treasurer could make more money available to the Department of Agriculture for research work in all fields of agriculture.

Like all other towns in this State, Geraldton is extremely short of houses. I urge the Minister to keep up the house-building programme and, wherever possible, to build homes under the State Housing Act. The main problem, of course, is finance, but I am one of those who believe that the working man should have his own house, and the only chance he has of obtaining one, as far as I can see at present, is by having it erected under the State Housing Act.

Lead and copper mining is also being conducted in the Geraldton electorate, but unfortunately the price of base metals fell considerably last year. The previous Government saw fit to commence the establishment of a treatment plant for lead and copper ores in Northampton, but unfortunately the plant has not yet been completed. However, the present Government is carrying on the good work and it is to be hoped that leadmining will again increase in the Ajana and Northampton districts.

I consider that the fostering of our fishing industry, not only in Geraldton waters but also in other parts along our coast,

is most important. The time has arrived when the Minister or Cabinet should set down a policy for the sound marketing of our fish products. At Geraldton, for the time being, we have an assured market in America for crayfish. The fishing community is comprised of hard-working and reliable citizens and I think we can look forward to a bright future for the fishing industry in this State with the greatest confidence.

As members have been told by the member for Greenough and myself, there are hundreds of thousands of acres of light land in our districts that are in need of being broken up for cultivation. Fortunately, they are gradually being cultivated. I understand that at present a shortage of surveyors has held up the surveying of blocks, which has somewhat retarded the progress of their development. However, survey parties are now operating in the country north of Northampton and once that land is cleared and brought under cultivation, I believe that, with men who have been born in the district and who thoroughly understand the work, and with the assistance of officers of the Department of Agriculture, it will only be a few short years before we will have freezing works established in Geraldton to handle the extra mutton and beef that will be produced on these light lands. That day cannot come too quickly for me.

Of course, at present we have high prices offering overseas to encourage farmers to make use of and to cultivate this land. Such cultivation, obviously, is rather expensive, particularly when super is so costly today. However, the Government should ensure that this land, no matter how close to the coast, is cultivated and the best use made of it. I consider that if such a policy is carried out, in a few years it will make a marked difference to the economic life of the State. I emphasise, however, that it should be opened up and developed by men who are most competent to handle it, and those men are the farmers who have been born in those districts.

MR. NIMMO (Wembley Beaches) [8.11]: In common with other members, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your elevation to the high office of Speaker. I also congratulate the member for Swan on his appointment to the position of Chairman of Committees. I direct my first remarks to the Minister for Lands to deal with the question of broken milk bottles. I understand the Milk Board has some control over full bottles but it appears to me that the only control over empty bottles must be placed under the Police Department. In some suburbs, numbers of broken bottles can be seen on the side and in the centre of the road. I raise this matter to ascertain if something could be done in regard to this problem.

The Minister for Lands: Are you sure they are milk bottles?

Mr. NIMMO: I could take the Minister out to Scarborough and show him boxes of milk bottles on the edge of the road which have fallen off trucks. This occurs not only at Scarborough but also in any other suburb, and the problem is becoming very acute. The matter has been brought to the attention of the Milk Board, and I am wondering what it is costing those people who are handling milk for the breakages and for those milk bottles that remain uncollected in the metropolitan area. Two weeks ago I had occasion to visit a house in the backyard of which there were 34 empty milk bottles, and the people showed no interest in them whatsoever. However, does one see 34 cordial bottles or beer bottles lying in many backyards?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Yes, more than that in some yards.

Mr. NIMMO: They do not lie there very long. Therefore, why cannot some pressure be brought to bear on these people whereby they have to pay a small charge for the bottle? I do not suggest that it should be the same as is charged for a cordial bottle which, I believe, is 2d.

Mr. J. Hegney: A charge of 3d. is made on a milk bottle.

Mr. NIMMO: That charge is made by small storekeepers and the customer, on returning the bottle, has his 3d. refunded. But that is only one move that is made to have the bottles returned. On the other hand, if a milkman places four bottles of milk on one's back verandah but only one empty bottle is put out the following day, he does not seem to mind. Some milk vendors might. There is always a danger of children sustaining nasty cuts on account of these empty bottles lying about the roads.

The Minister for Agriculture: I shall make inquiry into it.

Mr. NIMMO: I should be glad to show the Minister what is happening. More than once I have been tempted to ask a "Daily News" photographer to go out and take pictures, but then I thought it preferable to mention the matter here.

Mr. McCulloch: How long has that been going on?

Mr. NIMMO: For a long time. I thank the Minister for his assurance and hope that some remedy will be found.

Now I wish to refer to transport. Recently I asked the Minister about the trolley-bus service on the Floreat Park route having been cut down and he admitted that it had been curtailed. I am wondering why. The Minister gave as a reason that the number of people travelling did not warrant the extra service, but I remind him that the population in that area has increased greatly and therefore many more people should be using the

buses. Sometimes I wonder whether we are doing the job properly in the provision that is being made for patrons of public transport.

Last session, I spoke about the sections. A good many people have told me that they would not pay the extra charge when it was a matter of travelling only a few streets. A person might be only one or two stops from the section end and might wish to travel only a couple of streets beyond the section, which would mean his paying for two sections in order to travel a distance of about four streets. Probably considerable thought will be required to find a remedy for that. I have spoken about it to drivers and conductors, who have put a different aspect, and this has led me to believe that perhaps I am wrong.

I also suggested last year that the stopping places for the buses should be numbered, as is done in some of the other States. Starting at the city, the first stop is marked No. 1, and so on to 20 or 25, as the case may be. When a passenger joins a bus and knows that his destination is Stop No. 24, there is no fear of his being over-carried. Visitors to the State are not always clear about the name of the street for which they are destined, and are over-carried and have to walk back. If they could be told to alight at Stop No. 20, the difficulty would be overcome. When I was in the Eastern States and was told to get off at, say, Stop No. 20, it was quite easy to follow the various numbers and to alight at that point. I am satisfied that the adoption of this system would prove a great boon to the travelling public, and I hope the Minister will give it consideration.

Here is another instance. People travelling from Floreat Park to the Wembley pictures find that the end of the section is one stop short of their destination and so they walk the extra distance. The same applies to people from the Floreat Park end wishing to visit St. John of God Hospital. Many people may be seen walking the short distance beyond the end of the section, and this means loss of revenue to the department. The same thing applies in other districts also.

The Government has conceded a cheaper fare in the city. That is all right; I have heard it said that the short-distance travellers are the ones that pay, though I consider this a debatable point. However, the Minister should endeavour to devise ways and means to encourage people to travel short distances. This applies particularly in shopping areas. Yesterday I had to wait 20 minutes for a bus, and I heard people say, "Come along, we will walk." They were going further along the street to do a little shopping. Then I noticed a motorcar pull up at the G.P.O., and three or four ladies alighted and entered the Post Office. This may be due to their not living near a bus service, but I saw one car discharge four people who, I

knew, live on a trolley-bus route. That, too, represents revenue lost to the department.

The Minister for Transport: You would not expect us to try to stop that? That would be interfering with the liberty of the individual.

Mr. NIMMO: That is so, but I want the Minister to find ways of encouraging people to travel on the buses. They cannot be ordered but they might be encouraged to do so. It is better to run a full bus than one only partly filled.

The Minister for Transport: The reduced fare operates anywhere for the first section.

Mr. NIMMO: Right through?

The Minister for Transport: Yes.

Mr. NIMMO: Perhaps I have been misinformed on that. Today I asked the Minister a question regarding the proposed passenger service for the residents of Hackett Estate, Floreat Park, via Salvado-road, Alderbury-st. to Brookdale-st. The previous Government, as well as the present one, endeavoured to get the City Council to widen the road. There was considerable correspondence on the matter, and a deputation representative of the Perth City Council, the Nedlands Road Board, the Transport Board and the Tramway Department waited on the Minister. The Perth City Council intimated that the Nedlands Road Board owed it so much—I shall not mention the amount—and seemed to be rather hostile to the road board. A remark was passed that the money for the work would appear on the October estimates. That was October of last year. However, it was also stated that if there were more important jobs, they would be given precedence. Evidently there were, and that is why the road has not been completed.

But what could be more important than providing a service for the residents of that area, an area in which there has been considerable expansion? Those people have to walk to the trolley-bus terminus in Lissadell-st., which is a fair distance. As a result of this, a number of the residents who have cars pick up their friends and convey them to the city. This tends to make more people car-minded, and that is one of the problems confronting us today. Sometimes I do not blame people for taking advantage of an opportunity to get a lift to the city.

The Minister for Transport: You know that the Tramway Department would provide a service there tomorrow if the local authority would make the road wide enough.

Mr. NIMMO: Yes. At the deputation, we were told by Mr. Napier that, if the road were made, the buses would be there within minutes. The road is about 12ft. wide and buses are probably 7ft. or 8ft. wide, and one can imagine what might

happen if they were put on a road of that width. I suggested that the buses might be allowed to run to the end of the completed section, but Mr. Napier stated that he did not care to put on temporary services. Since then I have taken the matter up with the Minister, who accompanied me on an inspection of the area, and he is aware of the inconvenience those residents are suffering. I am aware that he is of the opinion that when the road is widened the bus service should be provided. I thank the Minister for having adopted that attitude, just as I thanked the previous Minister for his efforts.

That road is what may be termed a border road. The Hackett Estate is in the Nedlands Road District, and I understand that the road board owes money to the Perth City Council. Whether that is one of the causes of the delay in widening the road, I do not know. However, a border road is always a fifty-fifty matter, and I think members will agree that it is always a tragedy. If there is to be any redistribution of local authority boundaries, efforts should be made to cut out the border roads wherever possible. I wanted to get a load of sand and was told, "Yes, we will take it along." But when it was found that my house was located on the other side of the road, I was refused the load because that side came within a different local authority.

The other night the member for Victoria Park mentioned the traffic on the roads outside the schools, and about the school children waving flags to stop the traffic. I sometimes wonder what would happen if the traffic did not pull up and one of these children were killed. It would be a tragedy. I am sorry the Minister for Education is not here, but I am going to suggest something the Premier might be interested in, namely, that we have many crosswalks where there is quite a lot of traffic. Why, instead of having police or these children, cannot we bring in a pensioner or a disabled returned soldier and give him the authority to control the traffic at these points?

There are plenty of good men who are pensioners and returned servicemen who would be glad to do the job. They would start at, perhaps, a quarter to nine in the morning and would be finished at 9.30. They would come on again at the lunch-hour and again when the children broke up in the afternoon. The necessary money might come from the National Safety Council. I would not say how much it is costing to police the points where policemen are employed. The police officer would be far better off doing a job elsewhere. A returned man with an armband would carry more weight than do the children.

I have been to parents and citizens' meetings and the parents have spoken about the children going out on the roads with flags. In some States they have a

long stick. The parents say they would not like their children to do it but someone else's because if they get killed it does not matter. That is wrong. I have often thought that the time will come when one of these kiddies will be knocked over and killed by some unscrupulous driver.

Coming back to schools, I ask the Minister for Education whether it would be possible to enlarge the Wembley school which is only for infants. When the children leave there they have to go to West Leederville or Floreat Park. The Floreat Park school, so I have heard people say, is in the bush. At present 640 children attend there. Children from City Beach and from Wembley go there, and also the Floreat Park children. A number of children on the south side go to the Jolimont school, of course. In my opinion there is room for more schoolrooms at the Wembley School.

Right opposite is Rutter Park, where there is plenty of room for the children to play. It is a much better place for the children than their own playground which consists of black sand and a certain amount of bitumen. I was going to ask the Minister tonight whether he would consider this. If he could spare the time I would be only too pleased to take him out and let him see the place. A previous question I asked on schools was whether in the near future four rooms would be built at the corner of Dodge-st. and Harborne-st. The school there concerns the Minister for Native Affairs as well as it does me.

Another question I have mentioned many a time is in reference to beaches. During the last election I heard my opponent say that if his party got into power it would take over the beaches. Those in my area are no different from others, but I think the time will come when they will have to be taken over by the State Gardens Board, strengthened by the member for the district concerned with the beaches, or something of that sort. Take, for example, the beach at Scarborough. The local people have to support it. On a very hot day I estimate that 80 per cent. of the people on the beach would not belong to Scarborough.

Why should the Scarborough people have to bear the expense of looking after the beach? They cannot afford it, because in a fast-growing suburb like Scarborough all the money is wanted for roads. They cannot even afford footpaths. The same thing applies to other beaches. I suppose Cottesloe is in the same position. I know that North Beach in my area is just the same. If one goes to North Beach one finds that most of the people bathing or parking there are from the city or suburbs.

We do not want to stop these people from going there—in fact, we want to encourage them, but to do so we must have better facilities on the beach. We in Western Australia should be proud of our

beaches because they are equal to those in any part of the world. I have travelled the world, and I have never seen better beaches than we have. Unfortunately, though, we have not the money to make them attractive with amenities and so on.

Hon. C. F. J. North: What about a beach trust?

Mr. NIMMO: I would not mind what it was. When I suggested the Gardens Board I said that the member for the district concerned should be on the board. It could be a beach trust. It must be some body that will look after the right beaches and not spend all the money on one particular beach. Another matter I want to mention is that of the land at Daglish. Some time ago I suggested to the War Service Homes Department that it take over part of this land.

Hon. D. Brand: Is it Crown land?

Mr. NIMMO: It is university endowment land. A while ago a copy of the Subiaco paper was sent to me and in it I find that the "University claims loss of up to £20,000." I think the Subiaco Council was inclined to blame the Government as well as others. The Government at the time put a drainage system right through the centre of this land. It had been subdivided, but the drains go right through. Perhaps in a way it is just as well. On the land there is a claypan which is often under water. It appears that the university wanted to sell the land for factory purposes. As members know, land for a factory brings more than land for a private home.

At a recent council meeting, Councillor Miller, I think it was, moved that they should re-subdivide this area, which I understand the local authorities are doing. I mention this tonight because I personally do not want to see any more factories go up there. They say that the land is suitable for factories, but I say it is not because it is a low area. A pumping station would have to be put in. The time has come when we must consider these low areas and stop even factories being put on them.

Some time ago the railways wanted to get a certain amount of this land for a sports ground. I had the Minister for Railways out to look at the area, and I have spoken once to the present Minister about it. I told him I would take the matter up with him later. Western Australia is the only State where the railways have not got their own sports ground. If this ground were taken over by the railways for a sports ground, it would be an asset to the district, and it would be far better than being used for factories.

If they talk about building homes there, I shall fight and fight, because it will simply be another North Wembley and we shall have a rush sewerage job together with a pumping station, which will cost the Government a lot of money, which I

would not want. If the ground is made available to the railways I am informed that they would use it for the purpose of establishing bowling greens, tennis courts, and so on. It would then be nice for the people of Daglish to look on. It would be far better than having factories there.

One man said that when he bought his land at Daglish from the Government he was told there would be no factories there, but that it would be used for housing. The Subiaco paper reports that quite a number of people have said that it would mean the loss of £400 or £500 on their properties. I wrote to the Minister regarding assistance for the baby clinic at Floreat Park and in his reply he said that the Government would give it consideration. The Floreat Park clinic is an urgent necessity because at present the mothers in the district are using the verandah of a private home. The Floreat Park area includes the Hackett Estate as well and a number of women have, of necessity, been sent to Wembley.

Mr. J. Hegney: How long have they been there?

Mr. NIMMO: For three months.

Mr. J. Hegney: Where were they before that?

Mr. NIMMO: At the tennis club pavilion on the Boulevard. I understand that Dr. Stang on one occasion found one or two dirty towels hanging up, and she closed the place down. If a woman is to have a test feed she has to sit on the verandah, and that is most unsatisfactory. A committee has been established from among the people living on the Hackett Estate. There is a clinic at Double View but at Scarborough Beach they are using the hall opposite the hotel, and the same position applies at North Beach. One of these days notices to quit will be issued and the people will have to get out. A room in a private home is used at Balcatta Beach and at Innaloo—the member for Mt. Hawthorn is also interested in this district—they are using the hall. But I would like the Minister to give some consideration to the baby clinic at Floreat Park, because it is an urgent necessity.

Today I have heard a good deal about our traffic problems, and I think this is something common to most countries. One member said that other countries are doing their best to build underground traffic routes because it is not possible to cope with our traffic in any other way. I am glad to see that our local police are taking some action about cars stopping when entering major roads. A man told me that he was in a taxi at about half-past 2 o'clock the other morning and when they reached Stirling Highway in Nedlands the taxi driver stopped. The passenger said, "There is nobody about tonight." The taxi driver replied, "Yes, but I want to get used to the idea of stopping. I might

come here one day when the police are about, and it is our practice now to stop on every occasion, irrespective of the time of the night." So the action of the police is starting to bear fruit. However, I would like to see a number of our other roads gazetted as major roads. If that were done, there would be fewer accidents around the suburbs, and motorists would stop before entering upon them.

On motion by Hon. A. V. R. Abbott, debate adjourned.

PAPERS—STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION REPORT.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have here the annual report of the State Electricity Commission for the year ended the 30th June, 1953. Although this report contains the financial statements, those statements have not been audited as is required by the Electricity Act. However, I am presenting the papers this evening so that members will have the report much earlier than would otherwise be the case. In due course, when the balance sheets have been properly audited, they will be laid upon the Table of both Houses, but in the meantime I desire that members shall have early information about the State Electricity Commission's activities. Therefore, I move—

That the report be laid upon the Table of the House.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.50 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 26th August, 1953.

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

OBITUARY.

The late Mr. Hastings Carew-Reid, O.B.E.

The PRESIDENT: Before the business of the House is proceeded with, I wish to bear testimony to the passing of an old servant of Parliament, the Chief Hansard Reporter, Mr. Hastings Carew-Reid, and I ask members to join with me in expressing their sympathy by standing in silence.

Members, accordingly, stood in silence.

QUESTIONS.

EMPLOYMENT BROKERS.

As to Scale of Payment and Supervision.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Do all employment brokers deposit at the office of the Minister a printed copy of the scale of payment or remuneration for the time being chargeable by, and payable to, such employment broker in respect of the hiring of servants?

(2) If so—

(a) Do the printed copies of the scale of payment specify the maximum amount chargeable to the employer and the employee for, and in respect of, any hiring?

(b) Are these printed copies of scale of payment examined and considered by any responsible officer of the department?

(3) Does he consider that the scales of payment or remuneration are excessive in comparison with the service rendered?

(4) Are the application and engagement books kept by the employment brokers examined regularly?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(3) The fees being charged are at present the subject of investigation.

(4) Yes.

PETROL PUMPS, ELECTRIC.

As to Transport to Country Centres.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many electric petrol pumps have been transported by rail to country centres?

(2) To what country centres were these railed?

(3) How many electric petrol pumps have been transported by road to country centres?

(4) To what country centres were these transported?