

# Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 9th August, 1956.

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

## QUESTIONS.

### HARBOURS.

#### *Dredging, Fremantle.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he aware that owing to the silting of berths in Fremantle harbour with silt and light soil the Harbour Trust experiences difficulties in berthing ships of certain draught?

(2) Is he also aware that the dredge "Parmelia," on which many thousands of pounds were spent to put her in working order, has not turned a wheel since, and is still anchored at Garden Island?

(3) If he is aware of all this, will he see that the harbour is dredged and make it the 36ft. harbour which it has always been reputed to be?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. Certain flexibility in berthing is affected.

(2) The "Parmelia" is not considered to be the most suitable plant for the job, but will be commissioned for other harbour work later in the year should the loan fund position permit.

(3) Arrangements are in hand for completion of maintenance dredging by other dredgers.

### RAILWAYS.

#### *(a) Tabling of File, Fremantle Railway Bridge.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

Will he lay on the Table for seven days the file R/234/38 dealing with the Fremantle railway bridge?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

This file will be laid on the Table for the next seven days.

#### *(b) Additional Trucks, Busselton.*

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

As insufficient blue cross trucks are available at Busselton for efficient loading of vessels there, will he make necessary arrangements to increase the numerical strength of these trucks by at least 50 per cent?

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT replied:

The only way to increase the number of blue cross wagons at Busselton would be to transfer them from other centres, which would mean depriving those places of wagons for which the demand is at least equal to, or may exceed, that of Busselton. However, the position will be examined to see if any additional wagons can be made available.

### COMO.

#### *Proposed New Beach.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is he in a position to give a definite assurance that a new beach, comparable with the present one, will be constructed at Como when the Perth-Kwinana Highway in that area is completed?

(2) In the opinion of engineers from the Public Works Department, would an artificially constructed beach of that nature require constant building up, or would it remain as though formed naturally?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Constant building up of an artificially constructed beach would not be necessary.

## WATER SUPPLIES.

### *Use of Additional Storage, Wellington Dam.*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

What use is proposed for the additional water stored at Wellington Dam when the raising of the wall is completed?

The MINISTER replied:

Additional water will be used for the following purposes:—

(a) To augment the supply of irrigation water to the present Collie irrigation district.

(b) To provide irrigation water for further areas adjacent to the Collie irrigation district.

(c) To provide agricultural water for the ultimate reticulation of approximately 4,800,000 acres of farm lands in the Great Southern districts.

(d) To provide domestic water for the future development of towns in the Collie-Bunbury area.

(e) To provide industrial water for future secondary industries in the Collie-Bunbury area.

## DRAINAGE.

### *Prevention of Flooding, Cookernup.*

Mr. I. W. MANNING asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

What action is proposed to obviate flooding which takes place annually west of Cookernup?

The MINISTER replied:

Enlargement of the Harvey main drain is required. A proposal to commence the work is listed with high priority for consideration in the 1956-57 loan works programme, which is not yet finalised.

## TRANSPORT.

### *Traffic Lights, South Perth.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Does the Government intend to install traffic lights at the junction of Mill Point-rd., Berwick-st. and Canning Highway?

(2) If the answer to question No. (1) is "Yes," will he indicate when such work is likely to commence?

The MINISTER replied:

No. Thorough consideration was given to the problem of controlling traffic by traffic lights at the Mill Point-rd.-Berwick-st.-Canning Highway intersection. The need for uninterrupted flow westwards along Canning Highway at evening peak periods is paramount, and for lights to work effectively it is essential that they be installed in conjunction with an extensive channelisation treatment. The greatest

expense in channelisation would be in the resumption of land and properties, and in view of the fact that there will be a major change in traffic pattern when the Narrows Bridge is opened and is in use, it has been decided that further consideration of the matter be deferred.

## AGRICULTURE.

### *Experiments at Gascoyne Research Station.*

Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:

As the Department of Agriculture has set out a programme of experiments in vegetable growing at the Gascoyne research station, will he advise the House of the nature of these experiments giving—

(a) the types of vegetables being experimented with, and

(b) the area for each type?

(c) Are any of these experiments being carried out on private properties under varying conditions of soil and water salinity?

The MINISTER replied:

(a) Vegetable experiments at the Gascoyne research station are in the nature of time of planting and variety trials.

Most vegetables grow well on the Gascoyne, but the important factor to be determined is—which of them can be harvested at the right season to enable marketing in Perth at a time when prices are high enough to cover the extra freight costs and still show a profit for the Carnarvon grower.

Vegetables considered promising from this point of view have been planted at three weekly intervals throughout the season, and include:—

Onions.

Cucumbers.

Capsicums.

Eggfruit.

Sweet corn.

Sweet potato.

Pumpkins.

Rock melons.

Water melons.

(b) The area of each plot in this class of work is necessarily very small—a single garden row to each planting, varying in area according to the nature of the plant.

(c) No. We think it best to do those exploratory trials on the research station. Agricultural advisers are available, however, and ready to work with any individual grower prepared to lay down a trial concerning his own particular problem.

**AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS.***Recognition by Singapore City Council.*

Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

(1) Did he see the Press report, under date the 6th July, 1956, that the Singapore City Council did not recognise senior Australian engineering qualifications?

(2) Has the Government instituted any inquiries to ascertain whether recognition has since been given, or the reasons for non-recognition?

(3) If not, would he agree to make inquiries in view of the importance of recognition to our University, Australian Institution of Engineers and, above all, the graduates themselves?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) and (3) Inquiries are being made at the University in connection with this matter.

**SUNSET HOME.***Repairs and Renovations.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What amount was allocated for repairs and renovations to "Sunset" Old Men's Home to cover the advice of approval of funds for this purpose in his letter to me, dated the 1st November, 1955, (P.W. 3183, Part "A")?

(2) (a) Has any of this work been done?

(b) If so, how much?

(3) (a) Is he aware of urgently needed repairs and renovations at "Sunset"?

(b) If so, when will they be done, either from the balance of the original allocation or a fresh allocation?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The amount of £760 was approved for work to the hospital bathroom block.

(2) (a) Yes.

(b) All.

(3) (a) Yes.

(b) General renovations and repairs will cost approximately £14,000.

It is hoped to commence this work in the second half of the present financial year.

**TOWN PLANNING.***Closure of Portion of University Avenue.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister representing the Minister for Town Planning:

(1) Is it proposed to close University Avenue between Aberdare and Hampden-rds., Hollywood?

(2) If so, what is the approximate date planned for such closure?

(3) What alternative route is proposed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied:

(1) The metropolitan regional plan proposes the closure of University Avenue between Aberdare-rd. and Monash Avenue for the purposes of a medical centre and teaching hospital.

(2) The proposal is still under consideration and has not yet been agreed to.

(3) The alternative route, as proposed in the plan, is Winthrop Avenue from Aberdare-rd. to Monash Avenue and Stirling Highway.

**ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.***(a) Financial Results of State Electricity Commission and South-West Power Scheme.*

Mr. BRAND asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What profit was shown by the State Electricity Commission for last financial year?

(2) Did the South-West power scheme show a profit or loss, and to what extent?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Final accounts not yet completed.

(2) See answer to No. (1).

*(b) Withdrawal of Subsidy to the South-West Power Scheme.*

Hon. D. BRAND (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

If, as the Minister says, the accounts were not completed for the last financial year, on what basis did he make the decision to withdraw the £72,000 subsidy to the South-West power scheme?

The MINISTER replied:

I made no such decision.

*(c) Basis of Decision to Withdraw Subsidy.*

Hon. D. BRAND (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the fact that the Minister confirmed that the £72,000 was no longer being paid, can he inform me on what basis he made the decision, seeing that no final accounts were available?

The MINISTER replied:

The member for Greenough persists in saying that I made a decision to withdraw the subsidy, but I inform the House that I made no such decision.

Hon. D. Brand: You said it was no longer necessary.

The MINISTER: That is an opinion, not a decision.

*(d) Inadequacy at Karragullen.*

Mr. WILD asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Does he appreciate the fact that the equipment loaned to the Illawarra orchard, Karragullen, is proving inadequate for the demand upon it?

(2) In view of the undertaking that the ex-general manager (Mr. Edmondson) gave that power would be supplied in January, 1956, is he aware that a number of houses are wired and awaiting current, and that additional pumping equipment has been installed and cannot be used until connected to the main?

(3) As the preparatory work involved an expenditure of over £8,000 by the owners of the Illawarra orchard, and personal expense on the part of many local residents of Karragullen who had their houses wired following the promise made by the commission, is the decision contained in his communication of the 17th May, final and irrevocable?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. An additional diesel generating set has been offered on a "hire" basis.

(2) No. No householders were instructed to wire their premises.

(3) Yes.

(e) *Discussion on Position at Karragullen.*

Mr. WILD (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

In view of the Minister's answer to my question about the supply of electricity to the Illawarra orchard, would the Minister be prepared to have a discussion with Mr. Price and myself, at which the acting general manager could be present, in order to clarify the position?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

## HOUSING.

### *New Constructions, Bunbury.*

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Minister for Housing:

How many houses were built within the boundaries of the Municipality of Bunbury during the years ended the 30th June, 1955, and the 30th June, 1956, under each of the following schemes:—

- (a) Commonwealth - State rental housing scheme;
- (b) War service homes;
- (c) State Housing Act;
- (d) Aged Persons Homes Act?

The MINISTER replied:

The particulars are as follow:—

	1954-55	1955-56
(a) Commonwealth - State Rental Housing Scheme	42	28
(b) War Service Homes	14	10
(c) State Housing Act	5	33

(d) The Aged Persons Homes Act is a Commonwealth Act not administered by the State Housing Commission and figures are unknown.

## METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE DEPARTMENT.

### (a) *Recruitment of Additional Employees.*

Mr. COURT asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

(1) Is it correct that approximately 150 additional wage employees were engaged by the Metropolitan Water Supply and Drainage Department on Wednesday, the 8th August?

(2) Were these men previous employees of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Drainage Department and recently re-trenched?

(3) Were these men selected at random throughout the metropolitan area or mainly from one suburb or district?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) and (3) See answer to No. 1.

### (b) *Re-employment of ex-Employees.*

Mr. COURT (without notice) asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

With reference to the Minister's reply, if the 150 men—or approximately that number—were not employed on the 8th August, were they employed today or are they proposed to be employed in the near future and if so will they be ex-employees of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Drainage Department who were re-trenched; and will they be selected at random throughout the metropolitan area or selected from one suburb or district?

The MINISTER replied:

The men have not yet been picked up for work. It is proposed to pick them up in the very near future. They will be picked up through the Commonwealth Social Services Department in the usual way and it may be that some of them will be ex-employees of the department.

## BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £19,000,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Watts, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Cornell (Mt. Marshall) on the ground of ill-health.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Third Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. F. WATTS (Stirling) [2.30]: There are one or two matters to which I wish to refer during this debate and the first of them is the distinct possibility—as is now fairly apparent—that the Government contemplates an increase in rail freight charges. I have a vivid recollection of the publicity which was given in the

Press, during the election campaign, to a number of questions which were posed to the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in regard to matters which were thought, by the journal in question, to be questions of major importance to the public interest during the campaign.

It was on the 3rd April, 1956, some four days before the poll, that question No. (8) was submitted in the following language:—

**Railways:** Despite several freight increases and the system's greater haulage capacity, the deficit last year was £3,800,000. Since 1950-51, when capital was written down by £12,000,000, loan expenditure has been more than £30,000,000. The annual interest charge is now £1,500,000. Yet in its last annual report the Railway Commission said that progress in re-railing, resleepering and reballasting since 1947 had been insufficient to arrest deterioration. In other words, the permanent way is now in a worse condition than it was at the end of the war.

A. How would you reduce the deficit? Would you raise fares and freights and retrench staff?

The Premier, I think, achieved a minor amount of fame by the very terse and, shall I say, definitive replies which he gave to the greater number of the questions posed to him.

In answer to question A, "How would you reduce the deficit? Would you raise fares and freights and retrench staff?" he answered, "No." It cannot in any circumstances be suggested that the question was not worded in a way which was perfectly clear for anybody to understand. It also did not hesitate to convey to the public and to the person who was being asked the question, the position of railway finance and the problem which faced the system. We, of course, know that the Premier was well aware of it, but the question was quite clear and there was no possibility of misunderstanding and he gave the unequivocal answer, "No," four days before the poll.

When I read that answer I was greatly cheered because I could not conceive of an answer of that kind being given in such categorical language, "No," and that then within four months—during which period the situation, as a matter of fact, has not deteriorated—there should be a clear intention of taking action which would have warranted the answer "Yes," the direct opposite of the answer in fact given. Quite apart from the hints that have been thrown out in the last month or so by the Premier, and I think by one of the Ministers as well, on Opening Day the member for Blackwood asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways in this House, "When is the freight and fare increase foreshadowed by the Minister to take place?"

If it had been the intention of the Government to carry out what I suggest is the promise of the Premier made on the 3rd April last, I can readily feel that the Minister for Railways, or his representative here, would have said that the member for Blackwood was mistaken, or words to that effect, but he said nothing of the kind. He said, "I can inform the hon. member that no detailed consideration has yet been given by the Government to this matter and therefore there is no information which I can give him in connection with it at this juncture," and so, add to the broad hints that I have already referred to, that assurance and it is quite clear that the Government was considering, and considering pretty closely, the intention of going behind the statement of the Premier made on the 3rd April last. And that, I suggest, is something which could not meet with the approval of any right-thinking individual. There was no need for the Premier to give a categorical "No" for an answer.

Mr. Bovell: The Premier is so used to saying "No" to members on this side of the House that perhaps he just said it on that occasion by force of habit.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: He could have qualified it and therefore given the people the proper impression, instead of which it is pretty clear that he gave them an impression that is not correct. I do not care what the reasons are that may, after a lapse of five months or less, justify a change in the Premier's thinking. In my opinion, the people are entitled at least to a lapse of twelve months after that answer before any consideration is given to this matter with a view to raising rail freights.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I think the Premier will honour his word.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I am not saying that he will or will not, because I am not in a position to do so. I am merely indicating to the Premier, as fairly as I can, what the position is and what my view of it is, and I hope that I am doing it in language which will not carry with it anything but a fair expression of my opinion.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: Would you like a Minty?

The Premier: Ask the member for Stirling.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Later on, perhaps. This question of increased charges for the railways is one which is of very great importance to the far-flung areas of the State; and I am not confining myself to areas such as I represent. There are those where other industries are carried on and which are further from the main centre of population than any of those with which I am personally connected. The further they are away the greater this burden falls upon them. In fact, some

of them are so far away that even if alternative forms of transport could be used, they would be extremely difficult for the people concerned to use.

What is more, I am very much afraid that an increase in railway charges would not produce the revenue which an arithmetical calculation might incline the Premier to believe he would get; because I have no doubt that they are already so high that there is building up what one might call a consumer-resistance, with the result that people are dodging the use of the railways to the utmost extent possible. If there is to be any considerable increase in charges, that state of affairs will, in my opinion, snowball, particularly in regard to passenger traffic. If the rates for passenger traffic are to be increased, there will be a considerable diminution in the revenue derived from it.

The fourth question asked of the hon. gentleman that day was, "If not, what policy change do you contemplate?" and he answered once again, shortly and succinctly, "More efficiency."

The Minister for Transport: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. F. WATTS: As nearly five months have elapsed since that time, what action has been taken in the meantime to obtain the "more efficiency" to which the hon. gentleman referred? Obviously, thought has been given to doing the opposite to the answer to question (A). How much thought has been given to doing the positive in regard to the answer to question (D), asked on the 3rd April last? When the hon. gentleman was asked a question a day or two ago, in regard to this very point, he did not indicate in his reply that very much has been done. He thought that it was probably overlapping which he had in mind when he referred to this aspect of "more efficiency."

With proper respect to everybody concerned in the railway system, and repeating what I said here approximately two years ago—although maybe not in exactly the same language—what the railways want to do to create more efficiency, at least in my opinion, is, from the top downwards to the last man, to begin to appreciate that the customer is sometimes right. In other words, to endeavour to give the customer what he wants—that is to say, the facilities and treatment that he can reasonably ask for and encourage him to use the railway system instead of—as I see the position in a great many instances—every effort being made to do things in the way which the Railway Department wants to do them. That does not contribute to the satisfaction of the public or to the greater efficiency of the organisation.

I make a strong plea to the Premier in regard to this and I want him to carry out what he indicated to the public was

his intention in the answers to those two questions—(a) not to increase the charges and (b) to take some definite action to ensure that a greater attempt is made—call it more efficiency if that is the more suitable word—to give the public what it wants in regard to the railway system. Then I think we might get somewhere with this problem.

There is another point, too. Surely, this is not the time for the railway unions to be asking for a 35-hour week! If the conditions under which the men in the railway service were working were in any way of such a nature as to cause hardship to them, I would be the last one to resent an application by them to have those injustices removed; nor would I object to an application which enabled them to receive pay comparable to that which is paid to others performing similar services. I think that their conditions and opportunities should be as great and as good as in any other service and we would not be justified in taking any other point of view.

But if we are going to accept the idea, in the present circumstances of the railways, that a 35-hour week, as was applied for in the Arbitration Court and reported in the local Press on the 3rd May last, is desirable, of course it will impose a tremendously increased burden upon the railway service which obviously, in the face of the facts and the figures, it is in no condition to stand. Such a course could result only in a substantially increased deficit, which, of course, would give rise to further mental activity on the part of those who are concerned with the management of the railways as to where the deuce they could get the funds from.

So I suggest that we should all be reasonable in the matter and ensure that the present conditions and rates of pay are comparable, and then leave the position until we can remedy, to some extent, the railway situation in this State, because the position of the people who live and carry on their businesses these long distances from the metropolitan area is going to become intolerable before very long. We have, in the metropolitan region, approximately 60 per cent. of the State's population.

Mr. Evans: Which is a very bad thing.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I agree with the hon. member. In consequence, the greater part of the goods, which the people situated away from the metropolitan region require, has to come from the metropolitan region and, therefore, those people have to pay the extremely considerable costs which are now charged in order to obtain those goods.

What prospect is there of encouraging any kind of industrial development such as, for example, that which was referred

to by the member for Kalgoorlie last evening, if those costs are to be increased? What prospect is there of even encouraging those who are already in such areas to remain there if the costs of the goods they have to obtain are to be increased, because the possibility of obtaining any industrial development in their midst is, to that degree, to be diminished? It is absolutely vital in this State of Western Australia that we should do something at least to minimise and not to increase the costs that are payable by persons in the far-flung areas of this State and we will not make any contribution towards that ambition if we are to make another increase in our railway charges.

What is more, what contribution is it going to make towards arresting inflation if we are to work along those lines? It would do exactly the opposite and as far as I can see the last state of Western Australia will be worse than the first and the people in the metropolitan region will ultimately, I suggest, exist by taking in one another's washing—as the saying is—because no one with any sense would remain in the outer areas of Western Australia in circumstances such as, in the ultimate, will be reached if this state of affairs has not a period put to it, and put to it pretty promptly.

Hon. D. Brand: I believe the people of Geraldton struck about the high cost of living.

Mr. Hall: Does the Leader of the Country Party favour a reduction in grades on the railways?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: The Leader of the Country Party will favour anything which will reduce the running costs of the railways and, among other things, I believe that in certain cases that would have the effect of reducing the grades. I have a feeling in my mind that the regrading of the Carburup bank would have that effect, and also the one further north, towards Moojebing. However, I doubt whether that proposition would be very acceptable now, among other matters in connection with the railways, that have to be considered. Nevertheless, if that were decided upon, I would certainly be in favour of it. On the question of railways, I think I have said enough for the time being and I will proceed to something else.

I was very sorry that the Government could not see its way clear to go further into the question of allowing the employees of the closed Kent River timber mill to make an effort to carry on the operations themselves as they suggested. When the decision was made to close this mill, the Minister in charge of State Saw Mills discussed this matter with me on at least two occasions and it was soon apparent that the decision of the Government to close the Kent River mill was irrevocable. That is to say, as far as carrying it on as a State mill is concerned.

When I conveyed that decision—upon receipt of the Minister's last letter to me—to the employees at Kent River—who are, of course, in my electorate—I was waited upon by a delegation of three of the employees, who spoke on behalf of them all, and as a result of that meeting a suggestion was made by them that the Government should give consideration to letting the mill to them at a nominal rental and that they, on a co-operative basis, should be given the opportunity of carrying it on. I advised them that if such a proposal were acceptable to the Government, it would be desirable for them to take steps to incorporate themselves under the Act relating to incorporation in order that they might not become personally liable should they get into difficulty, which action, of course, is normal business procedure.

The Premier: Would the member for Katanning support that idea?

Hon. D. Brand: The Minister for Education would, I think.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: In consequence of this discussion and in the absence of the Minister some distance away on public duties and in the absence of the Premier in the North-West, the Deputy Premier, then Acting Premier, was good enough—although very pressed for time—to have a discussion with me and to accept from me a submission in writing on behalf of those people putting up this proposition. I endeavoured to put it in such a way that the prime request was that an officer of the Crown Law Department and an officer of the State Saw Mills should be sent down to the Kent River to discuss this matter further, although, of course, in that case I wanted the Government to accept the idea as a principle.

However, I was not kept waiting very long before I was informed that, for the same reason that actuated the Government to close the mill, the request contained in my letter and discussed in my conversation with the Acting Premier, could not be acceded to. In consequence, I was obliged to convey that decision to the people concerned, some 35 in all. It is true that the Government offered to let the married men concerned have the dwellings available there at a very nominal rental. It is equally true that it is extremely difficult for some of them to get employment of any kind in the vicinity.

It was because of that that the proposition to which I have just referred was put forward. The men concerned discussed this matter with me here, on behalf of themselves and their colleagues at Kent River and they made certain statements which if true—and I have no reason to doubt they are true, though equally well I have not personally investigated them—would warrant some inquiry into the operations that have been conducted in recent times at Kent River.

The Minister for Transport: An inquiry into how the thing started would be more appropriate.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: An inquiry as to how the thing started would be quite all right, and I am prepared to have any amount of inquiry into that subject.

The Minister for Transport: It was one of the greatest blunders made.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: I was the responsible Minister at the time and the only trouble was that the departments concerned were to some degree badly advised.

The Minister for Transport: It was put in the middle of a swamp among other things.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: As I have said, they were badly advised.

The Minister for Transport: Everybody was consulted but the sawmillers.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: The fact that they were badly advised is not the point at the present time, nor was I directing any criticism at the hon. gentleman who has been so busy interjecting, because I said very carefully that I had no reason to disbelieve the statements I am about to read, and also that I have not personally investigated them and therefore I was completely unable to vouch for their truth.

It will be interesting to the hon. gentleman to know that the references I am now about to make resulted from a meeting of the Kent River Timber Workers' Union held on the 2nd July, 1956, a copy of which was handed to me by the three people in question on behalf of themselves and their colleagues, as I said just now. Among the things they say are these:—

Why have local orders for scantling etc. been refused on many occasions, farmers having to travel from areas adjacent to Kent River Mill all the way to Shannon River to get their orders fulfilled. One very good order from Kalgoorlie was lost on account of the poorly selected timber being supplied.

#### Utilisation of Waste.

All short lengths of scantling plus a large percentage of other waste could be supplied to farmers, etc. at lower rates, all remaining waste could be used as fuel for steam power instead of being burnt in huge quantities with the aid of unlimited quantities of distillate plus the cartage cost from the mill by tractor to the dump.

Why is the mill being closed when the sleeper orders alone are sufficient for six months cutting, railways collect freight on timber being railed from Kent River.

Why have materials of all kinds been sold privately at the mill instead of being put up for auction or public tender?

And that was one aspect I did mention to the Acting Premier at the time I interviewed him. The other points were—

Firewood has been carted to hotels in Albany by the mill truck during working hours when local families and mill employees have been unable to get firewood when required.

Why have the new galloping out lines that were brought from Shannon not been installed to save manpower?

It is realised that it may take a little while and some canvassing to regain the lost prestige from the firms and other purchasers who have in the past been refused orders by the present manager for 1½ in. timber, boards and weather-boards, and have naturally gone elsewhere to get supplies and given their scantling orders to those firms which would supply their other immediate requirements. It must be realised that ordinary scantling, such as 3 x 1½, 3 x 2 and 4 x 2 will automatically sell themselves if the purchaser can get the other timber which he requires.

Those are about 50 per cent. of the allegations which were made by the meeting of the members of the Timber Workers' Union at Kent River on the 2nd July, 1956. It will be easy to understand why, believing as they obviously did, the things that have been said there, they came to the conclusion that, in certain circumstances such as were suggested, they could carry on the mill themselves.

As I say it is a matter of considerable regret to me that they were not given the opportunity to do so, or that the matter was not at least further and more closely investigated to see if it were at all practicable, because at the present juncture many of these men are still without employment and are unlikely to get it in any close vicinity, and therefore in many cases they would be unable to take advantage of the offer made to them for the cheap rental of the houses. So, from their point of view, the whole thing is entirely unsatisfactory.

In recent times I have noticed in the Press some reference to football pools becoming part of our gambling life in Western Australia. My main reason for making any reference to that possibility this afternoon is that I think it would be extremely damaging to the State Lotteries Commission if the sponsors of football pools were able to come into this State.

The Premier: The way things are going we will not have any football matches at all because they will not be able to get any central umpires.



Hon. A. F. WATTS: That is a small matter to the major one to which I have referred because the State Lotteries Commission now is firmly established in this State as an organisation which, on the one hand, has obliterated a great many undesirable lotteries and other devices of that nature and has carried on the duties imposed upon it by the statute in a way which has done the members of the commission and the staff considerable credit. It has made a great contribution towards many worth-while causes in Western Australia.

Mr. Evans: It is a good example of socialism.

Hon. A. F. WATTS: That may or may not be so; it does not matter two hoots to me whether it is or not. The Lotteries Commission has been in operation now for something like 24 years and it would be a great pity if anything were done to bring back a state of affairs resembling that which existed before its creation.

I am not enthusiastic about having legalised lotteries. That is not the point. I am dealing with the law as it stands and it is a great deal better than the condition which existed before the creation of the Lotteries Commission in the days of the late Hon. J. Scaddan. But I can very easily see that if we do have these football pools in Western Australia, it is going to do a great deal of damage to the commission. I am interested to know whether the commission and/or the Government have taken any steps to examine the situation and see just where they stand. Are they prepared, if they can, to take steps to protect the Lotteries Commission; if not, why not?

Mr. Heal: You refer to the English football pools?

Hon. A. F. WATTS: Those are the ones. I appreciate there may be some delay about the matter, but there has been no statement made by the Government at all although there is coming amongst us the forms from the football pool organisation. I should have thought that in the circumstances which I have referred to, some statement would have been made by the Government as to at least some activity in regard to this matter, so that not only I, but the public as well, may be placed in possession of the facts.

I said that I thought there might be some difficulty in regard to it. I am not readily able to assess the exact situation because I am not quite well informed as to what system it is proposed, if these football pools do come into operation here, to work under. I do not know whether there will be some local agency or whether it is going to be post office work. It is possible there may be some difficulty with regard to it, but I do think it is high time that the Government did something about it, or at least, came to the

conclusion as to whether it could do something about it and let the public, as well as the members of this House, know.

If one looks at the Lotteries Control Act, as re-enacted in 1954, one finds the definition of a lottery as follows:—

"lottery" has the same meaning as the term "lottery" in section two hundred and twelve of the Criminal Code, 1913, and, further, includes any disposition of property under any scheme or competition which the public or any specified section of the public may be or is invited to enter, the nature or conduct of which (though skill on the part of the entrants or competitors is required) is such as in the circumstances of the case to preclude the fair consideration of the answers of the entrants or competitors and includes all schemes or devices for the disposition of property known as art unions, raffles, guessing competitions, and the like.

A number of little queries arise, quite apart from the question as to whether this is to be done through the post or through local agencies. While it says that it is still a lottery, though skill on the part of the entrant or competitor is required, it goes on further to say that it must be such as, in the circumstances of the case, to preclude the fair consideration of the answers of the entrants or competitors. I do not know whether that is the position or not in regard to the so-called football pools, but it may be.

I think that is something which is urgent enough for the earliest advice to be supplied to Parliament so that it may contemplate whether or not it is possible effectively to alter the law, because I do not hesitate to say, if this business keeps going, it will do a great deal of damage to the Lotteries Commission, and that must in turn do a great deal of damage to Government revenue in the long run, because successive Governments, ever since the creation of the commission, to a greater extent in more recent times and in the last ten years for obvious reasons, have been relieved of a very considerable amount of expenditure which otherwise would have been required to come from Consolidated Revenue or loan funds.

Therefore I do not think this State, the Lotteries Commission or the people who do not want to see this sort of thing—and I am one of them—should permit any extension of these devices in our midst. We should all get together and take what action we can to ensure that the position does not deteriorate. So I do hope that our friends on the Treasury bench will be good enough to give this matter a little more consideration than, at least publicly, they have already done.

**MR. MARSHALL** (Wembley Beaches) [3.17]: Speaking to this Address-in-reply debate, it is not my intention, of course, to deal with every aspect of legislation that is proposed in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech. First of all, I take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to the electors of Wembley Beaches for giving me the privilege of representing them in Parliament. The previous member, of course, through an alteration in the electoral boundaries of Wembley Beaches, did not contest the seat and he is no longer with us. I say in this House that over the years that Mr. Nimmo represented Wembley Beaches he was held in very high esteem. As I am here to represent every elector, irrespective of political affiliations, I hope and trust that I shall be able to retain that confidence entrusted in me.

I also appreciate the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and his solicitation of the new members in this House, and also his sincerity in drawing our attention to the importance of taking some notice of the financial affairs which have to be administered by the Government from time to time. It is very interesting coming from one who has had very long and practical experience in seeing the way that Government money has been expended on the development of this State and the number of projects that have been completed over a good many years. Since 1924, the Governments of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member, held office in this State for approximately nine years.

It would appear, therefore, that Labour Governments have been responsible for the development that has taken place since that time, and that most, if not all, of the many large projects that have been carried out in the State have been carried out by Labour Administrations. So, some credit must be given to the members of the Labour Governments that have given considerable thought to ensuring that the development of this State has been in the best interests of the people. I can quite understand that when the Leader of the Opposition looks on this side of the House, it is only natural that he would not find any wizard of finance because he realises they are all sitting on that side of the House!

Hon. D. Brand: The member for Leederville would not like to hear you say that.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** I appreciate his sincerity in drawing our attention to the matter.

I intend to speak upon one or two questions that concern my own electorate particularly. I have not got the railway troubles and a few of the other problems that some members have, but I draw attention to one matter that is of great interest not only to the people of my own electorate, but also to a great number of

others who live in Western Australia, and that is the matter of our ocean beaches. There are at least seven of them that come within the boundaries of the Wembley Beaches electorate. It must be generally recognised that they are patronised by hundreds of thousands of people, and they provide one of the cheapest and most healthful forms of recreation possible.

The many hundreds of thousands of people who visit the beaches put a constant strain on the local authorities and the people of those districts who attempt to provide the necessary amenities and facilities that should be there. I feel that some assistance should be given, and I ask the Government to give consideration to the matter and possibly exercise some control by the formation of a board of control to act in close liaison with the local authorities to see that the necessary amenities are provided for people, both from the metropolitan and country areas, who visit the beaches during the long summer months.

Another important matter is in regard to the regional and town planning envisaged for the future, particularly in the metropolitan area. I hope the Government will take into account the fact that it will be necessary to provide good access roads to these beaches. I realise, of course, the responsibility of the local authorities in this regard. They are doing all they possibly can with the financial resources available to them. I have lived on the main Scarborough Beach-rd. for the past six years, and during that time the local population has increased threefold. With the increasing numbers of people from the metropolitan and country areas who patronise these beaches, the road carries one of the heaviest volumes of traffic in the metropolitan area during the summer months.

I think some consideration should be given to this fact because it is quite beyond the resources of the local authority to put the road into such a condition that it is safe to carry that amount of traffic. I hope the Government will take that matter into account when it is planning new roads for the metropolitan area. The West Coast Highway is a road that should be widened over the whole length of the coast. According to the regional plan, it is proposed to run a road north at some considerable distance from the coast. I see no reason why the Government should not accept the responsibility of widening the West Coast Highway accordingly.

As far as schools and the education of our children are concerned, that is a problem which arises in most electorates, but in the thickly populated area that has been built up in Scarborough we find that considerable overcrowding takes place. As a consequence, we expect that the Government, after taking into consideration all the information available to it, will go ahead

and build not only additional classrooms for the existing schools, but an additional school in the South Scarborough area where we know full well that one is required.

The Trades and Advisory Council has been established by the Government, and I feel sure, particularly because of the manner in which it is constituted, that it will render valuable service in promoting greater local production and consumption of goods; and that it will assist materially in improving the financial stability of this State. Every effort has to be made to reduce our adverse trade balance and to put our own people back into employment in Western Australia. Encouragement must be given to people wishing to take up land and to settle on the arable areas available.

Some years ago in England, a Labour Government secured the passage of the Land Control Act when it was found necessary to step-up the production of foodstuffs which were vital to the economy of Great Britain at the time. Under that Act any person holding arable land and not using it to the fullest advantage, could be instructed to lease or sell it. It is interesting to note that the Conservative Government is still implementing that legislation. In this State, too, we have many large areas of land that could be utilised to a lot better advantage; and I think it is nearly time that some of these people were told to get on with it, or get out.

The establishment of new industries is desired to further increase our industrial capacity, and more emphasis must be given to employer-employee relationships. As one who has worked in industry for a good many years, and who has taken a considerable part in the activities of industrial organisations, I suppose I can speak with some knowledge of the problems associated with employer-employee relationships. I point out that a larger degree of efficiency in management in industry would make a very valuable contribution in overcoming some of our difficulties.

In our great industrial organisations we can find just as many sincere men and women, imbued with a strong sense of responsibility and an understanding of human values, as we can among those with a more academic outlook, trained in our universities. It is no use dealing with human relations in a theoretical manner and talking a lot of abstract nonsense. Let us get down to fundamentals and essentials so that everyone can do his job and play his part as is expected in a civilised community.

Unfortunately we have developed some very bad habits, among which is an inclination to allow others to share responsibilities that we should ourselves be willing to shoulder. We need leadership in every branch of our national life, politics,

business, labour, the Press, the church and education, but we must also be prepared to stand on our own feet. To illustrate my point in this regard I will quote an article which appeared in the "Scarborough District News" of the 19th July, 1956. It is as follows:—

#### Your Own Two Feet.

Drawings of the casual Australian show him loose limbed, cigarette rolling—and leaning on the nearest post. We find them amusing because we like to think of ourselves as appearing this way on the outside, whilst beneath this offhand exterior lurk our real characteristics—sturdy independence and latent strength.

Yet, just how independent are we? How many of us are capable of making a decision quickly and clearly, and then standing or falling by it? How many of us carry out the plans we have made; and if we do, how many of us have done it alone? Aren't we rather inclined to rush about seeking advice, asking help and in the final stages, either not doing it at all, or getting someone else to do it for us?

Fundamentally, we seem to have developed into a nation of leaners, and here in our own district we have a proportionately large number of them. The worth-while efforts of a few people are constantly being "leg-roped" by the majority, and much of their work is not creative at all, but rather a superman effort to "carry" those who are too lazy to make any effort.

Take for example the honorary secretaries of our many district associations. How much of their time is spent in matters which are not their responsibility at all? The clause in their Constitution which applies to them, lays down in precise terms their particular duties, and it most certainly does not imply that they should be dashing about organising raffles, social functions, bazaars or soothing the ruffled feelings of their fellow members. Yet they do all this and more, simply because no one else will bother. Small wonder that the secretary's job is hard to fill. Their efficiency and enthusiasm is strangled from the moment they take office.

Another very convenient leaning post in any community is the parliamentary representative. From the moment he is proclaimed at the polls his life becomes an agony of service. His telephone runs wild, his wife becomes a permanent attachment to its receiver, and he himself is a human rock against which the waves of demand and request beat incessantly. He walks a constant tightrope endeavouring to please his

constituents and at the same time perform the duties for which he was primarily elected. Frequently, when after a great deal of trouble he does manage to fulfil a request, he is scarcely thanked, and one job completed, leaves room for another leaner to move in.

No, truthfully speaking, nearly all of us are leaners in one form or another; we rely heavily on our parents, our ministers of religion, our teachers, our politicians—in fact, on anyone whom we think will relieve us of the necessity of thinking and acting for ourselves. But most of all, as a community, we lean heavily on our district associations, expecting them, almost unaided, to perform miracles of road improvement, hall building, district expansion, and community development.

It would be nice to see more of our residents standing firmly on their own two feet.

I think that sums up the position very well, and I will now refer briefly to some of the legislation mentioned in His Excellency's Speech, and particularly that with regard to workers' compensation. My colleague, the member for Kalgoorlie, quite ably outlined certain phases of that legislation concerning compensation for miners' diseases under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act, but I can never understand—and never will—why, under that Act, when a worker becomes incapacitated by accident, he should suffer a substantial reduction in his normal income, and particularly the worker with family responsibilities.

Workers, I maintain and have always maintained, are entitled in such circumstances to a continuation of the standard of living that they previously enjoyed, and I hope some recognition of that principle will be found in the amending legislation when it comes before the House. Improvements to the Factories and Shops Act are suggested and they should assist materially in minimising the risk of accidents occurring in industry.

The restriction of trading hours under the Factories and Shops Act imposes unnecessary restraint on the activities of many small business people, and particularly those in various areas catering for tourists and visitors who may require goods outside the existing permissible trading hours. I consider that consideration should be given to amending the Act so as to provide that where such contingencies arise, it will be possible, in the circumstances I have outlined, for such people to obtain the goods they require.

In the industrial field today we find great changes contemplated in industry. Much has been said about automation and there is quite a lot that should not be said. One feature of the application of automation to industry is that it will

increase the demand for highly skilled technicians and skilled workers. Of course, that creates a demand for technical training facilities to be provided. Mechanical handling is nothing new as that has been evolved with the progress of civilisation. In our early history, the economic conditions under which many great projects were carried out—mostly by unskilled slave labour—were such that the need for mechanical handling did not arise.

But with the spread of civilisation, and a general raising of the standard of our living, a growing demand for consumer goods, and with the advent of power driven plant and the consumption of vast quantities of raw materials, a host of new handling problems have to be coped with. To do this an entirely new industry has come into being the object of which is to design and produce mechanical handling equipment. We can only expect that by the gradual change, brought about by the introduction of this type of machinery, there will be a considerable reduction in the manual labour that has been used in the past. But we must also expect that with its introduction there will evolve a much higher standard of living than is at present being enjoyed.

With our increasing population we must make every endeavour, in addition to building the technical schools that we require, to construct primary schools and high schools wherever the necessity arises. With a continuation of the housing programme, and the building of schools and hospitals the necessary impetus will be given to the building trade, and this in turn will considerably relieve the present problem of unemployment.

I notice that the Government proposes to build several new hospitals and I wish to draw attention to the question of staffing these institutions. It has been suggested that we should endeavour to obtain from overseas several hundred nurses to staff the hospitals which are already in existence. Therefore it is quite evident that if we intend to build more hospitals we will accentuate the problem of getting trained hospital staff.

In that regard, I would also like to mention the present position with respect to the training of nurses. We encourage our young girls to enter the nursing profession, an appropriate curriculum is laid down and these girls are required to reach a certain standard. However, I think that question could be investigated because I find—I am particularly interested in this subject because I have some personal interest in it—that these trainee nurses are expected to study while doing their work and if they are on annual leave or are away sick, that time is not counted in their period of training. I realise, of course, that they must become proficient and that they have to pass the necessary examinations; but in addition to studying to become fully qualified, they are also performing a job of work.

*Sitting suspended from 3.45 to 4.3 p.m.*

**Mr. MARSHALL:** Prior to the suspension, I was making some reference to the essential need for paying some attention to the staffing of our hospitals which are at present in existence and of those that we expect to build. I was referring to the system of training our young people, and I consider that some consideration must be given to ensure that every facility is provided for them in the way of accommodation and so on. Following on the points I raised, I have also ascertained that when taking time off from their ordinary duties to attend lectures, I understand that that time is debited against the period which would enable them to qualify and so obtain an increase in salary, which would normally be given to anybody else working in industry after the completion of a certain specified time.

I feel there is some injustice created by that fact. These trainee nurses are performing good service in the duties they carry out in the normal course of their work in our hospitals, and it is difficult for me to associate their remuneration with their qualifications, because I consider they should be paid in accordance with the length of service they give, particularly when one considers the period of time they put in. I appreciate, as I said before, that they must have a complete and proper training before they become qualified nurses. I wanted to raise that point, however, and I hope the Minister will take all I have said into consideration, particularly bearing in mind the fact that we are endeavouring to encourage girls and women from overseas to come here and help us out of the difficulties we experience in obtaining our own people in sufficient numbers to undertake training as nurses. I will not delay the House much longer and I would like to thank members for the courtesy they have extended to me in the course of my speech.

**MR. W. A. MANNING (Narrogin)** [4.7]: I am pleased to have the honour of representing the Narrogin electorate following the retirement of Hon. Victor Doney, who served that electorate faithfully and well for such a large number of years. I hope to serve it just as faithfully and for just as many years. I would like at this point to express my thanks to members and the staff for the help, consideration and advice that has already been given to me. No doubt I will need plenty more. I do appreciate what has been done.

It is my duty to represent the entire electorate and I hope to do so justly and fairly in relation to the whole constituency. Quite apart from representing the electorate itself, I hope I shall truly represent this State. We are part of the great British Commonwealth of Nations and I think we must have a vision big enough to embrace that fact. I realise we have a tremendous responsibility for the development of this State and I think we

should set about it in a way that will bring credit to us and prosperity to Western Australia.

Fairly recently we have had set up a metropolitan regional plan. This seems to provide a splendid basis for the present and for the future. No plan such as this could be 100 per cent. correct, but I do believe that a plan which envisages what should be done in the future is worth a considerable amount, even if it is not 100 per cent. correct, because without a plan we would have no hope of advancing along the lines which we expect, and at the same time to have co-ordination.

I suggest that following upon the metropolitan regional plan, a regional plan for the country should be formulated. If we are to develop this State as a whole, it is essential to have some planning for every region so that we can put our resources to the best use, in the best place and by the best possible route. Unless these things are planned we will not get too far. I realise this is a long-term project and cannot be accomplished hastily. I suggest that in the meantime we should implement this idea to some extent by the development of rural industries.

By that I mean the processing of primary products at, or as near as possible to, the place of production. We have an abundance of good quality primary products, but we do not process enough to provide sufficient employment and to be able to export the finished goods in any great quantity. That is an important matter and it is time we dealt with it. With the good quality products we grow, we ought to find many markets. There is the processing of grain, the treatment of timbers, and the use of waste timber, colossal quantities of which are burnt. There is the use of the products from the mallet forest, the extraction of tannin and the use of the timber, the processing and canning of meat and carcasses, the treatment of hides, etc.

They are all associated with our primary production and it is high time we gave a good deal of consideration to planning rural industries near where the products are grown. When we look at the position we find that far from encouraging country processing, the discrimination in railway freights discourages any action along those lines. Very often the processed article bears two freights. In the case of wheat, for instance, there is freight to the mill, then the processed wheat bears a higher freight when it is railed out from the mill.

So we see that any product consigned to the port or city has to bear two freights when it comes from a country mill. In any case the freight is higher on a processed article than on the original primary product although they may have the same weight when carried by the railways. Because of this discrimination in rates the

manufacturer in the country is placed at a disadvantage. Perhaps an overhaul of railway freights might help to improve this position, such as by having fewer classifications in the freights, which might also make for economy in the working of the railways.

The regional planning which I suggested is part of the policy of decentralisation. I do not intend to enlarge on decentralisation at this stage because what I have suggested is part of it. The more we examine decentralisation, the more we realise that transport is the major factor. If we commence at the stage we have reached today, we are losing so much on the railways that there is a suggestion for increased freights. But is that the answer? It seems that might be the apparent and easy way of solving the difficulty, but I suggest that would not overcome the position at all.

Anyone with a knowledge of merchandising knows that as prices increase, so demand decreases; and that as prices decrease for any product, so the demand will increase, providing the quality is the same. I think it is fatal to keep on increasing the cost of transport. We may seek to increase efficiency or increase a service. I think the railways are justified by the assumption that they can transport more goods, more efficiently and at a lower cost, or a combination of the three factors.

The mere fact that there is agitation on all sides for the use of road transport rather proves that the railways are not performing the task which they should. There would be no demand for road transport if the railways transported goods efficiently, quickly and cheaply. So I say that at present the railways do not meet the demands of the growing community. They certainly are no encouragement to the establishment of industries in the country. As we look around the railway system we will find that much has been done to improve the efficiency and quality of the service, but something should be done to relieve the high cost.

I feel it could be accomplished by relieving the railways of the responsibility of meeting interest and sinking fund on their capital expenditure. I suggest this because any increase in freights can only be borne by country residents of the State. It is a fact that country people pay the freights both ways. Freight is added to the cost of what they receive, and is deducted from what they rail away. The city bears no proportion of the cost of increased freights. Yet I believe the railways are as much of an asset to the city as to the country. If that is true, then the whole State should bear the capital cost of the railways and the railway commissioners should be allowed to run the transport at cost.

We realise that people in the metropolitan area are privileged to use the roads for carrying goods from the port to the place

of business without any restriction, but when goods are transported to the country by road there is restriction on every hand. I cannot understand why that should be the position. We are all citizens of the one State. We pay the same taxes, yet there is discrimination between dwellers in the metropolitan area and those outside. I think that is not right.

Another suggestion I make is that the railways be separated from the workshop side at Midland Junction. I consider these are two entirely different concerns. If the railways were allowed to conduct the transport system of the State, it would be more efficient. If that system had to obtain trucks, coaches or locomotives, the Railway Department could secure a price from the workshops under contract. We would go far by separating these two organisations which are two entirely different types of businesses.

I believe the railways can accomplish much more than they are at present by increasing the efficiency of transport, but to do so they need to deal with the main lines where a service should be provided when required so that both consignor and consignee would know when goods would reach their destination, which they do not now know. If we had an efficient railway system which specialised on the main lines and gave a quick and reliable service, then the branch lines could be used as feeders, or alternatively either public or private road transport could be used as feeders to the main lines. This could be dealt with in individual cases according to the needs of the district. I feel it would solve quite a number of our problems, but we have to be efficient on the main lines.

A peculiar position arises in practically the whole of the Narrogin electorate, and that is in regard to the relative distances by road as against rail. Narrogin is 42 miles nearer to Perth by road than it is by rail. The position is even worse at Arthur River and Williams. Williams is 100 miles from Perth by road and 183 miles by rail. The residents of these places are expected to get their goods by rail and to pay the mileage freight on everything that is landed there. A person living 10 miles this side of Williams would be expected to be a purchaser in Williams itself. He is 90 miles from Perth but he has to pay freight on a distance of 183 miles. I know this is a difficulty, but I think something should be done to adjust freights in accordance with the distance from Perth, whether it be by road or rail. We must do this or we will have the breaking of the rules regarding transport by trucks.

I wonder if we could suggest how the railways could derive more income. We can couple this matter with decentralisation. I suggest that the best way of getting more income for the railways is, instead of increasing freights, to increase

the business. This seems to be the logical way of deriving more revenue. If we encourage country industries and increase production in the country, the railways will naturally derive greater revenue. This applies especially to rural industries, as I have called them. There is another way by which revenue can be raised and that is by the greater use of the land which is adjacent to the railways.

Some mention has been made of an increased tax on unimproved land in the rural areas. This may be quite a good way of bringing land into production, and it may be desirable in many respects because we will all agree that to have an efficient railway system we should use the land adjacent to the railways. But the problem is deeper than it appears. To impose a tax in a special way may be all right if the owners have some alternative.

Let me give an illustration. A man may have 1,000 acres of unimproved land which he desires to clear and use. He would be fortunate indeed if he could clear, fence and crop or pasture the property for £10 an acre. That means he would need £10,000. He cannot borrow and there is no State scheme for civilian land settlement, so he must have £10,000 before he can start on it. So, there is not much alternative to leaving the property as it is. It might be said that he can sell it. He has to find a buyer with that amount of money to put into the land and who is then prepared to wait for a return from it. Thus, the problem is not just the surface one that might appear in the first place.

Something should be done to launch a project for civilian land settlement. That is something which has been wanted for long enough. Until we have some such project we cannot expect the land adjacent to the railway lines to be brought into use. I think, though, that some inquiry could be made into the prospects of using such land. If an inquiry were to be made, it need not be confined to the use of freehold land but could delve into the matter of reserves that are held by the State for all sorts of purposes—water reticulation, forests, fauna, caravan parks and goodness knows what. Some of these reserves may be justified but I feel that some are entirely unjustified. If we solve these problems and get production from the country districts we can, perhaps, expect the railways to have some prospect of paying.

I believe that we could do more for the development of trade outside the State. This follows on my suggestion for the establishment of rural industries. The export of primary products is all right, but it is better for us to establish an export trade in processed primary products. Here we should encourage the sale of these goods to our neighbours and our geographically logical customers in Indonesia,

Singapore, India and the Persian Gulf. I believe there is much scope for the advancement of our trade in those areas. Neither do I forget the Northern Territory through Darwin. I think we have an excellent opportunity to develop a market there for our goods, provided it is catered for efficiently by regular shipping up the coast. I am convinced there is a splendid market in that area.

In regard to education, I am pleased to note that some attempt is being made to raise the school leaving age, because I believe it is essential these days when we hear of automation being likely to expand considerably. This means that the brains to manage and the ability to plan for long periods ahead will rate a much higher place in our community, and there will be less work for just labour. If this is going to be the position, as it surely must be, then our education will have to be of a very high standard or we will have no capacity to control or plan for these machines which, after all, are only automatic, and the brains behind them are the brains of our youth today.

That is all right as far as industry is concerned, but what of agriculture? It is very hard for me to conceive of any great form of automation in the growing of our primary products. What then is the alternative? It is the use of better and more scientific ways of growing bigger and better crops or producing bigger or better sheep or cattle or whatever it may be. It is the responsibility of the State to educate those who are going in for agriculture. I think this matter should be taken in hand without delay.

The Narrogin School of Agriculture was the forerunner of our agricultural schools—the foremost school—but what do we find there now. The dormitories built of corrugated iron some 40 years ago are still there, and they are the dormitories being used today. There has been no increase in the accommodation at the school for a considerable number of years. I believe that not only should the accommodation there be improved but that it should also be enlarged in order to give those who desire to follow agricultural pursuits an opportunity to obtain the best education possible.

One of the things which hits country people hardest of all these days is the high price of petrol and those who have furthest to travel, through living in outlying centres, have to pay most for their fuel. That seems to me to be an entirely wrong basis. Surely some scheme could be devised whereby the price of fuel would be set at a flat rate throughout the State, so that it would be available to country people at the same price as is paid by those in the metropolitan area or larger centres.

Another matter on which I feel I must touch is native welfare, because that is one of our definite responsibilities, as has already been recognised in many ways.

The main trouble is that the way in which that responsibility has been recognised up to date is through benevolence, and I am afraid we have trained our natives to look for hand-outs rather than to accept any responsibility. They like to live on their allowances and it is all very well to provide them with some means of existence, but entire dependence on the Government does not improve their outlook.

The greatest difficulty with these folk arises at two points; firstly, when the native children leave school. They attend the schools very often from their native reserves and they are usually kept in a condition which I think is a credit to their people. They attend the schools and in many cases their work is at least equal to, if not better than, that of some white children. The native children have no lack of ability when at school, but what happens when they reach the age of 13 or 14 years? There is then no prospect for them and nowhere for them to go except back to the reserves to their own people.

Naturally I suppose their own folk do not like parting with these native children. The children cannot be taken from them as they cannot be declared neglected children, and so they drift back gradually into the bush life, because they receive no further education, their parents never having been trained. At the age when these people should be expecting to gain citizenship rights, they have no idea—never having been trained—what citizenship means. I consider it should be the responsibility of our Native Welfare Department to train them and teach them what citizenship means. I realise it would be a most difficult job but it is at present the responsibility of no one and I feel that the work should be done by the department. An endeavour must be made to instil into these young natives some sense of responsibility and citizenship.

It may be to a certain extent futile to try to teach the older ones, but unless we do something in the direction I have mentioned, we will not accomplish what we have set out to do. At present the native children, on leaving school, are just drifting round in a circle, as there is no means of training either parents or children beyond a certain point. We need a definite programme as to what we will do for the natives and what we in turn expect them to do. So far I do not think anything has been done in regard to what we expect of them.

After all, if the community keeps on giving the natives various things, it becomes a habit with them to expect to receive that assistance. I therefore hope that something will be done along the lines that I have suggested. Once a native secures citizenship rights the Native Welfare Department has no further responsibility for him. Who is responsible? Nobody!

The activities of the Native Welfare Department should be extended so that it may continue to help natives after they have received citizenship rights, or there should be some other organisation formed to show them the way to go. We put them into houses and some of them are doing a good job there, but it is the responsibility of no one in particular to see that they make a success of their new environment, except in cases where there are native welfare committees or similar bodies doing the job on a voluntary basis.

I appreciate the speed with which the comprehensive water supply scheme is proceeding but if the work were speeded up even further, that would provide an excellent avenue for absorbing unemployed. This is a work which is already in hand and I feel that the unemployed could be used on that project as the amount of labour required is considerable in proportion to the money spent. The reticulation of places such as Williams and Pingelly could be accelerated and the sooner the work is done, the sooner will the department receive money from rates in those centres. This is one case where the people would be glad to pay rates and the revenue from those rates could be acquired at no extra cost—once the work was done—except that of pumping the water. I feel that while the pipeline is proceeding northward to Pingelly smaller places such as Cuballing and Popanyinning should be reticulated.

We have been informed the charges for water in the country are to be raised and I cannot see the justice of raising those charges, as they are already approximately twice those in the metropolitan area, unless a similar increase is made in the metropolitan water rate. I feel that the tendency should be towards making the country and metropolitan water charges similar rather than to extend the gulf which already exists between them, and I consider that a protest in that regard should be made. I thank members for the way in which they have listened to me this afternoon and hope they will always pay the same attention to what I have to say.

**MR. NORTON** (Gascoyne) [4.37]: I desire first to congratulate you, Sir, on having been appointed Speaker of this House. I know that you will carry out your duties to the best of your endeavour and that you will be impartial and give us all a fair go.

Next I wish to pay tribute to three prominent men of the North-West who have recently passed on. I would like first to pay tribute to the late Hon. C. W. D. Barker who died suddenly while on tour of the North-West. As members know, he was a man who loved that part of the State and worked for it, sparing no effort or time, and he was a good friend to all who lived there.



I must refer next to the tragedy which occurred last weekend at Carnarvon when Dr. Herz and Mr. Vernon Leach were accidentally drowned while fishing. The State—and the North-West in particular—has lost two good friends and, not only that, but also two valuable servants. Dr. Herz was absolutely wrapped up in his profession and did everything humanly possible to save life and prevent suffering. In that work he spared no trouble whatever. Mr. Leach, in his own profession as the Resident Magistrate, administered the laws and dispensed justice, without fear or favour, whenever anything was brought before him. With the death of those three men, the North-West has lost three good servants.

Some 18 months or a little more ago, MacRobertson-Miller and Airlines (W.A.) Ltd. amalgamated. There is no doubt that this amalgamation took place for economic reasons and one obvious reason was the shortening of the Darwin-Perth air route. But following the amalgamation has come a constant stream of complaints. These complaints are not isolated ones because they have come from a broad cross-section of the people of the North-West. Since January, and until the middle of July, some 22 complaints were aired in the "Northern Times", a paper which circulates throughout the North-West. The complaints came from such organisations as the Carnarvon Municipal Council, the Roebourne Road Board, the Port Hedland Road Board, the Marble Bar Road Board, the C.W.A. at Wittenoom, the Gascoyne Planters Association and a number of people who contribute notes to the "Northern Times".

As I said, these complaints have been coming in continuously since the amalgamation and only last week I received a letter from the Carnarvon Municipal Council in which it voiced further complaints about the services given. Since the amalgamation some air services have been greatly increased while others have been considerably cut down. Kalgoorlie, a town which is well served by road and rail, now gets seven return air services a week, with a D.C.3 operated by MacRobertson-Miller, whereas in a number of outback areas the service has been cut in half.

I would instance an airstrip known as Barloweerie, which is on Woleen station not far from Yalgoo. Prior to the amalgamation one return flight by a Dove aircraft was made each week to Barloweerie and at that time people could travel to Perth in 2½ hours. However, since the amalgamation, this service has been cut in half and there is now one return trip per fortnight. The service is still carried out by a Dove, but now it takes from 4 p.m. to 10.45 p.m. on the same night for people to get to Perth. Passengers who board the aircraft at Barloweerie at 4 p.m. are put off at Geraldton an hour later and they have to wait in Geraldton until 8.40 p.m. to catch a south bound plane travelling to Perth

along the coast. This aircraft arrives in Perth at about 10.45 p.m. Not only has the time taken for these people to travel to Perth been greatly extended, but also they are now unable to get a weekly supply of perishables during the summer months.

Now let us have a look at the various complaints which have been lodged by these different organisations. The first one from Nullagine, was reported in the "Northern Times" on the 19th January. The correspondence states that perishables and papers were left behind or over-carried and the report reads—

Another black mark was registered against M.M.A. on Saturday when no newspapers or perishables were off-loaded here. I wish the person responsible for this repeated omission had been here to exist on the unpalatable fare this week in the extreme heat. It might have helped to eradicate the indifference with which we are treated. Lack of time cannot be claimed as an excuse as a good car could be half way to Marble Bar between landing and departure times of the present itinerary.

From that I take it that the perishables were off-loaded at Marble Bar instead of being taken on to Nullagine.

The next one is headed, "Freights Off-Loaded at Wrong Ports." It appears that there is no system of stowage on the planes so that a ready check can be made of the goods to be taken off. In fact, I would go so far as to say, from my own observations, that no check is made of goods when they are off-loaded from planes. On the 1st March there was a complaint from Marble Bar which was again reported in the "Northern Times". A part of the letter reads—

I think that more care could be taken in making sure that freight marked "Marble Bar" is delivered to Marble Bar and not to Roy Hill or elsewhere.

So members can see that the company is falling down somewhere, whether it be the company management or the servants of the company. The "Nullagine News" on the 3rd May said that the mails were delayed for some four days and that they could hardly see why such delays should occur.

On the 24th May, the C.W.A. at Wittenoom held a special meeting to discuss a letter which had been received from M.M.A. relative to the association's complaints of being unable to get the various commodities which were ordered, particularly perishables which are so urgently needed in the outback areas. The following report appears in the "Northern Times":—

The other object of the meeting was the reply received from M.M.A. on a letter which C.W.A. of Wittenoom sent to the airlines on the 15th April.

In this letter the ladies, who are primarily housewives, asked the airlines to deliver perishables on time. The report goes on—

The full size page and a bit of a reply came, dated May 7, and a current time-table of the flights was enclosed. By the way, this time-table was rendered useless when it was replaced by a new one valid as from May 19. The letter stated that on flight 874 leaving Perth Airport at 0500 on Saturday the perishables are arriving at Wittenoom at 11.30 a.m., etc. However, it was found at the meeting, (and by everybody else for that matter) that most of the time, only part of the perishables for Wittenoom are unloaded at 11.30 (the accessible part that is) and the other part, right behind all the stuff consigned to Marble Bar, Hedland, etc., is unloaded when 874 touches down on the way back to the city. Many a time we have witnessed a crowd of people waiting for the store to be opened after hours to distribute the incoming perishables. By this letter, the ladies did get a reply to their complaint, but the practice remains the same.

Mr. Court: Have you discussed this matter with the company?

Mr. NORTON: Yes, I have discussed it fully with Mr. Kleiny and Mr. Cameron and they know I intended to make these complaints in the House. Others also complain that the time-tables are not stable and that the planes are late. They do not receive any indication or communication to advise them when the planes are due to arrive.

Hon. D. Brand: You cannot get that with railway trains, let alone planes.

Mr. NORTON: But this company is paid special rates in order to get its planes to the various destinations on time. These complaints commenced to come in last October from the Carnarvon Municipal Council and the Gascoyne-Minilya Road Board and even the Pastoralists' Association had a letter of complaint published in the Press. However, the sudden cessation of these complaints was rather remarkable. If the Leader of the Opposition were in his place, he might be able to give us some indication of the reason why these complaints suddenly ceased and yet the delays in the time-tables and the other things which have brought about these complaints have not altered in any way.

Mr. Court: Why do you think the Leader of the Opposition should know?

Mr. NORTON: I will leave that for him to say.

Mr. Court: You have mentioned that the Leader of the Opposition should know and I think that you should tell us.

Mr. NORTON: Political pressure was applied to those who were writing the letters at the time because an election was due.

Mr. Court: That is nonsense!

Mr. NORTON: The hon. member can think what he likes, but I happen to know the facts. This company is paid a substantial subsidy from the Commonwealth Government to run this service efficiently. Throughout the years, until the amalgamation took place, each of the two companies received a separate subsidy. The subsidy for the combined companies in 1951-52 was £117,379 7s. In 1952-53 this subsidy rose to £171,491 5s. 7d. In 1953-54 the subsidy dropped to £146,602 1s. 8d. In 1954-55 the subsidy paid was £153,973 7s. 10d. For the year ended the 30th June, 1956, it is anticipated that the subsidy will be well over the £150,000 mark.

At the present time this company is running an extra service to Kalgoorlie and to Albany, in competition with our railways. In other words, this company is being subsidised by the Commonwealth Government to conduct an air service in direct competition with our railway service. Those towns which are referred to are already being well serviced and the extra services could well be spread over the North-West and the Murchison districts.

Mr. Court: Does not the company have to pay the Transport Board some fee to conduct the Albany and Kalgoorlie services?

Mr. NORTON: I do not know of any fees that the company might have paid.

Mr. Hearman: I think the Transport Board co-ordinates all these various services.

Mr. Court: When one goes to the Albany station there is a notice posted up showing what fees are paid to the Transport Board by Airlines.

Mr. NORTON: I do not know about that. All I know is that the company which is being subsidised by the Commonwealth Government is running an air service to those towns which are well serviced by other forms of transport.

The company claims that it is not a common carrier. It claims that on the back of the ticket which it issues there is a No. 1 condition, the wording of which is: "The company is not a common carrier and reserves the right to refuse to carry any passenger, luggage or goods without assigning reasons thereto." That is a very drastic condition to apply.

Mr. May: Too drastic.

Mr. NORTON: I think it is. This company is assisted with public money to conduct an air service to serve the public. If one looks up the definition of

"common carrier," one will find that the company cannot very well avoid being classed as a common carrier. The Chambers Encyclopaedia gives a very good definition of the term "common carrier" in English law and it is as follows:—

In English law a common carrier is one who offers to the public to convey goods from one place to another for hire. The offer must be general—for a private person who contracts with another for carriage is not a carrier in the legal sense, and does not incur the peculiar responsibilities which in almost every country it has been found expedient to attach to the occupation of a public or common carrier. Carriage, in law, is thus a peculiar modification of the contract of hiring. The contract may be express, depending on the terms of any agreement permitted by law, or implied from the status of a common carrier who has received goods of the kind which he professes to carry. Such goods he is not entitled to refuse unless they are dangerous, or unless he has no room for them in his conveyance, or unless they are not brought in time for packing, or delivered in a state insecure and unfit for carriage. The carrier may, however, refuse to carry dangerous goods or those which would expose him to special risk. The vehicle must be sufficient for safe carriage, and the carrier is bound properly to pack. The regular course of the journey must be followed and perishable goods must be forwarded with reasonable speed.

I say that our perishable goods are not delivered with reasonable speed. Continuing—

The carrier should give notice, when receiving the goods of any known unusual cause of delay.

The definition then goes on to give various other clauses which are used in other countries of the world.

Hon. D. Brand: The company claims it is not a common carrier.

Mr. NORTON: I know, but I claim that it is giving a service to the public over a defined route. It is subsidised to carry out that work and therefore, in my opinion, it comes within the definition of the term "common carrier."

Hon. D. Brand: Is the company subsidised generally or specifically for the service it renders in the North?

Mr. NORTON: It is subsidised to carry and transport goods and passengers. For the information of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I will read a question which was asked by Senator Willesee in

the Senate at Canberra on the 21st June, 1956, and the answer that was given to him. The question reads as follows:—

Are subsidies payable on the following air routes—

- (a) Perth to Geraldton, (b) Perth to Kalgoorlie, (c) Perth to Esperance via Kalgoorlie, and (d) Perth to Albany?

The reply given to that question is as follows:—

Specific air services in Western Australia are not subsidised as such. The network of services operated by the company, which is regarded as essential in the national interest, is reviewed and an amount estimated as sufficient, with efficient management, to bridge the gap between costs and revenues and to provide a margin for reasonable profit, is paid to the operator.

Mr. Hearman: Has the hon. member read the current report of the Transport Board and its comments on this matter?

Mr. NORTON: No, I have not, but I know what the people in the North-West are saying and what they require.

Mr. Hearman: I suggest you do, because you will then know where the Transport Board comes into this.

Mr. NORTON: The Transport Board merely co-ordinated it and agreed to the schedules submitted.

Mr. Hearman: They also recommended it.

Mr. NORTON: The hon. member will have a chance of putting his views on the matter.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I believe you have been making very untruthful statements about me.

Mr. NORTON: I do not know that they were untruthful.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: I do.

Mr. NORTON: When the whaling station was sold, the Commonwealth Government established a fund for the development of fisheries in the North-West and other parts of Australia. It will be interesting to learn whether any steps are to be taken to go into the development of fisheries in the North-West. There are many dollar earners in relation to fisheries, and the sea in the North-West is abounding with fish which would earn these dollars. We know that tuna and prawns are to be found there in quite large numbers, and recently it has been established that scallops have been found in Shark Bay. They are the Tasmanian variety which commands quite a big sale in that State.

Last session I had quite a bit to say concerning the price paid for fish to the fishermen in Shark Bay and that at which fish

were sold in the stores in the city. Recently and pretty well all this year the fishermen at Shark Bay have been told there is a considerable glut of fish in the Perth markets. They have been told that the storage places are full and that there is very little or no sale for fish. Yet we do not see any change whatever in the price of fish in the shop windows. In fact, over the last week we have actually seen barracoota—a fish not found in Western Australian waters—being sold in the shops in Perth at 1s. 6d. a lb. It appears to me that there is a monopoly somewhere, and somehow or other these prices are being kept up.

I consider that if the fish were put on the open market, and sold under the hammer, the public would be able to get the advantages of these gluts, and the fishermen would be able to keep on fishing. It is very interesting to note that approximately only 25 per cent. of the fish are sold by auction; all the rest are sold by private treaty. Out of 4,750,000 lb. of wet fish caught in this State only just over 1,000,000 lbs. are sold on the Perth markets under the hammer. These fish are practically all estuary fish, such as cobler, yellow-eyed mullet, Scarborough mullet, and the rest include sea herring, whiting, tailor and others. The last four I have mentioned only amount to 15 per cent. of the total sold.

In my opinion, a freezer or holding chamber should be set up within the metropolitan area so that the individual fisherman could send his fish from the country areas to the auction and allow them to be sold as the opportunity arose. Should there be a glut he could take his fish off the market and return them to the freezer and bring them out at a later date. It is something that should be looked into and one which would greatly assist not only the fishermen and the industry, but also the public in as much as they would get cheaper fish; it would also tend to develop our fisheries at the same time. I might mention that up to last June there were only 84,000 lb. of wet fish exported from this State, comprising mostly whiting.

Another matter I would like to bring before the House is the policy that I believe is to be adopted by the Federal Government, in respect of aerodromes. This will come particularly hard on the people in the North. It is, I understand, the broad policy of the Department of Civil Aviation to now hand back to all local governing authorities all aerodromes within their areas. As the North-West has so many aerodromes it is essential that they remain under the care and maintenance of the Department of Civil Aviation. The local governing authorities, road boards and councils throughout the North-West would have neither the money nor the equipment with which to keep these aerodromes in the condition that is required by the department. I

would urge that every possible pressure be put on the Commonwealth to keep the control and maintenance of these aerodromes under the Department of Civil Aviation.

Like the member for Kalgoorlie, the people in the North are very concerned over the prices of petrol which I believe are to be increased tomorrow. To give members some idea of the differences in petrol prices I would quote the charges for Geraldton and Carnarvon in drum lots by the gallon. The price of bulk super petrol in Geraldton is 3s. 5d. a gallon, against 4s. 4½d. a gallon at Carnarvon. Out of the bowser at Geraldton it is 4s., and at Carnarvon 4s. 10d., in each case a difference of at least 10d. a gallon.

The freight on petrol from Geraldton to Carnarvon by road is £1 per 44 gallon drum. To that must be added the cost of returning the empty drum to Geraldton, which is 5s. So it can be said that the cost of transporting petrol from Geraldton to Carnarvon is £1 5s. per 44 gallon drum. That cost is from depot to depot.

The Premier: Does anyone still buy super grade?

Mr. NORTON: I think so.

The Premier: Why?

Mr. NORTON: If we did not buy super grade we would pay the difference of 1½d. a gallon, which is an additional 1d. If my reckoning is correct, it costs 6.82d. per gallon to transport petrol from Geraldton to Carnarvon. Assuming that is correct, the petrol companies are getting 3.12d. per gallon profit after the petrol reaches Carnarvon. It would be interesting to find out where the difference goes to.

The Premier: Is super petrol any better than standard?

Mr. NORTON: That is a matter of opinion.

The Premier: I understand it is about ½d. a gallon better.

Mr. NORTON: Another service giving people in the North-West cause for complaint not only at present but over the years, is radio reception. People listen to one main station which is on a 32 metre band. There is another station on a 60 metre band which, I understand, gives better reception. From inquiries made in Perth, I find the wireless sets capable of receiving the 60 metre wave length cost much more and are scarcer. They cost approximately £20 more than the ordinary set.

On the 30 metre band the national station, because of its weak signals, is badly jammed by overseas and Eastern States' stations, so it is practically impossible for stations in the outback to give a reasonable reception on that wavelength. It is almost impossible to listen to the broadcast band,

except in winter time. The broadcast band from Geraldton can be heard in Carnarvon during daylight hours in winter time, but the receiver requires so much power for his set that it results in all the statics and interferences being brought in, so as to practically make the service inaudible.

The shortwave station which operates on 2 kws on the 32 metre band is the one tuned into by most people. If the power were raised to 10 kws, like the station operating on the 60 metre band, a great deal of the trouble of the outback stations would be overcome. If the Geraldton station were raised from 2 to 10 kws, as in the case of Wagin, far more people could be served by Geraldton than at present. I tested out the two stations on a car radio. I did this in the vicinity of Nookawarra station, out from Cue. At 4 p.m. I could pick up Wagin clearly which was 450 miles away, but I could not hear Geraldton which was 180 miles away. From that it will be seen that an increase in the kilowatts of these stations would enable them to service many more listeners.

Hon. D. Brand: Is that matter not under consideration by the Commonwealth at present?

Mr. NORTON: I have seen nothing about that in the report of the A.B.C. which I have here. I would point out that the Commonwealth is rapidly going ahead with the installation of television. When such a service is installed it will be in the Perth, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, Albany and Geraldton areas. I understand each of these stations will radiate between 35 and 40 miles. Admittedly, that would give a service to 495,000 of the 639,771 head of population in Western Australia. Those figures were taken from the last census, and in both cases they could be greater at present. I would urge the A.B.C. to give serious consideration to increasing the power of the stations which will serve the North-West and the outback. By installing television, with its restricted radius, we are moving towards centralisation, something which we are so urgently trying to avoid.

Mr. Rhatigan: Once again it is a case of the forgotten North.

Mr. NORTON: It is. The people of the North-West have very little entertainment, and the only thing they can rely on for entertainment is the wireless set, whereas people living in towns and districts to be served by television will have not only wireless entertainment but also television and other amenities which most people in the North are deprived of at present.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What is the maximum range of television?

Mr. NORTON: According to this 7th annual report of the A.B.C. it is between 35 and 40 miles.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: How could that be pushed any further?

Mr. NORTON: I was not suggesting that the radius be pushed further. I suggested that programmes could be better distributed by more powerful stations, and, if necessary, more stations. I am not advocating television for the North-West; I am only asking for the ordinary broadcast or shortwave service to be audible.

There is one thing which not only the people in Western Australia but in all Australia should do, and that is to press the Federal Government not to carry out any more atomic bomb tests on any sea routes. Over the last two years we experienced a number of such tests at Onslow. In every instance they not only disrupted the State shipping arrangements but also the air services, and, in fact, every service which is supplied to the North. During the last tests, four of the State ships were held up for over two days waiting for the all-clear to be given. There is any amount of space in the world for the holding of these tests without picking on a shipping lane which is the life-blood of any country.

In conclusion, I would ask the Premier, when he goes to Canberra, to again bring before the appropriate authorities the matter of taxation relief for the North-West. The Premier has now seen a lot of that part of the State for himself and I know he will appreciate the difficulties experienced there. Not only will he appreciate the difficulties, but also the potentialities, and I am sure he can readily see the urgent necessity to encourage, by some means, capital to that area.

On motion by Mr. Crommelin, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.22 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Tuesday, 14th August, 1956.

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