

The MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT: This Supply Bill, however, has to be passed to enable the government of the country to be carried on. I trust members will support the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 8th August.
Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 2nd August, 1950.

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

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Commission Employees.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) What was the total number of employees (permanent and casual) attached to the Housing Commission as at the 30th June, 1950?

(2) How many employees had this department as at the 30th June, 1947?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Three hundred and seven.

(2) One hundred and fifty-two.

(b) *As to Unit Panel Type.*

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) Has his attention been called to the unit panel house mentioned by Mr. N. Fernie, retiring Director of Industrial Development, references to which appeared in "The Sunday Times" of the 23rd July, 1950?

(2) If so, will he take immediate steps to test the statement that this class of house would step up, and reduce the cost of, house building?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Investigations by the Commission into this type of construction in the Eastern States has already been commenced.

(c) *As to Allocation of Departmental Homes.*

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Premier:

(1) Is it the policy of the Government to give equal preference to new Australians in the allocation of houses built by Government departments for occupation by departmental employees?

(2) If so, is this considered to be fair to regular and permanent employees?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) I have not issued any general instruction to departments. The matter is dealt with on its merits.

If the hon. member has a complaint regarding any specific case I shall be glad to have it investigated.

(d) *As to Availability of Rental Homes.*

Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) Is it a fact that applicants approved in 1947 have not yet been accommodated in Commonwealth-State rental homes?

(2) What is the approximate period which will elapse from the time an applicant is admitted to the priority list to the date of occupancy of such a home?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) A number of applicants whose need was established in 1947 have not yet been accommodated in rental homes but allocations are now being made on basis of hardship, plus date of application and these long-standing cases are now receiving consideration.

(2) The time cannot be assessed. The period which must elapse between date of listing for priority and occupancy of home is dependent on the building rate and other contingencies such as urgent cases. Every effort is being made by the Commission to step up the building rate by the erection of pre-cut timber framed and imported houses.

(e) *As to Applications, Completions, etc.*

Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) How many applications were outstanding on the 30th June, 1948, and the 30th June, 1950, respectively, with regard to the following—

- (a) for tenancy of Commonwealth-State rental homes;
- (b) for permits to build;
- (c) for permits under self-help scheme;
- (d) for small unit homes?

(2) How many approvals have been given to contractors to build under the "ready-made home" scheme?

(3) How many of such homes have been completed?

(4) What action is taken by the Commission to ensure that approved purchasers are not required to pay a black market price before a sale is effected?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Applications outstanding—30th June, 1948—For Commonwealth-State rental homes, 7,981; permits to build, 2,351; permits under self-help (not operating in June, 1948); small unit homes (included in Commonwealth-State rental figures above).

30th June, 1950—For Commonwealth-State rental homes, 7,079; permits to build; 5,907; permits under self-help, nil; small unit homes, 4,044.

(2) Approvals for 441 houses.

(3) Not known.

(4) It is the buyer's responsibility to ensure that he does not pay a black-market price but in cases where it is found after a report to the Commission that a contractor is asking excessive prices for his ready-built homes, the issue to him of further permits for ready-built homes is withheld.

(f) *As to Sale of Rental Homes.*

Mr. W. HEGNEY asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) How many Commonwealth-State rental homes have actually been sold to approved purchasers?

(2) Does the cost price form the basis of sale?

(3) How many approved applicants are still waiting to finalise contract of sale regarding such homes?

(4) Does the Government propose to alter the conditions of sale as announced by the then Minister for Housing in "The West Australian" of the 7th December, 1949?

(5) Is he aware that numbers of occupiers of Commonwealth-State rental homes in Glendalough and Joondanna Heights areas consider that the delay in finalising sales is unduly long?

(6) If so, can he state the reason for the delay?

(7) If not, will he make inquiries and ascertain the reason?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) One hundred and fifteen.

(2) Yes.

(3) 1,444 have indicated a desire to purchase. It is anticipated that an additional 150 sales will be completed during the current quarter.

(4) No.

(5) The delay in finalising the sale of homes at Glendalough and Joondanna Heights is beyond the control of State Housing Commission.

(6) Owing to the large number of subdivisions being submitted for approval the present technical staff of the Lands and Surveys Department is unable to cope with the volume of work and therefore the issue of titles is delayed. Difficulty has also been experienced in finalising costs for utility services. As homes are being sold at cost it is necessary to establish actual costs of all services before final costs can be determined. It is anticipated that the Commission will be in a position to finalise sales in these areas within the next three months.

(7) Answered by (6).

(g) *As to Homes for Immigrants.*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

How many—(a) permits to erect dwellings; (b) rental homes, have been granted to immigrants who have arrived in this State since the end of the 1939-45 War?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

The information is not recorded. No provision is made on application forms for supplying this information.

CLAREMONT MENTAL HOSPITAL.*As to Royal Commissioner's Report.*

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

(1) Is she aware that in her absence the Government adopted the Royal Commissioner's report on the Claremont Mental Hospital?

(2) Does she now agree with the Government's action?

(3) Does she consider her attack on the Royal Commissioner warranted?

(4) If not, does she intend to apologise to him?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No, but certain action is being taken by the Government, of which I approve.

(2) Answered by (1).

(3) No attack was made on the Royal Commissioner.

(4) Answered by (3).

RAILWAYS.*As to Engagement of Oversea Experts.*

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

(1) For what particular jobs are the 38 experts being engaged in England (as reported in "The West Australian" of the 1st August)?

(2) Was the Professional Officers' Association asked to express an opinion on the necessity for engaging these officers overseas?

(3) Was consideration given to sending junior officers in England to acquire the special knowledge required?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) (Mechanical Engineering) Plant, mechanical and electrical work, 1; locomotive, carriage and wagon designing, 7; (Civil Engineering) civil engineers, 13; structural engineers, 3; architects, 2; location engineers, 2; construction engineers, 6; signal engineers, 4; total, 38.

(2) The Professional Officers' Association is aware that additional professional staff is needed and is not available locally.

(3) Technical staff already sent and to be sent overseas for experience, includes professional officers, senior and junior. More cannot be done in this direction until numbers are augmented.

GRASSHOPPERS.*As to Combating.*

Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is he aware that grasshoppers have been reported as having already appeared in some areas, viz., north of Westonia and north-east of Southern Cross?

(2) Is it the intention of the Agricultural Department to investigate these early appearances with a view to adopting prompt remedial action in combating what has every indication of being a heavily-infested hopper season?

(3) What is the total quantity of bran now in hand and available for distribution to road boards for baiting purposes?

(4) What amount has already been despatched, and to whom?

(5) Is provision being made to divert greater quantities of baiting materials to districts where the heaviest strike is anticipated?

(6) What is the basis of distribution?

(7) Is it a fact that some road boards received bran last season although the incidence of the hopper was negligible?

(8) Did any of the following areas receive bran last season:—Cunderdin, Kellerberrin, Merredin?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. Inspection visits have already been made to Westonia, Southern Cross and other districts in the Eastern Wheat-belt.

(2) Yes. Investigations have already been made by the Government Entomologist.

(3) As large a quantity as possible of bran has been requested from the Flour Millowners' Association for grasshopper destruction, and arrangements have been made for the use of bran substitutes for mixing with bran should adequate supplies not be available. The Flour Millowners' Association has agreed to reserve at least 200 tons.

(4) Bran has been despatched in the following quantities to the undermentioned road boards:—Yilgarn, 10 tons; Westonia, 10 tons; Merredin, 10 tons; Nungarin, 10 tons; Mukinbudin, 10 tons; Mount Marshall, 10 tons; Koorda, 5 tons; Mingenew, 5 tons; Morawa, 5 tons.

(5) Yes.

(6) All available quantities of bran will be allocated to infested road boards, due regard being paid to the infestation areas within the board boundaries and the types of crops to be protected.

(7) No.

(8) Yes—Merredin.

COAL.*As to Report on Cardiff Supply.*

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

(1) Was a report on the quality of Cardiff coal being supplied to the East Perth power station made about March this year by Mr. Morgan, the State Coal Mining Engineer?

(2) If so, will he table the report?

(3) If not, why not?

The HONORARY MINISTER FOR MINES replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.

PLASTER OF PARIS.

(a) *As to Rail Transport from Chandler.*

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

(1) On what date did the Department of Industrial Development seek an assurance from the Railway Department that it would provide transport for 25,000 tons of plaster of paris to be produced at Chandler?

(2) What was the assurance given?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) The 31st March, 1950.

(2) An assurance of 300-350 tons per week without prejudicing any other industry was given.

(b) *As to Price.*

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Attorney General:

What is the price per ton in Western Australia of plaster of paris?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

The prices vary according to the conditions under which it is sold.

A list of the various prices is now appended.

Plaster of Paris.

Maximum Selling Price.

To Plasterboard Manufacturers—

Packed in jute bags of approximately 150 lb.—£6 14s. 7d. per ton net ex works.

Packed in bags of approximately 75 lb.—£6 4s. per ton net ex works.

To Resellers (one ton and over)—

Packed in jute bags of approximately 150 lb.—£8 8s. 7d. per ton net delivered in metropolitan area.

Packed in bags of approximately 75 lb.—£7 18s. per ton net delivered in metropolitan area.

To Resellers (under one ton)—

Jute bags 150 lb. weight when filled—14s. 5d. per bag delivered metropolitan area.

Bags, 75 lb. weight when filled—6s. 10d. per bag delivered metropolitan area.

To Builders and Public (one ton and over)—

Packed in jute bags of approximately 150 lb.—£8 8s. 7d. per ton net delivered metropolitan area.

Packed in bags of approximately 75 lb.—£7 18s. per ton net delivered metropolitan area.

To Builders and Public (under one ton)—
Jute bags 150 lb. weight when filled—14s. 5d. per bag delivered metropolitan area.

Bags, 75 lb. weight when filled—6s. 10d. per bag delivered metropolitan area.

Minimum Discounts.

Plasterboard Manufacturers—Net.

Resellers—10% and 2½% 30 days, on prices per bag for orders of under one ton.

Builders—2½% 30 days.

Public—2½% cash with order.

HEALTH.

As to Infant Mortality, Northam.

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

Will she lay upon the Table all papers covering the investigation into the incidence of infant mortality in the Northam district?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

As to Avon Valley Request.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE asked the Premier:

Will he lay upon the Table the departmental file dealing with the refusal of the Government to set up a regional development council, as requested by local governing authorities, in the Avon Valley districts?

The PREMIER replied:

Yes. File attached.

MEAT.

As to Price Fixation.

Mr. OLIVER asked the Premier:

(1) Is it a fact that the Prices Branch has been most inconsistent in its approach to the problem of wholesale and retail prices of meat?

(2) Is it a fact that the presence of so many pastoralists, graziers and other types of primary producer in the Government has some affinity with the Government's reluctance to control the price of livestock?

(3) Is it a fact that the wholesale price of meat is fictitious?

(4) Is it a fact that the retail selling price of meat fixed by the Prices Branch is based on a wholesale selling price that is approximately 3d. below the actual purchasing price of meat on the hoof?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) No. The approach to the problem of determining wholesale and retail prices of meat has not varied. It has always been the practice under both Commonwealth and State control to have regard to special circumstances that may arise from time to time.

(2) No.

(3) No. The present wholesale price is fixed by Prices Control Order No. 168 (published in the "Government Gazette" of 11th November, 1949), as amended by Prices Control Order No. 227 (published in the "Government Gazette" of the 17th March, 1950.)

(4) The approved maximum retail selling price of meat is based on the approved wholesale selling prices contained in the Orders mentioned in the answer to question (3). The price paid for livestock varies from sale to sale, and as between buyers.

BRIDGES.

As to Construction at "Narrows."

Mr. YATES asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Does the Government intend to proceed with the building of a bridge across the Narrows?

(2) If so, have plans been prepared for this important project?

(3) When is the project likely to commence?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No decision has been made by the Government regarding any further bridge proposals across the Swan River downstream from the Causeway, but the matter is under discussion.

(2) No plans have been prepared.

(3) Answered by (1) and (2).

STATE FERRIES.

As to Discontinuance of Mends-street Service.

Mr. YATES asked the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

(1) Does the Government intend to discontinue the ferry service from Barrack-street, Perth, to Mends-street, South Perth?

(2) If so, when is the service likely to terminate?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

(1) No. However, due to a falling off of patronage, a reduction in the present service is contemplated. Any further heavy decline in passengers carried would cause the position to be reviewed.

(2) Answered by (1).

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

As to East Perth Station and Diesel Units.

Hon. E. NULSEN asked the Minister for Works,—

(1) Would he inform the House—

(a) the maximum load, and

(b) total kilowatts generated;

(c) maximum load carried by the 25,000 K.W. set by the East Perth power station for May, June, July and August, 1948, and 1949, and for May and July, 1950?

(2) The number of engineers employed at East Perth power station in June, 1948, and June, 1950?

(3) The total number of employees for the same period June, 1948, and June, 1950?

(4) The number and capacity of diesel engine alternators in the metropolitan area supplied from East Perth power station?

(5) What is the relief in kilowatts on East Perth power station in consequence of these sets?

(6) Where are these sets installed and at whose expense?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) Maximum load carried by East Perth Power Station—1948: May, 43,500; June, 47,000; July, 49,500; August, 47,000. 1950: May, 49,000; July, 49,000.

(b) Total Kilowatts Generated—1948: May, 18,459,970; June, 19,663,000; July, 20,416,000; August, 19,822,450. 1950: May, 22,155,500; July, 21,950,400.

(c) Maximum load carried by 25,000 K.W. Set—1948: May, 25,500; June, 26,000; July, 25,500; August, 26,000. 1950: May, 25,000; July, 25,500.

(2) June, 1948—12. June, 1950—19. Increase due to new engineers being trained for East Perth and South Fremantle operation.

(3) June, 1948—335. June, 1950—378. More regular maintenance and training employees for South Fremantle.

(4) None.

(5) and (6) See (4).

COOGEE LAND.

As to Purchase and Use.

Mr. FOX asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) Has the Government purchased a large area of land east of the magazine at Coogee?

(2) If so, what area was purchased?

(3) Is it the intention of the Government to make any of this land available for industrial establishments?

THE HONORARY MINISTER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Forty-six and one-quarter acres, being part of Cockburn Sound Location 415.
- (3) Yes.

FREMANTLE HOSPITAL.

As to Visiting Fee and Pensioners.

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

- (1) Is she aware that people visiting patients at the Fremantle Hospital, including pensioners, have to pay 6d. per visit?
- (2) Is she aware that pensioners cannot afford this amount from their very meagre pensions?
- (3) If she is aware of it, will she see that pensioners visiting the hospital will be admitted free on production of their pension cards?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) I am informed by the Fremantle Hospital Board that free admission is given to all at regular visiting periods.

Outside these free periods a charge of 6d. is made.

Visitors present a serious problem to efficient medical treatment and nursing and I am informed that the charge is designed to limit the number of visitors outside regular visiting hours, and so to assist the medical and nursing staffs in their work of healing.

CEMENT.

As to Government Grinding Equipment and Output.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE asked the Minister for Works:

(1) In view of his statement published in "The West Australian" of the 1st June, 1950 (when referring to cement production at Swan Portland Cement Company), to the effect that "the Government, at its own expense, had acquired and installed additional grinding equipment, which should be in operation in two weeks," will he inform the House the total cost to the Government of such plant and its installation costs?

(2) How much cement has the Government received up to this date from the anticipated weekly output of 400 tons from this source?

(3) What is the cost of cement so received by the Government?

(4) Is the Government getting the cement at any concession rate?

(5) Whether the Government is receiving a concession rate or not, how is it arranging to recoup interest and sinking fund on the costs incurred by the Government in this assistance to a profitable private enterprise?

(6) Is there any profit sharing by the Government with the Swan Portland Cement Company in the profits made from the additional output made possible by the use of the Government grinding equipment?

(7) If no cement has so far been received, when does he expect deliveries and at what weekly rate and at what price?

(8) Is such price any different from the price being charged by the company to other cement users?

(9) Was the Swan Portland Cement Company approached to make such an installation at their own expense?

(10) If so, what was their reply?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Total cost as at the 30th June, 1950, £20,787, made up of plant, £12,062; installation, £8,725.

(2) None yet.

(3) Answered by (2).

(4) When cement is supplied it will be at normal rates.

(5) I will hand to the hon. member a copy of the recommendation of the Director of Industrial Development subsequent to his ascertaining that new machinery ordered by the company could not be available for about two years, and the views of the company on temporary installations.

(6) No, but in view of the difficulties associated with the working of a plant of this nature, it is considered that additional profit on this output is unlikely.

(7) It has been decided, in view of the increasing demand for cement and the need for supplying these needs for housing, primary producers, and others, that the Government shall continue to use imported cement until the end of 1950.

The estimated needs, apart from Government requirements but including the lag of orders previously existing, will exceed the maximum estimated output of the works until the end of this year.

(8) Answered by (4).

(9) Yes.

(10) See answer to (5).

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Proposed Extensions.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Minister for Works:

Will he lay upon the Table of the House the plan of the proposed harbour extensions at Fremantle prepared by Mr. Tyde-man and published in "The West Australian" of the 28th March, 1949?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 27th July.

HON. F. J. S. WISE (Gascoyne) [4.51]: First of all, I wish to congratulate, from the floor of the House, the new member for Cottesloe on his maiden speech delivered in moving the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply. The hon. member said many things with which I do not agree but I do not intend, under any circumstances, to make any criticism of his comments but rather to express my own views on the same subjects from time to time as opportunity offers, to show the difference in the point or points of view which I hold.

There are several matters in the Speech to which I intend to refer this evening. Those comments are confined to references made to national development, increased food production, finance, land settlement, timber and forestry and the North-West. In a very early paragraph in the Speech we find—

Ministers have conferred with representatives of the Commonwealth Government to enlist the support of the new Commonwealth Department of National Development. Important developmental schemes are being submitted as worthy of Commonwealth assistance.

I would like the Premier, and any of his Ministers, as soon as opportunity offers, to give this House information in detail as to what plans and schemes they envisage as being classed as "urgent and worthy developmental schemes" for which they require assistance from the Commonwealth.

The Premier: The comprehensive water scheme is one. Railway rehabilitation is another.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There is nothing new about those.

The Premier: We still want financial help.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: This reads as though they are being submitted. The schemes the Premier mentioned were submitted years and years ago.

The Premier: North-west development is another.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Then let us hear something about them. It says—

Schemes are being submitted as worthy of Commonwealth assistance.

I trust that the Premier will take the first opportunity of enlightening us, either by Press publicity or a statement in this House, to enable us to assess what, in his view and the views of his Government, should be determined

and developed under the national development proposals of the Commonwealth. It is a vital factor in our future and has an important bearing on Australia's economic position and economic development.

Australia generally has been enjoying a post-war boom consequent upon world prices and that, for the time being, has obscured many matters of vital moment to our future. The gross income from primary production has so increased, due to the almost fantastic overseas prices for some commodities, that there is, I am afraid, a tendency to cloud many important aspects of our economic set-up. High prices have more than offset rising costs and have disguised the serious shortage of labour and materials and the static nature of production. In my view the static nature of production in Australia is one of the most serious circumstances of the moment and it is not confined to any State; unfortunately it is common to every State. The inability to undertake deferred maintenance in farming and pastoral properties to maintain productive assets has made the net profit margins appear to be much larger than they really are and, with the value of production having risen so much due to price movement more than physical increases in output, we must take stock of the position in order to see what will happen if production is to remain static when prices commence to fall.

World economic circumstances have reached a post-war inflationary peak but it seems—and it is a very strange commentary to be able to make—that the only countries in the world where production per capita is increasing are countries which are receiving Marshall aid from America. The countries of Europe are showing a tremendous step-up in production, both primary and secondary; by that I mean the countries which are being deliberately bolstered up by the American nation. But, if we look at the trend within all British communities, all British Dominions and British Colonies, and in any State of Australia, we find that the trend is that of lessening production, induced by high prices and affected by high taxation. That is an aspect which I will analyse a little later. Australians must keep well in mind that movements in the main markets of the world must continue and, while we in Australia are so dependent upon the export capacity of this nation and the purchasing power of other nations, our export set-up must continue to have an important bearing on the whole Australian economy.

The startling prices brought by wool in recent years tell a very big part of the story. For the year ended the 30th June, 1950, £286,628,000 was the wool cheque of Australia. If we go back through the years, till 1943-44—six years ago—we find that the Australian wool cheque, for a greater

number of bales—3,600,000 bales—was £74,000,000. Yet, for 1949-50, with 3,590,000 bales, the wool cheque was £286,628,000. If, at present, the price of wool were anything comparable with the 1943-44 figure, Australia would not be proceeding so placidly with the air of prosperity which the Premier suggested last night. We would be beginning to see the writing on the wall, and the necessity for increased production to meet not only the overseas and internal production requirements but also the necessity to answer to the Australian and State capital debts. The sum of £80 a bale was the average price for wool for the 1949-50 year. The price per pound for greasy wool was 65½d. This is a most astounding figure compared with figures of recent years.

We must acknowledge that the position of Australian primary producers to a large degree has been stabilised by trade agreements with Great Britain for certain commodities. We must never lose sight of the fact that all the competitors in the market for wool are very many countries, including Russia, and they are all helping to stimulate the price at the moment. Should war occur, however, or should these countries fall out of the market, it does not follow that the price of wool will be kept up. It might very quickly shrink. We must remember, too, that as our population continues to increase, home consumption will also rise substantially, and a vigorous programme of expansion must be followed as a solution within Australia if the volume of exports is to be kept up. There is a very lucid and very succinct explanation relative to the whole of our exports in two of the most recent reports of the Grants Commission, particularly in the 14th and 16th reports. These will show in cold print—and one may also read between the lines—what the future of this great country will be unless these trends are checked and the possibilities because of them are guarded against.

Production figures from the latest statistical returns show a shrinkage in Australian production in spite of the necessity to be ready when prices rise. It is interesting to note that we have 1,800,000 acres less of wheat in Australia today than we had in 1938-39. We have 3,000,000 less under crop in Australia than we had in 1938-39. We have less cattle, less sheep, less pigs, than we had in 1939. We are producing less gold. In this State alone, as I will show later on in my speech by very important statistics, there is a decline in production. It is no use the Minister for Agriculture in this or any other State allowing himself to be blinded by the income from any rural industry when all the production figures are down—and I use only the statistician's figures to show that the decline is a very serious one. I wonder what the Government is doing in this connection.

I wonder what the Government has done for the gold industry in this State,—an industry which has carried it along for generations. Something must be done and done quickly. I do not wish to bore members for a second day in succession and I do not wish to quote a lot of figures, but if they will refer to the quarterly summary of Australian statistics No. 198, they will find therein the story of the trend which I regard so seriously. Side by side with this lessening production is no lessening of the State's liabilities in cash. Over £4,000,000 must be found by the Treasurer annually to pay the internal debt, and £6,000,000, I think, is the figure to meet the annual cost of the debt in London. It is a very serious matter, and one which warrants the attention and activity of Ministers if they are to meet the alarming trend which will bring us up with a round turn if there is a very quick lessening in the price of Australia's commodities.

The proper use and development of land, particularly by the encouragement of private development, and increase in production, are a great responsibility on the Government. Production from both primary and secondary industries must be inevitable if we are to plan for a future when the many responsibilities of the Government must increase commensurate with the income it will receive when prices recede. It is no use Ministers rushing hither and thither on more or less domestic problems of State unless the fundamentals of the welfare of this country are seriously regarded by them. There must be more thought put into this matter by this Government unless we are to see this trend assume alarming proportions. I can give examples, and I know the Premier can, where production is lessening because of high taxation; where people refused to plant large areas because they were growing them for Artie Fadden! There is no greater nonsense talked nor a more foolish approach to our problems, but we do find this dishonesty in some public men—misleading the people to believe that taxation can be reduced, and side by side with it a lessening of production.

Taxation must continue to be at a high level. Affected as it is by the taxable capacity of our people, taxation cannot be lessened and it certainly must be a greater burden on our people unless production increases. The third or fourth paragraph in the Speech refers to food production. His Excellency said—

A strong world demand continues for increased food production, and it is the intention of my advisers to take full advantage of the opportunity offering for the development of large areas of land hitherto unproductive.

I think this is the most important sentence in the Governor's Speech. I wonder what the Government is thinking or doing about it!

Mr. Hoar: Not very much.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I should say nothing. I would remind members of the Bill introduced by me in 1947 dealing with closer settlement. This was ruled out of order. It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that you had no alternative but to disallow it, seeing that it came from a private member. I commend to the Government, and particularly to the Minister for Lands, a very close scrutiny of that Bill, and of the case I presented in support of it. The Minister thought the Bill was worthy of future attention, but it has not received any and there does not appear to have been any action taken. In a Bill introduced many years ago, Sir James Mitchell had something to say which I think it would be very appropriate to quote on this occasion.

When the Closer Settlement Act of 1927 was introduced it was defeated. Within a year it was picked up by a different Government and the Bill went through. At the time of its introduction Sir James Mitchell said that the 1927 Act was to bring into use land at present unutilised—"Land held in particularly large areas and which does not produce all that it could reasonably produce". Sir James said—and I would like members to note these words—

We should have attempted to take all that land which is available and which is not being used. A large amount of freehold land was taken up in the early days and I am sorry to say a good deal was taken up at 1s. per acre.

Sir James Mitchell still has his finger on the pulse which conveys the very life-blood of this State—the ability to use our land in Western Australia to the best interests of this and successive generations.

The south-western part of the State is considered to be the greatest prospect in Western Australia for tremendous development in rural production, and therefore the prospect for a tremendous increase in population carried out with production. Very few Western Australians would challenge that statement; I think the Premier himself would say that the South-West Land Division of this State offers the best opportunity with its safe rainfall in the whole of Australia. There is a wonderful opportunity for better land use and better occupation.

The Minister for Lands: We are making progress with the development of our virgin Crown lands.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I shall deal with that point in a moment. We hear talk in terms of millions of people in the south-west corner of the State. Everyone present here has heard such comments. But

people must keep their feet on the ground; they must not have their heads in clouds when considering this question. Bertrand Russell, an eminent visitor to Australia, visualised 30,000,000 people in Australia in 30 years time. I quote from "The Daily News" editorial of the 24th July, 1950—

Bertrand Russell believes that Australia might have a population of 30,000,000 in 30 years time. He said this in an article on Australian development possibilities, but his optimistic forecast was subject to definite qualifications, chief of which was ability to bring our vast, arid areas under cultivation.

I say it is sheer nonsense for Bertrand Russell or anyone else to suggest that the contingency associated with Australia's population increase is the contingency of developing by cultivation our vast, arid areas.

The Chief Secretary: Did he suggest how those areas might be watered?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No. The writer went on to say—

No-one can put a limit to the possibilities of science in overcoming what appear to be insuperable obstacles. It may be that our deserts will ultimately carry more people to the square mile than they do now to that area. But that is a question for scientists to answer in the distant future.

There is still considerable opportunity for closer settlement and greatly increased development of the well-watered parts of the Commonwealth, but our immigration policy must be something more than an open invitation to the over-populated white countries.

I have from time to time addressed this Chamber on something that I admit is a hobby-horse of mine—Australia's empty spaces—but it is idle for Bertrand Russell or anyone else who visits this country for a short period to say that the areas referred to as empty, arid spaces are not destined to remain empty until long after a big population is resident in the areas not so empty of population.

If we take the potential in the well-watered parts of Australia, we must give serious consideration to the industries and activities of the people who are to occupy them. At the present rate of migration, plus the birth rate, we shall have 13.6 million people in Australia by 1970. If we consider 30 million to be the figure, it would mean on a pro-rata basis of the present figure a population of 2.2 million in Western Australia. If there were no migration, by the year 2,000, or 50 years hence, Australia would have a population of only 9.5 million. To double our population by the year 2,000, we must continue to receive 110,000 migrants a year. This has been worked out statistically and submitted to me as an accurate figure; with our

birthrate from the present population and from migrants, plus 110,000 migrants a year, it will take until the year 2,000 to double our present figure.

Therefore, if we are to have 30 million within 30 years, no matter how attractive our empty spaces may appear to those who look only at the map and try to fit Great Britain and Ireland into those spaces so many times, there is very great need to study closely the natural attributes of the land possible of occupation and consider how dense the population might be in those areas suitable for much more population. If we think in terms of 2.2 million for this State, which surely is not outside the bounds of possibility in the lifetime, perhaps not of the Premier or the Minister for Lands, but may be for the member for Cottesloe or the member for Canning, let us analyse where that population is to be.

On the present set-up we should expect to have a million people in the city. If that is to occur within 30 years, there will be a headache for the person who might happen to be the Lord Mayor in catering for that number. Our larger towns, if built up, would aggregate another half million, and we would still have three-quarters of a million to be distributed through the country areas. Can the Premier, or can the Minister for Lands within the policy of using Crown lands mentioned by him, see any possibility at all with present preparations of putting three-quarters of a million people in our country areas?

We have to remember also that, permeating the minds of Australian people, quite properly, is the idea that our standard of living is the basic thing to preserve. When we contemplate the problems associated with this subject, we have to remember that if our standard of living is to be sacrosanct and kept comparable to its present levels, we must consider the introducing of people who will maintain that standard and be capable of producing in some industry or other sufficient to maintain that standard. A lower standard of living may be forced upon us unless we develop our lands on sound and unselfish lines in our time. We must remember, too, that if the world's economic urge is stronger than the impulse of Australia to maintain its standard of living and way of life, we shall not have many idle lands in good rainfall areas, but this generation must do something towards using them in a better manner than they are being used at present.

In the South-West Land Division, the only Crown areas left undeveloped and suited to agriculture in the main are the forestry areas and the light lands. I say we should jealously guard our forest areas and not encroach upon them at all if we can possibly avoid it. But if the population potential of the South-West Land Division is millions of people, clearly such

millions cannot be sustained from the production of areas now held by the Crown. Will the Minister for Lands deny that? I shall analyse that statement.

It would mean not hundreds or thousands but tens of thousands of farms—more settlers and more farmers in every South-West constituency. It is of no use idly mouthing words that we can place millions of people in the South-West Land Division. If members consider the analysis, they will get some conception of the difficulties and of the action that must be taken if we are to begin to plan for millions in this State. So far as Crown lands are concerned, they simply do not exist.

The experience with soldier settlement, following the two world wars and also under the group settlement scheme, showed that the best land remaining in Crown ownership was taken over for those schemes and the experience since 1945 is contained in the report given by the Minister for Lands to the R.S.L. Conference, namely, that to provide for the demands of potential soldier settlers, 538 properties have had to be repurchased from private owners involving a cost of nearly £3,000,000. Thus nearly £3,000,000 worth of land has been bought back by the Crown and the cost overall is more than £4,000,000 so far, is it not? Over £4,000,000 has been spent by the Crown in the repurchasing of land from private ownership to prepare for the post-war land settlement scheme!

There is also this important point that since 1945 only 70 farmers have been placed on Crown land. With all the resources at the command of the Minister for Lands, it has not been possible for him or his officers to locate in the abandoned areas handed back to the Rural and Industries Bank the land that was required. The total in the last five years has been 70 farmers settled on Crown land. Is not that figure almost alarming? The 538 properties that the Minister has had to purchase would not have been bought had Crown land been available, and the Minister is unfortunately in the position of having to look at the prospects of every block submitted for sale between one person and another in case it might be suitable to accommodate one or two additional servicemen.

The Minister for Lands: We have not had the machinery until recently to develop Crown lands.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Will the Minister tell the House where those Crown lands are?

The Minister for Lands: We have a fair slice down at the Frankland River.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Minister will not mislead himself by talking in terms of hundreds or thousands of settlers. Let him look at the map and the area contained in the electorate of Vasse. We know that it is possible to place dozens

of settlers on some of those rivers, but we are talking in terms of the future of this great country—in terms of thousands and tens of thousands.

The Minister for Lands: The Government is not talking in that way.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: But the Government must do so.

The Minister for Lands: I agree with you there.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Government must wake up and pay attention to the future. There is no denying the fact that most and the best of our land has passed into private ownership at a very small return to the Crown—shillings per acre. So we have reached this incongruous stage that to satisfy the population of the City of Perth milk is being transported a distance of 150 miles—this to maintain a fresh milk supply for the city's present population. There are shortages of most garden crops, including potatoes and onions, and there is a tremendous shortage of meat, and shortages will spread to other commodities unless a conscious effort is made to increase production. The actions of the Potato Board and other restrictive bodies have gone haywire, in the restriction of planting and control of production. Will the Premier agree with that statement?

The Premier: I will tell the hon. member something about it later on.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Minister for Lands, by interjection, said that this Government is not doing anything about the distant future, but I say the Government must do something about it.

The Minister for Lands: I did not say that.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The interjection will be shown clearly in "Hansard."

The Minister for Lands: I said that at present we are not talking in thousands.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is not a question of 580 settlers being provided with farms in five years, but of whether Western Australia and its Government are going to face up to the demands of our present and future population, and our export needs and internal requirements. If that is not to be done we might just as well surrender now and say that it is foolish to talk of Western Australia ever supporting 1,000,000 people. Unless we face the facts and insist on a policy of increased production we will become a race of smug and self-satisfied people and will quickly be over-run by others, not of our standards or way of life, who will appreciate the heritage that has passed from the Crown to the people but is not being appreciated now. We find production falling because of the deliberate action of farmers and pastoralists.

Mr. Ackland: Does not the hon. member realise that production is falling because producers will not work seven days a week while the industrialists work only five days?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is a very poor excuse. Dairy herds are being deliberately reduced.

Mr. Ackland: Of course the primary producers will not work seven days a week while others in the community are working only five days. We will not work seven days a week while your people work far shorter hours.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There is no need to talk about my people. I may talk about yours, in a moment. Changing dairy herds into beef producers will not help the position, and it is being done for profit motives. Beef bulls have been put into the dairy herds by the dozen, lately. The Minister for Lands knows that to be true and the Premier knows of instances where people have deliberately reduced their herds. Never mind the causes! Let us look at the question impartially for a moment. The excuse of high taxation is only one factor that is putting people off the rails in this vital matter that will bring our country down unless we face up to it.

Unless the Government, with the assistance of the Opposition—we are anxious to assist if we are able to do so—does something to bring about a better land-use policy in this State, all the talk about carrying millions of people in the south-west corner of Western Australia is just idle chatter. We must give consideration to the land that has passed into private ownership, and must ask ourselves whether the areas in the certain rainfall portions of the Great Southern and South-West are being effectively used in the interests of the nation.

Mr. Marshall: Now they are beginning to squirm.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is what we must ask ourselves, as suitable Crown land is not available. Are the tens of thousands of acres held by some groups of land-owners being fully utilised? Are they doing their duty to the State? Are there not tremendous areas, adjacent to roads, railways and towns, carrying only a few head of stock under one ownership, where in reality they could carry many families? That cannot be denied. If Western Australia is to continue to be an exporting State and if we are not simply to live by taking in each other's washing and selling things, consumable and otherwise, to ourselves, we must have regard to the facts with which we are faced. I am not saying this from a partisan attitude such as that of the member for Moore, but I am trying to analyse the position and the fundamentals that are creating it.

I agree that the farmers cannot be expected to work 100 hours a week unless there is some compensation or inducement for them to do so, but whatever the contributory causes, whether labour or anything else, it is necessary that we analyse and face up to them instead of blaming one group or section of the people for what is occurring. We must examine the evil that exists and take whatever remedial steps are necessary, no matter how unpleasant they may be. I was interested in a statement made by the Premier to some dissatisfied milk producers. He is reported to have said that the Government is alarmed at the shortages of primary production, and that the problem to be faced was not so much one relating to export products as that of providing enough food for the increasing population of the State, particularly with regard to dairy products. I do not agree with that at all. That would be a short-sighted point of view—to worry only about internal requirements. The Premier said our problem is not one relating to export products, but in my view that is sheer nonsense. That trend would, within 20 years, reduce us to the position of a non-exporting State.

The Premier: I said that the Government was greatly concerned about the reduction in production, with regard to both our internal and export requirements, and the future of exports.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is exactly opposite to what "The West Australian" reporter stated the Premier had said.

Mr. Marshall: And that reporter never lies.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I quoted the exact words, and they will be submitted to "Hansard," as are all my documentary references.

The Premier: Surely the hon. member does not think I am not concerned about exports?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There was no correction of that statement, as it appeared in the Press.

The Premier: I was referring to the shortage of dairy products, in particular. There is not a shortage of wool, for instance.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We are short of meat, potatoes and onions. I am glad to hear that the Premier is concerned about maintaining our export position, because unless he is so concerned it would appear that he is adopting the haywire ideas of the production control boards, whose objective is to keep high prices through restriction of production. Unfortunately those boards have far too much power to make decisions, and too much authority over the issuing of licenses and the like is vested in them.

The Premier: I do not wish to encourage them to restrict production.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I hope the Premier gets rid of those boards. We are heading for a lot of trouble unless we encourage production for export to the maximum.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No matter what is our potential capacity for the production of exportable goods, we will always be in the position of having to import tea, coffee, sugar, probably cotton and certainly petrol, together with machinery, rubber products and fertilisers, and we must export in order to pay for those commodities. They can be paid for only by our selling goods to someone outside our State. It is therefore essential to realise that any proposal to lessen production will have a vital effect on the well-being of the State. Unfortunately far too many people have the idea that they will not increase production because if they do so they will have to pay Ben Chifley or Artie Fadden more. That has been said to the Premier a hundred times, if it has been said once, and it shows an unfortunate mental state on the part of those holding that view. They are favoured and fortunate people who can make such a decision. They do not belong to this side of the House. The idea is erroneous and can lead to a national calamity.

The Premier: I think that attitude can be found in many sections of the community.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, but unfortunately we do find it among the people who have not put the rams with the flock and have changed from dairying to beef production, or who have left the 500-acre paddock out of production deliberately.

The Premier: We have the same thing occurring with regard to overtime.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Of course, but not to such a vital extent. This trend, in the case of those responsible for the production of exportable commodities, will have a most serious effect unless it is checked.

Mr. Ackland: Has the hon. member heard of the shortage of materials?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I have heard of that. It is not my point to raise one section of the community against another. That I will leave to other members. My purpose is to face this national problem, which is keeping thoughtful people awake at nights. If we are to think in terms of continuing to increase our population—that is what we are thinking—we must envisage a continuous inflow of people who are to become Australians, but it is not sufficient for them just to come here and sell washing machines or radios, or to take charge of delicatessens or do each other's washing. It is not enough that retailers and non-producers should make

a profit of 100 per cent. in selling refrigerators—and that is what is happening. Refrigerators are being sold in Australia today and are being bought by the householder at a price 100 per cent. above that ex Australian factories. That is true, but is it fair? It is certainly not fair.

We hear talk about the 40-hour week being a burden, but I point out that a common motorcar jack, which can be bought in Hay-street today at £8 10s., costs £4 5s. ex factory in Adelaide or Melbourne. Is that fair? But that is what is happening. Unless we are prepared not to cavil and carp about the 40-hour week and about somebody else not producing something commensurate with the labour for which he is paid, let us have a look at those who do not contribute anything of value but who live on others who do. We must remember that to keep those 2,000,000 people in Western Australia—and I will use the figures of an eminent scientist in this State—we will need 200,000 agriculturists. At the moment, we have approximately 50,000. We will need 500,000 more dairy cattle and 4,000,000 more sheep.

A gentleman named Teakle, who belonged to this State, gave an extremely valuable address to the University in answer to one by Professor Currie on using Tennessee Valley methods and applying them to Western Australia. Of course, it is difficult to begin comparing incomparables. We must remember that the Tennessee Valley had 2,000,000 people within its precincts before the scheme started. However, in this article which I hold, the subject of an address by L. J. Teakle, he, in conjunction with other prominent scientists, went into the requirements necessary to feed 2,000,000 people on our standard.

I have taken a very close look at some of these figures from time to time and, in my opinion, they cannot be faulted. He says very definitely that to keep a population of 2,000,000 within this State and maintain our export position we require 200,000 agriculturists. So, in a kindly way, I say to the Minister for Lands that he can now see what I am driving at. It is not a question of a farm or two. The matter of prime importance to be considered by the Government is a better land use without the large land resumptions being made at the moment.

I would like to quote some comment from a book published this year entitled "Land Utilization in Australia." This copy, autographed by the authors, was sent to me and I am prepared to lend it to anybody who is interested, because in it they will get the basis of the problem and also the commencement of its solution. In the introduction to the second edition of this book these words appear—

Australia is as large an area as the United States of America, and this very size acts as a constant depressant of scientific investigation. Popular opinion will persist in the belief that large areas mean proportionately large resources. On the other hand, the continent is sparsely populated, and its people are, in general, so preoccupied with the tasks in hand that they have no time to be well-informed in regard to either the productive capacity or the unused resources of the continent on which they live. This lack of precise information with respect to factors that are vital to land utilisation is very striking; but it is a direct outcome, first, of the failure by the Australian community to set aside an adequate supply of trained research workers, and, secondly, of the longstanding jealousy between Commonwealth and State governments. Under these circumstances, ill-founded opinions on development are persistent and pervasive. Arm-chair theorists with ideas about either "vast potentialities" or "dead hearts" are legion. There is a school which believes that, somehow or other, the continent will ultimately support 100,000,000 people. There is another school which says that twice the present population will be the optimum density. The number of people who possess a rational valuation of the relative difficulty of the obstacles in the way of land settlement is small. Still fewer are the people who realise that the standard of living at which expansion of settlement is to become possible is the real heart of the problem.

The Premier: Who is the author?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Professors S. M. Wadham and G. L. Wood. Those words give us a basis for an outline of this problem which I am humbly endeavouring to place before this Chamber. In elaborating those words I say that a country such as ours, of good climate, certain rainfall and soil fertility, where amenities are being provided by all taxpayers, there is an extremely great responsibility on Governments to insist on better land use. It does not matter if it is achieved by more employment on farms; it does not matter if subdivision, in the main, is not ideal, but it does matter that the maximum population is retained in production of the commodity which we so sorely need to sustain our exports. All of us who have moved about in the countries near to the north, Java particularly, have seen the thickly populated areas where mountain slopes have been terraced and made productive by the driving force of prospective starvation.

The Minister for Lands: One will see that in the south of France and in many other countries.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, in many other countries. In that part of Malaya in which the member for Murchison lived for a time, the mountain-sides are terraced to sustain a population, and that is done because of the urge to avoid the prospect of having no food at all. In this country, certainly, prospective starvation does not appear to be imminent, but unless we do something to arrest the decline, we are not only to experience meagre supplies of milk, potatoes and onions seasonally, but we are going to find ourselves again importers of many other commodities. That is extremely sad to contemplate. I am quite certain that, with better land use and proper development, with the Government having a look at the Acts of Parliament which pretend to promote closer settlement, together with the Closer Settlement Act itself, which cannot be implemented, it could be avoided. I would like to see that Act implemented, and unless we face that we are going to leave the destiny of the country, which has passed from Crown ownership, in the hands of the selfish few.

Recently, and from time to time, we have had visiting English authorities making arrangements with the Commonwealth of Australia to be the big beef producer for Britain. Headlines have appeared in newspapers recently showing that those arrangements are in train. A scheme for roads, which will not produce many ounces more beef, is proposed. I would like to hear the member for Kimberley on the question of the proposals to spend millions of pounds on roads in the Kimberleys, but not spending anything to use the land to better advantage by the provision of fences and water supplies. However, it is a challenge to Australia when the United Kingdom accepts the promise that Australia is to be the big beef producer for Britain. Australia has a guaranteed market in Great Britain for the next 15 years for all her beef, and not at £40 a head. Not at the prices received for the stock when landed in Fremantle; not at the price obtained in the irrigated areas and the non-irrigated areas of the Murray electorate!

The Premier: There are not too many getting £40 per head.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Quite a number are getting between £30 and £40, are they not? I know of a case where a pastoralist received a cheque for one draft of bullocks amounting to £23,000. At this stage, our problem is to do something in a thoughtful manner, in an active manner, to keep this promise to the United Kingdom for Australia to be the big beef producer. In the home market, we have a considerable deficiency of many of our own products. But there is a considerable deficiency, too, in the diet of people in this country. If members want to read something of interest—I think the Minister for Health will have already read it—the final report of the Nutritional Council of this

country is recommended because it is well worth having a look at. It will be found that the larger families today are forced to eat less fruit and vegetables and less butter than is desirable. It is found that fruit is almost out of reach because of the cost, and the final report of that council sums up all that I have been saying, which is that we must watch not only the position in regard to our exports but also that relating to our internal needs.

Side by side with secondary industry development, I put it to this House that agricultural expansion, to meet the internal needs and predominantly increasing exports, which we must maintain, will force this policy of better land use to which I have been referring. The way to avoid that and a great drive to the cities is not to use the method adopted by large landholders but to face the problems which are very real and urgent. I stress the necessity and the urgency of this Government's collaborating with us if it wishes or, if it agrees that all the knowledge on this subject is not over on the Government side of the House and for us to assist, if possible, to ensure that the prospects of these millions, the prospect for us to maintain our standard of living in this community without increasing population are not lost sight of in any particular.

The Premier: I am all out for collaboration.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That will mean a change of heart and front in some sections of government.

The Minister for Lands: On both sides.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Maybe. I change to my next subject. I wish to deal at some length with matters affecting the North-West of this State.

Mr. Marshall: Has it been discovered?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I might tell the hon. member who discovered it recently. Do not provoke me on that point or I will be quite rude.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Do not tell me that the Premier discovered it recently!

Mr. Marshall: He viewed it through the porthole of a ship, for a change!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is my belief that perhaps not more than 10 per cent. of Western Australians, when they look at the map of this State, raise their eyes above Geraldton.

Mr. Marshall: The Darling Range stops most of them.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Some school teachers as well! The South-West Land Division and all it contains is Western Australia to the vast majority of Western Australians. The North, the North-West and the East are mythical places to some members of the Government. Election times have provided some Government members with opportunities to go further north than Northampton, but that is not very often.

One political party in recent years put out an eight-point—it might have been a 28-point—plan for the development of the North-West, but nothing was done. The author of that document has never been there. The expounder of that plan has never been further north than Northampton, but periodically—I could almost say annually—some people discover the North-West, usually by means of a very comfortable trip on a State ship. I notice that Mr. Hunt, the former president of the R.S.L., recently discovered it. He went north and travelled as far as the Fitzroy River. He was astounded at the lovely garden run by Arthur Gardener and he wrote to the R.S.L. stating that it was a real oasis, one of the best vegetable gardens he had ever seen, even compared with those at Osborne Park.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: Osborne Park gardens are far below the Fitzroy River garden.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Mr. Hunt so much impressed the members of the R.S.L. that a committee was appointed to explore the possibilities of setting up a town at Fitzroy Crossing for the accommodation of 5,000 people.

The Minister for Lands: That is progress!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The first move of the committee was a request to the Premier that he would provide the R.S.L. with a copy of the report on the Ord River Scheme. Of course, the Ord River is only as far from Fitzroy Crossing as Albany is from Perth, but that is by the way. The committee asked the Premier to renew his request to the Commonwealth Government to release the Dundas report on the northern areas of this State. Among other suggestions advanced was that Great Britain should be induced to send migrants to Fitzroy Crossing. Mr. Hunt went up there at a very pleasant time of the year and he was pleased with what he saw at Jubilee. I say very clearly that Mr. Hunt and many other people have no knowledge of the North; they know nothing about the State's rainfall and its climatology. They visit the northern areas only during the pleasant days of winter. They never ponder over other aspects, otherwise Mr. Hunt would not make such a foolish statement as he did.

As for the Dundas report, I have seen it. The Premier has seen it. It is time that the people of the North-West were told that the Dundas report is not something that they would be pleased to peruse. It contains parts that they will not like when they see them, because Mr. Dundas contracted himself out of every decent thing he said about the North. I ask the Premier whether he will make available some of that information.

The Premier: I do not know that I could disclose it, seeing that it was given to us as highly confidential.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I think it is time that it ceased to be in the realm of the mythical. I say emphatically that the Dundas report will not give the people of the North-West the solace they expect from it. I hope that if the Premier does agree to the suggestion for 5,000 people to be settled in a town at Fitzroy Crossing, as the R.S.L. desires, we shall know something about it. Perhaps it is that the proposal will be to buy Jubilee. Perhaps the Government will take that station over, or possibly Lulugui or Liveringa.

The Premier: If we did, it would be at a just price.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is also interesting to recollect that a few years ago a Lord Mayor of Perth re-discovered the North-West. He went north and had a lovely trip. He was as immaculate as ever at each port he visited, and everywhere he was received by the people with the respect to which he was justly entitled. He returned with his knowledge revived that there were such places to be seen north of Geraldton. I have no doubt, however, that in these days when people look at the map of Western Australia their eyes are focussed on the part from Geraldton southwards. It is time something was done in the schools with respect to this matter. Will any member deny the statement I have deliberately made, that possibly 90 per cent. of the people of Western Australia when they glance at the map of the State look only at the South-West Land Division?

Mr. Rodoreda: Did you say 95 per cent. of the members of the Government?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I included them in my estimate. It is interesting to observe that in the portion of the North-West that lies north of the 26th parallel, the part occupied by pastoralists comprises about 178,000 square miles, but the part unoccupied, except for a few nomadic natives, consists of 206,000 square miles. There is another area approaching 200,000 square miles within the pastoral area that is unoccupied. In the North-West, north of the Murchison River, there are twelve road districts which are in the northern and north-western statistical divisions. That vast area is represented by three members in the Legislative Assembly. In that area there are 10,000 miles of roads apart from tracks and internal roads on stations, which would represent another 30,000 or 50,000 miles. Of that length of roads only 370 miles have a constructed surface, while 2,000 miles consist of formation, either metal or treated. The 370 miles of road that have a constructed surface are not bituminised. In that vast area of such tremendous distances it is very difficult today to get more than a meagre portion of money spent on our roads compared with the revenue earned because of the vastness of that part of the State.

Millions of pounds have been brought to Western Australia by way of petrol tax because of the North-West, Eastern Goldfields and northern areas. At least £7,500,000 has been brought to Western Australia because of the formula governing the distribution of the petrol tax, and that has been mainly because of the vastness of the North. The Government Statistician and Economist looked through these figures for me and I find that of the £17,500,000 collected last year by the Commonwealth petrol tax, £7,000,000 of which is distributed between the States, Western Australia obtained £1,363,000 for the construction of roads. The Causeway, for instance, is not being built from Loan moneys. That amount of £7,500,000 has come to this State because of the imposition of the petrol tax, and the amount has been due largely to the North. Yet in that part of the State not £1,000,000 has been spent on the construction of roads!

I have gone to the trouble of taking out figures that reflect the earnings of each statistical division on the basis of the 3/5th area, 2/5th population formula. These clearly show that the Eastern and Northern Goldfields, the North-West and the North bring to this State more than 50 per cent. of the funds paid to the State because of the vastness of their areas and the paucity of the population there. As I mentioned in passing to the Minister for Works yesterday, one of the most difficult tasks he will have in the near future will be to obtain from the Commonwealth an assurance of the continuation of the payment of a just contribution to this State from the petrol tax. The formula has gone by the board. The agreement that embodied the formula is ended because the Act of Parliament governing the position expires in September. He has a responsibility to see that not only is the leeway in expenditure in the North-West made up but that adequate expenditure is provided for elsewhere. It is easy to get money for roads in Bruce Rock or Ravensthorpe or in the metropolitan area—or where pressure politics are resorted to.

The Premier: It is not so easy.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I ask the member for Moore whether he knows anything about the road from Northampton to Carnarvon.

Mr. Ackland: I do.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Then the hon. member will readily agree that it is in a very serious condition. I was partly responsible for the construction of that road when I was Minister for the North-West. I was insistent upon the expenditure of that money, yet that road today is allowed to crumble into decay. I would do nothing to prejudice the efforts of the Government in its advocacy of just dues from the petrol tax, but I ask the Minister for

Works seriously to contemplate the argument that will be put up by the closely populated States against Western Australia, with its paucity of population, getting anything comparable to the sums they will receive. He will have to shoulder a very serious burden in arguing the matter from that angle.

It was the late Alec. McCallum who was responsible for the adoption of the formula and it will be the Minister's responsibility to fight against the Commonwealth Government paying a fixed sum—and that is what I am afraid of—from the petrol tax, which sum in a few years' time will certainly not meet the demand that will be made upon the fund for the construction of roads. I believe that under £1,000,000 has been spent in an area that was responsible for the payment to the State of £7,500,000. In the North-West in an area comprising two-thirds of the State, not £100,000 has been spent on roads in any full year. That is a fact. To touch upon the population angle, in that vast area of 527,000 square miles, which is larger than Victoria and New South Wales combined, there are at present 7,500 white people of all ages but the production figures from that part of the State are staggering. From the Kimberleys to the Murchison, 60,000 bales of wool, worth over £5,000,000, were produced last year. Individual stations have wool cheques of about £90,000 and one station changed hands fairly recently for £90,000.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In this vast area of the North-West of 527,000 square miles, only an area of 600 acres is under cultivation. There are eight principal ports, the smallest with but a handful of people, the largest with a little over a thousand people. Each port has its harbour and jetty problem. Some ports are served by jetties that cost hundreds of thousands of pounds although they cater for very small communities. The tidal range, which varies from a few feet in the southern-most of those ports, has a rise and fall of 35 feet in the far north which, of course, creates tremendous problems in relation to jetties, shipping, the type of ship to be constructed and the timetables for ships. All these small communities have to be served and, as I remarked, jetties costing hundreds of thousands of pounds have had to be installed to serve those small communities.

In addition to the jetties, Governments have had to provide harbour facilities, water supplies, light and power, hospitals, schools, doctors, teachers, roads and other public services for mere handfuls of people in many places. We badly need many more homes, schools and hospitals. We have received very little in the last few years, but I do not wish to introduce anything seriously aggressive or critical

though I could be very critical on that subject. The local governing bodies do a great job over very extensive territories. Some of them have more than 1,600 miles of road within their jurisdiction. The farthest port of all is over 2,000 miles from Fremantle. I should like that fact to be considered by those people who regard the south-west corner of the State as Western Australia.

As to the pastoral industry, it is interesting to note that it has not encroached on any new areas in the last 60 years; on the other hand, there has been some contraction and abandonment. There are fewer cattle in the North-West now as compared with the number in 1910. This gives cause for very grave concern. In the northern division which includes the Kimberleys the number of sheep in 1910 was 852,601 and it has declined to 592,514, according to the latest statistics. The number of cattle in the Kimberleys has declined from 578,871 forty years ago to 500,835 today. The lowest figures within that period were recorded in both cases in the year 1936, when the number of cattle declined to 481,322.

The Minister for Works: Is it for the same reason that numbers are short in the South?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No; I will give the reasons presently. In the North cattle die of starvation in areas where there is plenty of feed. In the North-Western division—that is, the area from the Murchison to Port Hedland—there were 1,874,829 sheep in 1910 and the number in 1949 was 1,640,649. The number of cattle in that division in 1910 was 91,223 and today it is 19,769.

The Premier: I think it was about 1910 when tick fever broke out in the West Kimberleys.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, it was much later than that—in the twenties—and in 1923-24 pleuro occurred. That is reflected in the lower number of cattle in the Kimberleys in the middle period. The total sheep in the northern and north-western Divisions has declined from 2,727,430 in 1910 to 2,233,163 today and cattle from 670,094 to 520,604. This very serious decline is due to a large extent to the over-use and abuse of areas. Water exists with feed in profusion only a few miles distant, but too far away for cattle to walk, and late in the year cows and calves die in thousands because they are unable to reach the feed. In 1879 Alexander Forrest first travelled the Kimberleys from Derby to Fitzroy Crossing and Julius Brockman took sheep there in the same year. It is interesting to note that in the year 1881, J. and W. McLarty took sheep from Pinjarra to a property known as Lulugui.

In the cattle areas, open range conditions still prevail and hundreds and thousands of scrub bulls wander at will. In very few places are cattle raised under any form of animal husbandry; there are very few paddocks to permit of segregation and even now there is not a large number of man-made water points in the whole of that vast area. Excepting the area that has been denuded of its natural growth and where permanent water exists, the country, so far as development is concerned, is very little different from what it was 70 years ago. Until more watering places are provided and more subdivision takes place, this deterioration must continue. The erosion occurring on certain properties held by large interests can be seen. Cattle pads that existed as pads in my time extending a few miles from feed to water are now deeply washed-out gullies.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: The Premier as a private member supported the extension of the pastoral tenures without providing any protective measures.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The figures I have quoted form a story of the decline in that vast area and of the despoiling of it by indiscriminate stocking, in a large number of cases, by very large interests. I am very sorry to know that the large interests are getting a greater grip of it. The Durack family recently sold out to a very large British concern, which means that there is an area from Fitzroy Crossing through to Carlton near Wyndham back through Victoria River Downs to Wave Hill primarily held by one or two large interests. That is something to which serious consideration must be given. The Port Hedland, Roebourne and Gascoyne areas of lower rainfall are settled with sheep. I am not going to weary members with the story of sheep, which is vigorously told in the 1940 report of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. Fyfe. At that time the Government of the day had to take very quick action to keep on their properties smaller holders with serious indebtedness.

With regard to fisheries wealth and pearling, it is very important to note that the ocean to the North abounds in marine wealth. Pearling sustained 400 boats when it was at its peak and pearling concerns were carried on at Onslow, Port Hedland and Broome. Pearling has produced over £6,000,000 in the North-West and over £1,000,000 in pearls from the inception of the industry. The annual export in the heyday of the industry was capable of maintaining a population of 3,000 people in one centre and did so for many years. The year 1920 was the best, with £265,000 for pearl shell and £84,000 for pearls. Today—the member for Kimberley would know more about this than I—I would say that under a score of boats operate in the fishing industry associated with pearling.

We have there a new industry in whaling—new yet old, for it is a long time since the Point Cloates venture was started. New companies, including the Australian Government's interest, are beginning to show the immensity of the whaling wealth in our North-West waters, and it is anticipated that one Commonwealth station at present being completed will return over £1,000,000 a year in Australian currency from 1951 onwards.

I would like to elaborate a little on agriculture in the North. During the last 25 years, which is slightly less than the period in which I have been associated with the North, many crops have been tried, including cotton, rice, sugar cane, and various grains, pasture crops and tropical fruits. It is over 25 years since high quality cotton was marketed from the North-West. Only one agricultural industry has survived and this industry, within 600 miles of Perth, maintains 150 families where, under 20 years ago, 10 or 20 sheep used to graze. The founding of a tropical fruit industry in an arid country is one of the miracles of agriculture. The founding of that industry reflects very great credit on a few people for their tenacity and their belief that something of that kind could be done.

Mr. Marshall: What about the man who initiated it?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That industry got no money from private banks or companies. They would not take the risk. No bank in Carnarvon advanced 1s. until the industry became very prosperous, and only 20 years ago the Department of Agriculture brought the 500 plants from Queensland to commence the industry in its present—which is really its second—stage.

Mining has had its rises and falls in the North-West, since the first discovery of gold at Hall's Creek in the eighties. The North-West is fabulously rich in minerals—there is no other word for it. There is more than £500,000,000 worth of asbestos located and measured in the Hamersley Ranges. Miles and Foxall, our own geologists, in Bulletin 100 of the Geological Survey of Western Australia, say that the resources in asbestos have a definite possibility of eclipsing the gold production of Western Australia of £250,000,000. They further say that Roebourne must eventually be one of the principal asbestos distributing cities in the world. That is to be found in the Geological Survey Bulletin at page 49. I will not weary members by reading the conclusions of these men, but they are very definite; and in their final conclusion they say that Roebourne is destined to be one of the principal asbestos distributing centres in the world.

Further north we have the greatest iron-ore deposit in the southern hemisphere. There is more silver, lead and copper—if it

were developed and could be made accessible by roads—than would be necessary to pay our national debt. The minerals, which exist in large quantities, include gold and mica. Our supplies of mica in the war years came from Yinnietharra station in the Gascoyne. The rare minerals of beryl and tantalite and many other valuable minerals are found through the North; and in the Kimberleys coal is known to exist. I would say, after speaking to geologists in the Exmouth Gulf area, that it is their view that the finding of oil is more than a prospect. The prospect is better than anywhere else in Australia.

The Chief Secretary: Where are the coal deposits located?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In the Kimberleys—the Kimberley Downs and Leopold Ranges. The founding of towns in recent years, such as Wittenoom and Cockatoo Island, are modern achievements but in my view they are only a pointer to what will be, not what might be. The North and the North-West, both in area and latent wealth, have more capacity to sustain a population than many areas in different parts of the world that are at present carrying nations.

We must not lose sight of the fact that in spite of that wealth, which is real and tangible, the North is a problem country. That cannot be denied. But it is an area which should be concentrated on by State as well as national Governments to ensure that we, who for the time being are the possessors of it, do the best we can with it. Some of its problems include rainfall vagaries, remoteness from large centres of population, climatic disabilities, the absence of opportunities for families, difficulties associated with education and medical attention and the absence of suitable housing and, in addition, disabilities which include the very vital domestic ones associated with remoteness from civilisation and other established industries.

In further reference to the cattle industry, I would point out that the problems there are visible in this State after 70 years of pastoral settlement. Experience has shown that the hazards due to drought and cyclones in the sheep areas are indeed great. In the cattle areas, the holders of leases—not owners but merely leaseholders—have used every resource provided by Nature, without being in a position—in some cases and in other cases being unwilling—to improve on what Nature has done in order better to use that country. Cattle have starved to death in understocked areas because they would not leave waterholes at the beginning of the summer season, and cows in calf die in hundreds annually only a few miles from feed. It is wrong to continue to be complacent and look idly on while that country works out its own destiny.

The Premier: The Commonwealth Government is assisting in the Northern Territory in the matter of water supplies.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I know the Premier has it in mind to provide money for watering points on privately-owned properties, and that is a much more important step than the providing of millions for roads. That should be the second step. The spending of £6,000,000 under the Commonwealth project, to provide beef for Britain, is putting the cart before the horse, as the member for Kimberley outlined to this House last session, but there is a striking need for attention to be given to the provisions of the Land Act, which allow evasion by many people of essential conditions, and which have no insistence upon responsibilities in stocking correctly. I hope the Government will shortly give attention to that angle. There will be found in an issue of "The Western Mail," of the year 1924 when I was an officer in the service of this State, an article criticising the misuse of that country. That article could be repeated word for word today and still express the truth, as it did then, about the abuse of that country by those privileged to lease it, who regard it not as a heritage for the future but as something out of which to make a profit during their own lifetime.

The very remoteness of the North has brought about a remoteness of control and interest on the part of Governments and the people who should support Governments in doing a lot for that area. The North-West recently had a visit from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. For years, as the Premier knows, I have endeavoured to bring about such a visit. I am sure the reactions of members of that Commission were very favourable. In the past they have made allowances in the State grants for difficulties of administration associated with the North-West. I would think that now there would be no reasonable limit to the amount of money that the Grants Commission would assist in making available to this State under Section 96 of the Constitution, if the Government put forward plans for the betterment of the North.

The Premier: You issued a warning last night about the Grants Commission.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I did, and I do not alter my attitude in that regard, but I say that while the present Grants Commission exists it will give to the Premier every encouragement and opportunity—as must the Commonwealth Government also—to overcome these problems. Perhaps the greatest disability of the North at present is the remoteness of administration. That should be given immediate consideration by the Government. We have some splendid public officers resident in the North, but they have no authority to make decisions. There are many officers, such as engineers and geologists, who visit the North periodically, but they also have no power to make decisions. I think it is essential to set up some organisation comparable with

the North-West Department which had its headquarters in Broome many years ago. Such an organisation would have power to make decisions and would overcome the feeling of frustration that now exists. It would provide officers capable not only of making decisions subject only to the Treasurer but also of laying down administratively progressive plans, on the spot, for the development of the North. With those officers would be associated the appropriate resident engineers and geologists. The cost of all this would be inconsiderable compared with the returns that it would bring to the nation.

The Premier: Would you term it a directorate for the North?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: A rose by any other name would smell as sweet; It does not matter what it is called. The North-West Department was under a Commissioner for the North-West. I think a great stimulus could be given by the Government in reviving such a decentralised administration, and I am sure that my colleagues who represent the North, both here and in another place, would agree with every opinion I hold in this connection. The North needs officers capable of and empowered to make decisions on the spot. At present, a scheme of the magnitude even of the Ord River project, involving perhaps £10,000,000, is pored over in Perth by competent engineers and discussed from a distance of 2,000 miles, with the result that nothing happens. There is no-one on the spot to keep the thing going, to have the matter properly examined, and so on. The officers concerned in Perth are far too busy and pre-occupied with local problems. That is the position with regard to both Governments and individuals. They cannot be concerned sufficiently with matters 2,000 miles away.

If the parsimonious attitude of Governments towards the North were completely changed, we would, within a short space of time, justify our claim to the North. In that way there would be established many towns of perhaps a thousand people, such as that at Wittenoom Gorge, developing other minerals, together with a greater pastoral population and ancillary agricultural development. I will touch on no personal note, but, when the Government I led was defeated, I had in mind, because of the background I have in connection with the North, the setting up of such an organisation as I have mentioned. Had that been done, I am sure that in the next 10 years we would have determined the fate of the North and shown the world that we were in earnest about its development and worthy of holding it. I am sure there are many men, sufficiently earnest in public and national affairs, who would give the best years of their lives in an attempt to carry forward the vast project of developing our North-West.

I will now leave that subject and deal with the question of our forest wealth which, as members know, has always been of great interest to me. I was struck by the contribution made by our Conservator of Forests in a recent copy of "The Western Mail" of the 22nd September, 1949. Mr. Stoaate, in this contribution entitled "Our Heritage The Forest" said that a majority of the people have given little thought to the forest resource situation and its present needs. He went on to say—

The amount of available and usable timber supplies will markedly influence the future development and economy of Australia. Australia's timber supplies are inadequate for her needs in times of peace. In war the seriousness is obvious. Some countries with inadequate supplies of timber for their own full requirements export timber to other countries in exchange for much needed machinery, electrical equipment and so forth. Such temporary trading causes not only disorganisation of existing business in any country, but creates in the public mind a false impression of sufficiency in timber supplies.

He also said—

The need and value of a comprehensive Australia-wide programme of forest works for the augmentation, replacement and development of our forests has been emphasised by the present acute shortage of timber in the Commonwealth. While some attention, inadequate though it may have been, has always been given to our needs in war, Australia in the past has not prepared itself, at least in timber programming, for the demands of peace.

Those are the words of Mr. Stoaate, our Conservator of Forests.

Mr. Marshall: A pretty serious statement.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If Mr. Stoaate believes that to be the truth, then he cannot agree with the policy which he implements. We are in the position that Western Australia proudly boasts of her vast areas of hardwood forests. We proudly tell strangers that we have dedicated to forests 3,400,000 acres and some timber and fuel reserves of another 2,000,000 acres. We claim that the Forests Act of 1918 is the best of its kind in Australia and we also claim to have the greatest hardwood forests in Australia. That is something with which Nature endowed us.

In the sense of world terms we are very small fry and I would refer members to the Commonwealth Year Book of 1945, page 879, which sets out the forest resources of the world. Those figures show that Russia has 3,677,000 square miles of

forest. Australia has 30,469. Canada has 1,151,000 square miles of forest area compared with Australia's 30,000. If members peruse the table they will see the necessity and the urgency for Australia not to relinquish any forest areas. Even at this late stage we should conserve every acre that is dedicated to forests.

The last report of the Forests Department, tabled yesterday, shows that we cut nearly 10½ million feet of timber over the last year, valued at £2,647,000. The second sentence in that report shows that the output is less than three-quarters of the output of the pre-war year of 1938.

Western Australia is the only State in Australia which is still below pre-war production. The number of mills has increased but fortunately most of them are small units. I think that I am in agreement with the present Minister for Works when I say that a big responsibility in production, and in the better use of that production, lies with the larger milling people. I think the Minister for Housing, too, might agree with that. This enormous asset, which cost us as a people nothing to put there, had a gross revenue, for the last financial year, of under a quarter of a million pounds. The sum collected for royalty was £150,000.

The figures given to me yesterday by the Premier, in answer to a question, showed that our exports inter-State were 39,000 odd loads valued at £548,000, while our exports overseas were 18,800 loads valued at £450,000. About half the quantity of timber was exported overseas but it yielded almost the same sum of money. That answer shows the reason why the bigger milling interests have not played the game with Western Australia and its people—too much profit. I think it was at Perenjori, or somewhere up there, that the Minister for Works made a statement and almost got himself into trouble. It was an outspoken and frank statement, but very quickly he had influential authorities on his trail.

The Minister for Works: He did not. He made a correction of the statement.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I say that he quickly had those authorities on his trail. He did not retract his statement; he made a correction to it. I think the Minister was too impulsive a moment ago.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: He will grow up.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I give the Minister full credit for his attitude. If members of the Government will look at the facts and what can be revealed in an examination of the timber millers' privileges, and how they have been abused, I think we will get along very much better in this State. In the last two years we have exported 66,000,000 super feet of timber from Western Australia. We exported 66 million feet of jarrah and karri

and imported Baltic pine. Last week I saw Baltic pine being used in the flooring of verandahs in a Housing Commission home. The roof was Japanese iron and the walls Italian asbestos. My point is—the use of Baltic pine in the verandahs and our export of 66 million feet of jarrah and karri during the last financial year. Sir Ross McDonald took me to task last year for saying that it was a foolish thing to suggest that token shipments oversea of karri and jarrah are necessary.

Mr. Rodoreda: Tommyrot!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Jarrah and karri are world famous. There is no need to canvass that position. The present Honorary Minister, when receiving a deputation the other day, was told of the waste in sleeper exports. Feet of timber are being left lying in the bush and, of course, we know that sleeper timber is not the worst jarrah that is cut. It was claimed five years ago that within 25 years our virgin forests would all be cut over. I suggest that their life will not be another 20 years. But, is it enough to be proud and boastful of the fact that all of our virgin bush will not have been cut over for another 20 years, if what Mr. Stoate says in his comments in the Press are true? It is certainly very unfair to the present generation to be building houses of Baltic pine while millions of super feet of jarrah and karri are being exported. Having raised that subject in this Chamber on more than one occasion and having been taken to task very lamely and limply I submit, by a former Minister, I hope that the Government will examine that position closely to ensure that there is justice done to this and the next generation of Western Australia.

The Premier: There has been a substantial reduction in the amount of timber exported this year.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There has been a substantial reduction! I have all the figures before me as to that but I do not want to weary the House with them. The fact is that 18,874 loads of timber were sent oversea in the last year and 35,518 loads interstate. It is not enough to say that, on the present basis of consumption, we might have forests in perpetuity and forests to serve a population of the present or any increases in population. It is all very well to say that for our then population our forest needs will be met in 25 years. In order to plan for forests in perpetuity we surely must examine the whole set-up so that we may be fair not only in the house-building programme where the timber supplies are lagging and making it extremely difficult for private people as well as the Housing Commission, but fair to the future of the whole State. We have exported from this State vast quantities of timber bringing tremendous profits to a very few firms.

What is wrong internally in the Forests Department as to that, I do not know. However, I do know that very large interests have extremely large concessions and have had them granted only recently, and with the authority vested in the Conservator under the Forests Act, certainly not enough return is coming to the State from those concessions. Compared with other States, the revenue of £150,000 from royalties is ridiculous. I am wondering whether we are getting any income paid into revenue from the soft timbers recently cut in the Mundaring area, planted and developed by the spending of Loan moneys. Is that money going into revenue or is it being handed to the Conservator of Forests under the provision of the Forests Act, 1918? Can the Premier tell me? It is vital to know whether there is any return from Loan moneys or whether timbers are now being cut in reafforested and planted areas in the hills, particularly.

I submit we are denuding our forests unfairly, using up our national capital and making recoups, under the Forests Act, to the Forests Department, while revenue suffers. Other moneys, too, are being paid into the Forests Department under other statutes, in addition to the 3/5ths share of the revenue, and I hope that an examination of accounts will show that 3/5ths of the revenue from those Mundaring areas is not going into the Forests account, without the Premier's knowledge, to be spent by the direction, almost without control, of the Conservator of Forests. There must be something extremely wrong with the revenue position within our Forests Department when private firms can do what they are doing to our forests, and causing great detriment to all our taxpayers while we get only £150,000 from royalties paid into revenue. We must, of course, remember that timber is regarded, and has been regarded in the past, as an encumbrance to Australia's development, and the efforts of the pioneers were such that they had to get rid of the timber because it caused a great deal of uneconomic destruction when making way for cleared areas and other forms of settlement.

At this stage of our history, we must acknowledge that the whole thing needs examination. It needs at least an inquiry by a Select Committee suggested by the Minister for Housing, and needs it urgently. I suggest a Select Committee rather than a Royal Commission because we do not want the people interested to be on the bench; we want them to be in the box. There is sufficient capacity and knowledge of the timber industry enjoyed by many members of this Chamber for one of them or myself to move for a Select Committee if the Premier will not appoint one. I submit that the whole of our timber and forests set-up is calling out for a public inquiry. I have just been handed a Press

statement which shows the accounts of one trading company in this State. Those accounts disclose a profit, for 1949, of £76,749 as against £97,000 in 1948.

The Premier: Are they Western Australian figures?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, probably they refer to Australia as a whole. The trading profit of £300,000 was £46,000 less than the previous year, but the net profit distribution which went towards paying a 15% dividend is much more than the Treasurer received into revenue from royalties, and that, from the whole 3,000,000 acres. I submit it is not fair. During the period I was Treasurer of this State, our timber sales fell tremendously, and it was necessary for me to pay from revenue the interest owing by the Forests Department to Loan undertakings. It was necessary for the time being to suspend the payment of sandalwood royalties into revenue. We used to obtain £100,000 from sandalwood royalties which was paid into revenue but we are not receiving that sum today. I think the sandalwood royalties are finding their way into the Forests account. I would like to know whether the Premier agrees with that statement. If that is the position it is certainly a very bad one. Where are we getting with our abuse of this country's timber heritage?

It is extremely difficult for Australia or any State to attempt to expand without reafforestation. I hope, with all the vaunted achievements which we claim under our Forests Act, that the thing which is primarily moving those in charge is that we are not wasting our national asset for the benefit of foreign countries and the profits of private companies. I am given to understand that there are contracts between South Africa and Greece for Western Australian jarrah. There are certainly jarrah fences being erected in the Eastern States, whilst the Western Australian people go without.

The Premier: Where did you see this?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I saw jarrah fence posts erected in South Australia.

The Premier: I had a letter from the Premier of South Australia complaining most bitterly about his orders being in arrears.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I have a letter in my pocket from him, also. Of course he wants more timber; one cannot blame him for that.

The Premier: He says that he is years behind with his orders.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Of course he is! So are we. Let us follow that through and see what South Australia, with one quarter of a million acres of forests behind it, is getting and compare that return with that which the Premier is receiving. Let us compare Queensland returns. That State receives into revenue £450,000 a year after

the Forests Department administration expenses are paid, with a forest area of 3,437,000 acres. I sent for this Queensland Year Book to support my argument. I do not intend to delay the House any longer tonight. The facts and figures are there. The Auditor General's report of Queensland gives the full figures over many years, and shows very clearly that not only are loans and administrative costs being paid but vast sums are also coming into revenue. I suggest we are not being fair in denuding our forests for private enterprise or for people actuated by profit motives.

MR. ACKLAND (Moore) [8.22]: In speaking to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply may I, in the first instance, congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on again receiving the unanimous vote of this House to occupy the Chair which you also did during the previous Parliament. Having received such a vote I think you are justly entitled to draw the conclusion that during your last period of office you gave every satisfaction to this House and filled the position with dignity.

I listened with a great deal of attention to the Governor's Speech, which was one of optimism and of satisfaction at the achievements of the Government during the last three years—

Mr. W. Hegney: The Government drew it up.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Who wrote the speech?

MR. ACKLAND: —which was, I think, entirely justified. It is somewhat of a disappointment to me that the Government did not receive a greater majority—

Mr. W. Hegney: It was lucky to get what it did.

MR. ACKLAND: —and particularly that the Country Party did not increase its representation in this House. It has been said that we came back with depleted numbers.

Mr. W. Hegney: It is quite true.

MR. ACKLAND: That is not a fact. It is quite true that during the last Parliament we had 11 members in this House. With the redistribution we lost two of them and we came back with the seats which we occupy because of that redistribution.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What about Geraldton? Was that a Country Party seat?

MR. ACKLAND: We lost Geraldton and gained another. We left ourselves all square.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The Premier took two.

MR. ACKLAND: I do trust the Government will proceed with the reconstruction policy which it started three years ago. Now that we have begun to improve conditions in this State after so many years

of stagnation before the change of Government in 1947, I hope the advance will be more rapid than it was previously.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You are thinking about the advances before the war.

Mr. ACKLAND: Today this Parliament is commencing its term of office with the world very sharply divided into two camps, and though I believe that every member of this House has a horror of war, I also believe that we are proud that Australia has expressed herself very definitely as to where she stands with regard to her obligations under the United Nations Charter. A large percentage of members of this House have had firsthand knowledge of war, and realise the utter stupidity and futility of it. Should it so happen that the Korean conflict spreads to other parts of the world it is good to know that all parties in Australian politics today, with the exception of a very small and venomous section of communists, are right behind the Government in any action it may take to fulfil its obligations overseas. While speaking of the communists, the one disappointment I felt in the Governor's Speech was that there was no indication on the part of the Government that it was going to take action against them in this State.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is it not against communists?

Mr. ACKLAND: Although the Leader of the Opposition could not agree with all the member for Cottesloe had to say, I do agree with him in congratulating the hon. member on his maiden speech. I also heartily endorse the final phrases of his address when he spoke about action which should be taken in the way of supplementary legislation regarding communists in this State.

Mr. Styants: Our legislation would make provision to draw and quarter them.

Mr. ACKLAND: At a later stage I hope to have something further to say with reference to the communists. The only reason why I am speaking tonight is that I should like to refer to the action of the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture on the appointment of John Teasdale as chairman of the Australian Wheat Board. It is fitting that I should have something to say on that point because of all members of this House I think I have been most closely associated with him for many years.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Is he the man against wheat stabilisation?

Mr. ACKLAND: We have worked together in industrial organisations and in the wheat handling company. We also fought a losing battle in our endeavour to help the wheatgrowers who were opposed to the socialisation of the industry. We both believe in private ownership and we are both entirely opposed to socialisation, not only of the wheat industry but of any industry in Australia.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about stabilisation?

Mr. ACKLAND: We entirely support stabilisation and we are in support of the 15 point plan which was submitted to the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture in the year 1947.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Was he in favour of stabilisation?

Mr. ACKLAND: He is in favour of implementing what the Australian Wheat-growers' Association desires. Up to date only one of those 15 points has been implemented. I am of opinion that the growers of Australia now have an opportunity of having effect given to the principles which they advocated.

As the representative of an electorate that produces the greatest quantity of wheat of any other in the State, it is only natural that I should occupy some time in speaking about wheat matters. The Moore electorate produced 7,000,000 bushels of the 34,600,000 bushels delivered to sidings last season, or 36 per cent. of the whole of the wheat delivered to Fremantle, which is as much as is delivered at Geraldton and the combined totals of the deliveries at Albany and Bunbury. The receipts at Fremantle last year were 19,528,514 bushels representing 56.36 per cent. of the State's production. Geraldton's receipts totalled 7,265,804 bushels or 20.97 per cent.; Bunbury's 5,744,479 bushels or 16.58 per cent.; Albany's 1,979,852 bushels or 5.72 per cent. and Esperance's 129,709 bushels or .037 per cent.

The Government has decided to install a bulk-handling terminal at Albany. I have seen the plans and specifications of that work and, provided sufficient wheat is made available, I believe it can be worked economically, but the position today is that wheat exported as such from this State fluctuates in the Fremantle zone from 45 to 50 cargoes a year, contingent upon the quantity of flour exported overseas. From Geraldton 11 cargoes are exported and the port of Bunbury also exports 11 cargoes. If the Albany terminal is to handle only the wheat that nominally should belong to that port, the terminal facilities will cater for only 2½ cargoes a year, but if wheat is diverted from the Wagin-Lake Grace area, approximately five cargoes would go from Albany and six from Bunbury. When the terminal at Albany has been completed, I hope that consideration will be given to the advisability of exporting all the wheat from the southern part of the State through the facilities at Albany.

At present it is very difficult to get wheat trains into Bunbury. There is a bottle-neck; at all times coal has to receive precedence over all other freight offering and, with the erection of the South-West power station at Bunbury, the position will become worse. I am not advocating that any alteration should be

made without the most careful investigation, but I know that at Bunbury wheat is handled under very difficult and costly conditions. The wheat on reaching the port has to be put into a silo, taken from the silo in trucks along the jetty and then handled again to be loaded into the ships. I am of opinion that if grades and other factors were given consideration, it would be found advisable to discontinue the use of Bunbury as a port for shipping wheat.

I have been critical of the Government in some respects and doubtless I shall be critical in future, but I wish to pay a tribute to it for the assistance it has given to the farmers of Western Australia through Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. It has righted some of the wrongs that previous Administrations had not remedied. It has discontinued the charging of freight on the outward transport of liners and extensions used to make the railway trucks suitable for carrying wheat. More recently the Government has gone further and assumed a responsibility that rightly belonged to the Railway Department at all times, namely, the provision of the liners and extensions that have to be used to make the trucks fit to carry wheat. In the past this has cost the wheatgrowers some £200,000. I am glad that this responsibility has been assumed by the Railway Department because I am sure it will now realise the necessity for providing suitable trucks to carry bulk wheat.

The Railway Department has undertaken a very big expenditure. Members will appreciate this when I tell them that the canes for the truck coverings used to cost £28 5s. per ton, whereas the last lot purchased in 1947 cost £202 per ton. Liners originally cost 17s. 6d. per set, but the last lot bought in March of this year cost £7 0s. 0½d. per set. With costs rising to that extent, I believe we shall soon have what should have been provided long ago, namely, trucks suitable for the carrying of wheat in bulk. I want to give credit to the Minister for Railways in the previous Government for the action he took in insisting that his department discontinue this unwarranted imposition.

At Fremantle we have what is called a hospital silo and, as the name implies, it was built to treat infected wheat. But it was built against the strongest opposition of the handling company and, I believe, of the Labour Government which was in power in Western Australia at that time. It was constructed under powers vested in the Commonwealth Government under wartime regulations, and it was built quite contrary, as I have said, to the wishes of both those bodies. I trust that the Government will now take prompt steps to see that it gains repossession of these facilities at Fremantle. They were built quite unsuitably for the purpose for which they are used. In addition, a 4,000,000 bushel annexe was built alongside them, also under instructions from the

Commonwealth Government at the time, and they have now become quite unsafe for use. It is a mystery how the annexe remains standing in the state of disrepair into which it has fallen.

Mr. Guthrie: Who is responsible for that?

Mr. ACKLAND: The Commonwealth Government. The State Government has had no power whatever to interfere, nor has Co-operative Bulk Handling. It is a matter of urgent necessity that the State Government should come to some quick decision with the Commonwealth Government regarding these facilities at Fremantle. A completely new type of annexe will be required when that has been done. I am told that the roof lifts several inches every time there is a strong wind, and one of these days the whole roof will finish up somewhere in Fremantle.

Member: It drops, too.

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, several inches when the wind drops.

Mr. Guthrie: Who told you that?

Mr. ACKLAND: I know.

Mr. Guthrie: You were wrong when you went to Bunbury.

Mr. ACKLAND: No, I was not. It happens that the figures I have quoted are official figures and not of my own compiling. Early in the life of this Government, one of the first actions it took was to hand over to the handling company the bulk handling facilities and gantries at Fremantle. At the time, and at every opportunity since, we have had criticism from the Opposition about what has been done; but in view of the fact that the handling rate has been stepped up 64 per cent. in the interim, with a resultant lessening of costs, I consider that the attitude which was taken by the State Government was thoroughly justified. In March, 1947, the rate of handling was 302.4 tons per hour, and from the 1st November, 1949, to the 30th June, 1950, the tonnage per hour had risen to 502.44 tons.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That was because of the improvement in the speed of handling at the ship's hold.

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, that is perfectly true.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It had nothing to do with the galleries at all.

Mr. ACKLAND: There was one handling organisation handling the wheat right from its discharge at the hospital silo into the ship's hold. I have heard it said it was done because of the lumpers' work at Fremantle, but lumpers hardly touch the wheat. It is spread by an automatic blower through the holds of ships right to the sides of the vessels, and there is practically no manual work done at all.

Mr. Guthrie: At Bunbury they use a blower, the same as at Fremantle.

Mr. ACKLAND: At Bunbury the waste is due to the repeated handling before the wheat gets to the ship; first, into the silo, then out of the silo into a truck, then out of the truck again into the ship. The Bulk Handling Company in Western Australia has already approached the State Government with a request that the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. toll be increased to its original figure of $\frac{3}{4}$ d. The decrease was made during the war at the request of the Australian Wheat Board, but the annexe, and the large storage capacity bins at Fremantle and Bassendean, were originally built for 1d. per bushel, and the terminals in the country were erected at a cost of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. The sinking fund and interest have been so arranged that replacements would take place after a period of 15 years on those figures. But we find today that, owing to increased costs, the rebuilding of terminals in country districts will cost 1s. 4d. a bushel instead of the 4d. when they were originally constructed. With this increase back to $\frac{1}{2}$ d., Western Australia will still

have the cheapest and most flexible and trouble-free wheat handling system in the world.

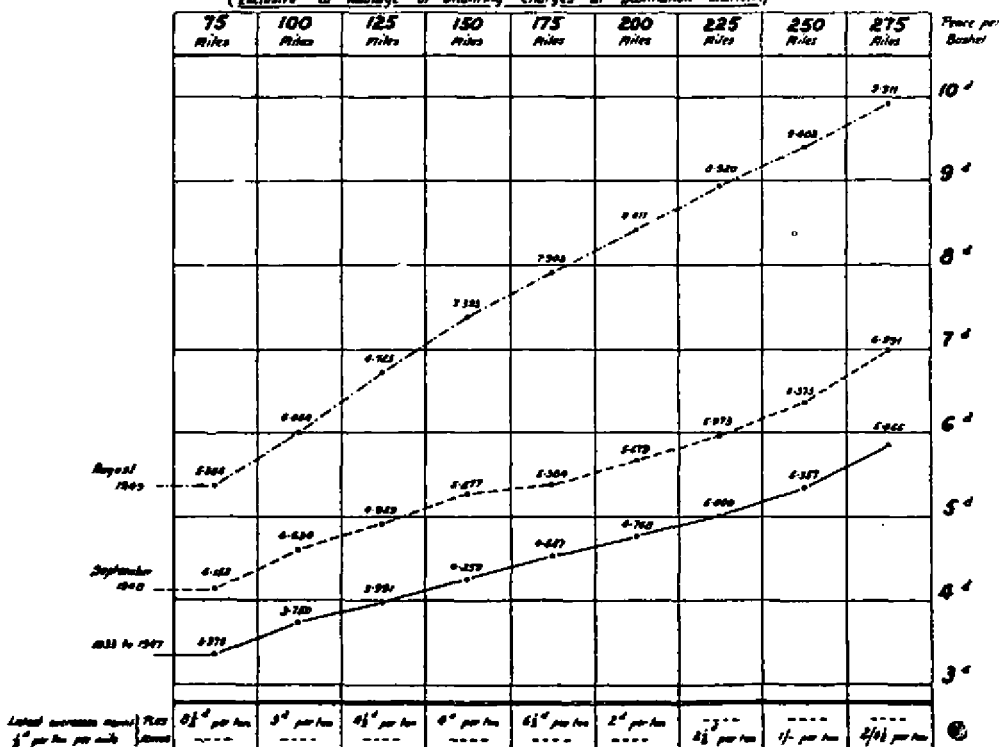
We have heard a lot in recent times of wheat freights. I have gone to some trouble to find out what the position is in Western Australia as compared with the Eastern States. I have had prepared two graphs, one showing the relative position of wheat freights in Western Australia and in the Eastern States, and one showing the increases in freights in this State since 1933. I hope members will be sufficiently interested to study these charts, which show the true relative position of wheat handling costs in Western Australia over the railway system, compared with similar costs in the Eastern States. The charts show that in Victoria the freight rate for 100 miles is 15s. 9d. per ton. In New South Wales it is 17s. 1d., while in Western Australia it is 19s. 10d. For 150 miles the rate in Victoria is 18s. 8d., in New South Wales 20s. 2d. and in Western Australia 24s. For 200 miles the freight in Victoria is 29s. 9d., in New South Wales 21s. 6d., and in Western Australia 27s. 2d.

Comparative Freight Rates for Bulk Wheat

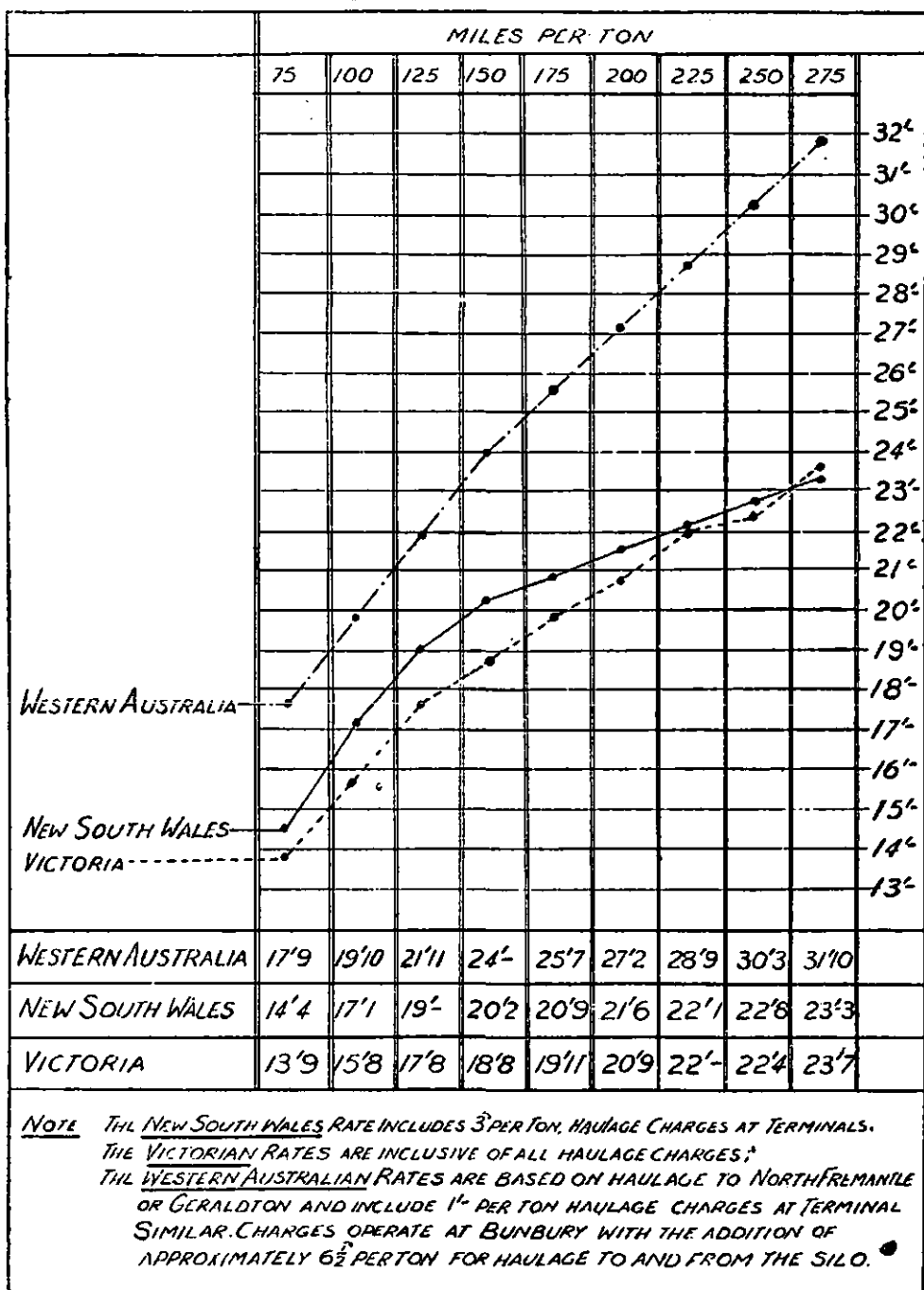
W.A. Government Railways

Calculated in Pence per Bushel

(Exclusive of Haulage or Stacking Charges at Destination Station.)



COMPARATIVE RAIL FREIGHTS FOR BULK WHEAT.
Siding to Natural Port Terminal.



It must be borne in mind that the Railway Departments in both those Eastern States have provided trucks suitable for handling wheat in bulk and the handling authority has not the costly work of fitting the extensions that are necessary to make the trucks in this State large enough to contain the minimum tonnage demanded by the department. The work involved in this regard, quite apart from repairs and renewals, is astounding. The second graph shows that in Western Australia the increase in rail freights on wheat has been disproportionate in comparison with the freights on other commodities. I was not opposed to the increase in freight rates, which was absolutely necessary. No one with any sense of responsibility could have objected to freights being increased so long as they were increased proportionately, but the wheat freights operating in this State are acting detrimentally, particularly to people who are faced with long haulage.

We find that for 100 miles the rate has risen from 3.75d. to 6.045d. per bushel. For 150 miles it has risen from 4.259d. to 7.393d. For 200 miles it has risen from 4.768d. to 8.411d., and for the longest haul, 250 miles, it has risen from 5.357d. to 9.404d. The overall increase has been to the extent of 84 per cent. and people who have the misfortune of being placed where their wheat must be carried 275 miles have suffered a freight jump from 6d. to 10d. per bushel, while those who are most fortunate, and are situated 100 miles from the port of discharge, have had their freights raised by 2½d. per bushel. Those who are least able to stand the increase have had to carry by far the greater burden and I hope the Minister for Railways will give consideration to some scaling down of the charges for these people whose wheat has to be carted long distances.

Mr. Styants: What was the percentage increase on 100 miles?

Mr. ACKLAND: In each case it is 84 per cent. As against that increase of 84 per cent. we find that the rate for clothing has increased 33 per cent., livestock 30 per cent., potatoes and vegetables 41 per cent., timber 43 per cent., tobacco 33 per cent., wool 36 per cent., and beer 31 per cent. No wonder I complain at this discrimination to the detriment of the wheat-grower.

Mr. Styants: Wheat has been carried for about one-third of the rate of other freights.

Mr. ACKLAND: I have already said that over all distances in this State the freight on wheat is much higher than in any other State in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Styants: Compare it with the freights paid by other sections of the community.

Mr. ACKLAND: We must remember that a truck of wheat, of whatever tonnage, requires exactly as much documentation as does a parcel weighing one lb. The department has the great advantage that it knows 12 months ahead just what wheat freight will be available, and can cart it entirely at its own convenience, while freights coming forward from day to day of other commodities mean that the department does not know where it will need haulage at any given time. Can members wonder at my indignation over this state of affairs? A few months ago there was a report in the Press that the Premier had agreed to a reduction of freights on wool to be carted to the port of Albany, as an encouragement to those concerned to have their wool forwarded to that port for sale or export overseas.

The increase in wheat freights is 84 per cent., while the increase in the freight of the most buoyant commodity of primary production in Australia today is 36 per cent. The Premier's reply to me, when I questioned him, was that if the people at Geraldton wanted the same concession as the people of Albany, they could receive it. That shows how little the Premier and his Cabinet appreciate just what they did in this direction. I admit it was not a large decrease, but members will understand how farmers on the extreme edge of the wheatbelt felt about what was done in that regard. To say that the same thing could be done at Geraldton as had been done at Albany made it so much worse, instead of improving the position.

Mr. Styants: What is the freight per ton mile on wheat and wool?

Mr. ACKLAND: I have not that information at the moment.

Mr. Styants: It is about six times as much for wool as it is for wheat.

Mr. ACKLAND: While dealing with freight discrimination against our wheat-growers, I will mention some other misconceptions that exist in the minds of several members of this House. Over the past three years I have from time to time heard what a favoured industry the wheat industry really is. I began to wonder why it was that I and other wheatgrowers in Western Australia failed to recognise just how generous the rest of the people in Australia had been to the wheatgrowing industry. So, I made up my mind to try to find out just to what extent we had been pampered and spooned by the rest of the community of Australia. I extended my investigations far beyond wheat. I went into super subsidies, cornsack subsidies, wirenetting subsidies and everything else. It is interesting to know just what the wheatgrower has received at the hands of the taxpayers of Australia.

It is quite true that over the past 20 years the wheatgrowing industry has received benefits, and substantial benefits, at the hands of the Treasurer of Australia.

I do not intend to repeat what I have already said on this matter. I went into it very fully in "Hansard" No. 1/48 at p. 116. But, regarding the generous contributions made by the taxpayers through the Federal Treasury from 1931 to 1943, the wheatgrower did receive £24,864,144, and primary producers received indirect bounties on superphosphate freight over an 8-year period, from 1932 to 1939, of £1,823,875.

Mr. Nalder: That was received throughout the Commonwealth.

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, and over the 10-year period from 1940, to 1949 inclusive they received £18,139,212. I have heard lots about this subsidy for the wheat-growers. That was the subsidy paid to all the primary producers throughout Australia and it has been estimated that, debiting the wheatgrowing industry to the utmost, wheatgrowers would have received £8,500,000 of a total amount of £19,963,087.

Mr. Styants: What about the exchange rate of 25 per cent.?

Mr. ACKLAND: The hon. member asked me that question the other day, and I was glad that he did because it gave me an opportunity to find out something with reference to it. The subsidy on nitrogenous manures, over a 7-year period from 1942 to 1949, represented £660,197. I know this is boring to members but I am sick and tired of hearing it said in this Chamber that the wheatgrowers of this country are too greedy.

Mr. Styants: You are supersensitive!

Mr. ACKLAND: I hope that members will realise after tonight that they do not know what they are talking about. Of that sum of £660,197—it must be realised that the greater majority of that manure is used for fruit, vegetables, potatoes and sugar—£100,000 has been debited to the wheat industry because in some parts of the wetter States of the Commonwealth such manures are used in some instances.

I recall hearing a lot about the subsidy on jute goods. A subsidy of £3,297,612 was paid for the years 1943 to 1948 and that figure included chaff bags, wool packs, as well as cornsacks and other small jute goods. But I have debited the wheatgrowing industry with £2,000,000 of that figure. In Western Australia, during the years 1942-43 to 1946-47, the Commonwealth Government made a compulsory reduction of acreage for every wheat farmer in the State. Those farmers received 12s. per acre because of that compulsory reduction. The sum received by the Western Australian growers represented £1,960,757. I contend that that was compensation and not a bounty, but for argument's sake I have left it in my figures as a contribution that the people of Australia made to the wheat industry.

Then we have subsidies on wire netting and to all primary producers in Australia we find that £2,524 was debited as a subsidy. I have allowed £1,500 of that as being the share which would be accepted by the wheat industry. Then there is the bounty on tractors. That bounty represented £62,019 and £50,000 of that sum has been debited to the wheat industry. I have been unable to obtain the correct figures on super carting subsidies but if we allow one quarter of a million pounds as the sum which the wheat industry has received, it would be reasonably accurate, although I think it is rather excessive.

Mr. Styants: The railways lose half a million a year carting super!

Mr. ACKLAND: I am talking about subsidies received by the industry. We find there is a total of approximately £38,000,000 over a period of 20 years received from the taxpayers of this country by the wheatgrowers of Australia. That is less than £2,000,000 a year. These figures have not been arrived at by guesswork; they have been taken from official figures, and the only estimate has been with regard to what proportion of the total has been granted to the wheat industry. If there has been any erring it has been on the side of debiting the industry with more, rather than less, of its receipts.

I wish now to refer briefly to the other side. From 1943 to 1948 wheat was sold in Australia at £106,922,586, which was less than its ready sale overseas. I do not intend to give full details because they have already appeared in the report of the Royal Commission on Wheat which was under the chairmanship of Mr. John Teasdale, in the year 1946. By compulsory selling below value in 1948 the wheatgrowers sold 80 million bushels at below overseas value of 1s. 6d. at a loss of six million to the industry. That was to the United Kingdom, and 1s. on 25 million bushels to India at a loss on overseas value of £1,250,000. When we add to those figures the loss on No. 12 of £24,500,000 and, on No. 13, £27,000,000, we see that the wheat industry has contributed to the people of Australia a sum of £165,500,000. I mean by that that they have sold wheat to the people of Australia this much below the price which could have been obtained overseas.

Mr. Marshall: Was that the extent of their loss in selling the wheat in Australia?

Mr. ACKLAND: No, it is the difference between the value of the wheat sold overseas and the sale of that within Australia. I think I should make some reference to the famous New Zealand deal which was made by Mr. Scully. Up to last year it had cost the Australian taxpayer £7,102,892. At that time there were some

455,000 bushels of wheat still to be delivered under that contract. How much that is to cost the people of Australia depends on the overseas price then ruling. However, what the general householders in Australia do not know today is that whilst their costs have been steadily rising, because of this deal which was secret and which was at first denied in the Commonwealth Parliament, housewives of New Zealand have been able to buy their bread cheaper by one penny a loaf as a result of the generosity of the people of Australia in making that contribution.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I hope the bread there is better than we get in Western Australia.

Mr. ACKLAND: It was not the intention of the Commonwealth Government to make the taxpayers of Australia pay for that, but the position became so hot that it decided that the general taxpayer of this country should pay rather than the members of the wheatgrowing industry. The peculiar feature about it was that the Labour Party believes in the right of striking and this deal was made for one purpose only. The farmers of New Zealand were demanding more money for their home-consumed wheat. To break any resistance, Mr. Scully entered into an arrangement with Mr. O'Sullivan as a strike-breaking action. How consistent that is with the other principles of the Labour Party!

Hon. A. H. Panton: What you do not know about the Labour Party would fill a book.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What are you paying for the wheat silo at Fremantle?

Mr. ACKLAND: We are paying nothing; it is still the property of the Commonwealth, and should be the subject of negotiation between the State and the Commonwealth Government. If I were the Premier of this State I would take it because the Commonwealth Government has no longer any right to it. It has no powers under the war-time legislation restrictions which it had during the war.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The hon. member believes in confiscation, does he?

Mr. ACKLAND: The Commonwealth Government built it against the wish of the Government of Western Australia, and today it is a menace because it is not fit for the purpose for which it was originally built, and the 4,000,000 bushel annexe which was built beside it by Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd., under the direction of the Australian Wheat Board, is no longer safe and fit to hold such a perishable commodity as wheat. Wheat is not the only industry which has been subsidising the Australian taxpayer during the last few years. However, for the purposes of my illustration I only intend to mention three of them.

Between 1945-46 and 1948-49 the barley crop of Australia was compulsorily acquired by the Australian Government at a loss to the growers in this country of £8,374,586. In 1935-36 the overseas price of barley was 9s. 10d. and was acquired for 5s. 4½d. In 1946-47 it was 14s. 9d. overseas and was acquired for 5s. 5½d. In 1947-48 the exports averaged 20s. 3d. but it was acquired for 6s. 3d. To the barley grower in that year that 6s. 3d. was well below the cost of production and in 1948-49 when the average price overseas had dropped to 9s. 9d., it was acquired at 7s. 3½d. The losses to the barley growers which I have already stated, amounted to eight and a third million pounds. I do not know how many barley growers there are in Australia, but there are 551 in this State.

Mr. Styants: What is the quality of Western Australian wheat compared with the overall production in Australia?

Mr. ACKLAND: Western Australian wheat has a ready market overseas. The good bakers in this country can make beautiful bread from Western Australian flour.

Hon. A. H. Panton: There must be very few of them today in Western Australia.

Mr. ACKLAND: It is a question of the baker far more than the flour.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Dr. Sutton does not agree with that.

Mr. ACKLAND: I know it is Dr. Sutton's hobby but Western Australia is growing wheat which its customers want. It is sold readily overseas and it is the duty, I think, of all sellers, whether they be storekeepers or farmers, to sell a commodity which is readily saleable and is wanted by the buyers.

Hon. A. H. Panton: One is entitled to a decent bit of bread. We used to get wonderful bread in this State.

Mr. ACKLAND: It is nearly two years since the growers throughout Australia were very strongly defeated with reference to the wheat stabilisation scheme. It is quite true that I was on the side which lost in that argument.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Was Mr. Teasdale there, too?

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, and we were beaten by a substantial majority in Western Australia as well as in the other States. However, we have now seen the workings of that stabilisation scheme over two years and I know that Mr. John Teasdale was on the losing side in that fight but, with the exception of a few who will have socialisation and nothing but socialisation, every wheatgrower in this State is behind him today. It will be remembered that a few years ago he was sacked from the Australian Wheat Board because

he would not refrain from giving information to the people whose product he was handling as was requested of him. I am not sure how many candidates there were in the field—I think there were four or five—but he was returned to that Wheat Board by an overwhelming majority. I think he got two to one of the combined votes recorded, but I am not sure of the exact figures.

Mr. May: He is on a sticky wicket now.

Mr. ACKLAND: Not at all. He is as safe as a house. We have seen imperfections in the wheat stabilisation scheme, and those who voted for it did so for the large part because they wanted security, and they thought that if they accepted the scheme which was given to them on a take it or leave it basis by the Commonwealth Government, they would in time be able to get what they really required. Of the 15-point plan for which they asked they only received one of their objectives, and today they have a Minister who believes in private ownership; who believes that the product of the land belongs to the producer and to no-one else—subject only to his just debts. In this new chairman we have a man who recognises himself and those who work with him as trustees and trustees only, holding the wheat that is acquired and handed to them temporarily for disposal; a trustee who is responsible to the wheatgrower for an account of his stewardship.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He has a big following?

Hon. A. H. Panton: Only in Victoria.

Mr. ACKLAND: There are many phases of the wheat position which are quite a closed book to the member for Fremantle. That is very evident. I have some extracts from a cutting which I should like to read to the House. One deals with a matter which has been perturbing the wheatgrowers of Western Australia very much lately, that is that the Wheat Board should cease dealing in wheat products, leaving flour millers to arrange their own overseas sales. In "The West Australian" of March 11th, 1950, we find that a deputation went to Mr. McEwen, the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture. This is what Mr. Teasdale had to say:—

Mr. Teasdale said that the Wheat Stabilisation Act imposed no obligation on the board to market flour on behalf of millers. There was no apparent reason or financial gain to wheatgrowers arising from the board's work in overseas selling of flour, which, in fact, it had to implement by purchasing the flour from millers. On the contrary, the board came in for some criticism, which it might avoid by placing the responsibility of finding markets for flour upon the shoulders of the flourmillers, where it rightly belonged. From the growers' point of

view, there seemed to be no valid reason why the board should not confine its operations to selling wheat to all buyers at home and abroad, thereby concentrating its activities upon a clear and unmistakable task. Departure from that specific objective was beginning seriously to involve wheatgrowers in the responsibility of providing employment for mills and mill capital, full employment for mill employees, and among other things, provision of adequate supplies of bran and pollard for dairymen and poultry and pig raisers.

We have recently had the spectacle on the Australian Wheat Board of finding the representatives from New South Wales and South Australia trying to use the funds of that board to set up handling facilities and storage bins in those two States. The Act most definitely provides that each pool must be kept entirely separate and distinct. That is one of the reasons why men of the calibre of Mr. Teasdale and Mr. Tilt should be given authority to control wheat at Melbourne today.

Hon. A. H. Panton: What do you want us to do about it?

Mr. ACKLAND: It is high time that the position regarding the price of offal was reviewed. I have sympathy with pig producers and poultry producers. I believe these industries are necessary for the economy of this country.

Hon. A. H. Panton: They do not want sympathy, but help.

Mr. ACKLAND: I think the help they get should come from the people of Australia. We find that the position is growing worse and worse and the wheat-grower has no obligation to the feeders of wheat products. We find that from the year 1930 to 1943 the feeders of wheat products, with the exception of one year, bought their wheat at far below the cost of production. In 1938, when the Flour Tax Bill came into operation and the consumers of flour did pay 5s. 2d. a bushel for their wheat, we find that feeders of wheat still bought their wheat at a price below the cost of production. It was not until 1943, when the price overseas rose to over 5s. 2d. a bushel, that we found there was provision for the feeders of wheat to come under the Flour Tax Act. As long as they could buy wheat at a cheap price they gladly took it. It can be proved that in the seven years since 1943 stock feeders in this country have benefited to the extent of £60,000,000 by buying the product at prices below the overseas value.

Hon. A. H. Panton: No wonder they are all millionaires.

Mr. ACKLAND: Under the Wheat Stabilisation Act we know that the price of wheat is tied to the cost of production.

Yet we find that as soon as it has risen to 7s. 1d. per bushel the Australian Government gives a subsidy to the users of flour, as well as to stock feeders, of 5d. a bushel, by permitting them to buy the product at the old price of 6s. 8d. Conditions have become worse. Bran and pollard are sold at £11 per ton, which is the price fixed with wheat at 6s. 8d. a bushel. In America, feeders are paying the oversea value of £24 per ton, and, because of this, millers in Australia have been losing their oversea markets as American flour millers are able to undersell them to the extent of £5 per ton. So the flour millers went to the Minister for Commerce, Mr. McEwen, and complained that they could not compete, and thus they are able to buy their wheat which is gristed for sale oversea at a price below its oversea value. Let me quote an extract from "The West Australian" of the 30th March, 1950, as follows:—

The Minister for Commerce and Agriculture (Mr. McEwen) said today that in an effort to increase flour exports, the Australian Wheat Board had agreed to reduce the price of wheat sold for gristing for export flour by an equivalent of £3 3s. a ton on flour.

Negotiations were also going on with flour millers to see if they could cut profits, but there was no great scope for this, Mr. McEwen said. One of the real difficulties which had caused a fall in Australian flour exports was that Australian millers were under the competitive disadvantage that the prices for mill offal sold in Australia were £11 a ton, while Northern American millers were getting £24 a ton. It was difficult to increase the price because mill offals were needed to maintain supplies of dairy produce, pig meats and eggs sold on long-term contracts to England at prices fixed on the basis of existing Australian prices for offal.

Mr. McEwen said that because of those contracts, mill offals were sold at a price equivalent to 6s. 8d. a bushel for wheat, whereas wheat was being exported for more than 16s. a bushel.

The last sale was at 18s. a bushel. Though the value of wheat oversea is 18s. a bushel, mill-owners are buying their wheat at 14s. 11½d. to allow them to compete with America so that offal may be sold at such a low price in this country. Now the mill-owners, having got away with that, have again approached the Minister for Commerce because the price of cornsacks has risen, and we find the price of wheat is being reduced to them to 14s. 9½d. a bushel. I consider that all these industries are vital to the welfare of the country, but is there any other industry that is asked to subsidise something else? I have another extremely interesting extract. Members may recall that on a previous occasion I spoke

of the advantage enjoyed by Western Australia because of its geographical position in the matter of oversea freight. This is a letter dated the 4th April, 1950, written to the manager of the Australian Wheat Board, as follows:—

In reference to the lower rate of freight from Western Australia to Java and Singapore of 10s. a ton, we wish to point out that this concession to Western Australia is making the position almost impossible for Eastern millers, such as ourselves, as far as retaining our trade in Java is concerned, and no doubt the same will apply to Singapore when that market reverts to private trading.

We would point out that pre-war the price of wheat f.o.b. Western Australia was somewhat higher than the Eastern States owing to the cheaper freights on cargoes to United Kingdom caused by Western Australia's geographical position. No doubt to offset this the Western Australian Government, we understand, arranged with the shipping companies to quote a rate of freight 5s. a ton cheaper to Java and Singapore compared with the Eastern States, which brought their quotations more or less into line with those of the Eastern States. The position today is that, according to the list of charters made, Western Australia is paying 7s. 6d. English per ton of 2,240 lb. less for charters to United Kingdom and India than the Eastern States, and consequently the price of wheat f.o.b. Western Australia should be raised by this equivalent to the millers of Western Australia for their export trade, i.e., 2½d. per bushel.

In putting these views forward, we know we are speaking for a great number of millers of the Eastern States who consider that the present position as far as the Java and Singapore trades are concerned is quite out of balance owing to the cheaper rate of freight quoted from Western Australia on flour to those markets.

I have the freight rates, but will not weary members by quoting them at this stage. I intended to refer to the International Wheat Agreement, but I have occupied more time than I expected, and I shall probably have another opportunity later in the session. My chief reason for speaking tonight was that I wanted to make reference to the appointment of Mr. John Teasdale as chairman of the Australian Wheat Board. Members will have read the announcement that he is to replace Mr. Cullen as chairman, and that Mr. Tilt will replace Mr. Johnson as representative of the wheat trade and Government nominee on the board.

I feel that the appointment of Mr. Teasdale is most timely and that it will be in the interests not only of wheatgrowers but

also of all the people of Australia. We now have a Minister who believes that the wheat is the property of the producer, and the new chairman is a man who believes that the board is in the position of a trustee. He is not a dictator; neither is he a man who will be influenced by the Minister for Commerce, whoever may be occupying that position. Mr. Teasdale considers that he holds the wheat for the time being in trust and that that trust is in the interests not of the Minister for Commerce but of the people who produce it.

I may mention that neither Mr. Cullen nor Mr. Johnson had had previous experience of the wheat trade. Lest some member might question that statement, I point out that Mr. Johnson was previously employed by the wheat department of Westralian Farmers Ltd. He was employed as a salesman to sell parcels of bagged and bulk wheat to the produce trade, the dairyman, poultrykeeper, pig-raiser, and anyone who came along and wanted a parcel of wheat. He occupied a position similar to that of a man in a grocer's shop selling a pound of tea or a pound of butter over the counter at a fixed price in the determining of which he had no hand.

The Minister for Lands: Did not he stand for Parliament on one occasion?

Mr. ACKLAND: He was a farmer at Salmon Gums.

The Minister for Lands: Yes; he stood for Parliament.

Mr. ACKLAND: He was the organiser for the old Wheat Growers' Union. I do not know whether he stood for Parliament. I do not know much about him.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, he did. He opposed me; that is why I know.

Mr. ACKLAND: He was a good officer for the position for which he was employed. I am told that the Westralian Farmers Wheat Department was quite satisfied with the work he did.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We must have lost a good man in Parliament when the Minister for Lands defeated him.

The Minister for Lands: He tried to defeat me.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is bad luck he never won.

Mr. ACKLAND: Both Mr. Cullen's and Mr. Johnson's appointments were political. I expected someone on the opposite side to say that Mr. Teasdale's appointment was political.

Mr. Hoar: So it was.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No, it would not be!

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I will not say it.

Mr. ACKLAND: I know the Leader of the Opposition would not, because I believe he is just as pleased as I that this appointment has been made and he considers it is in the interests of the people throughout the country. Today we have need of the most experienced wheat men to occupy the positions held by Mr. Teasdale and Mr. Tilt. Mr. Tilt is nearly as experienced in the wheat trade in Victoria as John Teasdale is in the wheat trade in Australia and in the world. I might mention that he came to this country as an assisted migrant in 1909 and still owns his original farm of 2,000 acres in the Belka valley. He has been interested in the wheat trade from the first years of his arrival in this country. He has visited America and Europe in connection with wheat matters. He was the chairman of the West Australian Voluntary Wheat Pool until quite recently and he was a member and chairman of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. from the year of its inception until it was handed over to the growers in, I think, 1945.

Mr. Teasdale was the first Western Australian representative on the Wheat Board, appointed in 1939 and has been on the board ever since, except for a brief period in 1941-42, when he was dismissed by Mr. Scully, the then Minister for Commerce and Agriculture. He was almost immediately re-elected by the Western Australian growers by an overwhelming majority over several other candidates. I think the number was four, but I am not quite certain of that. In conjunction with John Thomson, he was responsible for the setting up of the machinery of the present Australian Wheat Board which has continued to operate under that which was initiated in 1939. The Leader of the Opposition did a very wise thing when he appointed him chairman of the Royal Commission which inquired into wheat production in, I think, 1946. Several of the figures which I have quoted tonight I gathered from the report submitted at that period.

Earlier in my remarks, I think I mentioned that each year's pool was supposed to be conducted independently of the others and an accounting had to be given for each one. Yet we find that some of the non-grower members of the pool recently tried to give a prosperity bonus to the employees of the Australian Wheat Board—a prosperity bonus which was to be retrospective and to be taken out of the proceeds of the current pool. This was something entirely illegal and it was passed at a meeting at which Mr. Teasdale was not present and subsequently, I understand, was upset.

Then the Government nominee on the pool decided that it would be a very good plan to have a superannuation fund. A superannuation fund has many admirable characteristics, but this one was to be started with a fund of somewhere around

£45,000 or £46,000 as a gift from the current pool and was to be made retrospective to 1939. Then we had members on that board trying to use the wheatgrowers' funds to build bulk handling installations in South Australia and storage facilities in New South Wales, something entirely contrary to the provisions of the Act.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: How do you know all this?

Mr. ACKLAND: Because I have gathered the information. Since these things have been going on, it was necessary, I think, that there should have been a change in personnel. But the greatest reason for a change is that from now on wheat parcels will be sold daily or weekly and it is necessary to have men who have a knowledge of the wheat market.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Has Mr. Stott made any comment on the appointment?

Mr. ACKLAND: I do not know what Mr. Stott has said, but I read in "The West Australian"—I think, this morning—that a Mr. Armstrong, of Queensland, a representative on the Australian Wheat Board, is reported to have said that John Teasdale has put millions of pounds back into the pockets of the wheatgrowers of Australia; and that is something for which to commend any man. I think it is necessary at such a time as this to have something said with reference to this appointment. John Teasdale may have certain political views. At the same time, there was no outcry when Mr. Scully decided to dismiss him, but there is an outcry from a section of the people of Victoria because Mr. Cullen has been dismissed. I believe there will be such a reaction that John Teasdale will be as popular throughout Australia as he is in Western Australia. I believe his appointment has met with the approval of Queensland and New South Wales. I do not know about South Australia, but I believe it will be found in the last instance that the people of Victoria will not regret the decision the Minister made.

I have two or three other items on which I wanted to speak. I know the hour is getting late but I was very interested in some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition and I had intended to speak on one subject as he has done tonight, but on slightly different lines. I will quote from an article that appeared in "The West Australian" of the 2nd March, 1949. It was written by J. Gentilli and was headed "Drift from the Country to the Cities." Some of it, which I will read, is very apt at the present time. It reads—

Out of 134 wheatgrowing districts in Australia, only three have gained any population between 1933 and 1947. In Western Australia there are 34 districts that may be classified as wheat-

growing, and only one of them—Wongan-Ballidu—showed any population increase. Bruce Rock lost 601 persons, or 52 per cent. of the 1933 population. Koorda lost 599, or 50 per cent.; the worst hit was Mt. Marshall, with a loss of 844, equalling 56 per cent. The marginal areas fared badly, with Yilgarn losing 1,501 people, 42 per cent., Westonia losing 485, 47 per cent., and Narembeen losing 494, or 34 per cent.

And so it goes on, giving the different percentages lost throughout the country districts. It continues—

The metropolitan area attracted most of these people, increasing by 31 per cent. to reach 272,586 persons in 1947. Better comforts and amenities, better social services, higher wages, all contributed to these changes. The first step is to note these changes, compare them with changes in other States and overseas and take stock.

It is some time since that census was taken, but we should now take stock of the position. I admit that there is a lot of truth in the assertion of the Leader of the Opposition, that there is some land in this country not being properly used today, but I think that is the least reason for the drift to the city. Until the Government implements the policy of both its parties—decentralisation—and makes more attractive the lives of people in country districts, the present drift must increase rather than decrease. I understand why a young man milking cows or driving a plough in the country wants to come to the city and work a five-day week. One wonders sometimes why they call it work, in many instances, whereas a man milking cows or engaged on any other occupation in country districts works many hours longer than his city counterpart, with none of the social amenities that are available in the metropolitan area. The Government can help considerably by embarking on what might be called a centralised decentralisation policy. During the three years that I have lived part of my time in Perth I have been amazed to see how many of my friends have taken up permanent residence in the suburbs. We find, in the Eastern States, that people retiring from the land and handing over to their sons go to live, in many instances, in country towns, as the conditions there are good and the great majority of primary producers who come to live in the city are soon unhappy and dissatisfied.

After living 30 or 40 years in a rural area, interested in everything going on around them and taking an active part in the affairs of their district, people are apt to die of boredom when living in a suburb of Perth. For weeks past I have tried to get from the Public Works Department

some figures relating to the cost of water in different parts of the State. The officers of the department tried first to dissuade me from asking for the figures, and then hoped they would have them available for the opening of Parliament. They have not been received. I believe that, for a slight increase in the water rates in the metropolitan area, the rates in country centres could be reduced below the present charges, even if not to equal the city rates. Without water and cheap electricity we cannot encourage people to live in our country towns.

Last night I spoke of the water position at Dalwallinu, and I will not repeat that. Because of the refusal of the Public Works Department to extend the water supply to that centre I made an approach with the object of getting a comprehensive water scheme for the Midlands and the Mullewa rail area. A great deal of interest was shown by the then Minister for Public Works and Mr. Dumas. I suggested likely spots along the coast. I mentioned Dandarragan and then the diverting of the salt water from the Moore River in order to conserve the fresh water, but both those schemes proved impracticable. However, the department has investigated a scheme that it believes to be practicable, involving the use of water from the Gingin Brook and taking it across to the Wongan Hills line, up to Mullewa and into Geraldton to water that rich and productive part of the State. Feeder lines could be put across to the places in the Midlands district that need water.

I understand that the Commonwealth Government is to make available £250,000,000 and find interest and sinking fund from contributions to the petrol tax. From conversations with those who know more about it than I do, I believe it is estimated that the scheme I suggest would cost about £4,000,000. If that were so, and the scheme had to pay only operational expenses, I think the Government should proceed with it. In the past the Midlands districts have not received at the hands of the Government the treatment due to them. I believe the engineers are quite enthusiastic about the scheme I have mentioned, and that even at the end of summer 5,000,000 gallons of water per day run to waste in the Gingin Brook. If that scheme is proved practicable I hope the Government will proceed with it, thus giving to those northern areas the same consideration in the matter of water supply as is being given to other parts of the State.

There is one further matter I wish to mention. In our letter boxes recently we have had pamphlets such as one I now have in my hand. It is a pamphlet which says "Hands Off Korea." I do not intend to read the whole of it. It does not say from where it comes, but all members know that it has come from people—

Mr. Marshall: How were you so privileged? I did not get one. You must be a bit with them.

Mr. ACKLAND: —who are disloyal to our way of life. We believe that the Commonwealth Government will pass anti-communist legislation and we believe that if they do not pass it there will be a double dissolution. However, I feel certain that it will be passed. I am of the opinion that unless we, and the other States, pass some supplementary legislation the Federal anti-communist legislation will not be as effective as it should be.

Mr. Hoar: You want to watch your step there.

Mr. ACKLAND: In 1947, and each year since, I have approached the Premier and asked him to take some action against the communists in this State.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: He does not seem to take much notice of you.

Mr. ACKLAND: Up to date he has not taken a scrap of notice. In 1947 it would have been very unpopular to do it. People who were communists and fellow-travellers waved their flags and were very proud of themselves.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You always have the Premier worried when you speak.

Mr. ACKLAND: Today we do not see nearly as much as we did then. The Western Australian Government had the opportunity to lead Australia in taking action against these people. For various reasons nothing was done.

Mr. McCulloch: They are good coppers.

Mr. ACKLAND: Today it is popular, if it is popularity that the Government wants, and today it is more necessary than ever it was.

Mr. Fox: And always is.

Mr. ACKLAND: We have other large populations living in areas to our north. We have seen what is going on in Korea and we know what is happening in Malaya. We are a small people of 8,000,000 strong and it is a case of 8,000,000 weak if we have people of this calibre in our midst. I trust that though the Western Australian Government has lagged behind some of the trade union movements, the R.S.L. and the Farmers' Union, it will now come into the picture because I believe it would be a great shame if a private member had to introduce a motion in this House asking the Government to take some action in the matter.

Mr. Fox: Is that a threat?

Mr. ACKLAND: I do not intend to take up much more of the time of the House but I feel strongly on the matter.

Mr. Hoar: You have the Premier on the run.

Mr. ACKLAND: Unless we do something now it may be too late to do it in a few years' time. It does not need many fifth columnists to upset all the machinery of a State. I believe that the Government knows who these people are but—

Mr. Marshall: There was one in the gallery looking down at you last night.

Mr. ACKLAND: —it was denied when I made the statement in the House that there was such a list of people who could be readily dealt with. The denial was given that there was such a list in the Education Department and I believe that reply was quite correct. If the Premier would take action he would have every member of this House, and the great majority of the people of Western Australia, right behind him.

Mr. Marshall: How far behind him?

On motion by Mr. Needham, debate adjourned.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

Council's Message.

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

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £6,000,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 3rd August, 1950.

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

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAYS.

(a) As to Merredin Train Cancellation.

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

(1) Is he aware that the Sunday 9.15 p.m. Perth-Merredin train, has been cancelled as from the 31st July, 1950?