

Legislative Council

Thursday, 14th August, 1958.

CONTENTS

	Page
Questions on notice :	
State Pensions Acts, amending legislation	113
Esperanto, inclusion in school curriculum	113
BILL :	
Supply (No. 1), £21,000,000, 2r., remaining stages.	113
Address-in-reply, fourth day	125
Speaker on Address—	
The Hon. L. C. Diver	125

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.

STATE PENSIONS ACTS.

Amending Legislation.

1. The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH asked the Minister for Railways:

Does the Government intend to bring down legislation during this session of Parliament to amend the Superannuation and Family Benefits Act, 1938-1957; the Superannuation Act, 1871-1957, and the Government Employees' Pensions Act, 1948-1957?

The MINISTER replied:

Draft legislation has already been prepared and is being considered by Cabinet.

Nos. 2 and 3. These questions were postponed.

ESPERANTO.

Inclusion in School Curriculum.

4. The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON asked the Minister for Railways:

Will the Minister give consideration to including the auxiliary language—Esperanto—as a subject for examination in the Teachers' College, with a view to having Esperanto included in the school curriculum?

The MINISTER replied:

Esperanto has made little headway in gaining recognition as a world language, and its inclusion in the already overcrowded school curriculum could not be justified.

No. 5. This question was postponed.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 1), £21,000,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [2.35]: In speaking to the second reading of this Bill I would like to commence my

remarks by saying that the Minister for Railways was able, in the space of 21 seconds, to spend a sum of £21,000,000. That is the way it would appear. In another place, expenditure of this nature is sometimes made more quickly than it was on the occasion of the Minister introducing the Bill last night.

During the debates which occur in Parliament, the usual practice is for members to take the opportunity, on the Address-in-reply, to deal with matters affecting their electorates, and to bring before the notice of the Government questions which require attention. They generally traverse any subject they desire in the course of making their speeches. Until quite recently members did not avail themselves of the opportunity of treating the Supply Bill in practically the same way as the Address-in-reply; that is, to traverse a number of subjects and deal with anything they wished concerning their electorates.

As I have said, members have two opportunities—one the Address-in-reply and the other the Supply Bills—to address themselves to these various subjects. We do not receive the Estimates in this House. Therefore, we are obliged to accept a short speech from the Minister in charge of the House, and I agree that in this case it was very short.

The Supply Bill authorises the Government of the day to have its housekeeping money in connection with the affairs of State. I sometimes think it would be far better if we were able to receive from the Government of the day, or from the Minister in charge of this House, some little detail as to how this money is going to be expended. It would put us in the position of not having to just accept, as we have on this occasion, a short statement that the Bill appropriates so much money.

Before I make some comments about the Supply Bill, I want to take this opportunity of extending my congratulations to Mr. Hall. I did not do this on the Address-in-reply because I did not think he was actually re-elected on the day I spoke. If he were, I apologise to him. I desire to congratulate him on being re-elected Chairman of Committees. In my opinion, Mr. Hall has done an excellent job as Chairman. He has shown impartiality and, in his deliberations he has been just to all members. I am quite sure they will agree they have had very fair treatment, and I extend to you, Mr. Hall, through you Mr. President, my very best wishes, and I hope you will have another happy term in the office you now occupy.

I wish also to extend my congratulations to Mr. Abbey, on making his maiden speech in this House yesterday afternoon. I feel sure that, if he continues on as he has started, he will become a valuable

member of the House—as he should—because he is a farmer and has the rural pursuits of the State at heart. He, therefore, together with the other agriculturists in this Chamber, will be able to contribute much to many of our debates.

I will deal now with one or two matters in connection with His Excellency's Speech. I did not deal with these questions the other day, as on that occasion I endeavoured to confine my remarks to one or two particular subjects. I will refer first to the visit of Her Majesty the Queen Mother and express my appreciation of the fact that she came to Australia, and to Western Australia in particular. I believe that visits from members of the Royal Family from time to time do us a great deal of good and help to retain and strengthen the bond which exists between us and the British Throne.

I desire next to say a few words of commendation to the Government in connection with the additions being made to Parliament House, as I think it is an excellent move. Whilst there are some people who will criticise the Government for expending certain moneys on those additions, I offer no criticism at all, but, in fact, commend the Government for all it is doing in that direction. Travelling throughout the length and breadth of Australia, one finds that practically every other State in the Commonwealth has an excellent Parliament House building, and I believe that this State should be similarly equipped, with a much better building than it has now, and one in which members will have better accommodation. We all know that, when one of us is visited by a constituent, there is nowhere in these premises to take such a person in order to have the interview. I understand that the plans for the extensions provide for more members' rooms and facilities generally than are available to us at the present time.

I believe that the complex situation in which this State finds itself at the present time must have caused concern to and exercised the mind of every member in this Chamber. I have often wondered what can be the solution to many of our problems. The suggestion made by Mr. Wise the other day in regard to divorcing Commonwealth-State relations from party politics is one that I would like to see implemented. It would be a happy solution to the financial problems of this State if the Commonwealth Government would simply come forward whenever called upon, and give us more money, but I feel that that is not a complete solution. I believe that we, in Western Australia, must try to do something to help ourselves, in addition to asking the Commonwealth Government for more funds, because, fundamentally, the reason why we must approach the Commonwealth for more money is that we cannot balance our Budget.

Our railways deficit accounts for much of the money on the wrong side of our ledger. Many of us are wondering just what we can do to improve the financial situation of this State. The Government, as has been reported in the Press a number of times, has sent a trade mission overseas; I wish it the best of luck, but I must refer to the concessions that the Government is offering to foreign capital—British capital and American capital—if it comes to this State. I am reminded of the rather surprising statement made by the Minister for Railways the other night, when he agreed with me that it was the policy of the Government to impose taxes upon those who could well afford to pay. I said to him that it seems that the Government's attitude is to tax the company with a big balance sheet as far into the ground as it can—

The Minister for Railways: I did not say that at all. You were talking of charges, not taxes.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Taxes and charges; what is the difference? If there is any misunderstanding of what the Minister said or intended, I beg his pardon—

The Minister for Railways: The misunderstanding is all on your side.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thought the Minister agreed with the statement I made, but at all events this brings me to the point that if we are to invite to this State companies with big capital we must consider what will be our attitude to them when they are established here. Are we first to say to them "Come to Western Australia and we will give you all the concessions for which you ask and will help you with free land and everything that we can possibly give you," and then, when they are established, adopt a different attitude? I think we are entitled to believe that when they are established here and are making a profit the concessions will no longer exist. We should put our own house in order, besides trying to get someone from outside to assist us in our housekeeping.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We should try to keep some of our own housekeeping money—

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not propose to engage in that crossfire again because, as the hon. member knows, I have agreed with him on the point that that should be the basis. Not only should we keep some of our own housekeeping money, but also we must get ourselves into a position where we will probably want less of it and therefore be able to ask for less of it owing to our improved economic conditions. When speaking to the debate on the Address-in-reply, I mentioned that the Government had entered into the field of free enterprise to an alarming extent,

and today I secured a long list of buildings on which the Government had been engaged in recent times or which it is at present constructing through the Public Works Department.

To the best of my knowledge tenders were not called for any of the buildings constructed by the Government. No plans were prepared outside the Public Works Department and no work has been done on those buildings outside that department. The work, in the main, is being done on a day labour basis and is being paid for accordingly.

Surely we must strive for a return to a more stable economic position than that in which we find ourselves at present, because the numbers of unemployed are increasing and they are continuing to increase. In 1954, there were 225 unemployed people in Western Australia; in 1955, the unemployment position remained stable because there were only 249 out of work; in 1956, the figure was 1,600; in 1957, it was 2,400; and, in 1958, to the end of June, there were 3,005 people unemployed.

I am sure that members will agree that these figures show that the unemployment position has become alarming and I sincerely hope it will not become worse because we cannot stand an economic situation of that nature; we cannot afford to have a long list of unemployed. In any case, such a state of affairs reacts badly on the morale of the people and when the morale of the people drops we all suffer as a result. I am beginning to think—and I say this with all due respect—that the method for us to adopt in order to take Western Australia out of the situation it finds itself in at present, is for the Government to realise that Western Australia must return to a competitive state rather than the state in which it finds itself at present.

The building industry has been very badly affected by this state of affairs. I believe that if I stood here and talked in this strain all afternoon I would not find myself in accord with Government members because it is a question of policy; it is a question of one person's opinion as against another's.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: And you are always on the losing side.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is a question of what one person believes in, rather than what the other person believes in. It is a question of realising that one section of the people is entitled to its views in the same way as any other, and it is with that tolerance in mind that I have given some consideration to this matter. I have put my point of view and I believe that before we can regain a stable economy we have to turn more to the people who built up this State rather than try to take

away from them the work and the labour in order to feed it into Government enterprises as is being done at present.

Whilst I know that fundamentally we are a primary producing country, the building industry represents one factor in our economic state that counts a great deal. When the building industry is at a low ebb the whole of the economy of the State drops to a low ebb. As the prosperity of the building industry rises and falls, so the whole State is affected. I venture to suggest that if the Government were to try to return to a state where it was prepared to promote private industry so that it could at least compete with the ideas it has in mind, we might find that we would effect a saving in our economy. There would be a competitive spirit in the community and we would regain some of the status we have lost up to the present.

We all know that the situation is simply this: The State must have money. There are a few methods by which the State can get money. I think the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister said there were three ways: It can tax the people, float loans, or issue paper money. Not one of those three is very acceptable, but the fact remains that the Government must have money to carry on, and as the Government enterprises in this State continue to lose money so the Government finds itself in the position that it has to impose—and keep on imposing—more charges and taxes in order that the deficits can be met.

The Minister for Railways, Mr. Strickland, was good enough to supply me with quite a deal of information relating to increased Government charges and the taxes that have been made over a period of years. Also, very generously—it looks as though it were an afterthought because the last three lines are written in ink and not typed—he drew my attention to the volume of Hansard which set out the increases imposed by the McLarty-Watts Government in previous years. It occurred to me, when I read the three lines in writing at the bottom, that there was some feeling of guilt and we should try to blame another Government for increasing charges in the past, but I do not take that stand when discussing a matter such as this.

In addressing myself to this question, I am rather inclined to treat it as a State problem and to say, "Very well, the McLarty-Watts Government increased Government charges, some other Government before that increased charges, and now this Government is increasing charges". But it all harks back to the reason why these charges were increased. It seems they were necessary and reasonable in view of the implication, to be raised later, of a whole list of increased charges such as these I have in front of me.

This list is too long for me to weary the House by reading the whole of it. It will appear in Hansard and those members who are interested will be able to read it and sum up the situation for themselves. This whole matter is one that I want to treat on the basis of leaving party politics right out of it and to express my own humble opinion that something must be done so that Western Australia may return to that state of affairs and to that condition of mind where the people are more aware of what is going on in their midst than they appear to be.

The Press could do a lot to help us in this matter. If the newspapers were to give more space to the affairs and the work of Parliament and if the people of our State would accept greater responsibility by reading about the affairs of Parliament and understanding them, we might have some chance of getting Western Australia back into a more reasonable state. As a serviceman I found there was an inclination to fall into a lethargic state by reason of being in uniform and being under compulsion to do certain things; and we found that the things that got our backs up were those which affected our pay books or put our leave in jeopardy.

The Australian public finds itself much in that position. If some Government wants to do something which is universally unpopular with the community then there is an uprising and the community objects. If we were able to take more notice and give greater attention to the day-to-day problems with which we are faced, I venture to suggest we might not find ourselves in the position that we do at the present time.

In concluding these remarks I say this: This is a responsibility which the Government of the day must accept. It must do what it can to relieve the unemployment situation in this State. It must take stock of the financial arrangements. It must go to Canberra if it can and attempt to get some more equitable distribution of Commonwealth wealth for the State.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: If only we could get the money that the Commonwealth is wasting!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If we could get for schools, roads, water supplies and many other things the money that so many Governments waste over a long period of time we would be better off. Probably this Government is no more blameworthy than any other. The fact is that we do pour down the drain through the State enterprises money which we can ill afford to so dispose of. When we find the bottom of the barrel is bare we have to give it another shake and impose another tax which the people of our community will have to bear.

The whole process must have an end somewhere. One cannot go on from year to year asking the Government what will

be the increases in taxes, and then find that the cost of an article, for which one paid one shilling many years ago, is now very much greater than that amount. Some of these increases have been from as low as 15 per cent. to as high as 300 per cent., and there is only one section of the community that can bear these increases—the taxpayers.

So I say that before this Government, with the policy it is employing, goes any further in allocating work to the Public Works Department, it should entertain private enterprise participation in public works in respect of the long list of projects I have here—42 buildings. Instead of cutting out private enterprise, it should permit private enterprise to compete or tender for the jobs.

The situation is simply resolving itself around this point. The building industry is lagging and when it lags we find unemployment. The one important thing is for the Government to lift the building industry. This will be a good opportunity for it to do so. When I use the term "Government" I do not know what is going to happen in connection with the buildings for the 1962 Empire Games which will be held here.

The Minister for Railways: You do not believe in socialism.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not talking about socialism. I was simply appealing to the Government to give private enterprise in the community a fair share of the work.

The Minister for Railways: We call tenders for it every day. In every "Sunday Times" you will find the advertisements.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not want to weary the House with this long list but I can supply the Minister with particulars afterwards.

The Minister for Railways: I do not know about the ones you are referring to.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: These are the ones I am speaking about.

The Minister for Railways: Tell us about some of the jobs for which the Government does call tenders.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: These are the large jobs using bricks, mortar, timber, steel and all the things that are used in the building industry.

The Minister for Railways: What would you do? Sack all the employees?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am not suggesting that people should be sacked and unemployment created or that the employees of the State Brickworks should be sacked. If the works are allocated to private enterprise those very same employees will be absorbed in employment.

The Minister for Railways: Will private enterprise employ them all?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Frequently they will employ more, because they can carry out the task adequately and at competitive cost. The fact remains that the Government is not giving private enterprise an opportunity to do these things. I do not want to labour this speech because I do not think I shall get very far. It simply seems to be a policy of the Government. All I can do is to make a suggestion that more opportunity to participate in this work be spread round the community rather than have it done by the Government. In that way perhaps we will have a hope of returning to a more stable economy because at the moment there is a very bad drift.

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [3.5]: In speaking to this measure one, of course, comes to the conclusion that there is no option but to support it. The Government must have Supply to carry on. There was one subject I intended to refer to yesterday in the Address-in-reply which, unfortunately I omitted, and that is in regard to the application by the State for a licence to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore to Japan. I do so only in regard to one aspect of this matter. I stated yesterday that the attitude of this Government towards certain people within the State as compared with its attitude to certain people without was peculiar. The same thing applies to the export of iron ore from Western Australia.

The Prime Minister, on his return from the North, stayed at Meekatharra. An opportunity presented itself to the Mayor of Geraldton, together with the Town Clerks and a councillor to go to Meekatharra and interview the Prime Minister in an attempt to obtain his approval for the export of 1,000,000 tons of iron ore to Japan through the port of Geraldton. They went there in an attempt to persuade the Prime Minister to agree. Let us see what happened.

The Premier wrote a letter to the Municipal Council telling it in a clear and quiet way that it was interfering with the functions of Government. He reprimanded the Council for attempting to do something. I cannot understand that attitude at all. That was what happened, yet I notice in the southern end of the State the Mayor of Bunbury, who has been featured in the Press quite a lot because he advocated the establishment of a charcoal iron and steel works there, was not reprimanded but allowed to go on. Why the difference?

It seems to me to be a peculiar attitude for the Government to take. For my part I think the State Government can get this permit to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore from Talling Peak. From the

figures supplied by the Government not only to me last year, but also to Mr. Mattiske this week, there are 295,000,000 tons of iron ore above ground level in Western Australia alone. That is the figure in respect to 16 deposits in which estimates of the quantity have been made known. There are, in addition, six deposits with huge reserves, but no attempt has been made to estimate the tonnage.

For anybody from the Federal House to say that the life of iron ore in this State would be depleted in 30 to 35 years is getting away from the argument altogether. I do not know how it is based unless it is contended that this State and Australia will grow to such an extent in the next 20 years that the consumption will be so great that the ore reserves will be short for its domestic use. I can see no reason at all for rejecting the export permit for this ore.

The Hon. R. C. Mattiske: It was an officer of the Mines Department who gave the estimate.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I agree. The department made a mistake in tying this matter up with the other. Had the Government applied and got permission to export the iron ore it could have used the profits to do what it wanted to do.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is a State matter.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is a State matter. The Government could then go ahead and build the charcoal iron and steel works.

The Minister for Railways: It is amazing that the move in this Chamber received so much opposition. There was plenty of it.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: In my opinion that was the downfall of the original application, in tying the one with the other. Surely it would have been better for the Government to apply for the export of iron ore and to use the profits from the sale in its own way. Had that been done the Government might have got further than it did. Even at this late stage if the Government were to divorce the one matter from the other it might get better results. I only hope this Government can get the permit because at the moment I know of nothing which would give the northern end of the State a greater flip than the export of iron ore from Talling Peak. Of what use that ore reserve—a small deposit like that—will be to anyone in the future, I do not know.

The Minister for Railways: It only contains about a month's supply.

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is about all. I hope that this Government will be able to put enough pressure on the Federal Government to obtain the export permit. I am aware that manganese ore, which exists in this State in much less quantity

than iron ore, has been allowed to be exported. I know that permission has been granted for its export from Western Australia.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: You do not object to its being exported?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN: I would raise much more objection in respect of manganese than iron ore. If there is one commodity in short supply it is manganese. When an export permit is granted for manganese and not for iron ore I contend there is something fishy going on. In my opinion the right approach for the Government, is in the way I have suggested. I hope it can get permission.

I had intended to mention the railways, but now that the Government has widened the scope of the Royal Commission to inquire into other aspects of the railways—I moved in this matter in the House last year, and it was agreed to by the Minister—I do not at this juncture intend to say anything about the matter. The Minister and the Government have been taking a rather long time in carrying out this move. I await with interest the result of Mr. Smith's findings. I support the measure.

THE HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [3.12]: Anyone who looks at the present economy of this State must at times be rather bewildered. We received an assurance that the economy was sound yet we know of growing unemployment. We know that almost every business man in the city says that business has never been so bad; yet, on the other hand, if one tried to book a seat in a picture theatre or other entertainment it is almost impossible to do so, in respect of select seats, for weeks ahead. It does seem to me there is imbalance somewhere, and it will remain if that side of the picture continues.

I have been here now for over 30 years and I have seen the economic changes almost like a graph that hits the peak at one period and falls into the depths at the next. From then there follows a trough which may be for a short or long period. Then there comes another rise in the economy to be followed again by a trough.

It seems to me that we have grown accustomed to living in this trough. As a people, I think we have grown quite accustomed to be the Cinderella State of Australia. It is curious that the western side of this country always seems to be the last to be uplifted, or to expand into a state of economy. I have been wondering whether it is due to some climatic conditions, because we find that the western side of most countries is the slowest to develop.

Sometimes I wonder whether we would have been better off had the great desert been a sea. We would then have been an island State and more or less forced to find the basis of our own economy, in

the same way as islands have done, rather than having to regard ourselves as being on a limb, as it were, stretched out from a prosperous land some thousands of miles away.

I mention this matter for the reason that I believe we have for too long tagged along with the idea that we are dependent on the Eastern States; that we are eventually going to succeed in exactly the same way as they have succeeded, namely, by growing the same things; by selling the same goods; and by having the same outlook, when really we have a completely different economy to face.

Countries like Switzerland have had to find their own economy. After much planning and thought Switzerland, for instance, made the watchmaking trade almost its own. Today, apart from a few people who make really first-class watches, the world relies upon Switzerland for its watch supply. We find, if we look through the world, that many countries have had to do exactly the same thing and build up their own economy to suit their particular environment. The sooner we do something of the same sort, the better.

We cannot continue year after year, to have a tremendous debit trade balance with the Eastern States. The deficit does not lessen as our population increases, but rather does it grow with our increasing population, but it should not. It may be, of course, that if we could double, treble or quadruple our population we would not have that drift to the Eastern States. It is, however, extraordinary that Western Australia which has a large area that could be devoted to dairying—some of it is so used—brings in millions of pounds weight of margarine, annually, from the Eastern States.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is all imported from outside.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes. If we are in need of that amount of margarine, is not there the possibility of some firm being persuaded to manufacture it within the State? But we want such a firm to manufacture in quantities to meet our needs rather than that we should send such large sums of money to the Eastern States.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: That is governed by a quota system, is it not?

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes. I remember that, through Bills that came before this House, we prevented individuals from producing more than a certain amount of margarine. One factor that we might well look at is the question of the supply of margarine which is obviously being used in Western Australia; and while it might have been thought that if it were manufactured here it would have an influence on our dairying industry, apparently we must realise now it would not. So, if we are preventing the manufacture of margarine in this State, let us get rid of that piece of legislation.

In the last year or two we have seen an industry in Western Australia just disappearing. I refer to the fruit trade. Each year it becomes more and more difficult to purchase reasonable fruit simply because the fruit-fly is taking charge of the State. This question has been referred to in the House on more than one occasion. I think it was mentioned before this Government took office. It was suggested that we should take some active measures, but we have never been as courageous as were the authorities in South Australia when they realised that theirs was a fruit-growing country. We have never had the courage to do what they did, namely, walk into places and simply pull out the trees because the householders had no method of controlling the fly. The fruit-fly has now extended well over 100 miles from the centre of Perth, whereas years ago it was nothing like as widespread.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: Does it not extend to Mt. Barker now?

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is certainly found in Bridgetown, and in addition it is attacking fruit that it did not previously attack.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is attacking apples.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is so acclimatised that it is now attacking fruit that it did not attack before. If everyone in the metropolitan area had to give up the fruit trees that are likely to be attacked by the fruit-fly, it would not do them any great harm; particularly if eventually it meant we were able to produce good fruit. Surely this State should be able to produce good fruit; and we should be able to set up a canning industry. But when one started here it struggled to get the necessary fruit. It eventually closed, and the statement was made that in this State no types of fruit were grown that were suitable for canning. So we go on increasing the importations of tinned fruit from the Eastern States.

It would seem that there is a colossal job ahead of someone—whether it is to be someone in this House or from another place, or both, or someone from outside, I do not know—to get down to the real economy of this State and see how it can be improved rather than to expect that there must be a trough in our economy in which we must live.

I believe we have to reorient our views about these things and realise that our markets lie to the north of us where there are huge areas to which we could send our products. Countries like Indonesia will one day attain such a standard of living that there will be a demand for huge imports from countries outside their borders. I think we should be one of the countries that will supply those people with food.

There is no doubt that the vegetables grown here and exported to Singapore are of a very high quality. The other day I

saw some; and I do not think any country could grow better cauliflowers or celery than those we are sending to Singapore. Our exporting should be extended and these goods should go to other markets far beyond Singapore. In the small island of Java there are 40,000,000 people odd who will one day be on a higher standard of living, and as a result they will demand imports.

Meat is exported from Queensland to Manila. We can get meat to Manila days quicker—possibly a week—by ship, than it can be sent from Queensland. Manila, too, will within a short time have a more equal distribution of its wealth and it will be asking for imports. These are the things we should be looking for.

I am impressed by the fact that one of the great dangers which Indonesia faces at the moment arises from epidemics and ill-health generally amongst its people, unless it can be supplied with medical goods. That avenue should already be open to firms here. They could investigate the position and find out whether we could be the first in the field of supplying these people with the necessary requirements. When one talks about the health of a community, one realises that the items of manufacture that go towards maintaining that health are legion. They are not limited to bottles of medicine, liniments and dressings, but go far beyond those things.

The other day I had an interesting suggestion made to me by a man who wanted to grow rabbits as a form of meat supply, either for our own people or for export. This is a proposition that should merit a good deal of investigation because in this State there are many people who still prefer rabbit to poultry, but at the present price at which rabbits are selling, they are luxury goods. One suggestion was that possibly a suitable island could be found close to our borders, on which we could grow rabbits. We could then do what other countries have done and that is breed a rabbit with a whiter flesh than that of our present rabbits. We might even produce for export, meat which could be a dollar producer.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: What about a bit of decent kangaroo? It would go well.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Well, the hon. member can start and produce it. Sometimes members here may think the suggestions they make have no value, but frequently one finds that years afterwards somebody else accepts them as bright ideas. I can remember coming back from America some years ago and making it my business to meet certain people and suggest to them that Western Australia could expand its fat lamb industry by growing fat lambs for sale to the United States. Those to whom I put

the proposition thoroughly enjoyed themselves by laughing at it. But I notice that since the agreement with Great Britain has been altered or discontinued, a move has been made by the meat board to send someone to America with the idea of selling meat there—lamb, beef and pigs.

I am convinced that with the need for protein by those people in that tremendous country there is a field that we could enter and a demand that we could supply, and by so doing we could alter the entire economy of this State. Some day someone will really look into this matter and gain something of tremendous benefit.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: Experimental shipments were made some years ago.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Yes, but something more than that is wanted. The suggestion I made was that in each of two or three of the capital cities of the States—San Francisco, Denver, Boston and perhaps New York—we should establish a cafe through which we could give to the people the best of lamb, cooked as lamb should be cooked.

It is no good giving to a people something they are not accustomed to. That will never produce results. I am quite certain that if we make first class lamb, prepared, as it is in Australia, available to these people, the story will be a very different one. I can remember when I was in America having a meal in one of the most expensive hotels at which I stayed while I was in the United States. The waiter did not know me, and did not know that I was an Australian. I heard him whisper to my host that they had some choice Australian meat—probably it was from one of those experimental shipments—and would his guests like it. My host said, "Yes", and not one of the guests refused it.

I only mention these things to try to make somebody outside this House realise that we just cannot go on drifting along in the way that we have done over the last few years, waiting for something like Kwinana to turn up, or a new company like Broken Hill Pty. to establish itself here; big industries are not likely to establish themselves in this State in a hurry. We have to be content with smaller measures, and an alteration in our economy.

Coming back to one or two matters closer to home, I should like to stress to the Government the need for a complete overhaul of the sanitary services of our schools.

The Hon. L. C. Diver: Hear, hear!

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have been called in to see some of them and I have been to the Health Department about them. The department knows of the position but the reply to me was that it had no chance of doing anything because

it all depended upon whether the Public Works Department had money available for the purpose.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: In some country areas the Health Department has condemned the school sanitary conveniences.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have been told that over 80 schools still have the pan system, and the parents of the children attending those schools have to assist in controlling the system.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Are water supplies available in those schools?

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: In plenty of them, yes.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I should say there are not many schools that do not have a water supply.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I merely asked for information.

The Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have not queried that position, but no one can tell me that the 80 schools are without a water supply. I have seen some of the sewerage systems in the city schools, and while many of them are satisfactory there are others which could be much better than they are. I do not intend to criticise individual schools; all I ask is that, instead of expanding socialised Government works, expenditure on work of this kind be considered first. What chance have we of making reasonable citizens out of children if we do not give them, as children, the things we expect them to use as adults? So I ask the Government to have a survey taken of these schools to see the condition of the toilets and that something be done to put them in order as quickly as possible.

Finally I would like to congratulate the Government on a move to improve conditions at Parliament House; but I wonder if the Government has realised that some day, and we hope soon, the Public Works Department buildings will disappear, and then Parliament House as it stands, plus the new additions will govern the vista from one end of the City of Perth? Will it be worthy of its situation? Will the building that is being erected now justify the site upon which it is being built; or are we building something as a further expedient that will last for another 50 years and will not grace the site upon which it stands?

Perth will be a very beautiful city; and it will be a large one. Surely if we intend to build on the prominent spots in this city we ought to build with an eye to what Perth deserves, and how it will appear in the future when certain alterations are made. I support the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (The Hon. H. C. Strickland—North—in reply) [3.35]: I am very pleased with the way

members have received this Bill. I know that the Leader of the Opposition supported it, although I did not hear him say so. However, there are one or two points in his speech upon which I desire to comment. Firstly, I am in a quandary because I do not know what difference it would make to the unemployment position if the Government stopped erecting buildings with its own men, and asked private contractors to tender for the work. I cannot see what additional men would be required, or how that could affect the employment situation one iota.

I do not agree with the hon. member that the Government is unjust or unfair in its allocation of public works, or in the way in which it spends its money on public works. In the "Sunday Times," and also in various editions of "The West Australian"—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: There are not many in that.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: — hon. members will have noticed tenders being called by various Government departments for work to be done throughout the State. A lot of public works are carried on in country areas, and tenders for such works are not always called in the city papers. That is to give country builders and contractors an opportunity to tender. I admit that some big buildings are being constructed in the city by day labour; and also some big works are being carried out under contract—the Narrows Bridge is a case in point. As regards housing, without exception, tenders are called because that is the policy of the State Housing Commission, and has been, as far as I understand the position, for the last couple of years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Don't you think that if you had called for tenders for some of the big buildings you might have had them erected cheaper?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know to which big buildings the hon. member refers. He did not mention any names.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I will send you over a list.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That is not necessary; all the hon. member need do is to name one or two buildings. Work at the Royal Perth Hospital, for instance, is continuous. That has the effect of keeping the brickyards and other such works going. The hon. member stressed the point that there should be a return to competitive tendering. An honorary royal commission, appointed last year, stated in its report that for no less than 47 items for which the Western Australian Government Railways called tenders annually there was no competitive tendering; there was a fixed price in each instance. In some cases there are eight to ten tenderers,

but they all tender at the same price—price fixing by the tenderers, by the manufacturers and the merchants so that competition disappears.

That is one of the reasons why this Government, which is charged by Parliament to effect economies in the railways, was forced to resort to its own resources rather than accept some of the tenders which were submitted. By this means the Government has effected big savings in some instances and small savings in others; but no matter how big the savings is, it is an economy, and it has been reflected in railway finances, as can be seen from the latest financial report.

I am a little intrigued as to why the hon. member objects to the efforts of the Government to attract overseas capital to this State. Mr. Logan also spoke of the Government's efforts in this connection. Dr. Hislop said that we have to look ahead, and in my opinion we have to look further than the sheep's back. Wool has been our saviour for a long time now.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not deny the fact that the Government is trying to get overseas capital. I wish Mr. Tonkin the best of luck.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member passed some comment concerning the attitude of the Government in inducing people to come here as compared with its attitude to those firms which are already established in this State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right. Now the Minister is on the ball. I was talking of the disinclination of this Government to offer concessions to people who are already here, and who are having a struggle.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am glad the hon. member agrees with me.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I want the Minister to line up the two points.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I want to line it up with Liberal Party policy.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You had better stick to your socialist policy if you want to talk about it.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I want to read some remarks published in "We the People," which is an article in "The West Australian," and which appeared on Saturday the 8th February, 1958. It is all very well to make public statements about certain matters but at times they are like a boomerang—they come back again. What I want to quote

is Liberal Party policy, and this advertisement is paid for by the Liberal Party. It states—

The positive approach—the Liberal approach—to this task—

The writer was talking about Krupps coming here and of Evatt condemning such a move while the Premier of this State was endeavouring to get Krupp to establish an industry here. It goes on—

—of development is an all out encouragement to private enterprise to make capital investment in Western Australia and so expand the economy of the State.

That is exactly what the present Government is attempting to do.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What is the point of your argument?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is objecting to the present activities of the Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Minister apparently, although he might have been listening to me, did not understand what I said. I did not object.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member was comparing the Government's attitude to overseas companies and its attitude to private enterprise already established in the State.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: That is fair enough.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member is attempting to show that the Government is prepared to throw money away to induce overseas investments into this State while it does nothing to help local industry. Is that the position?

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: No; I did not say that the Government is throwing money away. I said that if the Government is prepared to offer these concessions to people with overseas capital, what is the Government's attitude to those industries which are established here?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know of any business concern, farming proposition, or any other proposition of substance, that the Government has been asked to help, that has been refused assistance. I am not saying that there are no such cases; but I do say that I do not know of them. I have a long list of companies which have been helped, and are still being helped, by way of guaranteed bank loans, to establish themselves in this State. I refer to the Alma Engineering Company, the Bindoon Saw Mills and a number of others. I could name 20 at least. Then there are others which have been helped by way of loans and cash advances—to name one, the Albany super works. Many of these concerns have received big advances. Even the Cockburn Cement Company is included. It was not this Government that made the agreement,

but Parliament, when the previous Government was in office. The establishment of the Portland Cement Company has so far cost this Government £700,000.

Sitting suspended from 3.46 to 4.3 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Before the tea adjournment I was telling the House that this Government had assisted to establish several local industries and to keep others going. It is also the policy of this Government to encourage private enterprise as much as it possibly can; and it has not withheld its support, in any shape or form, from private enterprise becoming established or assisting it to become established in this State provided it had a case.

It has been said, or implied, that there is some type of slackening of development in the State. That is natural because the wool cheque has dropped; and for no other reason. In my opinion, wheat is stable as well as meat and beef. Present day prices have never been better. The outlook has never been better for beef or cattle, but wool acts as a check, as Mr. Logan told us. It produces the income and therefore the money is not now in circulation. I would suggest that that is the reason for Dr. Hislop's wondering why there is a checkmate—I forget the exact word he used.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Trough.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: A trough develops periodically but, in my opinion, it is due wholly and solely to the wool market. This Government is going out of its way—a long way out of its way—to enter the competition with other States in attracting industries to Australia. This State commences with a disadvantage for the simple reason that it is the most isolated and remote State in Australia.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I thought you were going to say it was at a disadvantage because of the unfair trading legislation.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: We know that quite a lot of publicity has been given to the effect of that legislation. It has had some control on unfair trading, but a very minute control. It does not deter industries from being established here. Only last week the Premier opened a new nail industry at Welshpool. It is a branch of a firm that has a similar factory in South Australia where price control exists and where there has been an anti-Labour Government in power for many years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: A non-Labour Government.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That legislation has not deterred South Australian development, and the mere fact that

we have legislation here designed to protect the taxpayers and the consumers of this State will not deter firms from coming here. That is a positive fact. It has not deterred the firm I mentioned from establishing a branch in Western Australia. That firm has grown up under price control and is not afraid of this Government abusing any power which it might have, even though it has practically none at all.

One of the members of the company who attended the opening which was performed by the Premier wrote from South Australia in these terms—

My Dear Premier,

Thank you very much indeed for your kindness in declaring our factory open last Friday afternoon. I am quite sure your State has a great future before it and wish you and your Government every success in its development.

Business executives are willing to expand here despite the fact that very much widespread condemnation of the unfair prices legislation is being voiced throughout the land. I consider these people have examined the position thoroughly and they are not deterred; they are prepared to come here and establish themselves in this State.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Could the Minister give us some other examples?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Their coming here means quite a lot to Western Australia. As I said before, Western Australia is the most isolated State in Australia. We might as well have a sea between us as the Nullarbor Plain. Perth and Adelaide are more widely separated than are any other two capitals in the world. We are at a distinct disadvantage, although we have the possibility of establishing better markets in the Near Eastern countries, as mentioned by Dr. Hislop. There has been no neglect of the possibilities of selling meat to the Near East. As a matter of fact a lot of meat is being sold there, and we are also sending a fair tonnage of tomatoes and most of our orange crop—in fact we are trading very well in those countries. As they become more financial and their banking conditions become more stable, Western Australia can look forward to doing more business of all kinds, particularly from the Kwinana rolling mill.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Is not the flour position grim?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It looked grim because of the freight concession being lost. I am not sure whether it was the wheat-growers' or the flour millers' association that agreed to do away with the concession.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Do you know our mills are closing down?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: As far as I know, some mills have been affected; but where we did have a freight advantage, the representatives from this State agreed to forego it, and consequently our manufacturers suffered.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Can you give us more examples like the nail factory?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have been to several factories which have been opened by the Premier, and executives have been present. I have also read in the paper where the man from the Cockburn Cement Company took umbrage. He does not like us a bit, but we cannot be worried about that. The State will still progress. He is giving nothing away to the State, but the State gave him £700,000.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What does the Minister mean by "gave him"? Are you not getting interest? It is a loan!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes we are getting interest.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Why say you have given £700,000?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is as good as given. The hon. member said it would be a good thing when this State returned to some stable economy.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Some more stable economy.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I would like to tell hon. members that when this Government took office, the finances of the State were almost on the rocks. It inherited a commitment of over six millions in connection with Kwinana, together with this £700,000 loan, and unpaid debts in relation to locomotives and rollingstock purchased in England. The Government has paid these amounts off and has returned to a very stable economy.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: At the 30th June, 1953, the figure was in the vicinity of £2,600,000.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: "The West Australian" keeps a very good eye on public affairs and it published a leading article on the 4th July, 1958, headed, "W.A. is Getting Back on the Financial Rails." Therefore, I would say that this State has returned to a very stable economy.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Would the Minister read that article to us?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. It is as follows:—

A big improvement in the railway accounts has contributed to a much better showing in the State financial returns for 1957-58.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It only applies to railways.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, it continues about the railways. There is always the possibility of people, members of parliament, Press publicity and members of various organisations doing much more harm than good to the progress of the State when they criticise, for the sake of criticising, the conditions in this State, particularly in relation to the unfair trading legislation. They could do the State a disservice by their criticism, which is unfounded and unwarranted; and it behoves those who follow this practice to consider whether they are being destructive rather than constructive in relation to Western Australia's progress.

I agree with the thoughts of Mr. Logan in relation to iron ore, when he said that were perhaps 1,000,000 tons of iron ore exported from the vast resources which this State is known to possess, it would mean very little—very little indeed—because if my memory serves me rightly, whereas our resources of iron ore would allow the industry of Australia to carry on for 98 years, the exporting of 1,000,000 tons of ore would reduce that period to 97½ years.

It is all very well to sit here and listen to members talking about unemployment figures in this State, but if all members had got behind the proposal to export 1,000,000 tons of iron ore and establish an iron industry in Bunbury or elsewhere in the South-West of this State, many of those now out of employment would have been employed, and there would have been much more activity on the waterfront at Geraldton and other ports.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What does the Minister think has caused the unemployment in this State?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It is caused by the fact that there is not now the same amount of surplus money being spent, and the reason for that is that the woolgrowers are not earning as much as they did in recent years. Most of the woolgrowers circulate much of the money they receive for wool, and that creates employment. The State is doing everything possible to alleviate the situation and is attempting to encourage overseas capital to come here. At first sight it might appear that the Government is bidding too high in an effort to bring industries here, but it has to bid high if it is to out-bid the other States of Australia—and none of them has been idle in that regard. The Premier of New South Wales has been to America and the Premier of South Australia went there hurriedly—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: There and back in three weeks.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. In addition, there have been trade missions sent overseas by the Federal Government yearly, in an endeavour to attract trade and industries to this country.

Mr. Griffith complained that I did not help Western Titanium with a reduction in some charges. By interjection during his speech on the Address-in-reply, I said that, in the face of that company's latest balance sheet, a reduction was not justified. Mr. Griffith took umbrage at that. He wants to know whether we are going to tax them heavily when they make big profits. The taxation is automatic and has nothing to do with me, but while I have control over charges of this kind—a similar position has arisen in relation to wharfrage and again in regard to rail freights—the position will have to be thoroughly examined before I will be prepared to agree that a concession should be made to any company that is showing large profits.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Were you looking at the balance sheet of the parent company or of the local company?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: That which was published in the local Press not long ago. The trouble with the ilmenite industry is that it is over-producing; and what is the answer to over-production?

The Hon. J. Murray: What about the wharfrage at Bunbury?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I agree with the various harbour boards. I consulted them all on the question of some reduction, because they were all party to the original regulation of prices. The matter is not dead, nor is that in relation to rail freights, although a dead loss is often involved there. These matters have been referred to the Department of Industrial Development and the Treasury. I do not think any Minister or Government officer should be in a position to say to an industry, "Yes, you can have this or that reduction," without first getting Treasury approval, because the Treasury has to meet the losses incurred through these concessions, and the taxpayers have ultimately to find the money.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: My point was the inquiry about a concession on S.E.C. power.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I know nothing about that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That was my point.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: All the companies producing ilmenite are at present experiencing a slump, which I understand is a temporary one, but I am not competent to express an opinion as to that. At all events, the matter has been referred to the responsible departments to investigate and make a recommendation. I believe that any industry which seeks a concession or financial assistance will receive it if it is justified.

The Hon. J. Murray: The slump referred to is brought about by the fact that the overseas market does not exist at the prices at which these people can produce.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If we get some reduction it will be a good thing that I have mentioned the matter.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I come now to Dr. Hislop's remarks in connection with fruit-fly. I am aware that the Minister for Agriculture and his department are concerned at the spread of this pest. In about the last 12 months the fruit-fly infestation in the metropolitan area has become very bad, and it has spread to country areas. I believe the Department of Agriculture is taking active steps to bring the pest under control, and I will not be surprised if, before this session ends, we are asked to agree to legislation to tighten up the law relating to the eradication of fruit-fly.

Too many people are careless about fruit-fly, and I refer particularly to people in the closely settled metropolitan and suburban areas. I know that some householders around where I live, grow fruit trees and spray them and give them every attention, yet others in the vicinity neglect their trees, with the result that the fruit is ruined and the careful people have to destroy their fruit. I will bring the matter before the notice of the Minister to see whether any greater effort can be made.

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.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [4.29]: I wish to take this opportunity of congratulating you, Mr. President, on your election to the office of President of this Chamber. I echo the sentiments expressed by my colleague, Mr. Logan, who said it was fitting that you, having been so long associated with public life in this State and having rendered such great public service, should attain your present position. It gives me great pleasure to see you sitting there, Mr. President.

I desire also to congratulate Mr. Hall on having been re-elected to the position of Chairman of Committees and I support the remarks of Mr. Griffith, who referred to the able manner in which Mr. Hall had carried out the duties of that office in past years. To all those members who have recently been returned to this Chamber, I offer my congratulations, and I congratulate also Mr. Abbey, who is now one of my colleagues. I congratulate you, also, Mr. President, as a representative of the Central Province. One good thing about our mode of life in the English-speaking

world is that there is a degree of orderliness about the manner in which we are governed, and in the method by which we may say who the Government shall be. By that method, followed down through the years, Mr. Abbey has found himself to be democratically elected as a member of this House.

I had proposed to speak on rail closures, but I shall now refrain from so doing in view of the fact that the Government has shown wisdom in extending the terms of reference of the Royal Commission held by Mr. A. G. Smith in order to investigate all rail closures. I have not seen the extended terms of reference, but I hope they are of such a nature that they will include the potential of the areas in which the rail closures have occurred, and I trust they will be given some consideration in any report which the Royal Commissioner furnishes to the Minister.

The Minister for Railways: The terms cover Mr. Logan's motion which was passed last year.

The Hon. L. C. DIVER: On the Bill which we had before the House this afternoon and which dealt with granting Supply to the Government, I felt tempted to speak, but I have left it until now to mention a great need that exists throughout almost the whole of Western Australia, because it occurs in every centre where the Education Department provides schooling facilities. I am harking back to the subject on which Dr. Hislop spoke, namely, the provision of proper sanitation in country schools. Undoubtedly there is a tremendous need and demand throughout the State for the installation of septic tank systems in many country schools.

I am informed that there are approximately 70 schools which have a reticulated water system and it is the desire of the people in those parts to have septic tank facilities provided at the schools. However, I am also told that there is not sufficient money to provide such amenities. In addition to those schools which desire septic tank installations, I am also informed that there are 130 schools which need to be provided with good water supplies in order that they may be provided with septic tanks systems. I can appreciate the attitude of the Education Department towards this subject. The Director of Education says he is an educationist and is charged with the responsibility of educating the children of this State but is not charged with the responsibility of the health of those youngsters.

So it would appear that there is conflict between two departments which actually are administering the one need. On the one hand we have the Education Department which is charged with the problem of educating our children and on the other we have the Health Department which is required to maintain the health

of the children. It would appear, however, that the Education Vote made available by the Government has to provide for the installation of septic tanks at country schools. Getting away from party politics, it appears to me it is high time the Government decided that this problem of school sanitation should be tackled by making it the responsibility of the Public Works Department.

I think there is such a tremendous backlog at present in meeting requests of this nature that no matter how willing the Administration may be to meet the requests, it would now take many years to make up the leeway. I suggest it would take probably £400,000 or £500,000 to provide all the septic tank installations required at present and therefore if the Government tackled this problem in a practical manner by making available about £150,000 every year for this purpose the problem would ultimately be solved. By the way the Government is proceeding at the moment, however, I am sure that the problem will never be solved.

I think all members will agree with me that the health of children is more important than their education. A child can have all the education that is available, but if its health fails such education is of no avail. Therefore, I repeat, it is high time the Government of this State, irrespective of its political colour, faced up to this pressing responsibility; especially the present Administration, which I must criticise. Here we have the position of a very young State trying to emulate the performances of very old countries by making preparations to stage the Empire Games in Perth in 1962.

When it was suggested that Perth should be the venue for the Games we saw much flag-waving and many rash promises made by the Government as to what finance would be made available in order that the Empire Games might be held in this city. The Government is prepared to build up what could eventually be a legacy of debt. After the bubble of the Empire Games has been pricked and all the activity has ceased we will have very little to show for the expenditure of the money which the Government proposes to make available for the holding of the Games other than that, perhaps, in 15 or 20 years, we will see a great deal of fungus growing on the buildings because they will have outlived their usefulness.

On the other hand, if the Government were to spend this amount of money for the building of edifices to house septic tank installations in school playgrounds they would become monuments to the Government's wise administration.

Whilst speaking of the money that the Government proposes to hand over to the Perth City Council to help finance the holding of the Empire Games in Perth, I

would like to draw the Government's attention to many of the various pressing requirements within the boundaries of the Stephenson greater Perth town planning scheme. Those boundaries embrace areas that have been set down in the Stephenson plan for agricultural purposes. But what reply do the residents in those areas, who desire electricity services and water supplies, receive from the Public Works Department and the State Electricity Commission today? In making this point I do not wish the House to misunderstand me in regard to the State Electricity Commission because it is doing a wonderful job; it is just that I hope to weave that aspect into my speech as I go along.

If the residents in the agricultural areas that are within the Stephenson plan cannot produce sufficient evidence and facts in their applications to warrant the extension of water services which measure up to the formula set down for the metropolitan area in any locality where building is proceeding, their hope of obtaining a water supply is extremely remote. The formula laid down by the State Electricity Commission is very similar to that followed by the Water Supply Department because, unless the residents in the agricultural areas included in the Stephenson plan can put up a strong enough case for the estimated consumption of electricity and electric power to drive machinery of various categories, their hope of obtaining an extension of the electricity mains is practically nil.

The point I want to make is this: Before any Government makes available money for the holding of Empire Games, is it not more important that its people should be enabled to follow a decent way of life? Is it not fair that they should have electricity at a reasonable charge and water with reasonable convenience? In view of the fact that those conditions prevail in an area within a radius of 25 miles from the G.P.O., what hope has Mr. Wise, and other members representing out-back areas, in obtaining money to develop the North? The action of the Government shows them how far distant the day is before decent amenities will be provided in those parts. This is simply because we have not the vision to meet the requirements of the people of Western Australia and so make this country a worthwhile place in which to live. We are like a man on an overdraft up to his neck in debt, but we are going to throw a big party in the interim.

I also wish to refer to another matter. If there is any surplus money about it could be used to link up the other points I will mention; that is to finance the settlers on the coastal strip. In those areas there are settlers who have spent all their capital in developing their land but find the establishment of water supplies extremely difficult; so much so that

after carrying out a certain amount of clearing they lack the financial capacity to carry on. I must pay a great tribute to the Government for its move in initiating an experimental water boring programme. That is an excellent move and the Government must be commended for it.

It now appears that the areas I have in mind, Badgingarra and Hill River, will have to be bored to a depth of 400 ft. to locate a good water supply. When the casing is done, and equipment is provided to lift the water to the surface, decent concrete tanks and troughs will have to be installed. All told, such a project will cost at least £1,500 per bore. That being so, how can we expect these people to enter into an undertaking with the Government to have exploratory drilling carried out on their properties? The cost is the limiting factor.

This Government especially, or any other, should, because time is an important factor and the essence of the contract, immediately formulate a plan to make finance available to the people I have referred to and treat the cost as a charge on the land or as part of the purchase price. That is the only way to make the proposition successful. The Government should make a certain amount of finance available each year to provide certain equipment and then when it finds the water, it can make the cost as a first charge against the property, so as to ensure good water supplies and good watering points. This amenity will be there for posterity, not only for Western Australia today but also in the future. It is up to the Government to do something about that matter.

I do in all sincerity ask the Government to move along these lines. The matter is urgent. Although it is outside my area I have received letters from residents there in which I have been requested to press the Government about the provision of finance. I sincerely hope it will do something. I pay due respect to the Government for taking the steps it already has, but if it does not provide the finance necessary it will be extremely unfortunate for those settlers who require assistance.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Does the hon. member think that Western Australia should reject the Empire Games?

The Hon. L. C. DIVER: A person does not give a party when his bank account is in the red. In this case there are many urgent commitments. I am amazed that the hon. member has brought up the question of the Empire Games. At the present moment this State has very little money and so much to do that is much more worthy than the Empire Games. I pay a tribute to the sporting fraternity, but I say that the Empire Games will not bring overseas credit into this country.

As a matter of fact, I often wonder when the visitors come to Western Australia what we will be able to show them under the existing conditions. We can take them to places within 20 miles of Perth and show them homesteads lit by kerosene lights and people carrying water in buckets. That is the way we will be advertising Western Australia. Let us first make Western Australia a better place before putting on the games and that sort of thing.

The Minister for Railways: The efforts of the Government are shown in the Kalgoorlie water supply and the comprehensive schemes.

The Hon. L. C. DIVER: Far be it from me that I should say anything at all against the present Administration or the manner in which it is endeavouring to complete the modified water supply. No man can say truthfully that the Government is not doing a wonderful job. I hope that no unforeseen impediment occurs to prevent the Government from continuing its programme. I realise it is doing a wonderful job in this regard.

I know that later on the Minister, through Government channels, will say: "Look at all the money we spent on the comprehensive water scheme. Have we not done a wonderful job?" At this juncture I say this: It still has money to make available for projects not nearly as essential as boring for water for settlers, or enabling extensions of electricity to be made to the outer areas. We must bear in mind that the S.E.C. is a business concern. I have always treated it as such in my negotiations, and any proposition I put up I do so on a business basis. For that reason, when it comes to short extensions, of which there are many, to localities which cannot comply with the requirements set down by the commission, there should be a different approach by all the parties concerned. We should, by Government grants, assist those localities to have extensions provided over a few miles which at the present time is the stumbling block.

The next point I wish to raise is a vexed one. It relates to the Stephenson plan. On two or three occasions a measure to extend the interim development plan has been before Parliament. The exact period is immaterial. On each occasion when presenting the measure the Minister assured the House that it would be the last occasion and that the next occasion on which the House would see the measure would be in the form of a comprehensive Bill in regard to town planning.

I did have the privilege of being a representative of the Country Party on an all party committee that looked into the Stephenson plan some years ago. In the course of our deliberations it became very

apparent to me that there would in all likelihood be considerable conflict when the local authorities or the Commonwealth valuers made their rating under the Stephenson plan. I refer to the districts where the factory areas cease and the the building areas exist and the agricultural lands commence.

It was very obvious to me there could be occasions where only one roadway would separate the different degrees of siting. Human nature being what it is, it became apparent to me that when one side of the road was being carved up for home-building lots, the agriculturalists or landlords on the opposite side would, if the land was suitable for home building, want to join in the fray. I wanted to know more particularly how the local authorities would be able to differentiate in the rating of the different types of properties.

I have it on record—I can produce a copy of the minutes—that Mr. Green the Town Clerk first assured me that an anomalous state of affairs could not come about and Mr. Tonkin also gave me a similar assurance. I repeat that, human nature being what it is, an anomaly could not be prevented. I was assured that legislation would be brought in to cover the point.

But what do we see? We see all the anomalies that do exist in the outer metropolitan area on this very point. We see agriculturalists receiving assessments that tax their financial capacity to meet, simply because these anomalies do exist and continue to exist. We have reached such a point that I want to take this opportunity to inform the Minister that so far as I am concerned I am going to ask all members, even those on the Government side, to join me in refusing to pass another interim piece of legislation, but to produce a comprehensive Bill. Last year the Minister was away and unfortunately such a piece of legislation was slipped up. Now almost another year has come round and I think it is high time the promise made by the Minister was honoured and a comprehensive piece of legislation regarding town planning introduced.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The interim order is still holding up a lot of people who want to do something with their land.

The Hon. L. C. DIVER: That is so. As a matter of fact I know of one or two cases where drainage is becoming quite a problem; so much so that the areas concerned are set down in the development plan as park lands. These people know that their days are numbered as far as being owners of a residential area is concerned, and that they have to get out. But so long as Parliament puts off the passing of comprehensive legislation, there is not much hope of them saying to the Government, "Here you are. We have to get out. These

are park lands and the encroachment of water has ruined our gardens." It behoves the Government to take over those properties.

Another matter—a serious one indeed—has been mentioned, and it concerns our general economy. We have been told of the collapse in wool prices. One could speak on this subject for a long time, but I do not propose to do so but to discuss it only briefly. I am pleased at what has brought about the collapse in wool prices. I do not want to be misunderstood when I say that. I am not pleased at the collapse occurring but I am pleased that the price has collapsed because international affairs have got to the stage where there is not likely to be a war and it is not likely that armies will have to be clothed and provision made for blankets, etc., for them. In my opinion wool prices have got where they are today, not because wool is not worth as much as it was last year, but because there is no war scare. If there were a war scare, wool would jump 30d. a pound overnight.

If our economy can stand that without a war, in normal circumstances, why cannot the economy stand it all the time for the sake of posterity and the welfare of humanity? My contention is that we are told the credits are not available, but they can be available on a war scare even without a bullet being fired. Therefore if we can fit our financial arrangements to meet the price index for the wool commodity, why should we not do so?

I realise this is something too deep for the State Government, but that is as high a level as I can speak. I cannot speak at a higher level and I cannot go any higher than this for it to be recorded in Hansard. It is high time the Commonwealth Government interested itself in this question. The finance has to be found at some source and in its elimination or use it travels through all spheres of our political and industrial life, for the welfare of the wool producer. The wool industry is much more dominant than the wheat industry.

A few years ago I fought strenuously when a suggestion was made that the wheat industry in Western Australia should have its sowings restricted by 20 per cent. That suggestion was put forward on similar grounds to those which I am mentioning now. Our wool should be put on a plane similar to wheat. Even if there be only a 20 per cent. reduction in the wheat sowings of Western Australia, the resultant harvest could be down at least £4,000,000, and that would be the top £4,000,000 of spending power. That is the amount of wealth which really puts prosperity into the economy. This is why I sincerely trust the Commonwealth Government will soon make a move to do something for our great wool industry. I say this because there is so much tied to it.

Some people may say, "Look at the cheques the woolgrowers get." But there is one thing not realised in this country and that is that we, as regards our economy, lose the Russians, insofar as we imagine that we are all working for ourselves in a free economy and if we do exceptionally well, it is all right. But there is one man we have to answer to and that is the Federal Commissioner of Taxation who wishes us to furnish a return once a year. By the time he has finished his inquiries into our affairs we find we are pretty well restricted; and that keeps us all more or less on an even keel. So, without any police force to make us do this or that, we are all happy—perhaps to say "happy" is an overstatement—to subscribe to the system of furnishing taxation returns. But it is not altogether voluntary; we have to use a little compulsion.

The Minister for Railways: The worker has to furnish his taxation return before he gets anything back.

The Hon. L. C. DIVER: That is so, but I remind the Minister that those not in the category of a worker—in that sense—have to make arrangements for what is known as provisional tax, and they have to pay it in advance.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What about those workers who work much more than 40 hours a week?

The Hon. L. C. DIVER: Yes. It is rather interesting when speaking on the subject of workers to recall that one man who is going through the insolvency court has claimed that he made more money as a worker than he did as a proprietor. There are many different slants on the matter.

Another question I wish to deal with also concerns our economy. This morning, before I left home, a voice came over the radio advising farmers how to adjust their affairs. They were told that if the price was down, the cure-all was to produce more. I thought how strange it was to tell the farmer to produce more when the price was down. It sounded a young voice, and I think it must have been, and it must have been a young brain that produced the transcript. My mind goes back to 1933 when Mr. Scullin said, "Grow more wheat," and we received in the vicinity of 1s. 10d. a bushell for it, which was not very satisfactory to the producers.

A few weeks ago I noticed in the Press a paragraph stating that some big mining companies came to the conclusion that there was over-production of the metals they were mining and so they decided to close down or limit their production to a given amount. To me that is common-sense. I hope the powers that be will get busy with these broadcast scripts and see that a bit of sense comes over the air, and not nonsense.

I realise that I touched on matters with a broad national approach in the latter part of my speech, but in the early part of it I brought forward questions that the present Administration is competent to deal with immediately; and before resuming my seat I ask in all sincerity—especially in regard to water boring—that these matters be dealt with as urgent. I support the motion.

On motion by the Hon. F. R. H. Lavery, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 14th August, 1958.

CONTENTS

	Page
Questions on Notice :	
North wharf, Fremantle, commencement date, cost and completion date	130
Public Service, reclassification	130
Malaya, Government's intention re trading Flats for the aged, number, location, etc.	130
University of Western Australia, erection of buildings and cost	131
Drainage, Scarborough-Innaloo area	131
Wittenoom Gorge, additional water supplies	131
Bamboo Creek-Marble Bar road, progress of repairs	131
King Edward Memorial Hospital, additions and finance approved	131
Root vegetables, new selling arrangement at markets	132
Fishing industry, effect of fresh fish imports	132
Land tax, total receipts, 1957-58	133
Sewage treatment plant, installation south of the river	133
Claremont police station, date of completion and personnel	133
Telephones, instruction on use	133
Termites, damage to pastures and crops	133
Railways, reports of Royal Commissioner City Beach, swimming and fishing	133
Hollywood Chest Hospital, capacity and opening date	134
Narrows bridge, technical problems and responsibility	134
Unfair Trading and Profit Control Act, proposed amendments	134
Land, agreement with Esperance Plains Pty. Ltd.	135
Botanic gardens, availability of reports	135
Hire purchase, Premiers' conference	135