

stronger components of the trade, it is thought that enforcement of permissible intake conditions to a reasonable minimum would make areas available, through forfeiture, to the smaller people in the industry who, it must be admitted, have not been regarded very favourably by those who control large areas of our forests.

That is what I remarked earlier. This permissible intake might be used to the benefit of the small mills which are crying out all the time for part of our State forests.

I think I will close on those paragraphs I have read from the Select Committee's report, and repeat that in my view the Government, through the Minister, will do the greatest possible disservice to Western Australia if it continues with its present intention of dispensing with the services of the present Conservator, Dr. Stoaite, who over a long period of service to this State, has shown not only his capacity, but his desire and his ability to work night and day in the best interests of Western Australia and not in those of Dr. Stoaite personally. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. McI. Thomson, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 8th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.24. p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 26th August, 1953.

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

Minister for Forests and Press Report.

THE MINISTER FOR FORESTS: (Hon. H. E. Graham, East Perth): With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I desire to make a statement. I am most perturbed by the report in "The West Australian" this morning headed "Forests Committee Reports on Stoaite." Not only is this statement mischievous and without foundation, but it is embarrassing to both the Conservator and the members of the committee. An interim report has been received from the committee and has been passed on to the Conservator for his consideration and comment. At no time has it been my intention to refer to the committee the question of the administration of the Forests Department. Such was not in the committee's terms of reference and it has not, in fact, in any way reported on this aspect. I flatly deny that the committee has reported "that Dr. Stoaite has devoted himself more to the technical side of forestry to the detriment of departmental administration," or that there has been any reference to "uneconomical clearing costs."

QUESTIONS.**TRAFFIC.***As to Installation of Lights, Stirling Highway.*

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

In view of the fact that steps are being taken to call a public meeting in Claremont to urge the provision of traffic lights for the Bay View Terrace intersection of Stirling Highway, will he make an early announcement regarding further installations which would render such a meeting unnecessary?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:

A deputation from the Claremont Municipal Council was advised on the 10th June, 1953, by the Minister for Local Government, that the sum of £20,000 allocated for the provision of traffic lights and road signs during 1953-54 will be absorbed for the lights to be installed at the West Perth subway and in William-st., Perth, and for urgently needed road signs.

No decision with regard to further lights will be made until the success or otherwise of the West Perth subway and William-st. lights is established.

If proved successful, consideration will be given to the installation during 1954-55 of further lights.

A decision as to the location of any further lights will be made as soon as practicable in 1954.

HOSPITALS.*As to Reserving Site, Eastern Suburbs.*

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Health:

Has he taken any further action to reserve a site for a future hospital to serve the eastern suburbs?

The MINISTER replied:

The State approached the Commonwealth for the release of the Edward Millen Home for use as a community hospital, but the Commonwealth has now refused the request.

Consideration has been given to securing a site for a hospital to serve the eastern suburbs and the matter is being pursued.

NORTH-WEST.*As to Taxation Exemption.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Premier:

(1) Since last February have any representations been made to the Commonwealth Government in support of the proposal to exempt for a period the taxpayers of the North-West of this State from income taxation, on the lines originally submitted to the Commonwealth Treasurer at Canberra in 1951 by a delegation headed by me, or on similar lines?

(2) If so, when were the representations made and by whom?

(3) If not, is the Government of this State in favour of such proposals?

(4) Has a copy of the report of the Taxation Advisory Committee, which took evidence last year on the matter from members of the committee concerned, and known as the Northern Rehabilitation Committee, been made available to the State Government?

(5) If not, have further representations been made to the Commonwealth Government for such a copy?

(6) If the answer to No. (5) is in the negative, will he make such further representations?

(7) If a copy is available either now or later, will it be made available to individual members of the House desiring to peruse it?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) In May the Minister for the North-West, on behalf of the Government, wrote to Sir Arthur Fadden stressing the necessity for special taxation relief in the northern areas of this State.

(3) Last April I received members of the Northern Rehabilitation Committee and assured them of the Government's support for their taxation proposals which were similar to those presented to the Commonwealth Government by the delegation led by the hon. member, accompanied and supported by Hon. F. J. S. Wise, the then Leader of the Opposition.

(4) and (5) The latest advice received from the Federal Treasurer stated that he had been furnished with the report of the Commonwealth Committee on Taxation. Final examination of the report had not been possible and he was unable to advise of his Government's conclusions.

(6) Yes. The Minister for the North-West will accompany another deputation next month.

(7) If a report is received it will be made available to members.

BRIDGES.*As to Structure at Lower King River.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it the intention of the Government to honour the promise made by its candidate for Albany at the recent election to construct a new bridge at the Lower King River?

(2) If so, when will the work be commenced?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) In October, 1952, a sum of £2,000 was approved for the rehabilitation of the Lower King River bridge. It was expected that this work would enable the bridge to function satisfactorily for at least five years.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

FORESTS.

As to Research Work and Committee Report.

Mr. HEARMAN asked the Minister for Forests:

(1) Is he aware that in the answer he gave last Wednesday to the member for Vasse relating to a Press report of a statement of Mr. Rodger, the Commonwealth Conservator of Forests, respecting forestry research, he expressed neither pleasure nor satisfaction in the eulogistic nature of the report?

(2) Would he consider amplification of this answer to remove what might appear to be a lack of generosity towards officers of the Forests Department?

(3) Has any report, interim or otherwise, from the Forestry Advisory Committee been received by him?

(4) Will he table such a report when it is received?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) I was merely asked whether I agreed with a statement and indicated in reply that I was not in a position to express an opinion.

(2) In view of the foregoing there is no need for amplification.

(3) Yes.

(4) The report has been passed to the Conservator of Forests and discussions on its contents are proceeding between him and me. When these deliberations are concluded I will be prepared to table the report.

EGG MARKETING.

As to Administration of Board.

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is he aware that egg producers are required to pay 10d. per dozen to the W.A. Egg Marketing Board on all eggs produced, excepting those for hatchery purposes?

(2) If so, will he undertake to have a full investigation of the cost of administration of the board?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

This is made up as follows:—

Pool scheme, 6d. dozen.
Building fund, 1d. dozen.
Board administration, 1d. dozen.
Receiving, grading and selling,
3½d. dozen.

The pool scheme is a charge against producers which fluctuates during the year from 1d. to 6d. The amount of pool deduction depends on the surplus to be removed from the market as the pool account deals only with losses sustained in removing the State's surplus eggs by exporting in shell and pulp to the United Kingdom, Singapore, Persian Gulf, Colombo, etc. Losses due to the removal of

surplus eggs during the 1952-53 season just concluded totalled approximately £147,000—this loss was "equalised" through the pool account and financed by the pool scheme. As an indication of how these losses are incurred, it is pointed out that at the present time although producers are receiving 4s. 9d. per dozen for 1st grade hen eggs, the bulk of these eggs are exported at prices giving a net return of from 3s. 5½d. to 4s. 1½d. per dozen. Experience has proved that since the inception of this pool account scheme producers have benefited by from 1d. to 3d. per dozen on their net returns.

The building fund contribution of 1d. is to provide funds to undertake a building programme of cold stores, depots, etc.

The board administration contribution of 1d. per dozen covers the actual cost of board administration as separate from the expense of marketing and marketing administration.

The receiving, grading and selling contribution of 3½d. per dozen covers all costs from actually receiving the eggs to final disposal of eggs and egg products. These costs include receiving, grading, candling, packing, selling, marketing and all office administration costs of paying producers, recording consignments, oiling (local and overseas), etc.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

HOUSING.

(a) As to Reason for Building Expansible Homes.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) Is he aware that the expansible houses referred to in the question to him by the member for Canning on the 25th August, were constructed on the advice of the Housing Commission to provide much-needed accommodation for a considerable number of people?

(2) Does he not think that they fulfilled a useful purpose?

(3) Has not the provision of these houses meant that more families have been housed?

(4) Does he regard the provision of these houses as a doubtful legacy?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The expansible houses were constructed on the advice of the Housing Commission and the proposal was endorsed by the then Cabinet.

(2) and (3) Yes, but at the same time these types of dwellings have presented and are presenting, difficulties as to their enlargement. The additions which must be made today are at a considerably greater cost than would have been needed to provide the extra accommodation at the time these dwellings were first built.

(4) Yes, for the reasons stated in Nos (2) and (3).

(b) As to Report on Snowden and Willson Contracts.

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Premier:

(1) Has the Government given consideration to the report of the Royal Commissioner on Snowden and Willson?

(2) If so, is any action proposed to—

(a) carry out the Commissioner's recommendations;

(b) prevent a recurrence of such practices as the Commissioner condemned in his report?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) The report has been studied by the Minister for Housing.

(2) The main recommendations of the Royal Commissioner were in respect of—

(a) the period taken in the erection of houses;

(b) the method of calculation of the rise and fall factor;

(c) the keeping of complete books and records.

The State Housing Commission in all contracts entered into during the last 12 months has worked on the basis of a firm price in lieu of a rise and fall clause and has imposed a definite time limit and penalty clause.

The termination of rise and fall conditions obviates the necessity for detailed accounts for this purpose: Inquiries indicate that the procedure followed by the State Housing Commission is becoming the general practice in private building.

AMERICAN CAPITAL.

As to Encouraging Investment.

Mr. COURT asked the Premier:

(1) Has he seen the statement by the U.S. Vice Consul in the "Daily News" of the 20th August, 1953, under the heading "American Capital for the Asking"?

(2) Is it the intention of the Government to follow up the matter with a view to interesting the United States of America capital to invest in Western Australian industries and development, particularly in view of the income tax treaty to eliminate double taxation between Australia and the United States of America, which has now been finalised by the Commonwealth Government?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day—Amendment.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. V. R. ABBOTT (Mt. Lawley) [4.44]: I wish to express my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, at your appointment to the honourable position that you now hold

and at the appointment of the member for Middle Swan to the position of Chairman of Committees. I can express that sentiment whole-heartedly as both you gentlemen have been long known to me and our friendship has always been on a most happy basis. I must admit that at times I have used very harsh words in this Chamber, probably sometimes without justification, but I know that on no occasion, having once left the Chamber, has any ill-will been borne towards me by either of you as the result of anything said in the course of debate. I feel that no member on the Government side of the House could more honourably have filled your respective positions.

I was pleased, Mr. Speaker, to hear your comment on the decorum of this Chamber in respect of the reading of newspapers and the occasional inattention of members towards the debate. Many years ago, as older members will recall, there was in charge of the gallery of this House a very fine old police constable named Green. I was just about thrown out of the gallery by him on one occasion because, while waiting there for some debate that I was anxious to hear, I dared to open a book.

The Minister for Lands: What saved you?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the decorum required by you in this Chamber should be similar only to that required in the gallery. There is nothing more irritating to a member of the public who is sufficiently interested to come here and wait to hear our debates than to be threatened with ejection because he happens to open a book in the gallery or even speak in quiet tones to his neighbour, or something of that sort, and then to look down on members talking at will, leaning back in their seats in comfortable positions and some of them—including the member for Mt. Lawley—perhaps reading newspapers. An experience of that kind does not lead to any feeling of respect for this Chamber, and so I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, at your gentle reproof of members here, and I hope that you will exercise only the same discipline in the gallery as you feel is required in this Chamber.

Hon. L. Thorn: Are you frightened that someone might start reading while you are speaking?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Perhaps. I have read His Excellency's Speech and naturally, as a member of the late Government, I am proud of its contents. I hope that when it is time for me to sit again on the opposite side of the House, the Government of the day will be able to write such an illuminating record of valuable service to the State as was placed by the present Government in His Excellency's Speech.

The Minister for Housing: You will not have to wait as long as you think. There will be another one in 12 month's time.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I was thinking of one written by myself. It was nice of the Premier to give so much praise in this Chamber when he had failed to give the previous Government praise while on the platform.

The Premier: I praised your Government during the election campaign, and even then you could not win.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That was only an optimistic hope, like spinning a penny in a game of two-up—the fairest game of all—and it happened to come down the right way for the Premier. I do not know whether you remember, Mr. Speaker, seeing an excellent picture shown in Perth and based on the times of King Louis XIV. of France, when kings were all-powerful. The film dealt with a head of the underworld who was a very brilliant man, historically and otherwise. The title of it was: "If I were King." I always regard the Address-in-Reply debate as an excellent opportunity for private members to express what they would like to do if they were King, which I am sure so many of us dream about—

The Minister for Housing: Does the hon. member mean that he is dreaming now?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: —while members of the Government, of course, look on with easy tolerance. Like every other member, I have my dreams as to what I would do if I were King.

Mr. Nalder: The hon. member had his opportunity for six years.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I had a few dreams, too, during that time, and they were very pleasant. I will mention a few ideas tonight that I would put into effect if I were King.

The Minister for Health: If the hon. member were King he would still need to have money.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If I were King I would have money; Louis XIV did, anyway. The first matter I wish to mention is only a trifling one, but it causes me great annoyance and I am sure other members of the public suffer inconvenience, too. I refer to the State Government departments' list in the telephone directory. If any member can find what he is seeking in that list, he will be very fortunate.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The hon. member will never be King if he cannot do that.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I would like to see the State Government departments' entries in the telephone directory altered.

The Premier: I could improve it myself; I quite agree with the hon. member.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, some sort of alphabetical index should be provided in order that members of the public might find a particular branch of a department they are seeking in the telephone directory. However, I am glad to hear that the Premier thinks along the same lines as I do. The second thing I would do would be to give the member for Victoria Park his wish. He said that he did not think Victoria Park had enough playing grounds and I entirely agree with that. I suggest to him that if he can persuade the Government experts that a suitable piece of land would be that now being reclaimed between the Causeway and the race-course he would have an excellent site for the provision of playing fields. That area amounts to some hundreds of acres and if it were turned into playing grounds, the people on the south side of the river would have sporting facilities unequalled anywhere in Australia.

Mr. Lawrence: It would hardly be central.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, it would.

Mr. Lawrence: It would not be a central position.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It might not be as central as it could be, but it would be just as central as the playing grounds along the river are to the northern metropolitan area. I suggest that site because I have a nasty feeling that a department such as the Department of Industrial Development may try to obtain some of that land for industrial purposes. It is right on the river bank and is low-lying, but it would provide ground for playing fields which would be unequalled elsewhere in Australia. I make that suggestion to the member for Victoria Park because he might care to interview the Minister controlling the State Gardens Board to ascertain if he can set the ground aside for playing fields.

Mr. McCulloch: It would make a good soccer ground.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, it would and it would be an excellent ground for other sports, too.

The Premier: The Azzuris could throw their opponents into the river.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, that could happen. Another matter I would like to mention is that Western Australia has not a botanical garden. That is a pity because we are attracting more and more overseas visitors and others from all parts of Australia who would be glad of an opportunity of inspecting our Western Australia flora. Many years ago Melbourne started a botanical garden which now contains a wide range of flora.

Mr. Bovell: We have the best botanical gardens in Australia in King's Park.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I hardly think that. King's Park undoubtedly is a wonderful heritage that has been left to the

people, but I would not say it is a botanical garden. I doubt whether the soil there is suitable for a botanical garden. Apart from that, it has no trees or other specimens of flora from other parts of the world nor has it a good variety of Australian flora. The botanical garden I envisage is one that would contain various specimens of flora from all parts of the State, from other States and other countries. In the Supreme Court gardens a small plot has been set aside in an attempt to foster species of flora that are indigenous to Western Australia. There is a location which I have in mind which would be most suitable for a botanical garden, but at present it is vested in the City Council. It is that low-lying area around Reabold Hill in Floreat Park. It has natural small lakes and I have been informed that the soil is of the right type. There are some 200 or 300 acres that could be used for such a purpose. If a botanical garden were established there, I am sure that Western Australians in the future would appreciate such a move.

The Minister for Housing: The State Gardens Board has been chasing that site for a number of years.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I know, and I am throwing out suggestions to members so that some steps may be taken in that direction.

Mr. Nimmo: That area has been reserved for the people of Floreat Park by the Perth City Council.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is so, but I am suggesting that a small area should be reserved, say 200 acres, which is the minimum required for a botanical garden according to the experts. In return, some of the land adjacent to the river that I have mentioned could be handed over to the Perth City Council for playing fields. Therefore, if I were King I would like to see Western Australia have a botanical garden.

Pelican Point is another beautiful spot in this State and, as members know, it is adjacent to King's Park. I would be pleased to see it brought under the jurisdiction of the King's Park Board. That board has most successfully managed King's Park, which has become endeared to the hearts of the people of Western Australia. It is well known that the University has acquired land adjacent to Pelican Point and it is a pity that it was allowed to be vested in that body. That is why I suggest Pelican Point should be taken in as part of King's Park. There are always people who think they are acting in the best interests of the State who would like to lay their hands on such an area. I know that the Education Department in this State tried very hard to obtain Pelican Point for the establishment of a training college and, from its point of view, quite rightly so.

Everyone realises that a new training college is essential to meet the growth of the education system, and we must admit that it ought to be situated adjacent to the University because the work of those attending the training college is so closely linked with the work done at the University. Consequently, if possible, the college should be adjacent to the University. In the circumstances, I personally would not be adverse, if Pelican Point were added to King's Park, to a like area at the back of the park being deleted, an area that would not have the advantages of Pelican Point as one of the best scenic views in Western Australia and perhaps the whole of Australia. My suggestion might meet both conditions.

I believe a suggestion has been made that a further area in the vicinity of Pelican Point should be reclaimed and that the Training College should be built there. Such a site would be very low-lying and difficulty might be experienced to get firm foundations. I would sooner see the college located a little further from the wonderful heritage we have of the river frontage. Then, if Pelican Point were added to the King's Park area, and a like area were deleted at the back of King's Park or from some other suitable position to provide a site for the college, the problem would be satisfactorily solved. That is how I should consider meeting the problem if I were—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: If you were King?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. The next point I wish to raise is based on comments in the annual report of the Commissioner of Police. At page 10, the following appears:—

I strongly urge that the law relating to betting and gaming be reviewed and codified, with the object of either:—

- (a) suppressing such practices; or
- (b) controlling them within reasonable limits, accordingly as it may be considered desirable in the interests of the community generally.

The situation as it stands is most unsatisfactory, particularly as one or more country towns have practically been granted immunity from prosecution for betting, for apparently no better reason than early laxity in prohibiting or controlling it.

This is in keeping with the practice which developed of allowing a certain amount of unlawful trading in liquor on licensed premises on Sundays, but which has now been overcome by an amendment of the law to meet the situation.

Every lawyer during his training has had installed into his mind the importance of respect for the law and, as most members are aware, I introduced a Bill last session to amend the Licensing Act with

a view to enabling us to conform with the customs that the community demands. I personally might or might not approve of those customs, but when the community demands a certain liberty and custom and has built up vested interests, we ought to bring the law into conformity with that custom. It is of no use having a law that the people will not respect or obey. That was amply proved by the experience of the United States of America when prohibition was adopted in that country. When we find a great many respectable people taking the view that it is not incumbent upon them to observe a law, it is time the law was altered and something more sensible substituted.

I feel that the law relating to betting should be altered and that it is the responsibility of the Government to alter it. We have to admit that many people for many years have availed themselves of this demand by the community in order to earn a living by providing facilities for gambling. I do not intend to say whether gambling is a good or a bad thing, but many respectable members of the community consider that there is no harm in it.

Mr. May: Have not you an opinion on it?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, and I intend to give it. I consider that the business of gambling is not an ordinary one and should not be in private hands.

The Minister for Justice: What would you call the Stock Exchange?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not call that gambling. If we are going to legalise gambling, control should be in the hands of the Government and not in the hands of private persons out for gain. Therefore I would advocate the adoption of the New Zealand system of a totalisator or facilities for placing bets on the totalisator. That system has proved a great success in New Zealand, and no less a person than Mr. Stratton, who is so experienced and interested in the business of trotting, has expressed himself strongly in support of it.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Do not you believe in private enterprise when it comes to gambling?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not believe in its being in the hands of private individuals.

Mr. Lawrence: Do you believe in gambling?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think it is purely stupid, but a lot of people think otherwise and they get a considerable amount of amusement out of it. That remark does not apply to people in any one strata of the community.

Mr. Lawrence: You want to legalise something that you think is stupid.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think it should be rationalised. Many people are demanding the right to gamble. They do not con-

sider it stupid and they claim to get amusement from it. I do not believe in horse-racing. I maintain that it constitutes an absolute waste of energy.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Why go there?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I go so seldom that it would make no difference either way. The enormous amount of money that is utilised in gambling constitutes an absolute waste of national energy because, all said and done, money represents energy and man-hours. Gambling is a great economic loss. However, many people, including Royalty consider that horse-racing is a sport. I do not; I regard it as anything but a sport and an individual who has anything to do with it is anything but a sport. Really it is a greedy and avaricious instinct to try to get money easily. So I consider that something should be done in that direction. If the Government saw fit to adopt the course I have suggested, a very large revenue would be derived from the totalisator tax. I think I read an answer to a question to the effect that £46,000 has been collected by the Government from the betting tax.

The Minister for Justice: Just on £53,000.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is a substantial sum of money, and if off-the-course betting were taxed, a very large amount would be collected. However, I say without hesitation that many men supporting families by assisting to cater for the public in the way of gambling would be placed in a most embarrassing position, and I see no reason why some of the tax money should not be used to assist those men to rehabilitate themselves. To me it would be a dreadful thing suddenly to take away a man's avocation—a man doubtless having the family responsibilities that most of us have. It would not be fair to say to him, "We are going to shut you off from the custom that has prevailed and has given you a livelihood for years because the law says that must be done." I could not approve of that. Therefore I should like to see a percentage of the money collected by way of the tax made available for the rehabilitation of those men so that they might start in a new and better way of life.

The Minister for Justice: They will still gamble.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That might be so, but they would then gamble on the totalisator. I have seen the system that operated in South Australia—that of licensing betting shops. The system was tried out in that State.

Mr. Lawrence: It was well run, too.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, but my cousin, who introduced the measure into the South Australian Parliament, told me afterwards that he had never made a bigger mistake. The effects became so bad that when the war occurred, though the Act was not repealed, all licenses were revoked, and now it is almost impossible

to get a license in South Australia. Betting there is administered by a board, but the Government edict is such that a license would not be granted to a big town like Whyalla. When the betting shops were licensed, the turnover increased enormously. The system simply encouraged people to bet. The mere fact of its having been made respectable to walk into a shop and bet created a goodwill in betting that was astounding.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Did you look at it in action?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. Some of the betting shops went so far as to make provision for women alone.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That was not my experience.

The Minister for Native Welfare: What is wrong with that?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: In my view it is wrong, because nobody should be encouraged to gamble. I am basing my remarks on the thesis that I consider gambling is foolish and should not be encouraged.

The Minister for Housing: I thought you were opposed to women having children.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I meant that I did not approve of women with young children going into shops to bet.

The Premier: What about the hotels?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am not keen about their going to hotels, either.

The Minister for Native Welfare: What are you suggesting?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am suggesting that we adopt the New Zealand system of totalisators, which should be in sufficient numbers to enable those who insist upon indulging in betting to make a bet legally, that it be under Government control, and that the Government collect its portion of the tax. In doing away with bookmakers, I would make provision to see that they were rehabilitated in some other avocation, as I think that would be only fair.

Mr. Lapham: You would only drive them underground.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No. If we had a sufficient number of police, and made the penalties severe, it would be stopped. It was stopped in New Zealand. People do not go to gaol for this sort of thing.

The Minister for Housing: What about the telephone operators?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: They would go out, too.

The Minister for Housing: They have immunity here at present.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, because it is not illegal to bet by telephone, but under the system I suggest they would go out. The only gambling would be through the totalisator.

Mr. Heal: Controlled by the State.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

The Minister for Housing: You mean a totalisator in every little hamlet and village throughout the State.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. That is done in New Zealand.

The Minister for Housing: You would need thousands here.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is so.

The Minister for Health: In 1951, when I was in New Zealand, I could get a bet other than on the totalisator.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That might be so. The next matter I wish to deal with is more theoretical. I feel that the executives under democracy are being subjected to most unreasonable pressure by large pressure groups. I do not say that the pressure groups are of one classification, because there are all sorts of them. When we read of such happenings, we realise it is time something was done.

The Minister for Native Welfare: What publication is that?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It is the "News Review."

The Minister for Native Welfare: Who runs it?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If the Minister has any doubt about the facts, they were, I think, also published in "The West Australian." I just happened to have this copy here.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Who runs it?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know.

The Premier: Would you repeat what you said just now?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. I said that if the Minister had any doubt about the matter the facts were, I think, also published in "The West Australian."

The Premier: What does that mean?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That they were also published there. This report relates to an application made by the Commissioner of Railways in New South Wales to the industrial authority there for the abolition of week-end penalty rates. As everyone knows, the railways in New South Wales, and everywhere else, are in severe financial straits, and as a result the average person is contributing very largely to them by way of taxation, and otherwise. I am not quoting this on the merits of penalty rates, but merely as an example of what I call pressure groups.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Will you have one from the B.M.A. after?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. It is one, and I could name half-a-dozen others. The quotation is as follows:—

The Labour Council of N.S.W. unanimously decided to ask the Commissioner to withdraw his application for a reduction in week-end penalty rates.

Union's Grip.

Mr. J. D. Kenny, M.L.C., assistant secretary of the council said he had spoken to the Minister for Transport (Mr. C. E. Martin) and he had no hesitation in saying that, if necessary, Mr. Martin would issue a ministerial direction to Mr. Winsor "telling him where he got off."

The fact that Mr. Winsor was ordered by Cabinet to withdraw his application is proof positive of the grip the unions have over the Government.

I merely give this as an example of a pressure group. The Premier must know that there is, in the Collie union, a small group exercising pressure on his Government today. The Collie union, led by a Communist, has put considerable pressure on the Government.

The Premier: That is not so.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The union has issued an invitation to the Premier, and to the Minister for Mines, to go down there and hear its views on the Government's decision to allow two open cuts. If that is not pressure, I do not know what is. The union does not ask the Premier and the Minister there for fun, or to approve of what the Government has done.

The Premier: As an ex-Minister for Prices, you should know what pressure is.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do. I am fully aware of it. Under this system, too much pressure is being placed on the executive, and that is not true democracy. True democracy is where the executive carries into effect the wishes, not of a political group but of the whole people.

Mr. Brady: Who applied the pressure on Grayden at Nedlands?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not know. Does the hon. member?

Mr. Oldfield: Who paid the expenses of the Labour candidate there?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Do not talk about expenses in that area!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I submit that a different method of election of the executive should come into effect, and what I suggest is based largely on the system that now operates in Switzerland. It has done for many years, and which has proved highly successful. I propose that the

executive should be elected at a meeting of both Houses of Parliament, on a proportional representation basis.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do you favour—

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes.

The Premier: What would you suggest the Ministry should do when the petrol companies apply for an increase in prices?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Do not break my train of thought! A meeting of both Houses should elect the executive, or Cabinet.

The Minister for Native Welfare: It is a property qualification in another place.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: If the Minister prefers it, Cabinet could be elected by this House. In Switzerland, the executive is elected by both Houses, and I think that is the better way. It would, however, be infinitely better than what is done now, if in this House we elected the executive by secret ballot on a proportional representation basis.

The Premier: The hon. member might never get into a Ministry that way.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: That is quite a possibility, but I think the Premier would, because he is a man of considerable ability.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It is more than the Premier can stand!

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: This system has been proved in Switzerland to be very successful, and if it were applied here, it would mean that the Government would be less subject to this group-pressure, which is, in my view, rather spoiling democracy today. I have here an interesting book which I commend to members. It is written by Esme Howard, who was afterwards Lord Penrith, a distinguished professional diplomat, who was ambassador to Washington, amongst other places. His biggest job, as far as I know, was that of ambassador to Washington during the years of the first world war. Among other places that he was ambassador to was Switzerland, and he was very impressed with the system there.

Mr. Brady: What is the title of the book?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: "Theatre of Life", by Esme Howard. It is in the library. What I shall read was published in the Press many years ago by Lord Penrith, but he repeats it in his book. At page 189 he has this to say—

It may be accepted as an axiom that a truly democratic Government should first and foremost express as far as is humanly possible the will of the people of the country. An ideal constitution should make it impossible for parliamentary representatives to impose on the country laws which the people do not want. Further, it should be very difficult, if

not impossible, for a small majority to impose constitutional changes to which nearly one-half of the electors are opposed.

That, I suggest, is the present situation in this Parliament. The Government has a very narrow majority, yet it has power to introduce into this House and have passed by it, laws that would probably be approved of by only a small majority of the people.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Another House, representing the minority of the people, can reject anything we do.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I would not say that.

The Minister for Native Welfare: I am saying it.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes, and I differ from the Minister.

The Minister for Native Welfare: You know it is true.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No. I will argue this point with the hon. gentleman when the Government's Bill in that connection is introduced. Esme Howard goes on to say—

The first requirement of democratic Government being the expression of the real will of the people, the second is that the political machine should work as smoothly and as stably as possible. For this end, care should be taken so to constitute the legislative and executive bodies as to avoid as far as humanly possible political crises consequent upon, or the cause of, sudden changes of Government, and to minimise the turmoil and excitement inevitably caused by general elections.

I notice that the propaganda spread by all parties in a general election tends to deceive the people. Some of the propaganda put forward is known by the party responsible for it to be incorrect. I shall take the Premier to task on this occasion, because he did say at the elections that his party, if it were returned as the Government, would reduce railway freights. Later, when he was asked to comment on that he said that when he took over the reins of Government he began to appreciate the financial state of the railways.

The whole House laughed at him, and rightly so. I am not blaming the Premier, because he did nothing that was not customary, but if ever there was an advertisement that was deceptive to the people, that was it, and he knew it was, because he is a very keen financial student. When I was on the other side of the House, he debated the Estimates time and time again. He knew there was no more hope of reducing railway freights than of his flying in the air without assistance. I do not think that propaganda is a good thing; nor do I think that the

appointment of the executive should depend on propaganda of that nature. I quote again—

These two fundamental requirements of democracy, first that Government should be an expression of the people's will and, secondly, that it should work both smoothly and stably and not be subject to frequent crises, seem to have been met more successfully by the Swiss system than by any other in the world.

Then he goes on to explain the Swiss system and he says—

The Executive is called the Federal Council and consists of seven members presided over by the President of the Republic who acts for one year, being only *primus inter pares*, the first among equals, a sort of Chairman rather than a leader of the Government.

Each Federal Councillor is at the head of one of the Government departments. Federal Councillors may sit and speak in either Chamber but have no right to vote.

Each member of the Council is elected separately, as such, by both Chambers sitting together in joint session.

The Premier: Could the hon. member tell us how the second Chamber in Switzerland is elected?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. Each canton or province elects two members unless the province is so small that it constitutes what is known as a half canton, in which case it elects one member. The election is regulated by each individual canton as it thinks fit. Therefore, different methods of election are used in different cantons but the House is recognised as one representing the various provinces. Of course, I am talking about the Federal system and not the provincial system in Switzerland.

Mr. J. Hegney: Would you use the other machinery of government that they have such as initiative, referendum and recall?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think so.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do not you think it would be too cumbersome here?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: It might delay legislation. Of course, any Federal legislation passed in that country may be subject to referendum on the demand of a certain number of electors.

Mr. J. Hegney: They can initiate legislation there, too.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: They can, but I have made a close study of the book, and Howard says that it has never been done. Theoretically, either House may initiate it. Any member may initiate legislation and it is then referred to the Government for drafting. Following that it is introduced in the ordinary way.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do you believe in the recall?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: No, it has never been exercised there.

Mr. Oldfield: The present Government would not like that.

The Premier. Neither would the member for Maylands.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: To continue with my quotation—

Let us now consider what immense advantages in regard to freedom of voting according to his conscience this system confers on the individual member of Parliament. By it he is saved from ever being placed in the dilemma of having to choose between his own judgment on a matter, or the risk of, by voting against his Party's Government on a measure he disapproves, helping to turn that Government out, forcing on a General Election and perhaps so helping into office a Party of whose principles he disapproves.

So the individual party member, or individual member of the House, under this system, has a great deal more liberty and much more right to express his opinions.

The Minister for Health: But it is not compatible with the British psychology.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I think it is, and Howard, in this book, says so. In times of crisis, where good Government is absolutely essential, and party politics cannot possibly be followed, they have always used this system; they have always formed National Governments, with proportional representation from all parties. I quote again—

Party Government as such exasperates and wearies those electors who are not Party men, the always uncertain element among us, so that the country may often be compared to Florence, Dante's sick woman in the Purgatoria, Canto VI, who finds no rest upon her cushions of down, but seeks to escape pain while turning from side to side.

That is exactly what has happened. It is the non-party elector, changing from side to side in his efforts to get satisfaction—

Mr. Lapham: Is not that ignorance of politics?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: —from one party or the other, but never getting exactly what he wants, who decides the fate of governments. I commend this book to all members for their consideration. Howard says that the Swiss Constitution is the finest, as far as he knows, and he is a man with an extensive experience and great capabilities.

The Minister for Native Welfare: Did you put these proposals to your Government?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Cabinet secrets are not disclosed. Now I wish to say a few words about traffic. Efficient planning and control of traffic in the metropolitan area is becoming essential and, from a reading of His Excellency's Speech, it appears that this Government has recognised that fact. Vehicular traffic is becoming more dense in the metropolitan area and the figures reveal a startling increase in the number of vehicles on the road. I would like to have quoted the relevant figures but unfortunately I cannot find the report. From memory, the number of vehicles in the metropolitan area increased by 17,000 over the last five years and the number is increasing at the rate of 5,000 vehicles a year. From that members can appreciate the seriousness of the problem. Also, I understand Professor Stephenson said that in the next decade motor vehicular traffic in the metropolitan area might be trebled or quadrupled. Therefore this problem requires careful planning.

It is a well-known fact that the streets of Perth were planned in the horse and buggy days and were designed for their use. In addition, we have two great difficulties in traffic movement in the metropolitan area, the river and the railways. We have the river on two sides of the city and the railways on one of the other sides. Control of traffic on an executive basis needs to be unified because at present three Ministers and a number of departments and authorities control our traffic. Firstly, we have the Minister for Local Government—and I understand the setup is the same in this Government as it was in the last—who controls the Traffic Act and traffic in the metropolitan area. The traffic police come under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Local Government as regards control of traffic. Then we have the Minister for Transport who controls the Tramway and the Railway Departments, and of course, we also have the Minister for Police who is in charge of the prosecuting side. So, there is a diversity of control.

In my opinion, the Minister controlling the planning for traffic should not be the Minister who also controls a department which has an operational interest. In other words, the Minister should not be one who controls the railways or tramways because those departments have a vested interest in the traffic problem. Also, I do not think the Minister in charge of planning for traffic should be the Minister for Transport so long as he controls the Transport Board because the board has a vested interest insofar as it controls the routes of private operators. He should be a most impartial Minister so that he may sum up the views and advice that he receives from his colleagues and their various departmental heads and then arrive at a correct decision.

At present there is an advisory committee on traffic. The committee is responsible to the Minister for Local Government but its members have wide interests and, generally speaking, they are largely self-interested. For instance, there is a representative of the bus proprietors and in the control of traffic, those people are vitally concerned. There are representatives of the Tramway Department, the City Council and other local authorities as well as a member for the Royal Automobile Club and, I think, the Main Roads Department. That committee met on four occasions during the last six months and made a number of recommendations. I understand that the average time spent at each meeting was about one hour 30 minutes. A committee of that nature is composed of elements that are too interested in the organisations they represent. The representative from the Tramway Department must be interested in the tramways and the same could be said of the man acting on behalf of the bus proprietors.

The person in charge of the planning and control of traffic should have available to him the advice of specialists. I understand that in America there is a university degree covering the control and planning of traffic, and the same applies to most European countries. We have no such people available in Western Australia but we have a number of experts who have devoted a considerable amount to time and study to this problem. They could give expert advice if required.

Mr. Lapham: Are they experts or so-called experts?

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I am not capable of judging their qualifications but they are men with considerable experience and ability. The first representative on this committee, in my opinion, should be a senior officer from the Police Traffic Branch. Officers of that branch study these problems and attend various meetings of the advisory council for the Commonwealth. As a second member, I would appoint an engineer from the Main Roads or the Public Works Department. There are engineers in those departments who have studied these problems in Western Australia and overseas.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member had better hurry up and appoint his committee or his time will be up.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: The third would be a town planner. The committee would be more to advise the Minister on an executive and administrative basis, and it would be very valuable in this respect. From time to time it could consult those persons who are interested in the problem such as the Perth City Council and the Tramway Department. Apart from anything else, it would be able to apply a more independent and intelligent mind to the job than the existing committee. Very few members of the existing committee

can agree on any one problem. I would like to close with a few remarks to the Minister for Water Supplies.

Mr. SPEAKER: I fear the hon. member's time has expired.

MR. LAWRENCE (South Fremantle) [5.46]: May I join with other members in this Chamber in congratulating you, Sir, on your elevation to the Speakership? Having known you for some time past, I feel sure you will fill that position with the decorum and impartiality which it requires. I would also like to thank the member for Claremont for the very able manner in which he carried out the duties of the position which you, Sir, now occupy. He always treated members with the required impartiality and was always willing to help and direct us. I also congratulate the member for Middle Swan on being elevated to the position of Chairman of Committees, and offer my congratulations to the Deputy Chairmen of Committees and to the new members that have come into this Chamber on both sides of the House.

After making my own humble observations, I feel sure that these members will add much to the wealth of debate in this Chamber and that they will carry out the duties that are rightly theirs and fulfil the trust that has been placed in them by their various constituents. It is no small duty to fulfil, nor is it easy to be able to look back on one's past life and say that one has carried out the wishes not only of the people of one's own constituency, but the wishes of the people of the State. I do not desire to direct these members in any way, but it would be well for them to pause at some stage and consider the onerous duty that is theirs. So much for that.

I would now like to make a few observations on the speech delivered by the member for Mt. Lawley. Might I suggest that in his opening remarks the hon. member was quite constructive, but later he wandered from the track and became, to my way of thinking, quite destructive.

Mr. Bovell: He descended from a King to a member of Parliament!

Mr. LAWRENCE: To refer to the constructive part of the hon. member's speech, I wish to support his remarks with reference to the establishment of a botanical garden in our State. I have been out to the area which is in the electorate of the member for Wembley Beaches and have had a look at the place to which the member for Mt. Lawley refers, namely Reabold Hill. I take it he did refer to that area east of Reabold Hill, which I consider to be a most suitable site for the setting up of a botanical garden. I think there is an area there of about 1,000 acres ideally situated both in the topography of the country itself which makes it a thing of beauty, and also in the natural setup of the lake system which would further lend itself to the planning of the garden which has been suggested.

It would do members good to take advantage of the view that can be seen of this fair City of Perth. If they have not done so already, they will, if they visit the locality find that they can see right out to the ocean, to the ranges and practically to Fremantle harbour; in fact, I think Fremantle harbour can be seen from the top of Reabold Hill. It would be a great credit to members if, after having had a look at this area, they made their very best effort to have this place established as a garden, as suggested by the member for Mt. Lawley. This is the natural spot for it. The soil I have seen there is quite ideal for the growth of our local flora, etc., and it would become a place of remarkable beauty and enhance not only the district, but the tourist trade of this State.

In fact, I would say that the scenic beauty that could be developed in that area by careful planning would be almost equal to the scenic beauty one finds in Albany. I trust the member for Albany has heard me, because it was not long ago that I was able to make a trip to Albany and I was amazed at the scenic beauty available to tourists in that area. If members ever have the opportunity to go down to the coast and have a look at that area, I can assure them that they will find it most interesting and the scenery positively beautiful. At Albany I was also most impressed by the whaling station. Although they had landed three or four whales the previous day, unfortunately they were not able to hook one while I was there.

Hon. L. Thorn: They do not take the hook too well!

Mr. LAWRENCE: Very well then, not able to harpoon any. I seem to have digressed from the speech made by the member for Mt. Lawley. I was somewhat staggered after his constructive remarks to hear his views on gambling in this State, particularly with regard to s.p. betting. If the member for Mt. Lawley considers gambling is stupid and thinks that horseracing should be banned, —

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I have a wife, you know.

Mr. LAWRENCE: —then the only conclusion I can draw is that the hon. member himself is stupid, I cannot see any other answer. When the hon. member is doing his homework—

Mr. Oldfield: What do you mean by that?

Mr. LAWRENCE: Is the member for Maylands bleating again? As I have said, when the member for Mt. Lawley is doing his homework, he should take pains to straighten out what he has said before it appears in print in "Hansard," because if the public read that I feel sure they would think as I do. On the matter of gambling, I do not think it at all fair for anybody to say that it should make revenue for the Government. After the hon. mem-

ber makes the statement that gambling is stupid, he then proceeds to recommend to the Government of the day that it should tax the stupidity of the people. Rather than take advantage of the stupidity of the people and tax them, I would prefer to adopt some sane action to see that the people were not stupid. Therefore I quite agree in one sense with the hon. member that horseracing and also trotting should be abolished. I think it is the only approach to the matter because we cannot legalise something that is illegal.

If it is stupid to gamble, surely the hon. member cannot turn round as he has done and honestly believe that it should be legalised and the stupidity of the people allowed to continue. Another remark which calls for some comment is that made by the hon. member with reference to Collie miners being led by a communist. He further said that there was a pressure group that was—at the moment I take it he meant—embarrassing the Government of the day. I noticed the member for Collie was out of the Chamber at the time, but now he is back I know he will look the matter up and deal with the hon. member.

Hon. L. Thorn: If he had been here, we would have got a bite.

Mr. LAWRENCE: The remarks made by the member for Mt. Lawley were most undemocratic. They were most undemocratic because at the last election the hon. member was opposed by a member of the Communist Party.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I did not approve of that either.

Mr. LAWRENCE: Naturally the hon. member did not. What is more, he would not have approved if this same person had defeated him at the poll.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I would have highly disapproved.

Mr. LAWRENCE: Nevertheless, the hon. member would not have endeavoured to introduce legislation with a view to preventing that person from taking his place in the House, particularly after he had been elected by a majority of the electors in the district. I take it that the hon. member refers to Mr. Latter and Mr. Latter was democratically elected by the members of the Collie Miners' Union. That having been done, in a fair and square manner, would not it be undemocratic for the hon. member to object to it?

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I did not object to it.

Mr. LAWRENCE: Oh yes, the hon. member did.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I said where you have communist leaders, they usually use pressure on Governments.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I wish the hon. member would make himself clear.

Hon. A. F. Watts: It is clear to everybody but you.

Mr. LAWRENCE: Anyway, what he said can be checked in "Hansard". If the hon. member looks up the word "democratic", he will find it is something that should be free from pressure groups. But unfortunately I know of an instance where the hon. member himself and the party he supports turned round and used pressure, and not just on one occasion either. In fact, I might say that the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. probably used pressure on the Government of the day to get it to agree to draw up the agreement which was drafted some time ago.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: What nonsense!

Mr. LAWRENCE: I shall prove that to the member for Subiaco.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: I wish you would.

Mr. LAWRENCE: So much for the hon. member's speech. This morning I had the pleasure of very nice company at Kwinana; that is in the industrial area itself. I do not refer to the home building area at the moment. One can only give loud praise to the development that has gone on out there and praise loudly the people who have made that development possible.

Mr. Bovell: The McLarty-Watts Government.

Mr. LAWRENCE: It was quite an eye-opener to some people, though I have been out there before and know what strides have been made in the development of the Kwinana oil refinery project. However, to look around there and realise the enormity of the project and the great strides that have been made, causes one to wonder why, with the command of wealth that the company has, the McLarty-Watts Government made the agreement it did, having regard to the financial stress and strain imposed on the people of the State thereby. I do not think I would be far wrong in saying that in this coming year we will have to find somewhere about £4,000,000 to meet the commitments that were made by that Government.

Mr. Bovell: Has not the Deputy Premier made representations to the Commonwealth?

Mr. LAWRENCE: That is true; and he has been knocked back.

The Minister for Health: That company would have more money than the Western Australian Government.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I suggest it would have more than the Commonwealth Government. In fact, the statement was made at Kwinana this morning by one of the head executives of the company that the tools being used at the moment are alone valued at £1,000,000. From that figure one can gauge the enormity of the project, and it indicates the wealth of this company.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: The company is wealthy, but the State Government has £5,000,000 worth of goods in the Government stores.

Mr. LAWRENCE: That is all right! A further statement was made at Kwinana today that the plans for the present refinery were drawn up two years ago. If that is so, and the plans were drawn up before the agreement with the company was made, it is evident that quite a lot of talk went on prior to the signing of the agreement; and when I say prior to the signing of the agreement, I mean quite a long time before it was made. If the statement of the executive was correct, then the company was pretty certain that it would have no trouble at all in getting the Government to agree to allow it to establish the refinery at that spot.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: To what executive do you refer?

Mr. LAWRENCE: I refer to the executive of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. If the hon. member had not been reading a book—

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: "Hansard!"

Mr. LAWRENCE: —and if she had been listening to me, she might have known to whom I referred.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: You can do two things at once.

The Minister for Housing: Talking is one of them.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I have known the hon. member to do two things at once. In fact, I have seen her.

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: What are they?

Mr. LAWRENCE: I think the hon. member breathes and talks at the same time, does she not?

The Minister for Housing: What an anti-climax!

Hon. Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver: And one can listen and read at the same time.

Mr. LAWRENCE: While, with other members, I welcome with open arms the advent of this company to Western Australia, it is well to remember that the company has not come here to make a loss, but to make vast profits; and I think that, in fairness to the people of the State, the company should have borne a greater share of the capital cost of construction of the project than will be the case.

There is another matter that is worrying me in connection with the development of this area, and that is land resumption. Land has been resumed to a fairly large extent out there. I think that the company has 960 acres. When land is resumed, I would ask the Government that wherever possible it take stronger steps to provide alternative land

or accommodation for people who are displaced. It is realised that we cannot stand in the way of progress. But where for the sake of progress land is resumed, the Government should ascertain whether negotiations cannot be entered into with the owners before such resumption takes place. Secondly, where possible, some alternative land should be granted to those desiring it. Thirdly, where land is to be resumed, a board should be set up to decide what the compensation shall be instead of that aspect being left for one person to deal with.

I do not think it is fair to leave such a matter to one person because the fixing of compensation is a knotty problem at times. There is a man named Carrelio who has an orchard down there to the left of land resumed by the Government and it will be practically impossible for him to assess the value of his 1,200 olive trees. It would be much easier and far more equitable if such matters were dealt with by a board.

Mr. Nalder: What is the position of the dairy farmers?

Mr. LAWRENCE: That raises an interesting point. I know one dairy farmer named Smith whose land was wanted by the cement companies. I know that he paid £1,800 for it a long time ago; but as the result of private negotiations with the companies, he has been paid £52,000, which I think is a very handsome sum. I know of other instances in which private negotiations were undertaken between the cement companies and people who owned land suitable for quarrying, and they have been paid much higher rates than have been allowed by the Government for land resumed in the same area.

Some quarries at the 10-mile peg brought £120 per acre. The owner was given the right to retain the part of the land he was quarrying and the company concerned intends to work on the eastern side. It has also left him his arable land at the back of the quarry, and will provide a right-of-way to the main road. I consider that that is fair and just treatment; and when land is to be resumed, it is much better to have private arrangements made, because the people get more favourable treatment.

Mr. Nalder: That would not be so in every case, would it?

Mr. LAWRENCE: No; but it has been so in every case in which the cement companies have been concerned. Power is provided under the Act to resume land for industrial purposes. In each instance the companies have had private negotiations with the persons concerned.

Hon. L. Thorn: Is the olive grove to be resumed?

Mr. LAWRENCE: That has been resumed. Unfortunately, the land at the back, which I suppose is the best market

garden land in that area, including Spearwood, has also been resumed. It is something that cannot be avoided. I think that such matters should be considered by a board.

Another subject on which I wish to touch has reference to the Licensing Act. If the member for Mt. Lawley will cast his memory back to the time when he introduced the latest amendments to that Act, he will recall that I pointed out what would be the result of amending the Act to allow clubs in the city area to operate for four hours on a Sunday. If the Minister for Housing casts his agile mind back to the same occasion, he will remember that he called me "the wowser from South Fremantle" because I did not want clubs open for four hours on a Sunday.

Mr. Bovell: Do not take any notice of what the Minister for Housing says!

Mr. LAWRENCE: Perhaps at some later stage he may say, "Sir, you were right"; because I have been told that the publicans now want to open their premises for four hours on Sundays. I protest strongly against that, and no Government will have my support in the matter of opening hotels in the metropolitan area on that day. There are many reasons for my opposition. Not only would it be uneconomic; not only would it affect the leisure of the worker who already has to be at his post six days a week in that occupation; but it would have an effect on the employer also, because he would have to be in his hotel for seven days a week. Furthermore, there would be the effect on the churches, which object, and I think rightly so. But my main objection is the effect I think such a procedure would have on family life.

It may be a different proposition in the country, where people are somewhat isolated. I refer to places like the Goldfields and, say, Toodyay. Only on Sundays do people in those areas go into town and meet their friends and have a game of tennis and so on; and seeing that those people are stuck out in the country most of the time, I think they should be entitled to a drink on Sundays.

Hon. L. Thorn: What about the Workers' Club in Fremantle?

Mr. LAWRENCE: I would not object to that club being open one hour on Sundays, but I would object to the time being extended to four hours. I am a member of five clubs down there.

Hon. L. Thorn: Honorary?

Mr. LAWRENCE: No, I pay up! I find that the present arrangement is not very satisfactory; and if a Bill were brought before the House to amend the Licensing Act to meet the wishes of the licensed victuallers, who want to have premises open for four hours on Sundays, it would not have my support. We can

approach this question from a sane angle, and before any consideration is given to allowing hotels to open on Sundays for any longer period, the matter of licensed premises generally should be cleaned up.

Hon. L. Thorn: You are getting real sanctimonious these days!

Mr. LAWRENCE: Probably. Maybe it would not hurt the hon. member to become a little more so.

The Minister for Housing: I think my old description of the hon. member was very fitting.

Mr. LAWRENCE: Probably the Minister has driven me to that stage.

Mr. Nalder: There is no need to be ashamed of it, anyway.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I do not think so. It is a matter to which we must give serious consideration, because it affects not only the economy of the worker, but his home life and that of his children.

Hon. L. Thorn: I am very proud of you.

Mr. LAWRENCE: I do not move in the silver-tail clubs like the hon. member, but I belong to workers' clubs and I know full well what I am talking about. I trust that the Government will take note of my remarks and act accordingly.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray) [7.30]: I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on having been elected Speaker of this House and, in common with other members, I think you will worthily perform the duties of your office. I take this opportunity also of congratulating the new members who have entered this House since the last election.

In His Excellency's Speech I notice that reference was made to the passing of the late Hon. A. A. M. Coverley, a member of this House, and the death of three former members of this Parliament in the persons of the late Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, the late Hon. Sydney Stubbs and the late Hon. W. H. Kitson. I regret deeply the passing of those gentlemen and agree with the expressions of gratitude that have been voiced in regard to the good work they did for this State.

Then again, I desire to thank the Government—I do not suppose I will do that very often—for the invitation that it extended to Lady McLarty and me to attend the Coronation. The Premier has already told the House something about his trip to London, his impression of the Coronation and what he saw during his visit to Britain. There is no doubt that anyone who was privileged to be in London at the time of the Coronation was a very fortunate person indeed. There we saw tremendous demonstrations of affection and loyalty to the Queen.

With the Premier and some of his officers, I went through the streets of London on Coronation eve and saw at first scores of thousands and then hundreds of thousands of people sitting and even sleeping on the footpaths—many thousands of them were there 36 hours before the procession started—in order to view the spectacle. The weather, of course, was not good but despite that, countless thousands of citizens were determined to take up their positions and wait those long hours in order that they might cheer the Queen both going to and returning from the Abbey.

This tremendous outburst of loyalty and affection for the Queen has had a marked effect throughout the world—as I know the Premier agrees. It has shown the solidarity of the British Commonwealth of Nations and has made a great impression on the thousands of foreign visitors who were in London to view the Coronation. I believe that the tremendous demonstration that we witnessed in London will further increase the solidarity of the British Commonwealth and will, in fact, be a factor in maintaining the peace of the world. There is no doubt that today affection for the Crown is as strong as ever it was. No one would dispute that Britain easily leads the world in matters of pageantry and that the British people are great lovers of tradition. I sometimes wish that we had more tradition in this country.

Pageantry is indeed limited in Australia but in Britain pageantry and tradition do much to make that part of the Commonwealth of Nations so interesting. The hundreds of thousands of people who over the years have visited London and Britain generally have been anxious to witness the pageantry that takes place on certain occasions. During my visit I heard from no section of the people any remarks disparaging this pageantry and tradition, which is part of the make-up of the country and which the people expect to see.

I notice that when you, Mr. Speaker, were elected to your high office you appeared in your wig and gown, the traditional dress of your office, which has been handed down in the Mother of Parliaments over the centuries. I am glad to see that you are still wearing the gown. I know it is a matter for the Speaker's discretion. Some members of your own party—two that I can think of and one former member—when they occupied the office of Speaker, wore both wig and gown. I understand that you are going to wear the wig on important occasions and I wish that you could have seen fit to have worn both on all occasions.

One day you may have the privilege and pleasure of visiting the House of Commons and, if you do, you will be greatly impressed by what you will see when the Speaker enters that House because there

is much pageantry and ceremony attached to his entrance and large numbers of people are always anxious to see it.

I do not think any Australian would go to London without wanting to see the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace—a daily occurrence—the trooping of the colours on the Queen's birthday—the finest piece of pageantry in the world—the colourful uniforms of the Queen's Guards, the Yeomen of the Guard, the Gentlemen at Arms and the old Chelsea pensioners, whom I had the privilege of visiting, and all the other colourful dress that has been handed down through the ages. Of course, ours is a young country and it takes age to create tradition, yet we have been going for well over 100 years and we should have more tradition. We have some, of which we are very proud, but moving through Britain one sees many interesting monuments and buildings with plates attached telling that some famous person lived there in the past, or something of that nature, and giving a short history of the person concerned.

Such buildings or monuments are of great interest and constitute a source of pride to the people of the county or town where they exist. We all know such famous names as Nelson, Wellington, Pitt, Shakespeare, Captain Cook, and so on and among famous women there are Florence Nightingale, Edith Cavell and others, and all of them have monuments in which the people show great interest. We are lacking in that respect in Western Australia. There are many more monuments in cities in the Eastern States than we have here. I do not agree that such monuments are a waste of money, as I have often heard said.

In the older countries of the world, where people like to know what the great ones of the past looked like, such a view is not held. I can recall the names of several outstanding men who rendered great service to this State and whose memory deserves to be perpetuated. Some of us sat in this Chamber with at least two of them and I can think of another who attained great eminence in the Federal sphere and whose memory deserves to be perpetuated by means of a statue.

It has been said that the work such men accomplished during their lifetime is a sufficient monument to them, but we should think not only of the present generation but also of the generations to come. A personal monument impresses much more than a mere name on some building. I have mentioned those matters as something that impressed me during my stay in Great Britain and I believe we should encourage a love of tradition in this country.

I was also greatly struck, while in England, by the courtesy of the people—and that was my experience also when I was

there over two years ago—and particularly the great assistance rendered in regard to problems of traffic. I was impressed with the courtesy shown by motorists to each other. In Great Britain there are 5,000,000 vehicles on the roads and they are increasing at the rate of 300,000 per year. This, of course, creates a tremendous traffic problem and, as in this State, the authorities are continually trying to devise ways and means of arriving at a satisfactory solution. However, road courtesy is developed to a high degree, and in London and other parts of England it plays an important part in alleviating the traffic problem.

Next I will make a brief reference to the work performed by our Agent General and his staff in London. Everywhere I went, I discovered that such work is greatly appreciated. I was told the staff was most courteous and helpful to all visitors from Western Australia and to anyone seeking information about our State. The late Mr. Kitson did excellent work and was highly thought of by all those who came into contact with him during his term of office. As to future appointments, I would suggest that consideration be given to the extension of the term from three to five years.

Anyone who is appointed as Agent General has to break up his home in this State and start a new one in London, and it takes some time for him to acquaint himself with the run of things after his arrival. Usually—not always, I think—the appointment has been made of a serving member of Parliament who, of course, has to resign his seat. The position of Agent General is not very remunerative, and anyone accepting the office may have to make some financial sacrifice. If the term of future appointments were extended from three to five years, it would prove to be more satisfactory to an appointee.

I was interested to read the Speech of His Excellency the Governor. It has already been said, and I agree, that it does indicate that, during the period the previous Government was in office, great progress was made and the State is now reaping the benefit. As members know, the Speech that is read by His Excellency is handed to him by the Premier. At the time his Speech was compiled, the Premier was in London, so I suppose the Deputy Premier had a good deal to do with its compilation. I commend him for his fairness in paying a tribute to the Government of which I had the honour of being a member for six years.

Since my return to this State, I have been most interested in the Premier's policy speech and his electioneering promises, and also to read his excuses for not being able to carry them out. That does not surprise me, because I knew what his difficulties would be. The Premier now endeavours to find a way out of them

by starting what I might term a hate campaign against what he has been pleased to term, the "Canberra Government." This of course, is used to disparage the Commonwealth Government, and particularly the present one. In his criticism—and other Labour Premiers clambered on the band waggon and joined in the discordant chorus—he did not tell the people that the present Commonwealth Government, of which he is so critical, has provided far more money for the States than any previous Government has ever done, taking into consideration inflated costs, and inflation generally. I would have no difficulty in providing figures to prove that.

I do not think it can be denied that the Federal Government has treated us generously. We should remember, too, that we are a part of the Commonwealth, and when the Premier goes east and joins in the chorus for more income tax reimbursements when there is a demand for more social services and a reduction in taxation, it affects the people of Australia and of Western Australia, which is a part of the Commonwealth. When on the hustings, the Premier said, "The finances are grim," and on one occasion he explained how I raided the trust funds, and so impressed one lady that she said to another, "I never thought Mr. McLarty would do that."

The Premier: Was that at Carnarvon?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: It was. Of course, we will soon find out what the Premier is doing about trust funds. At that same meeting he said, "You know, ladies and gentlemen, what trust funds are." Of course, I am quite sure that they did not, and I am not too sure whether the Premier knew what they were.

The Premier: I had a fair idea.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: He will have a better idea now. During the elections, I remember his saying that the finances were grim, that they were deplorable; and in the next breath he made lavish promises. Only today, I again read the speech, and it is a classic so far as promises are concerned. The Premier will go down in history as "Bert the Promiser." He is, without doubt, the most promising Premier we have ever had. He made these promises of additional expenditure and then told us how he was going to combat inflation and reduce costs to the primary producer. Of course, when I came back, I looked around to see how he had made good these promises. I find that there are heavy increases in water charges, substantial increases in irrigation rates, and very shortly there are to be steep rises in rail freights, and I have no doubt that other increased charges are in store.

The Minister for Housing: You hope!

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The Premier went on to say what he would do before he would agree to increases in rail

freights. Certain things had to happen before he would agree to any such increases, and certain people said, "This is the man for us. There will be no increased rail freights in the near future. Mr. Hawke is going to see that certain things are done before he will agree to that." Now, what about those electioneering promises? Already, by way of a softening-up process, through both the daily and week-end Press, he is warning people to be prepared for increased rail charges, and, of course, blaming the Commonwealth Government—

The Premier: And the McLarty-Watts Government.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: —and he knew perfectly well—if he did not, he should have—the financial setup between the Commonwealth and the States before he took office. He knew all about the State's finances because he said that they were grim and deplorable.

Mr. Johnson: Were they not?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: He said they were, but I do not think they were.

The Premier: Did the hon. member think, in February, that there would be a railway deficit of £5,000,000?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I was aware of the position, but I did not go round the country making promises.

The Premier: Did the Leader of the Opposition, in February, think that there would be a railway deficit for the then financial year of £5,000,000?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I knew there would be a deficit, but I did hope that it would not be so great as it has turned out to be. I knew of all the rollingstock that was coming forward, that greater traffic would be carried, and all the rest of it, but I had hoped that the railway finances would be improved.

The Premier: A wonderful hope that was!

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I will refer again to the promises made by the Premier to reduce costs to the primary producer. We now find him raising their costs in many directions. During the election campaign, he referred to extra charges which he predicted we had in cold storage, as he termed it. There is no question about it, we will not have to wait long before extra charges are imposed. This Government has increased charges and taxes not only in cold storage but also right in front of the cold store, and it will not be long before the people of this State will know all about them. I do not think the Premier can deny that at this stage.

The Premier: I am listening carefully to what the hon. member is saying.

The Minister for Railways: We are doing what the hon. member did not have the courage to do.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Then there is the promise to reduce progressively rail, tram and bus fares.

Hon. L. Thorn: That is a good one!

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Yes. The people will be waiting for that promise to be kept. The Premier hoped that, because more people would be carried, the losses would decrease. It will be interesting to see whether his hopes are realised. The population of this State during the past few years has increased tremendously; by about 40 per cent., I think, and yet our transport losses have not eased. Let us see how the Premier's forecast works out that if more passengers are carried less loss will be incurred. Let me remind him also that other States have increased their passenger fares, rail, tram and bus, and if he is going to charge fares not up to the average of the standard States, he will find himself in serious trouble with the Grants Commission and will be looking for revenue in some other direction. Already the Premier is likely to have a pretty tough time with the Grants Commission.

The Premier: How do you know?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I have had some experience of that body. Then there is the promise to provide cheaper water, power and liquid fuel, including petrol, in the country areas. That is another very interesting promise. I wonder how long the Premier will take to implement this promise, because I have no doubt that all the people in the rural areas will be very glad when it is fulfilled.

The Minister for Housing: The price of petrol has been reduced.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I am pleased to hear that a start has been made, but I shall be still more pleased when cheaper water and liquid fuel supplies are made available in the country areas.

Mr. Andrew: We are getting cheaper vegetables in Victoria Park.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: But the hon. member cannot give the Government credit for that. In regard to those promises, I hope the Premier will not tell us that he is unable to carry them out because the Canberra Government will not give him everything he wants. Let me remind him that under the formula that was agreed to when a Labour Government was in power, we would have received last year a total of £8,744,329, but the actual amount received was £10,854,554, so that we received an extra £2,110,000 by way of income tax reimbursement from this so-called niggardly Canberra Government that the Premier talks about.

The Premier: What about dealing with this year?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: We shall see what the Premier gets if they stick to the formula, which I do not think they will do.

The Premier: They have not.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Let members bear in mind that, apart from the extra £2,110,000 that we received by way of income tax reimbursement, we also got £8,040,000 from the Grants Commission.

The Premier: But what about this year?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Therefore I do not think the Premier can justly claim that this State has been treated in a niggardly fashion by the Commonwealth Government.

The Premier: My criticism of the Commonwealth Government was in connection with the decision announced to the Premiers only three weeks ago whereas you are dealing with last year.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I am dealing with figures about which I happen to know something and the attitude of the Commonwealth Government in relation to finance generally.

The Premier: But what do you think of the recent decision by the Commonwealth in regard to tax reimbursement and supplementary grants?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: What extra has the Premier received over the formula this year?

The Premier: Over the formula, about £300,000 only.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: And the Premier still has the right to go to the Grants Commission, which he will do.

The Premier: Let me put it this way: Does the Leader of the Opposition think that the Commonwealth treated Western Australia fairly by giving us this financial year only £330,000 net above what we received last year from taxation reimbursement and supplementary grant?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The Premier is not only getting this amount under the formula; his deputy made representations to the Commonwealth for assistance in other directions.

The Premier: I am asking you to express an opinion about what has actually happened.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The Premier knew what the financial setup between the Commonwealth and the States was when he went to the Premiers' Conference, and he had no right to expect that the Commonwealth would make good all the lavish promises he had made during the time he was electioneering.

The Premier: Why do not you answer the question?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I shall answer it; I shall have another opportunity at a later stage.

The Premier: When?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I shall then give the Premier much more information about the financial position.

The Premier: You are completely dodging the vital question.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: No, I am not. It appears to me that the Premier believes he is going to halt inflation. He said a good deal about that on the hustings. His scheme for halting inflation is to increase charges against the people, and, as I have said, more increases are to come.

I now wish to say something about the public statements made by the Premier and the Deputy Premier concerning loan funds and revenue generally. I have spent a considerable amount of time delving into those statements in order to try to satisfy myself just what the Premier and the Deputy Premier really meant to convey. They have certainly been inconsistent, and I shall quote from the newspaper of the 20th and 21st May to prove it.

The Deputy Premier then stated that loan allocations totalled £20,750,000 and he used the same figures on the 10th June. On the 23rd May, he said that loan funds were limited to £17,000,000 including £2,000,000 to be raised by the State Electricity Commission and £1,000,000 from loan repayments—a difference of £3,750,000. On the 18th August, the Premier stated that the £17,750,000 did not include the £2,000,000 approved for raising by the State Electricity Commission, and it will be noticed that he did not refer to a further £1,000,000 from loan repayments.

A great deal of publicity has been given by the Government to contractual commitments, the idea being to lead the public to believe that the previous Government had spent loan money in a way that was not to the advantage of the State and had created a burden of debt for the present Government to carry. I am unable to put any other interpretation upon the great amount of publicity that was indulged in. I make no apology for the action of the previous Government; as Treasurer, I certainly do not make any apology.

What would be the position of the railways, the public works and electricity extensions if we had not entered into those commitments? Any Government has to try to anticipate both its short and long-term needs, particularly urgent needs. I should like to ask the Premier for a little information. Let him tell us the exact amount of these commitments on the 14th January, 1953, that is,

1. the amounts;
2. the nature of the goods and services;
3. the projects those goods and services were to serve.

I think he should also let us have the dates of delivery and payment. Will he also tell us whether he objects to any of the commitments we entered into and the reason for his objection? I think such information would be very interesting in view of all the hostile criticism that

has taken place. Is there any one of these commitments that he would have liked to cancel? That makes the Premier smile.

The Premier: I shall think over the list and let you know.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I wish the Premier would do so. I think he should name any of the contracts that he would not have entered into had he been Premier at the time we concluded them, taking into consideration all the economic facts at that time.

In regard to loan funds, there has been inconsistency in public statements. On the 23rd May the Deputy Premier said that there were contractual commitments to the amount of £11,344,000 to be met from £17,000,000, not £20,750,000 of the 1953-54 funds.

The Minister for Education: Obviously that is so, because the money for housing could not be spent in any other way.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: On the 18th August, the Premier said that £1,669,000 of the £11,344,000, as stated by the Deputy Premier on the 23rd May, represented last year's deferments. The Premier also went on to say that only £266,000 of the amount remained at the 30th June, 1953, thus relieving the 1953 funds of any burden except the £266,000 in respect of deferred 1952 commitments. Therefore, of all the £11,344,000 claimed by the Deputy Premier as being payable for commitments out of the loan funds available in 1953-54, £1,669,000 was in respect of deferments last year. Of these deferments, however, only £266,000 remained owing at the 30th June. Therefore the 1953-54 funds were subject to deduction for commitments, not of £11,344,000, but an amount of £9,941,000 only. There can be no question about that. The difference is, of course, the £1,669,000 less the £266,000 still owing on the 30th June.

Now in the statement of the Deputy Premier on the 25th May, he said that because of the £11,344,000, which I have shown to be a serious overstatement, there would be only £4,581,000 to finance works in progress and new works in 1953-54. The facts extracted by questions from the Treasurer, to which I have just referred, show that this amount should be increased by the £1,403,000 which I have mentioned. Therefore there is an amount of at least £5,984,000 to meet works in progress and new works. No attempt has been made to correct the false impression created by these statements, and I think the Premier should certainly make the correction. I would be interested to know how much of other contractual commitments was still outstanding at the 30th June, 1953.

The Minister for Education: Simple arithmetic would give you that figure.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I would like to hear some of this simple arithmetic and so would the public. Last night there

were some interesting answers to questions asked by the member for Greenough with regard to the movement of stocks in Government stores, including the Railway Department. The information given by the Premier on the 25th August, 1953, was that the stocks maintained their level. At the 1st July, 1952, they were, £5,519,198, and on the 1st February, 1953, they were £5,300,762. The figure at the 30th June, 1953, was £4,346,537—a decline of approximately £1,000,000 in five months. I think the Deputy Premier will agree that the Government had the use of an additional £1,000,000 of funds through this stock during the five months to the 30th June, 1953.

Then there is the statement of the Minister for Railways about an alleged £2,250,000 of I.O.U.'s on the 25th August. He said the deferment was only £1,134,000, and went on to say that the deferment was completely extinguished before the 30th June, 1953. I certainly find these statements hard to reconcile, and I think some further explanation should be given. As a result of these conflicting statements, there is confusion in the public mind, and, I am certain, in the minds of members of Parliament.

Mr. Hutchinson: The Government has been hoodwinking the public.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The action of the previous Government in obtaining all these much-needed materials, which require commitments overseas, has, I am sure the Premier and the Deputy Premier and the other Ministers will admit if they are honest in their convictions, been of great advantage to the State. We would have been in a sorry plight had we not entered into these contractual commitments overseas. This position should be clarified. It is much too important just to let go. The public should be given the facts. There has been conflict in the statements of the Premier and the Deputy Premier.

There are many other matters I would like to refer to, but I have to confine myself to one hour. I was surprised when I came back to read the answers by the Minister for Justice to questions in the House. I was astounded when I read this—

However, I do feel that it was a very great injustice that the previous Government should have acquiesced in preventing the playing of two-up on the Goldfields I am sorry the Commissioner took the action he did.

The Minister for Justice: I am not retracting one iota.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Good! The Minister was sorry the previous Government acquiesced in preventing the playing of two-up on the Goldfields. It is a most remarkable statement for a Min-

ister for Justice to make. I know the kindly nature of the hon. gentleman and that he likes to please people, but still he has a responsibility.

The Minister for Justice: I like consistency, too.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Be consistent, and uphold the law! If the Minister does not like the law, then let him alter it. Let the Minister remember that when he was appointed a Minister he took an oath to uphold the laws of the State as they are and not as he might wish them to be.

The Minister for Justice: And I have upheld them.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: No. The Minister condemned the previous Government for upholding the law and said that it should never have acquiesced in the stopping of two-up by the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. McCulloch: The previous Government knew.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: It does not matter what we knew. We did not prevent the police from doing what they considered to be their duty.

Mr. Lawrence: You should have made them uphold the law five years sooner.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: The Commissioner is there to uphold the law, and he knows what he should do and what he should ask his officers to do.

Mr. Brady: The Minister must be responsible to see that the police do their job.

Hon. D. Brand: Your Minister for Justice does not seem to think so.

The Minister for Justice: The Minister for Justice likes to be fair and impartial.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I will give him credit for wanting to be fair and impartial, but he is certainly undermining the law when he makes a statement such as this.

The Minister for Justice: I still contradict you.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I could say quite a lot about this.

Mr. Moir: The Minister is not a hypocrite like the previous Government was.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: That might be the view of the hon. member. He might think that our laws can be broken with impunity.

Mr. Moir: Everyone should observe the law.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Of course! The Government should not interfere with the police during the lawful execution of their duties.

Mr. McCulloch: Laws are being broken every day in Perth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I was also rather surprised to hear the reply of the Premier when he was questioned the other night by the Leader of the Country Party.

The Premier: Disappointed, I think.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: No.

The Premier: Very disappointed.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I regarded it so seriously that I thought the Premier condoned the action of his Minister.

The Premier: Go ahead.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: I am going ahead. The Premier did not reprimand in any way his Minister for Justice who says he does not favour the upholding of the law. I think the Premier should immediately say to his Minister, "You have to give a better explanation than you have done, and you have to make some recommendation to me in regard to altering the law if you think it is not a fair law."

The Premier: The law is being observed.

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: When I think of the financial position today, of the confusion that exists and of the contradictory statements of the Premier and Deputy Premier, I say we should not agree to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply as it stands, but should amend it.

Mr. Brady: Are you going to deal with the transport graft?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Before you tell me to sit down, Mr. Speaker, I move an amendment. That the following words be added to the Address-in-reply:—

"But this House regrets:

(a) That public statements made by certain of your Excellency's Ministers regarding the finances of the State have not since been corrected by them, and it is apparent that there is, at least, £1,403,000 more loan money to expend on works in progress and new works in the current financial year than such statements indicated, and

(b) That Your Excellency's Ministers apparently condone the attitude of your Minister for Justice towards the illegal game of 'two-up'."

Mr. SPEAKER: This is to be added to the motion?

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY: Yes.

On motion by the Premier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 27th August, 1953.

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

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAYS.

(a) As to Rail Weights and Standard Gauge.

Hon. C. F. J. NORTH asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Does he recall a speech made by him several years ago condemning the use of light rails on the W.A.G.R.?

(2) Does he favour 80lb. rails for all main lines?