

to that end. If we allow the clause to stand, the women will probably be happier about it.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: According to the Minister, we shall have all men on some juries and all women on others.

The Minister for Justice: That is not provided for in the Bill.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: If the case is of a sordid nature, women may say they do not wish to serve, but on the next case, the jury might be composed entirely of women. We should be informed exactly where we stand. The women should be told that it is their duty to accept this share of the work and not allow the men to have all the say.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: I do not agree with the member for Fremantle, and I do not agree with this provision either. It does not matter what the judge thinks. He may consider it is a most improper case for a mixed jury, but he has no discretion unless the woman asks to be relieved of duty. I would have a little more mercy on the men. It could be extremely embarrassing in some cases—sodomy, for instance—for a man to be sitting alongside a woman.

The Minister for Railways: And in cases of indecent dealing, and that sort of thing.

Hon. A. V. R. ABBOTT: Yes. The judge has the depositions, and he should have power to use his own discretion. Perhaps the Minister would also consider an amendment of this nature with a view to having it moved in another place.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It seems that the member for Mt. Lawley looks at it from only one side. Has he any objection to a woman barrister taking a sordid case and cross-examining the witnesses, including the prisoner? Of course not. He admits that women can be barristers the same as men. He would not say to a woman barrister, "You should not take this case but should give it to a male barrister".

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: I might think it, though.

Mr. ANDREW: The member for Fremantle seems to think that all the young people who go on a jury are hardened sinners like we are. Many of them are not people of the world. When my daughter turned 21, she was a very wholesome and refined type of girl, and for her to have gone on to a jury to deal with a case concerning an unnatural offence, and to have had to discuss it with men jurors, would have been rather hard. There should be some discrimination.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, 29th July, 1954.

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

QUESTIONS.

MINING.

As to Sending Geologist to Pilbara Field.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the action taking place on the Pilbara mineral fields, and as several requests have been made to me personally, will the Government send a geologist to that district, with a view to assisting companies and prospectors working in that area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

Our existing geological programme will not permit of an early inspection of this field, but meanwhile every attention and the fullest technical advice will be given to any requests or problems put forward.

FORESTS DEPARTMENT.

As to Canberra-trained Officers and Salaries Paid.

Hon. J. MURRAY asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the statement made by Hon. G. Bennetts on the 13th July regarding the administration of the Forests Department (*vide* "Hansard", page 387), will the Minister inform the House—

(1) What are the total number, and the names, of the Canberra-trained officers, who were employed by the Forests Department on high salaries and who have now been withdrawn in favour of practical men?

(2) What amount was paid in salaries by the Forests Department during the financial years ended—

(a) the 30th June, 1953;

(b) the 30th June, 1954?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) None. There has been some redistribution of professional officers to implement new developments of more importance elsewhere.

(2) (a) £141,146.

(b) £157,212.

GEOLOGICAL STAFF.

As to Shortage and Salaries Paid.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is it a fact that owing to a shortage of geologists and other technical men, urgently needed exploration work throughout the State is being retarded?

(2) Is the shortage of qualified staff due to the fact that the Government offers lower salaries than private employers?

(3) If the answer to (1) and (2) is in the affirmative, will the Government take steps to rectify this serious position?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) It is a fact that despite repeated advertisements throughout Australia and New Zealand, we have not been able to bring our geological staff to full strength. Accordingly, we are not able to accomplish as much work as we desire.

(2) Yes.

(3) There is a very great demand for geologists in Australia today in connection with oil and mineral activities, and such high salaries are being offered by the large private companies that it would not be possible for the Government to outbid them. All States and the Commonwealth Government are similarly affected in this regard. Every reasonable effort is, however, being made to retain existing staff and also to augment it.

BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report, etc.

Report of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Twelfth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. HENNING (South-West) [2.22]: In the first place, permit me sincerely to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your appointment to the honourable position which you now hold. It is an office to which many may aspire but which few succeed in reaching. I have noticed that in the 64 years that this House has been constituted you are the ninth to occupy this position. I have noticed another interesting feature; and that is, that every man who has occupied your position

has, at one time or another in his parliamentary career, been a representative of country districts.

I would also like to congratulate the new members, and I hope that their time here will be as happy as mine has been during the three years I have been a member. Naturally, no matter what one's political opinions are, one regrets to see old members departing from this Chamber on account of either age or defeat at the polls. However, I feel certain that when our time comes to leave this Chamber, we shall be at perfect ease if we can say to ourselves, as the four men who have recently left this Chamber can say, "I never voted according to political expediency, and at all times stuck to my principles."

During his Speech, His Excellency spoke of the buoyancy of trade conditions and prosperity, and mention has been made by some of the difference between that Speech and the advertisements which appeared in the Press during the recent elections. I find it easy to realise the reason for that. All of us are aware that at present we have a Commonwealth Government which we know will go on legislating sanely for the benefit of all the people, and not for any particular section of the community.

I intend to speak on agriculture for a few moments on the assumption that the prosperity of this State is entirely dependent on it. I am not trying to dodge the issue or to suggest that our secondary industries and their expansion over the years are not a contributing factor, because they are; but I am of the opinion that our prosperity has been based on agriculture and our overseas trade.

Looking at the Quarterly Statistical Abstract, which gives the statistics up to the 31st December last, we find that, in round figures, our exports amounted to about £113,000,000. If we analyse those figures, the fact emerges that meats, skins, hides, butter, wool, wheat, and all other primary products accounted for almost £75,500,000; and if another £5,000,000 is added for ships' stores, the total is about £80,000,000. In addition to that, the export of precious metals, principally gold, and other products such as timber, add up to another £14,000,000, which means that the total value of all other exports was approximately £17,000,000. Those figures show that roughly four-fifths or more of our overseas trade stems from primary industry exports.

Hon. L. A. Logan: That would be about 80 per cent.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Yes, somewhere about that figure. I maintain that that is the basis of our present prosperous trade. From this statistical abstract, I have also discovered other vital information: namely, that in four years our population increased by almost 99,000 to 633,000. However, there is one disturbing feature about

this increase. Three-fifths of it, or 60,000 people, have settled in the metropolitan area, and only 30,000 in the country, and of those a great number are not engaged in primary industry of any kind.

When the recent cost-of-living adjustments were made, there was a great difference in the figures given for the increase in the cost of living between the metropolitan area and the country. The increase in the metropolitan area amounted to some 13s., but in the country areas it was only 4s. Also, I submit that our housing problem is partly due to the large number of people who are drifting to the metropolitan area, seeking employment. However, to return to agriculture.

I want to speak about the Agricultural Department and the extremely grave shortage of technical officers employed by it. The first building occupied by the department was that which previously housed this Council, which vacated it about 50 years ago. At the moment its departmental branches are widely scattered. One of them is in Adelaide Terrace; another Subiaco way; and another in St. George's Terrace, which is the main section; and the Under Secretary has an office in the Lands Department.

Hon. L. A. Logan: There is only one decent office in the whole of the department.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: That may be so, but I have not found it yet.

Hon. H. Hearn: You are hoping.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: During the last session members received a copy of the Public Service List following the recent reclassification; and on looking through the officers employed by the Department of Agriculture, it was most interesting to note that quite a number of positions are vacant. I am not referring to clerical but to professional vacancies, and to the salaries that are shown against each item. According to this list, there are only two men at present employed in the research and marketing branch, but one is seconded to the Town Planning Department. That means that one man is doing the work of four, because the other two positions are still vacant.

What is wrong? I believe this officer is a B.Sc. and he receives £1,290. In my opinion, research and marketing are quite important functions of the department. In the veterinary branch, there are 11 positions for veterinary surgeons, and there are five vacancies. After the five years' training at the University, which is required for a veterinary surgeon, the salary offered is only £995. That is extremely low. The stock inspector must possess some veterinary knowledge, though of no definite standard; and he must have a good knowledge of stock. There are 12 positions for stock inspectors, with five

vacancies. But the salary for that position comes to within £20 of the salary for a trained and qualified veterinary surgeon. I shall skip one or two of the divisions.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Apparently the Government does not believe in proper margins.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Do not forget that these officers do a lot of overtime work which is not paid for. In the dairying branch there are 11 positions, with four vacancies; and, in the wheat and sheep branch, which is one of the most important in the department, there are 49 positions, of which 15 are vacant. The reasons for this are the same old ones—low salaries and lack of accommodation. We have read a lot about soil conservation in recent times. We have also heard that, in other parts of the world, through lack of soil conservation, the land has gone to waste.

Hon. H. Hearn: Speaking generally, the Government is the worst employer of labour.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am not blaming the present Government, but all governments. The Government does not appear to provide reasonable accommodation for these officers. Regarding soil conservation, there should be a section dealing with salt encroachment which we have heard so much about recently. There has been no set-up to deal with this problem. Salt encroachment particularly affects farmers over the Darling Ranges. They are affected to a much greater degree than farmers in my province.

In the research station there are 14 positions, with five vacancies. The highest salary received by the research officers is £1,015. The others are on £955. An attempt has been made to reclassify the department and divide it into branches. There are at least 23 branches in the Agricultural Department. I do not know whether the classification of all divisions is given, but I do know that the department has classified irrigation and soil conservation together. To me, that is absolutely absurd. Irrigation is confined to a small area in the South-West of the State; while soil conservation, in the main, is required on the other side of the Darling Ranges. There appears to be no community of interest whatsoever.

Hon. L. A. Logan: It is spread over a very wide area.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Over practically the whole agricultural area, but mainly on the other side of the ranges. I wish to point out that I am not in any way questioning the ability of members of the staff, or the technical officers of the Agricultural Department. Rather, I am amazed that we have retained the officers we have in view of the most inadequate accommodation provided and the very low salaries paid.

Farmers are exhorted to produce more and cheaper products. Nearly every day we read about that in the papers. To a certain extent, a farmer can experiment on his own; but there is need for more agricultural officers, particularly those who deal with extension services. If we had those officers, then I believe that farmers in due course would be able to produce at a far cheaper rate than at present. Until sufficient technical research officers are employed, and until they bring their findings on to the farms, we shall not get any better results.

There seems to be a growing need for a thorough reorganisation of the Agricultural Department—firstly, by the provision of reasonable office accommodation; secondly, by organising branches into divisions, with a divisional officer in charge of each, instead of the present system, under which some 20 or more branches and divisions have direct access to the assistant or the director; and thirdly, by providing salaries commensurate with qualifications. If more responsibility were thrown on to an intermediate officer, and if greater freedom of action were permitted, I believe it would have a beneficial result on agriculture in this State.

There is one other matter. In the past, the portfolio of agriculture has been extremely low in the grading of Ministers; that is, if one were to take note of the ministerial list appearing in "Hansard." When the present Government came into office, the portfolio went up to No. 5 on the list. I firmly believe, and I am certain that many other members believe, that agriculture should be at least No. 3 on the list, and should come after the portfolios of Premier and public works.

If we are to compete on the world's markets in agricultural products, we cannot afford to neglect the Agricultural Department, as was done to a large extent in the past. We cannot compete with many overseas products today. If our production is to increase, we must have far greater agricultural knowledge. In New Zealand, in proportion to the farming community, there are double the number of officers that we have here.

Last year, I spoke of artificial insemination, and I was rather disappointed that the Minister did not reply. When no reply is given to remarks on a subject which a very large number of people in this State, particularly in the South-West, consider important, one can only come to the conclusion that either the Government does not care or has no plans. I believe that at that time the Government did not have a plan. I am not at all certain that it has one at present; but recently the Minister for Agriculture announced a decision to commence artificial insemination as early as possible. He said that to this end arrangements had been made for the

construction of bull yards and shelters at Wokalup and a sum had been placed on the Estimates for the construction of an office and laboratory.

This news is gratifying to all who are interested; but the most important feature is the provision of stud bulls, those which have been proven. We have few, if any, in Western Australia. The department will have to obtain these either from overseas or from the Eastern States. The backing of a dam at present is of little consequence; show qualities are negligible. In New Zealand which is among the highest dairy-producing countries, a bull can become a champion although he may never have been in the show ring. He is judged purely on the production of his daughters. By this means, he can be awarded a certificate of merit. If the Government desires to start an artificial insemination scheme in this State, it is absolutely essential for it to obtain certificate of merit bulls. If low-grade producing bulls are brought into the scheme, then it will fall down absolutely.

In mentioning the difficulty of getting suitable stud bulls in this State, I want to refer to some figures which the Director of Agriculture gave at Armadale recently. He stated that in ordinary grade herd recordings from 1924 to 1942, butterfat per cow had risen from 180 lb. to 244 lb. During the war it came down to 181 lb. and now it stood at 194 lb. I am not prepared to give a reason for this falling off. Probably the difficulty in getting good bulls is one of the explanations.

The director also stated that the position with regard to pure breeds is almost frightening. Twenty years ago, a relative few averaged 270 lb.; and last year, after 20 years of testing of pure breed or stud herds, the average rose by only 5 lb. to 275 lb. In other words, last year's recording of production per cow was only 31 lb. above what grade herds were producing in 1942. I thoroughly agree with the words of the director that the position is almost frightening. It should also prove that it is absolutely essential to begin artificial insemination as soon as possible, and to obtain the best possible bulls.

On a number of occasions in the past I have dealt with the need for improving holdings, particularly the small dairying holdings, to enable a greater carrying capacity per farm. I am not going to discuss that at length; but it appears that the director in the same address, recognised this need, because he stated that the biggest difficulty confronting the dairying industry in this State at present was the financial one of bringing farms up to a carrying capacity that would enable the borrowing of money for cheap developmental work. Until this could be done the butterfat section of the industry would always be dragging its feet. That, of course, is perfectly clear.

Quite a lot of work has been done by the Rural and Industries Bank. It has gradually extended the service; and in its latest report, on page 15, it shows that during the 1952-53 season some 5,538 acres were reconditioned and bulldozed, and some were bulldozed and windrowed. Most of this money was provided by the Rural and Industries Bank, and the rest was found by farmers from their own bank credit or private resources. When we consider that from 1950 to 1953 the cost of bulldozing has risen from £5 10s. to £8 18s. 11d., we can realise that it is an extremely big figure for any small farmer. I hope that the Government will continue to exert every effort to get additional finance for this purpose.

A year ago I congratulated the Government upon its group hay-baling scheme. This scheme has taken on remarkably well. The report before me states that the number of groups assisted is 19, and I believe there are six farmers to a group. This means that 114 people at least have taken advantage of the scheme. Although the maximum loan under the scheme is £1,700, the average loan granted is only £766; in other words, the farmer is providing the bulk of the money. I repeat that a farmer does not want to borrow unless it is absolutely necessary.

If the Government could extend the scheme for bulldozing, I believe that quite a lot of farmers would be able to pay a certain amount of the cost from the start. One point I omitted to mention was that the number of bulldozers constantly employed by the Rural and Industries Bank was 14, though later in the season the number was 16.

Reference has been made to the communist danger at the Teachers' Training College. I had no intention of bringing this matter forward, but a number of people have asked me whether the Government is in a position to do anything about it. My answer was that I understood the Education Department had the power to veto any entry into the college. I was also asked, "What is the Government going to do?" I could not answer that question beyond stating that I had read about a month or six weeks ago that no further consideration could be given to the matter, and that at present it seemed that nothing was going to be done.

I am not one of those who are gullible enough to believe that communism is just another political ideology. Recently I obtained a copy of the constitution of the Communist Party, the most interesting portion of which is the preamble. This concludes with the statement—

that is, by the establishment of socialism according to the scientific principles given us by the great teachers of mankind—Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Much as I dislike the teachings of Marx and Engels, I would not associate them with the great purveyors of misery, oppression and murder such as Lenin and Stalin. I cannot see how anybody can honestly accept communism as a political ideology when the conception stresses only the importance of the State. An individual is accepted only so long as his interest coincides with that of the State. Because we have relatively few communists in Western Australia, there is no reason why we should hide our heads in the sand. Consider the position in the Eastern States, where we find unions trying to rid themselves of communistic control, some of them successfully. On the other hand, communists fight back and sometimes win. I am satisfied that every member here fully realises the danger these people can be to our democratic set-up as we know it today.

I also observe that a branch may consist of seven or fewer members. One of the jobs of the individual member is to form a branch wherever possible; and is it likely that these people are going to miss an opportunity to form a branch among trainee teachers or others, when it is the duty of every communist to spread the teachings of communism in every way? If education were not compulsory, the danger might not be so great; but when the majority of parents have to send their children to State schools, there is a real danger. I do not think for one moment that the average run of teachers try to inculcate their own political beliefs into the minds of the children, but I am not prepared to say that the communist would not accept every opportunity to indoctrinate the children.

Members on the Government side know that in their own party a communist is not allowed to be a member, or hold executive office, or be a delegate to their A.L.P. conference. Cannot this precedent be adopted by the Education Department? Years ago, I made a copy of some words that had been uttered by Stalin as follows:—

Words are one thing; actions another. Good words are a mask for concealment of bad deeds.

I think members will agree that his followers adopt that course, and that the people look to the Government to take action in this matter. Remember that individuals, groups, political parties, trade unions, religious bodies, or federations of employers must form part of the State or cease to exist.

I wish to refer now to the announcement by the Minister which appeared in the "Daily News" recently dealing with the transport of stock by road and the possibility of the railways, probably by coercion, securing a far greater share of the transport. This applies particularly to areas roughly within 100 miles from Perth.

I admit that recently, speaking for the South-West, the Railway Department has brought out a programme to speed up stock transference to a certain extent. I have a copy of it before me, but it does not speed up the transport to any great extent.

Take Armadale, which is about 30 miles from Midland. Stocks for the Midland market has to be loaded there at 6 p.m. and it arrives up to 16 hours later. At Serpentine, about 40 miles away, it has to be loaded at 5.30 p.m.; at Harvey, about 100 miles distant, at 6 p.m. If we take Bunbury, about 130 miles, the stock has to be loaded by 6 p.m. Yet at Roelands, five miles this side of Bunbury, the stock has to be loaded at 2.30 p.m.

If the Railway Department could provide quicker and better service, I believe that the farmers generally would patronise it, especially if some priority were given to a stock train on the line. Many of the stations on the other side of Pinjarra were loading at 4 p.m.—the time is now 6 p.m.—but that stock remained in the station yard at Pinjarra for six or eight hours before being sent on. When stock is sent by road, the truck can be loaded at the farm at 6 a.m. and be in the market and return back to the farm by midday. Twelve hours in transit for mature stock does not lead to deterioration to any great extent, but for younger stock a big deterioration occurs in 12 hours and accelerates in every hour after that.

Hon. A. R. Jones: And there is the damage to skins also, especially in the case of sheep.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Yes. I hope that the Railway Commissioners or the Chief Traffic Manager will take into consideration the fact that it is essential to get young stock, wealers and suckers, to market as quickly as possible. The ordinary passenger train can complete the run from Bunbury to Perth in four or five hours, and surely a special stock train could do it in six or eight hours! If a service of that sort were provided, there would be no need to apply coercion to make the farmers use the railways.

On the 21st March last trucks containing 31 head of cattle were railed from Waroona to Midland Junction. They were loaded at 4 p.m. and did not arrive at Midland until next afternoon—after the sale was concluded. Other stock loaded on road vehicles at 6 a.m. were sold in the market before noon. The loss to the suppliers of the first lot was between £6 and £7 per head. On the 31 head, that represented a considerable loss.

During his speech, Mr. Griffith dealt very briefly with the shipping trouble in Carnarvon, and I had hoped that North-West members would speak about it. I know very little about the problem, but I read some

letters that appeared in the Press in Carnarvon. Those that appeared in the Press down here contained, to a certain extent, garbled statements made by the Minister, and a representative of the shipping line.

The Minister for the North-West: Did you say "garbled"?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Yes.

The Minister for the North-West: Who by?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The report that appeared in the Press down here gave a different impression to the report in the "Northern Times." The report was cut down and probably a lot of substance was taken from the Minister's remarks.

The Minister for the North-West: That is right.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: At one time the "Northern Times" stated that a settlement had been reached; that was after the Minister and the Premier—I believe quite rightly—went to Carnarvon to endeavour to reach a settlement at about the end of the short April session. It was reported in the "Northern Times" on the 15th April that a settlement had been reached and—

It was decided that all financial members of the A.W.U., including the breakaway group headed by Mr. F. Baxter, J.P., should offer for work under the conditions governed by the A.W.U. agreement which has been in operation for the past four years and that the subject of this dispute should be submitted to the Industrial Court of Arbitration.

The Premier and the Minister for the North-West expressed pleasure at that, but I believe they accepted the word of the people with whom they were dealing. In my opinion some of the people with whom they were dealing—call them wise men from the East—definitely had communistic tendencies. Not only do I believe that, but also the Minister, in a later statement, said something to that effect. I wish to emphasise what I said a few moments ago—"good words are a mask for the concealment of bad deeds." I think all members will agree with me there.

The Minister for the North-West: Because of the noise, I cannot hear what you are saying.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: A little later, when it was discovered that things were not going as well as anticipated, the "Northern Times" on the 22nd April, issued a statement by the Minister for the North-West in which the Minister said that the hold-up at Carnarvon had been brought about by the communist-dominated Federal Council of the Waterside Workers' Federation of Australia attempting to take control

of waterside work in that port. The Minister also quoted a report published in the "Maritime Worker" on the 1st April which read as follows:—

He, Mr. Roach, stated that formation of branches would "complete an unbroken chain of Federation organisation right round the coastline of this vast Continent. This will enable us to take militant unionism to the North-West and united with the Seamen's Union, allow the Federation to play a more important role than ever in the fight of the workers of Western Australia for a better life."

The Minister for the North-West: Who wrote that?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: That is what the Minister said; it appeared in the "Northern Times" on the 22nd April, 1954.

The Minister for the North-West: Yes; but whose words are they? They are not mine.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: They are supposed to come from the Minister.

The Minister for the North-West: They are not my words.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Apparently the Minister has misunderstood me. They are not the Minister's own words, but are from an extract in the "Maritime Worker," which he quoted.

The Minister for the North-West: That is all right; so long as it is realised they are not my words.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I said, when I read it, that it was an extract the Minister had quoted.

The Minister for the North-West: Then emphasise it.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am not trying to garble the Minister's words. However, the Minister went on to say—

Since 1919 cargoes have been worked by members of the Australian Workers' Union under an agreement with port authorities—

Every person in the North-West with whom I have spoken has said that everything was most satisfactory until the Waterside Workers' Federation came into the picture. As I said before, I am not trying to garble the Minister's statement.

The Minister for the North-West: I will watch you.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The Minister's statement continued a little further on—

At Carnarvon men who depend on waterside work for their livelihood rejected overtures to abandon the Australian Workers' Union in favour of the Federation. Under existing conditions they are free to work in any

North-West port. This would be denied them and an age limit of 45 is a rule of the Federation in respect of new members. Under the Australian Workers' Union they are free to make decisions in respect of policy or action, whereas with the change they consider they would be instructed in these matters by the Federal Council.

I think everyone will agree with that portion of the Minister's statement.

The Minister for the North-West: With which part do you not agree?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I will not read all the statement, but a little further on the Minister said—

In the meantime the W.W.F. set-up at Carnarvon had been instructed by the council to demand all work on board the "Gorgon" which would be using shore labour at Carnarvon for the first time.

It appears to me that that is the cause of the Blue Funnel line not calling at Carnarvon. In the past the Australian Workers' Union had an agreement with the company and everything was satisfactory. However, this latest action has prevented the Blue Funnel line from calling at Carnarvon and picking up cargoes.

The Minister for the North-West: The owners would not send the boats in.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Also, on the 6th May, a letter appeared in the "Northern Times," written by Dalgety and Co. Ltd., who are agents for the Blue Funnel line. It is a fairly lengthy letter, so I do not propose to read it all.

The Minister for the North-West: Just read the last little bit.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: It stated—

In Saturday's Perth Press Mr. Strickland is quoted as having said that he was disappointed at the failure of the "Gorgon's" agents to reach agreement with the Federation along the lines of settlement previously agreed on.

Their reply to this was—

It was intended that the "Gorgon" would call at Carnarvon south bound as scheduled, but we were informed by Mr. Strickland that his wharfinger had been handed a list of some 20 odd names by the local W.W.F. representative with the demand that these particular men be employed to do the shipboard work and we were informed that this demand had been refused. At the same time we were informed by Mr. Roach and his local representative—Mr. Black—that in the event of their men not being employed (either by the Harbour and Light Department or by us direct) we could expect repercussions at Fremantle and Geraldton.

The Minister for the North-West: That is right.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I believe that the dispute has gone to arbitration, and that some sort of appeal is being made. It may be many months before the work at the port of Carnarvon gets back to normal. I know that at certain times of the year there are large shipments of sheep and wool from that port; the wool to England, and the sheep to Singapore. Now the company is unable to take its ships into Carnarvon because of the repercussions.

The Minister for the North-West: It is not unable to take them there; it has never tried.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The wool is now coming to Geraldton, some of it by road—probably some is coming by ship too—but it must be handled twice.

The Minister for the North-West: That is a small sacrifice if we can get rid of communists.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: How long people will be able to afford to pay double handling charges—which a little while ago were described by the Maritime Workers' Union as "helping the workers of Australia"—I do not know.

The Minister for the North-West: Do you not think it is a small sacrifice?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: To a large extent the Blue Funnel line pioneered shipping in the North. For many years, until the Navigation Act became more stringent, the company conducted a service to those ports. At one time the State Shipping Service had the old N2—she later became the "Bambra"—and conducted a service to Singapore. I admit that the five State ships are doing a good job. Certainly they are losing money, but they are carrying out essential work.

The Minister for the North-West: There are no railways up there.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The State ships are serving a useful function, and I understand that the Government is contemplating buying more vessels. Would it not be better to try to relax the Navigation Act to some extent and allow overseas vessels to call at the ports? The money that would be saved could be used for improving the roads in that area, as Mr. Willesee suggested last night. I do not say that the State should give up the service completely; but I believe that a combined service would be in the interests of the State, and particularly the people of the North. The money saved by adopting the suggestion I have made could be used in the North-West.

The Minister for the North-West: They have never been refused a permit.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: For years the other lines rendered a good service to the North, and they were able to handle all the requirements of that area. The State Shipping Service is purely and simply a

coastal service, and the overseas vessels are the only ships which take our produce to the islands in the far north.

The Minister for the North-West: They have never been refused a permit.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Approximately 120,000 sheep have been sent to Singapore each year from Carnarvon, and now they will have to be shipped from Geraldton. I am not very familiar with the whole business; but I would like the Minister to give us a statement when he speaks to the motion, and tell us the full story. People in the metropolitan area, and even those from the North who are living here temporarily or permanently, do not know the exact position.

The Minister for the North-West: What position?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Everyone agrees that the A.W.U. has given excellent service in the past. Dalgetys, in their letter to the Press, admit that, and so does everybody who knows the position; and they are right behind the A.W.U. They all hope the service, as it was in the past, will be restored.

The Minister for the North-West: That is why they want this ship.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: We do not want the W.W.F.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I support the motion.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [3.13]: I wish to join in the congratulations which have been extended to you, Mr. President, and I express the hope that you will have a long and happy tenure of the high office you now occupy. I would also like to join in the welcome which has been extended to the new members, and to congratulate all of them on the contributions they have already made to our debates.

It might be invidious for me to mention names; but without exaggerating, I would be expressing the opinion of most members if I said that the new members have satisfied us that they understand the problems that are associated with their respective districts, and that they are going to make some worthwhile contribution in this House to the solving of those problems and matters that come up for discussion before this Chamber from time to time.

I have made a few notes in connection with the goldmining industry, and I intend to refer to them. I have summarised them under 10 headings, with a view to elaborating the few points I would like to make. The first is that the world production of gold in 1953 has been estimated to have been 26,500,000 fine ounces. The largest producer in the world was South Africa, with approximately 12,000,000 ounces. Australia was fifth on the list with a production of 1,500,000 ounces of gold. Russia's production is still an unknown quantity,

but the United States Bureau of Mines estimates that in recent years it has reached as high as 9,500,000 ounces of gold per year. If this estimate is correct, or nearly correct, it would place Russia as the second largest gold producer in the world.

Hon. G. Bennetts: She was always reckoned to be so.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: For the year ended the 31st December, 1953, Western Australia produced 823,331 fine ounces, which, in Australian currency, was valued at approximately £13,000,000. Incidentally, this is equivalent to 29,000,000 dollars. The importance of gold, therefore, can easily be seen.

The total number of men employed in the goldmining industry in Western Australia last year was 5,616; of those 3,510 were employed in the mines at Kalgoorlie and Boulder, and 2,106 elsewhere in the State. The average recovery of gold per ton of ore treated in Western Australia last year was 5.19 dwt.; that is, a little over a quarter of an ounce to the ton. The present price being paid by the Commonwealth Bank for gold is £15 12s. 6d. per fine ounce.

Out of £13,000,000, being the value of gold produced last year in Western Australia, approximately £11,500,000 went in wages, stores, materials, etc.; the balance of approximately £1,500,000 was distributed in dividends. The Big Bell mine at Cue last year produced 54,142 oz. of gold to the value of approximately £840,000, and it employed 415 men. The Sons of Gwalia mine at Gwalia, last year produced 26,026 oz. to the value of approximately, £404,000, and employed 259 men. To conclude my analysis, in the month of May this year the value of gold produced in Western Australia was £1,028,564.

An analysis of figures and statistics relating to the goldmining industry of Western Australia leads to the distinct conclusion that that industry is still of the greatest importance to this State. It will be realised that the revenue from gold produced amounts to over £1,000,000 a month, and it will be appreciated that by maintaining a unit like the Big Bell mine at a far distant place such as Cue, the goldmining industry is achieving something worth while.

As I have already pointed out, in that far distant place there are 415 men employed; and, last year, wealth to the value of £840,000 was produced. In another remote centre like Gwalia we have a mine which last year constantly employed 259 men and which produced nearly £500,000 worth of gold. Accordingly the importance and the vital necessity of retaining mines such as those mentioned, and the importance and vital necessity of fostering and maintaining the goldmining industry in this State are self-evident.

Another fact I could mention at this stage is a paragraph contained in the Governor's Speech which reads as follows:—

The value of the State's mineral production last year reached the record figure of £19,000,000. Gold contributed £13,300,000, coal just over £3,000,000 and other minerals slightly under £3,000,000.

Those figures are most significant. Gold contributed £13,300,000; coal, £3,000,000; and other minerals, just under £3,000,000. There we find another set of figures that indicates very correctly and quite conclusively the immense importance of this great industry.

Although the State's gold yield is keeping up, the outlook for the industry is not bright. In the first place, the price of gold still remains fixed, in spite of the fact that costs of production in every direction have risen, and in spite of the fact that increased costs cannot be passed on as they can with other industries. For years now the world price has been fixed by the International Monetary Fund; and although strong efforts have been made from time to time to get an increase, nothing has been achieved. It was hoped that the attitude of America to an increased price would have altered with the advent of the Eisenhower administration. But Washington seems just as determined as ever not to alter its past attitude. Close observers now hold the opinion that the prospect of an increase in the dollar price of gold is not at all favourable. It seems obvious that the goldmining industry will be facing even more difficult times in the future.

If costs continue to rise, mines which are now working on low margins will be unable to carry on. Two of such mines are the Big Bell at Cue and the Sons of Gwalia at Gwalia, to which I have already made reference as being amongst the largest producers and employers in their districts. There are, of course, others, but those two serve as good examples. Not only are those mines important as producers and employers, but they wholly support and maintain two comparatively large townships in far distant portions of the State, and are largely responsible for the maintenance of their respective railway systems. If mines like those were forced to close down, the far-reaching and unhappy consequences, not only to individuals but also to the State, would be apparent. The position, therefore, is one that needs urgent attention on the highest level.

In his policy speech this year, the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, stated that the goldmining industry was of the greatest importance in the economic set-up of the Commonwealth, and promised that if he were returned to power he would bring

down legislation to give financial assistance to it. The Prime Minister's statement about the great importance of the industry cannot be over-emphasised, particularly as it applies to this State. Gold-mining practically built Western Australia, and no other industry has done more or can do more towards solving the grave problem of centralisation, which affects this State in particular. Therefore its continuance in a virile, healthy, prosperous condition is of the utmost importance to Western Australia, and the Commonwealth Government's proposals will be awaited with greatest interest.

Only a few days ago, however, the Prime Minister made a statement which caused the greatest misgivings to all concerned with the industry. The statement was to the effect that the proposed assistance from the Commonwealth Government will be confined to mines in areas with townships dependent almost wholly on them. Apparently such a proposal would exclude the prospector and the small mine-owner. If that is the case, it is a most unwise policy, and reveals a poor appreciation of the general situation. I can go further and say that any scheme of financial assistance which excluded the prospector and the small mineowner would amount almost to a breach of faith.

Yet it is this section of the industry that merits the most sympathetic consideration, because it is the prospector and the small mineowner who always go further afield to find new mines, which are so necessary to maintain the continuance of the industry. To exclude them at this critical stage when ever-increasing costs have already reduced their numbers to a minimum, would be a most unwise policy indeed. It would be utterly inconsistent with the Prime Minister's frequent promises to assist the industry.

By all means assist mines that are struggling to keep going and on which whole communities are dependent; but at the same time have an eye to the future, and to the necessity of finding new mines and establishing new townships to replace the old. I earnestly hope the Prime Minister will reconsider the position and evolve some generous scheme that will assist the whole of the industry. The contribution which the goldmining industry has made and is still making to the economic fabric of Australia calls for a courageous and generous attitude from the Commonwealth Government at the present time.

I was very pleased to read in the Press recently that the Commonwealth Government has agreed to the appointment of an agricultural adviser for the East Murchison Goldfields pastoral area, which comprises the area eastwards of Meekatharra to and beyond Wiluna. For a long time pastoralists there have been contending against very complex problems. It is a vast area with great potentialities for the

pastoral industry; but, as I have just stated, there are problems that baffle the hardy people who are carrying on in that district. Those problems call for research and study by scientists and experts, and the latest step taken by the Government is one I consider very commendable.

That district suffered a major set-back only a few years ago, when the Wiluna mine was closed down. The salvaging of the mine created a fair amount of work for a couple of years, but even that has come to an end. We all remember, too, how serious consideration was given to the pulling up of the railway line. That causes me to recall with a certain amount of pride that this House may have made some contribution towards the retention of that line; because, at a critical time, we passed a motion calling upon the Government to give the matter its gravest consideration; and present events indicate that we were wise in doing so. I do not know what the future holds as far as mining is concerned for the area around Wiluna. But the pastoralists up there have a great faith in its value for pastoral pursuits, and it is a far distant portion of the State which we just cannot let go.

In conclusion, I would like to pay a tribute to Sir Harold Seddon, who is no longer with us in this House, but who was a member for 32 years, during the whole of which period he represented the North-East Province. His record was a long and honourable one. As President, he was always dignified, and, at the same time, courteous to every member of the House. As a private member he made an intense study of finance, and his knowledge of this complex subject was of great assistance to the House on numerous occasions. He was a competent and loyal representative of the Goldfields, where his name will always be remembered with the greatest respect. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [3.40]: May I take this, my first opportunity, of congratulating you, Sir, on your elevation to the very high office you hold. I would add that I am very sorry I happened to be the first member you had to chastise. I know, however, that you did it in the course of your duty. I would also like to join other members in welcoming newcomers to this House. The address delivered last night by Mr. Willesee shows that we have, in him, a thinker. The speech he made was a lesson to us all, and I am going to try to emulate him by being brief—which may surprise members!

One of the matters upon which I wish to touch concerns main roads. In speaking on the Address-in-reply last year, Dr. Hislop referred to the widening of Canning Highway through South Perth. He pointed out that previously vehicles had been able to pull off the road into the sand, but now they had to remain on the

highway, thus reducing a four-lane thoroughfare to one of two lanes. Following that, the South Perth Road Board has been spending a sum of money in moving the kerbing back in the shopping areas and in bus bays. That is, of course, an added and uneconomic cost.

The Melville Road Board is of the opinion that if the Main Roads Department, before laying these roads, would consult the local authorities concerned, and put its plans before those authorities, the latter could assist in reducing expenditure by having the shopping and bus bays aligned in the first planning. I would refer members to the new shopping area which has just been established near Canning Bridge. In a few days the Main Roads Department is to widen that section of the highway. That will mean that there will be a distance of 13 ft. between the kerb and the building alignment.

Local business people and the Melville Road Board consider that of that 13 ft., 6ft. 6 ins. on each side would allow a parking space for vehicles which have to pull in to the shopping area and would still permit of a free flow along a four-lane highway. The board's idea is that if the Main Roads Department would, in building its kerbing, carry it out according to a plan provided by a road board, the board could pay the department for the added distance which would have to be widened, and at the same time the particular road board would be absolved from having to pull up the kerbing and realign it when it wished to put in parking bays for shopping and bus stops. The cost is fairly large for a small road board, whereas the Main Roads Department could do the work much more cheaply.

Another matter of grave consequence in my district concerns the electricity set-up. We have heard several times that electricity is needed in the Jandakot area, which is well developed and is only seven to nine miles from Fremantle. In Spearwood and Coogee, the market gardens are extending very quickly, but some of the people there have been told by the State Electricity Commission that they will have to wait for five years before being able to get current.

I found that in one road there is a potential of 17 extra consumers, if 16 poles are erected with the necessary wires. These people will not only require electricity for house lighting but power for motors which are operating pumps on wells that are over 100 feet deep. Most of the farms in that area are irrigated. The State Electricity Commission should make a further survey of this area, particularly as the number of people moving into Medina is giving the market gardeners an impetus that they have not had for many years.

I mentioned in my first speech here that there was not, in some ways, collaboration between departments. The local road

boards are concerned that the S.E.C. employees come into their districts, as has happened in Miguel-rd. in the Spearwood-Coogee area, and cut a track through where roads have not been cleared, but where there is a roadway. They have smashed trees by shooting them down 4ft. or 5ft. from ground level. This means that the road board will have a costly job to remove the stumps. The S.E.C. does this with impunity. It does not tell the local road board that it is going to do the work. It has caused great damage to fences.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It will be held responsible for that.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Yes; but the owners were not notified that the commission would be there, and one of the men concerned runs a lot of stock. He did not know why his stock were getting away until he went along and saw his back fence. It is not asking too much of a department like the S.E.C. to request it to notify people in this regard. The road boards, which are doing their best to govern the country in their own areas, are entitled to the courtesy of being notified of the work that is to be done, before any damage eventuates.

Hon. A. R. Jones: The S.E.C. has not time.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: This does not occur only in my province. Last year I was in Albany, when I was on tour with the Minister for Education, and I saw the same thing happening; and the local road board was complaining, too.

The commissioner in the Kwinana area is doing a splendid job. People who are not actually in Medina and who, prior to the new road board coming into existence, came within the boundaries of the Rockingham Road Board, have quite a number of problems on their hands; and the commissioner, Mr. McGuigan, is doing what he can to alleviate the position. But he is faced with one hold-up at the moment, and this again is due to departments not collaborating.

The Main Roads Department is ready to proceed with the continuation of the road through Medina towards Mundijong, but it is held up because the Railway Department has still not decided on the siting of its railway. It does not matter if the railway is not to be built for ten years, but the site is important. These two departments have not collaborated, with the result that the Main Roads Department cannot proceed with its job, which is an immediate requirement.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You want to see that you get some redress in regard to these things.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The railways are being blamed by the Main Roads Department because this work cannot continue.

The Chief Secretary: There is more to it than that.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I want to speak on two items that affect the State as a whole. I was pleased to hear Mr. Murray speak last night about the timber position. It seems to me that in our great anxiety to build homes, which is our first priority at the moment, we have gone mad on building wooden structures. I do not exactly mean that we have gone insane, but we seem to have taken unnecessary toll of the timber resources of the State, to the exclusion of bricks.

I was interested when Mr. Barker asked questions about clay deposits. The Minister for Housing told me that the Government was concerned about the production of bricks, and that when the expert from the Eastern States made his report there would be a big addition to the brickmaking facilities of the State. That is very pleasing.

We cannot forever go on just building wooden homes and using our bricks only for factories. When speaking on the rents Bill, I mentioned that at Medina, 60 wooden homes were being built in place of 60 brick ones, because the tender price for the latter was too high. Also, the Education Department is building wooden schools now. I am not a highly technical man, but I can see that the maintenance of these buildings will be out of all proportion compared with the maintenance of brick buildings.

Hon. L. A. Logan: In ten years the maintenance costs will overtake the extra amount.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I do not know about that.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Can you say why we are so short of bricks, seeing that we have just established a new works?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have not the exact figures, but the number of bricks being produced today is greatly in excess of what it was 12 months ago; but so is the demand. Bricks are needed for the construction of many war service homes, but the bricks are not available. The Minister is very concerned about the brick position.

I will not weary members by dealing with the housing position except to say that it is worrying not only to us in the city, but to everyone throughout the State. In "The West Australian" yesterday, we read that the Victorian authorities are perturbed at the present influx of migration and the ordinary increase of population. The expectancy is that the population will double in a period of 10 to 15 years, and this is worrying many of the organisations that control building operations throughout the Commonwealth.

We are told we need to populate this country for purposes of defence, but it is no use anyone trying to say that defence

and housing are not linked. No one can deny that the position north of Australia is serious. To have a big defence programme, we must have a large number of people; and if they are to be in a fit condition to defend the country, they must be housed, because housing is the first essential of our family life and the high ideals we all seek to achieve.

At lunchtime I was in the Swanbourne military camp talking to a high-ranking military officer. He said, "You will hear it said that Mr. Calwell is belly-aching about the empty North; but, believe me, he is right." We have to do something with the empty North in the way of populating it; and, that being so, the population has to be housed. We should take the bull by the horns and do something in the style of what was adopted during the war. We must build houses with great speed, and spend a great amount of money. Whilst I have been speaking, a rough figure has passed through my mind. I think that a sum of £100,000,000—nothing less—spent over ten years would, perhaps overtake the lag.

I am very worried as to what is going to happen in regard to the countries north of us as a result of the Indo-China dispute finishing as it has. We have a big project to face, and I hope the responsible authorities will take this matter very quickly to heart. We read in the paper this morning that the British are about to leave Egypt. In reading the defence debates recently held in the British House of Commons, I find that there are over 750,000 British soldiers fighting outside Britain. This means a very big cost to the country. If we are to protect Australia from what has been happening to the north of our shores, we have a big job in front of us.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You do not make any suggestion as to how we can get our people to stay there.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The first essential is good housing, and it will cost a great deal of money; but I feel that when there are houses, industry will follow them.

There were many people who, although they would have liked to attend various functions during the recent visit of Her Majesty the Queen, were unable to do so because they did not receive invitations; and I think that there are in our community many people who should not be so forgotten on any future occasion when Royalty might visit this State. I refer particularly to those who have been honoured by the Crown, in years gone by, perhaps by the bestowal upon them of some honour such as the O.B.E. There are many people who received honours in the past, but who were given no invitation to any function during Her Majesty's visit.

A case in point is that of a gentleman in Fremantle who received the O.B.E. for his services in organising the preparation and despatch of comforts parcels that were provided for our soldiers by a band of women

workers in this State. He was not upset because he did not get an invitation to any public function—other than the invitations he received from the Mayor of Fremantle—but was worried because the great band of women trench comfort fund workers, who sometimes had to produce as many as 1,500 parcels at a day's notice, did not receive any recognition. I repeat that, on future occasions when Royalty visits this State, people who in the past have been honoured by the Crown should receive invitations to some of the public functions. I support the motion.

Sitting suspended from 4.3 to 4.20 p.m.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [4.20]: In making my contribution to the debate on the Address-In-reply to His Excellency's Speech, which was delivered in this House, I will first compliment Mr. Willesee on the speech he made on behalf of the electors of his province. It is rather refreshing to hear a member who has a thorough knowledge of the difficulties experienced by his electors and who is able, in the manner displayed by Mr. Willesee last evening, to convey those difficulties to the members of this Chamber. I am pleased to endorse his remarks about those difficulties because his sentiments are the same as mine, and I held a similar opinion when I was Minister for Agriculture.

His remarks concerning the experiments to be made at Woodstock by the C.S.I.R.O. tend to indicate that this movement may bring about a reduction in the number of kangaroos. There is no other place in the world that has such a pest which is so devastating. One has only to travel along that inner road to Marble Bar and across to Port Hedland, and come back along the coast, to appreciate how many of these marsupials are in existence in that area. I think the hon. member must have impressed this Chamber, and any assistance members can give him in the effort he is making should be readily forthcoming.

The hon. member also referred to the embargo on the export of manganese from the North. I fully sympathise with him in this regard. Governments come along and merely say, "We will close down this industry;" but they offer no solution to the problem of holding the population there. The tendency is for us not to make the North attractive enough for people to go there and stay there; and if we were able to make it more attractive, by offering them a greater income than they would obtain in any other part of the State, there might be some inducement for them to live there. Of course, the discovery of oil might revolutionise that portion of the State; and I am hoping, with others, that it will prove to be a great success. No matter how we may try to hinder it, I am sure it will be successful in spite of the difficulties that are placed in its way.

It is unfortunate that Governments can come along and say, "There shall be no more exports of this mineral," and yet provide nothing to replace it. There is no doubt that manganese is a very important commodity, and we have substantial quantities of it at Peak Hill. I do not know whether the export of ore from that district has been stopped, but we were exporting it from Geraldton. The Government should step in and request the Commonwealth to offer some assistance to this industry.

I interjected when Mr. Lavery was putting forward his idea about the provision of more homes in the North. However, it is no use providing homes unless the income to maintain them is also provided. The solution is not easy. I think I mentioned in this House previously that some years ago a Polish ex-Minister came here with the idea that he could obtain £5,000,000 to place a number of Polish Jews in the North. That proposition was turned down by the Commonwealth Government—quite reasonably, I suppose, because we in Australia have always had an abhorrence of community settlement of people who do not speak the English language. If we had agreed to the establishment of a Polish colony in that area, it might have proved embarrassing to us in years to come.

That Polish ex-Minister spoke to me on one occasion, and I said to him, "The Jewish race, as a race, do not become land-owners or farmers. Usually, they are commercial or business people." He replied, "These people have lived off the land all their lives"; and he was quite sure that the settlement of them would be a success. I remarked that once they came down to Perth, and looked over the city, they would not want to go back to the North. Of course, that applies to all people generally.

It is not until people settle in the North that they fully realise the hardships they have to face. One can imagine what it was like before they had the benefit of the pedal wireless sets and the flying doctor. It is only necessary to go into the outlying parts and see the burial places of the few women who ventured there, and who died of tropical diseases, to realise the sacrifices that have been made. Whilst those difficulties remain, it is almost impossible today for us to do something worth while to effect a remedy.

In this House we have heard, not only from Mr. Willesee, but also from others, such as Mr. Barker, suggestions for populating the North and relieving the people of some of their difficulties. Mr. Barker is a great expert on onions, and he is of the opinion that we need not import onions from other parts because plenty of them could be grown in the North. However, that is not as easy to do as it is to say. The onion seed must first be obtained before that can be done.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: The seed is there and it is acclimatised.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Then the seed must be put in. The only way to keep people up there—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Do you know that onions today are £80 a ton, and £75 a ton for Egyptian onions? That is the wholesale price.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am a little disappointed that I encouraged the hon. member to interject. However, he is perfectly right. Today onions are selling at 1s. 3d. and 1s. 6d. per lb., and they have become a real luxury. The hon. member should get moving and encourage these people to grow onions. They can be sown and reaped by implements, so there is no need to employ any hand labour. Nevertheless, that industry would not provide an income for many people, because the work would only be offering during certain portions of the year when they would be able to compete—that is, when onions were selling at a high price in the South.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It would not be a big industry, but it would be something.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The hon. member might devote some of his spare time during the recess to encouraging it. I was sorry to hear the remarks about the difficulties of banana-growers. They are not new, because all parts of the world which depend upon irrigation have alkali trouble if there is any salt present. Unless the salt can be washed away by heavy flooding, it will accumulate and affect the soil.

Some years back, when I went to California, I came across what is known as black alkali country. It was treated with gypsum. I asked Dr. Sutton, who was then in charge of agriculture in this State, to follow up the matter and to ascertain the result of the trial plot in California. We did not get any information. I passed what information I obtained to wheat farmers who were suffering from soil erosion caused by salt encroachment, and they tried the experiment. Of course, the effect of gypsum itself on the soil must be ascertained before it could be fully recommended. Its effects might prove to be worse than the effect of salt on the soil. It seems deplorable if these settlers have only a limited period of operation ahead; it will tend to discourage persons on the land.

It seems that Mr. Barker has a thorough knowledge of his district. I hope that some day we may persuade him to join our political party, because he thinks on the same lines as we do. Although he may be foolish enough to stand for the Labour Party, we will do what we can to enable him to overcome the difficulties facing the man on the land up there. I have been

in politics for 30 years, and the North has always been a problem during that time. The population is smaller today than it was 30 years ago.

The Minister for the North-West: That is not correct.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Except recently, when it increased owing to mining activities. I can show some figures to illustrate that goldmining was developed in that region 30 years ago, but there is not much of it today. I suppose the new asbestos mine at Hamersley Range would have a population of 100.

The Minister for the North-West: Eight hundred people and all whites.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: There are not 800 on the electoral roll. That number might be made up of new Australians. Unfortunately, it is not easy to get up-to-date figures. In the Kimberleys, away from the port, the population is smaller than it was a few years ago.

The Minister for the North-West: Of course there are some thousands not counted.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I disagree with Mr. Willesee's remark that we should not provide accommodation for tourists. The only way to educate people is by giving them the opportunities to travel and see things for themselves. When I went through that district years ago the local people were anxious to show me something of the country. If a person wants to gain a knowledge of the difficulties of the North, with the intention of finding solutions, there is only one way to do it, and that is to go there and find out things for himself. So I hope that people will not be discouraged from visiting the North by any means possible in order to learn about it.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Mr. Barker took Mr. Jones and his friend around.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: They were very enlightened by what they saw, and were appreciative of the facilities made available by the people. Unfortunately they did not see enough of Carnarvon. They would have liked to travel around the stations and the homesteads. The thing which amazed me was the difficulty of the population in getting vegetables. When I was there in 1932 there was hardly a station without a vegetable garden.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That only happens at certain times of the year.

The Minister for the North-West: The gardens are all extinct today.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That may be because the natives have become so educated that they do not work at the homesteads.

The Minister for the North-West: The Chinese gardens have gone.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Not only the North of Australia, but Australia as a whole, must thank the Chinese for what they did in the early days of settlement. In the western parts of New South Wales the same thing would have occurred as is occurring in the North. All vegetables for the outback portion of New South Wales were supplied by Chinese market gardeners in the same manner as some new Australians are providing them in Spearwood, Osborne Park, and Wanneroo. These new Australians are supplying vegetables by working more than 40 hours per week. In fact they work seven days a week on the vegetable gardens, with their womenfolk and children. We should be grateful to them for that. The Chinese settlers seem to have a natural instinct for vegetable growing, or cooking. The old men who used to cook on the stations were invariably Chinese. They made a great contribution to the early settlement of this country.

This year the North must be flourishing. It has experienced a distribution of rain after the ordinary rainy season. I imagine that, with the exception of Carnarvon and parts of the Murchison, the North would generally have an extremely good year. I am amazed at the practice of the broadcasting stations and the newspapers of exaggerating crucial occurrences. We read and heard of the terrible floods in the Kimberleys, and of the wholesale destruction of sheep and cattle. It is funny that the monthly summary of Australian conditions issued by the National Bank tells us a different story. It says—

The Kimberley division is now reasonably safe and the sheep losses anticipated during the floods were not experienced. Given further rains, the general position in the pastoral areas from Carnarvon southward is more assured and should provide satisfactory conditions until the summer.

Further north we know that they have had unusual rain which must benefit the country considerably.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It has never looked better.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am glad to hear that. I rejoice with the people up there who, after years of difficulty and hardship, have something encouraging to look ahead to. Australia generally has never been so prosperous as it is today. It does not matter whether one looks north, south, east, or west. Glancing through the statistical return one finds that there has never been a time in the history of Australia when there was more work offering. In Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia there is a great shortage of labour. I do not mean to say that there is no unemployment. The unemployed are of the type which is unemployable, and we always have to carry some of these people, although it may be a very small percentage.

After years of shortages of materials, I regret to see that the same conditions exist today. It is amazing that there should be a shortage of bricks in this State when new brickworks have been established. I cannot understand that. In the steel industry there is a great shortage. Galvanised iron is almost unprocurable, because of the export of sheet steel, and the fact that the demand is greater than the supply.

Strangely, we are still importing these items from overseas. Undertakings which are very important to us, such as the Kwinana Oil Refinery, are taking a great quantity of these materials. When those undertakings are completed, more of the materials in short supply will become available to the community. It is very important that more should be brought into this State.

I wonder how many people appreciate the difficulties of the settlers in the wheat belt. The water supply gets smaller every year; against that, development is increasing, and pastures are being improved. In areas where subterranean clover or other varieties of clover were not known, farms have been established at present which are increasing their capacity to carry sheep each year. They are limited by the water supplies; they cannot get sufficient. There is only one method by which a sufficient supply can be ensured, and that is by conveying the water from the coastal area and conserving it. Until something is done in this regard we shall limit the number of settlers.

To many members it must be disturbing to find that in the last few years the population of the metropolitan area has been increased, until today there are 353,000 persons living in it, or more than half the population of the State. Without taking into consideration the population of the coastal towns, we are asking the people spread over this vast countryside to carry on the work outside the metropolitan area. The metropolitan area will have to surrender some of its own requirements and provide the farms with theirs if we are to retain the population of the country.

I ask the Government to do its utmost to provide the necessary piping so that water may be conveyed to those areas. Over the years we have not done all that we ought to have done in the way of increasing the pumping capacity and only recently has the holding capacity of the reservoirs been increased. In seasons like the present one, we must feel concern at the shortage of rainfall in the catchment area on which we depend to supply, not only the metropolitan area, but also the Goldfields and other parts of the country.

Western Australia has reached a stage where it may have to limit its population. Whether in 50 years or 80 years, it will have to be restricted because of the limited

quantity of water that can be conserved. This State is not like other parts of Australia where there are large fresh-water rivers flowing inland. It always seems most extraordinary to me that States like New South Wales and Victoria have a large river that starts practically on the eastern coastline and runs out on the South Australian side, while we in Western Australia are not so fortunate. How are we going to get sufficient water unless we can get potable supplies from bores? I do not know to what extent bore water is available; of course we are getting some which is mixed in with the conserved water.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: There are a lot of rivers in the North.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes; and at the same time, water requirements at Cockatoo Island are being supplied from Newcastle, New South Wales. Admittedly there is a lot of water in the North running to waste, but the holding ground is not good. On the Ord River, there is a very good place where a considerable quantity may be conserved, but the evaporation there will be very high. That water, of course, would be used for irrigation purposes and for whatever population the irrigated areas attracted to the North.

While on this point I may mention that people in the North could produce only such commodities as would be required down here when there was a shortage or such as could be exported overseas; and when it comes to exporting such commodities as can be produced there, we have to remember that Asiatic countries are producing similar commodities much more cheaply than we could. To find a solution to Australia's problems is not at all easy. However, I am more concerned about Western Australia, and I hope that we will make use of all the scientific means possible and give careful thought to the future, even 100 years ahead, as to where we are going to get sufficient water to maintain a big population in this State.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Experiments are being made to treat salt water.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is so. If we could reach the stage where the minerals could be extracted from the sea-water and leave a good potable water, we would be on solid ground. I have read that there are means by which lifeboats can be equipped to obtain fresh water from the sea, but I understand that the idea has not been tried in a big way. If such a scheme proved successful, Australia would be fortunate because it has plenty of coastline, and plenty of water outside the land.

At the moment a problem is confronting our agriculturists, and that is to find out how long we shall have a surplus of wheat. When it is a seller's market, the position is very nice for the primary producer, but when the market is in the hands of the

buyer, difficulties arise. Apparently countries that formerly imported wheat are increasing their production as much as possible in order to meet their own requirements. Those countries to which we usually export are not storing grain, but are compelling the producing countries to store it for them, and that means there is sure to be a percentage of waste.

We in this State are fortunate enough to be able to store our wheat in bulk and the deterioration is not so great as when the wheat is stored in bags. However, there are still some problems to be faced, more particularly when there is a shortage of material required for providing storage, especially if we have a successful season, which seemingly we shall have this year. We are shipping 4,000,000 bushels of wheat to India, which is being paid for, and some other sales have been made. We are fortunate in that respect, but the purchasing countries are not storing wheat; they are buying according to day-to-day requirements. Countries in Europe that were small producers of wheat are now almost self-supporting.

Strange as it may seem, though we are having difficulty in disposing of our wheat, we can sell large quantities of barley, even six-row barley, which is regarded as being of lower milling value than is malting barley. These sales are being made at satisfactory prices, and there is a market for more. The same statement applies to oats. This State produces a good quality of millable oats which is highly regarded. One thing our good land is capable of producing is a quality oat with a good kernel.

It would be well if city people gave some thought to what the agriculturists are doing and the disabilities under which they are labouring. While we have at present a good credit balance overseas, it has been built up almost entirely by the people who live outside the city. They may be miners, cereal growers, cattle-raisers or other producers. Consequently, Labour members should come along and let us get our heads together. The statement made by Mr. Heenan gives me a little encouragement. He pointed out the value of gold to Australia and indeed to the world—a very important matter. Although he is a pretty good stickler for Labour policy, he does seem to come round at times and support our ideas.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: You come over here.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I could not think of joining the hon. member in view of some of his ideas. I repeat that Australia has never been so prosperous as it is today, and never have the workers had opportunities to make a selection of employment such as they have today. There is not one State that has not important works in hand. In Queensland conditions are booming with the finding of minerals and the extension of cold

storage to facilitate the export of beef and butter. In each of the States, development seems to be proceeding rapidly and bringing greater prosperity.

Those who believe in the efficacy of prayer will pray that oil may be found in large quantities in the North. Such a discovery will create a great deal of worry for the Government.

The Minister for the North-West: No, it will not.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am certain it will cause a few headaches. Kwinana caused us worry enough, and that experience was mild compared with what might happen in the North. When members speak about present-day difficulties generally, I cannot help thinking that the Government is spoon-feeding the people too much.

The Minister for the North-West: Which people?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The people generally. Let us have people who have some idea of providing their own requirements. We are depriving folk of their initiative. The Government is employing officers to do this and that for the people, whereas in the old days people did those things for themselves.

The Minister for the North-West: There are not enough officials.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Where science is required, we must have trained men, and we cannot have too many of them. At present there is a serious shortage. It is hateful to think that when cattle are produced in the South-West, some disease appears. I understand that at present there is some scourge affecting the cattle in that part of the State. No individual can deal with an outbreak of that sort. It is necessary to find the cause and then provide a remedy. The same thing applies to disease in sheep; the ordinary farmer cannot undertake the research work necessary to deal with that.

The Minister for the North-West: Did the pioneers have all that assistance?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The pioneers were not confronted with some of the stock difficulties that exist today. I do not know what the cause is—it may be Nature's method of making known to producers that they cannot obtain their incomes too easily—but the number of stock diseases that have occurred since I was a boy is enormous.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It may be due to the speeding up of transport.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not know whether that is responsible. However, the remedies can be found only by trained men. I endorse the remarks of Mr. Henning that we are short of scientists. The men we have in the Department of Agriculture are highly expert, but the country is too large to be served

efficiently. There may be a call from Esperance and then one from the South-West, and the territory these men have to cover is terrific. They are doing their best, but it is time that the Government increased their number.

When I was a Minister, I tried to persuade the Government to change the position allotted to the agricultural industry which, at that time, was No. 10. Since then it has been raised up half-way.

The Minister for the North-West: What difference would that make?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Quite a lot; No. 1 gets priority of cash and No. 10 gets very little. The Minister for the North-West will realise that the cash coming his way will not be too much, whereas the Treasury, Education Department and Public Works Department seem to get quite a lot. I do not know whether they ever have a surplus.

The Minister for the North-West: It depends upon the works requirements.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The production of food for the people is a very important matter, and we are finding ourselves short of qualified men to deal with the waste that is occurring in our primary industries. I think we should tell the people, "Instead of our building the houses you want and making you tenants of the State, we shall accept a small deposit and provide the rest of the purchase money."

Hon. R. F. Hutchison: They could not provide the deposit.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: If people own their own homes, they take an interest in them. I am sorry that the workers' homes scheme has not been extended considerably with the object of making people home-owners instead of tenants. If they had their own homes, they would take a greater pride in them and be more contented.

The Minister for the North-West: That would be cheaper in the long run, too.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes. With our housing system, we are trying to cover too large an area. A quarter-acre block of land is far too much for one house.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Are you suggesting more Subiaco flats?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The hon. member may have as many flats as he likes, but I am pointing out that a quarter-acre block for one house is a large area. These blocks have to be served by roads and water supplies, etc., and the expense is considerable. I do not say that homes should be crowded together. For the time being, I am living at Como, and between my home and the next house there is quite a large strip of land which is more or less idle. It might be growing a few fruit trees—

which I hope are registered—and some vegetables, or a few fowls may be run; but these strips greatly increase the expense of carrying roads and water supplies to an area.

The Minister for the North-West: But the privacy is nice.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I agree.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: And there is the benefit of not being overcrowded in future years.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Later on there will be reconstruction there, and it will be more difficult to do than if the work were done now.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: What about starting on blocks with 40ft. frontages?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is no use people trying to persuade me that the public is badly off; it is not. I was looking at the figures for Australia which are shown under a heading "Banking Trends" in the monthly summary issued by the National Bank of Australasia. The subhead is "Money Volume Higher," and the article reads—

Looking at the financial year as a whole, which includes the period of high liquidity as well as the leaner period, a substantial uplift in the volume of currency and deposits has taken place. Over the 11 months to May, 1954, the total increased by £170 million, or 6 per cent. The increase comprised an addition to bank deposits of £156 million, whilst notes held by the public rose by £12.4 million. Deposits of all trading banks increased by £119 million, and savings bank deposits rose by approximately £38 million.

Movements in the volume of currency and deposits over the 11 months to May are shown in the accompanying table—

CURRENCY AND DEPOSITS.

	June, 1953.	May, 1954.	Movement 11 months to May, 1954.
Deposits—			
Main Trading Banks	1,374.7	1,487.7	* 113.0
Other Trading Banks	53.3	59.3	* 6.0
Savings Banks	947.5	* 885.0	* 37.5
Total deposits	2,375.5	2,532.0	* 156.5
Currency—			
Notes held by the public	201.9	304.3	* 12.4
Total Currency and Deposits	2,667.4	2,836.3	* 168.9

* Estimated.

It is of interest to note that total savings bank deposits in May, 1954, approximated £985 million and, as the annual interest payment due in June would probably exceed £17 million, savings bank deposits may pass the

£1,000 million mark for the first time. The average savings deposit is around £147, and per head of population these deposits work out at about £111.

So people have never been as well off, so far as money is concerned—if it can be called money—as they are now. Today we do not have paupers, and people will do something for themselves if they are encouraged along those lines. I am hopeful that members here will do everything they can to encourage people to help themselves. I believe in a man owning a piece of this earth, with a home for himself and his family.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: On page 2 of the report the following appears under the heading of "Savings Banks":—

Depositors' balances on the 31st May, 1954, amounted to £51,665,066 or £80 18s. 4d. per head of population as against £48,602,749 or £78 6s. 1d. per head as at the 31st May last year.

Yet, in 1932, the total deposits in the savings bank were £10,000,000.

The Minister for the North-West: That was in the middle of the depression.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is so; when the people started to draw out their money. The depression really hit us, and we handed over to the Commonwealth Bank. Up to that stage, the figures had been slowly increasing; they had not gone back.

The Minister for the North-West: That was after two years of depression.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: People started to draw out their money in order to maintain themselves, and that is why there was a run on our savings bank.

The Chief Secretary: Did I hear you aright when you said that the figure was £79 per head in May last year and only £18 this year?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: For the benefit of the Chief Secretary, the figures were £78 6s. 1d. per head last year, and £80 18s. 4d. this year.

The Chief Secretary: I thought you said £18.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am pleased to know that, despite all the money that has been spent on beer; despite all the money that has been spent on starting-price betting; and despite all the other encouragements to spend money, people are still able to increase their savings. So things are not half as bad as some people would have us believe. There will always be hard cases.

The Minister for the North-West: Does that mean everybody?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: But generally times are fairly good. I have not got the figures regarding the number of depositors in Western Australia, but I feel sure that the number would be high.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What would you expect, with a Labour Government?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Despite a Labour Government, the number has increased. After we had listened to the wonderful oration by the Chief Secretary the other night, when he spoke on housing, there appeared in the "Daily News" of last night an article headed, "Subiaco Flat-site Land Brings Offers from S.H.C." It reads—

A woman living adjacent to the flats being built in Subiaco said today that she had been approached by the State Housing Commission and offered alternate accommodation.

She said that the S.H.C. had not mentioned any specific price, but had offered her another home nearby in Thomas-st., Subiaco, in return for her double block property in Bagot-rd.

"But I wouldn't sell for £20,000—even with another house thrown in. I intend to stay here regardless of any inducements," she said.

Why not put somebody in that house, and let us stop growling about not having enough premises to house evictees? The article continues—

When interviewed today, residents in Coghlan-rd. and Bagot-rd., with blocks adjacent to the flats site, generally were reluctant to disclose information of offers they had received.

One householder with a home next to the site in Coghlan-rd., said she had been approached, but she refused to disclose any details of her intentions.

A second woman living in Coghlan-rd., said that her neighbour had been offered a new home to the same value of her present one, in any suburb she chose.

Apparently, there must be plenty of houses about, because the commission said that it would house this woman in Timbuktu, Ballidu or Como, or anywhere she chose. What is the use of telling us that there are not enough houses? The Housing Commission makes an offer like that, and yet we are told that we cannot house evictees.

The Chief Secretary: It does not say whether the house is built or not.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: She would not be put out on the street; she would not accept that position. At the bottom of the article appears the following:—

In the Legislative Assembly recently, Housing Minister Graham said that he was aware someone of apparent authority concerned in the construction of the flats, had offered attractive inducements to residents in Coghlan-rd., to sell their homes.

I hope the Government is not doing that sort of thing and then coming along with a pitiful tale that almost made some of us cry the other night—

The Chief Secretary: That would be the day!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: —about dreadful hardships.

The Chief Secretary: One cannot get blood out of a stone.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I admit that there are some hard cases; but, no matter how perfect we make our machinery, there will always be such cases which have not the same balance as we have. They are the difficult ones.

My contribution to the debate may not have been interesting to members; but having had a good deal of experience, I think I should pass it on to others. I think I have the right because of my age. We should all do our best, irrespective of politics and personal feelings.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I have been asking you to do that ever since I have been here.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: In my lifetime I hope I have done something to overcome the problems of the State. My wife and I worked a farm situated 54 miles from the railway and we had to cart for a distance of eight miles every drop of water we used.

Hon. L. C. Diver: There was often as much mud as water.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes. Also, we did not work a 40-hour week; or a 50-hour week; or even a 60-hour week. We worked a lot longer than that. I have been handed the figure showing the number of operative Commonwealth Savings Bank accounts in Western Australia; it is 412,467.

The Chief Secretary: That is not much more than 50 per cent. of our population.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: How many people bank with the associated banks? We have six or seven associated banks; the Bank of New South Wales has a savings bank branch.

The Minister for the North-West: Some of those people would have half-a-dozen accounts.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is against the regulations.

The Minister for the North-West: They still do it.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It is against the regulations for one person to have two accounts in the savings bank in his own name.

The Minister for the North-West: A person can bank at the Bank of New South Wales and the Commonwealth Bank.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is so. However, the figure I quoted is for the Commonwealth Savings Bank.

The Minister for the North-West: I thought you were covering all banks.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No. I hope that my contribution to the debate has given members something to think about. Let us accept the responsibility that is thrown upon us, and do not let us be petty about things. We should worry about the big problems that lie ahead of us in this State, and make our contribution to the foundation that must be laid for the future of a very great Australia.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [5.13]: I would like to extend my congratulations to the new members upon their entry into this Chamber, and I express the hope and confidence that they will play their parts in the debates in this House and assist towards good government in Western Australia.

I wish, particularly, to extend a welcome to Mr. Teahan who is a very old personal friend of mine. His advent here reminds me of the time in 1919—that is a little further back than I care to remember—when he and I, as a couple of lads of 19, began work as clerks in the Taxation Department on the same day. At that time we were both receiving the magnificent sum of £1 per week. He found it rather difficult to exist on that sum, particularly as he had to live away from home, and I found it rather difficult to support my mother and her family. As a result, we both decided to try our luck in other spheres. I am extremely happy to resume, after such a long period, a more active association with him as a member of this House.

There are a couple of matters I wish to discuss for a few moments. One concerns Standing Orders, and the Standing Orders Committee might find it worthwhile to browse through my suggestions at its leisure. The first point is in connection with Standing Order No. 330, which reads as follows:—

The Managers of the Council shall, when the conference has terminated, report their proceedings to the Council forthwith, in writing.

From time immemorial it has been expected of us; it has been traditional that when Council managers report to the Council, or Assembly managers report to the Assembly, they should merely report the result of their deliberations. Their deliberations are held behind closed doors and are very frank; and, as I say, the custom is that they report the result of those deliberations. Experience which I had at a conference I attended not so long ago prompts me to suggest that the

Standing Order should make it very clear that all the managers do report to the House is the result of their deliberations, because the actual wording is ambiguous.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The word "proceedings" would include everything.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The wording says "report their proceedings" and it is open to the suggestion that any member can report anything that goes on in the conference. That is not altogether desirable.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Why?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: For a variety of reasons. There are six men dealing man to man, trying to solve and iron out a problem on a basis of give and take, and without the prejudice and glare of the searchlight of publicity. It has always been the custom merely to report the result of the proceedings, and I suggest the Standing Orders Committee might have a look at that and make it very clear what should be reported. Otherwise I can visualise, perhaps not in the too-distant future, a report of a conference being presented which would, to say the least, not tend to contribute towards harmony and the smooth and efficient conduct of proceedings in this House.

There is one other point which I think the Standing Orders Committee might have a look at, and that is in relation to the second reading of Bills. In the House of Commons, Standing Order No. 33 provides that if on an amendment to the question "That the Bill be now read a second time" or "a third time" it is decided that the word "now" or any words proposed to be left out stand as part of the question, Mr. Speaker shall forthwith declare the Bill to be read a second or third time as the case may be. That is to say, once the motion for the second reading of a Bill has been moved, then, whether an amendment is moved that the word "now" be left out and the words "this day six months" be put in, or whether the House adopts the other traditional method of a reasoned amendment—which is one occasion where we may reverse the proposition and express it as a direct negative—the debate still proceeds as though it is a debate on the second reading and not a debate on the amendment as we ordinarily understand an amendment to other motions.

I think that has a lot to commend it. Under our Standing Orders, if we move to delete the word "now," the debate on that amendment may be restricted to the narrow question as to whether the Bill should be read now or six months hence. The same applies when a reasoned amendment is moved: there is a lengthy debate on the reasoned amendment; and then, as we did not so long ago, we run the risk of a further debate with all the argument that has already taken place on the

amendment being needlessly reiterated on the continuation of the motion for the main question.

The Standing Order of the House of Commons to which I have referred seems to be one at which our Standing Orders Committee could well have a look. After all is said and done, notwithstanding the amendment moved to the motion that the Bill be now read a second time, whether the word "now" is deleted or a reasoned amendment is moved that the House refuses to give the Bill a second reading the debate, whatever it may be on, is still a debate on the second reading. As I say, in the House of Commons one continues the debate as though it were on the second reading; and when the debate is finished and the amendment is put, then the fate of the amendment is automatically the fate of the Bill. If the amendment is lost the Bill is automatically declared to be read a second time. But in this House whether a person is speaking on the main motion or the amendment, he has an opportunity to discuss it again as if he were making a second reading speech.

If members are interested, they will find an illustration in the official report of the House of Commons Parliamentary Debates of 1947-48, Vol. 444, page 54, dated the 10th November, 1947. That was an occasion where Major Sir David Maxwell Fyfe moved a reasoned amendment to a Bill to amend the Parliament Act and where, after debate had proceeded, a division took place on the reasoned amendment, and the Bill was automatically declared to be carried or lost as the case may be. We all recall that the other night we had the spectacle of the Chief Secretary, who had moved the main question, being unable to participate in the debate on the amendment because of the fact that he had moved the main motion.

The Chief Secretary: He found a way out of the difficulty.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: He certainly did, with his usual dexterity; even though, if I may say so, it was 90 per cent. disorderly!

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: A reflection on the Chair!

Hon. H. K. WATSON: There is only one other question to which I desire to refer and I will not take very long with it. In our community there is a group of gentlemen—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I hope so.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: —who are not very able to speak for themselves on the matter I propose to mention. Or perhaps, shall I say, they would not if they could or could not if they would! I refer to the remuneration being paid to the Chief Justice and other judges of our Supreme Court. It seems to me that the salaries

being paid to these gentlemen could well be reviewed in a manner worthy of the position.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Do you include the country magistrates?

The Chief Secretary: I think they got a lift last year.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I refer to the Supreme Court judges who hold a position of eminence, dignity, integrity, and great responsibility.

The Chief Secretary: Did they not get a lift last year?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Yes. A Bill was brought down last year, and I must confess that had I had a little more time, I would have dealt with the question then; it would have been more appropriate. Unfortunately we had 116 Bills to deal with in that session; and in the welter of those Bills, the Judges' Salary Bill was one to which I, unfortunately, did not have time to address myself. We did increase their salary by £300 last year, plus provision—which I feel did not meet the position, having regard to the gentlemen with whom it was dealing—that they should get quarterly basic-wage adjustments in multiples of £20.

In my opinion the position of our justices requires consideration from a very broad viewpoint. In 1902 the Chief Justice received a salary of £2,000 and each of the judges received a salary of £1,700. It we make allowance for the change in money values I think it will be agreed that the salaries paid to judges today are not in keeping with those paid to them as far back as 1902. At the moment, the Chief Justice receives a salary of £3,300 plus quarterly adjustments in the basic wage; and the other judges receive a salary of £2,900. I can speak not without a little experience of the salaries and remunerations received by leading professional and business men, and I would say that the salaries at present received by the judges are not what they should be. Those salaries could be earned by any salesman with a bit of go; from the reports in the papers we read they can be earned by a roughneck up at Exmouth Gulf.

I do not desire to labour the point; but having regard to the salaries paid to the top executives in Perth, I do feel that the Government should, on the broadest possible basis, give consideration to substantial increases in the salaries of judges; particularly having regard to the remuneration earned by leading professional men. I do not mind nominating a figure for the consideration of the Government, and my own personal view is that the salary of the Chief Justice—who, by the way, has from time to time to discharge the duties of Administrator—should not be less than £4,500; and the salaries of the other judges, not less than £4,000. They would by no means be overpaid if granted

a remuneration on that basis. I do not say that those figures should be subject to a £20 quarterly adjustment. We are now dealing on a plane above and beyond petty niggling; we have to approach a question like that with a particularly broad view.

The Minister for the North-West: One of the justices wanted to know where the money would come from to increase the basic wage.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am not discussing the basic wage at the moment. It is well recognised that the average barrister who accepts a position as a judge makes a big financial sacrifice. I submit that he should not be required to make too big a sacrifice and that, in the interests of maintaining the principles of our Supreme Court and the standard of the men who are the justices of our Supreme Court, we should aim to have the best brains there, and should realise the great position they occupy. They constitute one of the branches of our constitutional system; and I consider that, instead of making annual adjustments of £100, £200, or some other paltry amount, we should deal with the question in a manner worthy of the cause and bring matters up to date, having regard to the standard that was established as far back as 1902.

In his recent remarks, Sir Charles Latham referred to the acquisition of or offers being made by the State Housing Commission for properties which adjoin the flats at Subiaco. I, too, am concerned and rather astonished at the apparent inconsistency of the representations and activities of the commission in connection with these matters. We find that last Tuesday some spokesman for the commission told us how extremely difficult and severe was the housing situation. It was said the commission was quite unable to house evictees, let alone persons who had been on its lists for many a day. Yet the day after that announcement, we found confirmed the belief that the commission was endeavouring to obtain quite a number of houses in Subiaco, not with a view to continuing to use them as houses, but with a view to employing them as garages for the flats at Subiaco.

The Chief Secretary: But they will not be completed for 18 months.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The fact remains that the commission is seeking to obtain houses at present occupied by people and to convert them into garages. It is apparently making attractive proposals to the persons occupying those buildings, offering to house them wherever they like. To my mind that is inconsistent with the story which we read in the paper on Tuesday and which the Chief Secretary has given to us in recent days.

The Chief Secretary: That story deals with the present. You are talking about what will occur in 18 months.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am talking about inquiries, approaches, and representations that have taken place. Everyone seems to know about the matter except the Minister for Housing. That is a rather extraordinary feature. When he was questioned about it, in another place, I understand the answer he gave was that he understood someone in authority was making inquiries. But it seems that more than inquiries are being conducted, and that offers have been made to induce people to leave the houses so that they can be turned into garages.

The Chief Secretary: Not necessarily now.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: That is not a contribution towards solving the housing problem of Western Australia.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Perhaps the Minister has been misquoted again.

The Chief Secretary: The Minister also said that in 18 months' time the housing shortage would be over. That is when these places will be required.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I promised that I would not detain the House for more than a few moments, and I trust that I have fulfilled that undertaking.

On motion by the Minister for the North-West, debate adjourned.

BILL—JURY ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

House adjourned at 5.47 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 29th July, 1954.

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