

This is the Supply Bill which is usually introduced at this stage of the proceedings. In each session there are usually two Supply Bills introduced. The Consolidated Revenue Fund which was expected to finish up with a deficit at the end of 1959-60 to the extent of £1,515,500, in fact balanced out with a deficit of only £1,405,814. This is certainly a great improvement as compared with the deficit of £1,684,000 at the end of the previous financial year, 1958-59.

The Government is seeking an allocation of an amount of £23,500,000. This exceeds last year's requirements by £2,500,000. The details are as follows:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund	17,000,000
General Loan Fund....	4,500,000
Advance to Treasurer	2,000,000
	<hr/>
	£23,500,000

It will be noticed that the requirements of the Consolidated Revenue Fund exceed last year's figures by £2,000,000, and that £500,000 more is sought for the General Loan Fund. There has been no increase in the requirements for the advance to the Treasurer.

I am aware that the debate on the Supply Bill usually enables members to avail themselves of an opportunity to address the House on various subjects pertaining substantially to their electorates; or, for that matter, to cover any ground. We are now in a position, at a very early stage of the session, of having had three such opportunities. There was the Address-in-Reply, the amendment to the Address-in-Reply, and now the Supply Bill.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: History is repeating itself.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is right. I am sure members will not complain about the opportunities which have been given this session. If it is desired by the Leader of the Opposition to seek an adjournment of the debate until tomorrow, I will have no objection.

On motion by the Hon. W. F. Willesee, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 3rd August, 1960

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

STRANGERS IN THE HOUSE

Admission to Speaker's Lobby

THE SPEAKER: I would like to draw members' attention to the fact that at the end of last session—and again I noticed last night—there was a tendency for members to bring strangers through the Speaker's lobby while the House was sitting, or about to sit. I think it is rather important that we should preserve the privileges of members and keep strangers from that lobby. The one exception, as I think everybody will agree, is the Secretary of the Leader of the Opposition who, by the very nature of things, must use that lobby on occasions.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Centralisation

1. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

What progress has been made by the Government on its expressed intention of bringing together various sub-departments or sections or offices into the one building?

Mr. BRAND replied:

The completion shortly of the new buildings at South Perth for the Department of Agriculture will enable consolidation of that department.

Early in the New Year the new Rural and Industries Bank building will be available not only to ease the position of departments now poorly housed, but also to accommodate remote sections of departments.

Further, early relief will be possible when the Hale School buildings become available in the New Year.

C.M.F. TRAINING

Paid Leave for State Public Servants

2. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware of the Department of the Army's reorganisation programme and that enlistment in the Citizen Military Forces is now on a voluntary basis?

(2) Will he give an assurance that State public servants who are members of the C.M.F. in W.A. will be granted leave of absence on full pay, to attend specified continuous training periods, as is the case with Commonwealth public servants and N.S.W. public servants?

Mr. BRAND replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The matter is under consideration.

RENTAL HOMES

Eligibility for Financial Assistance

3. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

In view of the higher levels of wages and salaries now operating, is it intended to raise the maximum amounts which now apply under the provisions of the State Housing Act and in connection with the occupancy of rental homes, to enable those who would have been eligible for financial assistance or for occupation of rental homes to become eligible again?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

It is proposed to amend the State Housing Act and, accordingly, to raise the maximum amounts to enable those who would have been eligible for financial assistance, or for occupation of rental houses, prior to the increase of wages and salaries, to become eligible again.

Tenders for Construction at Northam

4. Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is the fact that when tenders were last called for the erection of rental homes at Northam the tenders that were received were considered to be too high?
- (2) What was the amount of the lowest tender?
- (3) What was the amount of the highest tender?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) When tenders were last called for the erection of homes at Northam, these were satisfactory, but the tenders that were called previously were considered to be too high.
- (2) On the first occasion tenders were called, the lowest tender for three houses was £7,744, but this tender was later withdrawn by the contractor concerned.
- (3) The highest tender for three houses was £8,077. This tender was declined because it was £756 in excess of the estimate.

WUNDOWIE BLAST FURNACE

Extensions

5. Mr. HAWKE asked the Premier:

- (1) Is he aware that in the July, 1960, issue of the National Bank's monthly summary, the following extract appears on page 6:—
" . . . While the Government of Western Australia plans extension to the charcoal-fired foundry blast furnace at Wundowie"?
- (2) What is the nature of the proposed extensions?
- (3) When are they likely to be carried out?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) and (3) No extensions are planned or likely to the charcoal-fired foundry blast furnace at Wundowie.

6. *This question was postponed.*

NORTH-WEST RIVERS

Conservation of Water

7. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Apart from a restriction on the use of water from the Gascoyne River, is there any definite plan other than restriction to conserve water which, with the flow of each river, runs to waste to the sea?
- (2) If not, when will he be able to submit a plan, or is he satisfied with the present restriction as the best method in the interests of growers?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) There is no definite plan at present for the conservation of water on the Gascoyne River.
- (2) Investigations are proceeding with a view to assessing the extent and possible methods of use of water in the sand beds of the river upstream of the bridge, and also on possible sites for storage dams on the Gascoyne, Lyons, and Thomas Rivers.

Report by Mr. Furphy on Gascoyne River Survey

8. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

- (1) Has Mr. Furphy, of Scott & Furphy, visited Carnarvon to make a report on water conservation in the Gascoyne River?
- (2) If so, is his report available?
- (3) If not, when can it be expected that the survey will be carried out by Mr. Furphy, and a report submitted, or has the survey been abandoned?

Mr. WILD replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).
- (3) It is likely that an inspection will be made in about a month's time. Mr. Furphy has been ill.

SCHOOL SPORTING FACILITIES

Discrimination Between Country and Metropolitan Area

9. Mr. ROWBERRY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has he seen an article in *The West Australian* of the 30th June, 1960, headed "Big Contract for School at Melville," which contained (among other things) the following:—

The project includes development of the grounds with playing areas for basketball, football, cricket and hockey?

- (2) Is this a true recording of fact?
- (3) If so, will he explain why the development mentioned is included in this contract, whilst in country areas this work has largely been left to dedicated Parents and Citizens' Associations, which by voluntary effort and expenditure of funds, have been responsible for development of playing areas at the various schools?
- (4) Does not this appear, on the face of it, to be discrimination between metropolitan and country schools?
- (5) If the facts are as stated in the article, will he give an undertaking that, in future, country schools will be treated the same as metropolitan schools in the matter of providing sporting facilities?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) It is necessary for the department to develop the grounds at all high schools, where sport and physical education play a vital part in the school curriculum. It is desirable also for this to be done at other schools, but available funds have not allowed and do not allow this.
- (4) and (5) Answered by No. (3).

SNAPPER FISHING

Use and Effect of Traps

10. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:
 - (1) Have any of the Eastern States prohibited or restricted the use of metal or other traps for the catching of snapper?
 - (2) Do metal traps injure the fish caught in them?
 - (3) Could these traps, if lost, become a constant killer of snapper or other fish?
 - (4) Is it considered that the excessive use of fish traps for catching snapper could cause the area in which they are used to be fished out?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Not known.
- (2) Some injury occurs to trapped fish if traps are allowed to remain set for too long a period.
- (3) This is possible for a short time.
- (4) The excessive use of traps, or of any other method of capture for that matter, over the whole range of any species, could cause depletion.

F.R.V. "PERON"

Anchorage in Tegg's Channel

11. Mr. NORTON asked the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Why was the F.R.V. *Peron* anchored in Tegg's Channel at Carnarvon for several weeks?
- (2) For what length of time was the F.R.V. *Peron* anchored at Carnarvon?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Because of mechanical breakdown.
- (2) Approximately 8 weeks.

STATE PURCHASE HOMES

Alteration of Minimum Deposit

12. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Is it a fact that policy has been altered now requiring as standard practice £100 instead of the previous £50 as a minimum deposit on homes purchased under the State Housing Act?
- (2) If so, what are the reasons for the increase?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) The present policy, which requires a deposit of £100, has been found to be very satisfactory; but, where necessary, on compassionate grounds or for other valid reasons, a smaller deposit will be accepted.
- (2) An analysis of arrears on purchase accounts showed that the highest number of arrears, and also the largest amount of arrears, are where a purchaser pays a deposit of only £50.

COTTESLOE SIGNAL BOX

Tenders

13. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Were tenders called for the erection of a new signal box at Cottesloe?
- (2) If so, what were the tender figures?
- (3) Were tenders subsequently called again for this work?
- (4) If so, what were the tender figures?
- (5) Is this work now proceeding?
- (6) If so, at what figure, and by whom?
- (7) Was an estimate of the cost of the work made by C.C.E.?
- (8) If so, what was the figure?
- (9) If not, why not?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) £6,657; £7,287.
- (3) Yes.

- (4) £8,275.
- (5) Yes.
- (6) £8,275—Mr. F. R. Sampson.
- (7) Yes.
- (8) £7,334.
- (9) Answered by No. (7).

TRADE WITH SOUTH AMERICA

Western Australian Representation on Overseas Mission

14. Mr. KELLY asked the Premier:

- (1) Has he been taken into the confidence of the Federal Government in regard to an all-out trade drive to include such markets as exist in Europe, Canada, South America, and the Far East?
- (2) Has he been invited to appoint a representative on the five-man mission, which is to spend three months on a South American survey?
- (3) If no invitation has been extended to him, has he been given the opportunity of advancing Western Australia's strong trade appeal to the members of the mission?
- (4) What guarantee can he offer the House that Western Australia will be fully and favourably represented by this mission, and that Eastern States' interests will not overshadow Western Australia's undoubted claims?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) The Government is aware of what is proposed and is in close touch with the Commonwealth Department of Trade both through the regional director and direct with Canberra.
- (2) No. The functions of this mission are of an exploratory nature only and it is thus not in a position to undertake inquiries for individual firms. It will make a thorough survey of the area and furnish a report in detail to the Federal Government as to prospects and methods of increasing trade with South America. From this report we can better determine prospects for W.A. goods.
- (3) The claims of W.A. have been made clear to the Department of Trade, one of whose officers will accompany the mission.
- (4) As indicated in my reply to No. (2), the mission members will not be a buying or selling mission, nor will they be representing any particular Australian State or Australian exporter. It is confidently anticipated that my Government will be made fully aware of any export opportunities arising from the mission's survey.

MERREDIN POLICE STATION

Proposed Additions

15. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has a final plan of the proposed police station for Merredin been prepared?
- (2) What additions are proposed?
- (3) When will a start be made on the building?
- (4) What is the anticipated cost?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

Following promises made in Merredin by the Premier and myself earlier this year, plans have been completed for a new police station and quarters at Merredin and a female cell and a new brick exercise yard for the lock-ups to replace the existing facilities which have been inadequate for many years. As soon as the present house on the site can be disposed of, work will proceed on the new buildings, which are estimated to cost about £16,000.

NAREMBEEN SCHOOL

Siting of Additional Accommodation

16. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) When will a commencement be made with the building of extra accommodation at the Narembeen State School?
- (2) Is he aware that strong objections exist locally in Narembeen to the building forming an extension to the existing brick structure, that is located in an area which often becomes flooded?
- (3) Is he further aware that an equally unsuitable site, if chosen, would be adjacent to the existing Bristol-type classrooms?
- (4) As it is the opinion locally that the new classroom should be built as a first step in what would eventually become an entirely new modern school, will he give an assurance that this aspect will be fully examined before a final decision is made?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) The erection of one additional classroom is listed on the department's building programme for 1960-61. However, until it is known what loan moneys will be available, it is not possible to state when the work might proceed.
- (2) Yes; the objections raised have been forwarded to the Architectural Division of the Public Works

Department in order that a suitable site may be chosen for the new room.

- (3) and (4) Answered by No. (2).

MT. WALKER SCHOOL

Additional Classroom

17. Mr. KELLY asked the Minister for Education:

- (1) On what date was the additional classroom completed at the Mt. Walker State School?
- (2) On what date was the room first occupied?
- (3) Is it his intention to have an official opening ceremony; and when?
- (4) What was the total cost of additions?
- (5) How many extra children will be accommodated?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) The 8th February, 1960.
- (2) The 8th February, 1960.
- (3) Yes, on a date yet to be arranged.
- (4) £3,955 18s.
- (5) The present enrolment is 82, and the school can now accommodate 120.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR POOR PERSONS

Administration by Law Society and Aid Provided

18. Mr. HALL asked the Attorney-General:

- (1) Has the Law Society taken over administration of the Poor Persons Legal Assistance Act?
- (2) What is the correct procedure for poor persons to adopt when making application for poor persons' legal aid?
- (3) What is the means test in regard to poor persons receiving legal assistance?
- (4) Can poor persons apply for legal assistance to fight divorce proceedings, when it is known that hardship is being inflicted on the innocent party, and evidence is present to support such a case?
- (5) What assistance does the Government provide to poor persons requiring legal assistance?
- (6) What benefits will poor persons requiring legal assistance derive from the Law Society's intervention that did not exist before the Law Society decided to assist poor persons through the Poor Persons Legal Assistance Act?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) Yes, as from the 1st July, 1960.
- (2) By application to the Secretary, Law Society of Western Australia, Supreme Court, Perth.
- (3) There is now no means test as such, each application being dealt with on its merits. Relief in respect of legal costs can also be granted, now not only in full but in part, depending on an applicant's circumstances.
- (4) Assistance in divorce proceedings is given where the applicant is particularly deserving and special circumstances are present.
- (5) An annual grant is paid to the Law Society to administer the scheme, which this year will be £3,500. This amount replaces the amount expended by the Government for such purpose which in previous years approximated £2,000 per annum.
- (6) Answered by Nos. (3) and (4).

DOGS

Payments to Catchers by Farmers

19. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) Are farmers who are paying vermin taxes compelled to pay an officer of the department, known as the dog catcher, £2 per day when he is in the area to clean up the dog menace?
- (2) If so, does he think this action is justified, when the farmers have already paid taxes to meet vermin costs, plus the fact that they are the losers every day by way of sheep losses, until the dog menace is removed?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) No. The Agriculture Protection Board makes available, on application, the services of an expert dog trapper to road or vermin boards at a charge of £2 per day.
- (2) This facility is a special service and costs the Agriculture Protection Board £5 per day. The charge is therefore justified.

CLERK OF COURT'S OFFICE, KALGOORLIE

Installation of Cash Register

20. Mr. EVANS asked the Attorney-General:

- (1) Whilst it is obvious that in the interests of public convenience, the use of a cash register in a ground floor office of the public buildings, Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie—namely, the Water Supply Department office—is necessary and desirable,

does he not agree that the transfer of the cash register from the Clerk of Court's office, Kalgoorlie, has caused great inconvenience to litigants and other persons having financial business with the court, by requiring such persons to attend, in many cases, the Clerk of Court's office and then to take documents for stamping by the cash register downstairs to the Water Supply Department?

- (2) Will he please consider the instalment of a further cash register in the Clerk of Court's office, Kalgoorlie?

Mr. WATTS replied:

- (1) The new arrangement, while perhaps inconvenient to a small section of the public, is more convenient to a much larger number than hitherto.
- (2) Yes, after a reasonable trial period.

EMPANELLING OF JURY

Right to Challenge Jurors

21. Mr. EVANS asked the Attorney-General:

Is it competent for a judge presiding over a jury case to challenge a would-be juror, as his name is called during the empanelling of the jury?

Mr. WATTS replied:

No; but the court or judge has a general power to excuse from attendance any person whose name is included in the jury panel (Juries Act, section 32); and if, after a juror has been sworn, it appears to the court from his own statement that he is not indifferent as between the Crown and the accused person, or that for any other reason he ought not to be allowed or required to act as a juror on the trial, the court may, without discharging the whole of the jury, discharge that particular juror, and direct another juror to be sworn in his place (Criminal Code section 633).

EQUAL PAY

Implementing Legislation

22. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Labour:

- (1) Has the Government considered the question of implementing equal pay for work of equal value?
- (2) If so, what decision has been reached?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The matter is under consideration.

TEACHERS

Promotions and Transfers

23. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Education:

Were there instances last year of head teachers of Class 3 schools being promoted to Class 2 schools and also from Class 2 schools to Class 1, the transfers being to and from metropolitan schools; while head teachers of Class 1 schools in country areas were refused transfers to Class 1 metropolitan schools?

Mr. WATTS replied:

In the metropolitan area there were no instances of promotions from Class 3 to Class 2 schools, but there were four instances of promotion from Class 2 to Class 1 schools.

Two headmasters of country Class 1 schools were refused transfer to the metropolitan area having served for only one year in their present position.

MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE TRUST

Payments for 1957, 1958, and 1959

24. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

(1) What were—

- (a) the number of accidents reported;
- (b) the number of payments made; and
- (c) the total amount of insurance paid;

by the Motor Vehicle Insurance Trust for each of the years 1957, 1958, and 1959?

- (2) How many accidents included in the answer to No. (1) (a) emanated from country areas?
- (3) What was the number of payments made for each of the years 1957, 1958, and 1959 to claimants in country areas?
- (4) What was the total amount of insurance paid for each of the above years on behalf of claimants in country areas?

Mr. PERKINS replied:

- (1) The number of accidents reported—

(a)	(1) 1956-1957	2507
	(2) 1957-1958	2645
	(3) 1958-1959	2736

(b) The number of payments made is not available as these statistics are not kept, but the total claims payments as at the 30th June, 1960 is—

(1) 1956-1957	£517,757
(2) 1957-1958	£503,865
(3) 1958-1959	£270,012

and the estimated cost of claims reported but still to be settled as at the 30th June, 1960 is—

(1) 1956-1957	£118,150
(2) 1957-1958	£279,099
(3) 1958-1959	£637,120.

(c) The total amount of insurance paid (or premium received) is—

(1) 1956-1957	£688,392
(2) 1957-1958	£731,244
(3) 1958-1959	£754,938.

- (2), (3), and (4) This information is not available as no statistics have been kept segregating payments made against city or country vehicles since the 30th June, 1951. Prior to that date separate premium rates applied to city and country vehicles; but since the 1st July, 1951, one rate has applied throughout the State to each class of vehicle.

KALGOORLIE INFANTS' SCHOOL

Erection of Oslo Lunch Centre

25. Mr. EVANS asked the Minister for Education:

What is the present position as regards negotiations between the Kalgoorlie Infants' School Parents and Citizens' Association and the Education Department re the provision of extra school lands for the purpose of building an Oslo lunch centre at the school?

Mr. WATTS replied:

The Parents and Citizens' Association has now asked that an area be released from the Public Works Department's supervisor's residence site for Oslo lunch purposes in lieu of portion of the area in Forrest Street on which the house owned by Mr. Cecil Brown stands. The matter is being investigated by the Public Works Department.

RULES OF THE SUPREME COURT

Amendment

- 26 Mr. EVANS asked the Attorney-General:

In the event of the Rules of the Supreme Court being reviewed in the near future, would he give

earnest consideration to the amendment of the rule requiring a party to a divorce, having been granted a decree nisi, in order to make this order absolute, in accord with the three-month period, to sign the order and then take the order to a solicitor, not his own, to have this signature witnessed?

Mr. WATTS replied:

This matter is dealt with by Rules of Court made under the Matrimonial Causes and Personal Status Code. The judges of the Supreme Court constitute the rule-making authority under the Code. Any further review of these rules in the near future appears to be unlikely, as it is expected that the Matrimonial Causes Act of the Commonwealth will come into operation shortly and supersede the existing State law.

BETTING

Introduction of Off-course Totalisators

27. Mr. TONKIN: asked the Treasurer:

- (1) Has he seen an item in the local Press in which it was stated that a Bill for legalising off-course betting by S.P. bookmakers in Great Britain has received the Royal Assent?
- (2) What would be the estimated loss to the Treasury if licensed off-course bookmakers in this State are superseded by totalisators?
- (3) Would the Grants Commission be likely to reimburse the State for that portion of the deficit occasioned by the establishment of totes if the Government should decide upon such a course?
- (4) How would the Government justify increasing freights and fares if it deliberately incurred a loss of revenue of approximately half-a-million pounds in order to have off-course bookmakers displaced by totalisators?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) It does not necessarily follow that the establishment of totalisators for off-course betting would result in a loss to the Treasury.
- (3) and (4) Answered by No. (2).

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOODS*Sales Promotion*

28. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

- (1) Was he correctly reported in Saturday's *The West Australian* with reference to a question raised by a correspondent from Glen Forrest concerning promoting sales of W.A. goods?
- (2) In what way, specifically, does the method being followed by the present Government differ from that used by the Hawke Government?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The present Government has not placed the same emphasis on slogans such as "Buy W.A. Made Goods." Its policy has been to encourage manufacturers and distributors to step up the merchandising of locally made goods based on their quality and value. Periodical campaigns to remind the public of the need to buy locally made goods are necessary, but it is considered that in the final analysis a better and more lasting result will be achieved through a more vigorous approach by the merchant than by any general campaign appealing to local sentiment.

Merchandising aids under consideration are directed at increased merchandising efforts by manufacturers.

In the immediate future, exports to the Eastern States and neighbouring countries are important targets for selling expanded production. In these fields sales must be based almost solely on the quality and value factors. Therefore it is a good policy to emphasise these factors in competing in the home market.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
ARCHITECTURAL BRANCH**

Buildings Under Construction and Men Employed

29. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Works:

- (1) What specific buildings are at present being constructed by the architectural branch's own work force?
- (2) How many men are employed on each building?

Mr. WILD replied:

(1) and (2)—

Bentley High School	8
University	67
King Edward Memorial Hospital	141
Royal Perth Hospital	23
Modern School	35
Scarborough High School	6
Midland Junction Abattoir	16
Robb Jetty	17
Government Printing Office	25
South Perth Agricultural Laboratories	8
Supreme Court	9
Parliament House	19
Claremont Mental Hospital	19
Fremantle Hospital	34
Northam High School	21
Wooroloo Sanatorium	5
Collie High School	17
Albany Hospital	123
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PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT*Increased Expenditure*

30. Mr. TONKIN asked the Treasurer:

- (1) What main items of expenditure in the Public Works Department were responsible for the increased expenditure of £35,000 shown in his statement which appeared in the issue of *The West Australian* of the 2nd August?

Number of Clerical Employees

- (2) What was the number of employees on the clerical staff of the Public Works Department at the 31st July, 1959, and the 31st July, 1960?

Mr. BRAND replied:

- (1) Salaries and insurance of public buildings.
- (2) The 31st July, 1959 835
The 31st July, 1960 863

PRICE CONTROL*Introduction*

31. Mr. EVANS asked the Premier:

In view of the recent basic wage adjustment, which was an attempt to lift wages closer to the level of existing prices, will he give earnest and positive consideration to his Government introducing price control, to protect the present purchasing power of wages?

Mr. BRAND replied:

Price fixing elsewhere in Australia has not prevented price increases, and the Government does not believe it would be effective here. Price fixing results in the fixed price being always the minimum price.

MEAT MEAL*Cessation of Rationing and Source of Purchase*

32. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister for Agriculture:

- (1) On what date was the rationing of meat meal lifted at the Midland Junction Abattoir?
- (2) Is it possible for people in country districts to buy meat meal produced at the Midland Junction Abattoir from the usual merchants?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) The 31st December, 1959.
- (2) Yes.

STATE PURCHASE HOMES*Formula for Weekly Payments*

33A. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

What formula is used by the State Housing Commission in establishing weekly payments that are made by home purchasers under the State Workers' Homes purchase scheme?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Repayments are on a monthly basis when purchasing under freehold—mortgage or contract of sale—of the State Housing Act or Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and leasehold conditions under Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement Act 1956. Repayments under leasehold provisions of the State Housing Act, 1946 are on a fortnightly basis.

In all freehold cases, instalments are calculated on the cost of the house, land at value, less the deposit paid, over a period of 45 years at the appropriate interest rate for the scheme under which purchase is made.

In leasehold cases, the instalment is based on the cost of the house, less deposit paid, over 45 years at appropriate interest rate plus annual ground rent of the land leased.

COMMONWEALTH-STATE RENTAL HOMES*Formula for Economic Rental*

33B. Mr. SEWELL asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

What formula is used in establishing the economic rent of Commonwealth-State rental homes?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

Economic rents of Commonwealth-State rental homes are calculated in accordance with the formula as

set out in paragraph 4 of the First Schedule of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement of 1945.

PERTH AIRPORT EXTENSIONS*Homes and Housing Lots Affected*

34. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many dwelling houses will be involved in the proposed resumptions for the erection of the Perth Airport?
- (2) Is it a fact that the War Service Homes Division of the State Housing Commission has rejected applications in respect of housing lots situated under the "flight funnel" of the proposed extended runways?

Tabling of Files on Negotiations

- (3) Would he now lay on the Table of the House the files dealing with negotiations between the State and Federal Governments on the matter of airport extensions?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) It is not known, as the resumptions are being made by a Commonwealth authority.
- (2) This question is being referred to the War Service Homes Division, and it is a Commonwealth matter.
- (3) At the present time the files are in action, and consideration will be given to the request at a later date.

ONSLOW AND PORT HEDLAND HOSPITALS*Commencing Date of Erection*

35. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Minister for Health:

What is the anticipated date for the commencement of erection of—

- (a) Onslow hospital;
- (b) Port Hedland hospital?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

It is anticipated that work will commence on Onslow hospital in April, 1961, and on Port Hedland hospital in January, 1961.

SUPERANNUATION AND PENSIONS*Government's Decision*

36 Mr. BRADY asked the Premier:

On the 30th March, in *The West Australian*, a Treasury spokesman in answer to a letter dealing with superannuation, said "the Government was waiting on a report from the Government Actuary, etc., and when these reports had been analysed, the Government would arrive at a decision on

pension schemes as a whole." Can he state what decision has been arrived at by the Government?

Mr. BRAND replied:

A report has now been received by the Government and is being considered by Cabinet. An announcement will be made when a decision has been reached.

CATTLE WEIGHING SCALES

Installation at Yeeda Station

37. Mr. RHATIGAN asked the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) Who authorised the installation of cattle weighing scales near Yeeda station on the Fitzroy-Broome road?
- (2) What was the cost of installing these scales?
- (3) What number of cattle were weighed on these scales?
- (4) What number of cattle by-passed these scales and were not weighed?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) The Minister for the North-West following strong representations from West Kimberley pastoralists and to ensure a reasonable through-put for Broome meat-works.
- (2) The actual cost of installing the weighbridge at Yeeda is not yet finalised but an estimated figure including purchase of the weighbridge will be in the vicinity of £7,420.

It was originally intended that cattle scales be installed at both Fitzroy Crossing and Yeeda but a weighbridge at Yeeda was approved after urgent representations based on the following reasons—

- (a) the weighbridge would ensure a more satisfactory weighing of cattle.
 - (b) Cattle from non-infected areas would not be subject to the danger of "tick" infestation at Yeeda.
 - (c) The need for cattle yard extensions at Yeeda would be eliminated.
 - (d) Cattle need not be unloaded for weighing at the weighbridge with consequent saving of time, labour and injury.
- (3) 2,521 to the 2nd August, 1960.
 - (4) 1,993 were weighed at Fitzroy Crossing en route to Broome Freezing Works and consequently did not have to use the Yeeda weighbridge. (Approx. 4,200 by-passed Fitzroy scales and Yeeda weighbridge and were weighed at Derby jetty.)

SUNDAY NIGHT ENTERTAINMENT

Earlier Starting Time

38. Mr. EVANS asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) In view of the advertised time of Sunday night entertainment having been changed from 8.45 to 8.15 p.m. would he indicate whether this was a ministerial or Cabinet decision?
- (2) Had prior consultations taken place with church leaders of various denominations before such a change was made?
- (3) If so, what were their reactions?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) Ministerial.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) As the theatre opening time of 8 p.m. remains unaltered the reaction was not completely unfavourable.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CLOSED RAILWAY LINES

Reopening and Operating Costs, etc.

1. Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) Adverting to the questions and answers given to question No. 48 on the notice paper yesterday, has the Minister given further consideration to supplying me with the figures for which I asked in that series of questions?
- (2) Does he seriously expect me to believe that expenditure occurred as long ago as January last on work in connection with the reopening of certain lines, and that the Railways Department still does not know the cost of that work which took place at least seven months ago?

Mr. COURT replied:

- (1) and (2) I presume question No. 48 on yesterday's notice paper refers to the operating costs, and certain other information regarding the Burakin-Bonnie Rock and the Lake Grace-Hyden lines.

I promised the member for East Perth that I would expedite the obtaining of this information, and that has been done. The commissioner has been in touch with the Accounts Branch, which is endeavouring to get the information available in time for tomorrow's sitting. The reasons I gave the honourable member are *bona fide* reasons which I again checked and found to be correct.

Mr. Graham: But they finished work last January.

ROAD BUSES

Vehicles for Perth-Albany Service

2. Mr. HALL asked the Minister for Railways:

- (1) When is it anticipated that new road buses will be introduced from Perth to Albany?
- (2) What will be the cost of each bus when placed on this road service?
- (3) Are new buses being built at the Midland Workshops; and if not, why not?
- (4) If the answer to No. (3) is "No," were tenders called for the building of the new buses on the Perth-Albany route?
- (5) If the answer to No. (4) is "Yes," what is the name of the successful tenderer and the quote submitted; how many other firms tendered; and what were the respective tenders as submitted?
- (6) Were the Midland Junction Workshops given the right to tender?
- (7) Will pensioners travelling to Perth from Albany, and vice versa, receive concession rates when travelling by road bus as previously allowed when travelling by day diesel?

Mr. COURT replied:

I must apologise for not being able to get the answers to such a long list of questions of which the honourable member gave the department such short notice. I will have the answers available for tomorrow's sitting.

DIESEL ENGINES

Purchase of Parts

3. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

Yesterday I asked the Minister a series of questions about the ordering of parts for diesel engines for the workshops at Midland Junction. I also asked him if the Commissioner of Railways or the Minister himself was not responsible for directing from where these supplies should be purchased, who was responsible? Has the Minister now a reply to my question?

Mr. COURT replied:

I have the answer. I had some reservations about whether it is good policy to give an answer regarding a particular officer—

Mr. Tonkin: The same old story.

Mr. COURT: —who is fulfilling his normal duties. I think the Minister has some responsibility in the matter to protect the officer who

is doing his normal and proper duties. However, I have conferred with the commissioner and the officer concerned, and I might add that the officer concerned has no objection to being named as the person responsible. The answer is as follows:—

The ordering of spare parts for diesel engines is a normal function of the Chief Mechanical Engineer who is acting within his authority and responsibilities. The policy he has followed in this matter is known to the commissioner and the Minister and endorsed by us.

I might add it is very strange that there should be all this propaganda regarding these diesel spare parts when many many more times the number of spare parts for diesels are being made under the present Government's administration, than were made under the previous Government's administration.

GWALIA STATE HOTEL

Refusal of Lease

4. Mr. MOIR asked the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Were the Press reports that he refused the Gwalia Hotel committee a lease of the Gwalia State Hotel correct or otherwise?
- (2) If correct, will he state the reason for his refusal?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

- (1) and (2) Yes. I informed the Gwalia committee it was the intention of the Government to sell the State Hotels and that every avenue should be explored towards that end. In all the negotiations that have taken place between the committee and myself there has been a great spirit of co-operation prevailing; and we have, I think, arrived at a solution which will prove to the general satisfaction of all concerned. I have a letter from Mr. Clough, who was chairman of the committee that was formed, and he has expressed his great satisfaction concerning the way I conducted negotiations with him.

DIESEL ENGINES

Manufacture of Parts at Midland Junction Workshops

5. Mr. BRADY asked the Minister for Railways:

In view of the Minister's answer to my question without notice, and in view of his alleged sympathies towards local products, will he see that all parts that can be

made for the diesel engines in the Midland Junction Workshops are made there?

Mr. COURT replied:

In answer to the honourable member, who was a Minister in the previous administration, I would say that it surprises me that he did not address this question to the then Minister for Railways. The facts are that many, many more spare parts for the diesel locomotives are being made in the Midland Junction Workshops under the present Government than was the case under the previous Government.

Mr. Brady: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister entitled to make a second reading speech when giving an answer?

The SPEAKER: That is for me to decide.

Mr. COURT: There is an increasing amount of spare parts for the diesel locomotives being made in the Midland Junction Workshops, and that number will be progressively increased. There are technical reasons. From the parts of locomotives, it is possible to make some of the drawings, jigs, gauges, and so on.

I would emphasise that there is an economic limit in the making of these parts beyond which it is not wise to go. At the last Chief Mechanical Engineers' conference—that is an Australian-wide conference—considerable surprise was expressed at the amount of spare parts being made in our workshops as compared with other workshops in Australia.

Provision of Parts by Parent Company

6. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Railways:

Relative to the answer which he gave to the member for Guildford-Midland, is it not a fact that during the period of the Labour Government the majority of spares for diesel engines were being supplied by the parent company in England under an arrangement by which it was obliged to replace defective parts; whereas since this Government has been in office, no such arrangement has been in existence and therefore it has been incumbent upon the department to manufacture or obtain spare parts; and that is the only reason why the Minister was able to give the answer he did?

Mr. COURT replied:

If I interpret aright the questions of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I would say that the explanation he has given in defence of his Government's administration is not completely the answer, because it was not during the whole of that period the Railways Department was obligated to buy from the manufacturer. The facts as I stated them earlier this evening are correct and will bear any investigation the Deputy Leader of the Opposition desires to make.

Mr. Tonkin: Will you reiterate what you said?

STEAM ENGINES

Extension of Use

7. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Railways:

In view of the apparent difficulty in securing spare parts for diesel engines, does he not think it advisable for the Railways Department to return to the use of steam engines and so use our native fuel?

Mr. COURT replied:

Out of courtesy to the member for Collie I take his question as being quite a serious one.

Mr. May: It is.

Mr. COURT: The Government has no intention of extending the use of steam locomotives, and proposes to adhere to the present policy of using a proportion of diesel locomotives. For economic reasons the Government would not consider, at this juncture anyhow, an increase in the number of steam locomotives.

GWALIA STATE HOTEL

Authority of Chief Secretary to Refuse Lease

8. Mr. MOIR asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of the fact that this Parliament, last year, passed an enabling Bill for the sale or lease of the State hotels, does he consider he has the right to refuse to lease the hotels; and does he think that he should set himself up as being above the decisions of Parliament?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

No; I do not feel I can set myself above the decisions of Parliament. But the Government had a choice as to whether the State hotels were to be sold or leased; and, in this case, the avenue chosen was to endeavour to sell the State hotel. That course was taken.

DIESEL ENGINES**Manufacture of Parts at Midland Junction Workshops**

9. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Railways:

I desire to take the Minister for Railways up on his challenge, and for that purpose I wish to ask him whether he will restate the proposition he put up with regard to the spares for diesel engines so there will be no argument as to what he said and what we have to prove. I ask the Minister what he actually means when he says that more spare parts for diesel engines are being made during this Government's term than were made during the term of the Hawke Government? Does he mean per week, per month, per year; or what does he actually mean? Will he be specific?

- Mr. COURT replied:

If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition desires to be pedantic, I suggest that he place his question on the notice paper.

- Mr. Tonkin: The same old tale; running away from it as usual! Cannot put the papers on the Table!

- Mr. COURT: The truth hurts when the honourable member hears it as he did tonight. If the *Hansard* transcript is not sufficient for the Deputy Leader of the Opposition—

- Mr. Tonkin: You may alter that.

- Mr. COURT: You know I cannot!

- Mr. Graham: Too right you can!

- Mr. Tonkin: I am not taking the risk, anyhow.

- Mr. COURT: If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is not prepared to accept the *Hansard* transcript, I suggest he place a specific question on the notice paper, and he will be answered.

SPARE PARTS FOR EASTERN STATES RAILWAYS**Supply by Midland Junction Workshops**

10. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Railways:

Following his reply to the member for Guildford-Midland earlier today regarding the recent Australia-wide conference of the Chief Mechanical Engineers of the various railway systems—that amazement was expressed on the number of spare parts being manufactured at the Midland Junction Workshops—does he, as Minister for Industrial Development, not agree that this is a

great opportunity to create a new secondary industry in this State by supplying the Eastern States railway systems with spare parts manufactured at the Midland Junction Workshops and giving consideration to tendering for the Eastern States railways' requirements?

- Mr. COURT replied:

We have quite enough problems in the W.A. Government Railways without buying into the railways of the Eastern States.

- Mr. Graham: You have created most of them.

- Mr. COURT: For that reason I would not entertain the suggestion that we tender for spares for the Eastern States railways. If, however, private enterprise wants to seek such business—

- Mr. Graham: Of course; then the profiteers can come in!

- Mr. COURT: —they will receive every encouragement.

TOMLINSON LIMITED**Minister's Interest**

11. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Railways:

Has he any interest, either financial or proxy, in the firm of Tomlinson Ltd. that has the KA wagon contract?

- Mr. COURT replied:

I can assure the honourable member I have no financial interest, whatsoever, in Tomlinson Ltd. I think the honourable member has been reading a Communist publication called *Unity*.

- Mr. Graham: Typical of you!

- The SPEAKER: Order!

SPARE PARTS FOR EASTERN STATES RAILWAYS**Supply by Local Firms**

12. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Railways:

When he was replying to my previous question, he stated that if any private firm or industry wished to tender to supply the Eastern States rail systems with spares, it would be given every encouragement. Are we to understand that if any private firm in Western Australia does tender to supply such spares, he intends to supply that firm with jigs, materials, and gauges from the Midland Junction Workshops to enable the firm to carry out those tenders?

Mr. COURT replied:

No. If any private firm wants to chase this business, it will be given every encouragement, but it will be that firm's responsibility. I would remind the honourable member that the locomotives used in the other States, to the best of my knowledge, are not the same type as those used here.

TOMLINSON LIMITED

*Transfer of Machinery, etc. from
Midland Junction Workshops*

13. Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Railways:

Is it not a fact that certain machinery or jigs, gauges, and materials have been transferred from the Midland Junction Workshops to the firm of Tomlinson Ltd. for the purpose of building KA wagons?

Mr. COURT replied:

I will have to ask that that question be placed on the notice paper because I do not happen to be the manager or the foreman at the Midland Junction Workshops. Surely I do not have to stay up there day and night and attend to this detail!

PERTH AIRPORT EXTENSIONS

Homes Affected

14. Mr. JAMIESON asked the Chief Secretary:

In view of his answer to my question "How many dwelling houses will be involved in the proposed resumptions for the erection of the Perth Airport?" that "It is not known, as the resumptions are being made by a Commonwealth authority," does he not think that that is an evasive answer, in view of the fact that all the land involved is pretty well owned by the State Housing Commission?

Mr. ROSS HUTCHINSON replied:

The answer is not an evasive one. If the honourable member wants any specific information on any point, and he places his question on the notice paper, I am sure the Minister for Housing will supply the answer for him.

RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT

Costing of Trains

15. Mr. TONKIN asked the Minister for Railways:

In my view it is not unreasonable for him to answer this question without notice. Last session he said that the Railways Department was engaged in setting up

machinery to enable it accurately to cost any particular train on any particular service. I desire to know whether that organisation is complete and has been established so that it is now possible for the department to properly cost a train?

Mr. COURT replied:

As at this moment I understand it is still not possible to accurately cost each train. It was my objective, as it was the commissioner's, to introduce a system which would give an accurate cost. I think the matter arose mainly as the result of a question asked by the member for Albany. But there are technical difficulties in the costing for these trains that have been pointed out to me, and this would make the cost of ascertaining the details with accuracy prohibitive, compared with the results to be achieved. If the honourable member would like the minute covering this particular matter, which was recently submitted to me, I will let him have it.

Mr. Tonkin: Thank you very much.

SUPERANNUATION AND PENSIONS

Government's Decision

16. Mr. BRADY asked the Premier:

In answer to a question I asked today in regard to superannuation, he replied that a report had been received by the Government and was being considered by Cabinet. Would the Premier tell me when he feels that some decision will be made?

Mr. BRAND replied:

No. If I had been in a position to do so, I would have given a date to the honourable member. When a decision has been made and the report is before us, I will gladly make public the information and the decision.

BETTING

Introduction of Legislation

17. Mr. HEAL asked the Premier:

Has Cabinet reached finality in relation to the report from the sub-committee on S.P. betting, and could he give us an approximate date when legislation will be introduced into this Chamber?

Mr. BRAND replied:

We are still considering the report. No final decision on all aspects has been made and it will be at least a month before legislation is introduced.

DIESEL ENGINES

Increase

18. Mr. MAY asked the Minister for Railways:

In view of the reply of the Minister to my previous question I would like to know whether, as the Minister stated it was not intended to use additional steam engines, this indicates the further extension of the diesel engines?

Mr. COURT replied:

There is no immediate intention of extending the fleet of locomotives beyond the two which have just been acquired having been ordered by the previous Administration.

Mr. May: Can you deny that further diesels have been ordered?

Mr. COURT: I am talking about the diesels as distinct from shunters. If the honourable member is including the shunters, I will qualify my answer; but I am talking about the mainline diesels.

Mr. May: So am I.

Mr. COURT: I will make a check for the honourable member but I will be amazed if they have been.

Mr. May: I will be shocked!

BETTING

Totalisators to Replace Bookmakers

19. Mr. BICKERTON asked the Premier:

If the Government should decide to implement the totalisator system instead of the bookmaker system, in view of the report received, would it apply on the course as well as off the course?

Mr. BRAND replied:

That matter is still under consideration.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Second Day

Debate resumed from the 28th July.

MR. HAWKE (Northam) [5.19]: First of all I would like in this House to offer my congratulations to the member for South Fremantle on the success which he achieved at the by-election some weeks ago. He has had a wide experience industrially. I do not think he will mind if I say that he has come up the hard way. He knows a great deal about the difficulties and problems which beset the less privileged sections of our community and consequently he will prove to be a very strong and conscientious advocate on their behalf in the debates in which he participates in this House.

Mr. May: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAWKE: I wish him well. Yesterday I made reference to the speech made by the member for Canning in moving the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which the Governor opened Parliament this year. I stated that I felt he had delivered his Speech very well. I repeat that. Later on I will have something to say about the quality—the very unreliable quality—of some of the statements he made.

Mr. Graham: Piffle, most of them.

Mr. HAWKE: I read the Governor's Speech with great interest. As members know, it lists a considerable number of what might be called achievements. Practically all of these achievements were most familiar to me—most familiar. I made a careful check and found that with the exception of a very few the achievements were either commenced actually by the Labor Government or were planned or were almost ready to be initiated by that Government when it was defeated and the present Government elected.

I totalled approximately 45 achievements in the Speech. At least 38 of them were in connection with works started by our Government or planned to a stage where a commencement was almost practicable before we left office. The balance of the achievements covered matters which are of not very great significance except in relation to two or three of them.

Therefore, any member on the Government side who allows himself to be misled by the recital of achievements in the Governor's Speech into believing that the present Government has been responsible for those achievements, will know now that the present Government has been responsible basically for practically none of the achievements. This leads me to wonder what the Government has been doing. It appears to have little or no initiative at all.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAWKE: It has not been able to work out any new worth-while plans, apparently. Last year, when the Government had only been in office for a few months, I would not have said things like this. However, the Government has now been in office for well over a year. One would have thought that in that time the genius which some of the Ministers claim to possess would have asserted itself—would have brought about the development of some practical plans for new lines of State policy for greater development in various fields of progress.

Apparently, if the Governor's Speech can be taken as an indication of the initiative shown by the Government during the last 12 months, then it is almost non-existent in relation to progressive matters—to matters which would be of benefit to the community generally. It could be that the Government has no real

constructive initiative or policy at all. That could be one answer. However, I think the real answer is that the Government has been concentrating so much time, thought, effort, and activity on undermining valuable State assets and to using State resources to benefit private set-ups, that very little time has been available to it to concentrate upon what should be its real job.

Take the question of the declared and implacable intention of the Government to dispose of State trading concerns. In this regard I have a leaflet, written no doubt by the Minister for Industrial Development, and issued by Liberal Party headquarters at 1140 Hay Street, Perth. This leaflet is headed, "The plain facts about the sale of State-owned trading concerns." The leaflet goes on to claim that under the Hawke Labor Government, losses on State trading concerns reached £7,570,000 in four years. It then states that in 1958-59 State Building Supplies lost £46,000, and had a bank overdraft of approximately £110,000. It continues that in 1959 Chamberlain Industries owed the R. & I. Bank £4,000,000.

I made a careful investigation myself in regard to these claims and in particular in regard to the claim that losses in four years under the Hawke Labor Government reached £7,570,000. As a result, I found from official publications that the financial operation of State trading concerns for the five-year period, 1953-54 to 1958-59 were as follows:—

	£
State Brickworks and Saw-mills, loss	114,000
Wyndham Meatworks, profit	184,000
W.A. Meat Export Works, profit	39,000
State Hotels, profit	19,000
State Engineering Works, profit	455,000
State Shipping Services, loss	8,400,000

These figures show a net loss of £7,817,000 over the five-year period, with a total loss on the State Shipping Service to the North-West of £8,400,000. In other words, the State trading concerns, with the exception of the steamships, during that five-year period earned a net profit of £583,000.

No; it is not the State steamships which the Government proposes to sell. So this Liberal Party headquarters leaflet immediately becomes a lie of very great magnitude—and was written deliberately for the purpose of misleading those to whom it would be circulated. I understand it was prepared and published mainly for distribution to the men employed in the State trading concerns, in the belief that it would convince them they were a terrific burden upon the taxpayers generally, and should be happy—as happy as can be—to have in office a Government that would lift them from off the taxpayers' backs and hand them over to private enterprise.

Is there any member on the Government side who would favour the selling of the State steamships? Not even the member for Toodyay offers an answer.

Mr. W. Hegney: The member for Murray would not.

Mr. HAWKE: So, by silence, all members on the Government side, including the Ministers, say the State steamships shall not be offered for sale. Why not? Clearly it is because they cannot be operated at a profit. Consequently, the Adelaide Steamship Company, the Melbourne Steamship Company, Fred Johnsson, Mr. Tomlinson, Charlie Bunning, and all the rest of them have no interest in buying the State steamships. This concern is to be left a burden upon the taxpayers of Western Australia, and all the State trading concerns which have been operating profitably are to be sacrificed.

These profit-earning State-owned assets are to be handed over so that private enterprise companies and private enterprise individuals might get hold of them at bargain prices and make profits out of them. However, that is not the main reason why they want to get hold of them. The main reason why they want to get hold of these State-owned profit-earning assets is in order that the competition which they offer today, and have offered for years, will be killed; will no longer exist.

When that time comes the public will be losing both ways. They will have lost in the first instance because these profit-earning concerns will have been sold; and they will have lost in the second instance because the removal of competition by these State-owned trading concerns will mean that private enterprise will have a monopoly of the production and distribution of the commodities concerned and, consequently, will shoot the prices up.

Why do the State steamships lose as much money as they do in servicing the needs of the people and the industries in the North-West of the State; and, to some extent, the people of Darwin? Why do they lose so heavily? The member for Murray, an ex-Premier and Treasurer of the State, who has substantial interests in the North-West, knows why the State steamships lose as much as they do. The honourable member knows as well as I do that it has been the deliberate policy of Governments of this State, irrespective of their political colour, to subsidise heavily the operation of the steamship service. No Government has expected the steamship service to pay. This attitude has been adopted by successive Governments because the State steamships are the lifeline, in regard to transport, to the North-West ports and to the hinterland of the North-West.

I think the member for Murray would agree that should this service cease to operate, the industries and the people in

the North-West would be greatly reduced in number in a comparatively short period of time; that the cessation of this service to the North-West would mean that people and industries there would become immediately and totally dependent on private enterprise for transport. If it was physically possible for the member for Murray to turn pale at the thought of that, I am sure he would turn very pale at the moment.

The cost of transport services to people and industries in the North-West, if those services were to be supplied by private enterprise, would be so terrific as to cause the North-West to become, in a short period, largely an uninhabited region. So this Liberal Party leaflet, which claims to set out a case against State trading concerns, does nothing of the kind despite the fact that it tells lies and clouds the issue and attempts deliberately to deceive those who might, unfortunately, come into possession of it.

This leaflet also asks the question: What could be fairer? Then, in answering the question, it states that these are the conditions of sale—

- (1) Fair and reasonable prices.
- (2) Reasonable protection for the existing labour force.
- (3) Continuation of the industries within the economy of the State.

We all know that these profit-earning State enterprises have, to some substantial extent, already been undermined by this Government. We know, for instance, that the State Building Supplies were deprived of £50,000 of income last year because of the policy of this Government. We know, too, that the State Engineering Works at North Fremantle has suffered similarly. Although the railway workshops at Midland Junction are not a State trading concern they, too, have suffered in the same manner.

Therefore, because these State enterprises have already been undermined to a substantial extent, there is no justification whatever for this leaflet, or any other leaflet, to state that a condition of sale, by the Government of these State enterprises, is a fair and reasonable price. The sale value of the concerns has already been forced down very considerably by the policy of this Government of partially ringbarking the concerns; they are not doing the same turnover they were doing 15 months ago; they are not holding the same skilled labour force as they were holding 15 months ago; and the percentage of overhead cost to total turnover is higher. Consequently the cost of producing each article in the workshops is higher than it was 15 months ago.

So clearly, and beyond any possibility of successful argument the other way, the sale value of these concerns has been greatly reduced during the last 15 months,

and it would be thoroughly impossible now, with the concerns partly run down, to obtain a fair and reasonable price for them.

The second condition is this: Reasonable protection for the existing labour force. Surely no member supporting the Government would swallow that!

Mr. Graham: They would swallow anything.

Mr. HAWKE: It is impossible, in fact, to give any protection to the existing labour force once the concerns are sold; it is impossible physically or legally to give any protection. I know we can put down on paper that the workers are to be continued in their employment; and I know that we can have an agreement with the person who or the company which buys the concerns under which he or it undertakes to continue the men in employment. But why not let us be absolutely honest in our approach to the matter and say that once any of these concerns is sold to a private company the employees have no legal protection whatsoever for even one week afterwards? It must remain within the ability of the company which purchases any of these concerns to dispense, at a week's notice, with any of the employees. So this alleged fair condition, No. (2), has no value at all, and it has been concocted only for the purpose of trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the men who now work in these various State trading concerns.

Condition No. 3 is continuation of the industries within the economy of the State. There cannot be any practical guarantee of that, either. The guarantee is not worth the paper it is written on and never could be. Would the member for Avon Valley, who is an electoral neighbour of mine and a man of great commonsense, purchase one of these concerns and guarantee to continue it on the same basis; that is, to the same extent that it has been continued during the last three years? Of course he would not! When he bought one of these concerns, or when anyone else bought one of them, that person would become the owner of it and would run the concern in accordance with his own ideas.

If one of the timber companies bought a State timber mill in the South-West which was adjacent to one of its own large timber mills, is it thought that it would be bound legally, beyond any possibility of escape, to carry on the previously State-owned mill to capacity? Of course not! It is too silly for words! It is too silly to think about really, and yet it is necessary to think about it, talk about it, and expose the political hypocrisy of the Government in the matter because it is political hypocrisy and, what is more, political hypocrisy of the worst kind.

This policy of the Government of going ahead in a bull-headed kind of way to dispose of these State trading concerns is one which will damage very greatly indeed the State which owns the concerns. When the

concerns are taken over and operated by private enterprise, the price of the goods which are produced by those concerns will be certain to increase, and that will be another contribution made by this Government to the inflationary processes about which I spoke yesterday and which are now, as we all know, so severe as to represent a great danger to the continuation of our industries—especially our primary industries—on their present existing scale.

Mr. Tonkin: The Premier said his Government was going to build them up until they made a profit and then put them on the Stock Exchange.

Mr. Graham: He would say anything, though.

Mr. HAWKE: The member for Canning—

Mr. O'Neil: Hear the kindergarten bells ringing!

Mr. HAWKE: The member for Canning, I thought, laid praise plus on the Government. He really let himself go. I am certain that he ingratiated himself in the esteem and affection of the Ministers to an extent which leaves his colleagues on the other side of the House hundreds of miles behind in the race for ministerial preferment.

Dr. Henn: He delivered it well, though.

Mr. HAWKE: Yes; he delivered it well. He has been to school. However, there is one thing which the member for Canning did not learn and which he should have learned, and that is to be factual and not to accept, without question and personal investigation, figures which are handed to him to use to heap praise upon the Government and at the same time put the boots into the previous Government. That is a lesson which the member for Canning has not yet thought about; and gratuitously, and in a friendly way, I offer the suggestion to him now that he think very hard about it before he speaks again in this House. The member for Canning said—

It is therefore very interesting to note that whilst His Excellency has reported that unemployment has fallen substantially—in fact, employment is at a record level—the latest statistical reports available on interstate movement of population indicate that the drift to the Eastern States—evident in the last years of Labor administration—has been stemmed; in fact, it was reversed in the first quarter of this Government's period of office.

To substantiate my remarks I refer to the *Quarterly Statistical Abstract*—“Abstract” is the word!—

No. 376 dated the 31st December, 1959—the last official figures available to me.

May I ask the honourable member where he got those figures?

Mr. O'Neil: From the *Quarterly Statistical Abstract* to which I referred.

Mr. HAWKE: Not from the Minister for Industrial Development?

Mr. O'Neil: No.

Mr. HAWKE: I accept that, but I can give the honourable member this warning: That whenever the Minister for Industrial Development offers him anything by way of figures or alleged facts, or whenever the honourable member thinks of approaching the Minister for Industrial Development for information relating to figures and facts then, for heaven's sake, the member for Canning should not only check but also recheck a dozen times, whatever is given to him in order that he should not be led down the lane.

Later, in his speech, the honourable member went on to say—

In the year 1956, this State lost to the Eastern States 4,730 people; in 1957, the figure was 2,344; and in 1958, it was 2,454. Those three years were the last full years of Labor administration. In 1959, the figure was 3,382; and we took office at the beginning of the second quarter—the April quarter. It is interesting to note, therefore, that of the 3,382 people who left the State last year for the Eastern States, 3,239 left in the quarter ended March.

That was the last quarter of the Labor Government's administration. Now, let us have a look at the facts. The official migration figures show that the excess of departures over arrivals interstate, or *vice versa* where the other situation exists, in the March quarter of 1958, was 3,218. In the March quarter of 1959 the excess of departures over arrivals was 3,239. On the basis of what the member for Canning said, one would think that in the quarter ended March, 1960, there would have been a greater excess of arrivals over departures interstate, but the figure showing the excess of departures over arrivals is 3,234.

Mr. Graham: Laugh that off!

Mr. HAWKE: That is in the first quarter of 1960.

Mr. Graham: Is the member for Canning going to apologise now?

Mr. O'Neil: Apologise for what? I quoted figures from an official bulletin.

Mr. HAWKE: What has happened? What has caused the genius of this Government to collapse in regard to this issue? Why was the result of this Government in the March quarter of 1960 no better than the result of the last Labor Government in the March quarter of 1959 and the March quarter of 1958? There is no answer from the member for Canning.

Let us have a look at some total figures which cover not only the movement of population between other States and Western Australia, but also the movement

of population from countries overseas to and from Western Australia. In the March quarter of 1958, the excess of departures over arrivals was 1,808; and in the March quarter of 1959, the excess of departures over arrivals was 1,887. Those are bad figures and bad results. They are results which would cause the member for Canning and the Minister for Industrial Development wholeheartedly to condemn the Labor Government which was in office during those periods. I will repeat those figures. In the March quarter of 1958, 1,808 more people left Western Australia than came into it from all sources; and in 1959, 1,887 more people left Western Australia than came into it from all sources. In the March quarter of 1960, the excess of departures over arrivals was 1,949.

Mr. Graham: Laugh that one off!

Mr. HAWKE: That is worse than the March quarter for 1959 and the March quarter for 1958.

Mr. O'Neil: Where did you get your figures?

Mr. HAWKE: From the office of the Government Statistician.

Mr. Graham: Not 1140 Hay Street.

Mr. HAWKE: In this matter, let us take into consideration the results for the June, September, and December quarters in 1958 and 1959. The figures for those quarters in 1960 are, of course, not available, but the 1958-59 figures will give a very good basis for comparison because our Government was in office in those quarters in 1958, and the honourable member's Government was in office for those quarters in 1959. In the June quarter for 1958, 987 more people came into the State from all sources than went out of it. With the present Government in office, in March, 1959, the excess of arrivals over departures was 1,640, which shows a very good margin in favour of the present Government if one takes only one particular quarter, which is the sort of thing the Minister for Industrial Development does when he is building up an argument.

In the September quarter, 1958, the excess of arrivals over departures was 1,518; and in the September quarter of 1959, the excess of arrivals over departures was 295. In the December quarter, 1958, the excess of arrivals over departures was 1,495; and in the December quarter, 1959, the excess of arrivals over departures was 1,244. If those figures are added we get a total for the three quarters of 1958 of 4,000 excess arrivals over departures. The excess of arrivals for those three quarters of 1959 was 3,179. If we subtract from those totals the excess of departures from each of those years for the March quarters we would get an excess of arrivals for 1958 as a whole of 2,192; and for the year 1959 as a whole of 1,292.

Mr. O'Neil: Have those figures been checked?

Mr. HAWKE: I certainly hope the honourable member would check his figures. The figures I am giving are more detailed than those given by him, and they are more up to date. They were obtained officially from the office of the statistician. They prove very conclusively and decisively that the population in this State was increasing at a net rate far greater, under a Labour administration, than has happened under the present administration, despite all the ballyhoo and window-dressing speeches indulged in by the Minister for Industrial Development and one or two of his colleagues.

Before departing from that subject I might mention that the Minister for Industrial Development is directly involved in this matter, because he sent a statement to *The West Australian* on the 7th of July or thereabouts, and the statement was published on the 8th July. C. W. Court, Minister for Industrial Development, in this statement, among other things, said—

We lost nearly 10,000 people who left us for the Eastern States during the last three years of office of the Hawke Labour Government.

Mr. Court: That is correct.

Mr. HAWKE: Here we have the well known and well understood attitude of the Minister. He misleads and deceives and tells lies by telling one part of the truth.

Point of Order

Mr. COURT: On a point of order, I ask that the Leader of the Opposition withdraw those remarks, because I consider them to be absolutely offensive when he makes reference to deceiving and lies and words of that nature.

The SPEAKER: An objection has been taken. I ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw those remarks.

Mr. HAWKE: I withdraw them.

Debate Resumed

Mr. HAWKE: It is very interesting to note that the Minister for Industrial Development is showing a much softer attitude in these matters than he exhibited a year ago, and especially two years ago. It is encouraging to find that he is becoming a bit self-conscious, because that would seem to indicate that he might at last, to some extent, abandon the decided politically dishonest attitude which he has shown in and outside of this House for a long time.

Mr. Court: We give you a fair bit of license with your extravagant language.

Mr. HAWKE: What impression did the Minister for Industrial Development wish to have created in the minds of the public when he put that sentence into the letter which I read out a moment ago?

Mr. Court: If you want my answer I shall tell you. Ten thousand skilled tradesmen left this State during your Government's term of office. I am supported in my views by the supporters of your party at Midland Junction.

Mr. HAWKE: Do not put lies into the mouths of the men at Midland Junction. I say without reservation whatsoever that the Minister in putting that sentence in his letter for publication in *The West Australian* put it in only for the purpose of deceiving the public.

Mr. Court: Of informing the public.

Mr. HAWKE: And for the purpose of misleading them. Why did he not put in all the figures? Why did he not cover the whole movement of population into the State and out of the State during those three years?

Mr. Court: If you can get *The West Australian* to publish that for me I shall prepare the figures for you.

Mr. HAWKE: Obviously the Minister does not quite know which way to turn when he is faced with this issue.

Mr. Court: We know where we are going.

Mr. HAWKE: The Minister for Industrial Development knows where he is going all right; but unfortunately his colleagues do not know where he is dragging them, and that is to political oblivion as a Government.

Mr. Brand: He is not dragging them anywhere.

Mr. HAWKE: The Premier would not know.

Mr. Brand: The Premier knows where he is going.

Mr. HAWKE: He would not know whether he was being pushed, dragged, or kidded along. The Minister amused me when he said that if *The West Australian* had given him the space he would have stated the situation. All he need have done was to make use of the same amount of space; and instead of saying 10,000 men left this State for the Eastern States in the three years of office of the Labor Government, say that the excess of arrivals into Western Australia from all sources, over the departures from this State from all sources was a certain figure. That would have been the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But that would not appeal to the Minister for Industrial Development. He talks about *The West Australian* making space available to me to reply to this thing—it is heaping a bit of praise to call it a thing—but none of my reply saw the light of day in that newspaper. It covered up for the Minister for Industrial Development.

Mr. Court: I have not noticed it.

Mr. HAWKE: Today a number of trade union stewards from the Midland Junction Workshops interviewed me outside this House and presented to me a numerous signed petition in regard to the blood-letting policy which is being followed by the present Government, in regard to manufacturing activities particularly within these workshops. The petition reads—

To A. R. G. Hawke, M.L.A., Leader of the Opposition.

We, the undersigned members of the Trade Union Movement, employed by the W.A.G.R., being concerned about our future employment and the fate of the Midland workshops, urge your strongest intervention to defeat the disastrous policy of the Liberal Government. The Government's announced policy is fraught with grave dangers, not only for the railway workers, but for the State as a whole. We ask you to tell Parliament that we resist retrenchments, and the destruction of the Midland Junction workshops, with all the means at our disposal, and we urge the Labor Parliamentarians to support our struggle, which is a JUST one.

Mr. Court: There have been no retrenchments.

Mr. HAWKE: We had an instance this afternoon of how the Minister starts out on an inspired track to do and achieve something. He goes along this track without any experience and without any knowledge, chasing after his preconceived objective. When he gets along a certain part of the way he finds himself hopelessly blocked. Then he goes along and says, "There are these technical difficulties and there are these involved considerations; it looks now as if the whole thing will be a flop; the objective is out of reach and it cannot be achieved not even by me, the Minister for Industrial Development."

On that point I might add for the information of members of this House, other than the Minister for Industrial Development and myself, that I had the experience—I do not think one could call it unlimited pleasure—of hearing the Minister and one of the leading industrialists of Australia at a gathering some months ago. In essence the whole thing finished up with the industrialist saying, "The second brainiest man in Australia is Charlie Court"; and with Charlie Court saying, "The second brainiest man in Australia is Sir Barton Pope."

The Minister for Railways tells us—I cannot believe he is innocent enough or silly enough to believe it—there will be no retrenchments in the Midland Junction Workshops as a result of a policy which he is enforcing.

Mr. Court: There will not be any retrenchments, because we have a programme which will keep the workshops fully occupied until 1961.

Mr. HAWKE: No retrenchments until 1961, when the Empire Games, among other activities, will be with us. Probably the persons retrenched then will be able to sell programmes at those games.

Mr. Court: So much rot!

Mr. HAWKE: Anybody with sufficient commonsense would know that when one starts to operate a policy in an establishment, or against an establishment, such as the one the Minister is now operating within or against the Midland Junction Workshops, retrenchments become inevitable. The only alternative to retrenchments becoming inevitable and being made is for the workshops to become hopelessly inefficient, and for the cost of most of the work being carried out to be far beyond what it should be. The Minister's policy is not to replace men who retire because of old age, ill-health, or other reasons. That is the policy.

Mr. Court: We are still preserving a balance of tradesmen.

Mr. HAWKE: Of course, still preserving a balance of tradesmen! Can any member imagine a more haphazard and unscientific method of maintaining a balance of tradesmen within a big workshop than that one?

Mr. Court: How did you reduce the railway labour force by several hundreds?

Mr. HAWKE: We reduced the railway labour force by several hundreds by not replacing a number of men who retired on reaching the retiring age.

Mr. Court: That is what we are doing.

Mr. HAWKE: That is exactly what the Minister is doing; but we as a Government did not do that at the Midland Junction Workshops. As the Minister knows, the workshops at Midland Junction are by no means on the same basis as the railway system, as we generally know and talk about it. The railway system is one for the running of trains and for the transporting of goods. The Midland Junction Workshops are a manufacturing enterprise or concern, and also a workshop within which the maintenance required on engines, trucks and the rest is carried out.

Mr. Court: Are you prepared to sacrifice other workmen in the railways?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. HAWKE: Before the suspension of the sitting, I was dealing with the situation at the Midland Junction Workshops and the policy of this Government in connection with those workshops. The Minister told us, by interjection, that an adequate amount of work would be available there until 1961. In the meantime,

the only retrenchments which would take place would be those which would come about as a result of men reaching retirement age, or being retired, or leaving their employment for some reason or other.

Even if we can accept this situation, it leaves the position after 1961 quite unresolved. Undoubtedly by 1961 the policy of this Government will have had such a bad effect upon the workshops as not to justify the Government in continuing to give the same volume of work to those workshops. There would not be the same number of men there to do the work anyhow. The balance of skilled men then, and indeed before this, could be so much out of balance that work which the shops could now do efficiently could not be done on the same basis.

Once the Government becomes committed—deeply committed—to its present policy of having the manufacturing requirements of the Railways Department carried out in private workshops, either in this State or in other States, then obviously, the fate of the Midland Junction Workshops, at least as a manufacturing centre, is already decided; and that fate, of course, is one which will cause the workshops to become less adequate. This will mean that less work will be done there, and we know what happens when that process sets in.

It has been logically said, on many occasions, that success breeds success; that progress stimulates more progress, and so on. With equal logic it has been said, and can be said again, that deterioration breeds deterioration. Therefore, as these workshops are diminished in their importance—in the volume of work which they do, and in the number and variety of skilled men employed in them—then obviously they will continue to go down, and down, and down.

In the meantime, the Government will have become largely, if not entirely, dependent upon private workshops for railway manufacturing requirements; and the Government which, of course, is the State—will then be at the mercy of those who operate those private workshops; and it would not require very much forward vision to see that the Government will, in a few years, pay ever so much more for the manufacturing requirements of the Railways Department than it pays now; and much more than it has paid out in the past.

So obviously, those workshops are partly doomed. I think it might be said that they are completely doomed under the policy of the present Government as far as manufacturing activities are concerned. As the blood-letting process goes on and on, the workshops will become less adequate, weaker and, in effect, more anaemic.

The Minister, this afternoon, tried to indicate that more spare parts for diesel engines had been manufactured at the

Midland Junction Workshops, during the time his Government has been in office, than was the situation when the previous Government was in office. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition cleared that up by his question—to those who were capable of grasping the significance of what his question contained. In effect, he said that all the spare parts required for the electric diesels, as supplied to the Government of Western Australia by Metropolitan-Vickers of England, were supplied free of cost by the firm. In fact, many of the spare parts required were air-freighted out at the cost of the firm.

Members who took an interest in those diesels, after they were delivered here and put into service, will know that their performance was unsatisfactory in the great majority of instances. Parts which were comparatively new—almost brand new—began to deteriorate and break up, and all the rest of it, and our Government naturally pressed Metropolitan Vickers to make the engines serviceable, to keep them up to the warranty; and the company, after some argument, agreed to meet that responsibility, although they did try to blame the workshops maintenance, and so on.

But finally they agreed that it was their responsibility; and they undertook—as a legal arrangement, or an honourable arrangement with our Government—to supply spare parts for these engines whenever a particular part failed. Naturally, in that situation, a great number of spare parts were sent out direct from the manufacturers in England. The Government would not manufacture those parts at Midland Junction when the company was providing them free of cost to the Railways Department here, and meeting the cost of sending them out as well.

Mr. Court: You are not saying you did have to buy any spare parts, are you?

Mr. HAWKE: No; I am saying what the company agreed to do.

Mr. Court: That was part of the deal. You tried to get spare parts during your term of office.

Mr. HAWKE: Of course! I am saying that a great number of spare parts required for those electric diesels, as supplied to Western Australia by Metropolitan-Vickers, were supplied by the company under conditions I have mentioned.

Mr. Tonkin: Now you have got to buy a lot, or make them; that is the difference.

Mr. Court: You did not make them when you could have.

Mr. HAWKE: Yesterday I referred to the failure of this Government to honour a promise given to Parliament last year by the Attorney-General to have a fresh proclamation issued under the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, provided the

Parliament last session did not pass the Government's Bill to amend the Act. The Government continues to dishonour that promise made by the Attorney-General on that occasion. The Premier, when in a rather difficult position yesterday, was tempted to—and did, to some extent—query the claim that a promise along those lines had been made. I am confident he would not go any further with that line of thought.

The Premier has told us, in this matter, that the Government does not intend—certainly not at the present time—to introduce a motion in the Legislative Assembly favouring the issue of a fresh proclamation under the provisions of this Act. So we have a situation in which we have an Act upon the statute book which is not being operated. For all practical purposes, this Government has rendered it a dead letter.

Any person not aware of the fact would never imagine that this legislation was introduced by a Liberal Party-Country Party coalition Government in 1947. It was their Act; it was their method of trying to strengthen the term of their own Government in office. It was their method of trying to increase the number of Country Party and Liberal Party members who would be elected to Parliament in future years. They wrote their own ticket in regard to the Act. We who were in opposition then, opposed some of the provisions in the Act very strenuously, because we saw that those provisions were likely—almost certain—when in operation, to put out of balance the representation which various political groups in the community would be entitled to have on the basis of their voting strength. However, the Government had the numbers at that time in both Houses and was able to get its legislation through.

That legislation is on the statute book now in the same form as when it was passed by the Liberal-Country Party members in both Houses of Parliament. It is legislation which was framed for the purpose of keeping Labor out of office. That was its prime objective. And it did that for three years; and for three years only.

That, of course, clearly showed that there had been a serious miscalculation on the part of the person or persons mainly responsible for putting together in legal form in the Bill the jerrymannder which the Government was attempting to perpetrate against the people of Western Australia. Yet we have the extraordinary situation today of a Liberal-Country Party Government which refuses to operate its own legislation! What has gone wrong with this legislation since 1947, or 1950?

Mr. Graham: There has been a new member for Nedlands since then.

Mr. HAWKE: Has it lost its merit? Has it lost whatever merit it had? Apparently Ministers of this Government are

now afraid of the legislation—they are afraid to operate it. Yet I have no doubt that during the course of this session we will have at least one Minister getting up and talking to us about democracy; about the will of the people; about the voice of the people; about the essential need to protect our democracy against the forces from within and from without which threaten it. Yet this Government refuses to take action under its own party legislation which, a few years ago, was supposed to be the last word in electoral distribution fairplay.

We have in existence today a proclamation; but it is only a shell; there is no stomach in it. Both Houses of Parliament agreed last year to the provisions of a Bill which operated upon the proclamation and took the stomach out of it. So we have the farcical position today that a proclamation issued under the name of His Excellency the Governor exists in the form of a shell with nothing inside of it. I think it is an insult to the Governor of the State, apart from any other consideration.

I spoke yesterday about inflation, and during the course of what I said I dealt with the influence of rising wages, rising profits, and rising prices on the inflationary processes which are becoming more frightening as every month comes and goes. I also mentioned the ruinous effect which the operations of some big commercial concerns were having upon the small one-man commercial concerns in some sectors of the economy. Mention was also made of the huge amount of increased taxation which the Government gathered in the last financial year under old headings of taxation, and also under some new headings.

In addition to the figure of £800,000 in all which that increase in taxation represented in a year—or less than a year, because some of the new taxes did not operate for a full year—there is the alarming fact that this Government destroyed completely—more than completely—a surplus of £242,000 in the accounts of the Water Supply Department, which was the sum left there as a surplus by the present Deputy Leader of the Opposition who was Minister for Works and Water Supplies in the Labor Government. Not only has this surplus of £242,000 been used up, but the Government has already increased the water rates upon consumers in the metropolitan area—which means, of course, that the £242,000 surplus has gone, and water supply consumers in the metropolitan area, in addition, are to be slugged heavily by the increased water rates now operating.

Mr. Graham: What a Government!

Mr. HAWKE: I wish also to add a paragraph to what I had to say earlier about State trading concerns, and the profits which they earned—with the exception of

the State Shipping Service. I have no doubt that some members on the other side, if not all of them, would not regard the Rural and Industries Bank as a trading concern; nor would they regard the State Government Insurance Office and the State Electricity Commission as State trading concerns. I am not able to say why they would not regard the Rural and Industries Bank, and the State Government Insurance Office, as trading concerns; however, that is the line of thought they follow.

Whether they be State trading concerns or not, does not matter at this stage. What does matter is that during the five year period from 1953-54 to 1958-59, the Rural and Industries Bank earned a total profit of £215,000; the State Electricity Commission, a profit of £540,000; and there was a surplus in the accounts of the State Government Insurance Office, during those five years, of £380,000, making a total in all of profit and surplus of £1,135,000. I know the surplus shown in the accounts of the State Government Insurance Office for those years is not a profit, because insurance companies receive a lot of money each year to build up surpluses and, at the same time, establish liabilities for future years. They cannot tell in which year the liabilities will fall due, and they have to build up surpluses for the purpose of meeting any situation which might arise in a particular year.

In addition, of course, the State Government Insurance Office, like all other insurance offices, carries out a great deal of reinsurance with the biggest insurance companies in the British Commonwealth. However, it is significant that the bank and the insurance office have carried on successfully under State control—under Government administration—and that the State Electricity Commission has also been an outstanding success in that regard.

It could be said that the State Electricity Commission is a monopoly, and consequently could not lose—it must make profits, especially in the generation and distribution of electric power. All I would say in that regard is that I would hate to think how much higher rates for electric current would be in this State today were the electricity generating stations and the distributing systems in the ownership and under the control of private enterprise. So as we examine the situation with respect to State trading concerns, and near State trading concerns, and assess the situation fairly, squarely, and honestly, we find that, apart from the State Shipping Service, all of the other undertakings have been substantially profitable to the people of this State, and have not imposed upon the taxpayers the dreadful burdens which Liberal Party pamphleteers would deceive the people into believing, if they could so deceive them.

In conclusion on that matter, I would utter a word of warning to the Country Party members in this Parliament. Beyond any shadow of doubt I think they are being taken for a ride by the Government on this issue, and on other related issues as well. It seems to me that the Country Party Ministers in the Government do not take an interest in decisive lines of Liberal Party policy when they are being discussed and decided in Cabinet. It appears to me that Country Party Ministers say, in effect, to the Liberal Party Ministers, "That is your business; that is your policy; you go ahead and we won't raise any objection; we won't place any difficulties in your way; we won't oppose you and we will do the very best we possibly can not only to keep our private parliamentary members up to scratch but also to keep our rank and file supporters in the country quiet." I should say they will have the battle in front of them in the near future on the issue of increased railway freights so far as the people I have mentioned are concerned. I move the following amendment to the Address-in-Reply:—

We wish to protest strongly against the failure of the Government to honour the promise given by the Attorney-General to Parliament last year to issue a fresh proclamation under the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act and against the government's failure to foreshadow legislation to keep prices of essential commodities under reasonable restraint.

We wish also to protest strongly against the Government's policy of undermining the future of its own railway workshops at Midland Junction by refusing to allow even the management to tender with private firms for large-scale manufacturing jobs, including the building of the two new Westland trains, and against the policy of disposing of State trading concerns and of abolishing the public works day-labour construction organisation.

Furthermore, we would protest strongly against the mishandling by the Government of the Water Supply Department's finances and the recent severe increases in the department's rates, and the failure of the Government to take or propose any action to protect small traders from combines and monopolies.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier—on amendment) [8.0]: I must say that in the years I have been here, I have certainly heard the Leader of the Opposition in much better form than he has been tonight.

Mr. Graham: You used that same preface last time.

Mr. BRAND: Oh no; I did not!

Mr. Graham: Oh yes; you did!

Mr. BRAND: In any case, and even if I did, it is quite true now; it shows that this is the second occasion on which he has struggled.

Mr. Hawke: Let us have some reason.

Mr. BRAND: I listened for some reason in the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition; and from time to time, it got right away from reason altogether.

Mr. Hawke: It got a bit too deep for you.

Mr. BRAND: It reached the point where the Minister for Railways had to ask for a withdrawal of certain accusations. I did not, nor did any other Minister, or any other member on this side of the House, have anything to say yesterday on the many speeches made on the Supply Bill. Quite a number of members spoke on various points that were raised and referred to again by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader of the Opposition started by making some reference to the fact that we had published that, at the end of the financial year, we had shown a deficit improvement of £109,000; that we ran out £109,000 less than the deficit we had anticipated. The honourable member proceeded to say that was not any achievement. In view of all the difficult circumstances experienced throughout the financial year, I think it was quite a worthy result. The Leader of the Opposition did make some mention, or implied, that the Government had not met its obligations at the end of the financial year, by suggesting, for instance, we had not settled all accounts.

As far as I am aware, as Treasurer, we had settled all the accounts that were due; and, on checking with the Treasury today, I found that to be a fact; and that the £109,000 improved deficit was in fact the position of the finances of the State at the end of the year. The Leader of the Opposition referred to the extra money which was available to the Government as a result of new taxation, and as a result of increases from existing taxation.

All I can say is that if there was an increase in such matters as probate, stamp duty, and these other taxes, it simply shows there was a greater degree of prosperity existing in the community. The Leader of the Opposition did not point out that over £200,000 of the metropolitan regional tax goes to a special fund for a special purpose, and is not counted in the general Revenue Estimates at the end of the year. The taxation collections which are paid to Consolidated Revenue increased by £732,000. But at the same time the basic wage and marginal increases, and other costs, amounted to well over £1,000,000.

I think the Treasury is to be commended for having been able to run out, at the end of the year, as it did, and for having absorbed and met those costs with a better budget and improved deficit than was anticipated at the beginning of the year.

Tonight, the Leader of the Opposition made reference to the position of the Water Supply Department. I propose to leave the Minister to deal with this matter himself; but I should point out that although there may have been a surplus left by the previous Minister of some £270,000 odd, the position was that there was no excess water sold last year as a result of there being no water to sell; and there was, of course, the increase to which I have referred.

The Leader of the Opposition, last night, and again tonight, made great play of the fact that nothing was done about controlling inflation.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRAND: It is a strange thing to me that this inflationary problem seemed to start in this State about April of 1959. For, as far as I can see, in the six years that the Labor Government was in office, no effort at all was made to curb inflation.

Mr. Hawke: You refused to allow us to continue legislation to control prices. You voted against it.

Mr. BRAND: We say that price-fixing is not the answer.

Mr. Graham: Not the answer to your masters.

Mr. BRAND: Reference was made last night to South Australia having price fixing, and the Leader of the Opposition took me up on the fact that we referred to only one quarter. If he cares to look at the records he will find that South Australia has had from time to time, and from quarter to quarter, the same increase in the cost of living as many other States which had this so-called price fixing. It only goes to show that price fixing is not effective.

Mr. Evans: Sir Thomas Playford thinks it is.

Mr. Graham: The McLarty-Watts Government kept it for six years.

Mr. BRAND: It did; but it was then got rid of. It must not be overlooked, however, that we were moving from a point where goods were in very short supply during post-war years, and it was tailed off to such an extent that gradually we were able to get rid of price fixing in this State. Since then we have been able to get rid of other legislation which, I believe, has been a very great curb on the fortunes of Western Australia.

Mr. Graham: Good for profiteering and big business.

Mr. BRAND: It was strange to listen to what the Leader of the Opposition had to say last night; as indeed it was to hear the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for East Perth talk about the profits being made by these companies. I cannot understand it. In its belated effort to get industry to come here, the Hawke Government sent a team around the world, headed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. We read a great deal about what was going to happen; there were great headlines about the £92,000,000 investment that was coming here. I presume that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in a commonsense way, would have approached some of the companies who were alleged to be monopolists, capitalists, and profiteers. Did he indicate that his party adopted the attitude expressed by his leader when seeking private investment throughout the world? It does not make sense.

Mr. Hawke: Why not?

Mr. BRAND: No wonder they were not successful in attracting companies which they now refer to as profiteers.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRAND: It could be that a company which the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was very interested in attracting to Western Australia may still come to this State. It is a very substantial firm; and is that firm to overlook the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition when he refers to the big companies as profiteers and capitalists?

Mr. Graham: The sky's the limit.

Mr. BRAND: How can members opposite align that sort of reference and thinking with an attempt to attract industry to this State? It does not make sense.

Mr. Graham: Do you believe in 800 per cent. profit?

Mr. Hawke: Of course he does; 1,000 per cent.

Mr. BRAND: Why does not the Leader of the Opposition say 1,000,000 per cent.? Why does he not go on?

Mr. Graham: You want to kick the workers at the same time.

Mr. BRAND: It seems to be a worry to one or two people here that we are not kicking the workers; because if they thought we were, they would have something to talk about. Up to now, however they have had nothing to talk about.

Mr. Graham: And to try to intimidate the Arbitration Court by statements in the Press.

Mr. BRAND: Who tried to intimidate Parliament by filling the galleries?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Graham: You are afraid of the people.

Mr. BRAND: Not at all; I am not afraid of the people at all.

Mr. Hawke: They are afraid of you now.

Mr. BRAND: No; so far we have got along very well together. The Leader of the Opposition made some reference to Australian Paper Manufacturers. The arrangement for them to purchase land—and they purchased it privately—was made, as he published in a statement, during the time he was Premier; therefore he knows they were interested in coming here.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRAND: Now that a decision has been made for them to come here, and an agreement has been signed, we have this outcry.

Mr. Graham: What an agreement!

Mr. BRAND: The agreement involves the outlay of loan moneys of £300,000 annually for seven or eight years.

Mr. Graham: Terrific!

Mr. Hawke: Scandalous!

Mr. BRAND: It may be terrific and it may be scandalous; but nevertheless this firm is pledged to repay the money, with interest.

Mr. Hawke: By 1995.

Mr. BRAND: What is more, such a firm as Australian Paper Manufacturers will be a secure backing for the Government; it will mean permanent employment; and the first stage I have no doubt of the bringing about of what the member for Albany and the member for Warren have suggested should and could happen in this State—namely, the establishment of a paper pulping mill in Western Australia.

Mr. Graham: We all want one.

Mr. BRAND: The member for East Perth says we all want one. But the moment these people made a profit there would be an outcry; the moment they made a profit they would be called capitalists.

Mr. Graham: Of course.

Mr. BRAND: They would be kicked in the pants.

Mr. Graham: We do not believe in exploitation.

Mr. BRAND: The Opposition talks about the Government not knowing where it is going.

Mr. Graham: Unlimited profits and wage-pegging is your policy.

Mr. Brand: What do we mean when we ask these big firms to come here?

Mr. Hawke: They should play the game.

Mr. Graham: Unlimited profits and wage-pegging is your policy.

Mr. BRAND: Tonight we heard the Minister for Railways, I think very ably and adequately, answer numerous questions which were being asked because there were many people in the gallery tonight.

Mr. Graham: That seems to upset you.

Mr. BRAND: Not at all. The questions were so well answered that the Minister came out of a difficult situation creditably and truthfully.

Mr. Graham: You would not understand.

Mr. BRAND: I am very interested in what the Leader of the Opposition said about retrenchments which his Government made in the railways, as distinct from the Government railway workshops. There is a pamphlet about the United Railways Unions. I assume it means all the railway unions and all the railway workers, because this pamphlet is signed by the joint railway union committee, or something like that.

Mr. Graham: What is in it?

Mr. BRAND: The honourable member can read it for himself; it is in big black type. The point I am making is that the retrenchments made by the previous Government were perfectly right; but what has been done by the Minister for Railways in the matter of retrenchments is quite wrong. What is the difference?

Mr. Graham: Every difference.

Mr. BRAND: Is it right to give protection for the men who work at the railway workshops and none for the men on the other sections of the railway? What a nonsensical situation!

Mr. Graham: Sell it to big business.

Mr. BRAND: I would like to say that a Minister of the Government has given the assurance to those people that there will be no retrenchments; and, to show his *bona fides*, a programme of work has been put forward which indicates there will be ample work to keep everybody occupied. The Leader of the Opposition said tonight it will ultimately spell the doom of the workshops.

Mr. Graham: Hear, hear!

Mr. BRAND: As members opposite know, when we went to the people with our policy, we indicated that we did not intend, as a Government, to allow the workshops to continue as a manufacturing centre—that they would be rationalised. It was clearly stated in the policy speech; so what is being disclosed here tonight by spokesmen is not new. So far as I am concerned, the undertakings of the Minister for Railways, on behalf of the Government, stand; and there will be no retrenchment. In fact, we would like to see a state of affairs set up in the Midland Junction Workshops where there is security for those who work there and an assurance that these workshops will continue to be—as I believe they should be—maintenance workshops.

Mr. Graham: Ledger and Tomlinson will talk to you.

Mr. BRAND: They talk to me now.

Mr. Graham: They will wag their finger at you if you speak like that.

Mr. Hawke: Kick you in the pants.

Mr. BRAND: Not as often as they kicked the honourable member. A final reference is made in this amendment to the Address-in-reply by the Opposition to the fact that the Government, so far, has taken no action to issue a proclamation. This has been referred to as being politically dishonest. That is a phrase which the Leader of the Opposition seems to have coined for this session. He gets a phrase each session.

Mr. Graham: It is so appropriate.

Mr. BRAND: I would like to remind members, in case they have forgotten, of an equally—if you like—dishonest political act of the Labor Party when, after it was defeated, it took action to issue a proclamation which was a major decision by a defeated Government.

Mr. Hawke: To carry out the law.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BRAND: It did this to ensure it would obtain some benefit.

Mr. Hawke: To carry out the law.

Mr. BRAND: One cannot imagine the previous Government would have taken that action unless it was to make sure, while it was still the Government, that there would be some advantage to it—the same accusation that has been made about this side of the House. Because it is on this side of the House, it is wrong. The politically dishonest act of the previous Government in issuing that proclamation was put right—

Mr. Hawke: To carry out the law.

Mr. BRAND: —by Parliament, and that proclamation has been revoked. The situation will be explained later on by the Attorney-General; and he will satisfactorily explain it.

Mr. Graham: We will be the judge of that.

Mr. BRAND: He will satisfactorily explain that we are carrying out the law. As I said, at this stage, we have not decided to issue any further proclamation; nor have we decided we would move in this House a motion which would start the machinery in motion. However, I oppose the amendment to the Address-in-reply because—

Mr. Graham: Why?

Mr. BRAND: —I feel no Government is justified in amending a very fine speech—a record of achievement by this Government and a very worth-while plan for the future development of the State.

Mr. Graham: What a feeble effort!

MR. TONKIN (Melville—on amendment) [8.20]: No wonder we get a reply like the one we did. It was a wonder we got any reply at all.

Mr. Hawke: It was wicked.

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier must have found it difficult to say anything.

Mr. Brand: I did not.

Mr. Graham: You made a poor fist of it, anyhow.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TONKIN: The Premier had the effrontery to talk about an assurance. I do not know—

Mr. Hawke: Neither do I.

Mr. TONKIN: —that this House would not have been completely justified in refusing the Government Supply.

Mr. Brand: Why didn't you try it?

Mr. TONKIN: For the simple reason that those behind the Premier are so dragooned they have no right of private thought or action.

Mr. Brand: They are doing voluntarily what your boys had to do.

Mr. TONKIN: Let us see the position the Government is in. The Government has decided that it will not issue a proclamation, although as late as last evening the Premier did not know whether the Attorney-General had given an assurance to this House or not.

Mr. Brand: You reminded me by quoting something.

Mr. TONKIN: The Government made a decision not to introduce a proclamation without first examining the situation as to whether an assurance had been given to this House or not. So it just did not matter whether there had been an assurance. I am going to say most definitely that not only did the Attorney-General give this House an assurance, that if the Electoral Districts Act were not amended a proclamation would be issued, but so did the Minister for Railways.

Mr. Hawke: He does not deny it.

Mr. TONKIN: He cannot; it is in *Hansard*. Not only did the Attorney-General give an unequivocal statement that if the law was not amended the existing law would have to be carried out and the onus would be on the Government to issue a proclamation, but the Minister for Railways confirmed it. So we had two assurances from the ministerial bench that in the absence of an amendment to the law the Electoral Districts Act would be carried out.

Now we are told that some time in the future the Attorney-General is going to explain all that. He is going to explain why there is no necessity to issue a proclamation. I am going to give members a few things to think about in the meantime, because it is not that simple. The Electoral Districts Act requires that when the Chief Electoral Officer reports, after the making up of the rolls for a triennial election, that five seats are out of balance, the Governor shall issue a proclamation

directing a redistribution—not issue a proclamation about the price of cheese, or issue a proclamation with no provisions. He is to issue a proclamation directing a redistribution.

Now, the Government by its Bill of cancellation of the proclamation last session, wiped out all the provisions of the proclamation as if they had never been in operation. That was the wording of the Bill. That left the situation that all the Governor has done is to issue a formal proclamation without provisions, without instructing that anything be done. That does not meet the requirements of the Act.

So, this situation arises: The Electoral Districts Act requires that when the electoral officer reports five seats out of balance the Governor shall direct a redistribution. That Act has not been altered, so the position is that the law still requires the issuance of a proclamation directing a redistribution. As that has not been done—and it looks as if the Government will not do it—when we come to the next election it cannot properly be held, because the law has not been carried out with regard to the redivision of boundaries. So the distinct possibility exists that the new Parliament cannot properly be constituted; and, therefore, the Government even if it is defeated at the polls, cannot be replaced in office; or if it is, the new Government cannot get Supply, because it cannot call a Parliament together as the members have not been elected in accordance with the law. I hope that is something for the members of the Government to think about.

Mr. Jamieson: Members of the Government are not even interested.

Mr. TONKIN: It is no good running away with the idea that, because a proclamation without any provisions has been issued, that meets the requirements of the law. It is interesting to examine the Premier's point of view of this major decision of the Hawke Government with regard to the proclamation. That is what he called it—a major decision. We will see how much of a major decision it is. When this provision in the law was inserted by the McLarty-Watts Government, in a leading article of *The West Australian* it had this to say, and I quote from *Hansard*, Vol. 1 of 1959, page 45:

It is a good and necessary Bill, a fair and even generous Bill, and it incorporates two eminently desirable principles which are new to this State and which merit the widest public approval. These principles are automatic future redistribution—

Oh yes! To continue —

—whenever enrolments exceed the permissible margin of error and the definition of new boundaries by a body out of Parliament itself. It will be

encouraging to think that these two principles, at least, will never be altered.

Whoever wrote that had no idea that one day there would come along a Government that had no respect for the law.

[*The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Roberts) took the Chair.*]

Redistribution was intended to be automatic. If members want any further confirmation of that point of view, all they need do is to read what the then Attorney-General, Sir Ross McDonald, said when he introduced the measure. He said it was intended to be automatic that as soon as five seats were out of balance the electoral officer would report the matter and a redistribution would take place straightaway—automatically. This Government is doing its level best to prevent it from operating, and it says it was a major decision on the part of the Hawke Government to set the automatic machinery in motion. A major decision! If that is a major decision—and I can quite understand that from the Government's activities it has not much idea of what is major and what is minor—then the Government is in for a very great awakening.

Members opposite might sit and look smugly and think that because a proclamation was issued the requirements of the law have been met. The law says that a proclamation directing a redistribution shall be issued; and according to the Bill introduced last session the provisions of the proclamation were cancelled, as if they had never operated, leaving a worthless proclamation which no court in the land would accept as being a discharge of the duty and obligation imposed upon the Government.

If the Governor has not discharged his obligation in accordance with the law, in my view a proper election cannot be held in two years' time. So the members opposite will not be properly elected, and there will be no Supply for the Government; and then there will be a fine situation. I suggest the legal brains over there have another look at this matter and not rely too much upon the advice which is tendered from the Crown Law Department, with due respect to them all; because I can recall having risen in my place on this side of the House a few years ago and having argued with the Attorney-General that the law did not permit of temporary appointments being made to the Transport Board. The Crown Law Department advised the Attorney-General that it did; but subsequently the Government had to introduce a Bill to validate the appointments which had been made up to that point because it had woken up to the fact that the advice previously tendered to it was completely false.

I would suggest that instead of resting in the position which suits them and assuming that they have discharged their

obligation the members of the Government should take further advice. I would point out that in accordance with the Act of Settlement the Crown cannot defy the law, and if Ministers give wrong advice to the Sovereign or Sovereign's representative they can be punished by loss of portfolio; and the law sets it out very clearly. I propose to quote from the statement of this law by Windeyer, K.C. He said—

The laws of England are the birth-right of the people thereof and all the Kings and Queens who shall ascend the throne of this realm ought to administer the Government of the same according to the said laws and all their officers and Ministers ought to serve them, respectively, according to the same.

Windeyer says that this unquestionably states that the Crown is subject to the law and the Ministers are subject to the law. He goes on further to say—

The legal position of the Sovereign himself as well as of his servants or advisers the King's Ministers of State who act in contravention of the law can be brought before the King's courts in accordance with accepted doctrine of Ministerial responsibilities.

Therefore if the Ministers of this Government, as I think they are, are giving wrong advice to the Sovereign's representative, they are liable to punishment in the courts of the country in accordance with the Act of Settlement as quoted by Windeyer. Now I suggest to members that they should themselves have another look at the Electoral Districts Act, because individually they will be caught up in this, to see whether in their view the requirement of the law has been discharged or will be discharged if no proclamation is issued in time for the next election.

I am now going to read something which I think will make you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, laugh, in view of what the Attorney-General has been doing up to date.

Mr. Hawke: It will have to be good—

Mr. TONKIN: It is good.

Mr. Hawke: —to make the Deputy Speaker laugh.

Mr. TONKIN: I quote from page 45 of Volume I of *Hansard* of 1959, where the member for Stirling, the present Attorney-General, in dealing with this subject stated—

It is desirable to do that which was considered right rather than that which was considered expedient.

"It is desirable to do that which was considered right rather than that which was considered expedient." What is he doing now?

Mr. Norton: Gone home.

Mr. TONKIN: The Electoral Districts Act purely and simply requires that if five seats are out of balance there shall be a

redistribution. The electoral officer has reported that 10 seats are out of balance. If one were to do the right thing, instead of the expedient thing, what would one do? Now that is a very simple question. The Electoral Districts Act sets out that if five seats are out of balance and the electoral officer reports accordingly, there shall be a redistribution in time for the next election. The Government has decided that this will not be done. Now is that doing what is right, or what is expedient?

So it can be seen what a hypocrite the Attorney-General is, because he is advising the Government in this matter. As a matter of fact, we have been told by the Premier that later on he is going to explain the situation. He will have to be good to get out of that one—"We will do what is right rather than what is expedient." Of course we will, when it suits us—but not as a matter of principle.

All right! Go ahead! Do not issue any proclamation! Hold the next election on the existing boundaries and see what happens! And if the Government cannot call Parliament together and obtain Supply, where will it be? I suggest the Government have a look at that one because the law requires that when five seats are out of balance a redistribution shall be directed; and the electoral officer has reported that 10 seats are out of balance. Because of that, the law says the Governor has to direct a redistribution. If the Governor does not direct a redistribution, then the requirement of the law has not been met and the next election will be improperly held.

Now on that question, the Government is worthy of the gravest censure because we have had the assurance of two responsible Ministers that the obligation would remain. The Premier did not know whether or not an assurance had been given, so I draw his attention to page 39 of *Hansard*, Vol I of 1959 where the following is reported:—

The present statute will remain and the onus will be placed upon the Government of issuing a fresh proclamation to ensure the law is carried into effect.

Not much doubt about that. If the new Bill to be introduced to Parliament was not accepted, if the law remained as it was, then the position would be, according to the Attorney-General, that the present statute would remain and the onus would be placed upon the Government of issuing a fresh proclamation—not of saying that the proclamation which has already been issued meets the situation and discharges the requirements of the law. He did not say that. But he gained the passage of the Bill through Parliament by assuring members that if no alteration were made to the law the onus would be upon the Government to issue a fresh proclamation

to ensure the law was carried into effect. And that is the assurance which the Minister for Railways confirmed.

Mr. J. Hegney: He did not proceed with his Bill, either.

Mr. TONKIN: And yet the Premier has the effrontery to talk about the assurances which have been given to the men at the Midland workshops. When assurances are dishonoured as readily as they are in regard to the redistribution of seats Bill when it suits the Government, they will be dishonoured in every other instance in the same circumstances. I am in the position that I am not prepared to accept as true anything that the Government says in this House until it makes good its undertaking. No half measures about that!

We have put people in gaol for that sort of thing—giving assurances with regard to contracts and dishonouring them. And that is what this Government has done and intends to continue to do after giving solemn assurances to this House—not by a mistake, but deliberately. These were given by two senior Ministers, one confirming the other; and yet the Government has the hide to talk about assurances.

At page 56 of last year's *Hansard* we find the Attorney-General had this to say—

It was certainly intended—

Mark that—

—that when a certain state of affairs was reached, a proclamation should be issued in reasonable time.

That is the intention of the Electoral Districts Act as admitted by the Attorney-General. He said later—

I have already said in my opening speech that it will be obvious that the provisions of the existing Act will continue and must be brought into operation at an appropriate time.

Is the appropriate time after another election has taken place? If I were in the position that the Ministers of the Government are in, in regard to this matter, I would feel like crawling under the table.

To stand up to an Assembly of responsible men and give a solemn undertaking that the law will be carried out; and to talk about doing those things which are right instead of those things which are expedient; and then to decide not to carry out the law at all—and, what is more, put the Governor in the position that he cannot do what he must feel he ought to do, because the members of the Government are giving him wrong advice—is extraordinary. The Ministers are telling His Excellency that he is not under an obligation to do that which the law clearly says he must do and which the Ministers of this Government said he would be required to do; and they said that in this

Parliament—not on a soap-box somewhere—in order to obtain the passage of legislation which cancelled the proclamation.

If the Government had no intention of allowing the law to be carried out, then it gained the contract on false pretences; and people are being gaoled for that by our courts. I am surprised. I will not mention any names; but there are some Ministers opposite who, I thought, were the soul of honesty and would not stand for this sort of thing. Frankly I have never before experienced a single instance where a Minister of the Crown gave an assurance in Parliament, or anywhere else, and then dishonoured it because it was expedient to do so. It is contrary to the oath that a Minister takes, and it is contrary to a Minister's sense of responsibility. But the Ministers sit in their places and make it clear that they have no intention of carrying out the law; and they are advising the Governor accordingly. Well, let them go ahead with the course they have mapped out for themselves, and see where they finally land!

Now I desire to say something in connection with what has happened in the Water Supply Department. I think here the Government is doing something that it has no authority to do. Section 93 of the Metropolitan Water Supply Act has this to say—

Separate rates shall be made for each district and for the following purposes:—

- (a) To provide funds to defray the expenses of the general administration of this Act apportioned to the District.
- (b) To provide funds to defray the expenses incidental to each District, incurred in the maintenance and management of the water works, sewerage works and storm water drainage works in the District.
- (c) To provide funds for paying the prescribed interest and sinking fund on the capital cost of such works allocated to each District.
- (d) To provide funds for the construction, extension, and improvement of such works in the District as may be constructed, extended, or improved out of revenue.

And rates shall not be struck for any other purposes.

The Sewerage Department happens to have shown quite a substantial surplus over the last three years. In 1957-58, the surplus on the operation of the sewerage section of the department was £59,148, after charging the proper proportion of interest and sinking fund with regard to sewerage extension works. In

1958-59 the sewerage section of the department again had a surplus—on this occasion a surplus of £20,619. Again this surplus was arrived at after that section of the department had met its proportion of interest and sinking fund on the capital expenditure of sewerage extension works. Last year it had an even greater surplus than the previous year; namely, £30,804.

We are in this position: The Government has put up the sewerage rates even though the amount of money obtained in the past three years has been more than adequate to meet the charges listed in the Act. The sewerage rates have been increased at least 25 per cent. on every person; and on some people the increase has been as high as 45 per cent.; and this is in connection with a section of the department that is showing a surplus.

Let us examine the situation for a moment. Not every person in the metropolitan area is connected to the sewerage. As a matter of fact, I suppose the bulk of the people do not pay the sewerage rate. So if the Government is unnecessarily increasing the sewerage rate on those people who are connected to the sewer, it is taxing a section of the community in the interests of the general taxpayer.

Mr. Brand: Wasn't that the position all the time you were there?

Mr. TONKIN: No.

Mr. Brand: Weren't they all paying sewerage rates, but not all had sewerage?

Mr. TONKIN: But you have put the rate up when it is showing a surplus.

Mr. Brand: Nevertheless, the principle existed when you were there.

Mr. TONKIN: The principle is not the same.

Mr. Brand: Of course it is!

Mr. TONKIN: If the Premier is using the Sewerage Department as a taxing machine—and it was never so used before; that is the difference—to get revenue for some other purpose, which I say he is not entitled by law to do, then he has started something which has not been followed before. What justification can anybody give for increasing a rate which can only be levied to meet the costs of the service, when the costs of the service are already being adequately met? That is the point. The situation with the water section is different because that is showing a loss.

The Government did not intend to say anything about this; it was going to issue the notices, leave the rates as they were—just the same rate in the pound—and put up the rate for excess water and say nothing about it. The Government intended just to send these rate notices out through the post and not give any publicity whatever. But by a fortuitous circumstance I stumbled on what was happening and the Government then had to

say something about it. Unfortunately for the Premier, his Minister for Works was in the North somewhere, and so the Premier was not in a position to say much about what was happening, and he declined to say anything until the Minister returned; and then he did not say very much.

Mr. Bickerton: Perhaps he did not know.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not know whether members understand what has happened; but the department, without sending a valuer around to the properties and valuing them properly, simply took the figures on the habitation cards and increased every valuation by 25 per cent.; it lifted everyone by 25 per cent. But those places which were revalued last year got a double lift; they got the new valuation plus the 25 per cent. general increase. That is why some people this year will pay 45 per cent. more for water supply and sewerage than they had to pay in the last financial year. I am sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you would like to know what the Minister for Railways had to say about raising valuations to obtain extra revenue.

Mr. Hawke: It was terrific.

Mr. TONKIN: This occurred back in 1958 when the Hawke Government was in power and found it possible to reduce the rate in the £1 for the water rate, and to rely upon the ordinary progressive re-valuations, which this Government has put up by 25 per cent. I propose to quote from Vol 2 of *Hansard* of 1958 to show how much reliance we can place upon the opinions expressed by the Minister for Railways. This is what the Minister had to say at page 1552 of that Volume of *Hansard*—

Mr. Court: The people in my electorate and in the electorates of other honourable members who are feeling a similar impact, are all complaining about the impression given by the Minister that there was to be no increase in water rates. The nicety as to whether the rate is struck as a rate in the £, or overall, does not enter the mind of the average person. People are entitled to take the statement of the Minister as one of fact.

Mr. Tonkin: The Leader of the Opposition made precisely the same statement when he was the Minister for Works.

Mr. Court: He did not.

Mr. Tonkin: He did.

Mr. Court: He did not say the rates would not go up. The Minister read out the answer to a question asked by the honourable Mr Styants, but he did not read out the subsequent debate which took place on the

instigation of the honourable Mr. Styants recorded on page 2698 of the 1952 *Hansard*, when he was very critical—

Mr. Tonkin: Before you put yourself too far in on this matter, I suggest you get hold of the Metropolitan Water Supply Act and examine it.

Mr. Court: I have done just that.

Mr. Tonkin: You go ahead and do so.

Mr. Court: If the Government had made no statement about the buoyancy of funds in regard to the financial position of the Water Supply Department, people would not have the same cause for complaint; but the Minister made a public statement, and the people are entitled to be annoyed, just as the honourable Mr. Styants was annoyed in 1952.

Mr. Tonkin: He was annoyed, was he?

Mr. Court: If the honourable member were to read the debate, he would see that Mr. Styants was annoyed.

I wonder what state the people are in now if Mr. Styants was annoyed! The Minister then said—

He was annoyed because the assessments went up.

I remind you Mr. Deputy Speaker that these assessments that went up were the ordinary progressive assessments which the present Minister for Water Supplies said were on too conservative a basis. So he has put them up by 25 per cent. Those are the assessments about which the Minister for Railways was then complaining when he was on this side of the House.

Mr. Hawke: Is there anything there about his telephone bell ringing almost day and night and almost without ceasing?

Mr. TONKIN: I will continue to quote from this volume of *Parliamentary Debates* as follows:—

Mr. Court: He was cross when he got his assessment, call it by whatever name one will—whether it be a revaluation or a rate in the £. It meant more money to be paid by the people. This process is going on throughout the Government's income-raising programme.

Mr. Tonkin: What process?

Mr. Court: This is a form of taxation increase through administrative means, without having to come before Parliament for legislative authority. I agree that authority to revalue is in the legislation, but the property-owner gets the impact of the increase by paying a rate in the £ on the higher valuation.

Mr. Tonkin: You are arguing there should not be any revaluation.

Mr. Court: The Government should have called a halt—

I remind you again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that he said that our Government should have called a halt on revaluations which the present Government says were on too conservative a basis and therefore should be put up by 25 per cent. Continuing—

— or adjusted the rate in the £. The statement made by the Minister for Works was interpreted by me and by others that he had decided, as a manoeuvre during pre-election year, that no more revaluations would be made, and thus hold back the water rates for this particular year. Does the Minister realise how much the rates have been increased?

The Chairman: I suggest the honourable member address the Chair.

Mr. Court: It is very frightening to contemplate where the increases in respect of water rates, local authorities rates, and land tax will end. A special tax in the form of the Argentine ant rate is being imposed, and the honourable member for Wembley Beaches is advocating a beach trust rate. Last year we had legislation which envisaged a town planning rate.

So the Minister went on, but I will not weary the House by reading any more of it. That is sufficient to show that even with the ordinary progressive revaluation, the Minister for Railways saw fit to complain. However, this Government has come up with a double-barrelled effort. It has carried on the ordinary progressive revaluations and lifted all domestic valuations 25 per cent. in addition, which means an increase in sewerage rates although that section of the department was showing a surplus on existing valuations and the existing rate.

I do not know what the Government is going to do with all this money in the Water Supply Department. If one adds up the figures one will find that the amount of money which will be obtained from this increase in revaluations is not required to finance the operations of the Water Supply Department, because last year the loss sustained as a result of the limited sale of excess water was met out of the accumulated surplus in the department from the existing rate. If excess water sales can be made this summer—and I see no reason why they should not be—that loss will not be sustained. So there is actually no case for an increase in water rates, much less an increase in the sewerage rate.

It is obvious the Government is doing the very thing about which the Minister complained, but which was not being done at the time; and that is, it is using this increased rate as a taxing measure. I wish to point this out: Because the Act

provides for a maximum rate the Government dare not bring this to Parliament to try to increase the revenue by increasing the rate because it knows full well that Parliament would not agree, in the circumstances, to the substantial increase.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Roberts): Order! the honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I move—

That the honourable member's time be extended.

Motion put and passed.

Mr. TONKIN: Because the Government knew that it could not get this additional money by raising the rate in the £, it adopted this subterfuge of arbitrarily increasing the valuation of domestic residences—not the business premises, but arbitrarily raising, by 25 per cent., the valuation of every dwelling. In those cases where an owner's dwelling is connected to the sewerage scheme, a minimum increase of 25 per cent. will be made in the sewerage rate despite the fact that the sewerage section of the department has shown a surplus for the past three years.

I ask how anybody, in view of the law, could increase a rate which was already adequately meeting all the charges it was expected to meet? I daresay that if this were challenged in the court, it would be found that the Government is exceeding its authority. It has been axiomatic that the Water Supply Department should levy a rate sufficient only to cover its expenses and costs and not to carry substantial surpluses to general revenue. Of course, it is impossible to strike a rate which absolutely balances. It is inevitable, if a proper rate is struck, that there will be a surplus of a few hundred pounds, or an odd thousand pounds each year, but this present rate must give the Government a very substantial surplus over the financial requirements of the department and cannot be justified in any shape or form.

Nevertheless, the Minister for Railways, who was so vocal about this matter in 1958, now supports the policy of increasing the rate. Why, I do not know, because it cannot be justified. I suppose that is why the Government was trying to slip it in surreptitiously without making any announcement of what it was going to do. Unfortunately for the Government, however, it did not get away with it and the public became aware of what was being done. When the members of the general public get to know that the owners of those dwellings which are connected to the sewerage system are singled out for a special tax for general revenue purposes—a tax which the owners of dwellings not connected to the sewerage system do not carry—they will not be too pleased about it, because there is not the slightest justification for such action.

So I think we are entitled, on the two counts with which I have dealt, to make an addition to the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech. If any Government has forfeited the confidence of the people, this Government has. Firstly, it has lost the people's confidence because of its failure to live up to its solemn obligations given in this House; and, secondly, it has evaded the law in regard to what is required in one of the major departments of the Administration.

There is a great deal more I would like to say, but at this stage I do not think I should trespass further on the time of the House. I hope that the members of this Chamber will feel some sense of personal responsibility as to what ought to be the true and proper action of a Government—and it is not, surely, to dishonour assurances which one accepts in all good faith. That is the situation in which we find ourselves at this moment. I support the amendment.

MR. EVANS (Kalgoorlie—on amendment) [9.10]: May I, in my first brief speech in this Chamber this session, firstly congratulate you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, upon your appointment as Chairman of Committees again this session and also upon the first occasion you have occupied the Speaker's Chair in 1960? I also wish to proffer my sympathy to you upon the necessity for you to try to protect the sorrowful efforts of the Government and upon your misfortune in being a supporter of it. All my sympathies are with you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and to show my sympathy I intend, because of the many speakers tonight, to be extremely brief. That will be tangible evidence of the sympathy I feel for you.

The Leader of the Opposition has felt a genuine desire, backed by sufficient and adequate reason, to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which His Excellency the Governor was good enough to open this session of Parliament. The moving of an amendment to such a speech is an unusual and unorthodox step. I have heard the Minister for Railways often using that expression, and it is one with which I agree. A step which is unusual must have very good and strong reasons behind it before that step is taken and executed. On this occasion those reasons are present, and it is the duty of the Opposition to voice its protest because we represent almost 50 per cent. of the people of Western Australia at present, or we did at the last election; and possibly if an examination were made at the polls now, we would enjoy more than the sympathy and affection of such people.

It is our duty to criticise the Government and to request it to render an account of its stewardship if it is capable of doing so, and to place such an account before the people of Western Australia.

The first matter in regard to which the Government is failing in its duty occurs in its refusal to take any action concerning the redistribution of electoral boundaries. Such action has occupied the minds of the legal fraternity on many occasions in the past and the action of the Government on this occasion will certainly draw some attention within the period between now and the next general election if the Government continues with its present attitude.

I wonder if the Government is aware of an Imperial statute passed in 1828 and proclaimed on the 23rd July, 1828, which enacted that English laws existing at that date were to become the laws in the Colonies, including Australia? The laws were to become effective in Australia and were to be retained by each State until they were amended or repealed by the States.

There is one important law which is a monument of British constitutional justice, and which existed in England on the 23rd July, 1828. Research has disclosed that it exists in Western Australia and in some of the other States. I refer to the Bill of Rights, passed in 1688, when James the Second fled from the Throne and William the Third and Mary were asked to accept the Throne under certain conditions. Those conditions were contained in a Declaration of Rights and later were enacted in the Bill of Rights.

The second provision in the Bill of Rights states that "no regal authority shall dispense with any law as has hitherto been the practice without the approval of Parliament." That law still applies in England, and research has failed to show me that it has been amended or repealed in Western Australia. By this law the Government is morally obliged to observe and refrain from dispensing with the provisions contained in any other legislation. I find the Government doing just that, as it is not complying with the Electoral Districts Act of 1947. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition tonight indicated that the provisions of that Act could have been complied with by the Government.

A proclamation had been issued, but Parliament revoked it last year; that was all Parliament did in 1959 in respect of that legislation. The provisions of the Electoral Districts Act have still not been complied with. I repeat that the second provision of the Bill of Rights says that no regal authority shall dispense with any law without the consent of Parliament. This Government has not obtained the approval of Parliament to dispense with the provision requiring automatic redistribution of seats under the Electoral Districts Act.

I pass now to another point in the amendment; that is, the failure of this Government to protect the wage-earners of this State, following the pattern set down by the archdeacon of private

enterprise, the Prime Minister. The Premier has failed miserably to protect the purchasing power of wages in this State. He played an inglorious part in the last few months in an attempt to intimidate the Arbitration Court, which had to decide whether or not an increase in the basic wage was justified.

The State Government was also represented before a Commonwealth tribunal which discussed an adjustment of the basic wage. That representation was successful, because no adjustment was made by that court. Justice has prevailed in this State, however; because, to the credit of the majority of members of the Arbitration Court, there was an adjustment of the basic wage recently.

In this State we have reached the position where there are two classes of wage-earners—those employed under Federal awards and those employed under State awards. Both these groups have to meet the same costs, and this variation in their position is countenanced by the Government of Western Australia. It is to both these sections that the Government will look for support in 1962 to be returned to the Treasury bench. It is my firm opinion that the people will remember the woeful record of this Government, and during the election will examine the candidates, accept the best, and reject the rest, and we will find the Government out in the cold.

In Western Australia there was an adjustment of the basic wage recently, which applied only to State awards. It was clearly an attempt by that court to lift wages closer to the level of prices. I do not agree that the attempt has been successful to bring about a state of equilibrium between wages and prices, because wages are still trailing prices. The duty of the Government is clear. In the interests of the majority of the people who put the Government in office, it is its duty to protect the purchasing power of wages. Wages and prices are the two balances placed at each end of a see-saw. The fact that an upward adjustment is made to the basic wage points to the fact that prices are higher than wages, because the adjustment is made to bring wages closer to the price level.

If no move is made to maintain the position now reached, the see-saw will swing again in favour of the prices side, and the wage-earner will be no better off as a result of the recent adjustment in the basic wage. The effect of the adjustment will be null and void; in other words, the recent decision of the Arbitration Court will be perfunctory and useless. This is the position the Government is countenancing by its failure to take adequate steps to preserve the purchasing power of wages in this State. Perhaps I am giving the Government a little credit in saying that it has taken any steps at all, because a Government cannot be criticised as much if it takes some steps than if it does not.

try at all. A Government which does not try is deserving of the greatest condemnation. The action of the present Government cries out loudly for condemnation by those who act as Her Majesty's Opposition in this Parliament.

I asked a question in this House this afternoon regarding the attitude of the Government and whether the Premier would consider taking adequate and effective steps to preserve the purchasing power of wages by adopting price control. I was informed that price control was not regarded as an effective means of maintaining the situation now reached; or, in other words, price control was not effective.

I am puzzled as to whether the Government is concerned. If it is genuine in its belief that price control is ineffective, and it will not introduce price control, is it then solicitous for the welfare of the workers when it says that this method is not effective and will not be introduced, or is it using that excuse to protect the vested interests which support the Government?

Mr. I. W. Manning: Do you favour price control?

Mr. EVANS: The honourable member has not been listening.

Mr. I. W. Manning: I do not think you do.

Mr. EVANS: Does Sir Thomas Playford favour price control?

Mr. Graham: Mr. Nicklin favours price control.

Mr. EVANS: There we have two representatives of the anti-Labor Parties in this country favouring price control. Price control is the only means of maintaining equilibrium between prices and wages. It is a pity there is not closer liaison between the Government of Western Australia and that of its neighbour, South Australia, because I feel that Sir Thomas Playford could, in some respects, teach our Premier many things.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. May: The benefit of price control is one of those things.

Mr. Graham: Teach him how to negotiate with oil companies, too.

Mr. EVANS: I pass to the Government's further failure in the field of price control. I come now to the Government's main activity—one that is not subtle, hidden, such as the recent increase in water rates. It is one which, when the policy of the Government is known, is quite obvious; and it is unfortunate that the people of Western Australia did not recognise this—that is, its deliberate support of vested interests of this State at the expense of the workers, and its throttling of Government enterprise: I refer to the Midland Junction Workshops.

I have listened to the explanations—if they can be called that—given by the Minister for Railways concerning the Midland Junction Workshops. I have read closely

the Press reports on the subject issued by the Minister, and I admit that I fail to see any genuine reason for what has been done other than the fact that the security of the Minister himself, and that of the Government, depends on pandering to vested interests which would completely throttle, and would love to see disappear, the Midland Junction Workshops.

The Leader of the Opposition highlighted several aspects of the Government's failure; and he has miraculously been able to select some of the most salient ones from innumerable weaknesses and attempts at political dishonesty, and to mould an amendment which expresses the opinion of the people of Western Australia generally.

This Government has been dishonest from the beginning. It will be completely untrustworthy to the end, whenever that might be—and it might not be so far away as people are inclined to think. As the last election was held in March, 1959, they assume the next election will be held early in 1962. That may or may not be. However, whenever the next election takes place, I feel confident in forecasting that the workers, who have been hit by this Government, will remember their wounds; they will remember that they have been hit in their pockets by this Government. They will not be able to hit the Government in the place where they have been hit—in their pockets—but they will hit the Government where it hurts most, and that is through the ballot boxes.

MR. HALL (Albany—on amendment) [9.35]: One does not have to wonder why the amendment was moved when one looks at the first paragraph—

We wish to protest strongly against the failure of the Government to honour the promise given by the Attorney-General to Parliament last year to issue a fresh proclamation under the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act . . .

That is one subject. The other subject is as follows:—

. . . and against the Government's failure to foreshadow legislation to keep prices of essential commodities under reasonable restraint.

Without touching on the other paragraphs of the amendment, if one looks at it from the point of view of the majority of the people that this electoral Act affects, and then looks at the other part of the paragraph—the cost of living and its effect on the multitude, or mass, of the people—one cannot help but feel how the two are closely allied. The Leader of the Opposition, in framing it, probably thought on similar lines; because had the gerrymandering Bill passed through this House, as it was intended it should do, the workers of this State would have had no redress whatever, I feel confident in saying, for something like ten years. It would have had the effect of annulling their votes and

would have deprived the people of their rightful say in unseating a Government that was dishonouring its promise.

I do not think any member on this side of the House will dispute the fact that the Attorney-General has not carried out his promise. As a member who has been closely associated with his boundaries, I begin to wonder if the Attorney-General is not aging, in trying to allocate some of his duties to the Albany electorate. The passage of the gerrymandering Bill would have the effect of putting an extra 4,000 on to my electorate. That would be a victory for him if I retained the seat, for I would have to do the work in that area that he is now doing. He would have unloaded his responsibilities on to whoever was elected for Albany. I congratulate him on his motive! When I get to his age, I hope I will also be able to unload my responsibilities in order that I may carry on for a few more years.

I would refer to an article in the *Western Sun*. Admittedly it is a Labor paper, but it gives a clear statement on the electoral argument which, it says, may end in court. I hope it will not go that far; but from the sound of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, it seems to be heading that way. I think that whatever Government comes into office on the next occasion would be up in arms immediately if members could not get their salaries. It would therefore pay the Government to have a look at that subject in the interests of all.

The Premier, in addressing a Liberal Party rally at Merredin recently, was stated to have lamented his Government's inability to obtain the constitutional majority in the Assembly necessary to pass his gerrymandering amendments to the State Electoral Act last year. "But," continued Mr. Brand, "the Government will find a means of doing this." Well, they are certainly digging for gravel now. They have been stalling off on this electoral Act and they will not bring it before the House. Why, I do not know. Probably they are waiting for one defaulter on this side of the House who will give them a constitutional majority. They had the opportunity before, but left the chap sitting on the fence too long and forgot about him. The Attorney-General accepted all this last year. The Government failed to pass the gerrymandering Bill and the Act stands in its original form. So does the report of the electoral officer, and the eight months allowed the Government for action under the Act. The Leader of the Opposition went on—

The cancellation of the Hawke Government's proclamation legally gave the Government three months' grace to advise the State Electoral Officer to redistribute in terms of the amended Electoral Act, if the Act could be amended.

To recall Mr. Watts's own words in Parliament last year, when he was supporting the revocation of the Hawke proclamation:

The present statute will remain and the onus will be placed on the Government to issue a fresh proclamation to ensure that the law is carried into effect.

Well, that promise has not been honoured. As I have said before, the Leader of the Opposition must have been particularly perturbed by the fact that the masses would probably be robbed of their rights, if this gerrymandering Bill had ever got through; and the Government is still awaiting an opportunity to get this Bill passed, which would give it power for ten years and would necessitate some force to get it out. In view of the sackings that have taken place in the Public Works Department, and the possibility that the railways will be similarly affected, I am sure that the people of this State must be alarmed.

The member for Harvey mentioned, a few minutes ago, that the member for Kalgoorlie favoured price control. Perhaps price control in a modified form would not be such a bad idea until stability has been reached in the cost of living. However, in order to halt inflation, I think we should aim at steadying prices, and aim particularly at the bureau of standards, so that any article purchased would have the durability and life according to its worth. Spending power would be lessened. Today we are obliged to purchase an inferior article, and it is not long before we have to replace it. This applies to the great majority of people, and particularly to schoolchildren; we buy a pair of shoes and it is not many days before we find the soles completely worn.

I see the Minister for Fisheries is smiling to himself. A similar situation may affect fishermen's nets, and he may be receiving complaints concerning inferior quality. Farmers may also be affected: where we used to get first-class galvanised wire, we find today that it is poorly painted; corrosion sets up, and we find the farmer is having trouble.

Mr. Brand: Will price fixing solve that?

Mr. HALL: If we had a bureau of standards and a consumers' protection organisation, such as operates successfully in England, it would be to the advantage of the honest employer, or factory manager, or owner, in just the same way as it would be to the benefit of the purchaser. The honest manufacturer would be quite happy to be in it, and by those two methods we could make drastic attempts to reduce prices. The bureau of standards would insist on the quality of the goods being high, and the consumers' protection organisation would approve of only those lines which it thought should be approved. If that were done we would be getting

somewhere in the matter of slashing prices. It is absolutely essential. The other way of bringing prices back to the field—

Mr. Nalder: What about the price of superphosphate?

Mr. HALL: The Minister can work that out; his Government should handle that. I wish to mention productivity. We quite often hear the word "productivity" mentioned, but it does not mean the production of a factory; it means the productivity of an individual worker, wherever he may be, whether he works in a factory or in the commercial world. When he produces he should get a share of his productivity. With the present adjustment of the basic wage, the "C" series index, and the retail prices of goods, the working man cannot get an equal balance and cannot get the proper share of his productivity.

In some schemes, such as a share and profit scheme, we find that the productivity of the individual worker is increased because he is getting a direct share in the results of his own production. By the three methods I have mentioned I feel sure the Government could reduce prices.

Mr. Brand: Do you or your party believe in incentive payments?

Mr. HALL: Incentive payments are numerous; there are many forms of incentives—in fact there are 150 different forms of incentives. There is a book on this subject which can be purchased at the University for 3s. If the Premier read it, it would give him all the information he wants about every different incentive scheme.

Mr. Brand: But do you believe in it?

Mr. HALL: One form of incentive is where a man attends for work regularly without being late.

Mr. Brand: But do you believe in it as a principle?

Mr. HALL: The principle of incentives is sound, provided there is a balance; but unfortunately a rate which is applicable to the amount of work done is not always struck. It is up to the particular trade union concerned to decide whether or not it wants an incentive payment, and it is up to the courts or the boards of reference to give a decision on the matter. Sometimes those decisions are just, but sometimes they are not. However, all incentives will increase productivity.

Mr. Brand: But does your party believe in the principle of incentive payments?

Mr. HALL: Some unions believe in them and some do not; it is a matter for adjustment between the organisations involved and the people employed in the various industries.

Mr. Brand: But what about your party?

Mr. HALL: The party as a whole is not in favour of it, but we leave it to the individual worker and the unions to work out

for themselves; some like it and others do not. We leave it to the industrial workers because they know their own conditions much better than any member of Parliament knows them.

Mr. Hawke: The Premier's salary would come down with a thump if he were paid by results.

Mr. Brand: Yours would come down to nothing.

Mr. HALL: I was not surprised when the Leader of the Opposition moved his amendment. On the 2nd August, 1960, the following article appeared in *The West Australian*—

Grocery and General Merchants Ltd. discloses a consolidated net profit of £217,868 for the year ended March 31 after providing £131,000 for tax.

The tax provision is the first since 1951 because of heavy losses incurred in 1952 and 1953.

The result follows successive profits of £206,255 (1956-57) £151,372 (1957-58) and £159,508 (1958-59).

Compared with the £159,508 earned last year, the latest profit before tax is more than doubled at £348,868.

In the *Sunday Times* there is an article headed, "C Index—that shocker—is outdated." I'll say it is! As a matter of fact Albany is not taken into account in computing the "C" series index, even though the population is over 12,000 people. I wonder why?

Mr. Roberts: Are you sure of that?

Mr. HALL: I am, and I will prove it to the honourable member in a minute, because I have information from the Bureau of Statistics in regard to it. I shall not read the whole of the letter because it might take up too much time, but we find at Albany that when the freight and handling charges are added to the price of an article, the middleman's profit also comes into it. I do not know where we are going with the prices of all these commodities. One which has been mentioned many times by some people is beer. A bottle of beer costs 4s. in Albany and over the counter a publican would get six glasses out of each bottle for that 4s. Yet six glasses of draught beer cost 6s. I do not know who is getting the cop; but if I could not put keg beer on the counter cheaper than I could put bottled beer, I would jump in the creek.

Everybody seems to credit the railways with these added costs; but when we get down to facts and figures we realise that it is not the railways which are at fault. I think the Minister for Railways would agree with that. If the railways could get that much profit out of handling a bottle of beer and delivering it down the track, the department would be only

too happy. The trouble is that all these extras are added on to the price of commodities—groceries, and so on. A tractor ordered from Albany through Perth and shipped through that port is £100 dearer than if it is ordered direct from the firm in the Eastern States and delivered at Albany. That is because the order is sent direct to the Eastern States, and the tractor is landed at the port instead of the order being sent through the metropolitan area.

There are firms which order through the metropolitan area—firms of good repute—but the price is fixed in the metropolitan area and the people of Albany have to pay that price, even though the article may be shipped from the Eastern States direct to the port of Albany. I wonder how long the people down there will tolerate this sort of thing. It is a wonder they have not marched on the member for the district; I hope I will not be there when they do.

In reply to the question asked me by the member for Bunbury, I should like to say that the same question was raised with me by other people and I thought I had better do something about it. I contacted the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, and Mr. R. J. Little wrote to me as follows:—

In reply to your letter of 28th June, 1960. Before discussing retail prices statistics insofar as they relate specifically to Albany I should like to refer briefly to the term, "cost of living". This expression has been extensively misused by the public and by the Press and even by responsible officials. As far as I am aware no authority in Australia has ascertained a "cost of living" as such in recent years. In 1920 the Piddington Royal Commission on the basic wage made a comprehensive inquiry throughout the Commonwealth in order to measure the average cost of living in each of the capital cities but I do not know of any similar authoritative inquiry since then. The statisticians of Australia do not know what amount is required to meet any "cost of living" which, of course, varies greatly between individuals and households owing to the several standards of living involved. The statisticians have never ascertained any absolute cost of living, nor indeed have wage tribunals, although the results of the 1920 Royal Commission were related to the basic wage determination at the time.

I think I had better skip a little of this because I must have impressed the member for Bunbury on certain points up to this stage.

Mr. W. Hegney: If you have done that you have done a wonderful job.

Mr. HALL: Further on the letter goes on to state—

It should be noted that only in the metropolitan area, Kalgoorlie, Boulder, Northam, Bunbury, Geraldton and Collie, is there the comprehensive collection required for the computation of a C series index.

Mr. Roberts: All the important places.

Mr. HALL: I ask you! Bunbury and Albany are neck and neck as regards population. I think we might be slightly in front at the moment. How could anyone compute the cost of living in the southern part of the State, which is probably the wealthiest and most progressive part, without including Albany? The letter goes on—

In addition to the C series a special collection confined to prices of food and groceries, is undertaken in some 30 towns, including Albany.

Further on he states—

As all information is collected under the secrecy provisions of the Census and Statistics Act I am not permitted to make known the names of any informants supplying returns nor disclose the contents of any individual returns.

Apparently everything is taken at face value, and there is no actual check on the prices. The people concerned just state that that is the price and it is taken for granted. Tonight in the *Daily News* we see that there is to be a new cost-of-living basis.

The SPEAKER: Order! Can the honourable member relate these remarks on the cost of living to the amendment before the Chair?

Mr. HALL: I think so.

The SPEAKER: I would like to hear it.

Mr. HALL: The motion mentions keeping prices of essential commodities under reasonable restraint; and I think I have been hammering that particular aspect. I started off by telling members how inflation had affected the cost of living; I quoted the letter from the Bureau of Census and Statistics; and now I am talking of the effect of this new cost-of-living basis. I think I have covered that point in the time allowed.

The next point I wish to discuss is the future of the railway workshops at Midland Junction. Today I asked the Minister for Railways several questions appertaining to road buses. I asked these questions because I realised that I would probably have an opportunity of discussing the answers during the Address-in-Reply debate. I was a little disappointed that I did not get the replies I wanted. I think the time I allowed the Minister was reasonable, although perhaps not lengthy enough for him to get all the details. The questions were phoned to him at about 2 o'clock,

although his office may not have been able to pass them on to him. However, he should be aware of some of the answers. The first question I asked was—

When is it anticipated that new road buses will be introduced from Perth to Albany?

The second question was—

What will be the cost of each bus when placed on this road service?

The Minister must have had some idea of the answers to those questions; but, perhaps to give a clearer picture, he may be prepared to wait until tomorrow. Therefore, I have placed the questions on the notice paper in the hope that he will give a more comprehensive answer then.

Mr. May: I am sure he will!

Mr. HALL: I should now like to discuss that portion of the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition which deals with the construction of two new Westland trains by private enterprise. The Midland Junction Workshops might not be all that the Minister would desire, but by a little trimming here and there I feel sure he could have put them into a position where they would have been able to carry on with the work that their tradesmen are capable of doing. I do not think any one of us has any doubts about the ability of the workmen there, or about the quality of the work turned out by the workshops. One has only to look at the boys who have been trained there and whom we are going to lose—or at least a certain proportion of them will be lost to the State even though they served their apprenticeship here.

Whatever Government is in power will be the loser, because obviously a great deal of time and money has been spent on those men training in their particular work. When they migrate to the Eastern States to follow their trades, they will be lost to the State. That will be the effect of the pruning down of the workshops. The same applies in all industries, as the Leader of the Opposition mentioned. Once we start to slow something down, and machines become idle and momentum is lost, the machinery starts to deteriorate, and the necessary work force will not be available to carry out any of the work which might be required if contracts are obtained. This will be so because the trained personnel will be lost to the State. We will be in much the same position as we are with some of our footballers: they get to their peak and then they go to the Eastern States; the Eastern States gets the cream. So it is very easy to see that we are probably following the same policy. We are educating them to the high standard of efficiency they attain, and the cream of them then goes to the Eastern States.

In the *Sunday Times* of the 27th March, 1960, the Minister is reported to have said that there will be no retrenchments in the

Midland Junction Workshops, and that there will be sufficient work to keep them occupied until the end of 1960. But what will happen at the beginning of 1961? The men must be distraught with fear, and quite uncertain as to what their future is likely to be. This must also be the case with people who conduct businesses in Midland Junction.

I believe these people have had protest meetings. It is obvious therefore that dissension is running riot through the railways; and not only through one section of the railways. It is being picked up all along the track and the workers are feeling most frustrated. There was a deputation to the Minister; and we have the heading in the paper, "Minister says No on Trains". The Government has apparently made up its mind to carry out its policy irrespective of results.

Mr. Graham: To "court" disaster.

Mr. HALL: The other matter to which I wish to refer is the abolition of the Public Works Department day-labour construction organisation. As I said last night, when public works are closed down we immediately dislocate a system which provides the Government with its work force, and which puts its policy into motion. This unemployment slack must be taken up if it is to give any stability at all to commerce in the various towns. If we do not take up this slack which is created, we will get all the headaches imaginable. We will find that men who should be employed in the Public Works, in the drainage and sewerage sections, are out of work because of the Public Works force being reduced. We will find that even though the engineers may want to employ these men they will be in the position of being tied to the stringent policy of the Government and, as a result, will continue to be unemployed. This of course means frustration among the families, and I am afraid it will have its effect on commerce and industry.

The last paragraph of the amendment deals with the action of the Water Supply Department. As I am not a metropolitan member, this has not had any adverse effect on me or on my constituents.

Mr. Graham: It has on the workers of East Perth.

Mr. HALL: That is so, and I am sorry for the people who have to meet it. It comes back on the worker all the time; it is he who has to meet these increased costs.

Mr. Graham: This Government would peg his wages if they had a chance.

Mr. HALL: It may even try to do that. I think it aimed at that. Mr. Menzies talked about freezing wages.

Mr. Graham: He dragged the Commonwealth Arbitration Court into it.

Mr. HALL: If this amendment does not get through I am sure that the effects of the Government's policy will also be felt in the country areas. I shudder to think what effect it will have on the electors of Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

On motion by Mr. Roberts, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, the 4th August, 1960

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

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

President's Ruling.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND : I would like your ruling, Mr. President. Under Standing Orders we should read one question at a time but I would like to know whether, with your kind permission, I could read them one after the other.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think it is strictly in conformity with Standing Orders, but I have allowed several notices of questions to be read one after the other so far. However, I would not like it to be made a practice.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

Transport of Radioactive Land Rover

- The Hon. R. THOMPSON asked the Minister for Mines:
 - Did the State Shipping Service transport to Fremantle in 1953, a Land Rover recovery truck No. 15371, ex Monte Bello Islands?
 - Was the State Shipping Service notified that this vehicle could be radioactive?
 - If the answer to No. (2) is "Yes," were any precautions taken to protect seamen and waterside workers against radiation in the transportation of this vehicle?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- The State Shipping Service advised that there is no record of a Land Rover being shipped ex Monte Bello Islands to Fremantle in 1953.
- See No. (1).
- See No. (1).

- This question was postponed.

CROWN LAND

Release in South-West and Esperance

- The Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister advise the House the separate districts and relative acreages of Crown Land released by the Government for selection under conditional purchase, as stated in the Governor's Speech to aggregate 1,500,000 acres in the South-West Land Division and the Esperance District?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

District.	Acreage Released for Selection.
Avon	65,968
Canning	4
Esperance	35,338
Fitzgerald	20,872
Hay	3,571
Jilbadji	56,504
Kent	17,562
Kojonup	29,174
Leake	1,638
Melbourne	121,237
Murray	1,692
Nelson	23,872
Neridup	420,125
Ninghan	51,643
Oldfield	79,249
Plantagenet	67,973
Roe	102,755
Sussex	13,381
Swan	48,394
Victoria	275,771
Wellington	8,640
Williams	61,287
Yilgarn	42,639
Total	1,549,289