

The Agriculture Protection Board knows what is required to run its department so it would have no difficulty in assessing the fraction of a cent per acre which is required to cover that cost. If this proposal were adopted farmers would be able to budget from year to year, because they would know what tax is required of them.

Shire councils could also adopt the principle of rating on an acreage basis in lieu of the system of unimproved capital value. This would be fairer to all concerned than is the present method; and perhaps special rebates could be allowed for new settlers.

THE HON. S. T. J. THOMPSON (Lower Central) [3.52 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. W. F. Willesee (Leader of the Opposition).

House adjourned at 3.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, the 31st July, 1969

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 p.m.

The **SPEAKER** (Mr. Guthrie) took the Chair.

PROCLAMATION

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. L. P. Hawley) read the Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor (Major-General Sir Douglas Anthony Kendrew, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.) summoning the second session of the Twenty-sixth Parliament.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR

The Speaker and members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber; and, having heard His Excellency the Governor (Major-General Sir Douglas Anthony Kendrew, K.C.M.G., C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.) deliver the opening speech (*vide* Council report *ante*), returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber.

WOOL EXPORTERS ROYAL COMMISSION

Tabling of Report

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Acting Premier) [3.35 p.m.]: I wish to table the report of the Royal Commission into all aspects of the trading activities of Wool Exporters Pty. Ltd. and associated companies and into the conduct of individuals and companies in certain respects and into certain complaints.

I wish to say that copies of this report may be obtained by members upon application to the Premier's Department and they are also available to the general public at \$3 per copy through the Parliamentary Papers Office in the old Treasury Building.

The report was tabled.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) [3.37 p.m.]: In calling for questions without notice I must observe that, owing to a delay in another place, we are somewhat behind time and I can allow only a few questions.

WEEBO STONES

Tabling of Report

1. **Mr. GRAHAM**, without notice, asked the Acting Premier:

- (1) Has the Government yet received the report of the committee appointed to investigate matters relating to the Weebo stones area?
- (2) If so, will he lay a copy of the report on the Table of the House, and when?

Mr. NALDER replied:

- (1) and (2) The report is in the hands of the Government and consideration is being given to it. When a decision has been reached, the report will be laid on the Table of the House.

DROUGHT CONDITIONS

Government Action

2. **Mr. YOUNG**, without notice, asked the Acting Premier:

Is the Government aware of the rapidly deteriorating condition of pastures and crops due to insufficient rainfall in certain agricultural areas; and, if so, what action is being taken in this matter?

Mr. NALDER replied:

I hope the depression that is approaching the State will bring the necessary rain. However, I want to report that the Farmers' Union made some information available to me last Friday and, as a result, I have requested that reports from every office of the Department of Agriculture in the South-West Land Division be made available immediately. I have also set up a committee of officers from the Department of Agriculture to process these reports.

The person in charge is the Assistant Director of Agriculture (Mr. Burvill). Those reports will be processed as soon as they become available and will, we hope, be placed before Cabinet at the first opportunity.

IRON ORE LEASES

Shire Rating

3. Mr. BICKERTON, without notice, asked the Minister for the North-West:

- (1) Has the committee which was formed to make recommendations regarding the rating of iron ore leases reached its conclusions and, if so, what are they?
- (2) When will the shire rating of iron ore leases commence?
- (3) Will the rating be retrospective to the time the leases were granted and, if not, why not?

Mr. COURT replied:

I thank the member for Pilbara for indicating to my office the nature of his question. The answers are—

- (1) No; but the recommendations are expected to come in very soon.
- (2) and (3) It is anticipated that the committee will deal with this particular matter and make recommendations. In the meantime I understand that two of the shire councils have accepted *ex gratia* payments in lieu of rates up to this juncture.

HOME BUILDING FINANCE

Reduction of Interest Rate

4. Mr. CASH, without notice, asked the Minister for Housing:

In view of the need to keep the cost of homes and home finance as low as possible, what can be done in regard to the cost of moneys allocated to building societies under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement to help offset the recent increase in the long-term bond rate?

Mr. O'NEIL replied:

As members will be aware, an announcement was made this week that some \$4,000,000 from the home builders' account will be made available to home building societies, and, concurrently with that announcement, it was stated that the interest rate on the loan would be 6½ per cent., ¾ per cent. higher than the interest rate on the funds made available in the previous financial year, because of the two increases in the long-term bond rate in the preceding year; one of .15 per cent. in September, and the other, in this financial year, of .8 per cent.

I have had occasion to examine the ultimate cost of finance made available to home builders, because of these two adjustments, and

I am pleased to be able to report that I have announced this morning that the State Housing Commission will reduce the interest rate from the previously announced 6½ per cent. to 6 per cent.

DAIRY INDUSTRY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Leave to Introduce

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Acting Premier) [3.45 p.m.]: In order to preserve the privilege of the House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice—

For leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Dairy Industry Act, 1922-53.

Question put and passed; leave granted.

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr. Nalder (Acting Premier), and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

Distribution of Copies

THE SPEAKER (Mr. Guthrie) [3.46 p.m.]: Accompanied by members of this Chamber, I attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of greater accuracy, I have caused printed copies of the Speech to be distributed amongst members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: FIRST DAY

Motion

MR. McPHARLIN (Mt. Marshall) [3.47 p.m.]: I move—

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech be agreed to:—

May it please Your Excellency: We the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I am deeply conscious of the honour given me, by the generous invitation of Cabinet, to move this motion for the Address-in-Reply—a procedure which is very deeply rooted in our parliamentary tradition—on this occasion, the second session of the twenty-sixth Parliament of Western Australia. I, too, share with His Excellency the pleasure we experienced when we recently welcomed, on their first official visit to this State, the first Western Australian to be elevated to the high and distinguished office of Governor-General, His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir Paul Hasluck and Her Excellency Lady Hasluck.

I, too, share with His Excellency the pleasure felt by the people of Western Australia when it was learned that Her Majesty the Queen had conferred on the Premier of this State the honour of Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George.

Our State has continued to expand at a rapid rate. A very significant feature of our expansion is the fact that Western Australia's population growth is more than double the average rate for the rest of Australia. This increase has been augmented to a very large degree by the migration of skilled and semi-skilled labour; and yet our unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the Commonwealth.

Again, we have seen remarkable progress in primary and industrial development in Western Australia. These industries continue to expand quite dramatically and their worth to the nation is increasing year by year.

His Excellency said: "Transactions on the Consolidated Revenue Fund during the last financial year resulted in a deficit of \$1,056,000." Having broken free from the bonds that previously tied us to the Grants Commission, we began the financial year of 1968 as a non-claimant State with a surplus of \$829,000 and now face the next financial year, having absorbed that surplus together with a deficit of \$1,056,000. Having accepted the responsibility of determining our own destiny in the firm belief that we can expect the tremendous expansion which has taken place in Western Australia over the last few years to continue, the present position in which we find ourselves must be very closely watched by the Government.

The upward pressures exerted by national wage decisions, resulting in variations in awards, must inevitably increase costs. In almost every occupation pressures are being applied for increases in salaries and wages.

The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission is aware that in these changing times it is expected that awards may be sought which cover new ground, and it must attempt to balance the maintenance of reasonable wages against all other factors in the economy, and, in the final result, endeavour to gauge the capacity of the economy to pay.

The impact of the cost-plus regime is felt very forcibly by those engaged in primary industries and, in particular, by those in primary industries which depend mainly on world markets for the sale of their products. The world surplus of wheat, together with our own record harvest, has already been reflected in our economy, in that our silos are full; therefore not requiring the railways to haul the grain, and resulting in a very marked reduction in railway revenue.

The recent suggestions for price reduction under the International Grains Agreement does not promote confidence in the

future of the industry; and, when it is recognised that wheat is still one of our greatest income-producing commodities, I repeat that this situation must be very closely watched.

Those primary industries which are in the main dependent on world markets for the sale of their products are in a defenceless position. When a world surplus of these products becomes evident; when the demand for these products in traditional markets eases; and when these countries become self-supporting in their own right, the economy of not only Western Australia but the whole of the continent must receive a very severe setback which will be felt throughout all sections of the community of Australia.

The glitter and glamour attached to the tremendous and spectacular development of our mineral fields must not be allowed to blind us to the contributions of those industries which have played their part in the building up of our great State. There is evidence that business leaders in the metropolitan area are giving greater study to agricultural economics, and appear to be willing to adopt a better policy of co-operation and tolerance than ever before.

The small or low income farmers are facing very difficult times, but many of these people, because of their intense love of the land, and because farming is a way of life they cherish, are quite prepared to accept a relatively low monetary reward for their labour—but a reward which at least provides their families with a standard of living comparable with the rest.

The harsh facts of our modern economic life are that rising costs, which both State and Federal Governments have extreme difficulty in controlling, coupled with static or even falling prices for farm products, brought about by many complex factors quite beyond the control of the Governments, have created a situation in which farming the land does not produce the financial reward it once did. I am confident that both State and Federal Governments, with the co-operation of business leaders, will not neglect to give consideration to some realistic forms of assistance and protection to these people to allow them to continue to live within the industry to which they have given so much.

With the continued improvement of road systems in all parts of the State; with the standard gauge railway through to the Eastern States; and with the containerisation of goods entering and leaving Fremantle, it could reasonably be expected that some relief would be given to transport costs, not only on the export to, and import of products from, countries overseas, but on both interstate and intrastate as well; but it appears that, owing to those reasons to which I referred earlier, this is not going to be the case.

The costs involved in transport are met by all sections of the community, but it is the larger exporting industries which bear

the greatest burden and feel the greatest impact. I suggest to the Government that serious consideration be given towards offering some relief from the high transport costs, particularly to those living in distant places. Large amounts of overseas capital are being attracted for investment. It can be expected that revenue to the Government by way of royalties will greatly help to balance the Budget and offer some relief to the ever-increasing demands being made on the Treasury. Benefits, although perhaps intangible, must eventually flow to all sections of the community.

Many other important developments are creating demands for labour and materials. The rapid growth brings problems in supplying amenities and services; the building industry is employed in building a record number of houses and flats; water supply extensions in both metropolitan and country areas continue; a record number of classrooms has been built to cater for the large increase of enrolments in Government schools; and hospital services are being expanded to meet ever-increasing demands.

All this, together with the expansion of industries, makes Western Australia a very large purchaser of goods manufactured in the Eastern States. The Government is to be commended for the encouragement it gives to those who seek to establish manufacturing industries in an earnest endeavour to offset to a greater degree this imbalance between us and the Eastern States.

The development of new townships in the northern part is in conformity with the Government's policy of decentralisation; the establishment of these towns is assisting the distribution of our population. His Excellency has referred to the Government's legislative programme. In this is included amendments to land tax legislation to provide additional relief to home owners, and provision for the setting up of our own State taxation department for the collection of land tax. I suggest to the Government that a review be made of some forms of State taxation with a view to spreading these taxes over all sections of the community, and not have the burden placed unfairly upon any one section. This policy would be acceptable to all concerned.

Also, I suggest to the Government that in the drawing up of this year's Budget, consideration be given to a reduction of the rate applied in the assessment of probate duties. Owing to the higher values of land and property, these duties are in many cases a very serious embarrassment to the remaining next-of-kin, and some measure of relief is warranted.

Owing to a large surplus of wheat in Australia, and indeed the world, and on the recommendation of the industry leaders, the Government is to introduce a Bill to enable a wheat quota plan to operate to provide a form of control of deliveries in our State.

In conclusion, I would like to express my confidence that the expansion of the industries of our State, as initiated by the Government, will continue in the year ahead and I feel sure that the Government will introduce whatever legislation may be necessary to ensure contentment for our population, to provide opportunities for success for people—particularly for our young people—with courage and initiative, so that our great State can go forward to greater progress to the satisfaction of all.

MR. STEWART (Merredin-Yilgarn) [3.56 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Graham (Deputy Leader of the Opposition).

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. NALDER (Katanning—Acting Premier) [3.57 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 5th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.58 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 5th August, 1969

The **PRESIDENT** (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (3): ON NOTICE

JUVENILE OFFENDERS

Rehabilitation and Segregation in Gaols

1. The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE, pursuant to notice, asked the Minister for Child Welfare:

- (1) What specific institutions are now available for juvenile offenders for their rehabilitation after commitment by the court?
- (2) Are there any centres where guiding and training are carried out so that such people can obtain assistance towards rehabilitation?
- (3) Are juvenile offenders housed in gaols, segregated from adult inmates?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) For boys 13 to 18 years of age following assessment of rehabilitation needs at Longmore—
 - (i) Riverbank—Maximum security institution. Population 33. In process of expansion to 43.
 - (ii) Hillston—An open institution. Population 60. To be extended to 90.