

area. In a few years this will reach serious proportions and I would like to make a few suggestions which, however, may not be altogether original. Nevertheless I think they are good ones. Firstly, I would like to see adopted a practice which is followed in England, that of putting Zebra pedestrian crossings. The crossings we have at present are difficult to see and are a danger to the public, whereas the zebra crossings are in big, broad, black and white lines, and they would be a vast improvement. I would like to see the intersections studded with reflectors for night driving. This would be a great help. The question of drunken driving should also be gone into very seriously and heavier penalties should be imposed. I believe that any man who gets into a car while he is drunk is a potential murderer.

Hon. L. A. Logan: The figures do not prove that.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER: Another great problem concerning the traffic in Perth is that of parking and I would suggest that Heirisson Island be turned into a car park. If the area were surfaced with bitumen, we could quite easily park 6,000 cars there and a continuous taxi service could be run from the car park to Perth. That would take a number of cars off the street and would help the parking problem.

There is a further matter which has disturbed me quite a bit and which I feel sure will draw an interjection from my good friend who last interjected, and that is the question of motorcycles. I think it is a risk to give anyone under the age of 21 a licence to drive a motorcycle, particularly in the metropolitan area. If a boy of 17 applied for a licence for a revolver he would not get it. Are not motorcycles equally dangerous? Figures will prove that they are. If licences were issued only to men of 21 years of age and over in the metropolitan area, it would do a great deal towards lessening the accident rate. I do not want to keep the House any longer. I would like to thank members for giving me such a good hearing. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. Murray, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

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

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 25th August.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 19th August, 1953.

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

### ORDER AND PROCEDURE.

*Remarks by Mr. Speaker.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Before proceeding with the routine business of the House, I have a few remarks to make to members. I have noticed during the last few sittings a growing laxity of decorum on both sides of the House and behind the Speaker's Chair. Last night, in particular, there was a great deal of over-loud conversation on both sides of the House—so much so

that the "Hansard" reporters found it very difficult to hear the respective speakers. Members will realise that these reporters have a difficult enough job under the most favourable conditions, and so I ask members to be a bit co-operative in this respect and to give these people all the chances that are possible to report the various speakers.

Another phase which has been brought to my notice is this; that if members desire to read the daily paper in this Chamber, I think they could use a lot more discretion. The papers are delivered far in advance of the time that we used to get them, so that members are now able to get the gist of what is contained in the paper before coming into the House. If they must read the paper whilst in the Chamber, I would like them to use more discretion in so doing. I do not want to adopt the role of one delivering a homily to members. I would intensely hate having to adopt the role of a martinet, so I would ask members to appreciate the fact that a sense of decorum should prevail in this Chamber, and that if they will co-operate and realise that fact, the position will rapidly improve. I would not like it to be said that the conduct of members in this House had deteriorated while it was under my control.

#### **BILL—COLLIE CLUB (PRIVATE).**

##### *Petition Presented.*

Mr. May presented a petition from the agents for the Collie Club praying for leave to bring in a private Bill for "An Act to resolve certain difficulties concerning the legal position of The Collie Club Limited, a Company duly registered under the Companies Act, 1893, and to vest the assets of the Company in an Association to be formed and registered under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1895-1947, and for other purposes arising out of such difficulties and incidental to such vesting."

Petition received and read.

In accordance with the prayer of the petition, leave given to introduce a Bill.

Bill introduced and read a first time.

##### *Referred to Select Committee.*

Bill referred to a Select Committee consisting of Mr. Heal, Mr. Manning, Mr. Nalder, Mr. Sewell, and Mr. May (mover) with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned and to report on Tuesday, the 8th September.

#### **QUESTIONS.**

##### **ELECTORAL.**

##### *As to Adjustment of District Quotas.*

Mr. BOVELL asked the Premier:

(1) Has the Chief Electoral Officer reported to the Minister concerned that from the state of the rolls made up for

the triennial election held on the 14th February, 1953, not less than five electoral districts fall short of, or exceed by 20 per cent., the quota as ascertained for such districts, provided for in the Electoral Districts Act of 1947?

(2) If so, what action has been taken by the Government to comply with the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) This matter is receiving consideration.

#### **EDUCATION.**

##### *(a) As to Closing of Newcastle-st. Infants' School.*

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Education:

As the parents of children attending the Newcastle-st. Infants' School are concerned about a report that the school is to be closed and the rooms made available to the Junior Technical School, can he say—

(1) Has the closure of the Newcastle-st. Infants' School been considered?

(2) If closure is contemplated, when will this take place?

(3) Is accommodation for the children concerned available at neighbouring schools, and if so, at which?

The MINISTER replied:

(1), (2) and (3) The matter is still under consideration.

##### *(b) As to School for East Maylands.*

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware of the growing need for a school on the site to be known as the East Maylands School?

(2) If so, when is it anticipated that work will commence on the erection of this school?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. The work is included in the 1953-54 building programme.

(2) This depends on the availability of further loan funds.

##### *(c) As to Wembley School, Additions.*

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Education:

In view of the fact that Wembley children have either a long walk to Floreat Park School, or must travel by bus to West Leederville School, will he consider increasing the size of the Wembley School by building more classrooms, and by making the school a higher grade than at present?

The MINISTER replied:

The question of adding classrooms to the Wembley School has been considered, but in view of the small playground it has been decided against this move.

(d) *As to Expenditure on School Buildings.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Treasurer:

(1) What was the total expenditure on school buildings for the year ended the 30th June, 1953?

(2) Of the total expenditure, how much was in respect of works authorised prior to the 14th February, 1953?

(3) Of the total expenditure, how much was in respect of the purchase of "Bristol" pre-fabricated units actually erected during the year?

(4) Of the total expenditure, how much was in respect of the costs of erecting the "Bristol" units referred to in (3)?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) Loan, £1,697,147; revenue, £211,483; total, £1,908,630.

(2) Loan, £1,677,843; revenue, £167,199 (approximately); total £1,845,042.

(3) £325,675 (estimate).

(4) £208,321 (estimate).

#### WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) *As to North Tammin Extension.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What was the amount approved for the purpose of effecting improvements and renovations to the North Tammin Goldfields Water Supply extension?

(2) The amount expended to date and the nature of the work done?

(3) Is it a fact that no further work on this extension is to be undertaken during the current financial year?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Approvals—1950, £3,000 (to relay one mile of main). 1951, £14,000 (general reconditioning of the existing extension). 1951, £1,400 (for a branch to be provided on completion of reconditioning of the extension).

(2) Expenditure to date—1950, £2,256 (replacing 70 chains of 3in. with 4in. pipe). 1951, £1,625 (partial enlargement of the extension).

Shortage of steel plate, followed by limitation of funds and urgency of higher priority works—such as improvement of main Goldfields Water Supply conduit, pumping stations, etc.—has precluded further work to date.

(3) No financial provision has been possible this year so far, but funds for the purpose are being sought.

(b) *As to Chandler Pipeline.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Is it intended to pull up the water supply pipeline to Chandler?

(2) What was the reason for the non-reply to my telegram of the 28th July concerning this matter?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) This information was supplied by the Under Secretary for Works in his letter of the 6th August in reply to the telegram referred to.

#### HOSPITALS.

(a) *As to Benefit Fund Allowance and Charges.*

Mr. CORNELL asked the Minister for Health:

(1) Is he aware that the Hospitals Benefit Fund of W.A. has recently increased the amount of benefits payable to its contributors, the first increase from 9s. per day to 10s. for the period from the 1st July to 22nd, and the second increase of 10s. to 12s. per day operative from the 23rd July?

(2) Is he aware that following each increase the Department of Public Health has instructed hospital boards to increase their minimum fee rate from 21s. to 24s. per day?

(3) Has this increase in the fee rate received his approval, and does he consider the increase to be justified having in mind that, with extras, the amount of benefit received by contributors often does not meet in full hospital expenses?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) Yes.

(3) Yes. Where the fund benefit is less than 12s. per day, consideration will be given to reducing the minimum charge.

(b) *As to Regional Building, Albany.*

Mr. HILL asked the Minister for Health:

What action has the Government taken to honour the Labour Party's pre-election promise for an immediate start on the regional hospital at Albany?

The MINISTER replied:

There is no knowledge of any promise to make an immediate start on the proposed regional hospital at Albany.

#### TRANSPORT.

(a) *As to Western Australian Board, Report.*

Mr. LAPHAM asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) As the value of the Western Australian Transport Board's report diminishes with the abnormal length of time taken before it is issued to members, will he arrange for:—

(a) The Western Australian Transport Board's twentieth annual report to be available to members within three months of the closing date of the report?

- (b) If the notice is too short for this procedure, will he arrange for the reports to be issued within three months of the closing date of the report in subsequent years?

(2) (a) Are the minutes of the second annual conference of road transport control authorities of the Australian States, which was held in Melbourne and attended by the Chairman and Secretary of the Western Australian Transport Board, available for perusal by members?

(b) If not, are that conference's findings available to members?

(3) The nineteenth annual report of the Western Australian Transport Board on pages 8 and 9, Part III—Omnibuses, clauses 14 and 15, sets out statistics for privately owned and Government owned services operating in the metropolitan area. As these statistics only relate to the revenue received, will he—

(a) Supply particulars of the expenditure incurred in receiving this revenue?

(b) Would he arrange for this information to be a part of each annual report issued by the Western Australian Transport Board?

(c) Would he arrange to have the information sought in (a) and (b) set out in itemised form?

(4) As clause 23 of the nineteenth report states that temporary reductions in the amount of license fees have been granted to several operators, would he advise—

(a) Who are the operators concerned?

(b) Has the temporary arrangement ceased?

(c) Are any temporary reductions operating at present and to which operators?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) The State Transport Co-ordination Act provides that the Board's annual report shall be submitted to Parliament in October in each year. This provision has always been complied with.

(b) The Board's report for the year ended the 30th June, 1953, will be submitted to Parliament in October next. Delay in distributing copies to members has been solely attributable to delays in printing which are beyond the Board's control.

(2) (a) There would be no objection to any member who desires to do so, perusing the minutes of the conference referred to.

(b) Answered by (a).

(3) (a) As omnibus operators' accounts are made up for various periods, it would not be possible to supply figures for one particular year or period. Even if the accounting periods of all operators coincided it would not be practicable to prepare the information sought in time for publication in the annual report.

(b) As indicated in (3) (a), this will not be practicable.

(c) Answered by (a) and (b).

(4) Answers to (a), (b) and (c) are contained in the following statement:—

Beam Transport Ltd.—Reduced fee still operating, to be reviewed before the end of December, 1953.

United Buses Pty. Ltd.—Reduced fee still operating, to be reviewed before the end of December, 1953.

Carlisle Bus Service—Reduced fee still operating, subject to early review.

Inter-Suburban Bus Service (Perth-Bassendean)—Reduced fee operating, subject to review before the 30th June, 1954.

North Beach Bus Co. Pty. Ltd.—Reduced fee was applicable to the company's service in Morley Park area, which service the company relinquished in December last.

Coogee-Spearwood Omnibus Co.—Reduced fee still operating, subject to review before the 31st December, 1953.

Pioneer Omnibus Co. Ltd.—Reduced fee ceased to operate on the 30th June, 1953.

(b) As to Eastern Goldfields Board, Loss.

Mr. LAPHAM asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) What was the operational loss of the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board for the year ended the 30th June, 1953, or other accounting period?

(2) Has the Hyden-Lake Carmody service been resumed?

(3) Is Mr. G. Slater still classified as Acting Secretary? If so, when will he be classified as Secretary?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The revenue account of the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board for the year ended the 30th November, 1952, shows an excess of revenue over total working expenses.

(2) No.

(3) Yes. When the position of secretary is declared vacant consideration will be given to the appointment of Mr. Slater thereto.

## HARBOURS.

As to Transit Shed, Bunbury.

Mr. MAY (for Mr. Guthrie) asked the Minister for Works:

Can he give me any information regarding the transit shed which was to have been built in Bunbury?

The MINISTER replied:

The steel work and other materials for the transit shed are on the site but no funds are available for erection.

In view of the restricted loan funds available for Bunbury harbour, construction work is at present confined to the

extension of the jetty. This is in accordance with the expressed view of the Bunbury Harbour Board that the jetty extension should be given priority as the most urgent phase of the whole scheme.

### RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Refreshment Room, Bookstall and Advertising Departments.*

Mr. OLDFIELD asked the Minister for Railways:

What is the amount of salaries and wages paid to the staff of—

- (a) Railway refreshment service;
- (b) Railway bookstalls;
- (c) Railway advertising department?

The MINISTER replied:

For the year ended 30th June, 1953—

- (a) £63,536.
- (b) £4,172.
- (c) £6,630.

(b) *As to Diesel Locomotives, Arrival, Cost, etc.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) When is the first diesel locomotive expected to arrive in this State?

(2) How many were ordered, and when?

(3) After the arrival of the first, is it expected the balance of the order will be delivered promptly? If not, what lapse of time is expected?

(4) What is the expected total cost of these locomotives?

(5) On what country lines is it proposed to use these locomotives and will they be used mainly for passenger or goods traffic?

(6) To what extent will they haul heavier loads than steam locomotives now in use?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) "X" class main line diesels, October-November, 1953; "Y" class branch line/shunters, September-October, 1953; "Z" class jetty shunters, August-September, 1953.

(2) Forty-eight "X" class ordered November, 1950; 18 "Y" class ordered November, 1950; three "Z" class ordered February, 1951.

(3) "X" class—Four to the end of 1953, thence two per month; "Y" class—Four to February, 1954, thence two per month; "Z" class, August-September, 1953.

(4) £4,500,000.

(5) On all trains Northam-Goomalling and northwards thereof and eastward of Merredin. On some trains on the main line Perth-Northam-Merredin and branch lines to northward. On some passenger trains on the G.S.R.

(6) The tractive effort of these locomotives is—"X" class, 26,000 lb.; "Y" class, 18,000 lb.; "Z" class, 7,000 lb.

It is not possible to give an actual comparative tractive effort of these diesel locomotives with the steam locomotives in use owing to the variations in design and different types.

The tractive effort of three of our most powerful steam locomotives is—"S" class, 30,685 lb.; "FS" class, 26,570 lb.; "PM" class, 25,860 lb.

### ARGENTINE ANT.

*As to Control Measures.*

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

(1) Is the Agricultural Department about to take over the Argentine ant problem?

(2) Is the present situation a case of "every man for himself"?

(3) Does he favour State control or the local authorities acting independently?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No.

(2) Argentine ant control on private properties is the responsibility of the owner as provided in the Act.

(3) I consider there should be a uniform effort over the whole of the metropolitan area and State participation is receiving consideration.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

*As to Power Line Costs, Hills Areas.*

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Works:

What is the average cost to the State Electricity Commission for the construction of power lines in the hills area—

(a) Per mile of completed 20 k.v. line;

(b) Per mile of completed 250 volt line;

(c) To supply and erect one pole for each of the above lines?

The MINISTER replied:

The information required is not available.

### FORESTS.

(a) *As to Authority of Advisory Committee Chairman.*

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Forests:

(1) Is it a fact that the chairman of the recently appointed Forestry Advisory Committee has authority to approach any senior officer of the department for any information concerning the department's activities and, without reference to the conservator, report direct to the Minister?

(2) If the answer is in the affirmative, is he of the opinion that the Conservator of Forests can continue to administer his department under such conditions?

(3) Having refused to lay on the Table of the House his file dealing with the appointment of the Forestry Advisory Committee is he prepared to lay the departmental file dealing with this matter on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) and (2) The Chairman has authority to obtain from the Department such information as is necessary for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the Committee. Any information obtained from departmental sources is treated as confidential. The Committee's reports are advisory only to the Minister who will discuss any proposals with the Conservator of Forests before making decisions.

(3) I am prepared to allow him to see the relevant papers in my office.

(b) *As to Research Work.*

Mr. BOVELL (without notice) asked the Minister for Forests:

Does he agree with the statement appearing in "The West Australian" of the 15th August, 1953 which is headed—

"W.A. Leads in Forest Research" and in which the Commonwealth Conservator of Forests, Mr. G. J. Rodger, is reported to have said that the research work carried out by the Forests Department of Western Australia is far ahead of anything done by any other State, and that the pine plantations at Gnangara are a standing tribute to the W.A. Conservator of Forests, Dr. T. N. Stoate.

The MINISTER replied:

As I have no personal knowledge of the forestry activity of other States I am unable to supply an answer.

(c) *As to Qualifications of Advisory Committee.*

Mr. HEARMAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands:

Was he consulted before the appointments were made to the Forestry Advisory Committee and is he satisfied that the qualifications of the members of that committee in connection with land development and agriculture are adequate?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes, the matter was one which was the result of a decision by Cabinet.

Mr. Hearman: Is the Minister satisfied?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am naturally satisfied with anything that Cabinet approves.

Members: Hear, hear!

### CAUSEWAY.

*As to Delay in Completing.*

Mr. JAMIESON asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What is the present hold-up in the completion of the western end of the Causeway?

(2) Would he supply the maintenance cost figures for the upkeep of the remaining portion of the old Causeway in the last half financial year, January to June, 1953?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Work on the site of the new rotary at the western end of the Causeway is proceeding. At the present time the dredge "Stirling" is pumping a dump of 50,000 cubic yards of shell to a temporary half-way storage. This will commence being transferred to the site of the new rotary next week. After this has been placed 40,000 cubic yards of additional filling will be placed. The consolidation of this material on poor foundations will necessarily extend over a long period.

(2) £437 7s. 10d.

### COMMONWEALTH RE-ESTABLISHMENT ACT.

*As to Time Limit on Loan Grant.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS asked the Minister Lands:

(1) Is there any time limit after discharge from the Forces beyond which a loan cannot be granted to an ex-serviceman under the Commonwealth Re-establishment Act?

(2) If so, what is the period of time?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Within five years from the 2nd September, 1945, the defined date of cessation of hostilities, or five years from date of discharge, whichever is the later—or five years from date of termination of completion of any training which the applicant received under Part 3 of the Commonwealth Re-establishment Act, 1945.

### LOAN FUNDS.

(a) *As to Additional Repayments.*

Hon. Sir ROSS McLARTY (without notice) asked the Treasurer:

(1) Referring to the questions answered yesterday in connection with loan allocations, would he tell the House whether in addition to the £19,750,000 mentioned there is not also an amount of £1,000,000 coming from loan repayments, thus making a total of £20,750,000?

(2) If that is not so, why did the Acting Treasurer refer to such an amount in a Press statement dated the 25th May, 1953?

The TREASURER replied:

(1) and (2) I hope the Leader of the Opposition is correct in regard to his first question. In any case I would like to have an opportunity of checking the matter thoroughly with the officers of the Treasury Department and will provide replies to the questions at to-morrow's sitting.

*(b) As to Allocation and Use.*

Hon. A. F. WATTS (without notice) asked the Minister for Education:

With reference to his answers to my questions without notice yesterday—

(1) If there was £248,710 2s. 8d. sterling owing as at the 14th February, 1953, whereas the amount owing on the 1st July was nil, how could the amount paid between the 14th February and the 1st July be only £138,243?

(2) What actually was the total amount paid for pre-fabricated Bristol units between the 14th February and the 1st July, 1953?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) The £138,243 sterling quoted in answer to question (1) was the cost of the 28 units delivered between the 14th February and the 1st July, and not the full amount paid between those dates.

(2) £248,710 2s. 8d. sterling.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.***Fifth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. ACKLAND** (Moore) [4.55]: In the first place I would like to congratulate you, Sir, now that you have been elected to the high office of Speaker of this House. In all sincerity I wish you a very happy period while you occupy that position. At the same time, Sir, with just as much sincerity, I do hope you are not called upon to occupy the position too long, certainly not beyond the life of this Parliament. But while you are there we wish you all success.

I have read the Speech made by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Gairdner, with a great deal of interest. Throughout the whole of the Speech the keynote is one of drawing attention to the continued progress that has been made in Western Australia. At a later stage I hope to speak on various items which appear in that address. But firstly, because I feel I may speak for my full hour, I do not want to squeeze out a matter which to me is one of considerable importance. This concerns the Transport Board. I have never been very much in sympathy with the operations of the Transport Board. Personally I believe its name is a misnomer and that a very much better tag would have been "a board to protect the Railway Department from competition." At this stage, however, I do not wish to criticise the function of the board as to its legitimate operations.

I have, however, a far more unpleasant matter to bring before the House; it is one which I would have been very glad to shirk because the casting of reflections on any man is not a matter to be taken lightly. Unfortunately on this occasion I feel that must be done. The House will

remember that when the Railway Department was no longer able to cope with the transport of super, its cartage was put under the control of the Transport Board. From that day to this, or until a few months ago at any rate, I have been constantly interviewed by road hauliers.

Some of these men are from the city and have complained that they could not get any carting of super to the country. Others from the country districts complained that they could not get any carting at all. Some of the men who approached me have been known to me for a long time, and a number of them have carted super for the same farmers for many years. These people have contracts and some of the farmers had made personal representation to the Transport Board for these specific carriers to be given the right to handle their cartage.

I had many interviews with Mr. Howard who expressed to me the policy of the department, which was that the local carrier should have the right to handle the super, delivered into his own district. On more than one occasion, I was able to tell him that that was not being done. I shall give an instance: I have some 100 tons of super, to be carted each year, and never on one occasion has the local carrier had an opportunity to handle it.

I, in common with other people, have had the unpleasant experience of receiving and having put into my shed a load of super, that should have been delivered to a neighbour. I have heard that in the Great Southern, a man who lives 170 miles from Perth had his super, delivered by a carrier who had travelled more than 250 miles because of his having taken the wrong road, and that farmer was asked to pay for the mileage travelled by that carrier. So it was a matter that was causing a great deal of inconvenience to the people in the country.

The carriers who approached me on this matter also said that there were practices of graft going on in the Transport Board. Although I tried to persuade those men to make a statement or give evidence before a proper authority regarding the nature of the complaints, I was unable to get them to take any action at all. I had given up all hope of being able to trace what I had every reason to believe, without evidence, was the practice that was being adopted. From so many sources that I believed to be reliable, I was receiving much the same information.

During the whole of this period, I was in collaboration with my friend and fellow Country Party member in another place, Hon. A. R. Jones, and we had abandoned all hope of getting something tangible to place before the correct authority when the information was dropped into our lap. If I have your permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to read the

remarks I desire to make on this point because identical phraseology is being used in another place at just about this time. After having met this contractor—the phosphate carrier—and talked the matter over with him, Mr. Jones and I interviewed the then Premier, the member for Murray. He was not prepared to be a party to the unpleasant business, but was prepared to give protection to our informant inasmuch as his name would not be disclosed. The then Premier said he would make this arrangement with the Commissioner of Police and the Commissioner agreed.

In all we had three interviews with the Commissioner and at two interviews the Chief of the C.I.B. was present. At the second interview there were five persons present who included the two police officers, Mr. Jones, the informant and myself. The informant said he was tired of graft and that if he were given an assurance that he would not be prosecuted and that his name would not be disclosed, he was prepared to make a statement. Here is his statement—

He said that on one occasion, when he went to the Transport Board for carting permits, the man whom he had seen before was not present. Another officer accepted £10, saying that it was all right that he would see that the right man got the money.

The informant said that the practice was common among carriers who received the bulk of the work, and that he and his son had paid £40 each on more than one occasion.

For this amount they usually received three loads one week, and two the next, and one the following week, and then no more until a payment of more money.

Gifts, he said, started in a small way, and were in the form of a case of beer being left at an officer's residence; the informant's son had purchased a car radio which was installed in the car of one of the departmental officers.

I understand that the police and the informant had other interviews, but after a considerable time we again met the informant, who stated that for some weeks after his statement to the police, he had not paid over any moneys to the officers and had received no carting, and as there appeared to be no activity by the police and he was needing money to meet his commitments he was again paying to the officer and obtaining super carting.

Mr. Jones and I, for the third time, interviewed the police officers, and it was pointed out to us that they could not obtain evidence to enable them to take action.

As a last resort, and knowing that road haulage of super was nearing an end, on behalf of Mr. Jones and myself, I interviewed the present Premier, and asked for some action regarding the stamping out of the alleged graft.

We had hoped to hear of action regarding this matter, but there seems to be no alternative and so have decided on this course of action.

A similar statement is being made in another place today in support of our contention that all is not well in the Transport Board. We can submit some written evidence to the Premier in the hope that he will instigate an inquiry.

That is the statement I desired to read, but I wish to say that I do not want it to be regarded as an attack on the police, on the member for Murray or on the Premier. I have discussed the matter with the police this afternoon, and some information has been given to me regarding their attempt to find whether there is anything in this alleged statement. Unpleasant as my duty has been this afternoon, it seemed to me as well as to Mr. Jones, that we would be lacking in our duty if we did not bring the matter before the House in the hope that the Premier would institute an inquiry from the information we have given and have the matter sifted.

Amongst the transport carters, the name of at least one officer of that department is not at all savoury. It may be that the man is perfectly innocent, but we cannot disregard the talk that is going on and the fact that this carter, after having given his statement, has entered into this graft again. It has been said by my friend and I that we have no longer any intention of failing to disclose the informant's name in the right quarter, and I hope that he will be subpoenaed as a witness to give evidence as to what he told the Commissioner of Police, the Chief of the C.I.B., Hon. A. R. Jones and myself. We have some letters from carriers and not one of them admits any graft. One writer states that he was approached, but did not succumb to the suggestion. I am expecting that we shall receive more letters from carriers, who have promised to forward them this week.

I fully realise the responsibility that Mr. Jones and I have taken in bringing this matter before Parliament. I have done it with considerable reluctance and with no thought whatever of any party political action. That is the last thought either of us would have had. However, it has been stated to me by an authority that should know that graft is not uncommon in the Public Service of Western Australia. When that statement was made to me, I replied, "Is your department less guilty of graft than any other department of the Public Service?" I do not know anything about the Public Service; I do



not know anything about graft in it, but that remark was made to Mr. Jones and myself a few week ago.

The Minister for Railways: I have heard similar remarks made about Parliamentarians.

Mr. ACKLAND: That is so. I explained the position as we see it and so this report has been made to the House.

Let me now revert to the Governor's Speech. It was a pleasure to read of the recognition by the present Government of the progress that had been made during the preceding regime. We read of land settlement and of 865 ex-servicemen having been allotted farms during the last five years and of £10,000,000 having been spent on land settlement. I may mention that some of those ex-servicemen have farms in my electorate, and I believe that in every instance they are doing a good job. Some of them, I understand, have sufficient money today to clear off the whole of their liability if they so wish. Thus land settlement, so far as wool and wheat farms in my electorate are concerned, has been a complete success.

Then it is interesting to read in the Speech that 7,730 new homes had been erected during the 12 months. When we realise that this represents an increase of more than 300 per cent. on the number six years ago, we can appreciate the progress that has been made in that direction. I understand that in the last five years 25,000 new homes have been erected by private enterprise and by the State Housing Commission.

The Speech also contains some eulogistic remarks about forestry. It mentions that 2,500 acres of pine were planted during last year, which I understand represents a record planting programme for a year. We now have 18,000 acres of pines in this State. In recent weeks there has been a good deal of comment, certainly in the House since the session began a fortnight ago, regarding the appointment of a Forestry Advisory Committee. There is much speculation as to just what actual service the committee is going to render. I have read the report of the Royal Commission that reported not long back—less than 18 months ago, I think—on the Forests Department, and the report was eulogistic.

During my stay in Ottawa in September, 1952, I had the very pleasant experience of coming in contact with the Empire Forestry Conference which was being held in the House of Commons there, the same building in which our parliamentary conference was taking place. On one occasion I was sitting next to the forestry representatives from South Africa and New Zealand, and they could not have been more eulogistic concerning the capabilities of the Conservator of Forests and about reforestation and forestry matters generally in Western Aus-

tralia. I also have the cutting, on which a question was asked, without notice, containing the remarks made by Mr. G. J. Rodger. That extract is almost word for word similar to the remarks uttered by the two gentlemen to whom I have referred when I met them in Canada—and they must have been qualified to express an opinion.

Rumour is not a very reliable source of information, and I appeal to the Premier to take the people into his confidence regarding the appointment of this committee, a committee which I understand consists of two men who were junior officers in the Forests Department at one time, as, I understand, was the present Minister for Forests.

Mr. Bovell: Make it three by including the Minister himself.

Mr. ACKLAND: I understand the Minister was also in that department. It seems to me that the position of Conservator must be rendered absolutely untenable by the fact that these men who, from the Minister's remarks yesterday, are interested in sawmilling industries, have access to all the files of the Forests Department and have no obligation to the Conservator himself, but are answerable only to the Minister. It may be as right as right can be; but it seems to me that if the Conservator is the man that no doubt he is, judging from the remarks passed about him and his capabilities, it would be quite impossible for him to continue administering his department under such circumstances.

The Minister for Housing: Why did not your Government reappoint him?

Mr. ACKLAND: I understand his term expired just at the time of the election, though I stand open to correction.

The Minister for Housing: Prior to the election.

Mr. ACKLAND: Within a week or two.

The Minister for Housing: Prior to the election.

Mr. ACKLAND: We will not split hairs on that matter; but it was certainly at a period when we were all busy with electioneering campaigns, and it is quite understandable, without any reflection on the Government or the Conservator, that a matter like that should be left until after the election.

The Minister for Housing: You might ask a few questions of your colleagues who were Ministers at the time. I say that advisedly.

Hon. L. Thorn: Do not try to pass the buck.

Mr. ACKLAND: To continue with my reference to the Governor's Speech! It is interesting to know that in the South-West Land Division 3,786,000 acres of land were selected during the period in which the previous Government occupied the Treasury bench and that an extra

3,000,000 acres of arable land was cleared. What is of particular interest is that whereas five years ago there were only 2,100,000 acres of pasture in Western Australia, the area has now been increased to 4,000,000 acres.

It is very noticeable that wheatgrowing has not increased in comparison. In 1946-47 there were 2,500,000 acres under wheat in this State. Last year there were 2,800,000 acres, a very small increase considering the expansion of cleared land. That was the only increase in Australia. Whereas during the 1930's, 18,000,000 acres of land were under wheat in Australia, today there are only 10,000,000 acres. If we do not want to go back as far as the 1930's, we find that in 1946-47 there were 14,000,000 acres under wheat, compared with 10,000,000 acres today. It is no longer attractive to grow wheat in Australia; but I do not intend to spend any time at this juncture in speaking about wheat production, other than to say that the greatest decrease in acreage has occurred in the most populous States of New South Wales and Victoria. In New South Wales the decrease has been from more than 4,500,000 acres down to 3,000,000 acres, a decline of considerable magnitude.

The Minister for Native Welfare: What crops have they planted instead?

The Minister for Railways: Oats and barley, which are more profitable.

Mr. ACKLAND: At an opportune time I will talk about that, but it is not a subject I wish to discuss now. However, the Minister is entirely wrong when he says there has been any great increase in the production of oats and barley in Western Australia. There has been in South Australia, and that was partly responsible for the decrease in wheat areas in South Australia.

There are two matters about which I wish to speak before I resume my seat. The first concerns bovine tuberculosis in cattle. It is a matter of extreme surprise to me that the previous Government did not give more publicity to the wonderful results that were achieved in Western Australia from its campaign to stamp out tuberculosis in this State. The initial tests showed that 45 per cent. of the cattle supplying milk within a short radius of Perth were reactors. At Osborne Park, in a herd of 90 cattle, 78 had to be destroyed because they had tuberculosis.

The Minister for Health: In what year?

Mr. ACKLAND: It was in the year that the late Garnet Wood introduced the tests. I think it was in 1948-49, but it may have been in 1947-48. At Kalgoorlie nearly half of the cattle supplying milk to the Goldfields had to be destroyed. No fewer than 49.6 per cent. were killed. But at the last test, which was only

recently completed, in the 289 herds supplying wholemilk in Western Australia, the incidence of tuberculosis was only 1.6 per cent. It is from this point that I should like to see the present Government get to work. The money that has been spent, the inconvenience caused and the results achieved are all too great to allow this campaign to slip back, and I would ask the Minister for Agriculture to continue the work initiated by the late Garnet Wood.

The Minister for Lands: Would you support a proposal to apply that to the whole of the dairying cattle?

Mr. ACKLAND: That is what I was about to say. I would suggest to the Minister that he include all the wholemilk area in the compulsory testing of cattle.

The Minister for Lands: What about the butterfat section?

Mr. ACKLAND: Yes, all dairy herds. It so happens that a dairyfarmer who supplies wholemilk to Perth has no assurance that his replacements, which invariably must come from the Lower South, will be free of tuberculosis, and the whole of his herd could be so easily reinfected. I rang up the Princess Margaret Hospital to ascertain whether I could secure any authentic figures concerning glandular tuberculosis in children. I was unable to obtain the information, but was told by the doctor who answered the telephone that the incidence of glandular tuberculosis in children had decreased to a very marked degree, and no doubt the fact that the children were having purer milk was responsible in a considerable measure for bringing that about. The Premier would receive my support if he introduced a Bill to clean up the whole of the dairy herds in Western Australia, so that we could proclaim to the mothers of this State and to the world in general that in Western Australia the milk supplied to the people was 100 per cent. pure, if it is possible to raise it to that standard.

The Minister for Health: All the cattle controlled by the Health Department when I was Minister in 1945-46 were destroyed—that is, those that had T.B.

Mr. ACKLAND: No-one has disputed that. I should like the testing carried to all herds of the State. The other matter about which I wish to speak is a paragraph in the Governor's Speech reading as follows:—

By the end of the year the railways should be in a position to handle all the traffic offering.

That is a wonderful statement and was made possible by the action of the Government that occupied the Treasury Bench for six years. To obtain a full appreciation of the position, it is desirable to read a little about the state of the railways when the previous Government came into power in 1947. I want

to quote two extracts from the report of the Royal Commissioners—Alex. J. Gibson and D. H. C. du Plessis—which was printed in December, 1947. At page 16 appears the following:—

Although we were naturally impressed with the volume of evidence which was placed before us, we were even more impressed with the evidence of our own eyes, that is the conditions of general neglect which we found throughout the system. These conditions, which could not have developed in a short space of time, covered such matters as an obvious lack of maintenance of the permanent way; locomotive depots and other buildings in the last stages of decay; bad equipment and lack of proper supervision at running sheds; lack of adequate control of stores; no effort made to reclaim useable materials lying about as scrap; neglected and dirty barracks; primitive, neglected and dirty mess rooms; ablution facilities and staff latrines; neglected and dirty station, goods and locomotive offices; neglected departmental houses provided for the staff; general neglect of maintenance of buildings.

At the end of Mr. Ellis's evidence we read—

Alarm at the deterioration of the railways, which had reached a stage where we could see that you were very near a breakdown unless strong measures were taken?—Yes.

As my time is limited, I will pass over some of the matter contained herein and will read next from page 36 the following:—

... we know of no other comparable railway system in any other part of the civilised world which has been so neglected—is the short-sighted policy pursued in the past 20 years of economising in railway expenditure regardless of the consequences to the State's most important asset.

Further—

In reaching this conclusion we are not unmindful of the fact that during two world conflagrations, apart from a shortage of manpower, it was most difficult to obtain adequate supplies of material and equipment. These difficulties were, however, also applicable to most other railways in the Commonwealth as well as in other countries.

Further—

The rank and file of the staff, taking their cue from the senior officers, have become apathetic and, in consequence, efficiency and discipline have reached a low ebb. The staff have very little pride in their work and

a considerable proportion of their time and energy seems to be devoted to the ventilation of their grievances—group and individual—before the Arbitration Court, the Promotions Appeal Board and the Punishments Appeal Board. These are all outward symptoms of the disease which has, over a period of many years, done its insidious work of sapping the vitality of the railways and undermining the team spirit.

In "The West Australian" of the 12th December, 1947, Commissioner du Plessis had this to say—

I have seen a state of affairs which I never believed possible—that is, railways in such a state of general neglect and decay, and this applies to their engines, rollingstock and other assets which I have seen so far, that they were very near a general breakdown in their service.

There are many other passages in the report that I underlined, but I have quoted sufficient to remind the House that the work of the late Government in rehabilitating the railways was so outstanding that His Excellency has been able to say that at the end of this year the railway system will be able to handle all the traffic offering, and I maintain that that position would have obtained last year had it not been for the useless six months railway strike.

When we hear so much about the railway deficit, we should ask ourselves how much of it is attributable to the fact that the McLarty-Watts Government, in its humanity, would not close down the railways entirely, but did its utmost to find work for the men who were not on strike. It would have been quite an understandable action had the Government said to the strikers, "Until you fellows go back to work and give us engines, the whole system must cease to operate." Although I have a great personal regard for the present Premier, I believe that he and some of his supporters did a disservice to the State by not getting 100 per cent. behind the then Premier, and using their influence to get the strikers back to work instead of trying to persuade the Premier to negotiate with men who were outside the law.

I believe the present Minister for Railways knows a great deal about the railway system as he was employed by the department for many years as an engine-driver. He must realise that, of the 20 years mentioned in their report by Mr. du Plessis and Mr. Gibson, Labour Administration was responsible for the railway service in this State for 17 years. I have read where he has made some criticism of the past Administration—

The Minister for Railways: Stick to wheatgrowing, about which you know something.

Mr. ACKLAND: I may know more about railways than the Minister thinks. Although I have not been employed by the department and have never driven an engine, I am interested in the department's biggest customer and have on many occasions interviewed the more highly-placed officers. One of my colleagues mentioned the other night the great work done by the Chief Traffic Officer in relation to the transport of apples from the South-West. That officer has done a great job for the whole of the service and since he took over control of the Traffic Department there has been very little friction, and a greater appreciation of the fact that the customer is not always wrong. I believe he has been to an appreciable extent responsible for the improvement in the position of our railways. It is interesting to note that in 1950-51, only 24 months ago, 326,117 tons of wheat had to be carried by road, because the railways could not handle it. That represents a little less than 12½ million bushels of wheat for the road haulage of which the wheatgrowers of this State had to pay £5,000,000 which could have gone into the coffers of the Railway Department.

I believe there is a likelihood of an increase in freights being foisted on us soon by the present Government, the first action of which in connection with railway matters was the increasing of suburban train services. I would remind members that those services are the most uneconomic of the whole railway system, yet the Government has taken off the surcharge on fares and reduced the minimum fare within the city limits. The Minister may laugh but I do not think he can name one item of the produce of this State, apart from primary produce, that is for sale overseas, and I may say further that there are very few of our primary products that we can now sell on the overseas markets.

We have been pushed out of the fresh fruit market in Singapore, and Tasmania cannot now sell its dehydrated and tinned vegetables outside Australia. The wheat-growers have had to sell wheat to the milling industry at a low rate so that we could compete with America on the Far Eastern flour markets. I have no desire to run down the Chamberlain tractor. I have had experience with two of them and prefer them to comparable American machines but, even though the company is protected by the existing exchange rate and a high tariff, in addition to which tractors from overseas have their price increased by a heavy freight charge, the Commonwealth Government is now paying Chamberlain Industries £240 for every tractor produced in order that the company may compete with overseas manufacturers.

There must be something wrong with our manufacturing system and there is a great deal wrong with the means of distribution. A 32-volt battery for a 32 volt

electric light plant costs about £90. The distributor, who simply takes the countryman's order and forwards it to Perth, collects £30 commission.

Hon. A. V. R. Abbott: Are you referring to Westralian Farmers Ltd.?

Mr. ACKLAND: I am referring to the position generally. Instead of trying to upset my story by means of interjections, the member for Mt. Lawley should be behind me.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I cannot understand why you are allied to him.

Mr. ACKLAND: Neither can I! I will mention next the cost of running goods and passenger trains in this State, and will deal with the figures for 1949. The position is much worse today. According to the Commissioner's report, in 1949 the working expenses of our railways were 18s. 9½d. per mile, while the earnings from passenger traffic were 5s. 11½d.—parcels 1s. 7½d.—per mile, the total earnings being 7s. 7d. The goods earnings, for the same expenditure, were 17s. 8½d., again below working expenses; yet we have now had more trains put on to the suburban services—more empty trains. I know that in peak periods some trains are fully utilised, but as far back as 1949 the return, as I have said, was 5s. 11½d. for an expenditure of 18s. 9½d. The attitude of the present Minister was illustrated by the running of more suburban trains. If we are right in our assumption, he is thinking of increasing the freight costs which were so near the expenses at that period. I admit that they cannot be near now.

The Minister for Railways: It is a wonder the hon. member admits that.

Mr. ACKLAND: The same thing applies to a greater extent to the passenger traffic. There the position is even worse in the city compared with the country. At page 37, table 12, the report of the Railways Commission of 1949 shows that the average earning per passenger mile in the metropolitan area was .6d. and in the country 1.46d. The position is one that should be ventilated in this House and I considered it was most desirable to do so, particularly at this time, when the Government may be intending to increase freights and when the Premier so adroitly tried to pass the buck to the Prime Minister of Australia when he, the Premier, entered into the question of any increase of freights.

The Premier: It is a matter of absolute fact; not of passing the buck.

Hon. Sir Ross McLarty: We can expect plenty of that during the next few years.

The Premier: Plenty of fact.

Mr. ACKLAND: I thought the Premier would stand up to his own actions and would not say that someone else should carry the responsibility. I support the Address-in-reply.

The Premier: The hon. member finished up well.

**MR. JAMIESON (Canning) [5.47]:** I, too, wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your elevation to such a high position, and in opposition to the previous speaker, the member for Moore, I hope you remain there for quite a number of years. I think that after a period of six or nine years the Opposition will become a good one for the Queen's Governments in this State after having had such experience. At the outset I wish to thank the electors of Canning for giving me their support in the election and placing me in the position of being able to speak on their behalf in this House. As members know, my electorate is the largest numerically in this State, and that fact in itself emphasises the great honour I feel in representing such a large number of people.

During the election campaign much publicity was given to the achievement of the previous Government in regard to education in the Canning electorate. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition implied, I was somewhat frustrated not by my own Government but by what I saw when I investigated the school position in the Canning district. My electorate is one that is expanding rapidly and with that expansion schools and other amenities must be provided. However, I found that in the Kewdale school several classrooms had been added but no pupils could be found to place in them and yet the Carlisle school, a few miles distant, was using a bus to transport pupils from it to fill the new rooms at Kewdale school.

The Kewdale and Carlisle schools are still without adequate facilities and I consider that it is mismanagement on the part of the Education Department that such a state of affairs exists. When I made some inquiries into schools recently in South Australia I found we have an advantage over that State in that we have, to some extent, overcome the difficulty of the shortage of teachers. In South Australia they cannot obtain enough recruits for the teaching service but they have sufficient classrooms. I feel that we might perhaps strike a happy medium between the two States when we catch up with our school accommodation and South Australia is able to obtain sufficient teachers.

There are quite a number of schools in the Canning district which have insufficient classrooms and the position is undoubtedly acute. However, it is even worse in the Kent-st. High School, which was converted from a junior high school to a five-year high school by the previous Government and, in doing so, it provided some extra classrooms but no other amenities. As members are aware, such amenities are necessary in a senior high school but are not altogether a necessity in a more junior school. I refer to, say, science rooms, a gymnasium and a number of other amenities necessary for the old pupils but not so important for the youngsters. I

have taken great interest in the progress of the Kent-st. High School and recently I received a letter from the headmaster—a copy of which was also sent to the member for Victoria Park—and I wish to read portion of it to the House to show the position that this high school will be in during next year if we are unable to provide the necessary accommodation because of the lack of loan funds. One of the paragraphs, which is over the signature of Eric McGrath, Head Master, reads as follows:—

I have made a thorough investigation of the possibilities of staggering of hours. As you know, this has been done this year in the trade and home science centres and has worked reasonably well, but it is quite unworkable in the classrooms. It would be unrealistic to ask children who travel up to and over 12 miles to school to be here before 8 o'clock every morning, and it would be equally unworkable to ask them to try to board crowded buses on the homeward journey at 5 o'clock every afternoon. We just must have these nine extra classrooms or the position will be desperate. As these rooms go in pairs, should 10 rooms be erected there will be one less floating class and 1955 will only see a further increase in numbers, and more still will be needed.

To illustrate the position more clearly, I point out that the Cargill-st. school in Victoria Park provides five classrooms to accommodate those children who constitute an overflow from the Kent-st. High School, because that school has had a drop in numbers of school-age children in the vicinity and it is thus able to make available some accommodation. It would appear that the necessity for additional accommodation is most desperate in the Kent-st. High School area without additional amenities of any kind whatsoever being provided.

I will now deal with some other schools in the district which I think should be given immediate attention provided, of course, the Government can obtain money to carry out the work. Another fast-growing area which requires additional school accommodation is East Belmont, where quite a number of houses have been erected apart from flats which accommodate a large number of people. There is a dense population in that area. The headmaster of the school there has told me that for every three or four children who move from the district another seven or eight come in. So it would appear that that is another instance of a school that requires urgent additional accommodation. On their own initiative, the headmasters of all the schools in the Canning electorate have conducted a survey and it was found that, in most instances, the number of five or six-year-olds who will attain school age next year is so large that additional classrooms will be required.

In the new suburb of Bentley Park it is anticipated that there will be an increase of 50 school-age children attending school next year. At the moment they are able comfortably to accommodate the existing pupils, but these new enrolments mean that the children will again be placed in cloakrooms and sheds and have to face the elements in the same way as those children did who attended the Cannington school before the Bentley Park school was built.

I now wish to refer briefly to traffic control on the highways in the metropolitan area. I consider, as did the member for Victoria Park, that it is high time another type of warning sign was used to notify motorists to stop when approaching highways or main roads other than those that are now painted on the roadway itself. All members in this House who are motorists will readily realise that at night-time, especially when it is raining, those signs cannot be seen because the roadway becomes one shining surface to the motorist who is looking through his windscreen. So the necessity for some other type of warning sign that can be picked up at the side of the road by the illumination of car headlamps is urgently required and the efforts of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in illustrating a sign of this nature to motorists and emphasising to them that they must stop at highway intersections is a laudable one.

The Government should also inquire into the lighting on the highways. No satisfactory method of lighting has been evolved as yet to my knowledge. The lights that have been installed so far have been experimental. We have seen in operation mercury lamps and the fluorescent type on the Causeway which have not proved altogether satisfactory and, over the years, we have also seen other types tested unsuccessfully. Whilst in Adelaide recently I was impressed with the Argon type of lighting on the Port-rd. and the Anzac Highway which gave quite a soft light. I consider that the Government should take steps to make inquiries as to that type of lighting and equip the highways in this State with it in order to test these lights and ascertain if they are as good as they appeared to be after driving along the highways a few times in Adelaide.

Another traffic feature which will require the attention of the Government in the near future is the parking of vehicles on the highways around the city. In Victoria Park, part of which suburb is in my electorate, Albany Highway is fast becoming extremely congested on account of the heavy traffic. The bulk of the fast-moving traffic proceeds along that thoroughfare and in that respect it is different from the traffic in the city itself where its speed is limited. Coming into the city to attend the sittings of the House, I have noticed the yellow markings on the road indicating where police officers have been investigating accidents, and there are so many of

them that the surface of the road in places has assumed the appearance of a yellow pavement. Some action will have to be taken regarding the narrow highways and efforts should be made to deal with the parking situation. In fact, parking at many parts should be prohibited, particularly at the most dangerous points, thus avoiding additional worries caused to pedestrians and motorists alike.

Earlier in the session I listened attentively to references made to the provision of a bridge at the Narrows. This matter concerns me greatly because it would be the means of providing additional access to the Como area, which would be of great advantage to the residents there. I was not, however, very impressed with the proposal for the construction of a bridge. Despite the huge cost involved and possible engineering difficulties, I feel that when funds are available—goodness knows when that will be in view of the present situation—the Government should give consideration to the provision of a 6-lane tunnel from the Perth side of the river to Mill Point.

Provision of that nature would retain to the city its present scenic beauty through not interfering with the surface of the river and, in addition, would not cause any difficulty to the yachting craft during the summer months. On one occasion I remember hearing a question put to the town planning consultant, Professor Stephenson, regarding his opinion about the new Causeway. He replied to the effect that if the present rate of traffic were maintained he feared that within 20 years the present structure would be in a condition somewhat like that of the old Causeway that is being pulled down. Some method of getting the traffic over, or under, the river must be investigated within the next few years.

Quite a lot has been said during the current debate regarding the closing of certain railway lines in the country areas. From my standpoint, I would not be in favour of closing such lines permanently. Possibly, if they are run at a huge loss, as the Minister indicated in the figures he quoted, a trial closure for some time, perhaps for two years, could be effected, and a skeleton maintenance staff retained to make sure that the rails were not used for some other purpose, such as boat anchors and so on, and the lines affected could also be maintained. The position could be reviewed in the light of how the people affected had got on with regard to the goods they desired to obtain or the commodities they had for despatch.

If it were found that they had been satisfactorily catered for, I do not think anyone would have qualms about closing down such lines permanently. On the other hand, if it were shown that the country folk concerned had been at a disadvantage or if for instance on the Goldfields it was apparent that a centre had once more become a Mecca for speculators

and, generally speaking, that the lines that would be used in such circumstances were needed, they could be reopened with a minimum of delay and without the necessity for extensive repairs. Then again, rather than pull up a line immediately it had been closed, which involves considerable expenditure in view of present-day high labour cost, it would be far better to maintain the service until some alternative means of transport had been provided and proved to be adequate.

An instance of what happens in that regard has relation to the Kalamunda line which was pulled out without provision being made for another form of transport for residents whose employment was at Midland Junction. Members will appreciate that their situation is deplorable because no provision is made to convey them to and from their work. Recently we took a deputation to the railway authorities who control the buses operated by that department, in an endeavour to provide those men with some adequate means of transport to and from their work.

The Tramways Department must sooner or later give consideration to shifting the present tram sheds from East Perth to some other site. That area is rapidly being built upon, and I suggest to the Minister concerned that he give consideration to reserving part of the foreshore in front of the cement works on the eastern side of the river for the future positioning of the carbarn for the buses. That site is not far from town and it would mean only an additional three-quarters of a mile of running. There is plenty of room there and no one would have any worries. If that course were adopted, we could then have available a large additional parking space for city traffic. Another aspect of the parking problem is that, with the increase in the number of motor vehicles on the road, parking now extends up Hay-st. as far as Harvest Terrace and even beyond in the daytime, and it extends just as far down Hay-st. in the opposite direction. If nothing is to be done with the island at the Causeway, provision might be made for its use as a parking area for vehicles.

Turning to the Swan River itself, I suggest to the Government that, when funds become available, consideration be given to the purchase of another dredge. The Stirling has been operating on the river for many years. I have not inspected the vessel, but I should say that it is approaching its full term of usefulness and very shortly the necessity will arise to procure another dredge. If two dredges could operate at the same time, much work could be done. With the extension of the city in the direction of the Canning River, the necessity arises for the reclamation of much of the foreshore, particularly in those parts where there are algae beds and where unsatisfactory conditions prevail. The areas I have in mind are becoming closely populated. I certainly think

an additional dredge should be secured when the Government is in a position to do so.

References have been made to the proposals by the Government to provide a hotel or at least a liquor bar for the convenience of the residents at Kwinana. Taking into consideration the profits made by the State hotels, which have amounted, if my memory serves me aright, to about £8,000 for the year, I would say to the Government, and particularly to the Minister responsible for the administrative control of the hotels, that it would be advisable to impose a check on the conduct of the undertakings. Surely in these times when hotelkeeping seems to be one of the prime industries of the State, a greater return to the Government should be forthcoming. There must be some failure somewhere. Either the State hotels are not providing the amenities essential if they are to attract public patronage, or the system is such that it needs a thorough overhaul with a view to returning to the Government some recompense adequate for their upkeep and a reasonable profit in addition.

Another matter to which I would draw attention directly concerns the House. I have in mind the provision of public conveniences for those who occupy seats in the galleries of this Chamber. The present situation is most difficult and discouraging for those who come here wishing to hear the debates. They often sit here for hours during the winter months waiting for the debate in which they are interested and no conveniences are available for them. These should be provided. Some direction by way of a notice should be made available in the interests of those concerned. After all, they are the people and we are their servants, and they are justly entitled to facilities such as I suggest, particularly when they come here to listen and note whether their member is taking the right action in their interests.

A problem that concerns the outer parts of the Canning electorate particularly—I refer to the low-lying areas at Cannington—has reference to sales by estate agents during the summer months of land that was subdivided many years ago. People who are looking for reasonable propositions to enable them to erect their homes, buy these blocks in summertime when the area seems to be quite dry. Estate agents apply high pressure salesmanship in disposing of blocks there between November and the following March, and then cease operations of that description until the succeeding year. This practice has caused much concern to road boards affected. When residents who have bought these blocks and have erected homes on them, find that their properties are flooded in wintertime, they ask their road board members to have something done for them. In reply the board has to

admit that it is powerless to do anything and the ratepayers are reminded that they have purchased blocks in a low lying area.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. JAMIESON: I was rather non-plussed, Mr. Speaker by your Indian sign before the suspension. At the time I was dealing with real estate sales. Having experienced your Indian sign once I shall know what it means in the future. With respect to real estate sales, in the main the area which is being sold by means of high pressure sales in the summer time consists of what is known as summer land where the people buy the blocks in good faith and build on them, and then find that they are not what they anticipated. The land, in the main, is sandy so that there is no indication that it will be flooded. When, however, the winter rains come these people find that they have bought a pig in a poke and they have considerable trouble in keeping themselves above water.

As their nearest approach to any redress is through the local board or municipality they immediately raise a hue and cry through their road board members who can do very little to help them. In many instances, after worrying their members a lot they finally have a roadway built past their houses and then they complain to the road board about the drainage of the roads on to their properties, which is happening because the roads must be built above the ground level.

I ask the Minister concerned with real estate sales to watch carefully the position of these subdivisions and, if possible, in instances where they look like being a liability to a local authority, to take some action either by way of having the areas gazetted as unsuitable for building purposes or by introducing legislation to take over the areas that are subdivided swamps.

Whilst dealing with the flooded areas in the east Canning district I would like to mention the comprehensive drainage scheme that has been mooted by Governments for a number of years. This scheme is most necessary. There are several rather large brooks that empty into an area which is roughly between the Albany-rd. and the Perth air port, and they cause quite an amount of flooding. There is no outlet for these brooks except through rather undefined soakage ways, swamps and the low areas to the Swan and Canning Rivers.

Until such time as the comprehensive drainage scheme is put into operation there will be no alleviation of the present position in this vast, swampy country behind the eastern suburbs. It extends right up to the airport, and I have had complaints from people in the Newburn

area that the airport itself has caused much inconvenience on account of the natural waterways being affected by its construction.

If this is not altogether true, it is to some degree factual, because it has been necessary for the Department of Civil Aviation to bank up the sand to prevent the water from running on to the airport and causing damage to it. If the Government can proceed with this scheme it would assist many people in the areas I have mentioned—Newburn, East Cannington, Cannington and in a lesser degree Riverton on the other side of the Canning River which will eventually need a drainage scheme, because it is somewhat similar country with many swamps and connecting billabongs.

In many of the new suburbs that have come to stay in the eastern parts of the city limits housing has gone ahead, but many amenities, such as fire-fighting facilities have not been made available. The Minister concerned with the placing of fire hydrants would be well advised to have his officers examine the new areas, particularly where there are timber-framed dwellings and flats erected, to see whether hydrants could be placed there.

It would appear that, with respect to many of these districts, the prime consideration has been to get the houses built. No facilities have been provided for the people. The position could improve quickly with just a little observation from those in authority, as they could make these facilities available to the people if they wanted to in the case of emergencies.

Since being the member for Canning I have been privileged on several occasions to travel with the Ministers, in the course of their work, to various parts of the State. On one occasion I went to the Agricultural College at Muresk and on another to the Pardalup prison farm. Whilst to most members these two institutions might appear to be far apart, in actuality they are not. It may be alarming and distressing when I say that in my opinion—and I daresay in the opinion of others who have visited both places—the institution that was kept in the best condition from the point of view of teaching agriculture—due not to the administration, but to the facilities available—is the Pardalup prison farm where the most up-to-date methods of milking, etc., are available. Pardalup is an example of what should be done at a place like Muresk where, for the want of a few thousand pounds, we are slipping badly.

Muresk is considered to be one of the well known agricultural colleges in Australia, but it is struggling on against unfair odds in that it has not adequate buildings. Before it can function properly as a college it must have buildings to house the farming implements, which at present



are stacked out in sheds that have been there since the farm was taken over from the original owners.

I would like to see the Minister for Agriculture do something for this institution in the course of the next few years. Whether he will is a matter of finance, but it is something which I think should be done, and I am sure my friends of the Country Party will agree with me when I say it should be done and that it is most necessary in this State to have an A1 agricultural college. We should not spare expense in establishing the college as a prime institution that we can be proud of.

The Pardalup prison farm is one of the best known reform centres in Australia. I feel we should have other reform centres. The Pardalup farm is all right as regards agricultural lines, but there is scope for other reformatories where the prisoners would not be under supervision or behind bars. At Pardalup we had to be told who was a prisoner and who was not because there was no way of telling them apart, except in the case of the chief warden who was the only one in uniform. I commend the originators of the Pardalup scheme and also the various Governments who have kept the farm going. There are far too few of these institutions.

Referring to the hospitals in the metropolitan area, my colleague from Victoria Park mentioned the approach to the Minister for Health regarding a site in the eastern area for a hospital at a future date. There was some talk of a stop-gap by retaining the Edward Millen home. This proposal met with quite an amount of opposition, as I anticipated. I am not too happy at any time with stop-gaps, so I am not altogether disappointed at the opposition. My idea, and that of my colleague at the time, was that in the near future land on the eastern side of the river will be pretty well built out, so that now is an opportune time to make a reservation of a site for a 400-bed hospital.

The size of the hospital would have to be in the vicinity of 400 beds in order to cater for the huge population which is quickly growing on that side of the river. When I was in the East recently I noticed that in a western suburb of Adelaide one wing of a new hospital, which is to be a subsidiary of the main Adelaide hospital, was just about finished. While the land is still available the Government here would do well to resume it and retain it as a reserve for a hospital at some future date. At present the cost will be little, but later it may be great.

Recently I asked the Minister for Health a question concerning the interrogation of parents before the admission of children to the Princess Margaret Hospital. On the surface this may seem of little consequence and the answer given by the Minister, possibly rightly so too, was that the honorary surgeons attended

these patients at the hospital and therefore it was necessary to interrogate the parents before the children were admitted. However, as the Government of the State paid to this hospital from the hospital fund subsidies amounting in 1950-51 to £108,374 and in 1951-52, £149,910, I think the Minister should have some authority to ask those in charge to refrain from this practice of interrogation, at least until the children are admitted. I say this because parents, whether their children are really ill or only mildly sick, are generally alarmed at the symptoms. This interrogation could be done after admission of the children and then arrangements could be made, if the necessity arose, for transfer of the children to other hospitals. So I ask the Minister to bear that in mind when making further inquiries into this matter.

I now wish to touch briefly on the water supply and drainage position in my electorate. In this matter I think the previous Government erred to some extent because I consider it spoilt some areas that were without water supplies and needed long leads by putting in these schemes, thus allowing other areas in the outback parts of the State to raise a hue and cry on their requirements for similar schemes. The population in those areas is just as great and they considered that, if one area was entitled to consideration, it should apply equally to their area.

I think it was a bad move on the part of the department to grant some of these extensions because I have seen many instances where people in relatively built-up areas—and these people have lived there for many years and have owned their blocks—have not been able to obtain a connection to the water supply schemes while others who needed up to 30 chains extensions had been able to get satisfaction. Such people as I have mentioned should be given consideration and, as soon as possible, their properties should be connected. When the supplies of piping were limited and labour was short, some of the people who rendered a service to the public could have been and should have been given satisfaction.

Recently there was a further Press announcement about the establishment of a medical school at the University. Although the establishment of such an institution would involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, it would be of great benefit to this State and in my opinion something will have to be done about it in the near future. For years people have said that we would eventually have a medical school in this State but little seems to have been done. The sooner we can establish this school, the better it will be for everybody in Western Australia.

I consider that the Minister responsible for the Inspection of Scaffolding Act should take some action about safety precautions when asbestos is used for roof-

ing purposes. I have been associated with the building industry for some years and have had some experience in the use of asbestos for roofing. I have fallen through sheets on a number of occasions when they have become brittle and I was lucky to be engaged on cottage work at the time, otherwise serious injury might have resulted. In those cases, battens were used and this prevented any serious injury to myself or others who were working with me. Therefore I think the Act should be amended to bring it into line with the New South Wales legislation. Under that Act builders are compelled to use netting or battens underneath asbestos roofs.

In conclusion, I wish to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for having been tolerant with me and I also thank members for their tolerance. I do not expect them to exercise this virtue on future occasions and I am sure that they do not expect me to be tolerant on every subject that is brought before the House.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

**MR. BOVELL (Vasse) [7.50]:** The most momentous announcement in His Excellency the Governor's Speech is—

The visit next year of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh is keenly awaited. Five country centres have been included in the itinerary, which has been designed to give as many people as possible the opportunity of participating in the loyal and enthusiastic welcome of which our Royal Visitors are assured.

It goes on to say—

There is keen goodwill towards Western Australia in Britain. The recent visit by the Premier and the two visits by Sir Ross McLarty as Premier in 1951 and as Leader of the Opposition this year have greatly assisted in building up this goodwill, towards which successive Agents General have made a most notable contribution.

**Mr. May:** Are they going to Busselton?

**Mr. BOVELL:** I wish to thank the authorities—and in this I include the Premier—for adhering to the original itinerary as regards visits to country centres. This is a most momentous occasion because it will be the first time that a reigning monarch has set foot on the soil of Australia, and Her Majesty the Queen, with the Duke of Edinburgh, can be assured of a loyal welcome. We in the South-West greatly appreciate the fact that Busselton, an historic centre in the annals of this State, has been included in the itinerary. The Crown is the most ancient symbol of our tradition in this British family of ours, and it is fitting that Her Majesty should visit Busselton because that centre is linked with the earliest history of Western Australia.

In the halls of this Parliament House there are depicted buildings erected by the earliest pioneers of this State and in which reside the descendants of those pioneers; I refer to the paintings in water colours and oils which adorn the walls of the main corridor in this building. There members will see the historic homesteads, including that of Cattle Chosen, which was originally built by the late John Garrett Bussell when he followed his cattle from Augusta where he had originally landed. He established his home and built the residence which his descendants still occupy. The late John Garrett Bussell was the first representative for Vasse in this Parliament during the early days of the Legislative Council.

Another picture hanging on the wall is that of Wonnerup House which was originally erected by George Layman. The original George Layman, who migrated to this country with John Garrett Bussell, was speared by natives outside the gates of the homestead; the descendants of his family still occupy that home. Mr. Layman also represented the Vasse district in the Legislative Council. Also depicted in this gallery is Quindalup House, which is still occupied by descendants of the Yelverton family. Mr. Yelverton was member for Sussex, the original constituency under responsible government. There is a painting of Sandilands, a homestead which is now occupied by the Willmott family. That was the home of the first member for Sussex in the person of the late Joseph Cookworthy. Then there is a painting of Lockeville and one of the members of the Locke family also represented the constituency of Sussex in this Parliament.

We can also see a painting in oils of the historic St. Mary's Church in Busselton, erected by John Garrett Bussell and his family. In the background can be seen the residence of Mrs. A. M. R. Bunbury who has resided there for many years—all her life—and it is a tribute to her that she celebrated her ninetieth birthday recently. So the traditional aspect of this State will be conveyed to Her Majesty by those surroundings, added to which there will be an enthusiastic and loyal welcome by all the people of the Lower South-West. We look forward to the visit of Her Majesty the Queen and we trust that she will continue to reign, as did two of her great predecessors in the persons of Queen Elizabeth I and Queen Victoria, from one century to another.

The original settlers in the Vasse district established the dairying industry in this State. It was the cattle that strayed from Augusta to the banks of the Vasse River that brought the Bussell family to the Vasse and created the township that now bears the name of Busselton. During the 120 years the industry has progressed very slowly. During the time of Sir James Mitchell and the inauguration

of the group settlement scheme, the district showed great advancement and, due to the fortitude of the settlers, some of the original ones being still engaged in the industry in that district, the industry has been maintained. But unfortunately it has not been placed on a standard equal to the development of the dairying industry in the Eastern States and, due to heavy costs of clearing, progress has been limited. I suggest that the Government give very earnest consideration to a proposal to assist this industry.

The Minister for Lands: The Government is very much concerned about the dairying industry.

Mr. BOVELL: I realise that the Minister for Lands and Agriculture has problems in his electorate similar to those that confront me in mine. The proposal I have to submit for consideration is one that involves an expenditure of £5,000,000. It is estimated that in the lower South-West there are approximately 1,500 dairy farms below standard. It is impossible for settlers to borrow money through the normal channels and pay the required interest for further development. But if funds could be secured to the extent of £5,000,000, which would be a provision of £2,000 each on every sub-standard dairy farm, without payment of interest and spread over a period of 25 years this venture would contribute to the stability of the industry in this State.

The scheme envisages that approximately £2,000 should be made available to each of the 1,500 sub-standard dairy farms for clearing, cultivation and for additional stock. It would have to come under close supervision—perhaps the Land Settlement Board could be the authority to discharge this responsibility—and the period for repayment of any capital granted would be 25 years. In the first five years no capital repayments would be required. Over the next 20 years the sum of £100 would be repayable in reduction of the debt of £2,000 and at the end of that 20 years the debt would be liquidated. As I said earlier, the existing development does not permit dairy farmers with sub-standard holdings to pay interest on capital, and the Government would have to carry that interest itself. The legal security could be similar to the system by which land rents are applied to conditional purchase of land.

The loan would be a first charge on the land registered with the Lands Department, or some other authority, where the land was still under conditional purchase. But where the land is freehold, the title would be endorsed if it was held by a trading bank or the Rural and Industries Bank, and the loan would be a first charge against the land, and any other security, such as loans from trading banks, etc., would be subject to that debt. I think this would be a practical solution to help to overcome the difficulties of development in

this industry. The McLarty-Watts Government contributed in no small measure in assisting the development of undeveloped dairy farms. I must also give credit to the present Minister for Lands for tackling the position and offering some small assistance, as appears in recent editions of the Press.

Mr. May: Can you tell me where the Government is going to get the money?

Mr. BOVELL: The money can be raised from the Commonwealth Government by submission through the Loan Council. It is recognised that the dairying industry in Western Australia, in comparison with that in Victoria and New South Wales, is undeveloped, and it is the responsibility not of Western Australia alone but of the whole of Australia to see that this industry of ours is brought up to a standard equal to that enjoyed by dairy farmers in the more developed States of Australia.

During the war and in the course of my duty, I was stationed at both East and West Sale, which is the centre of the Gippsland dairying area of Victoria. And, being born and bred in the dairying districts of this State, I made a close investigation into the industry there. I was very impressed with the great development that had taken place in the Gippsland area. We have the land, the climatic conditions and the rainfall. In fact, we have everything that Nature can give us in the South-West of this State for the establishment of the dairying industry. It is only a matter of finance, and it is the responsibility of this Government to see that the Commonwealth Government comes forward with a scheme that will place our dairying industry on a sound footing. Once that has been done, we can then compete with the more developed industries in the Eastern States. I trust the Government will give my suggestion every consideration. The legalities of repayment of the money can be arranged quite satisfactorily, but action is needed, and it is the responsibility of the Government of this State to see that its dairying industry is brought up to the standard enjoyed in other parts of Australia.

Mr. May: What about quality?

Mr. BOVELL: In quality our dairy products are second to none in Australia. The Leader of the Opposition has returned from a trip to the Old Country. He was very impressed by the value of the tourist trade. Here again, Western Australia is very richly endowed by Nature. The South-West provides a playground for travellers, visitors and everyone who has the available leisure. As I previously stated, we are richly endowed by Nature. I lived in Geraldton for a number of years, and feel sure that Geraldton and Carnarvon could be made the playground of the State during the winter months. An evenly-balanced scheme to use both the northern and southern areas would pro-

vide all the attractions for tourists who wish to come here from any part of the world.

But the first consideration must be good roads. The only way to establish satisfactory roads in the South-West, particularly where there is a heavy rainfall, is by sealing them with bitumen. The Minister for Lands, with myself, is interested in the Brockman Highway, which extends from Nannup to Karridale. This is not a main road but a secondary road. It is, however, one used extensively by tourists practically all the year round. It is not in a very good state of repair, and I ask the Minister for Works to use every endeavour to have this road surfaced with bitumen at the earliest possible date. The local authorities in the South-West, namely, the Augusta-Margaret River Road Board and the Busselton Road Board, have embarked on a plan to seal feeder roads with bitumen. But here again finance is the stumbling block, and every consideration should be given by the Government to the local authorities to help them to provide sealed feeder roads so that residents of the outback may be better provided in that respect.

Since the new Government took office we have heard a great deal about the railways. As the member for Moore has said, the producer is the best cash customer the railways has, and I am alarmed that discussions are now in progress in Cabinet to increase railway fares and freights. This is most alarming to the country people, and I hope that before any action is taken, a full survey will be made of the whole system, especially in the metropolitan area where so much other transport is available to the residents, whereas transport is the main artery of life to people living in distant parts of the State. To my mind the mere thought of pulling up any of the country lines would indicate a retrograde step. I trust that the Government will not act hastily and I implore Ministers, in the interests of the country people, not to increase freights and fares unless and until they are satisfied that every avenue of the Railway Department has first been geared up to its greatest capacity.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

I wish to take members' minds back to 1947. Since that year upwards of 20 new members have entered the House, and I consider it only fair to quote for their benefit from the pages of "Hansard" and refer to certain accusations made by the then member for East Perth, who is now Minister for Housing, concerning employees of the State Housing Commission, which department he now administers. In "Hansard" of the 11th September, 1947, at p. 676, the hon. member spoke as follows:—

I will now make some statements that may be regarded as indiscreet. I make them deliberately, being fully conscious of my responsibility as a

member of Parliament and fully aware of the implications of what I am about to say. In essence my remarks will be a definite criticism of the State Housing Commission. I am not aware of how closely members of that Commission investigate applications, or how many of their decisions—and to what extent—are based on information placed before them. I feel sure that all is not well with the general conduct and administration of the Commission.

"Hansard" contains other references in the same strain made by the same hon. member. He literally accused members of the Housing Commission of not doing their job. As a matter of fact, he went further and implied that certain corrupt practices were occurring within the walls of that department. At that time I was a new member of the House and was rather alarmed at the hon. member's statement. Following his remarks I made a speech on the 16th September, reported at p. 713 of "Hansard," and amongst other things I said—

I feel that the charges made by the member for East Perth have involved the good name of public servants of this State.

I then proceeded to defend the public servants, because I am confident that we in Western Australia possess one of the best and most efficient public services to be found in the British Commonwealth. We have, through bad administration on the part of governments, lost valuable officers from the service.

As I have stated, the member for East Perth in 1947 made accusations against members of the Housing Commission. He now administers that department as Minister for Housing. He has held that position for upwards of eight months.

The Minister for Housing: Not yet six months.

Mr. BOVELL: I should like to know whether the persons he accused in 1947 are still employed by the Commission.

The Premier: That is a "beaut" question.

Mr. BOVELL: I refer to the persons that the hon. member declined to name on that occasion. The Government of the day was so concerned about the accusations of the hon. member that it appointed a Royal Commissioner to inquire into the charges. The Royal Commissioner was Mr. Henry D. Moseley, but to him the member for East Perth refused to divulge the names of the persons whom he had accused. However, that is a thing of the past. We are concerned with the present.

The hon. member has also become Minister for Forests, a department in which he once served as a junior officer, and one of his first actions was to upset every employee in the department, and I make that statement without reservation. There is

not a member of the staff of that department that is not uncertain of the future. When officers of the public service are placed in that position, it is not a good thing for the service.

My experience of the public servants in this State is all to their advantage. I consider that it is a much maligned service. I shall uphold the good name of these officers so long as I find they are doing the work for the State they are doing today. If there are some corrupt practices in the service, those concerned would be in such a minority that it would not be worth considering, and why should we drag the public service as a whole through the mire if one or two of the employees do not measure up to the required standard?

The Premier: Is the hon. member replying to the member for Moore?

Mr. BOVELL: I am making a statement about the turmoil that I feel exists in the Forests Department at present.

The Premier: It sounded a bit as if you were replying to the member for Moore.

Mr. BOVELL: My speech was prepared long before the member for Moore spoke this afternoon. I had had no indication of what he intended to say. The member for Moore made certain allegations today and, if he is called upon to disclose the names of the persons concerned, I know that he will do so. He will not cast a slur upon the whole of the public service as the Minister for Housing could be accused of having done. I feel that the action of the Minister for Forests in regard to the appointment of the advisory committee and the calling for applications for the position of Conservator, when we have as Conservator Dr. T. N. Stoate, the most highly qualified forest officer in Australia, is, to say the least, upsetting to every officer of the department.

The Minister for Housing: You are doing your very best to promote that, of course.

Mr. BOVELL: I wish to leave this suggestion for the Minister's consideration. If Dr. Stoate is to go, let us have an officer to take his place that has served a lifetime with the department. When I was sitting on the Government side of the House, I heard members of the Labour Party criticising the Government I supported for what they described as appointing imports to high public offices. It is imperative for the good of the public service to give those officers who have devoted their lives to the work an opportunity to fill the highest executive post, provided they have the qualifications.

There are men in the department who have high qualifications, though not so high as those possessed by the present Conservator, but if the Minister or the Government has decided that Dr. Stoate's services are no longer required, that is the

business of the Government and neither I nor any member can do much about it, but I do ask that consideration be given to the appointment of an officer who has given his whole life to the work provided the department is not going to be jeopardised in any way by making such an appointment. I implore your assistance in this matter, Mr. Speaker, and hope that you will impress upon the Government the need for retaining stability within the public service that those officers who commenced their life's work in the service should be given an opportunity to fill the highest positions.

The Minister for Housing: As you did with the Railways Commission.

MR. RHATIGAN (Kimberley) [8.27]: First of all, I should like to pay a tribute to my predecessor, the late Hon. A. A. M. Coverley, who represented Kimberley in this Chamber for 29 years. During that period, he worked untiringly in the interests of the people of the North. As Minister for Native Affairs, he took a personal interest in the native question and his knowledge of it was second to none. By all who knew Mr. Coverley, he was respected. All sections irrespective of their political creed respected him and his decease is a sad blow, not only to the Kimberleys but also to the State, and I am very proud to be the successor to such a man.

I wish to thank the electors of Kimberley for the confidence reposed in me by electing me to represent them in this House. It will be my earnest endeavour to justify that confidence and follow as nearly as possible in the footsteps of Mr. Coverley. To you, Mr. Speaker, and to members and officials of the House, I wish to express my gratitude for the manner in which I have been received and for the advice that has been so readily given me.

Innumerable words have been spoken and written as to how to develop and populate the Kimberleys. May I add a few suggestions. First of all, I would propose a revision of the Land Act. The present pastoral properties should be divided into holdings of not more than a quarter of a million acres. Practically all the properties in East Kimberley are cattle stations consisting of a million acres. The staff on such a station usually ranges from two to three white employees and 10 to 15 native stockboys. A herd of cattle consists of 15,000 to 25,000 head. The fencing in most instances is confined to a horse and bull paddock. No effort has been made to segregate the herds and to prevent inbreeding.

On the majority of the properties more bores are required and additional fencing, and in many instances no effort has been made to open up the back country of properties. Reliance has been placed on river waters and springs, with the re-

sult that the river frontages are now completely eaten out. I know of one big company in the East Kimberleys whose station manager has no authority whatsoever even to maintain existing fences and yards. It is necessary for him to obtain authority from the branch office, which is situated in a capital city in the Eastern States. If the sum required exceeds a certain amount, the matter has to be referred to London and permission secured from the shareholders there, who in all probability have not seen the property and possibly have not even seen Western Australia, and have no interest in the matter apart from the proceeds they derive from the place. Can such properties be adequately managed and developed under such circumstances? I say they certainly cannot.

In the West Kimberleys the situation is somewhat different. There we have a mixture of sheep and cattle stations and some improvements have been effected. The country outback has been opened up to a larger degree than has been the case in the East Kimberleys. Unfortunately, the Fitzroy Crossing area is at present experiencing the worst drought in its history. There are families in the North who are anxious to take up a few acres of land and engage in agricultural pursuits, but because of the provisions of the Land Act there is little chance of their being able to do so unless the pastoralist agrees to give them a few acres.

Land along the river frontages is the most suitable for agricultural purposes, but pastoralists are reluctant to part with even a few acres of that land despite the fact that it is not much use to them since it is barren and devoid of feed, simply because there has been concentration on the river frontages as watering points for cattle, instead of the outback land being opened up. After all is said and done, the land belongs to the nation, and not to a few shareholders who in the majority of cases are absentee owners.

It is pleasing to know from the Governor's Speech that it is the Government's intention to provide another vessel of the "Kabbarli" type for the North-West coast. I strongly urge the Government to make every effort to raise the necessary finance to secure a vessel of the "Koolinda" type as that appears to be much more serviceable for the North-West coast. The shipping service is undoubtedly the lifeblood of the North and I hope the time is not far distant when we will see at least a fortnightly service to Wyndham such as operated before the last war. At present the passenger accommodation on the North-West ships is totally inadequate and residents of the North who wish to come south are not always sure of getting a passage both ways. The cost of travelling by air is so high that it is beyond the reach of the workers. We have read in the Press and it has been mentioned in

this Chamber that there is a possibility of building up the tourist trade by the provision of another couple of ships, but in the first place the privilege of travelling must be given to North-West residents.

Another improvement which would be of benefit to the North would be the extension of the activities of the Rural and Industries Bank. I presume that, like every other department, that bank is at present "broke," but let us hope the day will come when it will have some money to lend. I understand that at present its activities do not extend beyond Carnarvon, but I suggest that they should be extended to the Kimberleys in order to assist the few small settlers we have in that area.

To retain the present families in the North, consideration must be given to increases in the away-from-home allowance for children attending boarding schools in the south. Also there should be further concessions in fares of students travelling to and from school. There is no school in the North for children wishing to proceed beyond the sixth standard so it is essential for them to come south—or, in the case of Wyndham, to go to Alice Springs—for further education. On this matter I can speak from personal experience. The cost of educating two children by sending them away from Broome was £500 per year, which is beyond any workman's pocket in the North. We are granted one free trip per year but if children are to be sent one way to school by air, the cost is £52 for two from Broome and increases proportionately.

A good deal of improvement has been made to main roads in the North, but in comparison with what remains to be done before the roads can be even termed tracks, it is a mere fleabite. We have had one main roads engineer stationed in Carnarvon who has been responsible for that portion of the district north of the 26th parallel up to the Northern Territory border. It is humanly impossible for any one person to be responsible for such a large area and I strongly urge the Government to place a second engineer somewhere in the North, in Broome or north of Broome, to control that portion of the road between the 20th parallel and the Northern Territory border.

Taxation is crippling the North and I strongly urge the Government to make every effort to persuade the Commonwealth to see reason and grant taxation concessions. I advocate complete exemption for the first £1,000 earned and concessions to industry provided that the amount of the concession is put back into the industry. The pearling industry is being badly hit by taxation. It does not receive the same concessions as do primary producers. If those engaged in that industry were given substantial concessions for a period of 12 months or two years, I think that the present fleet of 22 boats

would be doubled. It is to be borne in mind that the pearling industry is one of the biggest dollar earners in Australia.

I was glad to see from the Governor's Speech that it is the intention to introduce legislation in connection with native welfare. The present Act is outmoded and obsolete. I would ask the Government to give serious consideration to the building of houses for the coloured people of the North. I am speaking of the North because I know it so thoroughly. The coloured people there are doing a good job in certain industries. The only thing we hear of them is generally condemnation; we never hear anything to their credit. But I would like to point out that in the Broome power house, for instance, the staff of three consists of coloured people. One has a diesel ticket. He came south and recorded a very high pass. As a matter of fact, I think he obtained the highest marks in his particular school.

In connection with the pearling industry, four boats are now under construction in Broome. The work is under the supervision of one white man, but all the carpentry is being done by coloured people, who learnt their trade at the Beagle Bay Mission. Then there are natives working in the Public Works Department in Derby and Broome, and also on the main roads and on the wharves. The domestic staff and nurses in the Broome hospital, too, are coloured people, and there are native girls working on the Derby hospital.

Another matter to which I would like consideration given is the provision of a technical training school in the North so that both whites and natives would be able to learn a trade. At present when young people reach a certain age, after having completed their schooling, there is no avenue of employment open to them unless they have a trade. Assistance should also be given to people compelled to come south for medical attention. I know of two persons, one in Broome and one in Derby, who were not able to receive the required treatment in those towns last year and had to be flown to Perth for special attention. In one case, a doctor, and in the other case a nurse, accompanied the patient and the patients were billed for the fares of the doctor and nurse as well as their own, in addition to the cost of medical attention in Perth. The total ran into a few hundred pounds and absorbed the whole of the workers' savings for years past. It would be a small matter for the Government to give assistance in such cases, which do not occur very often.

I have heard members opposite complaining about the increase in water rates, particularly in Mt. Lawley. Although I have been a resident of the North all my life, I have owned a house in Mt. Lawley for a few years, and have no complaint about the increased water rates. I realise that I have had my good times with that

property and am positive that my constituents in the Kimberleys would be very happy indeed if they could get water at the price for which it is obtained in Mt. Lawley. The cost in Wyndham at present is 5s. per thousand gallons. In Broome one is lucky to get any water at all.

In reply to a question by me the Minister for Works said that the P.W.D. had no knowledge of the dangerous condition of the jetty at Derby. I do not know where the department got its information, but it has a resident engineer at that centre and if he does not know of the condition of the jetty he is probably the only person there who does not. At present they have to tie the wool on to the trucks to get it from the goods shed to the wharf. When I was there in company with the Minister for the North-West a truck was derailed and the men told us that that has been a common occurrence over the last 12 months, and that it is nothing to have two or three derailments during a 12-hour shift. When that sort of thing occurs we are apt to hear comments about the time taken by the waterside workers to unload a ship whereas it is really the fault of the P.W.D. for not having the jetty in order. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members for the hearing I have been afforded.

**MR. HILL (Albany) [8.46]:** I wish first to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on being elected to your high office. I have known you for many years and feel sure you will discharge your duties with credit to yourself and this House. Of course you realise that you will be there for three years only, but I can promise you an enjoyable three years as we private members are jealous of our reputation of being one of the best conducted Houses of Parliament in Australia. I desire to pay tribute to the late Bob Coverley. He may have been one of my political enemies, but there was no man whose friendship I valued more than his. He was the type of person one could trust implicitly. I will not forget the final hours of last session when I was granted a pair to allow me to attend a certain function. The member who paired with me was our late friend and as I said goodbye to Bob that night I felt that it was a final goodbye. I wish his successor every success and hope that he may gain the respect that was felt by all for his predecessor.

The present Government is bawling the shortage of funds, but I think much of our financial difficulty is due to the fact that many electors are out to sell their votes to the highest bidder and I must congratulate members on the Government side on being very good bidders. I will read from the final message by my opponent a couple of days before the election. It is as follows:—

Labour also makes promises and we put them in writing, because we know that the promises we have made can

be fulfilled: (1) Early completion of harbour works, (2) Immediate start on the new regional hospital.

Tonight I asked the Minister what had been done to honour that promise and he replied that there was no knowledge of any promise to make an immediate start on the proposed regional hospital at Albany. I think I am correct in saying that this article was approved before publication by the present Minister for Lands. My opponent then went on as follows:—

(3) New Lower King Bridge, (4) re-opening of Kentdale school and if inadequate, a new one, (5) school playground for Denmark, (6) clearing of Denmark channel inlet, (7) timber royalties to be paid from date of Royal Commission's findings.

A few days ago when I asked a question relating to that matter I was told that it was still under consideration. Further—

(8) New schools at Mt. Manypeaks and Marbellup areas, (9) free school milk for children in Albany as in other towns, (11) progressive policy of free school books, (12) Prices Commission to investigate high prices.

They were the promises made by my opponent two days before the election. The time is long overdue for the establishment in this House of a standing committee on public works such as exists in South Australia. The committee there investigates and reports on all public works of a value of more than £30,000, and I would suggest that a committee be established here to investigate and report on all proposed works to cost more than £100,000. If we had had such a committee in 1946 our present Premier would not have been able to go to Albany with a conglomeration of wharves which were called a harbour scheme, or to tell the people of Bunbury that there was a proposal to spend £800,000 there—Parliament being ignored in each case. I find that on the votes cast at the last election Labour received 69,174 and non-Labour 85,049. The key seats, of course, were Albany, Canning, Maylands and West Perth. The figures for the voting were Albany, 2,604 Labour, 3,307 non-Labour; Canning, 6,344 Labour, 6,022 non-Labour; Maylands, 4,173 Labour, 4,292 non-Labour; West Perth, 3,665 Labour, 3,333 non-Labour. Out of the four seats there was a non-Labour majority of 168. I must admit that an election is not without its humorous side and there is no need to buy comic cuts if one cares to read "The Albany Advertiser" of Monday, February the 2nd, where in the report of the labour candidate's meeting the following appears:—

Mr. Schulze spoke first saying that he was a proud man indeed to have been selected to carry Labour's banner for this election. He stressed the need for an immediate survey of the potential water reserves in and around Albany and alleged that the fact that

there had never been a comprehensive survey of that potential was a main reason for the non-establishment of the oil refinery (Kwinana) at Albany.

It was, said Mr. Schulze, a very poor outlook for Albany if the water that is so vital for the establishment of secondary industries is not available. "We go home at night," said Mr. Schulze, "turn on the tap, and all we get is a loud gurgle."

While I was visiting Government House today a lady brought in a bottle of something and I wondered what it was. At first it looked like dirty vinegar and on inquiry I was told it was water from the taps at Government House and the lady said, "After we bath in it we are dirtier than we were before."

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What did the previous Government do about it?

Mr. HILL: To continue reading—

At this stage Mr. Schulze said that he would read some of the points from the policy of the Labour Party. Looking through his voluminous file, Mr. Schulze suddenly found an address. Holding it up to read, he exclaimed, "Oh, this is the L. and C.L. policy; that's no good to me; I must have left mine at home."

Mr. L. L. Hill is very fond of making misstatements, but he is not so good at proving them.

Then the Premier got up—

Opening his address, Mr. Hawke said that he was very interested to hear Mr. Schulze speak, and thought that he had done remarkably well in his election address. He said he was taken back 30 years to his own first election speech, and after telling two funny stories—

The Premier: Those stories were beauts!

Mr. HILL: To continue—

—went on to say that the present member for the electorate (Mr. L. L. Hill) "apparently hated the sight of me, as he is always trying to hold me up to ridicule whenever he can. He seems to think that I am the arch-angel of the Albany district."

I assure the Premier that my policy is not to hate, but to reciprocate. I will relate now an historical incident not recorded, but told to me by the late Sir George Pearce. During the Abyssinian War when relations between Great Britain and Italy were strained, a tourist ship called at Malta and the Commander-in-Chief told the captain of a destroyer that, to afford the tourists a bit of experience, he was to go out and give them an example of the effect of depth charges. He was shown the exact spot where they were to be detonated. When the charges were detonated up came a couple of Italian sub-



marines and the captain of the destroyer said, "What is the matter? We were only practising and did not know you were there." That reminds me of the efforts of Labour to torpedo me. When I drop a depth charge they squeal.

Members will recall the attack made last session by members of the present Government on the agreement made with the B.H.P. At that time I interjected and the present Premier said to me, "Did you not vote for secession from the Commonwealth?" In fact I did vote for secession as a protest against the unfair deal received by this State from the Commonwealth.

The Premier: We are still receiving unfair treatment.

Mr. HILL: Some years ago I took the members of a visiting Commonwealth Navigation Act Royal Commission up the Kalgan in a launch and they spent the best part of a day in my home. One member, a New South Wales senator, said to me, "The people of Perth and Fremantle are so busy complaining about the unfair treatment they get from the Commonwealth that they cannot see that they are giving the outlying parts of their State greater cause for complaint."

No part of the British Empire has received such a rotten deal from its Government as Albany has received from successive Labour Governments. I remember that after I was elected in 1936 a Labour Minister came down to Albany with his wife and some of his family and I was invited to be in the railway coach with them. I was not happy as I was made to feel that I was in the enemy camp. One day the Minister turned on me and said, "You need not think Collier will do anything for Albany. You turned our man out and we will do nothing for you." Just before they left a senior civil servant who was with the party said to me, "I am sorry for what you have in front of you. They are going to give you hell." During my first years in Parliament the late member for Maylands, Mr. Harry Shearn, often took the then member for East Perth, Tom Hughes, and me home.

The Premier: What a gang!

Mr. HILL: One night he turned to us and said, "There are three members that the Labour Party want to ridicule; you two and Mrs. Cardell-Oliver." They have tried to do so, but have failed. Once when I was seriously ill the late Sir John Kirwan came over to me and said, "I have heard a lot say they admire you. They ridicule you and do everything to put you off, but you are sticking to your job and are winning out." That was in 1946.

In 1945 I introduced a influential deputation of representatives from the Great Southern to our present Premier who was then Minister for Works, requesting him to provide a modern reclamation harbour scheme for Albany. He was very pleasant

with his promises and I came away quite pleased with myself but, as it turned out, making a big mistake. I thought, "At last we have a Labour man big enough to give us a fair deal." That was in September, 1945. In the corridor he promised to show me the plans of that harbour when they were sufficiently advanced for him to do so. However, we heard nothing about them until October, 1946, and then the A.L.P. at Albany announced that the worthy Minister for Works was coming down to Albany to make an important statement. He made a long rambling speech and at last produced a plan for the harbour programme at Albany which he waved around.

I had put him on a pedestal, but when he started to describe the harbour improvements at Albany and said, "This is the first instalment of a plan for the reclamation of 18 acres," the Minister fell off the pedestal right into the mud, and at the general election the mud began to smell and some of it still sticks to him. I did not have the opportunity of studying that plan for the harbour works at Albany. I came to Perth and visited the office of the Under Secretary for Works. I said to him "Can I see the plan for the works at Albany?" and he replied "As you are the member for the district, I suppose you can," and he brought it in. I looked at it and I said, "Do you know what you want to do with this?" I said, "You can tie it up with a lot of red tape and put it on the shelf and forget all about it, because it is no good."

I also said to him, "You know Albany and the importance of motor transport and the extension of the railway yards. Here is a port with 11 berths and the only approach to it is along Stirling Terrace and Brunswick Road, which are about 30-ft. wide and over the hill 140-ft. high on the road to the deep water jetty." The Under Secretary looked at me and said, "It is not too good is it?" A little later I saw the Chief Railway Civil Engineer and said to him, "What do you think of Hawke's plan for the improvement of the harbour at Albany with no addition to the railway yards?" He replied, "The railway yards should be double to serve the existing berth." If the Premier, who was then Minister for Works, had kept his promise and had shown me the plans before they were produced, I could have told him that as plans for a harbour scheme for the port of Albany, they were an absolute wash-out. It took him eight months to have those plans prepared but it took me only eight seconds to realise that they were no good.

The Minister had to suffer the humiliation of seeing those plans rejected lock, stock and barrel by a responsible expert who had been appointed by himself to investigate harbours in this State. Later, as Leader of the Opposition, he went on

to say that the Labour Government was responsible for the planning of the harbour works at Bunbury.

I suggest that a monument be erected at Bunbury to our present Premier as the man responsible for the start of the harbour works there so that in ten years' time the taxpayer will know who was responsible for this scandalous waste of public money. I am proud to say I was successful in stopping the present Premier from spoiling the State's finest harbour, which is situated at Albany. I am sorry I have been unable, however, to prevent this scandalous waste of money at Bunbury.

The Minister for Works: It was the same engineer.

Mr. HILL: Which engineer?

The Minister for Works: The one that planned Bunbury harbour also planned the Albany harbour.

Mr. HILL: Here is a report by the Royal Commission on the development of outports, two members of which are now members of Cabinet. I have not forgotten this incident when we considered the evidence but another member of the commission has. One of the members of that commission suggested that we should scrap Bunbury as a port. I was not agreeable to going to that extent but we recommended that the Tydeman report on the Bunbury silting problems be implemented. When he speaks, the Premier may be able to explain why he did not appoint Col. Tydeman to report on the Bunbury improvements before that scheme was started. If we of the Outports Royal Commission had had the Tydeman report on Bunbury we would have had, on the evidence, no alternative but to have recommended the abandonment of that port.

I am offering this criticism because I have the courage to stand up here and tell the truth about Bunbury. Ports should be financial undertakings. In 1925 the Bunbury Harbour Board showed a profit of £792 but for the year ended the 30th June, 1951, the loss on working was £22,147 and with the interest on loan capital, the total loss for the year amounted to £55,213. In 1952 the loss on working amounted to £28,021 and with interest, the loss totalled £68,510. Fifty-three ships used that port, which meant that for every ship that entered it, the taxpayer had to subsidise the undertaking to the extent of over £1,200.

I disagree with Mr. Tydeman who says that the cogent cause of few ships using Bunbury is the insufficient depth of water. The cogent reason for ships not calling at Bunbury is its proximity to Fremantle. The zone system is not recognised by business people or by shipping men. In Col. Tydeman's report it will be seen that the improvements suggested for preventing the

silting of Bunbury harbour were to cut through the estuary and plug up the old entrance. Last year members will recall that the member for Bunbury referred to that work which cost about £70,000 as a tragic blunder. Another means of preventing the silting is to extend the groyne and the breakwater. Col. Tydeman says that the present work will last for seven years. He then goes on to say they will have to put 150ft. on to the groyne and 100ft. on to the breakwater, yearly, which would mean a cost of about £70,000 a year.

I believe the improvements that are being constructed to prevent the silting at Bunbury will eventually cost about £1,000,000. Col. Tydeman then points out that when the groyne and the breakwater reach their limit, the harbour will require two dredges at Bunbury to be in continuous operation at an annual cost of £33,000. Parliament has never been given the opportunity of considering the question whether this expenditure is in the interests of the State.

The Premier: What did the hon. member's Government do about it when it was in office?

Mr. HILL: It had to carry on the work in the same way as the present Government is doing, or go out of office. The Premier knows quite well that he cannot stop the work at Bunbury because he will lose the Bunbury vote. The present Government only had a majority of one in the election for the Bunbury seat when it held that electorate for the first three years.

The Premier: What about the second three years?

Mr. HILL: Do not worry! I have in mind all the trouble I had with the previous Government.

The Premier: Good on you!

Mr. HILL: I would now like to refer to the duties of the present Minister for Transport. In Western Australia transport is in a terrible mess and that is because we have never had a sound transport administration. What we need in this State is a transport department. For example, the Minister for Works has under his jurisdiction a Director of Works, an Assistant Director of Works, an Under Secretary for Works and an Assistant Under Secretary; but the Minister for Transport has no expert officers to advise him on transport matters as a whole.

At the time when the present Minister for Transport was chairman of the Royal Commission on the outports of this State, I suggested that he should obtain two reports, which he did. One dealt with transport in Australia generally by Sir George Buchanan and the other was a report on the presidential address of the then manager of the port of London and the chairman of the Institute of Transport in England. At the conclusion of that

address, he said that he visualised the time was fast approaching when all means of transport would be used where they could best serve the community, and that when that came about the means of land transport on the one side and sea transport on the other would be co-ordinated.

When the present Minister has obtained a sound transport administration he will need to work for a sound port policy. That is going to be a very difficult matter. I do not know why it is, but of all major problems I think that is the least understood. It is rather interesting to note what outsiders think of Western Australia. I have here an extract from the Commonwealth Grants Commission's eighth report made in 1941. It reads as follows:—

The expenditure out of loan funds on outer harbours in Western Australia is large and it does not appear to us that a sufficient attempt is made to get an adequate return from the users in the districts served. If the traffic will not stand the cost, there is no reason for expenditure on harbours unless it is essential for the industry of the district, in which case the industry should be charged through a special rate. This policy has been tried in other parts of Australia, and insistence upon it has on occasions led the people of a district to decide that the expenditure on a harbours is uneconomic. It is true their interests. A multiplication of harbours is uneconomic. It is true that in Western Australia the port of Fremantle returns a large profit, but this does not make up for the losses on the other ports. In any case the profit of Fremantle is no excuse for an unscientific and unco-ordinated policy of harbour development. A large expenditure has been made on the Bunbury Harbour, which is only about 100 miles from Perth, and it is doubtful whether it has succeeded in overcoming the disadvantages of the port.

In 1946 I had the pleasure of sending to the late Dr. G. L. Wood, who was a member of the Federal Grants Commission, a copy of the report of the Royal Commission on Outports and also a copy of a report of Sir David Owen's speech. I received from him in acknowledgment a letter which I shall read to members. It was as follows:—

I found all the documents most interesting, informative and helpful in every way. Sir David Owen's paper is sound and very applicable to Australian conditions. I have marked it for reference when I get back to Melbourne.

Unfortunately I find little evidence that people in Western Australia, or indeed in any other State in Australia,

are prepared to give proper and sound study to the port problem. It has a bearing, as you so well know, upon the costs of our products overseas and upon the cost of overseas products here. The natural harbour, the possibility of easy drainage of exports to the ports, and the great advantages of quick "turn round" of ships are all being neglected.

All good wishes in your fight for Albany.

I value that letter because Dr. Wood was looked upon at the time as one of the leading economists in Australia. We have to face facts. As Sir David Owen remarked, a port, to be effective, has to adapt itself to changing forms of transport. During my time I have seen a revolution in that direction. I worked on board one of the last of the sailing ships. I have been in the engine room that contained plant which was at that time one of the most powerful afloat, namely, that installed in H.M.S. "Hood." I have driven a horse and cart and I have driven a motor truck. Improvements in the method of transport have increased the areas a port may serve. It has increased the size of ships, increased labour costs and led to the creation of a demand for fewer ports. Fifty years ago we wanted ports scattered all over the place. Today we want to limit the number to a few properly equipped ports, and the only four ports that will survive in Western Australia are Geraldton, Fremantle, Albany and Esperance. All the others will gradually go to the wall.

I shall next make some references to Kwinana. I have closely followed matters relating to Cockburn Sound for the last 43 years. The opening up of Kwinana is the biggest gamble any Government has ever undertaken. It is one I support because I think the odds are with the Government and the stakes are very high. The late Sir George Pearce, in his book "From Carpenter To Cabinet," indicates very clearly that he was not at all proud of the fact that he was the father of the Henderson Naval Base. Some of the last words I said to the late John Curtin were that if ever he were to take steps to open up Cockburn Sound it would have my opposition.

I was a few years ago at Robb's Jetty with a party that included the present Minister for Railways. He was called away to the telephone at one stage and did not hear the conversation that ensued. I was standing in a position where one could look over Cockburn Sound. I said to some of those who were present, "The late John Curtin's big blunder! I think this helped in hastening the death of Mr. Curtin." One of the gentlemen said, "I do not think you are far out." For my part I am sceptical about the channels. Forty years ago I was talking to a harbour engineer who told me that he had had 25 years experience at Fremantle and that

when he had heard about the proposal to open up the Sound he felt that the authorities would regret it. He added that Nature put the banks there and Nature would do its best to keep them there.

I followed the situation as it developed, and I did not feel so pessimistic. I think that the dredging maintenance will be a substantial undertaking. In conversation with one of the officers of a dredge working in the Sound, I asked him what they were shifting and he replied that it was sand. He added that there would be plenty of work for the "Sir James Mitchell". That vessel will be an ideal dredger for maintenance work in connection with the channels. However, there is no turning back now. I shall never forget a conversation I had with an elderly man at Rockingham. It was during the war period. He said that there was to be another Pearl Harbour at Cockburn Sound. Admiral Fraser had just been down to Rockingham to look over the position and he had remarked, "I am not going to use this base." After that, he said, all work down there had been stopped.

Later I came to Perth and saw the then Town Planning Commissioner, Mr. Davidson. I told him that I had heard that the Cockburn Sound project was going to the pack. He replied that if that was true, it would upset the whole economy of Western Australia. I certainly appreciate that the opening up of Cockburn Sound will alter the economy of this State very considerably and for the better. The Government has acted rightly in carrying on with the work. I am sorry that the oil refinery is to be established so close to Fremantle. It would be better if it were placed further away. Of course, I am glad that it is to be set up here rather than in some part of the more thickly populated portions of the Eastern States.

Of course there has been a lot of talk about converting Cockburn Sound into a naval base, but we must face facts. One is that the naval position today is entirely different from what it was in 1914 or in 1939. Our potential enemy is not building up a surface fleet, and consequently we do not require a large surface fleet ourselves. Our naval activity must be concentrated on anti-submarine warfare defence. Cockburn Sound and Albany constitute safe bases for ships as part of an anti-submarine move. At the present time practically all the naval defence of Australia is based on Sydney Harbour, and one atomic bomb would wipe the whole lot out of existence. I still think that if a naval base is to be constructed in Western Australia, a site at Albany would be the better proposition. A few months ago I received a letter from a senior naval officer to whom I had forwarded a couple of communications, one of them a speech I had delivered in the House in 1945. In it, he stated—

Dear Mr. Hill,

Many thanks indeed for letting me read those two interesting papers. Albany, as you have stressed, has a fine Fleet anchorage and is easily defensible. The inner harbour, of course, would have to have a lot of money spent on it, chiefly to dredge it, but no doubt that could be done at less expense than is envisaged for Cockburn Sound.

I imagine that suitable sites can be found for large air stations—very necessary these days, not only for Fleet aircraft, but also for defence. However, as a mere pommie, I feel I had better say no more.

I'd like to tell you how very much we all enjoyed our visit to your most hospitable town.

Needless to say, I shall not mention the name of the signatory. If we are to have a naval base in Western Australia, for Heaven's sake let the site be decided upon without resort to political considerations! Let us have the base where it is likely to be most useful!

Today, the Minister for Works answered a question about the building of a transit shed at Bunbury harbour. The only reason why that shed is likely to be provided is because we have one at Albany. A transit shed is needed at Albany because of the handling of general cargo at that port, but if one is provided at Bunbury, it will prove to be a white elephant. If I were the member for that district, I would ask the Government to make the money available for the purpose of increasing the tourist attractions and providing a first-class golf course. The money, if spent in this way, would prove of much greater benefit to Bunbury than the building of a transit shed. I also support the suggestion that we should do everything possible to encourage the development of tourist traffic to Geraldton.

During the war, we had a commission on the question of utilising the outports to greater advantage. I was speaking to the chairman of the Melbourne Harbour Trust, and offered to sell him one of our harbours at Albany. He replied, "There might be some difficulty in shifting the harbour, but my word, what an opportunity you have to develop the tourist trade!"

I congratulate the Government on what I believe is its intention to continue the work begun by the previous Administration of developing the southern province of the State. We have been told of the land settlement scheme at Rocky Gully and Manypeaks on various occasions, but very little mention is ever made of the rapid progress that has been made in the development of the southern areas by private people. In the Ongerup area alone applications have been received for 100,000 acres of land. We have to realise that the southern end of the State should be

carrying a million people, and that if we do not get white people settled there, other people will come.

Since the election, several Ministers have paid a visit to Albany. One was the Minister for Lands, who came on two occasions and enjoyed himself on both. He was followed by the Chief Secretary, who had a most enjoyable time. The next visitor was the Deputy Premier, and I gathered that he had never spent a more enjoyable time anywhere than when he was the guest of the Albany Road Board. Another visitor was the Minister for Fisheries, who wrote to me beforehand and left all arrangements in my hands. He too enjoyed himself. I arranged an outing for him, and when he starts to talk about fish, he will have no difficulty in adhering to the truth without taking advantage of the fisherman's privilege. He will be able to tell us about the whale he helped to catch and the one that got away.

I am not a native of Western Australia, but I am keenly anxious to see this State come into its own. It is a great country with immense possibilities, but the tragedy of it all is that in 191,000 square miles, we have more than half the population of the whole State. We must adopt a sound policy of decentralisation and part of that policy should be to build up centres in the country. Let me repeat a remark made by the late Lord Forrest, namely, that Western Australia should be divided into three provinces, with centres at Geraldton, Fremantle and Albany. I am satisfied that when a man like Lord Forrest spoke in that strain, he was speaking as a statesman.

On motion by Mr. Brady, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.28 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 20th August, 1953.

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

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

*Hon. Sir Ross McLarty and Attitude to Allegation of Bribery.*

**HON. SIR ROSS McLARTY (Murray)** [2.17:] With your permission, Sir, I would like to make a personal explanation arising from the remarks of the member for Moore at yesterday's sitting, in the course of which he referred to certain charges of bribery. On reading "The West Australian" this morning, I found the following:—

Mr. Ackland said that he and Mr. Jones were put in touch with a man who admitted that he had been a party to graft and was willing to make a statement to the Premier and to the police.