

like individuals. They have very short memories for misery and defeat but long memories for their hours of glory and aggrandisement.

In my opinion, Japan is only awaiting the day when she can have a free hand, and she may achieve politically what she might be hampered in doing economically, and again threaten the peace of Australia. The last time she failed. Next time she might succeed. About five weeks ago there was a pan-Asian conference held at New Delhi. I think it was attended by 28 Asiatic nations plus Egypt. One of the two major items discussed at the conference was the question of free migration and the three countries particularly mentioned were East Africa, Australia and the Pacific islands. Migration to those places was what those nations were considering and I think it is something we ourselves should consider.

It may be asked: What is the solution? First of all, we must fill our continent and my suggestion, which is not unlike Mr. Calwell's, is to use political and strategic considerations to achieve what perhaps economic efforts alone cannot do. I suggest that we should sell to England and America the idea that they, as well as we, have a stake in the Pacific. We can represent Australia as the apex of their strategic triangle. They have the men, the plant and the money and they would solve the problem that we are finding it very difficult to solve. Since the war ended, 80,000 migrants have gone to Canada from England, and during the same period only 1,500 have come to Australia. That is something worth thinking about.

I said earlier that talk without constructive suggestions was wishful thinking. Believing as I do that Western Australia is the most under-populated State in the Commonwealth, and the most vulnerable State, and that our future development and defence are bound up with the question of migration, let me offer for consideration a ten-point plan which would, if adopted, achieve something of real value. Here it is:—

1. The appointment of an assistant Minister to deal directly with migration, and in particular to press Western Australia's claims for development and defence.

2. An intensive publicity campaign to condition the minds of the people to this grave and growing need, by means of lectures, Press articles, films and instruction in schools.

3. An official, nation-wide drive to encourage larger families, stressing the supreme value of the family unit, and the value of the native-born Australian as the best possible immigrant, with a scale of marriage and family allowances based on the Russian model as published in V. H. Wallace's book, "Women and Children First."

4. An educational programme designed to teach young and old the cultural and scientific achievements of nations other than our own, and stressing the need for a spirit of welcome and co-operation.

5. A programme of suitable instruction to all incoming migrants designed to adapt them to Australian conditions and appreciation of the Australian way of life.

6. The provision of suitable reception houses to house migrants for a course of training as set out in point 5, this course including a course in simple English using Basic English as a groundwork, the length of the course varying according to the need for such instruction.

7. The inculcation of a national Australian spirit after the American model but linked with the ideal of a British Commonwealth.

8. The encouragement of the idea of absorption by infiltration and the discouragement of the development of national groups.

9. The planning and initiation of a programme of works and country development calculated to employ and absorb migrants; country centres to be asked to assist in the general plan of decentralisation, having in mind the special need for development of the North-West as an urgent item in the defence programme.

10. The closest possible liaison with the Federal authority and the encouragement of foreign capital investment, both national and individual, and the importation of industrial plant and technical skill to speed up the process of employment and absorption.

That, as I see it, is the course that we should adopt. We are, as it were, at the cross-roads of destiny. Either we go forward or we drift towards disaster, and possible extinction. That is the choice. There is no other. So let us give a lead to our people to grasp the opportunity that offers. Never let it be said that we abandoned our opportunities through craven fears of being great. I support the motion.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South) [5.46]: I desire first, Mr. Deputy President, to thank previous speakers who have congratulated me on my election to this House. I wish also to congratulate you, Sir, on your elevation to the office that you hold during the absence, owing to illness, of our President. As a new member the thing that impressed me most, despite statements and

inferences to the contrary, was the favourable circumstances under which this Government came into office.

The difficulties under which the previous Administration laboured were intensified by its having to co-operate to such an extent with the Commonwealth Government in making most, if not all, of its resources available in furtherance of the Commonwealth Government's all-in effort to accomplish the successful conclusion of the war. In an effort to achieve this end the legislation usually enacted had, of necessity, to be set aside or postponed. Such essential departments as those controlling the maintenance of railways, shipping, roads and—most important of all—housing, had to be neglected temporarily owing to the drastic shortage of manpower, transport and material.

A large percentage of the timber milled and asbestos manufactured in this State was required in the erection of camps, etc. to accommodate the Fighting Forces. Formerly this State held huge reserves of building materials but today in the district which I represent it is impossible to buy 100 ft. of flooring, despite the fact that there has been a change of Government. I do not intend to criticise the Government for this as it has not been in office very long; but it must expect some criticism and accept some responsibility in view of its election promises in connection with housing, which was made a vital issue.

I am entirely convinced that the Wise Government was unduly criticised in this regard, as the figures for the months of January, February and March of this year are in favourable comparison with those of the ensuing three months of the McLarty Administration. It must be remembered that most of the materials used in the building trade, with the exception of bricks, timber and asbestos sheeting, have to be imported from the Eastern States. Again the annexation of manpower, supply of raw materials and transport must be taken into consideration. The present Government has enlarged the scope of the Housing Commission. It is useless setting up boards or enlarging commissions unless there is a greater amount of raw materials available. The only way of achieving that is to make more attractive the conditions of the timber workers. Any industry

offering good conditions invariably has an abundant supply of manpower available. The same can be said of other commodities required for house building. Supporters of the present Government in this House were responsible for defeating a Bill which made provision for giving better housing conditions to the timber workers of this State. Boards and commissions get us nowhere; the things we want now are flooring boards and weatherboards.

If Press reports are correct, I am pleased to see that the Government intends to establish a sulphide treatment plant at Kalgoolie; but one plant will not be nearly sufficient to cope with the sulphide ore that exists in the huge area that I represent. I think the Labour Party can claim the credit for establishing so many State batteries throughout the mining districts. I see no reason why other plants cannot be established at Coolgardie, Southern Cross, and at Norseman, where so many small mine owners and prospectors have been operating successfully for many years. No effort should be spared to treat every ounce of gold available, as it means so much to the economy of the State.

I believe it is inevitable that the price of gold will be increased, and I think the Government should increase the prospector's allowance. When this allowance was first made it was fixed in accordance with the basic wage existing at that time, and the State's prosperity was not then comparable with what it is today. I emphasise the fact that every ounce of gold adds to the State's economy. If the Commonwealth Government intends that the price of gold should be increased, it should be done on a sliding scale.

The Government has appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the Workers' Compensation Act and its operations, but I notice that no member of a trade union is on that Commission. I hope that the Government will amend the existing Act, to provide conditions much more favourable to the workers of this State. Labour Governments have on a number of occasions amended this Act by adding further advantages or by increasing some of the benefits, and on other occasions have made the attempt but have failed to get the legislation through this House. I hope that as a result of the investigations of the Royal Com-

mission, the present Government will amend the Act, which at present provides for a worker to be paid half wages in the event of his being off work through accident, up to a maximum of £4 10s. per week irrespective of his responsibilities. Most workers, of course, receive much less than the maximum. These rates must be increased.

Under the Commonwealth Act any worker doing manual work, irrespective of wages, is eligible to receive compensation. The Government in 1944 amended this Act to provide for payments in respect of disabilities under the Second Schedule, so that the worker would be paid, irrespective of the wages received. The provision of Section 2 of the Workers' Compensation Act, which is a vicious section, should not be limited to 12 months. An incapacitation such as silicosis, which is a progressive disease, discovered after a man has left the mining industry, is in all probability caused by the employment, and should be recognised as such, but no claim can be made if the recent employee has T.B., nor can he re-enter the industry. The maximum compensation in Western Australia is £750, which should be received, particularly in the case of a fatal accident.

Compensation under the New South Wales Act was limited to £1,000 and that amount has been raised. That Act provides a weekly payment for life, fixed by a Commission. It was increased from £3 to £3 10s. for the worker, from £1 to £1 5s. for the wife and from 8s. 6d. to 10s. for each child up to school-leaving age, with a maximum of £6 per week. I trust that workers and their dependants in this State will shortly be as well, if not better off, in the event of meeting with sickness, accident or death during the course of their employment.

The roads in my district are in a shocking state, and I hope the Government has a good road programme in hand. With the increase of motor traffic this is a most vital factor. The main road east of Carrabin to Coolgardie is now under construction, for which the Wise Government can claim the credit, as it was assembling the necessary plant and materials when it went out of office. I trust that this road will be extended south through Norseman to Esperance, so that the people of the Goldfields will have a good road to their natural seaside resort. This road could then be extended to Hope-

toun, Ravensthorpe, and eventually to Albany.

The road from Esperance to Hopetoun is one of the worst in Western Australia today. At Hopetoun there is a promising fishing industry. The men who went there to establish it are making a success of an industry hitherto unknown in that part of the State. Ravensthorpe promises a reasonable yield in the mining of both gold and copper. In addition to serving the tourist traffic, such a road would serve the prosperous mining town of Norseman and equally prosperous agricultural districts. I would suggest that the Government give consideration to the establishment of a national park reserve at Esperance. If one-thousandth of the money spent in the metropolitan area were to be spent at Esperance, it would be one of the beauty spots of the State.

When that tolerant and broad-minded statesman, the late Lord Forrest, proclaimed King's Park as a national reserve, I think it is safe to say that the whole population of this State was not much greater than that of the Goldfields today. Had it not been for the vision and foresight of that wonderful statesman, we would not have been able to show tourists this national reserve, of which we are so proud. I do not think I am asking for too much in requesting that an area be surveyed and proclaimed in the vicinity of Esperance Bay, so that future generations may take in it a pride equal to that which we today take in King's Park. It should be done now, before the land gets into the hands of private monopolists, because if that is allowed to happen the State, to provide such a reserve, will have to buy it back again.

I believe it has recently been suggested that the timetable for the Esperance railway be altered. That would cause considerable inconvenience and hardship to workers on the Eastern Goldfields and to business people at Esperance. The train now leaves Kalgoorlie at 7 p.m. on Saturday, arriving at Esperance at 8 a.m. on Sunday morning. This enables Goldfields workers to begin their holidays without loss of time. The train leaves on the return journey on the Friday evening, bringing the workers back to Kalgoorlie and the surrounding districts at 8 a.m. on the Saturday, thus giving housewives an opportunity to obtain provisions

for the week-end, and enabling the bread-winners to go to work on the Monday morning. The suggested alteration might mean that the workers would lose an extra day's pay, and the people of the Goldfields view the suggestion with alarm. I trust that the Minister will not allow any alteration to the existing timetable.

There are many farming properties in the south-western area of my electorate. Roads, of course, are one of the main concerns. I refer particularly to the reconstruction of the main roads, which in most instances are in bad condition during the winter months. Most of the farmers lack many of the implements necessary to carry on the efficient working of their land. In most cases they have tractors, harvesters and so on, and when a major breakdown occurs they may be held up for months, either waiting for spare parts to arrive or sending them to Perth to be repaired. If the Government could ensure that engineering shops and garages in those areas had first priority with regard to tools of trade, lathes, etc., they would be able to operate efficiently. This would obviate loss and inconvenience to the farmers and would keep them going at all times, particularly during seeding and harvesting. Many have left the land not only because they could not buy new machinery, but because they have not been able to maintain their plant.

Recently, in one town, I was told of three young men who had established themselves on the land and had shown promise of being efficient farmers, but who had to seek other occupations for the reasons that I have stated. In mining areas a number of essential commodities have been scarce at different times. One very serious shortage is that of bicycle tyres and tubes. I hope the Minister dealing with supplies will view this matter urgently, as many miners and prospectors rely entirely on this form of transport to enable them to reach their work and earn a livelihood. Another serious shortage on the Goldfields is that of infant foods, which I understand have been short elsewhere. At the same time we had the spectacle of racehorses being transported inter-state by air and other transport, while mothers had to do with makeshift foods for their infants, in a great many cases with worrying results.

The absence of water has precluded the enjoyment of amenities on the Goldfields because the people cannot afford to pay the high charges. It is because of that position that we do not see the attractive lawns at the front and back of houses on the fields that are so noticeable in the metropolitan area. If lawns and gardens were cultivated at Kalgoorlie on the basis we see in the city it would cost the people on the Goldfields at least £30 a year. At that price water could only be regarded as a luxury and that applies to other amenities that the use of water would make possible. Of course, water is procurable in abundance on the fields as it is in other parts of the State but, as I have indicated, it is available only at prohibitive prices. If the Government could see its way clear to lower the charges, much more water would be used at Kalgoorlie at no extra expense to the Government. On the contrary, it would provide a source of added revenue.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the campaign in progress in connection with the colony housing scheme at Wooroloo. An appeal has been launched on the Goldfields where workers have been asked to contribute and employers to subsidise on a £ for £ basis, a fund to assist the movement. I know of at least one union that has agreed to impose a levy on its members at the rate of 1½d. in the £ and their employers—they are two of the local governing bodies—are to subsidise the scheme on a £ for £ basis. I have nothing but praise for the worthy effort undertaken by Dr. Henzell and have no intention of offering any criticism of the enthusiasm he is displaying in that effort. At the same time, I regard it as rather degrading that a man of his capacity should be devoting his talents and ability to organising this scheme. I think his time could be far more profitably employed if it were devoted to the medical side of his work.

I understand that the Commonwealth Government has made available a considerable amount of money to the States for the purpose of dealing with tuberculosis. I do not know how much of that grant has been allocated to Western Australia but it should be possible by agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments, to provide the money necessary for the establish-

ment of the colony without asking people to impose fresh taxation upon themselves, particularly as in many instances the people concerned can ill-afford to undertake the added obligation. This matter is of particular importance to the people on the Goldfields as tuberculosis is a secondary disease that in many instances develops consequent upon the industrial diseases, such as silicosis, which are so common among workers in the goldmines. If this problem were tackled seriously, it would mean much saving in the present great waste of human life. I feel sure that members will agree that it is more important to save the lives of Australians than to hunt the Continent for immigrants. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.1 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 20th August, 1947.

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

QUESTIONS.

SHIPPING, INTERSTATE.

As to Tonnage of Imports.

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Chief Secretary:

What was the total tonnage of imports which arrived at Fremantle from the Eastern States during—

(a) the last three months of the Wise Government's term of office;

(b) the first three months of the McLarty Government's term of office?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(a) 89,095 tons (January, February and March, 1947).

(b) 76,177 tons (April, May and June, 1947).

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Well!

MOTOR LICENSE FEES.

As to Granting Reduction.

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Attorney General:

(1) For what reasons were the license fees for motor vehicles increased as from the 1st July last?

(2) In view of the present restrictions on the supply of petrol to consumers and the proposed further reduction as recently announced, will action be taken to grant immediate relief to motorists by way of reduced motor vehicle licenses, together with rebates to those who have already paid excess amounts?

(3) If not, why not?

The ACTING PREMIER (for the Attorney General) replied:

(1) (a) Local Government Group Associations urged the repeal of the 25 per cent. reduction on license fees on petrol-driven vehicles. The Traffic Branch of the Police Department also favoured restoration.

(b) As at the 1st July a great proportion of motorists were receiving very substantial use from their vehicles not only for business but also for pleasure. Observations on roads at week-ends and holidays and ordinary traffic at other times indicated how substantial was the approach to normal use.

(c) The concession was originally granted at a time when petrol was at a premium and most private vehicles almost stationary, and business vehicles heavily restricted unless they used gas producers. Consequently gas producer vehicles received no reduction.

(d) There are scarcely any gas producers in use now and it is obvious, therefore, that the removal of the restrictions had been so considerable as to render their use unnecessary.