

I think it was an American who was quoted in the paper last week as having said that we had some of the worst roads in the world. Whether or not this is a fact I would not know, but it is certain that, if the Government is going to keep transport costs to the ports at a level where the primary producer can cope with them, only a good road will bring this about.

THE HON. V. J. FERRY (South-West) [7.50] p.m.: I rise to oppose the amendment. Very briefly, I just wish to reply to a comment which was made during the course of the debate concerning roads which, in some instances, are built and maintained by private operators rather than by a local authority or the Main Roads Department. I understand that the Main Roads Department has already financially assisted a firm, which constructs and maintains its own roads, by contributing money towards the upkeep of those roads. All operators—whether they travel on public roads or on roads constructed privately—are subject to the road maintenance charge. However, in some cases I understand the Main Roads Department has met the request of people concerned for some financial adjustment, particularly in the instances to which I have referred. Also, I understand that negotiations are proceeding with some sections of the community, particularly in isolated industries where people do, in fact, construct and maintain their own roads under certain conditions, with a view to some alleviation in regard to the funds necessary for the maintenance of these roads. Therefore, there is some flexibility in the situation at the present time. Although, as I have said, all the vehicles which use these roads, are subjected to the charge, consideration is currently being given—and it will be given in the future—to some adjustments in these circumstances.

I would also like to refer very briefly—as did The Hon. Mr. House—to a survey which was conducted in Africa on the costs of operating buses and trucks on roads with different surfaces. The report on this survey was compiled by Messrs. Millard and Bonney. They quoted the mean cost in pence per rated gross ton mile on freight vehicles using bitumen surfaces at 0.94d. and on unimproved roads with gravel surfaces the cost was 1.69d., which is almost double that for a sealed surface.

I just mention these figures to emphasise some of the references made by The Hon. Mr. House, and with those few words, Mr. President, I oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes—8.

Hon. J. Dolan	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. R. H. C. Stubbs
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. W. F. Willsee

(Teller)

Noes—17.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. E. D. Brand	Hon. G. C. MacKinnon
Hon. V. J. Ferry	Hon. N. McNeill
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. T. O. Perry
Hon. C. E. Griffiths	Hon. H. R. Robinson
Hon. J. Heitman	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. E. C. House	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. A. R. Jones	(Teller.)

Pairs

Ayes	Noes
Hon. F. J. S. Wise	Hon. C. R. Abbey
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. H. K. Watson

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate (on motion) Resumed

THE HON. G. E. D. BRAND (Lower North) [7.57 p.m.]: I wish to add to the Address-in-Reply. Firstly, I would like to touch on an interesting topic raised by The Hon. Mr. Ferry in his speech on the Address-in-Reply on opening day. I would like to comment on the importance of "travel money" as he called it.

A friend of mine was in England at the time of the seamen's strike over there and in a letter to me he mentioned how much money Ireland had lost because of the effect of the strike on tourism. I quote—

He said Ireland was feeling the effect of the British seamen's strike, which had been in progress for six weeks at the time of writing.

Being in the middle of the northern summer and holiday season, more than 70,000 cars had been expected from England and the occupants were estimated to spend \$200,000,000.

This certainly represents a loss to the economy.

As far as tourism is concerned, it is interesting to note that the goldfields have requested the Minister for Tourists to endeavour to have a road cut through from Mandilla Station, on the Norseman road through Kambalda, the new nickel find, to Kalgoorlie. By this means those on the goldfields hope to induce people to travel from Kambalda and on to Kalgoorlie instead of going straight to Perth. As a result, Kalgoorlie would obtain some money from tourism.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: This would mean that Coolgardie would miss out again!

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: Emanating from the very worth-while trip through the Kimberleys, which members of Parliament recently enjoyed, was a visit to Carnarvon. Now that members in this House have seen the research station at Carnarvon, and have seen the great amount of seed growth and testing which is carried on there, they will understand that Carnarvon faces water problems. Two rivers have come down this year and, although they have not been very big rivers in the general sense of the word, they have supplied sufficient water for this year. However, I am informed by the research station officer at Carnarvon it is hoped to have further rain in the area.

This, of course, is the immediate wish but the people are also interested to hear that the Commonwealth Government will come in and assist in an inspection of an area, or a testing of the area, in order to find a place at which to dam the Gascoyne River. The people concerned consider this is most essential. I am sure all members in this House will agree with me when I say that I certainly hope the Commonwealth Government, and the State Government, will hasten that project and do something about damming the Gascoyne in the very near future.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is a good project; needless to say, it was proposed by a Labor member.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: Those who live in that area naturally feel a little worried at the present time. They have had approximately seven good seasons, which is a further reason for good progress to be made with this project.

I might mention that following the trip by parliamentarians to the Ord project, the goldfields people were most interested in several talks I gave, not only over the air but also in other places. Over the past few years the growth of Kalgoorlie has been very static, and the local people, hearing stories of so much money being spent in the north are naturally extremely pleased but they wish, of course, that it were being spent in the Kalgoorlie district.

I would also mention that the people residing in the Kalgoorlie district are worried not so much about the road maintenance tax as they are about the regulations imposing restrictions on the dimensions of road transport vehicles. All the submissions to me, with the exception of one, have been in regard to what a road transport operator is permitted to carry on his vehicles.

It is to be hoped that the recommendations made by Railways Commissioner Wayne in his recent report will be adopted by the Government with a view to an easing of the regulations on those road hauliers who cart cattle and other produce, not only in the Kimberleys, but also in the Carnarvon, Meekatharra, and Wiluna districts. I have been appealing to the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Police to ease the restrictions on over-width vehicles operated in those parts, because I cannot see any reason why they should be rigidly enforced. There is not a great deal of traffic on the roads, which are fairly wide, although many of them are very rough. I repeat, however, I cannot see how an extra couple of inches in width would be the cause of accidents on the road or would create undue concern.

I repeat the hope that the recommendations in Mr. Wayne's report will be implemented in the near future to bring about an easing of these restrictions to the benefit of those engaged in the transport of

livestock and other commodities. In my view they could be issued with permits to operate their trucks until such time as they purchased new vehicles, which could be built to the dimensions laid down in the regulations.

Members will recall that when people suffered hardship at Collie as a result of floods the Government saw fit to grant them financial assistance. In the Carnarvon district both floods and droughts cause a great deal of concern to the residents. One pastoralist explained to me that he had all his fences washed away during the last flood at Carnarvon, but he was unable to obtain any Government assistance, or the loan of any cheap money to repair the damage. I would suggest that the responsible Ministers should ensure that in times of disaster not only should people residing in the south-west who are affected be granted relief, but also those people who reside in the north. Among other losses, the pastoralists around Carnarvon lost large numbers of sheep because of the floods.

As a point of interest, I would now mention that the tracking station at Carnarvon, during the next festival to be held at Carnarvon in the second week in September, will be tracking an object in orbit which will be carrying the first man to reach 400 miles into space. Those members who made the trip to the north have seen the N.A.S.A. project, and here I would remind members that I will welcome them up there at any time.

The Hon. C. E. Griffiths: Not in orbit, I hope.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: No, not in orbit.

The Hon. R. Thompson: What about giving us a talk on it sometime?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: Yes, very well. As regards Exmouth Gulf there is one complaint which I would like to see rectified. Commissioner Murdoch is doing his utmost to attract people to that centre, but unfortunately he is being plagued with officialdom.

The charges for public utilities, such as water and sewerage, at Exmouth Gulf are extremely heavy, and this frightens away those people who have any ideas of settling there. The charges for essential services are \$1,470 for a large block and \$735 for a small one. This amount covers the premium for such services. These charges are considered by those in authority to be too harsh, and we hope the departments concerned will look at this problem with a view to making the charges more equitable.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Do those charges cover the connection or the right to connect?

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I do not know.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Well, you cannot argue about it.

The Hon. G. E. D. BRAND: I was asked to mention it. Once again, I would like to make known my gratitude to those who were responsible for organising the recent tour by parliamentarians to the north. I also hope the wishes of the Minister concerned will be granted by the Commonwealth Parliament in the near future.

THE HON. F. D. WILLMOTT (South-West) [8.7 p.m.]: In this debate on the Address-in-Reply I wish to refer to margarine quotas which have had a great deal of publicity in recent months. Argument on margarine quotas is nothing new. A similar controversy occurred in the late 1930's, with the result that, after consultation, the Australian Agricultural Council requested the various States to pass legislation to fix a quota on margarine production. At that time there was a considerable body of opinion which thought the production of table margarine should be prohibited completely. So far as I am concerned, I am glad to say that wiser counsel prevailed and it was decided to impose a quota, the result being that, in 1940, The Hon. F. J. S. Wise, the then Minister for Lands in another place, introduced a Bill for the purpose of bringing into force a quota system on margarine production.

The quota fixed in this State, in 1941, was 364 tons. Quotas were also fixed in all the other States, and the total quota for all States at that time was 3,973 tons. Since that date, only Victoria has not changed its quota. In 1940 the Victorian quota was 1,196 tons, and it remains the same today. In the other States the quota has been altered in varying degrees. In 1952, Western Australia increased the margarine quota to 800 tons, and New South Wales increased its quota from 1,248 to 9,000 tons; a rise of 621 per cent. Queensland granted a rise of 557 per cent.; South Australia, 69 per cent., Western Australia 120 per cent., and Tasmania 50 per cent. The overall result of that action throughout the Commonwealth was that quotas were increased from 3,973 tons to 16,072 tons; an overall increase, in Australia, of 304 per cent. So some of the arguments that have been raised against the quota system being too static can hardly bear proper examination if they are looked at in a proper light.

For instance, although the present quota is 16,072 tons, the actual production was 22,700 tons; that is, approximately 6,700 tons in excess of the quotas. Therefore it can be seen that the quotas have not been rigidly enforced. While speaking in that vein I might point out that, in fact, the original Act has not been rigidly enforced.

In the parent Act, which remains unaltered, it is provided that anyone selling margarine must clearly display a large placard to indicate that margarine is sold in that establishment.

Therefore, according to the Act, any restaurant or hotel is supposed to have a large notice displayed indicating that margarine is used on the premises. Also, the Act provides that every vessel or container in which margarine is placed must be clearly marked to indicate that it contains margarine before it is placed on the table. Such a provision still remains in the Act, but has never been enforced.

The Hon. R. Thompson: You would not want to see it enforced, would you?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: No, quite frankly, I would not. In fact, the whole Act has not been rigidly enforced because the quotas have been exceeded by over 6,000 tons.

The Hon. R. Thompson: It would not be so bad if they were using the natural Australian products.

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: I will deal with that aspect later. In this margarine controversy there is a tendency to view the whole matter in the light of margarine versus butter. That, of course, is a complete fallacy because there is a great deal more to the dairying industry than the production of butter. Although the industry is still largely based on butter production, there are many other products which are produced in the dairying industry.

The arguments frequently put forward by people who do not believe in a quota for margarine production is that the dairying industry receives from the Commonwealth a subsidy of \$27,000,000 annually; but that, again, is not a correct statement. The dairying industry, as a whole, does not receive the subsidy; it is only the butterfat section which receives it. That is the only section of the dairying industry which is entitled to any share of the \$27,000,000 subsidy. At the same time, although the butterfat section does receive a subsidy, the dairying industry as a whole is bringing into Australia income from exports of about \$117,000,000. Therefore the overall position is beneficial to the nation.

This is in direct contrast to the position of margarine, as Mr. Ron Thompson has implied by interjection. The products from which margarine is made are largely not produced in Australia. Something like 80 per cent. of the bulk of the edible oils are still imported. Furthermore, margarine produces practically no export income for Australia; if there is any it is very small.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Any imports from the Australian territories?

The Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT: There are imports from New Guinea, but how long that territory will remain Australian we can only guess. I think it might remain Australian territory for less time than many of us would like to see. I say the dairying industry is still based largely on butterfat, but it is a changing situa-