

F. E. Chamberlain, secretary of the W.A. Trade Union Industrial Council, and State Secretary and Federal President of the Labour Party, on his return from communist China, that "somewhere I suppose there must be an angry Chinese man or woman, but as yet I have not seen one," when read in conjunction with a report submitted after exhaustive investigation by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and the Director-General of the International Labour Office disclosing information to the effect that 25,000,000 slaves in communist China are held in captivity under the most appalling conditions?

The PREMIER replied:

I am not in a position to thank the hon. member for having provided me earlier with a copy of his question. However, there is nothing unusual about that. The reply to the question is that I and my colleagues in this Government are so constantly and so fully concerned regarding the welfare of the people of Western Australia that we are not in a position to know what is right or what is wrong in communist China.

7. TRAFFIC.

Use of Clover-Leaf System at Causeway.

Mr. ANDREW asked the Minister representing the Minister for Works:

When the Narrows bridge is completed it will have the clover leaf system to enable traffic to approach and depart from it. Though the Causeway carries, and will continue to carry, a much larger volume of traffic than the Narrows bridge, as it is the main outlet from the capital to the South-West—the most populous part of this State—it has the rotary system, which is outdated and not to be compared with the clover-leaf system for efficiency. Therefore, will he inform me whether the Government has taken, or intends to take any steps to build the clover-leaf system at the approaches to the Causeway?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:
The matter will receive consideration.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

Statement by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER: As the time is advancing, I propose, unless the questions are of vital importance, to refuse to allow members to ask any further questions, and I shall proceed immediately to the next business and ask the Premier to move the first reading of the Privilege Bill.

PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

First Reading.

The PREMIER: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation,

I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for "An Act to amend the Plant Diseases Act, 1914-1956."

Leave given, Bill introduced and read a first time.

LIEUT.-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

Distribution.

The SPEAKER: Accompanied by hon. members of this Chamber, I attended His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of greater accuracy, I have caused printed copies of the Speech to be distributed amongst hon. members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

MR. BICKERTON (Pilbara) (4.0 p.m.):
I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor and Administrator in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to Parliament:—

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

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay a tribute to my predecessor, the late Mr. Rodoreda. There is very little I can say about the work done by Mr. Rodoreda because he was well known to most members of this Assembly. Suffice it to say that he was a man who enjoyed the confidence of the majority of the people of Pilbara for approximately 25 years. He was a most conscientious and able man; and, above all, he possessed the attribute of courage. I deeply regret his passing.

It was most pleasing to see from the Speech made by His Excellency that further works are to be carried out in the North-West. It indicates that the Government still has the interests of this area very much at heart, and it is in keeping with the Government's record of past achievement in this territory. On behalf of the people of my electorate, I thank the Government for the interest and consideration it has shown to the people of the North-West.

I come before this Assembly representing approximately 125,000,000 acres of Australian territory which is inhabited by

fewer than 3,500 whites, plus the native population. It is of this territory, and of its people, that I wish to speak, for to give appropriate representation to that vast area is quite sufficient to occupy my limited ability. Members have already heard much about the North-West, and I do not feel it is so much my job to ask them to hear more as to make them feel more.

Many people in Australia have seen the North-West but that does not necessarily satisfy me. It is one of my duties to ensure that they are ever-conscious of its presence. To obtain a true appreciation of the North-West one must live there and carry out one's daily toil there. One must eat there; one must buy there and sell there, or try to establish something there; one must rear and educate one's children there, and all these things must be done in the intense heat of the summer. If one does all or any of these things, and compares how much easier they are to accomplish elsewhere, one cannot but admire the people who see fit to keep that area populated.

The treatment that area has received from the State Government is commendable, but the treatment it has received from the Commonwealth Government leaves much to be desired. It is easy to understand urban, or suburban, minds thinking in terms of security, cosy rooms and ordered gardens; thinking of deliveries to the door, and of telephones, newspapers, transportation, and medical facilities, because these are things to which they are accustomed, and the people of my electorate certainly do not wish to deny them these facilities. But it is difficult to understand the actions of those governing the Commonwealth, who in the main enjoy all the necessary amenities and facilities but shake their heads in disapproval and put on frowns of abhorrence when money for the betterment or development of the North-West is mentioned.

We have had many ambassadors of goodwill going from this country overseas to see what can be done for the more unfortunate areas. One wonders whether they have not been misdirected, because there is plenty here in our North-West to accommodate the sympathetic heart. I feel that we, as Australians, are forsaking our legacy, unless we extract from the more prosperous areas of this country sufficient capital to subsidise those areas which, in the main, romantic authors are pleased to term primitive.

Much has been said about the potential of the North-West, and, indeed, many particular potentials have been mentioned. To my way of thinking, the most important potential has been overlooked by the knowledgeable. This potential is the people who live in the North-West—those who work in it and rear their families

in it. They are without doubt the greatest potential the North-West possesses; they are the potential in which I am most interested.

In the early stages of the North-West, many people were attracted there by what appeared to be easy riches and the lure of gold. But though many came, few were chosen. Many of those who were successful took their new-found wealth elsewhere; and many of those who were not successful left and went elsewhere. A number of these people stayed on to develop the area, and again some were successful; some failed, so we had a nucleus of people remaining who decided to call the North-West their home. These were added to by late comers establishing themselves or being employed in the industries of the day. Let us call them the permanenters.

It is to the benefit of every Australian that these people should remain there; indeed, it is to the benefit of Australia generally that their numbers should be increased. This can be achieved only if conditions are somewhere near on a par with those applying throughout Australia. To make this possible additional and adequate public works must be carried out, and public utilities and amenities established.

I refer particularly to such things as electricity, water supply, good roads, good telegraphic communications; air services combined with all-weather airstrips; and port and shipping facilities, together with medical and hospitalisation facilities. We must also have more education facilities, and greater opportunity for higher education, to prevent children having to travel a thousand miles to school and a thousand miles home again in order to spend a few weeks with their families.

We must also have a basic wage in accordance with the cost of living, together with good and adequate housing. From where does the money come to provide all these facilities? I suggest it would come from the same source which finances the Snowy River scheme; which provides the money for the standardisation of the railway from Albury to Melbourne; the source that provides the money for the St. Mary's ammunition factory; and the source from which finance is required for Australia House in London. The money must come from Australia as a whole.

Let us look upon Australia as one large property, of which we are the owners.

If one possesses such a property with prosperous, productive areas and a weak northern sector, one has two alternatives. It is necessary either to subtract from the good areas and subsidise the weaker areas, or ignore the weaker section altogether. If one ignores the weaker section it can quite easily become a breeding ground, or sanctuary, for vermin, noxious weeds and pests. This can apply to a country as it

does to a property, except that the noxious weeds and vermin, and the pests, take on a different aspect from that which is conveyed in the normal agricultural meaning, while still having the same devastating effect on the country as a whole.

The development of my electorate to the stage where it can stand on its own feet can be greatly initiated and assisted from within. However, outside assistance must be forthcoming when required to enable that area to play its full role as a very important part of this Commonwealth.

The North-West may be likened to a spastic amongst healthy children. It likes to be treated as an ordinary individual; it likes to do some thinking for itself now and again; it battles on valiantly, regardless of its disabilities; but when the occasion arises where it is necessary, through some particular set of circumstances, for it to make use of crutches, it feels these should be within reach and not have to be crawled after.

In the brief time available, there are one or two matters, that I would like to deal with in a little more detail. One of them is water. If there is one commodity that my electorate needs, it is water. One must appreciate that one cannot have crystal streams flowing over semi-arid areas. However, there is a difference between abundant and adequate water. It is my contention that adequate water can be found if money is made available to prospect for it.

The average individual or organisation has not the finance to explore this avenue. Indeed, the result of their exploration is already evident in the many shallow depth wells and river dams in the area at the present. What is needed is an organised deep drilling programme financed by Government funds. It is my contention that if such a boring programme were carried out, say, along similar or somewhat modified lines to that carried out by Wapet, in addition to the necessary technical skill, then we would be achieving something almost akin to the discovery of oil.

Many pastoral and mining towns in my electorate suffer through lack of water. Indeed, some towns lack the normal necessities through shortage of water. I can think of no single project that can do my electorate more good than an organised drilling programme with the right equipment, the object of which is to obtain water at the right time, in the right place, and in the required quantity.

Another point which is very important to my electorate is higher education. With my limited knowledge of the costs involved, I consider that it is possible now to have high school facilities in the North-West. A school centrally situated in my electorate, with boarding facilities for students, would serve a large portion of the North-West population. This would overcome the set

of circumstances that now exists by which our people literally lose their children when they are 12 or 13 years of age. In most cases they are lost to us for good. They go south when they finish their education; they take employment down here, and they never return.

Parents of children not faced with these sets of circumstances are indeed very fortunate. A centrally situated school in my electorate would enable the children to see their parents at least once a month. As matters stand now, unless parents have the finance to bring their children home at the expiration of each term, they see them but once every 12 months. Surely this is not reasonable, and it is not what we term our Australian way of life! Apart from the heartbreak suffered by the parents, is our country doing the right thing for the children of these people who choose to live in an area where the majority of Australians choose not to live?

I have paid tribute to this State Government for the good work it has done in the North-West. I would like also to pay tribute to the local government in those areas. Various road boards in my electorate perform a magnificent job considering the vast distances that many members travel to attend meetings. This is evidence of their sincerity. My speech would not be complete without thanking them for the work they are doing in those areas.

In conclusion, may I sum up my remarks this way: The North-West must be assisted to develop, in the interests of the State, in the interests of the Commonwealth, in the interests of humanity, and in the interests of plain good thinking or ordinary commonsense. Commonwealth aid must be forthcoming to assist this development. Let every Australian face this fact.

The locals of the North-West could be getting tired of carrying this portion of the country for the rest of Australia. The question which should be asked by every Australian worthy of his salt, is not so much as to when this aid will be made available, or when adequate aid will be extended to the North-West, but rather, why aid has not been extended earlier. Is it because spinifex does not vote?

MR. O'BRIEN (Murchison): I formally second the motion.

On motion by the Hon. D. Brand, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (The Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.18 p.m.