

has been tarred and the damaged portion, if it were damaged, will be sealed next summer.

#### KNITTING WOOLS.

##### *As to Shortage in Supplies.*

Mr. STYANTS (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister for Supply and Shipping:

(1) Is the Minister aware that there is a shortage of knitting wools on sale in this State?

(2) What is the cause of this shortage?

(3) Will the Minister take the necessary action to have ample supplies of this commodity made available by producers, wholesalers and retailers?

(4) Does the Minister think that supplies are being withheld from the public hoping for increased prices, after the discontinuance of the subsidy on wool, for stocks upon which the subsidy has already been paid?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) I was not aware that there is a shortage of knitting wool.

(2) Not being aware of a shortage, I cannot say what is the cause of any such shortage.

(3) I will do my best to find out whether I can get sufficient supplies to meet the shortage—if there is a shortage—and will take action in the matter.

(4) I cannot say whether wool is being withheld from the public for the reason suggested, because I have not investigated the position. I will do so and furnish the hon. member with a reply next week.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### *Fifth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. BRADY** (Guildford-Midland) [4.44]: This being the first occasion on which I have had an opportunity to address this House, I would like at the outset to pay a tribute to the late member for Guildford-Midland, Hon. W. D. Johnson, whose position I have taken in the House. I first knew him 25 years ago when I was associated with the co-operative movement at Geraldton. I met him again a few years later when I assumed office as secretary of the Trades

Hall at Midland Junction. I always found the late Mr. Johnson a very earnest worker for the co-operative movement and also in the interests of his electorate. To me he proved a very great friend. I feel that in the passing of William Dartnell Johnson, the Guildford-Midland electorate lost a stalwart representative and the Labour Party a very worthy member.

At this stage I desire to express to the electors of Guildford-Midland my appreciation for having paid me the great honour of electing me to the vacancy caused by the demise of Mr. Johnson. I feel at the moment that, even if I am not re-elected at the next general election, I have been very greatly favoured and I deeply appreciate the honour conferred on me. I hope that whilst I continue to be a member I shall prove worthy of the confidence the electors have reposed in me. I also desire to thank members of both parties in this Parliament for the consideration they have shown to me and the assistance they have rendered to me since I was elected in March last. They have been most helpful in any advice that I have sought. I also thank the staff of Parliament House for the help they have given me since I have been elected.

It is not my intention on this occasion to try to speak down to members or to speak over their heads. I feel that if I do so I might perhaps get into deep water; and as later on in my speech I shall be dealing with matters which might be termed shallow water, I do not want to get out of my depth. On behalf of the electors of Guildford-Midland, I desire to say how pleased we are that the Royal family is to visit this State next year. The electors of Guildford-Midland will gladly join in a right loyal welcome to Their Majesties and to the Princess Margaret. Even at this early stage the Midland Junction Municipal Council is, I am pleased to say, desirous that the Royal family should stay for a short period in Midland Junction during their visit.

Since being elected, I have found that my district is in urgent need of much attention. Many matters appear to have been overlooked, I am sorry to say, by all previous Governments. If some of these important matters are not given early attention, it is obvious to me that there may be some bad social reactions. We have in the electorate numerous secondary industries already in

operation, whilst others are springing up. We have in the electorate the biggest workshop, with the largest personnel, in Western Australia. I refer to the railway workshops, which are situated in the heart of Midland Junction. Yesterday, the Minister for Railways, in reply to a question of mine, pointed out that the production of the workshops last year amounted in value to approximately £1,750,000. In addition, we have the Government abattoirs, which are adjacent to the workshops. Alongside the abattoirs there is a most important military ordnance store. On the boundary of the electorate itself, we have brickyards, quarries, bacon factories, superphosphate works, flour mills, confectionery factories, dripping factories, joinery works, chemical works, two or three timber mills and numerous other industries, all of which employ a large number of people and carry on their activities in the economic interests of the State. Apart from the secondary industries, there are many commercial concerns conducting various businesses. There are no fewer than four local governing authorities—two municipal councils and two road boards—which are responsible to 18,000 people.

I mention this to impress upon the House the importance of the Guildford-Midland electorate to the State. Despite all the activities of the secondary industries and commercial enterprises, I regret to say that the social amenities of the electorate do not appear to have been looked after as they should have been. My attention has been drawn to the fact that in the schools there is a grave shortage—I repeat, a grave shortage—of educational facilities. The people at the moment are crying out for a high school, long overdue, a technical school and at least two infants' schools. The following letter has been addressed to me, as the member for the district, by the Parents Committee:—

The parents of the above school (the Midland Junction Infants' School) wish to bring to your notice that we are placed in a very awkward position, owing to the fact that we have a number of children who are eligible to commence school on July 1, and we have nowhere to room them, not even a hall. This is a deplorable outlook for these youngsters. I have written to Mr. Little, of the Education Department, concerning the matter; but all he says is that the matter is receiving attention. This gives us no definite answer. As a resident of Midland, you must know

the crowded condition of our school. Surely a pavilion room or two would relieve the situation for the time being. Will you do your utmost to help us get these rooms. Please, can you tell us whether the site for the new school has been arranged and where?

That is only one of a number of similar letters that I have received. I have in my pocket at the moment a petition signed by 70 residents asking that urgent consideration be given to the provision of an infants' school. I do not know whether members are aware that schoolchildren at Midland Junction, in addition to being crowded—800 of them—into the local State school, are spread over the town in public and private halls and consequently are not receiving the attention which they should have. The parents and teachers are clamouring for an early remedy of these conditions. It may be said that some of the delay in building a high school in the district is owing to the fact that the people most concerned could not agree upon a site. That difficulty has been surmounted, a site now having been agreed upon.

Another matter of vital importance is hospital accommodation. During the past 15 years, to my knowledge, various Ministers have been brought to the district and have had pointed out to them the urgent need for up-to-date hospital facilities. I regret that some Ministers have taken the view that only a small hospital is required in the district. I point out, however, that in Midland Junction and the surrounding districts there is a population of not less than 30,000. These people for many years have looked to Midland Junction to provide them with necessary hospital accommodation. At the moment, there are only two private hospitals, with approximately 20 beds each, in the district and they are always overcrowded. In this electorate there are 7,000 or 8,000 industrial workers, and to have only two private hospitals is definitely wrong.

It is said that there is a public hospital in Perth and that these people are in close proximity and can use it. In answer, I say that the people in the Guildford-Midland electorate, where the majority of toilers are salary and wage-earners, should not be expected to have to pay fares on the railway trains to go to see those near and dear to them in hospital. Most people, when in hospital, have relatives visiting

them from time to time and it helps them on their way to recovery. The position at the moment is that if a man desires to go into Perth to see a sick relative he has to pay 1s. for fares and 6d. admission to the hospital. If a man on a small wage has a relative in hospital for any length of time those costs become a hardship.

Another angle of hospitalisation is the fact that the residents in the district are concerned because one or two doctors have been heard to say that if a hospital is not built there they will possibly move their practices to Perth. The residents would then find themselves in the position that they would not have the doctors readily available, and would have to go to Perth because the doctors would not go to the private hospitals in Perth from Midland.

The next subject I wish to deal with is that of housing. At the moment, to my knowledge, in the Midland area alone to say nothing of Bassendean, Guildford, and Bellevue, over 150 people hold No. 1 priorities for houses. I have personally interviewed people in the last three months, and in some cases as many as 18 units comprising four families, are living in one house. The last case brought to my notice a fortnight ago consisted of four families, 16 units, living in a five-roomed house. When I rang the department to see what could be done, I was reminded that there were at least 150 No. 1 priorities in the district. There is ample evidence, I think, that the housing project, as far as Guildford-Midland is concerned, must be kept quite up to date. I have already said that there are numerous industries in the district. The number is growing and at the moment some new ones are being shifted by Westralian Farmers Ltd., from North Fremantle into the area, and the workers concerned will require residences. I hope the members of the Government present will realise it will be absolutely necessary for them to maintain the housing programme in order that those in immediate need of houses will be provided for, and those coming into the district will be given proper accommodation.

I mentioned earlier that I would touch on the matter of water. I want to refer to the Swan River and the fact that it is silting up. My attention has been drawn by some of the old residents of Guildford to the fact that the Swan River, on which

barges drawing up to 3 feet and 4 feet travelled some 50 years ago when the goods required for the opening up of the State were taken to what was then known as Barker's Bridge at Guildford and to Loton and Padbury's stores, is, in some parts, so shallow that it would not float a canoe. This state of affairs is causing quite a lot of concern, not only to the older residents, but to the people in the district who have children attending school. The Swan River, particularly around Bassendean, Guildford and Midland, and through into the Middle Swan area, is used considerably for recreational purposes in the summertime, particularly by the children for swimming. Owing to the fact that it is silting up and there are a number of snags and a lot of debris in it, the natural flow of the water is being held up.

Last January and February the water became stagnant in parts of the river and in such a state it is apt to cause a lot of disease to the school children. I remind members that a number of the schools in the district have quite large attendances. Here again I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that the river exists and that it is being used a lot for swimming by the children. I am concerned about their health just as are the local governing bodies. There is another aspect in regard to the river, and that is its value as a tourist attraction. I believe the river lends itself to being developed so as to constitute an attraction to tourists. That is something that has been lost sight of in the past.

Personally I can think of nothing more pleasant than for tourists to be able to get on a motor launch at, say, the Causeway and tour leisurely up the river past Bassendean, through the first established town in the State—Guildford—and see where fresh water was first discovered and where Captain Stirling landed in 1829, and also see the wonderful monument erected at the Guildford Grammar School, and so on. If the river were dredged and properly cleaned out it would be of ultimate value to the tourist traffic of the State. Tourists who have come here from time to time and seen Mundsring Weir, Yanchep and the Caves, will not come back again unless we have added attractions. I believe the Swan River can be developed along these lines. The

foreshore could be improved. I hope the day is not far distant when we will have a riverside drive from the Causeway through to Midland Junction, Middle Swan and beyond. I feel I should mention these things today so that when the Government is trying to get additional finance into the State it will consider the possibilities of the Swan River attracting tourists.

On the eve of the recent by-election held in my district, the Premier, when speaking at the Government workshops in support of the Liberal candidate, said that the amenities block had been recommended by the Royal Commissioner and the Government hoped to have something done about it in the near future. I would like to see the Premier concern himself again with the provision of that block. I can assure him that the 2,000 odd workers in the workshops would welcome some early announcement on the subject, because at the moment they are suffering a great amount of disability inasmuch as they have to queue up for their requirements at the lunch hour.

I want to touch briefly on the matter of local government. In the main the local governing authorities in the area are doing a good job, but they are experiencing high costs, and anything the Government can do towards lessening those costs will be greatly welcomed. I am surprised to know—and I believe that the Main Roads Act requires amendment in this respect—that even though there are thousands of tons of goods taken over the roads in the Bassendean area by heavily-powered and large tonnage trucks, there is no road through Bassendean gazetted as a main road. At the moment the main road deviates through Guildford down the south side of the river. The Government will have to give some consideration, and very shortly too, to having the road over the Guildford bridge, through Bassendean, Bayswater and Mount Lawley, gazetted as a main road. It is distinctly unfair that the local governing authority at Bassendean should be called upon to maintain a road, which is virtually a main road, at the expense of the ratepayers of the district, while other local governing authorities are being assisted with main roads through their areas.

Another matter which I consider worthy of mention—and whilst it may be deemed

to be a minor matter, I think it will ultimately be of major importance—is the question of natives. In my electorate, in the grape-picking season, a number of natives migrate to the district and are utilised by the growers to pick the harvest. These people remain in the area for quite a long period, and yet as far as I know nothing has been done to give them the proper facilities to which people of this description are entitled. Unfortunately at times people have supplied the natives in my electorate with alcoholic liquor and some of these natives have made a nuisance of themselves, but in the main they are decent types. They try to do a day's work and try to conform to a decent standard of living where they are given any encouragement to do so. I hope that the Government will give consideration to making some provision for these people who do this casual work in the vineyards and the surrounding primary producing orchards.

At this stage I would draw attention to the Communist activities in the Guildford-Midland electorate. I am amazed to know that in the general elections held last year and again in the by-election held this year, 1,200 people saw fit to give a No. 1 vote to the Communist candidate. I cannot understand why people are doing this, particularly when their activities in Europe, in America, and I am quite convinced throughout Australia, are well known. Most of the people who supported the Communist candidate are law-abiding and God-fearing people, and I can only put it down to the fact that they do not know or realise what a menace they are encouraging in this country. We will be playing into the hands of the Communists unless the Government is up and doing and the electors are educated.

It may be that we will have the first Communist in this House representing the Guildford-Midland electorate, but I hope I never see the day when that comes about. There is a Communist doctor practising in Midland Junction who is giving the public the benefit of the new medical and sickness facilities provided by the Commonwealth Government, with the result that people are coming from all parts of the metropolitan area to consult this man and receive free medicine. I consider that if the B.M.A.'s attitude to the free medicine

scheme is allowed to continue it will encourage people to support such Communist candidates. In my opinion, all doctors should fall into line and do the right thing by this scheme for, if industrial organisations were to take in their particular sphere the attitude now being adopted by the B.M.A., they would receive a hostile reception from the Press. In spite of this, the B.M.A. considers that its attitude is for the good of the people.

Mr. Reynolds: It is scandalous.

Mr. BRADY: The doctors, in taking the attitude now adopted, are playing into the hands of the Communists, and I trust that the medical profession will see its way clear to assist the scheme which is in the interests of our fair country. One other important aspect which is tending to force people towards Communism is the fact that the majority of young people in recent years have been frustrated from their earlier ambitions because of the high costs associated with the necessities of life. A house which could be built in 1935-36 for £500 or £600 today is costing £1,000. Firewood that could be purchased for 15s. or 16s. a ton in 1935-36 is today costing £2 per ton and £2 5s. per ton.

From those two comparisons it can be seen that costs have risen almost 100 per cent., and I can only think that it is the frustration and the non-realisation of their ambitions that are causing these people to look to the Communist Party as the one to steer them through such troublous times. I consider they are depending on the wrong party and that the young people are grasping at the wrong straw but, unless people are educated and given some consideration in regard to their social amenities, it is possible that Communist candidates will in future be given stronger support. I repeat that I hope I will never see that day, but unless people are given social amenities and a decent basic wage they will support the Communists.

Whilst speaking on this subject I am reminded that President Truman recently toured the United States and he opposed what is known as the Mundt-Dixon Bill which has been brought down in the United States Congress to outlaw Communism. President Truman opposed the Bill and had this to say—

Give the workers decent wages, decent conditions, decent social amenities and communism will be defeated.

If the people are given decent wages, decent conditions and decent social amenities the Communist Party will never get sufficient members in this country to enable a member to be elected to this House. However, I do not agree with President Truman in his statement that such a condition of affairs would eliminate Communism, because I think that the Communists are being used by a foreign power ultimately to take possession of this country, along with others.

At this stage I would like to commend the member for Wagin on his high ideals. I think he said that members should strive for righteousness, good morals and Christian principles. I agree with an interjection made the other evening that the hon. member should remind his own party to some extent of their responsibilities in this regard. When recently helping a Labour candidate for the Central Province, I was very disappointed to see a pamphlet issued by the Country and Democratic League in support of its candidate. I will read the last paragraph of the pamphlet to illustrate the propaganda used on that occasion. On the front of the pamphlet is the candidate's photograph. Mr. Logan is quite a fine gentleman and I was associated with him many years ago. In the pamphlet itself the following subjects are discussed:—Education, land settlement, housing, mining, wheat, and railways. The final paragraph is a warning which reads as follows:—

A warning—Today we are at the crossroads. One road follows the democratic and British way of life, and this we have every reason to respect and be proud of. The other leads to domination and control by a foreign power. This is no time for hesitation or appeasement. Therefore, it is essential that you vote for the candidate whose policy is to fight the peril all out.

The implication there is that the Labour candidate, Mr. Robinson, was not prepared to carry out those principles. I consider it was very uncharitable, and I use that word because I consider it un-Christian. Mr. Robinson is a returned soldier and has been chairman of various organisations in his district; and particularly associated with the road board for many years. The Country and Democratic League should look to its laurels in the matter of running

elections. As a contrast to the statement I have just quoted is the pamphlet of the Labour candidate. This pamphlet deals with the member's activities in the district and unlike Mr. Logan's pamphlet it did not cast innuendoes about the other candidates. I therefore hope that Mr. Nalder—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must refer to members by their electorates.

Mr. BRADY: I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I hope that the member for Wagin will acquaint his party of his high ideals.

I am very anxious that the Government should do something about the matters to which I have referred, namely educational facilities, housing, hospitalisation, amenities for the workers in the district, and the question of the care of natives as well as the matter of the Swan River, which is of such historic value to this State. I am most anxious that these requests should receive attention.

Recently in "The West Australian" of the 24th July, Professor Benjamin Higgins, the Acting Ritchie Professor of Economics at the Melbourne University, warned us that there would be a "down-turn" if not a depression within three to six years. In last Saturday's copy of "The West Australian" we had a warning from Wall Street that things are not going so well on that side of the world. In Monday's issue of "The West Australian" we had a further warning by Melbourne business interests that things are not looking too bright in that State. I consider that at the moment we are on the crest of prosperity, and I do not want it said in a few years time that we would have done something for the Guildford-Midland electorate if it were not for the fact that the boom had declined.

I cannot imagine that prices will remain at their present high level, as the European countries are steadily getting back into their stride and factories all over the world are catching up with the lag. Prices of all commodities must fall and today I consider there is ample evidence of this fact. Shops in the metropolitan area are beginning to stock up because most workers are not in a position to pay such high prices. I trust that whilst I am a member of this House something will be done to amend the Industrial Arbitration Act in order that the basic wage may be brought into conformity

with modern times. The basic wage as laid down by the court under the Act is not nearly adequate, and I trust I will have the pleasure of seeing this Act amended to bring about reform. In conclusion, I thank members for their attentive hearing and I hope that the matters referred to in my speech will have the attention of the Government.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [5.15]: I hope during the present session we will not have so many Select Committees and Royal Commissions. Hardly any of them have done any good at all and, in fact, they have done no particular good in any way. The only thing they have done is to make an enormous amount of work for an already hard-worked staff. The "Hansard" staff have already a great deal to do without being called upon to do work on Royal Commissions and Select Committees. Take the Betting Commission, for instance! I think it would be almost impossible for any commission to dig up any information that was in any way new as far as betting is concerned.

The Australian people comprise a betting nation, and I take it that every member in this Chamber and almost every man in the community has had a bet at some time or other, and they should know the ramifications of starting price betting just as well as the Government knew them after a Royal Commission inquiry, or even better. One thing that resulted from the Betting Commission was that the Commissioners thought that betting on the racecourse should be legalised. I wonder whether that suggestion was made in order to give the privileged classes an opportunity to bet on the racecourse without breaking the law.

The Premier: The answer is "No."

Mr. FOX: The Premier says "No," but we will see. Some ingenious person might have had that object in view when it was suggested that the Royal Commission be appointed. We are going to give the people who attend racecourses the opportunity to have a bet legally and the patrons of the racecourse, if they so desire, can have a starting price bet there because the course bookmakers bet starting price on the Melbourne races; yet the poorest person is denied the privilege of having a bet because he does not wish to go to the races.