

which are being suffered by the wheat industry, and the fact that premium wheat cannot be transported to the metropolitan area on the standard gauge rail, the situation is seen to be critical. Furthermore, there is a backlog of applications for reservations on the magnificent trains that run between the east and the west.

It is time we produced the rolling stock and planned ahead for the services that can be provided. We must face our responsibilities with fortitude and courage to ensure that this State is served to the fullest possible extent.

I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your election, and I thank the electors of Merredin-Yilgarn for their confidence.

**MR. COYNE** (Murchison-Eyre) [5.56 p.m.]: Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to you on your appointment as Speaker of this House. May I also take the opportunity to congratulate those members who have been elected as chairmen of the various parliamentary committees. I also wish to convey my gratitude to the staff of Parliament House for the helpful and courteous service that has been extended to me.

I will work zealously for the welfare of the people in the Murchison-Eyre electorate, in recognition of the honour they have bestowed on me in electing me to represent them in this Parliament. I wish to offer my good wishes to others who, like myself, have recently succeeded in becoming members of this Parliament. I hope they will all have a long and meritorious career in Parliament.

In his speech last week the member for Northam mentioned that the Address-in-Reply debate was a golden opportunity for new members to highlight problems affecting their electorates. I therefore wish to avail myself of this opportunity to bring to the notice of this House some of the problems that are at present confronting the people of Murchison-Eyre.

Before proceeding, however, I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor and sponsor, Mr. Dick Burt. It was he who first suggested that I should put myself forward as a candidate for parliamentary honours. For this I am deeply grateful, and I am sure it was his influence amongst the electors of Murchison-Eyre that paved the way for my succession to this electorate.

It was a matter of deep regret to the people of Murchison-Eyre that Mr. Burt announced his retirement. I realise what a tremendous responsibility rests with me to follow in his footsteps but it is a task I undertake with enthusiasm, as I have at least had the opportunity, in the last seven years, to watch Dick at close range.

During my seven years as a sales representative in what is basically the Murchison-Eyre electorate I have gained an insight into what this job entails. Only time will tell how successful I will be.

The electorate that I represent is, I believe, one of the largest in the State and has the smallest number of electors. This is a situation that I feel sure will not last for very long. I firmly believe that a tremendous upsurge will take place in mining development which will be unprecedented in the history of the goldfields. Not the least of these developments will take place in my old home town of Agnew. I also spent some of my early working years at Lancefield goldmine at Laverton, and I am particularly pleased at the prosperity which is about to envelop that area.

It is most distressing to the people of Laverton to find that the Poseidon company is proceeding with the development of a separate town at Mt. Windarra. To my mind it would appear that the disadvantages of the daily 15-mile journey each way by the work force would be more than compensated by having all the Government instrumentalities located in the Laverton township. The fact that all facilities are already in existence at Laverton would obviate the necessity of duplicating the whole civic structure and ancillary services, and surely would save the developing company many hundreds of thousands of dollars in development costs. I understand that the Poseidon company and the Laverton Shire are having discussions today, and I sincerely hope something of benefit to Laverton will ensue, otherwise the future of the town will be very bleak indeed and the business people could be left high and dry.

The future of Laverton, of course, could revolve around Union Oil and Hanna Homestake of Canada, if the current explorations of those concerns live up to expectations. In that case, Laverton would not be so dependent on Poseidon.

The projected plan of the Walkabout motel company to build a \$1,250,000 hotel-motel in Laverton would undoubtedly be one of the first casualties in the area and people would even have grave misgivings about upgrading the present hotel.

I made a recent tour through my electorate in company with two other members and we were shocked at the tragedy that has befallen pastoralists throughout the entire area. This situation is attributable mainly to the drought conditions which have left what is considered to be the best woolgrowing area in the whole of the State almost completely devoid of ground feed. Even the mulga which provides a certain amount of feed is also dying. In the Leonora-Laverton-Sandstone area, which is probably the worst affected, most pastoralists are down to half and

even less of their usual stock numbers, and those sheep surviving have dropped production by 40 per cent.

The low price of wool is a real body blow and makes the situation doubly serious. Yet, despite the reduced circumstances in which the people find themselves, they are still optimistic and planning ahead and hoping for rain which will allow them to remain on their properties until the wool price support scheme is implemented by the Federal Government. I believe good general rain was experienced during the weekend almost throughout the whole of my electorate; but as usual, Sandstone missed out. This rain will undoubtedly alleviate the situation to some extent.

I have related two important factors that are causing grave concern to pastoralists; however, there is still another serious obstacle which affects their progress. I refer to the mining and exploration activities that are taking place on pastoral leases. The damage done to properties by pegging teams and geological survey groups has been well publicised; but I wish to raise the matter of compensation, as in some cases the activities of mining people make the operation of wool production almost impossible.

One of the ideas put forward recently seems to me to have real merit. An annual lease rental of \$75 is paid together with the survey fee at the time of registering the claim. Thereafter, an annual lease rental is paid after the lease is approved by the Minister. Could not a portion of this rental—say, \$10 on each claim—be returned to the pastoralist for each claim pegged on his property? On many properties up to 300 or 400 claims have been pegged, and that would mean that \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year would be paid to the pastoralist to compensate him for the wear and tear on his roads, damage to fences, loss of some of his paddocks, and the general interference with his livelihood.

To take this idea a step further, why could not a similar benefit be applied to the shire councils? As an example, let me mention the Leonora Shire in which something like 7,000 claims have been registered. If \$10 a claim was allocated to that shire each year, \$70,000 in additional revenue would result and the shire would ensure that the money would be spent in the area from which it came, thus providing better amenities for the people who live in the region. I am sure this idea could be expanded and made practical.

One of the most interesting conversations we had on our recent trip was with the matron of the Leonora Hospital. Matron Canning is an extremely capable person who takes a great interest in the welfare of native children. From her experience over the years, she feels that insufficient work is being done for native children after they leave school. Usually

they return to the reserve or station from which they came and a great deal of the training they receive in hygiene and school lessons is lost. She strongly advocated the establishment of a work training centre at Kalgoorlie or Geraldton where the education of these children could be continued instead of being lost to them.

The matron's thoughts on native children were taken a little further by Mr. and Mrs. West of the Kiara Hostel at Cue. They expressed the opinion that a kindergarten is also a great necessity in order to teach the younger children normal hygiene and social behaviour instead of leaving this form of training to the teachers when they begin primary schooling.

One of the most urgent needs of my electorate is cheaper electric power, and in relation to this a promise was made by the previous Government—a promise which was enthusiastically welcomed. Householders, generally, are availing themselves of the benefits of air conditioning and other electrical conveniences, but at the present time the charges of between 14c and 18c a unit make the cost of such amenities almost prohibitive. I am sure the present Government could give consideration to subsidising the electricity charges, particularly for householders.

It is pleasing to note that the building of a new police station at Leonora is in the preparatory stage. This project is long overdue and the fact that the station is now to be sited in the main street will uplift the appearance of the business area to some degree. I am sure the police staff will work much more efficiently and happily in their new surroundings.

While on the subject of police stations I must mention the appalling and antiquated conditions that exist at Laverton. On the day that we visited the town six young natives who had just been sentenced were being held in the gaol prior to being sent to Kalgoorlie. The officer in charge was on relieving duty only and did not have his family with him. This caused a problem in regard to feeding the prisoners. Normally one of the officers' wives attends to the cooking. However, at present the cooking is attended to by one of the four constables and the food is prepared on an open fire in the police yard. The officer in charge was most concerned about the general security of the station—I am quite sure the police would not sleep very well whilst prisoners were in custody.

The upgrading of the Meekatharra school to a three-year high school is well under way. I understand that tenders are about to be called for additional classrooms and the project should be ready for the beginning of the 1972 school year. It is to be hoped that consideration will be given to the establishment of a regional hostel in Meekatharra to cater for station students.

This would also provide accommodation for high school students from the neighbouring towns.

Meekatharra is a busy, bustling town, and being the railhead for the area it is a centre for several major transport companies. It is the jumping-off place for transport vehicles which travel to Paraburdoo, Newman, and Port Hedland. The Meekatharra Airport is an alternative airport for overseas planes, and this helps the town considerably because the Department of Civil Aviation maintains a reasonable number of radio operators, technicians, and weather men.

The construction of a new civic hall and shire offices at Meekatharra is well under way. An amount of \$179,000 is being spent on this project which will complement the new police station completed several years ago. I think the development which has taken place at Meekatharra is a first-class example of the benefits of decentralisation.

The last point I wish to mention concerns the Hill 50 goldmine which is at present the only goldmine operating in the whole of the Murchison area. I think the operation of this mine would be helped considerably by an increase in the gold subsidy. At the present time the mine is maintaining production and extensive prospecting for nickel is taking place. If nickel is found I think the prospects for the entire area will be enhanced. I would like to wind up my remarks on that note, and I wish to thank members for the attention they have paid to my speech.

*Sitting suspended from 6.12 to 7.30 p.m.*

**MR. HARTREY** (Boulder-Dundas) [7.30 p.m.]: May I, in the first place, follow the admirable example of those who have already spoken and extend to you, Sir, my heartiest congratulations on your elevation to the high and dignified post of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia.

Already in the brief life of this Parliament you have given eminent proof that you possess those innate gifts of wisdom and justice and the acquired qualities of experience and learning which admirably fit you to discharge the onerous duties of your high office.

May I congratulate, most humbly, the other members besides myself who have been admitted for the first time to this august assembly. Some of them have already made very good speeches and I await with interest to hear those of the other members who have not spoken.

I feel that I can describe myself in more senses than one as a latecomer. I arrived here rather late in life and I also arrived a little late during the opening of Parliament. This, however, was a great advantage because I received at your gracious

hands, Sir, the oath of allegiance to our most gracious Sovereign. So I feel that I was not the loser by that episode.

I join with the member for Merredin-Yilgarn in paying a tribute to his and my old colleague and friend Jim Garrigan, who passed away after the last session of Parliament. He was a most valuable goldfields member; a highly popular man in another place, and a very highly respected member of this Parliament. I would like to pay him a very sincere tribute.

At the same time I am happy to pay a tribute to my immediate predecessor as the member for Boulder-Dundas. I refer, of course, to Arthur Moir who was a member of this House for close on 20 years. He represented the goldfields characteristically and industriously. He was himself a miner and had he not been he might still have been a member of this Parliament. Unfortunately, however, he and Mr. Garrigan became the victims of what is commonly known as miner's complaint, or silicosis.

It was silicosis that took the life of Jimmy Garrigan and the health of Arthur Moir. Never having been very industrious I might point out that I am in no danger of contracting an industrial disease. Before I go any further I would like to thank the electors of my constituency for the confidence they have reposed in me; and I would like to express my appreciation of its loyalty to the political party whose cause I am proud to espouse tonight.

In 1905 the electorate of Boulder was first represented by a man who left his mark on the history of Western Australia. I refer, of course, to Philip Collier who was Premier of Western Australia for several terms. He was a man who did more than any other man in the cause of Labor so far as State politics are concerned. Ever since his election he has been succeeded by a series of Labor members. They have all, up till now, upheld the dignity and the honour of the constituency, and I trust I shall walk in their footsteps humbly and with a full sense of responsibility as to what is required.

I would now like to congratulate the Government on the comprehensive programme of legislative reform which it has foreshadowed in the Speech of His Excellency the Governor to which we are now replying. I am pleased to note that some quite novel propositions are being put forward. They are novel so far as the Legislature of this State is concerned, but they are by no means novel for those people who have progressive minds.

Consumer protection is something which has long been close to my heart, because over the last 30 years I have been a bush lawyer; and no man can hold that humble but useful office without becoming familiar with some of the real problems of the average man. I am not a "corporation