

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) 20.
- (2) 1928-1929.
- (3) The information sought can be found in Appendix 2 of Volume 3 of the Tydeman Report. and plans, etc., may be viewed at the Public Works Department by the hon. member.

ROADS.

As to Commonwealth Aid Funds.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What amount did the State Government have on hand at the 30th June, 1950, from the Commonwealth Aid Road and Works Act, 1947-1949?
- (2) What amount had been set aside for the machinery pool?
- (3) If any money had been used from the machinery pool, what was the amount?
- (4) What amount of the original sum was unallocated?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) £1,373,894.
- (2) £162,000.
- (3) £10,650.
- (4) Nil.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

As to Freight on Blue Asbestos.

Hon. H. K. WATSON asked the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What is the freight per ton charged by the State Shipping Service on blue asbestos shipped from Point Samson to Fremantle?
- (2) Does the Government pay a freight subsidy on such shipments, and if so, how much?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) 39s. per ton of 20 cwt.
- (2) Yes. 10s. per ton, of which half is recovered from the Commonwealth Government.

TIMBER.

As to Intake of Sawmills.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Minister for Transport:

What was the permissible intake and the actual intake of the various sawmills in this State, including the Western Australian Government timber mill, for the years 1947, 1948 and 1949?

The MINISTER replied:

This information is not available, as it is only supplied to the department confidentially.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the 9th August.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [4.39]: I was greatly moved by the kindly and eulogistic references to my late father by His Excellency the Governor in his opening Speech and, on the following Tuesday, by yourself, Mr. President, and members of the House. My father was born in Victoria and came to this State at a very early age and Western Australia treated him very kindly. When he entered Parliament in 1914, he set himself out not only to attend to the interests of his electors but also to do everything possible for the development of Western Australia and its people. He left behind him a record of which I and my brothers and sisters are especially proud. I think it is one that any citizen would be justly proud to have, and would try to emulate as I desire to do. My family sincerely appreciate the messages of sympathy and condolence from this House, and I wish to say, "Thank you very much" to yourself, Sir, the members here, and His Excellency.

I also desire to express my thanks for the warm welcome extended to me and the other new members of this Chamber by you, Mr. President. We are all young men, and I think we will prove to be quite an acquisition to the House. I do not doubt, speaking not only for myself but the other new members, that we will uphold the traditions of the House and add tone to it inasmuch as in the past we have heard that the Legislative Council was a House for old gentlemen. We can now stand up and say to the people, "We refute that. Look at the talent and the young members here who will still be here, we hope, for some years to come." I am sure the other new members will stand by me in this; if they let me down, I shall certainly have something to say about it.

At the outset, I shall touch shortly on the Korean situation. Most members are not particularly happy with the way things are going, although the United Nations forces seem to be holding their own, and in places, making gains. But the communist octopus seems to be reaching its tentacles out to every part of the world, and it appears to be doing its best to destroy what the democracies have built up over the years; and, apparently, it is trying to enslave the peoples of the world. We have one of those tentacles here in Australia; even in our own State.

We have experienced, on the last two Sundays in Western Australia, demonstrations arising from meetings held by the Communist Party on the Esplanade. These people are not attempting to build

up anything, but are out purely for destruction. They set up nothing constructive for the future. They are out, purely and simply, to pull down democracy. I say they are just as liable for the demonstrations that occur after their meetings as a starting-price bookmaker is for obstructing the traffic. They should be arraigned before a court and treated in a similar, if not a more severe manner. Our communist friends—Healy, Kelly, Alcorn and Mrs. Williams—were at the meeting last Sunday week. The expressions they used in regard to Korea were, I consider, bordering on subversive suggestions.

Members may have noted in the paper recently that the Sydney publisher of the Communist Party's paper "Tribune" was arraigned before a special court. He is now on trial for publishing seditious words. Mark the words of the people on our Esplanade! They say "Hands off Korea," and they object to our sending troops to Korea. Are they not just as seditious as the words of the editor of the Sydney "Tribune"? Why should not the State take action against these people? Here is a little pamphlet they circulate headed "Hands off Korea". Inside it states—

Hands off Korea—Demand Withdrawal of All Forces of Intervention.

We are supporting U.N.O. against the aggression by the North Koreans, yet these people are allowed to go around the streets and the public reserves preaching against what the Commonwealth Government has decided. Action should be taken against them immediately, and if they can be arraigned before a court, that should be done. Ways and means of doing that should be found.

If ways and means can be found for dealing with one law-breaker, then they can be found to deal with another. In my opinion these people are law-breakers. I sincerely hope that Cabinet and the Attorney General in particular, will attempt to find some method of dealing with them and stopping what I consider to be subversive work on the part of the communists. They are not so dangerous to the more mature people who have been brought up in democracies, but they are definitely dangerous to our younger people who during the war years knew certain measures of control. It does not seem so hard for them to listen to the communist doctrine, but we people who have had to work and battle all our lives and know what it is to live in and appreciate, a democracy are not liable to be converted. Our young people, on the other hand, are, and we have to look

after them. That is one reason why something should be done. In my opinion no action would be too drastic.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Treat them as vermin!

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Exactly. If they do not like our democratic institutions, let them go somewhere else. I doubt if they would be accepted in Russia where they would have to think ahead. I want now to deal with the migrant position; the new Australians, as we call them. The State Minister has no control over these people, and in my opinion, from observation of the position here, the control that is exercised is fairly lax. One can travel through the country where these camps are—I refer particularly to the Cunderdin and Northam camps—and can see the people travelling on the road to and from one or other of the camps, or going from one town to another. They hitch-hike as much as they can, and to an extent are quite a nuisance to the motorist. At the same time, they were brought out here to start a new life; they were given an opportunity. I say that many of them are not making the best of that opportunity. They go out and take a job for a while and then return to the migrant camp where they get 25s. a week, and pay £1 a week board. They get the best of food there, and it is just a holiday for them. They have no responsibility to battle for their families.

I think it is time that more strict control was exercised over these camps. I know that at Cunderdin they hold concerts every night in the week, Sundays included. If anyone tells me that people who have concerts every night are working hard, I fail to see it. This matter, I contend, should be taken up very strongly with the Commonwealth Government. We saw an article in today's paper regarding the meals in the migrant camps. These people are not hardly done by, but are spoon-fed. This article is headed "4,500 for Meals at Northam Migrant Camp" and states—

Feeding more than 4,500 persons at a time is no small task, but it is the lot of the catering staff at the town-sized migrant camp at Northam. The food is prepared in well-equipped kitchens in various parts of the camp, and the cooks are mostly new Australians—

It does not say that they are all new Australians because some of our own people are employed there. It goes on—

—who have a high standard of ability. Certainly no charge of lack of food can be laid against the caterers, for plates are piled high with meat and vegetables. Children are especially well fed and there is no limit to

the amount of food which can be obtained for them. They are called in to meals before the adults, and are accompanied by their parents. Each dining mess for children caters for about 80 youngsters who are given three meals a day and morning and afternoon tea. All types of high class baby food are available—

I might add that a number of our own people—I mean the Australians outside—have considerable difficulty in obtaining baby food at times. I know that from some of my own friends who have young babies. The article continues—

—and all the children are given soup once and fruit twice a day.

The staff in one kitchen consists of three cooks and kitchen hands, who work to a roster throughout each day. This system is worked through all messes in the camp. One of the most popular dishes among the children is a special meat loaf, made from liver, kidneys, heart and other delicacies. New Australians have yet to gain a taste for mutton and lamb.

They would soon attain a taste for it if they had to earn it the hard way and food was a little difficult to get. It goes on—

For those who want extras there is the camp canteen at which more than 900 lines are stocked. Members of the camp have no need to travel into Northam to shop, for they can purchase anything they require at the canteen, including foodstuffs, clothes, soaps, toilet equipment and soft drinks.

Members can see by the last paragraph that these migrants can obtain everything they want at the camp.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Is that a Government canteen?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It comes under U.N.O., but is under the control of the Commonwealth Government. This migrant camp is really a holiday resort, although these people were brought out here to work and help build up the number of people we require for industries, farming, etc. A few of them have been employed on farms but most of them say that they cannot do that work. They say they won't do this and they won't do that; then they leave.

I had an instance where a friend of mine in Northam engaged four of these men to put up a building which he required erected. They asked for £10 per week with no tax. That meant that this man had to pay the tax for them and they said that they could not arrive for work at 8 o'clock because the bus did not leave in time. That meant that they could not get into work until a quarter to nine. They also told him that they wanted to leave at a quarter to four in

the afternoon in order to catch the bus back to camp. In other words they did not want to do a decent eight hours per day—not even 40 hours a week. They lasted four days and were proceeding so slowly with the job that the employer decided that if they kept going at that pace it would cost him three times as much as it should.

If we must put up with that kind of thing these people might as well not be here. They did not come here only to populate the country; they came here to help us to build homes and increase the production of essential supplies and supplies in general. I maintain that the control over them is not as severe as it should be and that our State Minister for Immigration and Labour should have control over these people. Our Minister should be able to say what shall be done with each man and if that man is put to a job the Minister should be able to say whether the migrant has a right to leave and return to the camp at 25s. a week. These people are kept at the migrant camps at the expense of the Australian taxpayers. I realise that the camps are financed with U.N.O. money but we all pay our share into U.N.O. by way of taxes.

Migrants are brought out here and we should have some say in what is done with them and the way that the money is spent so that it will not be frittered away in keeping up holiday camps. These people do not seem to want to work and unless we can do something about it I am afraid we will be on a losing proposition. Most of them are not short of money; that is one of the main troubles. They can go to a town like Northam and quite a number of them have purchased bolts of cloth and sent them home to Europe. They have bought all sizes of dresses and sent them to Europe also. Some of them are even building up bank accounts in that way. Many do not intend to stay here and a number of them will return to Europe by building up bank accounts in this country. They are sending goods to their home countries in Europe and they are reaping the benefit from it. I suggest to the Premier that when he attends the Premiers' Conference he should take up this matter with the Prime Minister with a view to giving the Government more control and placing it in the hands of our State Minister for Immigration and Labour.

Another matter mentioned in this Chamber recently has been that of milk supplies to school children. We all know that at present Sir Earle Page is deliberating with the Ministers for Agriculture in the Eastern States regarding this aspect. However, there is one feature about it in this State; during part of the year we may be able to supply this milk to school children but during portion of

the summertime our own metropolitan area is short of milk and it becomes necessary to ration it to our people. It is all very well to talk about providing extra supplies of milk, but where are we to obtain them?

We can draw them temporarily from the lower South-West, which is, however, generally considered a butterfat producing area, but I am afraid drawing milk from such sources would be a temporary expedient only. Also, it would be a costly one and far from economically sound. There is the long haulage of over 100 miles and that would increase the price to the consumers. We could not expect that increase to be borne by the producers because it would not pay them to send the milk such a long distance and accept a lower price. The producers would probably be better off on a butterfat basis supplying their milk to cheese factories and the like. Therefore, it behoves the Government to look round and see what can be done to develop land adjacent to the metropolitan area.

For consideration I suggest that land such as portion of the Wanneroo Road Board district be investigated. There are over 5,000 acres of what was the old stock route and this is reasonably good country. I would not say it is first class, but it is a good type of sand. Some of the producers there do very well, yet for a long time it has been neglected. It is timbered with banksia and jarrah and from personal observations I know that it will carry quite good pastures. The producers there can grow mid-season subterranean clover and good lucerne. This country could be easily adapted for dairying purposes. One important aspect about it is that it would be most economical to develop because it is so close to the metropolitan area and the timber cleared from it could be sold.

This type of country is easy to clear with bulldozers such as are being used on war service land settlement properties. The timber cleared could be sawn into firewood and sold in the metropolitan area. The money obtained from the sale of this firewood would almost pay for the cost of clearing the land and when it is cleared the country could be broken up into 200-acre farms. That would mean there would be 25 farms each with a carrying capacity of 40 cows. Therefore the 5,000 acres, fully developed, would carry at least 1,000 cows, and that would contribute considerably to our metropolitan milk supply. In the summertime they should get an average of at least a gallon a day and through the other parts of the year two gallons or more.

Someone may say, "This is almost in line with the Peel Estate of some years ago. What a dismal failure that was." We are not living in the days of the development of the Peel Estate; we are living in the days of modern development

in farming. The Peel Estate settlers did not know what could be done with clovers and other grasses. Our knowledge of those grasses today is one of the big factors in making a success of a project such as this. I have gone into this matter and to my mind the development of an area such as this would cost approximately £4,000 for each farm. That would include the building of a home at a cost of between £1,600 and £1,800 and the stocking of the property with 40 cows, which are expensive items today.

It could be said that it would not be an unreasonable proposition to make the capitalisation of these properties approximately £4,000. Once developed they would be worth very much more than that valuation. One drawback is that it would be rather hard to construct roads there. Very little solid material is to be found in the area, which is very sandy; but that difficulty could be overcome. I sincerely hope the Government will take up this suggestion regarding the development of land in areas close to the metropolis in order to augment our milk supply.

I do not know why, but in the past the tendency has been for dairying operations to be conducted further and further away from the city, with the result that today areas in the Denmark and Albany districts are being developed as dairying propositions. That is quite good, but when it comes to a matter of whole milk production it is a different proposition, and we ought to have areas developed closer to the metropolis. I have already quoted the Wanneroo district as an area adjacent to the city that could receive attention. That centre is not very far away from Perth and holdings there would make excellent dairy propositions. It is only a matter of making a start, so that the area would be made attractive to those concerned in the dairying industry.

While I was dealing with the question of migrants, I failed to dwell upon a point I desire to make in connection with the spoon-feeding of new Australians. In today's issue of "The West Australian" there appeared a report under the headings "Doctor's Antarctic Ordeal Ends," "Reunion with Wife; No Immediate Operation." The report went on to give details of the dramatic voyage of H.M.A.S. "Australia" to bring Dr. Udovikov to Perth. Members know that the "Australia" was sent down to Heard Island to bring the doctor back because he was suffering from acute appendicitis—a quite humane course of action.

I wonder if that would have been done for some of our able-bodied seamen or whether they would have had to take Hobson's choice. Possibly many members will recollect that a few years ago someone on a North-West station suffered from appendicitis but he was operated on by one of his colleagues on the

station, the necessary instructions being given him over the air. To my knowledge that operation proved quite successful. In this instance we have the doctor right on the spot and quite able to give instructions for anyone else to carry out.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It would be a big gamble.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Why was not the procedure adopted with the station-hand repeated in this instance but by direct instruction. It will be noticed that when the doctor arrived at Fremantle, he was able to walk off the ship. I know that would be quite possible with a person suffering from appendicitis, because I believe the attacks come and go. Of course, I know the action taken regarding the doctor was very laudable, but would it have applied to Australians, or is this sort of thing to be done in respect of only a certain section? I wanted to refer to that matter in relation to spoon-feeding new Australians. Why do we not let them battle for themselves and paddle their own canoes? I support the motion.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [5.5]: I am very pleased to see you, Mr. President, back in the Chair in the enjoyment of your normal good health. I hope you will continue in that position throughout the session. I congratulate Mr. Simpson upon his appointment as Leader of the House and a Minister holding several important portfolios. He has not been very long in Parliament and it is certainly pleasing to see his rapid elevation to ministerial rank. Two of the portfolios he holds are most important and concern my province very much. As a representative of the Goldfields, mining and railway matters are of vital concern to those whose interests I seek to serve in this House. I hope the Minister will give special attention to those sections of his work as a Minister of the Crown. I know he will give fair decisions on all matters that will be placed before him.

I am sorry the Honorary Minister for Agriculture is not in his seat today because there are several matters I had wished to deal with in his presence. Incidentally, I am very pleased to note that he has been restored to good health. I regret the loss of three of our former members. I refer to the late Hon. Charles Baxter and to the retirement of Hon. G. W. Miles and Hon. A. Thomson. Mr. Baxter and Mr. Miles were pioneers of the goldfields and I always admired them because when I spoke of the pioneers I could see the gleam in their eyes and I felt at home with both of them.

As to Mr. Thomson, I do not think there was any subject dealt with that he was not able to speak about and throw some important light on the topic discussed. I congratulate the new members

—I refer to Mr. Baxter and Mr. Thomson in particular—and hope they will continue the good work their fathers did before them. I have a big list of subjects before me for discussion.

Hon. H. Hearn: Big business!

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I am glad of that interjection, because the topics I shall deal with are of importance. Since the redistribution of seats and the reallocation of electoral boundaries, my province has increased in area and extends from Baandee and Hines Hill through to Yilgarn. In various parts, including Southern Cross, the people are greatly exercised regarding the grasshopper menace. Mr. Cunningham spoke at some length in that regard and I have been supplied with a lot of information by the Yilgarn Road Board. The secretary of that body, Mr. Keany, has studied the subject for a long time and has gone into details thoroughly. Quite a lot of information has been sent to the Agricultural Department in the hope that a trial will be made in that district with regard to the suggestions that have been advanced.

Mr. Keany is of the opinion that three large depots should be set up in furtherance of the attempt to deal with the menace. I was in the district some time back and discussed the position with those concerned. They said the Government, through the Agricultural Department, was doing a good job, but there was a lot more that could be put in hand. So far, the attempts undertaken touched merely on the fringe of the whole problem and the Government, in their opinion, will have to spend much more money on the work. I have received a letter from the board dealing with the position on a property owned by Mr. Smith at Turkey Hill. It comprises 5,000 acres, 400 of which are under crops.

From the indications there they consider the grasshopper plague will be worse this year than ever before in the district. An appeal has been made to parliamentary representatives of the district to get in touch with the Agricultural Department immediately with a view to prompt action being taken. I do not know if members saw last week's issue of "Pix," which contained a write-up regarding the position in the Eastern States and South Africa and the methods adopted for dealing with the pest. Had the Honorary Minister for Agriculture been present, I would have appealed to him to do everything possible to assist the farmers in the outer districts, where the hardship is greater than that suffered by others in more closely settled parts.

Erosion is causing much concern in the district and representations have been made to the Agricultural Department regarding steps to be taken for dealing with this phase so as to maintain production.