

this subject, but all members know that I am keenly interested in it. I recognise the difficulties that have to be solved by the wheat farmers, but we cannot afford to be old fashioned any longer, and some change is absolutely necessary. Experts say that there should be two or three classes of wheat in this State, and I consider it would be possible to have one class in the Great Southern, another grade in the good wheat areas, and another grade if necessary between the two areas. That is a question for the experts to determine. The division of wheat into two grades would be a tremendous advance. That could be done without putting the farmers, and the wheat industry, to any great expenditure. I stress the point, and my remarks are supported by experts. The farmers are losing money by sticking to this old-fashioned system of grading. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. G. Hislop, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 1st August, 1950.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to swear-in the member for North Perth.

Mr. Needham took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Section "B," 1949.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received from the Auditor General a copy of Section "B" of his report on the Treasurer's statement of the Public Accounts for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1949. This will be laid on the Table of the House.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

As to Outstanding Applications.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

How many applications were outstanding on the 30th June last for—

- (1) War Service homes;
- (2) Commonwealth-State tenancies?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

Applications outstanding on 30/6/50—

- (1) War Service homes, 4,572.
- (2) Commonwealth-State rental homes, 11,123.

It is estimated that 20 per cent. of the applicants for War Service homes are also applicants for Commonwealth-State rental homes.

TIMBER.

As to Quantity Exported.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE asked the Premier:

(1) What quantity of Western Australian sawn hardwoods, including sleepers, was exported from Western Australia, both overseas and interstate, for the year 1949-1950?

(2) What was the value of such export?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Interstate, 39,518 loads; overseas, 18,874 loads.

(2) Interstate, £548,516; overseas, £450,638.

SERVICEMEN'S LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to Areas Submitted to Commonwealth and Withdrawn.

Mr. ACKLAND asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) Is it a fact that at the 28th February, 1950, the State Government submitted 1,805,358 acres of land to the Commonwealth Government for approval for Soldier Settlement?

(2) Is it a fact that 201,914 acres were subsequently withdrawn by the State?

(3) Is it a fact that 263,447 acres were rejected by the Commonwealth and that 1,039,838 acres were approved by the Commonwealth for acquisition for Soldier Land Settlement?

(4) Will he state what reasons, if any, were given by the Commonwealth for the rejection of the 263,447 acres?

(5) What was the reason for the State withdrawing 201,914 acres after having submitted these to the Commonwealth?

(6) Were the 201,914 acres definitely acquired by the State prior to submission to the Commonwealth, or have they—or any portion thereof—been acquired since?

The MINISTER replied,—

(1), (2) and (3) Figures for acreages are from Commonwealth records, and after allowing for time lag in collection, are substantially correct.

(4) Properties were rejected on various grounds, including—

lack of development;

high cost of development;

unlikelihood of development within a reasonable time;

disagreement on carrying capacity and/or crop returns.

(5) Withdrawals by the State were practically all owing to failure in reaching agreement on price with vendors.

(6) No.

CHANDLER ALUNITE WORKS.

As to Production of Plaster of Paris.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has any plaster of paris been produced by the Government at the State Alunite Works at Chandler? If so, what quantity and for what purpose was it produced?

(2) When was the production of plaster of paris first commenced at the State Works, and when was it stopped?

(3) Was it necessary to make alterations to the Works to enable plaster of paris to be produced?

(4) What was the cost of these alterations?

(5) Were they made with the knowledge and concurrence of the Minister for Industrial Development?

(6) Did the Board of Management acquire any machinery, tools, apparatus, equipment, appliances, fittings, and/or materials for use at the Chandler Works subsequent to the 16th November, 1949?

(7) For what purpose was such machinery, etc. acquired?

(8) Was such machinery, etc., obtained with the knowledge and approval of the Minister for Industrial Development?

(9) When did the Government first seek legal advice from the Crown Law Department concerning its power to produce plaster of paris at Chandler?

(10) When did the Government seek legal advice from Sir Ross McDonald, K.C., and Mr. Louch, K.C., concerning its power to use the Chandler Works to produce plaster or paris?

(11) Was Mr. Fitzgerald, manager of the Chandler Works, permitted by the Minister for Industrial Development, to visit the Eastern States at the expense of a local group of business men for the purpose of verifying or inquiring into certain prospective business relating to the purchase of plaster of paris which the State Works at Chandler proposed to produce?

(12) Was Mr. Fitzgerald's visit made with the knowledge and concurrence of the Board of Management?

(13) Did the W.A. Plaster Manufacturers' Association make representations to the Minister for Industrial Development or the Government, either directly or indirectly, for the purpose of preventing the State Works from processing gypsum?

(14) Did any member of the Government or any member of the Board of Management wait on the Plaster Manufacturers' Association for the purpose of discussing the Association's attitude towards the proposal to use the State Works at Chandler for the production of plaster?

(15) When did such visit or visits occur?

(16) When did the Government obtain advice from the Crown Law Department concerning its power to lease or sell any part of the Chandler Works?

(17) Was outside legal advice obtained in connection with this question?

(18) If so, from whom and when was it obtained, and what was the nature of such advice?

(19) Did the Board of Management decide to call tenders for the leasing of the Chandler Works? If so, on what date was the decision made?

(20) Did the Board of Management negotiate with any person or firm concerning the leasing of the Chandler Works?

(21) Has a lease been entered into?

(22) If a lease has been finalised, what is the name of the lessee?

(23) What is the financial arrangement in connection with such lease?

The MINISTER replied,—

(1) Only small experimental quantities.

(2) Answered by (1).

(3) and (4) Some minor additions were made to the plant on which only labour and some existing material were used.

Separate costs were not kept, but the value of the work would be less than £2,000.

(5) I was aware that the Board of Management had under consideration a proposal for the production of plaster, but the work done and mentioned above was carried out by the Board of Management in the ordinary course of its duties.

(6) No machinery or other items mentioned were purchased by the Board.

(7) and (8) Answered by (6).

(9) About the end of March.

(10) When no tender had been received for leasing the plant, as advertised, it was considered desirable, in view of certain communications received from Eastern States' sources as to plaster requirements, to obtain further advice on the question of Government production.

(11) The Board of Management made the arrangement in pursuance of inquiries being conducted by them at the time.

(12) Answered by (11).

(13) A deputation waited on the Minister in January and later certain correspondence was received, both of which were directed at acquainting the Government with the supply position of plaster in Western Australia and the views of the Association.

(14) No member of the Government, but two members of the Board of Management discussed with representatives of the Association various aspects that might be involved were the Government to decide to produce plaster.

(15) 14th March.

(16) On various occasions over a considerable period.

(17) No.

(18) Answered by (17).

(19) No, but members of the Board of Management were fully informed of the position.

(20) When an offer was received from Australian Plaster Industries Pty Ltd. early in July for a lease, members of the Board of Management discussed with the managing director the conditions and terms of the proposed lease.

(21) The matter is now in the hands of the Crown Law Department.

(22) Answered by (21).

(23) It is not now considered desirable to make public the proposed terms of the lease, but when it is completed a copy can be made available to the hon. member for his personal information.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

As to Local Slipping of M.V. "Koolinda".

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that M.V. "Koolinda" is to be sent East again to be docked?

(2) Seeing that only small alterations are necessary to the Fremantle slipway to allow M.V. "Koolinda" to be docked in this State, will he see that the necessary alterations to the slipway are made, and the "Koolinda" docked here, thereby saving much valuable time and many thousands of pounds to the State?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) The slipway and cradle at South Fremantle were designed for a 2,000-ton vessel. The "Koolinda" exceeds 3,000 tons deadweight and alterations would not be small.

HEALTH.

As to Council's Recommendations.

HON. A. H. PANTON (without notice) asked the Minister for Health:

Is she prepared to lay on the Table of the House all recommendations made by the Health Council established by her predecessor?

The MINISTER replied:

Yes.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

As to Broadcasting.

Mr. J. HEGNEY (without notice) asked the Premier:

(1) Has any consideration been given to the question of broadcasting the debates of this Assembly as the debates of the Commonwealth Parliament are broadcast?

(2) If not, will consideration be given to the matter?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) No consideration has been given to the question of broadcasting the debates.

(2) I shall consider the matter.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

As to Retaining Mr. Fernie's Services.

Mr. McCULLOCH (without notice) asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

Now that Mr. Fernie has resigned from the position of State Director of Industrial Development, does the Minister intend to retain his services in an advisory capacity on a yearly retainer?

The MINISTER replied:

Mr. Fernie has consented to accept a position on the Advisory Committee, which will keep him in close contact with the department for 12 months at least.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

On motion by the Premier, ordered—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the Premier, ordered—

That on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the Premier, Sessional Committees were appointed as follows:—

Library.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Nimmo and Hon. J. T. Tonkin.

Standing Orders.—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committee, Mr. Nalder, Hon. J. B. Sleeman and Mr. Rodoreda.

House.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Cornell, Mr. Yates, Mr. Graham and Mr. Styants.

Printing.—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hutchinson and Hon. E. Nulsen.

CHAIRMEN (TEMPORARY) OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce that I have appointed Mr. Hill, Mr. Rodoreda and Mr. Yates to be temporary Chairmen of Committees for the session.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £6,000,000.*Standing Orders Suspension.*

On motion by the Premier, resolved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day, and to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Election of Chairman of Committees.

The PREMIER: Before moving that the House do resolve itself into Committee of Supply, I move—

That the member for Roe (Mr. Perkins) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

Question put and passed.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [5.5]: I desire to congratulate you Mr. Chairman, on again being appointed Chairman of Committees. I believe all members will agree that during the past three years you have carried out your duties as Chairman efficiently and with satisfaction to all sections of the House. Whoever occupies the position of Chairman of Committees holds an office that is both responsible and most exacting. I hope that your occupancy of the Chair from now on will be as pleasant as it has been in the past.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: And that you will soon join the Liberal Party.

The PREMIER: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1951, a sum not exceeding £6,000,000.

Supply is required to carry on the services of the State pending the preparation of the Estimates, which will be made available to Parliament as soon as possible. The cost of services and developmental work has greatly increased during the last few years and the amount of Supply required is £6,000,000; as follows:—

Consolidated Revenue Fund	£4,000,000
Loan Fund	£1,500,000
Advance to Treasurer	£500,000

The cost of carrying into effect loan works, such as the improvements to the Albany, Bunbury and Fremantle Harbours, the comprehensive water scheme, increasing the capacity of the Mundaring and Mt. Yokine reservoirs, capital expenditure by the State Electricity Commission, etc., is certainly heavy, but increased costs of manpower, and materials such as cement, steel sheets, pipes, equipment, and so on, must be incurred in accordance with ruling conditions. Much of the material and equipment is imported and costs more than would Australian products, if such could be available for the State's public works.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Are you charging that difference to Loan or Revenue?

The PREMIER: To Loan. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, we are unable to get the materials to carry out those works and we have had to import great quantities from overseas. It was a question of importing the necessary materials, at greatly increased cost, or closing down those essential works. The Supply granted last year was as follows:—

Consolidated Revenue Fund	£3,700,000
General Loan Fund	700,000
Advance to Treasurer	300,000
	<hr/> £4,700,000

The year 1949-50 ended with a small surplus of £23,758, as against an estimated deficit of £838,927. The actual revenue received for last financial year totalled £25,810,961, and the amount estimated was £22,670,946, showing an increase of £3,140,015. The actual expenditure from Consolidated Revenue Fund amounted to £25,787,203, and the amount estimated was £23,509,873, showing an increase in expenditure of £2,277,330. The main increases in revenue were taxation, departmental receipts, public utilities and Commonwealth grants. Included in the latter is £330,000 on account of the balance of our assessed grant for 1947-48, and £661,677 made available by the Commonwealth towards losses incurred by the State owing to coal strikes.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: How much do you think you lost? Do not commit yourself.

The PREMIER: I think we will leave it—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Leave it at that.

The PREMIER: There was increased expenditure for interest and sinking fund on loans, £77,363; subsidy for transport of superphosphates by road, £179,709; Forestry, £63,018; Education, £227,470; Hospital Fund Contributions, £120,353; State Shipping Service losses, £56,172; provision for assistance to settlers affected by South-West bush fires, £20,000. Included in expenditure was £383,092 allocated to State Concerns for losses owing to the coal strikes. The increase in Railway expenditure amounted to £286,000; Tramways, £229,000, and Public Works, £146,000. Fuller details will be available when the Estimates for the current year are presented to Parliament.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (Gascoyne) [5.14]: It is a long time since we last saw you in that seat, Mr. Chairman, and I congratulate you on once more having been appointed Chairman of Committees. We have had experience of you in the past, and know that you will give to members, provided they keep within the Standing Orders, every opportunity of expressing themselves on any subject. It is ten months since Parliament last met. We assembled last year on the 15th June and adjourned on the 30th September. Of that and its effect on Parliament and on our people I will have much more to say at a later stage.

I want to take this, the first opportunity I have in this session, appropriate as it is to an address on the Supply Bill and quite distinct from the Address-in-reply, to congratulate the Government on its return to office. The elections must bring victory to some and defeat to others and I therefore extend my congratulations to those who have been selected to be within the Government. At the same time, I am very sorry that there is necessity for change in the front Bench. For the first

time, we notice the absence of one who held the portfolio of the Minister for Housing, now Sir Ross McDonald, who will, I am sure, be much missed, particularly by the Premier himself. I regret, too, the absence from the front Bench of Mr. Seward, a man who gave sterling service to this country in every capacity he filled as a member of Parliament.

From this side of the House we have some notable absences. Mr. F. C. L. Smith is one whose seat was abolished by Act of Parliament, because it was necessary, under the formula applied, to abolish at least one seat on the Goldfields. Mr. Smith, who served as a Minister, will be sadly missed not only from this side of the House, but by the whole House generally, because of his great knowledge and his capacity as a debater. I regret, also, that Mr. Triat is not with us, his seat having been lost in the redistribution. In these references I include Mr. Reynolds, too. Those three men, from behind the Leader of the Party, gave sterling service to the community and to both sides of the House.

One must mention, in addition, with very great regret by many people, the absence of Sir Norbert Keenan from this Chamber. Sir Norbert was a wise counsellor and an extremely fine friend. He would be, indeed, the first man in Australian politics to suffer defeat on account of age because that was the card very strongly played in the election at Nedlands to bring about his defeat.

Mr. Styants: And in other places, too.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: To his successor, in extending my congratulations, I hope that it is to be his privilege, that it is to be his achievement, to give something proportionate to the life of this community as was given, through a generation, by the man he defeated. Sir Norbert Keenan I trust will, in his future years, have much pleasure in reflecting on the things he was able to do for this great State of Western Australia. I would like to make particular mention of the fact that we now have the person in this Chamber who holds the office of the Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor. It is the first occasion since Perth had a Lord Mayoralty that the Lord Mayor has, as a person, been a member of the Legislative Assembly. I cannot say to him that I hope he is long a member for West Perth, but I do hope that whilst he is the member for that electorate he does add, by his contributions to this Chamber, something of benefit to his fellow-men. I notice that the seat that was occupied on the first day of sitting by the member for Avon Valley is, for the moment, vacant.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The hon. member means the two seats.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I think that comment is necessary from me in this connection. I understand that the hon. member is still occupying the seat next to where the Independents sit. That is in striking contrast to the position of the member for Nedlands who, I understand, is not yet a member of the Liberal and Country League, but because he intends to be such he is sitting in his place behind the Government. However, with the member for Avon Valley, the Press paragraphs of recent date I think should be recorded. On the 12th July, 1950, this paragraph appeared in "The West Australian":

Mr. Mann's Seat.

Months of curiosity by members of the State Parliament as to where Mr. J. I. Mann, M.L.A., would sit in the new Parliament, which opens on July 27, have ended. Yesterday Mr. Mann requested the Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. F. Islip) to reserve him the centre aisle seat of the back row of the Opposition cross-benches, next to the two Independents—Messrs. W. R. Read and H. Shearn. In the last Parliament Mr. Mann sat immediately across the aisle on the rear Government cross-bench. Mr. Mann was formerly a Country Party member, but in March last year he became an Independent and later a member of the newly-formed Liberal and Country League.

It is very interesting to find in the same issue of "The West Australian" and in the personal column this paragraph:—

Mr. Ross McLarty, the Premier, will visit York today at the invitation of Mr. J. I. Mann, M.L.A.

The Premier: The ride to York!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I think the Premier will not be very low down in the list of men who have ridden to York, but I hope he will not be taken for a ride. The next interesting paragraph appeared on the 14th of July, 1950, and it states:—

State Parliament.

At a combined meeting of State parliamentary members of the Liberal-Country League and Country Party yesterday it was unanimously decided that Mr. C. J. North (L.C.L.) and Mr. C. C. Perkins (C.P.) should again be nominated when the new Parliament meets on July 27 to continue in office as Speaker and Chairman of Committees, respectively. Mr. W. S. Bovell (L.C.L.) was elected Government Whip and Mr. G. M. Cornell (C.P.), Assistant-Whip. Among those not at the party meeting was Mr. J. I. Mann (L.C.L.), but he notified "The West Australian" by telegram from Beverley yesterday that he would give full support to the Government.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The next interesting piece of news from "The West Australian" appeared on Friday, the 28th July, and it reads:—

Yesterday, Mr. Mann (L.C.L.), Avon Valley occupied the seat he had selected on the Opposition cross-benches, but it is understood that, when the House meets again next Tuesday, he is likely to return to a seat on the Government side of the House.

Mr. Fox: Could we not have a fence for that passage?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If we have a fence for that passage I have no doubt as to which side the hon. member for Avon Valley would fall. He has had an extremely interesting career insofar as Party representation is concerned. He was first a candidate as a member of the United Party of the Country Party. He was then Independent, then Country Party, then Independent again, then he joined the L.C.L. He was its first member and the first to join the L.C.L. as a parliamentarian. The member for Avon Valley has this distinction: he is really the one-man party who absorbed the Liberal Party. I think he would be the first man in history who has had a party join him. He is certainly an accommodating man with as much versatility in politics as the Vicar of Bray had in religion. The hon. member adopts, invariably, the politics of the table at which he sits, and it is just plain humbug to find the member for Avon Valley sitting on this side of the House, still, as he is, a member of the Liberal-Country League; a person who claims to be its founder at the famous meeting at Beverley on the 30th May, 1949. The Liberal Party joined him; he is still behind the Premier, according to "The West Australian" in his own terms, and he sits on this side of the House.

I object to the hon. member sitting on this side of the House and I hope that the sooner he makes up his mind where he is and sits over there where he belongs, as a member of the Party which he founded, the better for himself and the House. I think that pretence and sham in politics do no credit to any individual or party and certainly the actions and attitude of the hon. member resemble the propensities of a flea and will be an irritant, as such, to the Premier and those associated with him. I am sure that the majority of new members, men of all parties, enter this House with a genuine heartfelt desire to benefit their fellow-men, but extremely few emerge from their first session with all their illusions unscarred and intact. However, I am certain that all new members will find that there are many persons of all parties anxious to help and advise them. They will find, too, many frustrations and disappointments. Those sitting behind the Government, particularly, will have very many disappointments. They will find that all Ministers'

geese are swans and Government members will be expected to applaud and not to criticise. We know that from the past three years' experience.

The Premier: Why not say for the past 14 years?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I know that there are many in the front Bench at the moment who were extremely vocal in Opposition but who now have become strangely silent, and that remark is not confined to members of both sexes sitting on the Government side of the House at present. It is interesting to observe that the Government is in charge in this House without a majority. It is the Government for two main reasons which were carefully and deliberately planned. Firstly, the wiping out of a North-West seat by Act of Parliament and, secondly, its refusal to conduct by-elections last year. The North-West has had four seats, specific within the Statute, since 1904. From 1899 to 1904 there were five seats in that area and the important part is that the Government had no tremors whatever—it may have them now—when the Redistribution of Seats Act was passed, to retain in the North three Legislative Councillors in spite of the arguments the Government itself raised. But because of the aspect of population it was necessary to have three members instead of four in that vast area. The North-West, of course, will continue to support Labour as the Premier will discover during the next four years. I venture to forecast that there will be no L.C.L. members either for the Lower or the Upper House within four years from now.

The Premier: It is dangerous to forecast so far ahead.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Premier knew full well that, in destroying the North-West seat, he had gone as far as he could go, in making safe the Government in this State. The people have given their answer as to that and for the first time in history have returned, with a very large majority, a Labour member to represent the North Province.

So, by deliberate intent and design, the North-West seat was wiped out by statute with the knowledge that the tribunal to which the case was referred would ensure, under the formula, that the Government would be returned. Furthermore, thousands of people had no representation in this House for many months and steps were taken to close Parliament early last year.

The Premier: Did they suffer?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Of course they suffered.

The Premier: Not at all.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Unless the Premier wants to discredit Parliament, he will not do that again, but he did discredit Parliament to the extent of applying the gag

on the Opposition to avoid defeat. Unless he wants to discredit Parliament, he will give the people a vote to decide on all these things because most certainly the Government would have been voted out had that course been followed.

The Premier: Certainly not.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: "The West Australian" furnishes the Government with much advice. Most of that advice is followed by Ministers, as I will show in the course of my speech. That advice most decidedly has been taken by the Government. In a leading article published on the 23rd May, 1949, which was headed "Political Problems", "The West Australian"—I shall lift certain passages from the context of the article—had this to say—

Circumstances have combined to make the position of the McLarty-Watts Government more than usually precarious when it faces Parliament this year. Its difficulties . . . stem from the Federal ambitions of Messrs. Leslie and Grayden. Their decisions to contest the new Federal divisions of Moore and Swan respectively mean that for a period around Federal election time the State Government will lose control of the Legislative Assembly pending two by-elections for Mt. Marshall and Middle Swan. If it takes those hurdles safely, it may have to face another uneasy period pending a by-election for Avon from which seat Mr. Cornell proposes to resign to contest Mt. Marshall. Of those three seats, two—Middle Swan and Avon—the Government holds by narrow majorities. There is no reason to suppose that it would, but it could, lose both seats and with them its right to sit on the Treasury benches. And then within a matter of a few weeks or months the whole of the lower House members would have to go to a general election fought on new boundaries.

This is not a situation likely to encourage the Government to prolong the meeting of Parliament which commences on June 15 by the introduction of unnecessary or contentious legislation.

The leading article continued—this advice the Government also took—in the following strain:—

The Government will be well advised to keep its 1949 legislative programme down to the barest essentials—

Let members listen to this—

—to produce its Budget as early as possible and to give a firm undertaking that it will afford members a more reasonable opportunity than they were given last year for debating the Estimates.

Members will recollect that the gag was applied to the discussion on the Estimates last year and little opportunity was given members to debate the Estimates as they desired. The Estimates were not introduced until the end of July and we shall watch with interest the Premier's performance this year with regard to his next Estimates. I anticipate that the Estimates will not be ready for presentation to Parliament before the end of August. "The West Australian" continued further on that note, and in the leading article said—

It would be much more desirable for Parliament to hang together somehow for this year—

I should say it would be better if some members were hanged separately—

—and go to the earliest possible general election in the hope that one side or the other will secure an adequate working majority.

And so the Government accepted the advice of "The West Australian" and the first law of Nature predominated. The Government was in no hurry whatever to test the views of the electors of Middle Swan, and it certainly did not want to hold a by-election before the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1947 became operative at the general election. The Government then, as it is now, was controlled by outside influences. I will read what Hon. W. J. Mann, M.L.C. who is a member of the Liberal and Country League, said about outside control.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You had better be careful because he is on this side of the House now.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I am not referring to that Mann but the W. J. Mann who is a member of the Legislative Council.

Mr. W. Hegney: The one here is not the only Mann—and he is a super-man.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: There are too many Manns.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In an article written for a newspaper, Mr. Mann, M.L.C. said—

A Government proved incapable of at least making an effort to implement its own carefully-considered decisions, and lacking the dignity, backbone and strength to disregard outside influences has no claim to be retained in power.

The Premier: He was not referring to this Government.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The appropriateness of those remarks by Mr. Mann, M.L.C. give to him credit for a considerable amount of capacity as a wielder of the pen. He made it clear that a Government that had not the strength to disregard outside influences had no right to be in power.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That is an understatement.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is a very kindly statement.

The Premier: It is a statement, anyhow.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is a statement that the Premier cannot refute—that a Government incapable of making its own decisions has no right to be the party governing the country.

Mr. Fox: Is he a member of the L.C.L.?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Of course he is. It is due to many shortcomings and outside control, together with strife from within, that we have the fact that the anti-Labour forces in this State are very little different from the set-up in Victoria. In that State the official Opposition to the Liberal Government was the Country Party. Now the Liberals are in Opposition to the Country Party Government. There is very little difference in this State with regard to the internal bitterness that characterises the affairs of the political parties in Victoria.

The Premier: That is a long, long way from it.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I will point out the position during the course of my remarks. There was an attempt to secure a merger of the two anti-Labour parties. Someone has interjected behind me to the effect that it was the "murder of the Country Party". In 1949 when there was pending a Federal election, both parties expressed themselves as favouring a united front against Federal Labour. The Liberal Party met and made an offer, which meant that the Country Party would be swallowed up. This proposal, quite understandably, was rejected by the Country Party, the members of which did not want to be absorbed by the Liberal Party and, in consequence, the offer was rejected. The Country and Democratic League, by which title the Country Party was then known, made an offer of an amalgamation and the formation of a Liberal-Country Party Federation under a joint management committee.

At the elections it was suggested that there should be no three-cornered contests. Each candidate was to represent the Liberal-Country Party Federation and after the election each member would sit with the party to which he belonged. There were to be separate party conferences and separate platforms to be supported by each party. After that arrangement had been proposed, it was suggested that the Liberal and Country League was to continue, at any rate, until April, 1952. While the Liberal Party was considering this offer, the then member for Beverley, Mr. J. I. Mann, handed to Mr. Watts and the Press his resignation from the Country and Democratic League.

This move astounded Mr. Watts who said, in a statement in "The West Australian" of the 10th April, 1949—

He had first received Mr Mann's letter on Tuesday afternoon during a Cabinet meeting. Its receipt was all the more surprising in view of the most recent approach made by the C.D.L. to the Liberal Party suggesting the formation of a non-Labour federation of the two parties and the ultimate consideration of proposals for even closer co-operation if that were found to be desirable in the light of political trends.

"The West Australian" of the same date, in the course of a leading article, supported Mr. Mann and said—

Mr. Mann who has represented Beverley in the Legislative Assembly for nearly 20 years, will become an Independent for the time being, but intends to devote his time to helping to bring about a fusion of the two non-Labour parties. His decision to sever a long-standing political association would not have been reached impulsively.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: And now he has left the party.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: After reading that statement in the leading article, one would be constrained to say, "Sez you." The leading article continued—

It was the outcome of a strong conviction that unity is essential in the interests of both Australia and Western Australia.

Today he is not interested in that fusion at all, for he is sitting on the Opposition side of the House. To continue with the story of the proposed merger, following the resignation of the present member for Avon Valley, the Liberal Party rejected the offer to have a Liberal-Country Party Federation established, and that decision very considerably disappointed the present Deputy Premier because he said that his party had gone to the utmost practical length to bring about the merger. In a Press statement Mr. Watts said—

The decision of the executive of the Liberal Party in rejecting the proposal for the creation of a non-Labour anti-socialisation federation, of the C.D.L. and the Liberal Party, while disappointing to my organisation, is likely to be even more so to the supporters of the Liberal Party.

In the statement Mr. Watts made it clear that his own party had no satisfaction in the decision, and expressed the view that it certainly would not give satisfaction to members of the Liberal Party. Then, on the 30th March, at a record political meeting held at Beverley, there was launched the L.C.L. While Sir Charles Latham and Mr. Milford Smith attended the meeting, they were severely trounced

by those present. It was made a matter of personal attack so far as they were concerned and they were absolutely "on the outer" with respect to the proposal to bring about a merger between the movement denounced by the present member for Avon Valley and the Country Party, which was the party with which he was formerly associated.

The Country and Democratic League received advice from "The West Australian" every few days. I think that there were twelve leading articles published in "The West Australian" embodying advice to the Country and Democratic League telling that body what it should do—to accept the merger, or be swallowed whole. As a matter of fact, "The West Australian" lectured the organisation, and on the 5th April it published the following statement:—

When the non-Labour Government, suffering from many years in office, started to disintegrate after the death of Mr. Lyons, the Labour Party was able to capitalise its opponents' disunity and it has never desisted, nor had much reason to desist, from that line of propaganda . . . Labour is still able to point to the existence of two Opposition parties as prima facie evidence of disunity, and recriminations such as have been going on between the Liberals and the Country Party in Victoria lend an air of verisimilitude to what Labour says when it argues that stable government cannot come from such warring factions.

"The West Australian" advised the Country Party at every opportunity possible to make sure that the members of that organisation did not continue to display disunity and the recriminations that existed then, and still exist, between the two parties.

Hon. A. H. Panton: "The West Australian" is a menace.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It was at that stage that Mr. Hamilton, M.H.R., sought the endorsement of both parties—which is a rather peculiar attitude. I do not think he was endorsed by both parties, but certainly was a centre of attraction of the L.C.L. during the course of his candidature. But to the enjoyment of the Country Party and the discomfiture of the L.C.L., he won the seat.

The Premier: I hope you are not trying to drive a wedge in the coalition forces.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There is no need to. It is not a question of getting a wedge in; there is a gaping chasm at the moment.

The Premier: You would hope so.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We will see the amity that exists, in the course of this current session. We will see the brotherly love displayed by members of the front bench and internally within the front bench and certain members of the back benches.

The Premier: Like cooling doves!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We will draw attention to the brotherly love paraded to the public but which is merely a pretence and a sham.

The Premier: Not a bit of it!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It does not matter how often the Premier says that. He will become redder in the face the more often he says it, knowing how impossible it is for him to say it in very truth. Varying decisions were reached at mass meetings about this time, when Mr. Downing and others stumped the country.

The Premier: What is this all about?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Premier has not gathered yet? He will a little later. I will read some interesting advertisements and show him some nice pictures of himself.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Premier is better at gathering wool.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Premier will be wool-gathering. I was about to say, before the Premier so rudely interrupted, that varying decisions were reached at this stage at mass meetings in various parts of the country; because Mr. Frank Downing and others stumped the country regretting that members of the Country Party were waging such an intensive campaign against the Beverley movement. That was in the Press. Mr. Downing stumped the country. He went to places in the Great Southern and the South-West, getting meetings together and attacking the Country Party, and regretting that the Country Party was attacking the decisions of the Beverley meeting. The paper at that time was full of headlines such as 'Criticism answered by the C.D.L.' 'C.D.L. refuses to face the issue.' 'Mr. Watts deprecates merger propaganda.' 'Mr. Downing replies to the C.D.L.'; plus, of course, the regular appearance of the leading articles in 'The West Australian.' Much bitterness developed in outside organisations. Will the Premier deny that?

The Premier: We have these family quarrels.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Family quarrels, where the poor little child would be poisoned by the others!

Mr. Marshall: They seem to be illegitimate in their family quarrels.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I will give an instance of how friendly and close was the relationship. In 'The West Australian' of Saturday, the 21st May, 1949, Mr. Barrett-Lennard, Chairman of the Provisional Executive of the L.C.L., made a statement which was replied to by Mr. Milford Smith, State President of the Country and Democratic League. This is a very friendly sort of comment from Mr. Milford Smith to Mr. Barrett-Lennard. It is the sort of thing a father would say to his son.

Mr. Barrett-Lennard made reference to the fact that I and my party were living in the past instead of the present. I admit that we had not yet caught up with the technique of how a substantive political party can be absorbed by a party which only exists in name, the title to which would be difficult to claim.

It is more than a remote possibility that had the Liberal Party been living on ground level instead of in the clouds over the past few years and had accepted our offer for a joint executive, this attempt with all its attending evils to force a united front by browbeating people into believing it is the only way to promote a maximum non-Labour effort at the next election, would not be taking place.

The newspaper report goes on to say—

Mr. Smith added that it was not his wish to widen the gap—

Note the word, Mr. Premier—

—between the Liberal and Country League and his organisation, and for that reason, after answering the official statement by the retiring president of the Liberal Party (Mr. Frank Downing), he had purposely refrained from publicity. However, it was now quite apparent that the new party not only possessed all the vigour and venom of its predecessor, but it was intent on "turning the heat on" in an intensified manner.

What a friendly comment! He said that the Liberal Country League was venomous.

Mr. Marshall: You are a bright lot of families!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is plain humbug to suggest that. From 'The West Australian' and from other papers I intend to quote passages to show that not only was there a gap between the parties but venom was shown in the attitude of the Liberal Country League towards the Country and Democratic League.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I suppose Mr. Milford Smith would collaborate with the Parliamentary Leader of the Country Party before writing that.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I should say so! There surely would be a family connection there just as between Mr. Downing and the Premier on all such statements.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: And the Attorney General.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Do not wake up the Attorney General.

The Attorney General: Go on! I am listening intently.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Much bitterness developed in these outside organisations, and the Deputy Premier kept on insisting that it did not enter Government circles and did not affect the friendliness of Mr. McLarty and himself.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: But the Premier on that occasion said not a word. There was not a comment from the Premier.

The Premier: Silence means consent.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If the Premier remained silent for the next hour on that point he would be very wise. He showed great wisdom at that time. One cannot find a word about the matter. I watched it closely and did not see anything. He was pleased for Mr. Clive Palmer and Mr. Frank Downing to say what they liked about the Country Party and his own colleagues, but he said not a word. The next very interesting comment in "The West Australian" gives the context of a letter from the Country and Democratic League President to the L.C.L. This appeared on the 23rd May, 1949. It is a letter that was sent from one member of the family to the other. These friendly family relationships, this brotherly love, speak for themselves in this extract. The heading is "L.C.L. Attitude," and the letter reads—

Replying to your statement that you are unable to understand our unco-operative attitude towards your invitation, I wish to say in effect that had you been imbued with the spirit of co-operation you would, at your meeting on May 4, providing it was not already known to you, have ascertained from our office the date fixed for the annual conference, and generally indicated a desire to work in with our plans. Instead, we were presented with a fait accompli to the extent that the Liberal-Country League was under no obligation to honour any undertakings entered into between the Liberals and the C.D.L., that the endorsements of all Liberal candidates had been confirmed, and that it was the intention of the L.C.L. to contest all seats, including a Senate team of four. As a final ultimatum the C.D.L. would be given until June 6 to decide whether it wished to amalgamate or not.

It would appear that, having completed your plans to your own satisfaction, my organisation was expected to please oblige by dancing to your music. If your precipitate actions or our failure to co-operate with you has led you into some difficulties, it is not the fault of my members, and as the aggressor party in these activities, you must take full responsibility for the consequence and difficulties arising therefrom.

Just a friendly note from the President of the C.D.L. to the President of the L.C.L. which stresses the uncompromising unco-operative attitude. Indeed, it suggests that the L.C.L. was determined not to consult and to give no opportunity for consultation at a general meeting that was suggested.

"The West Australian" again gave some very good advice to the Country Party, but no criticism of the L.C.L., when it said in its leading article on non-Labour unity that—

It is to be hoped—

This was at the time of the Country Party's annual conference, and I can understand "The West Australian's" trepidation lest some members of the Country Party might say something rude. So "The West Australian" advised the Country Party members in this fashion.

It is to be hoped that nothing will be said or done at either conference to inflame the bitterness—

Note the word, Mr. Premier—

—which has resulted from the simple and worthy desire of the old Liberal Party for friendship.

Mr. Marshall: They would shake hands with anyone in order to hold Ministerial office!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I will read that again—

It is to be hoped that nothing will be said or done at either conference to inflame the bitterness which has resulted from the simple and worthy desire of the old Liberal Party for friendship and unity with the C.D.L. to the point of amalgamation.

Fortunately there is some reason to believe that non-Labour country residents do not, in general, share the bitterness of a relatively small number of leading personalities in the C.D.L.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They must have been frightened of the member for Moore.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: One of the points of insistence by Mr. Smith was that in any case "There shall be a loyal exchange of preferences between candidates of the parties and a mutual undertaking that neither party, nor its members, candidates or supporters, will attack or criticise the other party, or its candidates or supporters." That was quite a reasonable request but we will see as we progress just how much the L.C.L. took notice of that. "The West Australian," in a leading article a day or two afterwards, made some comment about the Country and Democratic League conference. It denied that it had attacked Mr. Seward as a Country and Democratic League Minister. "The West Australian" replied to Mr. Marwick, who was a senior vice-president of the C.D.L. and said in this article—

There were a few things said yesterday at the Country and Democratic League conference which might deceive artless readers were they allowed to go unanswered.

Mr. Marwick, senior vice-president of the C.D.L., for instance, had the effrontery to say that "The West Australian" had attacked one section of the Government and particularly C.D.L. Ministers in the Government.

"The West Australian" did not like the Country Party saying that its criticism was confined to Country Party Ministers. But in spite of the weaknesses in administration, despite the deficiencies in their offices, I do not recall one instance where "The West Australian" has attacked the ex-Chief Secretary or the Attorney General or the Minister for Shipping—not one instance. I thought the Attorney General might interject that they had no reason to. There is not an instance that I could find in my search of the files to show that the Liberal Country League Ministers were paraded and laid bare as was the ex-Minister for Railways.

We find in "The West Australian," three days afterwards, still more advice to the Country Party. This is a very interesting one because it shows clearly just where the attitude of the then leader writer of "The West Australian" inclined him politically. This leading article of the 11th July, 1949, reads—

The Country and Democratic League voted overwhelmingly against a merger with the Liberal and Country League, but it would have been a miracle if it had voted otherwise on that issue.

Later the article said that non-Labour—

while the country Party or C.D.L. retains its separate identity has no alternative to composite Governments when its two Parties gain a majority. Such Governments . . . cannot always be depended upon to pull together and show the strength and cohesion which are desirable in a Government. The fact that they are a combination of two parties makes for minor frictions.

So that at the time "The West Australian" did not anticipate any other decision than a decision against a merger at the Country and Democratic League Conference. Members will recall, too, that this bitterness extended into the Country Party and Liberal Party camps in the Federal sphere. You, Mr. Chairman, will recall the bitterness over Mr. Freeth and Mr. Potts, and I will quote examples of what was said during the course of that campaign, if it is necessary. I will show how the proposals for a merger progressed so that we get to the present stage. Then, later, I will deal with the last occasion; the occasion when feelings were expressed in the Supreme Court of this State. I recall a Country Party Minister speaking openly of the strained relations between themselves and their opponents, the Liberals, in connection with that election.

The Premier: Not between Ministers.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes.

The Premier: No, that never has been.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I will name the Minister if it is necessary.

The Premier: You can name him but that has never been so.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is a Minister who speaks in this Chamber. However, I will protect him and the things he says of his friends, the Liberal and Country League.

The Premier: He did not say it of his colleagues in the Government.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: He says it of the tactics of the L.C.L. in elections, and at other times. He has stated it quite openly and I have had to listen to him for quite a long time. We next come to the stage when the Country Party received an awful shock. In January of this year the first election advertisement for the last State elections appeared in "The West Australian." The Country Party members were astounded; they were worried. The advertisement was a full-page one headed, "Legislative Assembly Elections—1950" with a very stern-looking photograph of the Premier. It mentioned such subjects as "housing, hospitals, transport, education, electricity, land settlement" and finished up with—and this is what caused the consternation—"Keep Ross McLarty Premier. Elect L.C.L. candidates." Not a mention, in a full-page advertisement in "The West Australian," costing over £100, that there were any Country and Democratic League members in the Government. Not a mention of them at all—"Keep Ross McLarty Premier. Elect L.C.L., Liberal and Country League, Candidates."

One or two advertisements followed that and they caused consternation in the Country Party camp. I well recall it as, I am sure, can the Chief Secretary. As a matter of fact, I am not sure that a Country Party meeting was not held because of the consternation caused by this sort of advertising. The next advertisement was half a page stating, "Vote 1 for L.C.L. Candidates. Help McLarty to continue progress in schools, hospitals, transport, electricity, land settlement. New records are in sight."

Mr. Rodoreda: The Premier needs considerable help.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Not a mention of the C.D.L. Then we come to the next interesting advertisement—"The L.C.L. is your party. Facts you should know."

Mr. Marshall: They would tack themselves on to anybody.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: And they did in this advertisement. They claimed they were an absolutely rural set-up. They did not want to win seats from this side of the House but they wanted to win them from their mates over there. This was the set-up; these are the facts you should know, "Ross McLarty, Premier of W.A., and Parliamentary Leader of the L.C.L., is a farmer from Pinjarra."

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: And what a farmer!

Mr. Marshall: Farmer from St. George's-terrace.

Mr. Graham: I would like to see him lumping bags.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The advertisement goes on to state—

Les Barrett-Lennard, President, is a farmer from Beverley.

Parliamentary members and candidates include farmers, professional men, traders, trade unionists, clerks, and men and women from every walk of life.

Of 132 branches, 88 are in country electorates.

20,000 members are spread throughout the southern half of the State.

Of 71 members of the executive, 39 are country dwellers.

The L.C.L. is a State-wide and not a "sectional" party.

The L.C.L. will govern for the whole State, and not in the interests of any one section.

The "farmer" build-up! Of course that hurt the friends of the family; the friends within the family. They were entitled to be hurt. They were not being included but were being criticised and they knew that the seats the L.C.L. had a chance of winning were seats held by their own mates; which events subsequently proved.

In self-defence, through all the country papers with a substantial circulation, the next advertisement appeared, issued by the Country and Democratic League. This will show the friendliness about which the Premier speaks. It is most marked in this one because it starts—

State elections, March 25, 1950. Although the L.C.L. advertisements appear to have overlooked the fact—

Very kindly done, is it not? The advertisement continues—

—in the McLarty-Watts: L.C.L.—Country Party Composite Government there are five Country Party members —Here they are.

Then it gives the details of the Country Party members of the Government because by some inadvertence the L.C.L. advertisement had omitted to show that there were any Country and Democratic League Ministers in the Government. It had omitted to suggest that there was even a composite government because, if members will recall, the first three advertisements stated, "Keep Ross McLarty Premier. Vote for the L.C.L. Candidates." A very friendly approach to a general election! In this advertisement that appeared in "The Albany Advertiser" it gives the details. If I were to read them out they would make the Minister for Lands blush.

The Minister for Lands: No hope.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Then it would make the Chief Secretary blush if I read them out.

Hon. A. H. Panton: The Premier is the only one over there that can blush.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That advertisement tells in detail what has been done by the Country and Democratic League members of the Government to keep the Government on the rails; to make this progress so much vaunted by the L.C.L. in its advertisements. Here we have the next stage and I would like the Minister for Lands to have a close look at this one. This is the city advertisement which compares with the last one that appeared in the country newspapers. It does not have the words, "Although the L.C.L. advertisements appear to have overlooked the fact." This advertisement says, "In the McLarty-Watts L.C.L.-Country Party Composite Government there are five Country Party Ministers and here they are." They are not very good photographs; especially the one of the Chief Secretary.

The Chief Secretary: The less they are like me, the better I shall be pleased.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It sets out details in much fairer terms than they appeared in the other type of advertisement because it says, "Keep an L.C.L.-Country Party Composite Government." Every advertisement the Country Party used in the country or city Presses advocated the McLarty-Watts L.C.L.-Country Party Government. Quite a distinction from the advertising of the L.C.L. The member for Albany, whom we all know as a man and a member, does not complain unless he has something to complain about. However, he said this in Albany the week before the elections were held—

Mr. Hill said that both the Labour Party and the L.C.L. seemed anxious to remove him from the Albany seat. Mr. Hill said figures of past elections showed that Albany and the rest of the Great Southern were dominantly Country Party, and as both the other parties were dominated by city interests, their future well-being relied on maintaining a strong C.P. representation.

The member for Albany was opposed by an L.C.L. candidate whose cause was espoused by the Premier. But, he did not appear on the platform of the member for Albany, as I will mention later. The two leaders appeared on the platform together at the time of delivering the policy speeches; but, not again. They were speaking for opposing candidates after that. We did not find the Premier speaking for the opponent of the member for Vasse nor for the present member for Albany. We found that where there were candidates standing separately and there was no identification of opposing interests supporting the Country

Party, no L.C.L. Ministers supported Country Party candidates. So, this brotherly love is a matter of pretence and does not exist within the party.

The next gem of an advertisement, and perhaps the gem of them all, was the full-page advertisement that appeared in the "Daily News" of Friday, the 24th March; right on the eve of the election. This is headed "Thanks" and states—

We thank the L.C.L.—

And then in brackets "Liberal" to make sure that there is no mistake.

We thank the L.C.L. (Liberal) Party for the following eulogium.

Housing. Building rate a State record! New records in view!

Education. More schools built or building than ever before.

Transport. Big expansion! Further considerable progress planned.

Electricity. Great speed-up of new power station. Second station ordered!

Mr. Styants: That is a good one!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: These are all the praiseworthy efforts of the Country Party administrators but the L.C.L. advertisements overlooked the fact. Such friendliness; such brotherly love that the Country Party had to spend £100 to draw attention to the fact.

The Premier: Is that what they cost?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, and well the Premier knows it.

Hon. A. H. Panton: A sum of £1 an inch.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I do not like to draw attention to any member but there is one member sitting on the Government side who could tell the Chamber what it costs. A sum of £100 a page—"We thank the Liberal Party for the following eulogium. Because all these praiseworthy results have been achieved by these competent Country Party Ministers." But, they missed out the Minister for Lands; the man who would have looked the best of the whole crowd.

The Premier: Inadvertently, I should say.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: We have the Deputy Premier, the then Minister for Railways and the then Minister for Public Works. It states, "Vote Country Party." The Liberal and Country League treated its friends of the family, its family members, so dreadfully that it became necessary for the Country Party to act in its own defence.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I was dealing with the stage which had been reached between the two parties just prior to the last election, when the Country and Democratic League found it necessary to show by advertisement that they had been overlooked by their coalition colleagues, even to the extent of thanking them in an advertisement for a eulogy that had been

given to Country Party Ministers. Following that stage, which was just prior to the election, policy speeches were delivered by the Premier and the Deputy Premier, when much brotherly love was professed. There were two policies, and two policy speeches were made, each on the other's platform. They were not, however, again together on the same platform during the course of the election in Albany, or in Vasse, or in Bunbury or in Dale—

Mr. Marshall: Or in Avon Valley.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes, or in Avon Valley. They certainly kept as far away from each other as they could. They had two conflicting policies, two conflicting loves, and conflicting candidates in very many seats. It was said, and told to me on very good authority, that such partisanship was shown in the Roe electorate that the Country Party Minister, Mr. Seward, who was opposed by one of his Country Party colleagues, was certainly not assisted by the Liberal Party organisers in that election, that they were not assisting him but the other candidate. That shows exactly what the position was, both inside the Cabinet and out of it. That information was given to me by one of the participants in that election. I do not wish to weary the Chamber on this subject but, if the Premier thinks there is still this brotherly love, I will be pleased to quote some of the literature issued by a few of the candidates for both parties, where there was no Labour candidate standing, to show just how wide this rift is, and to show it is not a question of driving a wedge—the gap is too wide for any wedge to fit into it. As I said before, it is a gaping chasm. We have the case of the member for Moore. I remember his disappointment at not being opposed by the L.C.L. so that he might have had an opportunity to tell them what he thought of them.

Hon. A. H. Panton: He could have had my opponent.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I remember the member for Moore, when they let him loose in the Avon Valley, telling his opponents what he thought of them. He certainly had his reward, much to the chagrin of the Government, in the Upper House election when Mr. Daffen was defeated. Credit for the election of the Country Party member in that province lies with the member for Moore for taking the active steps he did to make sure that the sitting member, belonging to and owing allegiance to the L.C.L., was not only defeated but decimated. We had the case, too, of the strange coincidence of the ex-Leader of the Country Party and ex-Leader of the Opposition assisting an unendorsed L.C.L. candidate—I refer, of course, to Hon. Sir Charles Latham assisting Sir Norbert Keenan against and endorsed candidate. So it is that politics making strange bedfellows provide some very weird results in the two parties which

claim to be a closely-knit coalition. There was a very interesting Supreme Court action which I made sure I would listen to—

The Premier: Did you have time to listen to it?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes. I am not as busy as the Premier, though there are times when I have been busier. The Mann versus Synnot case could easily have been the Downing versus Watts case. That was the proper title for it. It was very obvious that senior counsel treated the Country Party, as he did on every possible occasion, with ridicule and indicated a political bias in the handling of that case. I do not wish to make any reference other than that to that case.

The attempts of the L.C.L. to kill the Country Party were of no avail at all. As a matter of fact it got to the dreadful stage when the Deputy Premier, the one who fought most vigorously for the merger, had finally to issue an advertisement in self-defence. I refer to the half-page advertisement in the "Daily News" headed "Beware of Substitutes. There is only one Country Party." It reminds one of the old saying "There will always be an England." This advertisement followed the L.C.L. advertisement claiming that from the Premier down they were all brothers. Obviously the Deputy Premier was driven to the stage in his vigorous protest of countering the advertisement of his coalition colleague of showing that in spite of what the L.C.L. could do or attempted to do by their advertisement there would always be a Country Party.

The Country Party was obviously driven to the very desperate position of having to insert this advertisement, which showed that the two parties were still two warring factions. It is necessary for the public to know that the two factions are not a friendly coalition, and to know that the outside control of the L.C.L. is prejudicial not only to stable government but also to temperate government. I can recall occasions following the election when discussions ensued as to who would be in the Cabinet and "The West Australian" again had a very marked influence. In the leading article of the 27th March, 1950, "The West Australian" summed up the result of the election. It is very interesting. It is headed "As We Were" and says—

The redistribution of seats on which this election was fought has, of course, had its influence on the results . . . Though it tried hard to make good its losses at the expense of the Liberal and Country League the Country and Democratic League . . . it failed dismally. It put up rather a poor performance against Mr. Mann in the Avon Valley and its intensive campaigning made little impression on the L.C.L. strongholds in the South-West. But its activities may have contributed to the defeat of Mr. Murray, the sitting L.C.L. member for Bunbury.

One fair conclusion to be drawn from this election is that the electors are not so easy to deceive by propaganda as the Labour Party and the Country and Democratic League imagine them to be. The public had been asked to believe that the composite Government was the worst Government the State had ever had and that anything good and effective that it had done had been done by Country Party Ministers or through pressure of the Country Party. The results show that a majority of electors are capable of using their own judgment.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Crunch, crunch!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It goes on to say—

The most significant feature of the election has been the decline of the Country Party in its parliamentary influence and public support.

This is a very vital sentence.

It would now be absurd for the Country Party to expect more than three, or at most four, representatives in a Cabinet of 10.

In the eyes of "The West Australian" this is considered to be a factual statement and an analysis of the facts that the most significant thing of all was the decline of the Country Party, the ineffectiveness of this criticism against the L.C.L., making the Country Party entitled to three or at the utmost four seats out of the 10 in Cabinet. Why the Country Party gave in to the L.C.L. is beyond me. They had the ball at their feet, and the Premier and Mr. Downing could have done nothing if they had insisted on an equal distribution of Cabinet strength.

The Premier: Would you have liked the Victorian set-up in Western Australia?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Country Party had the opportunity and I cannot understand why it was content simply to go quietly to the Premier. It gave in and was certainly influenced by "The West Australian," and, of course, as the newspaper said in its headlines and context, the Country Party gave in but demanded conditions. I can guess what some of them were, although I have not been told. I can guess that one was not to press for a merger for a while. Another would be that they must not attack each other's candidates, and there would be others.

The Premier. That is a good suggestion; I like that one.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I was sure the Premier would. Therefore it is stark truth that the Premier hoped he would have sufficient members to form a Government without the Country Party and was disappointed.

The Premier: Not a bit: It was never anticipated.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It has been told to me that at a meeting at Nedlands in the presence of a member of Parliament, the Premier gave expression to that view. Undoubtedly it is a very great embarrassment to the Premier that he has had to accept the Country Party again. The result of the elections clearly shows his disappointment. Prior to the elections the L.C.L. had 13 seats. The Labour Party had five seats destroyed by Act of Parliament. It went to the country with 18 and returned with 23, two of them new seats, and we won two old ones from the L.C.L. and one from the Country Party. The Liberals returned with the same number, not at the expense of their so-called opponents, the Labour Party, but at the expense of their so-called colleagues, the Country Party. The Country Party went to the country with 12 seats and returned with nine. We can interpret in the text of the Bill of which notice has been given the keen desire of the Premier to make good another Minister for the Country Party by converting an Honorary Minister to a full Minister.

The Premier: I will tell you about that later on.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: And I will tell the Premier what I think of it, too. The Government, with this brotherly love so much in evidence, has numerically a very flimsy hold, but I have no doubt that this shotgun wedding will continue for quite a while though the Country Party need have no illusions about their place in the picture. As soon as the L.C.L., if ever it gets sufficient numbers to form a Government without help, reaches that position, it will drop the Country Party.

Members will recall the discussion in this Chamber on the Redistribution of Seats Bill and the statements then made about the Country Party agreeing to its own annihilation. Those statements proved prophetic.

Mr. Marshall: What fools they were!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Politics in Western Australia will continue to be unstable until there is another redistribution of seats. There is no avoidance of that. Members will recall that that Bill passed the second reading without a division. We on this side of the House believed that there was a necessity to review the boundaries, but we fought vigorously against the imposition of wiping seats out by Act of Parliament and presenting a tribunal with a formula grossly unfair in its incidence and quite ridiculous in its assessment of the value of votes. Members will recall, too, that apart from the Minister who introduced the Bill, no-one on the Government side of the House spoke. Members were muzzled.

Mr. Marshall: They were gagged.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No-one in either House spoke from the Government side. Members were muzzled lest they might commit themselves.

The Premier: Not one was muzzled.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Everybody knows that nobody but the Minister spoke from the Government side. There was another nasty experience; no pairs were granted by the Government to very sick men. We had three sick men at that time, the three of them died in 1948. If members read Vol. 2 of "Hansard" of December, 1947, they will find that I asked the Attorney General, Sir Ross McDonald, who was in charge of the Bill, to grant pairs, and he said there was no possibility of doing so. Thus the Government took advantage of every opportunity to wipe out a North-West seat, to rob the Labour Party of five seats and to ensure that it would continue in office based on the formula which it had prescribed and submitted to the tribunal. I hope that the Government, having set a lead on the granting of pairs to sick men, will not mind a little reciprocity in that direction.

The Premier: A constitutional majority was necessary to pass that Bill.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Of course, but there was no need for it at that stage. The Government was sure that the second reading would be passed. Although we did not agree to the basis of representation, we did agree to fairness in proportional distribution of votes, something which we fought all night to try to establish, but pairs were denied to sick men. On any reasonable proposal, there would have been no division at all.

In 1947 I commented on the fact that there had never been a Premier of Western Australia who had inherited such a healthy Treasury position as had the present Premier.

The Premier: That is much better.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I am sure the Premier will enjoy this, but I might lapse at any moment. Nor had any Premier had such prospect of getting easy money as had the present occupant of the office. The Premier finished the financial year 1949-50 with a surplus of £24,000, but there is much of the story that has not been told. I am disappointed at the strictly formal way in which the Premier gave his figures and omitted many that should have been mentioned. He gave to the Press and to us very meagre information. He gave us no details in his speech on Supply and we have no alternative but to wait for the introduction of the Budget.

The Premier had a gross revenue of £25,810,000 and the prospective surplus before huge sums were juggled around must have been tremendous. I know that the members of the Grants Commission were worried because a substantial surplus would upset three claimant States and would certainly upset the Commonwealth as well as the formula in use by the Commission in allocating grants for the claimant States. The Government, in its last month of the financial year, had to cover

up very large sums to avoid embarrassment not only to itself but also to the Grants Commission.

It is interesting to observe that the grant claimed was £4,342,000. If members look at the 16th report of the Grants Commission, they will find that of all the States which claimed a sum under Section 92 of the Constitution, this State was the only one that got not only what it asked for but also more. We asked for £4,342,000 and received £5,618,000. I suspect that the Premier found it necessary when he went East recently to have an earnest talk before the end of the financial year with the Prime Minister and the Grants Commission at the dilemma in which he found himself at having so much largesse—an embarrassment of riches.

I remind the Premier that this largesse may stop at any time. Section 96 of the Constitution is contained in four lines, but it gives a very clear indication of what was in the minds of the framers of the Constitution when they were prepared for Parliament to approve of grants to States in necessitous circumstances. Section 96 of the Constitution and the Grants Commission Act No. 3 of 1933 clearly show the position. The Act under which the Commission operates may be found in one of the appendices of its 16th report. These things clearly show that if the Commonwealth Government at any time found it desirable, the State grants could cease. I hear the member for Victoria Park say that after an hour-and-a-half I have got on to the Bill. I have been on the Bill all the time.

Mr. Marshall: What does he know about anything?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If the member for Victoria Park will take the pains to look up the parliamentary procedure in the House of Commons for centuries, he will find that it is not only the right, but also the privilege and the expected action of members of the Opposition to ventilate any grievances they may have before Supply is granted.

Mr. Marshall: What does he know about that?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: To return to my comments, the uniform taxation paid to all the States in 1949-50 amounted to £63,000,000. In 1947 our Premier wanted his taxation rights back. That is a very unpleasant thought for him today; it worries him every time he thinks of it. He promised that he would insist upon the State's resuming control of its own finances. I can only hope that when the time comes for the Commonwealth to hand back to the States their taxing rights, it occurs during the term of the present Premier, because he has so enjoyed being a puppet of the Commonwealth that he would die of fright if the Commonwealth

reached the stage where, with its vast fixed commitments, it was forced to say that in the light of its responsibilities of a fixed sort, it could not continue to advance £63,000,000 to the States annually.

We are today enjoying tremendous benefits because of high overseas prices and with the Commonwealth having the prior right in the field of taxation, we may find one effect of the High Court judgment of a few years ago could be a scheme of taxation claimed to be uniform but based on the Commonwealth's terms with very little left for the States. As a matter of fact, if members examine how the £63,000,000 is divided, they will find that Western Australia is receiving £9,494 per capita or much in excess of any other State, and it would require a tremendous increase in taxation within this State if the Premier had the responsibility of levying his own income tax. The changing circumstances of the nation's responsibilities have brought about a remarkable change in the attitude of the public to financial problems and the circumstances prevailing today, and it is impossible to forecast what would happen if fresh uniform taxation principles and proposals were advanced and accepted. I think that with the serious responsibility and the fixed commitments of Governments—huge commitments—the Governments of both claimant and standard States should be very careful to restrict, as far as possible, in these times, any loose kind of governmental spending.

The Premier: That is a very wise statement.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Members will find, in the Commonwealth Treasurer's statement, a summary of the public debt of the Commonwealth, which is costing the Commonwealth revenue £82,324,000 annually. That money is being paid in Australia, in London and in New York. As that is an angle that I believe the member for Murchison would like to deal with, I will not analyse that aspect much further. Suffice it to say that £87,000,000 of the Commonwealth's total budget is for interest on our debt of £2,000,000,000. War pensions, social services and all sorts of legacies from the war still render it necessary to consider the fixed commitments of State and Commonwealth Governments when we might be ready to believe that taxation will come down instead of going up.

Mr. Marshall: That will be the day.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If members, in pursuing the subject, will look at the analysis of the Commonwealth's rising costs and the statistical register, they will see just how Government costs are spiralling and how administrative costs have risen in the Commonwealth sphere from 25½ million pounds in 1947-48 to 30½ million pounds in 1949-50. Out of a total

revenue of £580,000,000 odd, taxation produced £504,000,000, mostly from the buoyant incomes of the States and the Commonwealth from overseas exports, with an income from wool this year—I believe—of £284,000,000, as against about £65,000,000 pre-war. What is to happen when those prices recede and taxation has to be based on lesser sums and a less buoyant national income?

Members will recall the statement of the Deputy Prime Minister, who expressed surprise that he did not find £110,000,000 just lying about in the social services account at Canberra. It was a silly statement. The Deputy Prime Minister knows that such sums will not be found lying loosely about but will be invested in Government debentures, as the social service income of the Commonwealth is invested until a claim is made against it. When taxation returns shrink, not because of lessening of taxation, but through the lessening of the volume of national income, one of the dilemmas of our Premier will be how to carry on. I wish he would address the Chamber from that angle. I assure him he will get less consideration from his colleagues in the Federal sphere than he received from Mr. Chifley. The present Commonwealth Government would not even appoint a Western Australian to its Cabinet, where previously there were two Western Australian members of the Cabinet. Although they may have been ardent State-righters overnight, the attitude of Federal members, as soon as they become Federal members, is that they lose interest in the States.

It will be found that there is an anti-State attitude on the part of most of those who now comprise the Commonwealth Government and I think our Premier will be batting on a sticky wicket at Canberra. With our buoyant national revenue, income taxation produced £179,000,000 and indirect taxation contributed £400,000,000. If our commitments are not lessened there will be a debacle when overseas prices recede, because such a high percentage of our income is derived from exports that a shrinkage in the price of any such commodity must affect all Australia.

The Premier: Do you think there is any indication at present that overseas prices are about to recede?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes. What America is doing gives a first-class indication of the economic circumstances in that country and I suggest that even a threat of war, without a world war, will increase taxation, even on a lessening income. Talk about putting value back into the pound! Our Premier has the distinction that, under the "C" series index, taking the 1939 pound as 20s., in 1946 the pound was worth 16s. 4d. and in March, 1950, it

was worth, in this State, 12s. 4d. Members representing electorates in the Fremantle area will remember a pamphlet, issued by a gentleman named Sneddon, which referred to the "Chifley Quid." In the present-day McLarty "quid," worth 12s. 4d. as compared with 20s. in 1939, there is certainly a "quo" without a "quid."

The Premier: Were our people ever better off or more contented as a whole than they are today?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: There was a time when they had more meat.

The Premier: Those times will come again.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If spending is a virtue and there is to be no day of reckoning, it is easy to answer the Premier. We must get a picture of the set-up of public finance by an analysis of the past and the present. I commend to members a perusal of the Budget tables contained in the last Treasurer's statement. They will find that prior to uniform taxation income tax brought this State £859,617, financial emergency tax £1,263,700, dividend duty £153,449, and entertainment tax £98,722, a total of £2,372,488. With the advent of uniform taxation, when all those taxes were grouped and the average of the previous two years was used as a basis for reimbursement, we received in 1946—six years afterwards—£2,644,196 from income tax, and from the uniform taxation reimbursement, in 1950, £5,172,000. If we look at the Commonwealth grants over that period we find that in 1940 the grant under Section 96 of the Constitution was £595,000. How would the Premier like to finance the State on that? Interest under the Financial Agreement was £473,432, which is the same each year, and the sinking fund agreement was £174,000 odd. In 1946 the grant under Section 96 had increased to £950,000, plus the deficit of £912,559, with £185,000 for sinking fund under the Financial Agreement, giving a total of £2,521,891. This year we find a Commonwealth grant of £5,180,000 odd, plus £438,000 for the deficit adjustment.

The sinking fund agreement has risen to £210,000, and then there is the special coal grant, which neither the Commonwealth Government, the Grants Commission, nor the Premier could justify—£662,000 of money for nothing. It is a most embarrassing sum and it embarrassed the Premier when he tried to balance his Budget and not disclose the surplus. We have a total of £6,693,432 received in grants this year. I suggest to the Premier that now is the time to be contemplative of the future and not take things for granted. In the future those grants must surely be reduced and might even be diminished to the great embarrassment of this State with its fixed commitments in many departments, which I

do not criticise. The time has arrived when we must acknowledge that without a beneficent Commonwealth Government we would be in queer street.

What will happen if falling Commonwealth receipts force a reduction in the grants to the States? I wonder whether the Commonwealth will then consider the claimant States. How can we reduce our own commitments? The Commonwealth Government will not be trying very hard to reduce its commitments, because they are too potent an election feature and the power of the purse, which is held by the Commonwealth, will be the determinant in the future of this State as to whether we have then to unify with the Commonwealth and cease to be a sovereign State. The Prime Minister said that the States have now no sovereign rights to surrender, because the Commonwealth has the authority of the purse.

The Premier: Which Prime Minister said that?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Mr. Chifley, and it was heartily endorsed by Mr. Menzies. The Premier will be grasping at a very loose reed if he expects from Mr. Menzies and Mr. Fadden anything of great benefit to the States, both claimant and standard. I have gone to the trouble of taking out a taxation comparison of the years 1939, 1946 and 1950. In 1939 the financial emergency tax on a £600 net income was 1s. in the pound. The taxpayer with a net income of £600 would have paid £12 5s. 7d. in State tax, £22 10s. in financial emergency tax, £3 5s. 10d. in hospital tax and £10 10s. 11d. in Commonwealth taxation, a total of £58 odd. In 1946 the tax on a £600 income was £189 7s. That taxpayer today, with the reductions given by the Chifley Government, pays £8 10s. income tax, and £45 social services tax, giving a total of £53 10s.

We must remember that the middle class incomes will be those imposed upon when prices recede and the taxable capacity of the higher earnings group falls. The Commonwealth will still need its £84,000,000 per year to service the national debt. It will still need £53,000,000 per year from the taxpayers of Western Australia and the Premier, whoever he may be at that time, will have to superimpose on that sufficient taxation to meet the fixed commitments of the Government, which at present require a total of £7,000,000 in Commonwealth grants and over £5,000,000 in income tax reimbursements. That is the picture as to the future, but it may not continue. It is not something to run away from; it is something to face up to.

If members will recall, the total budget of 1939 was £11,000,000 and 11 years after the Premier's Budget, I presume, will be for £25,000,000 and so, with a lessening value of money, with the prospect of the reduction of our income internationally,

there is something for Governments to be extremely thoughtful about. During the last financial year we received, of the £17,000,000 of Commonwealth moneys from petrol tax, £1,026,000 for the Main Roads Trust Account and the Minister for Works knows at heart that he will have something to worry about because he is going to a Commonwealth conference shortly to endeavour to have some sort of agreement renewed.

The old agreement has lapsed, through which we received £15,000,000 from the Federal Aid Road Agreement on petrol tax working now under an Act of Parliament, and when that Act of Parliament finishes, as it does in September next, some new arrangement has to be made. I suggest that in an attempt to renew that agreement, based as it was on a formula of three-fifths population and two-fifths area, we will have no chance of getting benefit from the vast areas of Western Australia which enabled us to obtain £1,250,000 a year in the past. I am afraid that the Ministers of State will be asked to accept a fixed sum, the Commonwealth getting as it does about £17,000,000 a year from petrol tax. Western Australia will be extremely lucky indeed if it has to continue on a priority basis as has been our experience in the past; which basis was formulated in 1935. All of these things seem to me to be a serious warning and create great concern as to what will happen to the claimant States, particularly in view of the fixed commitments of Governments both Federal and State.

Two or three sessions ago I commended to the Premier an earnest study of the unproductive loan assets of Western Australia; the Premier will remember it. If members will look at our financial statements in the summarised classification of loan assets, they will find that out of £103,688,000 internal debt of Western Australia, over £9,000,000 of it is fully productive. There is need for serious thought. Of a loan liability of £103,000,000 we have £9,000,000 of it fully productive and I suggest that there lies a great responsibility attached to government and I hope, too, that the Premier will bear in mind that at any Commonwealth conference, with a Commonwealth Treasurer of the astuteness of Mr. Fadden, he will not be whittling away the Commonwealth right, but will be taking away the State rights that the framers of the Commonwealth Constitution provided in order that adequate financial resources might be made available to all States. I am strongly of the view which was expressed at a Premiers' Conference in 1946, that, irrespective of where Australian wealth occurs, it should be taken on such a broad base with a federal attitude, of a Federation rather than that of a unified Commonwealth to tax that wealth wherever it is to develop the resources of Australia irrespective of where they occur.

Unless that is done we have no chance whatever of developing the North-West or any other part of this State. We have no chance unless the Eastern States, with their accumulated and consolidated wealth, will continue to make a substantial contribution to our development. Unless that happens we will continue to be the Cinderella State and will quickly reach the stage when the Commonwealth will take over our responsibilities.

The Premier: There is an incessant demand for more and more money to be spent on unproductive works such as schools, hospitals, etc.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I do not deny that, but I suggest to the Premier that he peruse the Loan assets and he can obtain much greater returns from schemes such as drainage and irrigation even in his own district. I commend the Premier to have a look at that. I do not wish to take up any more time in quoting tables although I could, but I tell the Premier that the sooner there is a change of Government in this State the quicker such schemes will develop.

The Premier: What else? That does not get us very far.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That will do for the moment. Let the Premier have a look at that.

The Minister for Works: I am having a look at it.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I have the greatest confidence in the Minister for Works. He almost provokes me into quoting the classified loan assets to him for his attention. However, in giving attention to those things I hope he does not conflict with the Premier, but agrees with the Premier's urge to increase the interest-earning capacity of those investments. In taking a close look at those things I hope that before the Premier introduces his Budget he does not take the Commonwealth assistance and the moneys from the Commonwealth Grants Commission for granted.

The Premier: I must take the Commonwealth assistance for granted.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Do not take too much for granted. Do not think that this is to go on like the brook, for ever and ever; that grants are to be paid and that uniform taxes are to be increased.

The Premier: I am not looking for that.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Do not. A Supply Bill for £6,000,000 is in great contrast to a Supply Bill of 12 years ago which, at this stage of Parliament, would be £2,100,000.

The Premier: While the national income grows I have every right to expect increased assistance.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If the Premier prepares for the future and ensures that his heirs and successors will not be overburdened I will be quite satisfied.

The Premier: The hon. gentleman has been most interesting up till now, but before he sits down—

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Premier does not want to provoke me into making a long speech, does he?

The Premier: You are interesting now—

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Premier can at least delete the word "now".

The Premier: The hon. gentleman is interesting as compared with what he was before the suspension. If he can indicate where we are wasting money, or where we should not be spending it, I would be glad to hear his comments.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The Premier threw away £100,000 on the alunite proposition.

The Premier: We know all about that.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: There are many things which are glaring but which were not mentioned by the Premier. There was £199,000 paid for superphosphate cartage.

Mr. Styants: £179,000.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It was something like that. My memory is fairly good and my hearing fairly acute. That was based on the difference between the meagre sum charged for the super. haulage by rail and the actual cost.

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Well, was not the State robbed through passing a concession on to the superphosphate haulers, many of whom contributed to the superphosphate shortage by using it when they need not have done and were paid to haul their super. an amount, as a subsidy, far in excess of the services given to meet their own needs and not those of the State? There are many things. If the Premier will tell the Chamber his story I will be pleased to analyse his figures. Even "The West Australian" in its leading article on the budgetary situation stated that the Premier did not disclose the figures as to the State Electricity Commission or the railway system. It made reference, in its leading article, to several notable omissions.

The Premier: You will get them all.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is good. I hope the Premier will give them in his reply because if he does not we will have no further chance until many weeks hence. I fully support the Bill because I realise the Premier cannot conduct the affairs of State unless he gets this supply. However, I do suggest, in the most friendly way, that the greatest service that can be rendered to the future of Western Australia is an analysis by himself and members of his Government of the financial trend within this State.

MR. ACKLAND (Moore) [8.27]: It was not my original intention to speak on this Bill at all. The remarks I intend to make this evening might well have been the subject of portion of my speech on the Address-in-reply. But when one realises the early history of the House of Commons, when the King only called it together when he wanted money, there arose the practice amongst the members of that House that they aired their grievances before they granted Supply. As time went on we found that some Parliaments have adopted, as the title of this Bill, "The grievances before Supply". I have grievances, Mr. Chairman, and it seemed to me that this was the right time in which to air them. I do want to say this: if there is any member of the Opposition who thinks that I am the medium through which this Government is to be destroyed—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We do not believe that.

Mr. ACKLAND:—they are making a big mistake. I entered this House as an endorsed Country Party candidate—

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The hon. member is pulling his own leg.

Mr. ACKLAND:—and the Country Party have seen fit to join in this Coalition Government, and I intend to support it as long as it does all things for the benefit of Western Australia. I have no doubt that during the life of this Parliament that will be done.

Mr. Rodoreda: The hon. member will be the goat, I suppose.

Mr. ACKLAND: Certainly I will be the judge of what I consider to be in the interests of the State. It is more the responsibility of the Premier than mine that I am speaking tonight because he will remember that during the last session of Parliament ten members supporting the Government, who live north of the East-west railway, asked him to meet them. Seven of them were from this House and three from another place. However, we did not meet the Premier, and I consider that had we done so he would have seen the reasonableness of our dissatisfaction and there would have been no necessity for me to be on my feet this evening. I had started to prepare some subject matter to put before this House, but the Government has done it for me. It has prepared a very fine booklet "Development Work and Other Activities of the Government of Western Australia, 1947-48-49," entitled "A Facts Manual." I believe everything in it is a fact.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You will believe anything.

The Premier: It is good stuff.

The Honorary Minister for Housing: Worth reading!

Mr. ACKLAND: There are set out the activities of the Government during the last three years, and it is a booklet of which any Government could be very proud. I do not think that in the history of Western Australia there has ever been such progress made as is mentioned in this booklet. What I am most interested in is what is contained in pages 10, 11 and 12, which deal with hospitals, homes and public health. Being a member who comes from the rural areas the part which deals mostly with rural expenditure is that which interests me most. I have found that in the rural portion of the South-West Land Division, from Northampton in the north to Albany in the south, the Government has spent the sum of £389,374 on 26 hospitals. I should like to divide the South-West again into two parts, taking the natural division of the Perth-Kalgoorlie railway as the division of the South-West Land Division. I think there is a larger area in the north though there is a smaller population. Expenditure has been incurred, on the hospitals at Northam, Kellerberrin and Merredin to the amount of £25,536 on those three institutions, which could be justly divided between the north and south, and we find that £359,790 has been spent on 21 hospitals south of the East-West railway; and £4,048 on two hospitals in the northern section of the South-West Land Division.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You are very lucky. They are spending nothing in the North.

Mr. ACKLAND: A sum of £1,223 was spent at Geraldton and £2,825 at Dalwallinu. As soon as the election was over and Ministers had settled down in their different portfolios, I asked for and was granted an interview by the Minister for Health and her Under Secretary. I had four hospitals in my electorate, all of them in urgent need of some expenditure, and for an hour and a half I tried to persuade the Minister and her Under Secretary to agree to some expenditure in that area, but I did not get any satisfaction at that interview. But understanding that the Minister could not know the position, I asked her to visit part of my electorate with me to see for herself the conditions as they existed. I must say this to the credit of the Minister that although she had only just returned from a trip to the Eastern States, within half an hour of her taking up her duties, she agreed to make a trip of 350 miles in all to see these conditions. I know that what she saw there astounded her, but I still have had no promise that work will be done at that or any other hospital in my electorate.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Not even a promise?

Mr. ACKLAND: I have here a letter from the secretary of the road board at Dalwallinu and I would like to read an extract from it, namely—

An order was served on the Department of Public Works to—1. Reconstruct room, now occupied as a maid's bedroom and situated under a shed at back of main hospital block; this room is 8ft. x 12ft. and has an average ceiling height of 6ft. There is one door and a small window 2ft. 6in. x 3ft. but no ventilation. Three persons sleep in this room.

The cubic space of that room is 576 cubic feet and under the bylaws of the road board 750 cubic feet are allowed for each individual. I believe that if the Premier had found it convenient to meet those members from the North, such things as that would not exist. The hospitals in my area have been built mostly by self-help. The sum of £4,000 was raised in loans by the Dalwallinu Road Board to build the hospital. Some of that money is still owing. I believe it is as important as any hospital in Western Australia. It serves the Lower Murchison area north, to Morawa and Ballidu south. The other day when I was in the hospital a woman was brought 128 miles to Dalwallinu, her nearest hospital, to receive treatment but the institution was full and somebody had to be put out to make room for her. When we consider that Dalwallinu is surrounded by country roads of gravel, and distances that I have mentioned have to be travelled, and at the same time the Government is spending £130,000 in erecting a hospital at Pinjarra which is only 60 miles from Bunbury and Perth on a fine well-made road, can anyone wonder at my hostility at the disregard of the Government for relief such as this?

Ten years ago plans were prepared and I have seen those plans, but the Under Secretary says they are not in existence. I can give him the number of the file in which they are, but I can get no assurance whatever from the department that anything will be done at that centre. I am sorry if members find these matters boring but they are of vital interest to me. Although I am supporting the Government, I owe allegiance first and foremost to the people of my electorate and to the people of the State generally. When one section of the State receives such a disproportionate amount, when we find the South-Western and Great Southern areas receiving 88 times more money than is spent in the northern section, is it any wonder that I feel so hostile?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Are you going to vote against Supply?

Mr. ACKLAND: I should like to refer to Wongan Hills. The people there built their own hospital in spite of opposition from the Medical Department. I know of the difficulty because I was chairman of the committee and arranged for farmers to join me in a joint and several guarantee. That is how the hospital came to be built. By way of loans and gifts

we raised and spent £4,000, and for seven years those people were under a personal obligation to meet the liability. At the end of seven years, when the hospital had been proved, the department was prepared to take it over.

I have been endeavouring to get a new hospital for Wongan Hills. The Under Secretary says the existing building is most unsuitable. That is so; it was arranged for and built by a lot of laymen without the assistance of the Medical Department, and, in the light of modern conditions, is quite unsatisfactory. I have a letter from the secretary of the board, portion of which I should like to read, as follows:—

The total number of patients admitted during the year was 479 in addition to which 69 babies were born in the 12 months ended the 30th June, 1950. We have spent £647 13s. 8d. from donations account for this year.

Another extract says—

We recently had to have the whole of the hospital re-wired electrically at a cost of £180 and we are now told that the quarters must be done as the present wiring is unsafe. In this respect we have asked the department for the full cost of re-wiring the hospital. According to "The West Australian" Bruce Rock was paid in full for the same thing. We have been offered half.

There we have a hospital in the southern part of the State receiving the full cost while a hospital in the northern part of the State is asked to contribute part. I should like to make reference to Moora, where the conditions are somewhat different. The Moora hospital was originally built by the Government and was a fine type of building, but is falling into disrepair because of the need for renovations. The Moora Road Board in a letter mentions what has been done during the last 13 months:—

The board has been regularly and generously contributing from its own funds to the overall improvement of the hospital and its facilities. For the past 13 months the board has spent from its capital account just under £2,000 at the rate of £150 per month.

The board has been informed that the renovations which are now necessary will amount to £2,970, but will not be undertaken unless the people of Moora contribute half of that amount. That does not apply in other parts of the State.

I should also like to quote the conditions at Goomalling. Though not so bad at that centre, they are considered sufficiently bad for the local people to raise £600 for the building of nurses' quarters.

The construction of these quarters has been refused by the Health Department because it is considered that they are unnecessary whilst the hospital board insists that it cannot get staff because the staff would have to live in the hospital.

There is one other grievance I wish to ventilate—something that would have been quite unnecessary had the Premier met us during last session of Parliament.

Mr. Marshall: An obstinate Premier!

Mr. ACKLAND: In 1947 we passed the Agricultural Areas, Great Southern Towns and Goldfields Water Supply Bill. I am prepared to admit that the people who live in the north-east corner of my electorate did not wish to be included in the scheme as introduced by the member for Northam, but they did desire to come in under the scheme later introduced by the then Minister for Works (Hon. V. Doney). When that Bill was passed by the House, I approached the Works Department with a request that the scheme should be carried to Dalwallinu. We had several discussions about it. Originally I asked for the main pipeline from Cunderdin to be sufficiently large to make provision for an extension eventually to Dalwallinu. The distance to Dalwallinu from the end of the line, according to the map accompanying the scheme is 40 miles, and this is what I received in a letter from the Department dated the 2nd July, 1948:—

As following upon exchanged correspondence and our two or three discussions regarding the supply of water to certain towns on the Wongan line, may I advise that there have been very many requests of a nature similar to yours, but that the Government is unable at the moment to offer any hope that the several centres involved can be supplied from the Comprehensive Supply Scheme.

I think you understand fully that the boundaries of the scheme as approved by Parliament and by the Commonwealth Government are fixed and that the subsidy on a £ for £ basis can apply only within those boundaries. You will appreciate that that has to be regarded as a fixed decision so far as towns are concerned, although it is possible that in odd spots there may be a few short extensions into wheat areas just outside the actual perimeter.

I heard rumours that the scheme was to be carried a distance of 78 miles from its southern boundary to Mt. Barker. At first I could get no proof of that, but the new Minister for Works had been in office only a fortnight when he announced in the "Farmers' Weekly" of the 1st May, that the scheme was to be extended to Mt. Barker. Dalwallinu has an average rain-

fall of 14.14 in. a year, and Mt. Barker has an average of 29.49 in. I have ascertained that last year in an area which I asked to be served—an area bounded by Ballidu in the south, Dalwallinu in the north, the Mullewa railway on the west and the rabbit-proof fence on the east—they harvested a crop, which was delivered to the receiving agents, of 1,526,833 bushels of wheat. It is one of the richest wheat-producing spots in this State. Yet in nearly every instance we find that at the end of the summer the people are carting their water; and it may be of interest to members to know—though they will hardly believe it—that the people of Dalwallinu, during last summer, paid 12s. per 100 gallons for domestic water, which was carted 11 or 12 miles from a sandplain soak to the west of the town—12s. per 100 gallons! Yet apparently the same scheme which I asked should go into that area is being sent into another area with double the average rainfall and, I understand, no real water problems. The scheme I asked for was to serve three townships and one of the most productive agricultural wheat-growing areas in Western Australia. It was a distance of 40 miles according to the scale on this map. The area to which the scheme was going was not to be supplied with water for agricultural purposes. It was going 76 miles down to the township of Mt. Barker.

Member: Is this in the book too?

Mr. ACKLAND: Certainly those figures are not in this book. There is only one bright picture that I can see. Of those 10 members of this Parliament who wished to meet the Premier last session, two are now Cabinet Ministers. They were both wholeheartedly behind the proposition and things we were asking the Government of that day to do. I believe that is the one bright spot in this matter. During last session the former member for Mt. Marshall, Mr. Leslie, and I took a Minister of the Crown into the north-west portion of the wheat belt and he was referred to, when he addressed a public meeting, as Minister for the Great Southern and South-West Government of W.A. I think that in view of the figures I have just quoted, there is a great deal of justification for that. I believe the responsibility of having to air these matters in the Chamber tonight is not mine. It is due to the fact that the Premier did not meet that body. I do not believe for one minute that he would have allowed things to exist as they do with regard to the disproportionate expenditure on hospitals or the extension of the water scheme south-west when there was a refusal to extend it in a northerly direction.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: We will judge him upon his reply.

Mr. ACKLAND: I believe the Minister for Works in this Government is going to rectify some of these things about which we have every justification for complaining. There are others, but I think those two are sufficient to bring before the Chamber on this occasion. I support the Bill.

MR. NEEDHAM (North Perth) [8.55]: I rise with a certain amount of reluctance to make my maiden speech as the member for North Perth because of the fact that owing to a recent attack of influenza my vocal chords are not in the best of order. I could not let this opportunity pass without referring to a very great grievance under which the people I have the honour to represent are labouring and have been labouring for some time. But before I refer to that particular grievance let me say to the member who has just resumed his seat that members on this side of the Chamber have as much hope of expecting him to do anything that would put this Government out of office as members on that side would have of my doing anything to keep them there. I can assure the hon. member of that if he is under any misapprehension as to what members on this side think about his political allegiance to the party to which he belongs.

I desire, as far as I can, to refer to the all-absorbing question of prices which is agitating the public mind today. The grievance is not confined to the electorate I have the honour to represent. It is widespread throughout this State and rampant throughout Australia. I refer to prices of the necessities of life. Over two years have passed since the prices referendum was held, when we were told by the gentlemen on the Government bench and their colleagues outside that once the States took charge of prices they would not soar, but would be controlled. But during those two years prices have risen at an alarming rate, and in April of this year Perth attained the unenviable position of being the highest cost-of-living city in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Fox: What is the Minister for Prices doing?

Mr. NEEDHAM: The Minister is listening. I assure him that the department over which he presides, or he himself, has done nothing to prevent the sky-rocketing of prices. The increase in the cost of living since 1939 is 63.6 per cent. Clothing prices in Perth since the beginning of World War II. in 1939 have risen by 159.6 per cent.; food by 60.4 per cent.; miscellaneous items by 41.2 per cent.; and rent by 1.9 per cent. In connection with this matter, Dr. Wilson, the Commonwealth Statistician, says that in the March quarter the increased cost of living was due mainly to the higher prices for meat, bread, bacon, sugar, eggs, milk and clothing—all essentials. Most of those items are absolute necessities for the preservation of life.

A few weeks ago there appeared in the Press an argument between Mr. Kirby, secretary of the Retail Grocers' and Storekeepers' Association, and the Prices Commissioner in this State. Mr. Kirby claimed that the Prices Branch determined the retail price of all grocery lines, whether controlled or not. The Prices Commissioner flatly denied that and said that he had no say in fixing the prices of de-controlled goods. He said further that the prices of de-controlled goods could be determined only by the traders themselves, and that neither he nor the Retail Grocers' Association had any power to interfere. We all know that prices of de-controlled goods have risen considerably during the past 12 months. No matter which of the gentlemen I have mentioned was wrong, there is no escaping the fact that the inflationary spiral is mounting higher and higher while the value of the £ is sinking lower and lower; this despite the statement of the Prime Minister that he would put the value back into the £. It is an extraordinary state of affairs to find that in two years of State control of prices, the prices of goods have gone beyond the control of the State Prices Commissioner. In spite of the many promises of the Prime Minister during the election in December, 1949, that value would be put back into the £, we find its value decreasing. The Prime Minister has de-rationed tea, and the price has risen by 7d. per pound. He abolished the subsidy on superphosphate, and according to "The West Australian" of Wednesday, the 5th July, as a result of the abolition of that subsidy, primary producers have threatened increases in the price of butter, milk, meat, cheese, cereals and vegetables. It is true that they have not taken any action so far in that regard, but I will not be surprised if they do so. Shortly before the increase in the price of tea, we were informed, through the Press, that there was then in Australia 47,000,000 lb. of tea and that there was no necessity for people to rush to secure supplies. We must bear in mind that the subsidy had been paid on that huge quantity of tea.

The Attorney General: The subsidy was withdrawn.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The traders are charging a higher price for tea on which the subsidy had been paid, without submitting any reason or justification for that action. The consumer is paying a double tax—first, his share of the subsidy and then the increased price for the tea. From the present trend of events, I will not be surprised if there is a further increase in the price of tea when people have become used to the present price. The Federal Shopkeepers' Association has not been idle. It was active in the endeavour to abolish tea and butter rationing. I am glad to see the end of rationing of any commodity, provided it does not result in an increase in price. Following the increase in the price of tea, I would not be

surprised to see an increase in the price of butter. I read in the Press, a while ago, that a spokesman for the tea trade had told the "Sydney Morning Herald" that a fair price for tea would be 4s. per lb. At the same time, the tea controller, Mr. Bennett, is reported to have said that he wished he was in the tea business, because retailers were making a profit of 5d. per lb. Is it any wonder that people are asking what this Government is going to do, and what the Minister in charge of prices is going to do, to bring the cost of commodities to a reasonable level? No wonder the people are alarmed when they find that the promises made by those gentlemen on the Treasury bench, during the campaign on the prices referendum, are not being fulfilled and they compare the prices of today with the price obtaining under Commonwealth control. This is so when we find drastic increases in necessary commodities added to the family budget and yet the basic wage is still a long way behind.

We on this side of the Chamber were truthful in our advice to the people during the campaign on the prices referendum. We said that prices would increase under State control and our statements, on that occasion, have been substantiated by events since that time. Unfortunately, the people of this country voted to give the State control over price fixing. On that occasion they sowed the wind and now they are reaping the whirlwind with a vengeance. In the last Parliament we on the Opposition side of the Chamber advocated a system of price control similar to the wage fixing system of the Arbitration Court. We did that because we considered that it would be a better and more effective system of price control than that which exists today. We were able to secure an amendment to the legislation before the Chamber and if that amendment had remained in the Bill, and become law, then those who wanted an increase in the prices of their goods would have to go to a tribunal and put their cases in the same manner as the worker has to go to a tribunal to put his case for an increase in wages.

That amendment was rejected in another place. Eventually the Bill came back to this Chamber and the rejection of another place was assented to because a member here had changed his attitude. If we are to have effective price control some system similar to that outlined in the amendment must be introduced. All members realise the costs involved when a union endeavours to obtain increased wages for its members. They also realise the time occupied in appearing before an industrial tribunal in order to obtain those increases. Compare that with the immediate, or practically so, increases in prices under the present system! Any person can see at a glance the difference in the two

systems. When a worker obtains increases in wages he certainly has to pay for it through his union. As well as that he has to wait a long time before he is able to obtain that increase.

I have always maintained, so far as price control is concerned, that the profit margin is not given sufficient consideration. I venture to say that in some instances the present-day profit margin is greater than it was before World War II. On numerous occasions in this Chamber I have quoted figures to prove that contention. Those figures were not quoted from a Labour journal but were taken from commercial journals. Until the question of profit margins is properly considered we cannot have effective price control. Look at the time that has been taken up with the claim for an increase in the basic wage which is at present before the Federal Arbitration Court! Fifteen months have elapsed and still the case is not finished. Even in our local court considerable time has been taken in the presentation of a case by the workers before a decision is given. When it is given we find that the system is wrong. Under our regimen for the State Arbitration Court the sum allowed for rent is £1 0s. 2d. per week. It is more than silly to imagine that anyone can get a portion of a home, even a very small portion today, for £1 a week. Vegetables and fruit are not included in the regimen and with present prices members can see what little effect the basic wage has when it is increased.

We had a declaration yesterday of another increase of 3s. 6d. in the basic wage. That brings the basic wage to £7 3s. 6d., but it is still a long way behind prices that the workers have been paying for some months. That sum of £7 3s. 6d. will not go very far with a family of three or four. Our friends on the Government bench, and their supporters in the Press and other places, blame the basic wage for the increase in prices. They allege that the output of the worker is such that prices must go up. Nothing is further from the truth. It is wrong to say that the 40-hour week was to blame for increased prices or that the basic wage increases are to blame. During the 12 months after the 40-hour week was brought into being in Australia the output of each worker rose by nine per cent. That has been proved by an independent survey of 71 industries throughout Australia. That survey was recently held and as a result it was proved that since the introduction of the 40-hour week the output per worker has risen by nine per cent. In face of that it is wrong for members on the other side of the Chamber, or anywhere else, to contend that the 40-hour week is a factor in the present high prices.

It must not be forgotten that the 40-hour week was not introduced hurriedly or without due consideration. It was decided to introduce the 40-hour week into the industries of Australia after a long and exhaustive inquiry by the Federal Arbitration Court which heard evidence of a voluminous, comprehensive and varied nature from both employer and employee. Following that, the Court determined that the economy of Australia could stand a 40-hour week. Those people who thoughtlessly blamed the 40-hour week and the increase in the basic wage for the increased cost of living forgot altogether another important factor which is causing such an increase and that is, obsolete plant.

Time and again it has been pointed out that many industries throughout Australia are working with obsolete and out-of-date plant. Leading men in the Commonwealth have stated that as a factor which has caused the increased price of production. I wish to quote a statement made today in the "Daily News" by the secretary of the Furniture Trades Union. It is certainly interesting and extremely relative to the matter with which I am dealing. It reads—

40-Hour Week Is Not to Blame,
says Union Chief.

Higher furniture prices were not the result of wage increases or the 40-hour week, claimed secretary R. C. Cole of the Furniture Trades Union today.

An article in the "Daily News" last Thursday headed Prices No Bar To Spending said that prices of furniture, among other things, have risen considerably in the past few years and wages have gone up with them, he said.

Statements in that article will bear some examination particularly in view of the oft repeated claim in certain quarters that price increases have largely been the result of the introduction of the 40-hour week and the wage increases that have taken place in past years.

The W.A. Statistician's figures for the furniture industry show, from comparisons made between the pre-war year 1939-40, that any increase in prices has not been the result of wage increases or the 40-hour week, or both, as may have been claimed.

In 1939 the wages cost of every £100 worth of furniture produced was £30 while gross profits (which include head charges and depreciation) were £16 6s. In 1949 the same figures show that the wages cost had declined to £26 15s. 3d. a £100 produced while gross profits had increased to £19 6s. 3d.

In the same period the average value of output for each worker, expressed as a money figure, had more than doubled—from £575 in 1939 to £1,107 in 1949.

After allowing for depreciation, leaving only overheads and net profits, the relative figures show £15 5s. a £100 in 1939 and £18 8s. 6d. a £100 in 1949.

Analysing these facts which relate only to the manufacturing and have no relationship to retailing, the following deductions can be drawn:

The workers' share in the form of wages, etc., has declined. Therefore the claim that increased wages in this industry has been the cause of price increases in furniture in W.A. is wrong.

Since the whole of 1949 was worked under a 40-hour week with additional annual leave the decline in the wages cost of production also shows that the price increases have not resulted from the 40-hour week.

The greater money value output of workers means a greater turnover and a correspondingly greater aggregate profit to capital.

Even after allowing for depreciation of plant used in manufacture, the return to capital is comparatively the same.

The gross profit margin of 42½ per cent. allowed retailers gives a greater aggregate return because it is superimposed on the appreciated price.

Those are convincing figures. In one industry alone the 40-hour week has not been the cause of the increased price of furniture. In the Federal election of 1949 one of the main claims made in the policy speeches of the Prime Minister and Mr. Fadden was that they would put value back into the £. Liberal and Country Party supporters were loud in their promises as to that. Mr. Menzies and Mr. Fadden particularly. Whilst they were loud in their claims then, they are silent today. They are as silent today as they were vociferous during the Federal election campaign.

I want to refer to something else in rebuttal of the contention that increased wages have been the main factor in creating inflation. People making such claims, whilst remembering the increase in wages, entirely forget the increase in other commodities apart from labour. Labour is the only thing the worker has to sell and that, to him, is what wheat and wool are to the farmer. While there is a great cry against the increased cost of labour there is no outcry against the increased cost of wheat and wool, especially export prices which have undoubtedly influenced the inflation of prices relating to farms. Although criticism is levelled against the increase in

wages, such critics forget that when wages were pegged, prices rose and prices are always a long way ahead of wage increases.

I remember only one instance when the basic wage was increased and when that increase could be considered as a real wage. I think that was in 1935. The late Mr. Trainer was successful in the Arbitration Court in getting an increase in the basic wage without any increase in the cost of living. So far as my memory goes, that is the only time when that kind of thing occurred. The principal factor in inflation in recent years has been and still is in the high export prices for certain commodities. With wages 60 per cent. higher than in 1939, wool and wheat ranged from an increase of 500 per cent. upwards. We never hear anything about that from the gentlemen on the Government bench.

Other items of export have sometimes shown similar increases, so that if wages had remained pegged, the extraordinarily high prices and increased income of farmers from the high export price of wheat and wool would continue to be the main factor. Look at the over-all picture of inflation! It is evident that the increase in the basic wage is a mere trifle compared with the increase in wheat and wool and other commodities for export. We must look upon the labour of the worker as his only source of livelihood—just as the farmer's is wheat and wool. When we look at this inflationary spiral, we must apportion the blame for the inflation to the exporter because of the high export prices of wheat and wool.

In conclusion I desire to say and to repeat what I have said when opening my remarks, that if we are going to control effectively the all-absorbing and all-important prices spiral, it can only be done by the people of this country demanding a reversion to Commonwealth control, because State control has proved abortive. This Government should bring down amending legislation with a view to incorporating in that legislation the suggestion that a proper tribunal be set up comprising a representative of the producers and the consumers with an independent chairman to determine prices. If this is done, some relief will be afforded to the worker in his ever constant struggle with the basic wage.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (Melville) [9.35]: In accordance with time-honoured custom I propose to air two or three grievances before the Premier is granted Supply. It is the plain duty of any Government to observe the laws of the country and to govern in accordance therewith. In my opinion there never has been before, in this State, a Government which has played ducks and drakes with the statutes in the way this Government has done. It sees all sorts of legal difficulties where

none exist at all, and it sees no legal difficulties in its path when it is strewn with plenty. It will be remembered that on the 27th October last year Mr. Grayden, member for Middle Swan, resigned, and on the 30th October, Mr. Leslie, member for Mt. Marshall resigned.

Mr. J. Hegney: Mr. Grayden resigned in September, did he not?

HON. J. T. TONKIN: He resigned on the 27th October. No action was taken by anybody to fill the consequent vacancies, and those seats remained vacant until the General Election—a matter of five months.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The Premier said that it did not matter!

HON. J. T. TONKIN: The Premier said nobody suffered because no by-elections were held. Surely he must know that over the years of parliamentary Government people have fought to have representation, but somebody deliberately erred in keeping the people in the two districts mentioned without representation for five months. What would the people in the Premier's electorate say if anything happened to him causing his seat to become vacant, and no attempt was made to find a successor, and they were left without representation for five months?

Mr. J. Hegney: They would be just as well off!

HON. J. T. TONKIN: According to the Premier they would not suffer without representation.

The Premier: They were not without representation.

HON. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, they were.

The Premier: There were other members representing them.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Misrepresenting them!

Mr. Marshall: Why not abolish the Legislative Assembly altogether and let the Council do the job?

HON. J. T. TONKIN: When vacancies occur, it is the duty of Mr. Speaker to take the necessary action to see that these are filled. In Great Britain where the Speaker is not obliged to stand for election and his appointment is not dependent upon the goodwill of a particular party, we find him in a position of considerable independence and he does not have to fall in with the Government's views in the action he may propose to take. The position in this State is of course very different, and if the Speaker acted contrary to the desires of the Government he would soon find retribution coming to him pretty swiftly. So I assume that when these two vacancies occurred Mr. Speaker was not left in doubt for very long as to what the desires of the Government were. The Government's desire should have been to observe the statutes and the spirit of the statutes but, instead of that, its foremost desire was the preservation of its own safety, irrespective of

the rights and obligations of anybody. Irrespective of the constitutional rights of the people, what was uppermost in the Government's mind was, "How can we preserve our own safety?" because a by-election in Middle Swan would have been very dangerous for the Government—a risk the Government was not prepared to take. So the Government sought Crown Law advice on the matter.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What! With four lawyers in the Government!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am indebted to the Premier and the Attorney General for permitting me to see that opinion, but after having seen it, I feel in the position of a chap who was going to take candy from kids, because the manner in which it was put up gives the whole show away. If one desired an unbiased opinion from the Crown Law Department, one would submit the question in a perfectly open form without giving the slightest suggestion as to what reply was desired, but if one desired to obtain certain advice on the principle that a wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse, one could frame the question in such a way as to suggest the answer.

Let us examine how this request for Crown Law advice was put up. Crown Law was not asked, "What is the position when vacancies occur during a recess and what ought to be done?" This is what was asked—

An opinion is sought as to whether the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly has any power to delay or withhold his warrant—

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Long live the rights of the people!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I shall read that again—

An opinion is sought as to whether the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly has any power to delay or withhold his warrant for the issue of writs for by-elections to fill two vacancies caused by resignations.

If you, Mr. Chairman, were a lawyer and were asked to give an opinion on that matter, you would immediately conclude that the Government was looking for a possible excuse to do this.

The Premier: Would that alter his opinion? Not at all.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Let us see. The opinion states—

The matter is dealt with in Section 67 of the Electoral Act, 1907-1949, which provides, etc.

I shall deal with that later. It goes on to say—

It is to be noted that except in special circumstances referred to in the subparagraphs (c) and (d) above, the Speaker is not required by the Act to issue his warrant immediately on the occurrence of the vacancy.

If Parliament is not in session or if the vacancy occurs during any adjournment for a longer period than seven days, the Act expressly gives a discretion to the Speaker to issue his warrant for the issue of the writ.

I want members to get that firmly fixed in their minds because I shall ask them later on to find where this discretion is provided for. The Solicitor General said—

If Parliament is not in session or if the vacancy occurs during any adjournment for a longer period than seven days the Act expressly gives a discretion to the Speaker.

I say it does nothing of the sort.

The Premier: Then you differ from the Crown Law advice.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am dealing with the Crown Law opinion.

The Premier: And you differ from it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, and will tear it to shreds. The Solicitor General continued—

It would seem to be the general intention of the section that warrants shall be issued for writs to supply vacancies as soon as they occur.

Then he quotes from "May"—

In order that a representative may be chosen without loss of time by the place which is deprived of its member, etc.

Having quoted that reference from "May," which is as clear as daylight, the remarkable thing is that he gives an opinion that the Speaker has discretion. Then he adds—

The Speaker, therefore, in my opinion, has discretion to delay or withhold his warrant if he is satisfied that he is acting as the House would wish him to act.

I propose to quote the relevant parts of the statutes and leave it to members to find out whether there is any provision anywhere for the exercise by Mr. Speaker of a discretion which allows him to delay an election for five months. Section 25 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, to be found at page 169 of the Standing Orders, provides—

Any member of the Legislative Assembly may resign his seat therein by writing under his hand addressed to the Speaker, or, if there be no Speaker or if the Speaker is absent from the Colony, to the Governor, and upon the receipt of such resignation by the Speaker or the Governor, as the case may be, the seat of such member shall become vacant.

That section fits the case of Mr. Leslie and Mr. Grayden inasmuch as they resigned their seats. I may mention that there is no provision in the English law for a member to resign his seat. He is

not permitted to relinquish his seat as we provide for in this State; he has to adopt another method. He accepts an appointment to an office of profit under the Crown and that renders his seat vacant. We, however, provide for resignations, and so there is no question but that those two seats became vacant. Section 38 of the same Act, to be found at page 172 of the Standing Orders, reads—

If any member of the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly, after his election—

- (1) ceases to be qualified or becomes disqualified as aforesaid; or
- (2) takes the benefit, whether by assignment, composition or otherwise, of any law relating to bankrupt or insolvent debtors; or
- (3) becomes of unsound mind; or
- (4) takes any oath or makes any declaration or acknowledgment of allegiance, obedience or adherence to any foreign Prince or Power, etc.;
- (5) falls to give his attendance in the Legislative Council or in the Legislative Assembly, as the case may be, for two consecutive months of any session thereof without the permission of the said Council or Assembly, as the case may be; or
- (6) accepts any pension, etc., his seat shall thereupon become vacant.

I have quoted all the instances in which the seat of a member of Parliament will become vacant. Under the Electoral Act of 1907, Section 66, which is to be found in the Standing Orders at page 180, we find this provision with regard to filling vacancies which have occurred in the way I have indicated—

Whenever a vacancy occurs in either House from any cause—

There is no exception there so far quoted—

—(otherwise than by the effluxion of time in the case of a member of the Council)—

We are not concerned with that because the two ex-members with whom I am dealing were members of this House. So we need not take any cognisance of this exclusion. This section, therefore, applies in toto—

Whenever a vacancy occurs in either House from any cause . . . the President or Speaker, as the case may be, upon a resolution by the House declaring such vacancy and the cause thereof, shall by warrant under his hand, in the prescribed form, direct the Clerk of the Writs to issue a writ to supply the vacancy.

It will be noticed that the word there is "shall." Subsection (2) says—

In the case of any such vacancy when Parliament is not in session, or when such vacancy occurs during any adjournment for a longer period than seven days of the House affected, the President or Speaker may, without such preceding resolution, by warrant under his hand, in the prescribed form, direct the Clerk of the Writs to issue a writ to supply the vacancy.

The word there is "may." So the Solicitor General fastens on that and says that there is where the Speaker gets his discretion because this subsection says that he "may" issue a writ when the House is not in session. I will come back to that later, to see whether this word "may" is or is not discretionary. Subsection (3) says—

If at the occurrence of any such vacancy there is no President or Speaker of the House affected, and Parliament is not in session, or if the President or Speaker of the House affected is absent from the State, the Governor shall, if satisfied of the existence of such vacancy, by warrant under his hand direct the Clerk of the Writs to issue a writ for the election of a member for the seat so vacated.

In the all-embracing section—that is with regard to cases where the House is sitting and a resolution is passed, in regard to cases where the House is not sitting and the Speaker "may," and in regard to cases where the Speaker is absent from the Colony and the House is or is not sitting and the Governor "shall"—the law says that every such warrant—not some of them, but every such warrant—shall be issued by the President or the Speaker or by the Governor, as the case may require, as soon as—and then it enumerates the different examples—

(a) in the case of death he shall receive notice by a certificate in the prescribed form, under the hands of two members of the House of which the deceased was a member, of the death of such member; and

(b) in the case of acceptance of any of the principal executive offices of the Government liable to be vacated on political grounds, as soon as the appointment of such member has been published in the "Government Gazette," and notified by the Minister to the President or Speaker, or to the Governor, as the case may be, and such appointment and notification it shall be the duty of the Minister to publish and give forthwith:

That is to prevent the Minister from dilly-dallying and holding a notice back. But in case he does dilly-dally and hold it back, there is this proviso—

Provided that any such warrant may be issued notwithstanding no such notice has been received or appointment published as aforesaid, if the President or Speaker, or the Governor, as the case may be, is satisfied of the existence of the vacancy.

That is the vital thing—that he will not be precipitate and issue a writ before the vacancy is established. But as soon as he is aware of the vacancy, even though no notice is received, he can direct the writ to be issued. The statute goes on—

Whenever a vacancy occurs by reason of any of the disqualifications mentioned in section thirty-one, subsection (5), and section thirty-eight, subsection (2) of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, it shall be the duty of the Registrar in Bankruptcy forthwith to give notice thereof in writing to the President or the Speaker, as the case may be, if within the State, and otherwise to the Governor, and on receipt of such notice the President or Speaker, as the case may be, if within the State, or otherwise the Governor, shall forthwith, by warrant under his hand, direct the Clerk of the Writs to issue a writ for the election of a member to supply the vacancy.

That is the law in connection with it and I indicated the section on which the Solicitor General fastened and declared that there was discretionary power, and if the Speaker saw fit he could exercise that discretion. Let us see whether we can find anything at all to support the contention that there is discretionary power in that. We will turn first to the Interpretation Act, No. 30 of 1918, as amended by No. 28 of 1938. We find Section 32 on page 213 of the Standing Orders, reading as follows:—

Rules as to Powers and Duties.

32. Where, in any Act passed after the commencement of this Act—

and that is important—

—the word “may” is used in conferring a power such word shall be interpreted to imply that the power so conferred may be exercised or not, at discretion; and where in any such Act the word “shall” is used in conferring a power, such word shall be interpreted to mean that the power so conferred must be exercised.

This only refers, as it says, to any Acts passed after this Interpretation Act. But the Constitution Act to which I have referred, and the Electoral Act were passed years before, so that this provision in the Interpretation Act cannot apply and we have to disregard it. However much we would desire and however much it would suit our purpose to use it, we are not entitled to do so because it expressly says that it applies only to Acts passed after

this Act. Therefore, we have to abandon that as a refuge, if we are seeking one. On the contrary, instead of “may” being permissive, we find all the authorities saying the opposite. If we look at Halsbury's Laws of England, Second Edition, vol. 31, we find this, commencing at p. 529 and proceeding to p. 530—

A duty, however, may exist, outside and apart from the enacting words whereby those on whom a faculty or power is conferred by the statute are under an obligation to exercise it. The expressions “shall” and “may” “shall be empowered,” “it shall be lawful for” and simply “may” have for this reason, though primarily permissive, been, in certain circumstances, treated as mandatory.

Broadly speaking it may be said that powers conferring jurisdiction on a judicial body—provision as to time in regard to procedure and generally in public statutes enacting words, where a thing to be done is for the public benefit or in advancement of public justice, “may” must be taken to have a compulsory force.

If we look at the Election of Members During Recess Act of 1858, of Great Britain, we find there the reference “the Speaker may”, and then it says, “It shall and may be lawful.” “The Speaker may during recess issue warrants for making out new representatives in the room of members accepting certain offices,” and then it says, “It shall and may be lawful” for the Speaker of the House of Commons to do this. So when we say, “The Speaker may” we mean that it is lawful for him to do it. It is permitted for him to do it. Even though there is no resolution of the House saying he must or shall do so, without that resolution, if there has been more than a seven days’ adjournment he is empowered to issue the writ, and it is his duty to do that forthwith.

If we read through all the provisions of the Statutes we find that the general tenor is that delay must be avoided and that expedition shall be used in the issuing of writs for the filling of vacancies. That is why it says, “Every such warrant shall be issued as soon as”, and then mentions the occurrences and makes provision also against any possible delay in giving notices to the Speaker. It seems to have been the care of the Government which originally put the legislation through to ensure that the Speaker would not be too precipitate and issue writs before he was absolutely certain of the vacancies, but once he was certain of the existence of the vacancies his duty was clear. It was not to wait five months, but to get ahead with the business as quickly as possible. There is a reason for that, given clearly in the 14th edition of “May” at page 181 where, dealing with this subject, there appears “Issue of warrants by

the Speaker during the recess when vacancies occur by death, by elevation to the Peerage or by acceptance of office."

There is no provision in Great Britain for resignation in the way that we have it. They resign their seats by accepting office. The law provides for the issue of writs during a recess due to a prorogation or adjournment, without the immediate authority of the House, "in order that a representative may be chosen without loss of time by the place that is deprived of its member." That is the kernel of the nut. The objective, right since the commencement of representative Government, has been to see that the people are not deprived of their representation for a longer time than is absolutely necessary. It is their constitutional right to have representation and anyone who denies them that right is acting contrary to the spirit and letter of the law. That is precisely what occurred in this State.

The sole reason actuating the Government in the action taken by Mr. Speaker was the preservation of the Government, and the rights of the people were pushed entirely into the background as being of no consequence. It is strange that that should be so, in view of the lengths to which the Liberal Party will go to assure the people that it never does anything of that nature and that it is always giving consideration to the requirements of the people; that it does nothing to take away from Parliament its authority, and the like. I have here a very interesting publication. It is a brochure issued by the Liberal Party. The heading is, "The Policy of the Liberal Party Includes Many Benefits for You." When one turns the leaf over one finds set out, "The Objectives of the Liberal Party of Australia." They are as follows:—

(1) To have an Australian nation safe from external aggression and living in the closest communion with its sister nations of the British Empire. Playing its part in a world security order which maintains the necessary force to defend the peace.

(2) In which national defence is a matter of universal duty and in which the spirit of patriotism is fostered and all Australians united in the common service of their country.

(3) In which an intelligent, free and liberal Australian democracy shall be maintained by (a) Parliament controlling the executive and the law controlling all.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That reads very well.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What hypocrites! "Parliament controlling the executive and the law controlling all," but when it comes to a simple matter of giving democracy its representation, which is the very fundamental of democracy, is it the law that

the Government observes? No, it looks for a loophole in the law and asks the Solicitor General to find whether it is possible for the Speaker to delay or withhold the issue of warrants. How does that fit in with "benefits for you?" How does it fit in with the preservation of democracy in which an intelligent, free and liberal Australian democracy shall be maintained? They are nothing but a bunch of hypocrites to publish that and then act as they did in connection with this matter. It is a straight-out mockery.

The Premier: We have been to the country since then.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Premier has been to the country and with another such victory he would be completely lost. He must realise that he did not come back with a majority.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Not even after loading the electorates in his own favour.

The Premier: We are still here.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There it is. To save its own skin the Government did not hesitate to explore the possibilities of doing away with by-elections that would have been dangerous to it. It was quite satisfied to ride roughshod over the constitutional rights of the people and to deny the electors in the two electorates concerned the right to have the services of their representatives. What amazes me is that in the face of all the authorities which exist in the matter, Crown Law opinion could be obtained which would enable the Government to follow that course.

Now I desire to make a few brief references to a matter upon which I directed a question to the Minister for Housing on opening day. I asked the Minister for Housing whether he had been correctly reported in the "Sunday Times" when he was supposed to have said that he was going to give away some claypits to a brickmaking company. I asked him further if he had given them away and he answered "No" to both questions. I believe the Chief Secretary was of the opinion that my question fell rather flat. I did not ask it because I was engaging in theatricals and it did not concern me whether it fell flat or not. I wanted the answer because I am entitled to believe that when a reputable paper makes a statement purporting to come from a Minister, and he takes no steps to deny it, the report is substantially correct. Now we will hear what the paper had to say on this matter on the 25th June last and we might hear the Minister again later. The heading of this is, "Canning Racecourse is to yield tons of clay for bricks," and goes on to say—

One of W.A.'s largest clay deposits at Canning Park racecourse has been offered by the Government to a brick-

making company. In announcing this yesterday Housing Minister G. P. Wild said that the offer was made to expand production as rapidly as possible to cope with the demand when permits for building of houses up to 12½ squares are issued after July 1st. Clay deposits will be given to the company subject to their getting into production within 90 days.

That is plain enough, is it not? It goes on—

The Government has also assisted another W.A. company which has opened new works and came into production at Orange Grove this week, added the Minister. This company is using a locally-manufactured machine, combining the best principles now in use. The Government will use these machines.

Then it goes on to refer to certain other matters in this connection.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Does the Minister say that the pressman made this up?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There is a plain statement. Unequivocal! It leaves no room for doubt, and the Minister denies that he said it. He denies in this House that he said it, but the public outside still believe it. I do not know what was behind the statement or why the Minister allowed it to be published in that way, if he did not mean it. But, I would like to say to the Government that if it gives those claypits away it will have something to answer for. I say that because some years ago there was a proposal to extend the Maylands aerodrome. In order to do so it was necessary to acquire a very small area of land—a few acres—which formed part of an estate in which a member of a brickmaking company was directly interested. The taxation value for the land was round about £1,700, if I remember rightly. When a subsequent value was obtained, a value of £800 was put on the land, but, when the Commonwealth Government sought the land a value of about £20,000 was put on it by the brickmaker because he said that the land contained valuable claypits. He subsequently asked more than £20,000, I understand, and the Commonwealth Government dropped the proposal.

The claypits were opened up and bricks were made from the clay. Now, we have to assume that if the person who owned that land and wanted it for making bricks thought it was worth all those thousands of pounds then land very much larger in area, at Canning Park, would be worth considerably more than £20,000. I hope the Government does not propose to give a nice present like that to a brickmaking company and all the company has to do is simply start operating within 90 days.

So, I would like to hear more about the proposition from the Minister as to whether there were any grounds for this publication or whether, after having made the statement, the Minister realised he was off the rails and decided to get out as quickly as possible. We will be watching that with interest.

The third matter is in regard to the inquiry held into the Claremont Mental Hospital. A most remarkable volte face occurred in connection with this matter. It must be assumed that when the "Sunday Times" took the action it did it had reasons for so doing; and substantial reasons for so doing. I absolutely refuse to accept the explanation made by some people that it was done in order to get a story. If the paper wanted stories all it had to do was to delve into some of the actions of the Government and it would get plenty of sensational stories.

Mr. Yates: Delve into the last 15 years!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There was no need to send somebody there to get a story. I believe that the paper had information which impelled it to endeavour to find out what was occurring inside. As the result of action taken by the paper the Government felt obliged to hold an inquiry and it had the opportunity to select a person to carry out that inquiry. There was a responsibility on the Government to make certain beforehand that the person who carried out the inquiry was one who would carry the Government's confidence; one whom the Government felt was capable of doing the job. Otherwise, it was very wrong of the Government to allow the man to undertake such an inquiry. So, I have to assume that the Government was well satisfied with the Judge's credentials. I understand he is very highly regarded in the Eastern States. In due course the Judge made his investigation and submitted a number of recommendations which the Government sat upon for some time. It would not let anybody outside see them but subsequently made a statement that publication of the report would have prejudiced the trial of certain persons involved had it done so. What a lot of nonsense!

If that is so, every Coroner's inquest prejudices the trial of the man subsequently charged for murder, yet it is the law of the country. The inquest is held. The preliminary inquiry is published to the world and then, if the Coroner thinks fit, a person is charged and subsequently stands trial. How did this inquiry differ in any way from such coronial inquests with regard to the prejudicial effects of a disclosure? It did not differ at all, yet that is the argument advanced by the Government for withholding the report. The report was referred to the persons most blamed by the commission. What was to be expected? Would they admit the charges made against them? Of course

they would not! Anybody in such a position would straightaway attempt to defend himself and look up reasons for putting the best possible case for himself, and the Government gave such persons an opportunity of doing that. Then what did it do?

Contrary to the advice of the Royal Commissioner it launched prosecutions against the workers employed in the institution; the men who had all the hard work to do, and anyone who has any knowledge of that institution knows that those nurses have a difficult task to perform because the people they are dealing with are not normal; they are not responsible for their actions and are likely to do anything and the nurses attending them have to put up with it. Nevertheless, they were the ones singled out for punishment, although the Royal Commissioner recommended against it and those whom the Commissioner held were mostly responsible were completely exonerated by the Minister and then, on top of that, she attacked the Commissioner by saying that his report was illogical and unbalanced. She attacked a man who was in no position to defend himself.

Did the Attorney General come to his defence as it was his job to do so as Leader of the Bar in this State? No, he did nothing, either; and so it remained for Sir Norbert Keenan to take up the cudgels on behalf of the maligned judge and to show the situation the Government was in and the position in which it placed the Commissioner; a most unfair one. Apart altogether from the merits or demerits of the case the action taken by the Minister could not be excused on any ground. Of course, the Government, being sensitive to public opinion, soon realised it was in trouble so it advised the Minister for Health to take a trip East.

Mr. Marshall: To take a rest for the time being.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Having got her out of the way, the Deputy Premier, as he has to do on so many occasions, had to bring his energies to bear to extricate the Government from the mess it was in and he made a pretty good job of it.

Mr. Marshall: Too right he did; he is the man that can, too!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: However, it is pretty tough on him that he has to come to the Government's rescue every time it puts its foot in it. That is undoubtedly what happened in this case. To make it easier for the Deputy Premier to do that the Minister for Health was recommended to take a holiday. Although the Minister for Health had stated that the Government was satisfied with the position and had accepted the word of those to whom the report had been referred, the Deputy Premier soon made it clear that the Government had no such intention, and with some extremely well selected phrases he

indicated that the public need not worry; that the Government was not unmindful of what should be done and that it proposed to do it.

It is a wicked thing for anybody to be placed in the position of having somebody in the Claremont Mental Hospital. It means long hours of anguish to the people at home thinking about their loved ones in that institution. They ought to be in the position of feeling that the best possible care and attention are being given to the inmates; that everything is being done to look after their welfare to make them as contented and as happy as it is possible to make demented people. Once let it get abroad that there is a callous indifference to the welfare of those people or that they are being ill-treated, then there can be no rest for those at home, and that was the situation the people were in after the Minister for Health had made her declaration.

The inquiry had stirred up the people concerned, and the public generally had shown that there was a state of affairs which required some attention irrespective of who was to blame for it. There was a state of affairs which required rectification in many directions as indicated by the Commissioner, but the Minister for Health had intimated that nothing was to be done about it. That left the people in an extremely disturbed state of mind which can be readily understood. I am glad the Deputy Premier took the step he did to allay the fears of the people and so bring to them some comfort. It remains now for the Government to do the things that the Deputy Premier said would be done in order that public confidence can be restored and that the persons most concerned, the relatives of those who are incarcerated, can have some peace of mind.

I have nothing further to say at this stage because I believe the Government must have supply. However, I consider it is right and proper that grievances should be aired before supply is granted. It is a time-honoured custom and a safeguard for our democratic institutions. When we attempt to stifle discussion and prevent criticism we will then experience the same trouble as is met with in some of the totalitarian countries. Therefore, because I believed it was the opportunity for me to exercise my rights by airing my grievances I fear that I have, to some extent, transgressed on the time of the House.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I move—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	22
Noes	24
Majority against	2

Ayes.

Mr. Brady	Mr. Needham
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Fox	Mr. Oliver
Mr. Graham	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Guthrie	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Sewell
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. W. Hegney	Mr. Styants
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. May	Mr. Wise
Mr. McCulloch	Mr. Kelly

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Manning
Mr. Ackland	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Brand	Mr. Nalder
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Nimmo
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Owen
Mr. Doney	Mr. Shearn
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Thorn
Mr. Griffith	Mr. Totterdell
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Watts
Mr. Hill	Mr. Wild
Mr. Hutchinson	Mr. Yates
Mr. Mann	Mr. Bovell

(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [10.34]: First of all I would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to the Chair of this House. We know it is a most important office and I have no doubt that you will fulfil it with great distinction. Before proceeding further I should like to thank the Premier for his personal help and friendliness to me when I was numbered among the vanquished. I appreciate it very much and take this opportunity of publicly expressing my thanks. I feel I am only a junior counsel tonight, because the senior counsels in the persons of the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Melville dealt very extensively with the matter to which I was going to refer, namely, that the Government left the Middle Swan electorate without representation for a period of five months.

In bringing this matter before this Chamber as one who was resident in the old Middle Swan electorate, I can say that many of the electors did not know where to turn for advice, and the Middle Swan electorate was at a distinct disadvantage, and by leaving it without representation the Government did a great disservice to the electors of that district. I wonder what would have happened if any other electorate had been left without representation. We know that Mr. Grayden left with a view to elevating himself to the Federal House and we know that the Government was faced with a difficulty as a result of it, but having regard to this democratic institution and the very basis of it—the personal representation of the electors in this Assembly—the Government, in refusing to have a by-election, was recreant to the principles on which this Assembly is constituted. When three members in the New South Wales Parliament decided to contest seats in the Federal sphere, the Labour Government held by-elections, and some of those by-elections went against the McGirr Government, but the action of that Government

is in contradistinction to that of this Government which denied representation to the electors of the Middle Swan district for five months.

We hear a great deal about oligarchies and juntas being set up. No matter what the nature of the Government is, if it sets out to frustrate the will of the people by unconstitutional means, as was explained so fully by the member for Melville, I think it becomes a very dangerous precedent indeed. I would be lacking in my duty as the newly elected member for Middle Swan if I did not take this opportunity of making a vigorous protest on their behalf. The other matter to which I wish to refer is that of transport in the Middle Swan district. When I was member for Middle Swan during the war years and towards the latter end of them, transport was a difficult problem, and even on that occasion I led several deputations to the Minister for Transport dealing with the matter of the Federal buses and their operation to Bedford Park, Morley Park, through Caversham and into Bassendean.

On several occasions these matters were ventilated to the Transport Board. During those years, the excuse made, probably a valid one at the time, was lack of manpower, and also that we were engaged in the greatest war in history and that it was difficult for the company to keep its buses on the road. I read a statement by the then Deputy Leader of the Opposition in his election speech in 1947 to the effect that the excuse offered by the then Minister for Labour of shortage of manpower and lack of material was not valid as the war had been over for two years. Now a further three years have elapsed and the war has been over for five years, and the service operating in the districts I have mentioned has been nothing short of scandalous. It has been inefficient; irregular and erratic.

I took the matter up with the chairman and secretary of the Transport Board, and have been in touch with the manager of the company, and I ventilate the grievance here in order that the Deputy Premier, who represents the Minister for Transport in this House, may realise that the service provided for those people is far from satisfactory. A few years ago, the Transport Act was amended to provide for seven-year licenses for the companies, the argument being that if they were granted a term of seven years it would be an incentive to provide better services. That has not been the experience. It seems to me that the companies think they can do as they like.

After discussing the matter with the chairman of the Transport Board, action was taken, and some improvement has been effected. I know for a fact that almost immediately after the Federal Bus Co. was bought out from Mr. Baldock by

another company operating in the metropolitan area, the purchasers wanted to discontinue the service to the eastern suburbs and run its vehicles to Cottesloe on Sundays, leaving the eastern suburbs without a service. The Transport Board required the company to keep the buses on the old route and to retain the name of the original company.

This criticism of the service has been general. I have received numerous telephone complaints about the irregularity of the buses, and the Parents and Citizens' Association of the Morley Park district has communicated with me with a view to endeavouring to get some improvement. After my first interview with the chairman of the Transport Board, I received a letter dated the 26th June, 1950, as follows:—

I refer to your visit to this office last week when you lodged certain complaints as regards late running, omission of trips, etc., by the Federal Bus Service on the Morley Park route.

The chairman subsequently interviewed the manager of the company and the various points were taken up with him.

It was admitted in some instances that trips did not run and that there had been late running on occasions, although these circumstances were beyond the control of the management. In other instances, however, in which it was claimed buses did not run, the manager denied the allegation.

The whole point is that the company did strike difficulties once again and probably the company is to blame to some extent for failure to maintain its fleet in the past. Every effort is being made by the present management, however, to improve conditions, and new buses are on order. A new Austin bus has already been commissioned to assist pending the arrival of larger vehicles. A Bedford is expected to be on the road within the next few weeks and two new Leylands should be operating by October.

The board is continuing to keep in touch with the management and, with the latest developments to arrange additional new vehicles, the board is satisfied that every effort is being made by the management to meet public requirements.

For a long time, complaints were numerous, particularly from the Morley Park area, about the irregularity of the service. When intending passengers went to catch a bus, no bus would come along. The same thing was experienced along the Guildford-road into Bayswater. It is my intention to keep in touch with the Transport Board and the Minister for Transport to ensure that this service is stepped

up and improved. Any company that is given a license with a seven-year term ought to provide a satisfactory service.

In the past, lack of provision to secure new buses appears to have been the company's difficulty. However, it is most important that people should have reasonable transport facilities. It is most exasperating for them to go to the corner only to find that a bus does not run. Sometimes the buses are ahead of time; on other occasions they are late. It had become a ragtime service, but I am pleased that, since I made representations to the Transport Board, the service has been improved. I take this opportunity to ventilate the matter, hoping that it will be brought officially before the Minister for Transport and that a considerable improvement will be effected.

MR. GUTHRIE (Bunbury) [10.47]: I did not intend to speak on this motion, but after having heard the remarks of the member for Moore, I felt that I would be failing in my duty if I did not say something about the hospital position in my electorate. A regional hospital for Bunbury at a cost of £130,000 was a No. 1 priority, but this proposal has been set aside and a sum of £10,000 has been spent on the existing hospital. A site had been cleared and a road approach made for a regional hospital, but I am afraid that it is not likely to be provided within the next five or six years. This is very unsatisfactory to the residents of Bunbury, and I hope the Minister will give consideration to the matter. On the question of housing, I wish to direct attention to the fact that for five-unit homes at Bunbury, which are supposed to be workers' homes, a rental of £2 5s. a week is being charged, which is altogether beyond the means of a working man. As to Supply, I realise that the Government must have money, and so will vote for the Bill.

HON. A. A. M. COVERLEY (Kimberley) [10.49]: I was not anxious to speak to-night, but apparently the Premier has made up his mind to get the Supply Bill passed before daylight. Consequently, I am compelled to speak because I want an explanation about the North before I am prepared to vote for the passing of the Bill. Members will recall that last session I moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the administration of the Department of Native Affairs, particularly having regard to Udialla Station. Perhaps for the benefit of the new members of this Parliament it may be well for me to outline some of the charges I made, because I know they will not be familiar with "Hansard" and will not have read what was said in reference to that complaint and the reply that was made. The institution known as the Udialla Native Settlement is one of the most select sites throughout the whole of

the Kimberleys. It is a magnificent property of a couple of thousand acres and it has many acres of wonderful soil on the banks of the Fitzroy River. It has been settled or rather under control, for many years. It is known to be capable of producing any kind of tropical fruit and vegetables throughout the year.

Some wonderful crops of vegetables and bananas and other fruit have been taken from the property. It was held by a private individual and purchased by the last Labour Government as an institution for natives. It will be realised that when we start to build the native's mind, his physique must be built. He needs to be on a property which is self-supporting and can be used as an educational institution and for domestic and manual training for boys and girls. During the war, as all members know, labour and material were not available, and while the Labour Government was awaiting the purchase of material there was a change of Government. It was then predicted by many people that the institution would never go ahead, and it did not. This composite Government decided to close it and sell the stock.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What sort of Government did you call it?

The Premier: What an Opposition would be expected to call it.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We do not want to be rude.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: This Government did that on the recommendation of a newly appointed Commissioner of Native Affairs who had not been six months in Western Australia, had not spent one week in the Kimberley district, and knew nothing about the district personally but accepted the information given him by those who desired to purchase the property. We have had a lot of lip service in this Chamber—one or two of the members giving it are missing or I would name them—on behalf of the natives; but when it came to doing something, by vote, of some practical importance they submitted to the crack of the whip by the Government and voted against that inquiry so that the motion for a Select Committee was defeated by one vote. When speaking on that motion I said that within 12 months the property would be sold. I missed by a little. The property has not been sold but it has been leased for 10 years.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: To whom?

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: To the adjoining station which bought the sheep for 15s. a head with the unmarked lambs thrown in. Quite a case was put up as to the value of the sheep, which I am not going over again. The adjoining station people did not want a native institution alongside them, so influence was brought to bear and mis-statements of fact were

made to the newly appointed Commissioner to influence him to influence the Government to have the institution closed down. There is not the slightest doubt about that, and had a Select Committee been appointed the facts would have been produced. After his very short visit, the Commissioner of Native Affairs returned and recommended to the Minister that the institution should be closed. It was closed by this Government and the natives were transferred to La Grange Bay, about 300 miles south of this glorious little institution.

One of the worst features of the situation, from the point of view of the natives, was that they had been able to get yams and other natural foods on the banks of the Fitzroy at Udiella. But 100 odd were transferred to La Grange Bay, which is an area within two miles of the coast and contains sandy pindan country, waterless except for wells, and with no natural game of any description; and, what is more, no vegetables, or very few, have ever been grown there and none is being grown at present. These natives were sent away from their natural habitat to what might be termed a strange country and they are most dissatisfied. But they have no voice in this House and the Government cares little for them so long as its friends are satisfied and the native institutions are shifted from their natural areas. Jackie, the native, has to put up with it.

There was a sacred spring on the Udiella property. I do not think the new Commissioner knew anything about it but it was used by the desert natives for tribal and other sacred rites. In days gone by the natives came in from the desert to this sacred spring, which was within 11 miles of the homestead, performed their tribal rites and went away. But after the Government bought the property and it became known amongst the natives that it was a native settlement, instead of going back to the desert they went to the homestead and received rations and made their home on the property. They domiciled themselves at Udiella and they were the 116 natives who were transferred to La Grange Bay.

Another point arises in reference to Udiella. On one occasion I brought down some onions which I showed to the Premier and the then Minister for Native Affairs and the Minister for Lands. They were huge, brown onions, hard as cricket balls. I tried to influence the Minister for Native Affairs to get some machinery and put 10 or 12 acres under onions, which can be grown there without irrigation, under natural conditions, and could be landed here at this period of the year when onions are unprocurable in the city. I did not make much headway. The present Minister for Lands who was then Minister for Agriculture—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: —and still is.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY:—and still is, gave sympathetic ear and was instrumental in getting the Minister for Native Affairs to have a tractor sent up to follow out my suggestion. But he was a bit unlucky and he got it up too late. At present it is at La Grange Bay on blocks and has never ploughed five acres since it was sent there. No onions are grown there and yet we are importing from Egypt. I tried to induce the Minister for Native Affairs to see that, if the Government was so determined to let Udiassa go, it was thrown open for selection or leased to somebody prepared to work it for vegetable growing, thereby saving many thousands of pounds which the Government or the Transport Board is at present paying by subsidising the transport of vegetables and fruit from the metropolitan area to portions of the Kimberleys.

I know at least five people—four returned soldiers and one other—who were prepared to take over Udiassa and start an agricultural and fruit proposition. It has never been done before because the market has not existed. But with the working of the Yampi iron-ore deposit and the increase in population around Derby there was a wonderful opportunity for anybody to make exceptionally good money year after year from a property such as Udiassa.

The Premier: What is the distance from Udiassa to Derby?

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: About 60 miles.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is 54 miles.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: Members can split the difference. It depends on how one travels. I have travelled it many ways. It is within 60 miles of Derby and 100 miles of Broome, which is on the south side of the river. Today, with the improved transport services, there is less need for worry about the river being in flood. It was a standing disgrace to this Government to permit those sheep to be sold at 15s. per head, with the unmarked lambs thrown in, and the Government has added insult to injury by permitting the property to be leased for 10 years to a pastoral company that already had hundreds of thousands of acres of its own, with the result that people are now debarred from starting this vegetable industry in the north. I was informed, in Derby, that the Mt. Anderson Pastoral Company has leased the Udiassa property in order to start a stud herd for breeding rams.

I desire the new members of this Chamber to realise that when the Government was defending its action in selling these sheep at 15s. per head it argued that the property was eaten out and eroded, that the sheep were dying of starvation and had to be sold in a hurry, without advertisement or the calling of tenders. I am now told that the property has been leased for stud farm purposes. Why would a

pastoral company be so foolish as to try to breed rams on a barren and eroded property? I leave it to members to work out for themselves who was telling the truth about this matter.

Hon. F.J.S. Wise: Spoils to the victors!

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: I asked the Minister for Lands whether I could see the relevant files, and he said he would let me know. I have not received an answer up to date, but if I do not see the files soon I shall move to have the papers laid on the Table of the House. I will be pleased to hear what the Premier has to say in reply and would like to know whether the property has been leased to the Mt. Anderson Pastoral Company for 10 years, what the conditions of the lease are and what rent the company is to pay. I am dissatisfied and suspicious.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member is not usually like that.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY: I am suspicious on this occasion, because the House was told that the property was so barren and eroded that the sheep were dying like flies, and that the Government had to dispose of them in this under-cover manner. I think there may have been a commission attached to the sale of the property. If I am not satisfied with the Premier's reply I will take the matter further.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray—in reply) [11.5]: Not a great deal of time has been taken up tonight with matters relating to finance. From my point of view the most interesting part of tonight's debate was that initiated by the Leader of the Opposition after tea. If I deal briefly with the activities of the Government and some of the financial undertakings that are at present in hand, I think that is as far as I need go at the moment. Other matters to which members have referred will be noted and the information sought will be conveyed to them. The member for Kimberley has just asked for certain information and an undertaking. I do not think he seriously expects that I will give him an undertaking at this stage. He will have every opportunity, either tomorrow or during future sittings, to obtain all the information he desires. I will give him the undertaking that the information he seeks will be obtained and supplied to him as soon as possible.

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: Does not the Premier know anything about the transaction?

The PREMIER: Not enough to reply to the hon. member as he would wish. I know something about it, but surely the hon. member does not want me to give him information that will be of no help to him.

The Leader of the Opposition expressed concern at the present set-up with regard to Commonwealth-State finance, and

issued a warning about prudent expenditure by Governments. I do not think any responsible person at the Treasury these days could help being concerned at the rising costs with which Governments are faced, but certain public works must continue, as I am sure the Leader of the Opposition would agree. We have heard a lot tonight about inflation and we are continuously hearing about the need for a reduction of taxation. If Governments are to spend money lavishly it certainly will help the inflationary spiral, in the grip of which we are today, and Governments cannot expect the taxpayers to sit down and say, "It is all right for the Government to spend lavishly, but money is being taken from us in order that we may not spend and help the inflationary spiral."

I agree that money being plentiful is no reason why it should be expended in an extravagant manner. Cabinet is continuously discussing how far it should go in the matter of certain expenditure that is taking place. Members know that we are committed, for instance, to this comprehensive water scheme. We realise that the original cost was £4,300,000 but we have had to import hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of material from overseas and we are still doing so. Of course, the cost of that scheme has gone up. I cannot say by how much but the cost has risen by hundreds of thousands of pounds.

It has been put to me on more than one occasion that the Government should cease activities in connection with this scheme. I might say that I have not had any parliamentary representation in this direction, but such suggestions have been made to me by people who have discussed finance during the course of ordinary conversation. We have to proceed with this work although we cannot get any information as to when supplies will be more plentiful and when they will catch up with local demands, or nearly so. Therefore, I do not think any member in this Chamber would say, "Cease work on this great undertaking until money is cheaper and until supply is more plentiful."

That applies again to certain of our other works. I have told the Leader of the Opposition, privately, that I was very concerned about railway expenditure. As Treasurer I receive requests from time to time to approve of so much here and so much there, running into colossal sums of money. I realise, of course, as has been pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, that this will greatly increase the capital debt of the railways. Does any member here suggest that we cease work on the rehabilitation of our railway system? Again, we are importing large quantities of material from overseas so that we can proceed with this work. I could mention other public works which I regard as essential today and with which we must proceed despite inflated costs.

Reference was made by the Leader of the Opposition to unproductive works, and I remember that when he addressed himself to the last Supply Bill I introduced he issued the same warning. I can assure the hon. member that the Government is not anxious to proceed with unproductive works but it does not matter what great public work we undertake today it will be unproductive for a considerable time—whether it be the provision of a water supply scheme, rehabilitation of our railways or money spent in many other directions. It is true, too, that while for a certain period these great public works are unproductive they are, in fact, non-reproductive for a considerable time after their completion. As a result of that such works are adding to the inflationary spiral of today.

A Government has to undertake certain works which can be classed as non-reproductive, as the Leader of the Opposition knows only too well. There are schools running into hundreds of thousands of pounds—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Where?

The PREMIER: Throughout the various parts of the State.

Mr. Marshall: Pinjarra, in particular.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Pinjarra but not in Carnarvon.

The PREMIER: In the Murchison electorate.

Mr. Marshall: There is not too much up there.

The PREMIER: And in many parts of the State. No member would suggest that we should not proceed with those works and it is right that posterity should carry its load with regard to hospitals, schools and such work. I would tell the member for Moore that I think he is wrong when he says that the Government is selecting certain parts of this State, or passing over certain parts of the State to favour others.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I agree entirely with him.

The PREMIER: I would expect the Leader of the Opposition to do that because it is criticism of the Government and he is not going to discourage criticism.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: No, I firmly believe him.

The PREMIER: We have endeavoured to do the right thing in the development of all parts of the State.

Mr. Ackland: The figures I quoted were yours, not mine.

The PREMIER: I do not doubt the figures the hon. member quoted but we realise that there are certain urgent works which should be carried out in the parts of the State to which the hon. member has made reference.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is easy to obtain £6,000 for a road to Ravensthorpe but hard to get anything for a road to Carnarvon.

The PREMIER: When I was in Melbourne I spent some hours with the Prime Minister and talked to him about this great comprehensive water scheme and its additional cost. I suggested to him that the Commonwealth should bear its fair share of these additional costs. I told him, too, that it was the desire of this Government to proceed with further water conservation schemes in this State. I consider that we should do something, when conditions permit, to extend the comprehensive water scheme. Again, I told the Prime Minister that we were expected to carry a very much larger population in Western Australia and we could not possibly do so unless we provided water for the people.

I further pointed out to him that in some of our rural areas today we have difficulty in providing sufficient water for the people who are already there; but, if the water was provided there is no doubt that these districts could carry a very much larger population than they are carrying today. The Prime Minister agreed that water conservation, in a State like Western Australia, was a sound policy. I would advise the hon. member that the Government is determined, as quickly as possible, to provide water in areas where it should be provided, knowing full well that the future of our State is largely dependent upon water supplies.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The member for Moore complained that you would not give his people a hearing.

The PREMIER: I do not think the hon. member did that.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: He did.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Most definitely.

The PREMIER: I very seldom refuse a hearing to anyone.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He said that you would not give a hearing to his people.

The PREMIER: If the hon. member wants a hearing I am prepared to give him one at any time.

Mr. Marshall: The hearing is not much good if he does not get any result.

The PREMIER: Then there is the need for hospitals. There again the need is recognised. In a very short speech the member for Bunbury—and I wish other members had followed his good example—told us, in a few words, some of the urgent requirements of the Bunbury district. We realise that hospital accommodation in Bunbury is not all that we would wish it to be and we are hoping that, as soon as circumstances will allow us, especially those relating to material supply and labour, we will be able to do something to

that hospital. Other matters referred to can stand over because they will no doubt be mentioned again during the Address-in-reply and the Ministers of the various departments will also be introducing their Estimates with a full dress rehearsal, and all the information which members require will then be available to them.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Perkins in the Chair.

The PREMIER: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1951, a sum not exceeding £4,000,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £500,000 from the General Loan Fund and £500,000 from the Public Accounts.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: On some occasions I consider that it would be a good idea for the Premier to explain to the Chamber, for the benefit of new members, particularly, what takes place in Committee of Supply and in Committee of Ways and Means. It is a most interesting and not a very involved matter. It gives to the community a right to see that the Government is properly raising and, also, properly spending its money. Therefore, I hope the Premier will take the opportunity to give a lucid and simple explanation of this matter which always seems so involved to the uninitiated. I support the motion.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Bill Introduced.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray) [11.25]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed; Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Issue and Application of £6,000,000:

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Mr. Chairman, are you passing the preamble before the clause?

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In speaking to the preamble—

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the hon. member that the preamble comes after the clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Preamble:

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I do not want to be the cause of keeping members any later tonight, but I would suggest to the Premier that the word "cheerfully" be dispensed with in the preparation of the preamble of this Bill in the future. I think we are getting past the stage where any Opposition or Parliament will cheerfully grant to the Premier the sum of £6,000,000. I therefore put it to him that he should consider well that suggestion so that the preamble does conform to the attitude we should adopt in granting a sum of such magnitude.

Preamble put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 11.29 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 2nd August, 1950.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Additional McNess Homes.*

Hon. G. FRASER asked the Minister for Transport:

Will the Government give immediate attention to the building of more homes under the McNess Housing Scheme when the present programme of five duplex homes is completed?

The MINISTER replied:

The McNess Housing Trust has now authorised the building of a further three duplex cottages.

The number of homes that can be provided under the McNess Housing Trust Act is governed by the funds available in the Trust Account.

(b) *As to Rental Homes and Permits.*

Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) How many small unit dwellings have been erected, or are in course of erection, under the Housing Commission's rental scheme?

(2) Which are the districts where these dwellings are erected or under construction, and the number in each district?

(3) How many permits of 12½ squares have been issued since July 1, 1950, in—

(a) country districts;

(b) metropolitan area?

(4) How many of such permits issued in each case are under the self-help scheme?

(5) What provision, if any, has the Government made to ensure that materials will be available to the recipients of these permits?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) 252.

(2) Bayswater 3, Bassendean 2, Belmont 57, Carlisle 1, Claremont 30, Hilton Park 6, Manning Estate 44, Midland Junction 9, South Perth 74, White Gum Valley 6, Bunbury 12, Collie 8, total 252.

(3) (a) Country 85 (not complete as further returns to come in). (b) Metropolitan 1,035.

(4) Self-help scheme absorbed in general 12½ square permit scheme.

(5) Steps have and are being taken to stimulate and organise industry with a view to increasing the production locally of all building materials to meet the position. Materials in short supply are being imported from abroad.

STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

As to m.v. "Kybra's" Itinerary.

Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Honorary Minister for the North-West:

Seeing that the m.v. "Kybra" has been withdrawn from the North-West run and in view of it being taken from the Fremantle-Esperance run, will the Government return this ship to its rightful destination — Fremantle-Esperance — for tourist and cargo traffic?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

The "Kybra" has not been withdrawn from the North-West trade, where she is fully employed as far north as Port Hedland. No signs are evident of any easing of the position to enable the Government to consider releasing her from that run.