

but particularly in the metropolitan area and on the Goldfields. I have explained previously that there is not a road board in the State with a revenue sufficient to allow it to carry out a programme of providing 100 per cent. roads for its rate-payers. Most road boards have territory in which they cannot in any circumstances construct the roads and do the work necessary to satisfy the residents of their districts.

Hon. H. L. Roche: What about Peppermint Grove?

Hon. W. R. HALL: I do not know much about that, but if the hon. member is referring to the Minister for Mines, he should direct his interjection to him. The question of improving the Great Eastern Highway between Coolgardie and Southern Cross or a little further was a matter that the Labour Government had well in hand. Most of the surface from No. 5 Pumping Station to four miles this side of Southern Cross has been tarred, and although work was discontinued during the war period, it has been resumed. I have great sympathy for the motorist of today, who is one of the greatest assets the State and Commonwealth have. He more or less pays for the roads and yet, even in the metropolitan area, we encounter some "wicked" roads, of which I could name several. When that state of affairs exists in the metropolitan area, members can imagine what the country roads are like and what a toll the corrugations take of the cars. Seven or eight years have elapsed since we were promised a good road between Coolgardie and Southern Cross, and I hope the present Government will have that section completed as early as possible.

Motorists had a very bad spin during the war years. They are taxed heavily and I claim that they are entitled to greater consideration now that the war is over. Doubtless the acute tyre position was brought about largely through the roads being in such a bad condition. As the Main Roads Board is doing the work on the Coolgardie—Southern Cross section, efforts should be made to complete it as soon as possible. I hope that my remarks will carry some influence with the Government, and above all I trust that

the mining industry will receive the consideration it deserves.

On motion by Hon. A. L. Loton, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 19th August, 1947.

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

### QUESTION.

#### MILK.

#### *As to Monopoly for Treatment Licensees.*

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) Is he aware that in the exercise of powers under Section 26 of the Milk Act the Milk Board in reducing the number of treatment licenses and refusing to approve of contracts except as between dairymen and holders of treatment licenses has created a situation which is already developing to a state of complete monopoly of the treatment of milk for distribution to consumers?

(2) Does he consider that the formation of a monopoly of the treatment of milk was intended by the Legislature when the Milk Bill was enacted?

(3) Does he believe that a monopoly of the treatment of milk is in the best interests of the people of the State?

(4) Does he intend to take steps to prevent it?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No. This action was advocated by my predecessor when introducing the Milk Bill last session. (Hansard No. 4, page 297.) The Chief Secretary also indicated the policy of consolidation of treatment depots

in the Legislative Council. (Hansard No. 14, page 1554.) This has been the policy of the Board since 1945 (see annual report, pp. 8 and 9), and apparently approved of by my predecessor and Parliament.

(2) Answered by No. 1.

(3) The proposed reforms are very much more in the interests of the people, insofar as the supply of clean safe milk is concerned, than the conditions prevailing during the past 14 years.

(4) The question of a monopoly does not arise.

### ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

MR. SPEAKER: I am prepared to swear in the hon. member for Pilbara.

Mr. W. Hegney took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the 13th August.

HON. E. NULSEN (Kamowna) [4.37]: It seems rather strange to be speaking from this side of the House after having been on the other side for so long. However strange it may be, it might do a number of us, not only on this side but also on the other side of the House, quite a lot of good, because members on the opposite side will realise that the matters to be dealt with are not so easy as they made out in their propaganda. I congratulate them on their propaganda, which I think was rather clever. It seems to me that when a person enters Parliament, it does not matter how high he was held in respect of his integrity—that is, from the private-life point of view—he seems to become politically dishonest.

The Chief Secretary: Do you find that?

HON. E. NULSEN: I do not confine that remark to any one section of the community. That is my opinion. It seems to be the case, because I am perfectly satisfied that the propaganda put up during the election would never have been thought of by any person in his private life. From a political point of view it seems to me to be dishonest, but nevertheless it is really clever. I am not making a specific charge. The same can be said of many Parliaments through-

out the world. I know that members on the opposite side of the House are scrupulously honest in their private life, but not honest in their political life.

The Minister for Lands: Are you applying that to both sides of the House?

HON. E. NULSEN: Yes. I am not blaming any particular Party.

The Minister for Lands: That is fair enough.

HON. E. NULSEN: However, we have been relegated to this side of the House, but after the next election I feel we shall be back on the other side. I hope members opposite will then be sporting enough to say, "Well, you have put up your fight and won. We were all in the ring and we are satisfied to take it."

The Chief Secretary: We will not say that it was propaganda. That is one thing we will not do.

The Minister for Lands: We will not squeal.

HON. E. NULSEN: If members opposite say that it is not propaganda, they will not be truthful. It definitely was propaganda and they cannot get away from it.

The Chief Secretary: I am talking about the next occasion. We will not then say that it was propaganda.

HON. A. R. G. Hawke: The Chief Secretary does not know what he is saying.

HON. E. NULSEN: If I am here then, I must remember that and I shall be glad to know that it will not be propaganda. I am going to deal with my electorate, which is a big one, but I am not going to apologise to the House for being parochial. It is the largest Assembly electorate, and there is only one province that is bigger than it. Members may say that there are not many electors there. That is so; there are not quite 4,000, but there are many who are not on the roll. About two or three years ago, the Hon. E. H. Gray and I called at the Yarri Hotel, where I saw a number of men. I asked them to come in for a drink, which they did, and which I was glad to pay for. After we had had our drinks, I said to them, "Are you on the roll?" Only one, out of the 14 who came into the hotel and had a drink with me, was on the roll.

The Minister for Lands: That was a waste of money.

Hon. E. NULSEN: It is almost impossible for me to go around and see that they get on the roll, as my electorate extends over 214,000 square miles, which is about three times the size of Victoria. I venture to say that instead of there being 3,000 to 4,000 people enrolled, there should be about 6,000. However, I am not complaining. I have my job to do, but I find it difficult to treat my electors as they should be treated and give them the service that is necessary for their requirements. The people in my electorate are not organised as are those in the metropolitan area with their various committees, etc. That is one of the reasons why I get a big mail, although it has been considerably reduced. On the average, I receive about eight letters a day. At one time I averaged considerably more. I have a record here which shows that I replied, a few years ago, to 3,000 letters in one year. That gives an idea of the correspondence that I have to deal with.

I have previously told this House that Esperance is the foundation of my electorate and the natural port for the greater part of the Eastern Goldfields. It is 134 miles nearer to Coolgardie than is Fremantle; it is 352 miles nearer to Norseman than is Fremantle, and it is almost 568 miles closer to the Eastern States by sea. But we still have not been fortunate enough to get a regular service. We had an energetic committee, of which I was secretary and Sir John Kirwan chairman, and the members of it were members of Parliament representing the Eastern Goldfields, and we had things working reasonably well, with a monthly service, but unfortunately the war intervened and upset everything. As members know, freight by water is very much cheaper than it is by land or by air. Esperance being the natural port, we looked forward to getting a regular monthly service at the least, and I will give an idea of what such a service would mean to the people on the Goldfields. I will quote a few figures showing the average savings. On B., C. and first-class freights from Esperance to Norseman the saving is 60s. 10d. compared with the cost from Fremantle. To Coolgardie it is 22s. 1d., to Kalgoorlie 21s. 4d., to Boulder 21s. 1d., to Menzies 19s. 1d., to Leonora 18s. 3d. and to Laverton 18s. 2d.

These figures do not sound extravagant. It may be thought that there would not be such a great saving, but when several thousand tons of goods come into a district it means a large amount, and it would probably mean prolonging the life of the mining industry. My figures are conservative because I did not want to lead any businessmen astray by putting up figures that were at all exaggerated. I have a few more figures to show the saving from the mining point of view, directly. The rail freight on explosives from the port of Esperance to Kalgoorlie is 104s. 8d. per ton, and from Fremantle 140s. 1d. That represents a saving of 35s. 5d. a ton. Cyanide (Cassell) from Esperance costs 83s. 9d. per ton and from Fremantle 112s. 1d. per ton, a saving of 28s. 4d. per ton. Cyanide (Aero), from Esperance, is 52s. 3d. per ton, and from Fremantle is 68s. 4d. per ton, a saving of 16s. 1d. Piping, from Esperance, is 65s. 3d. and from Fremantle 85s. 5d., a saving of 20s. 2d. per ton. Mining machinery, drill steel, plates, iron, etc., cost 51s. 11d. per ton from Esperance and 66s. 11d. from Fremantle, a saving of 15s. The nearer we get to Esperance, the greater is the saving.

The saving on explosives to Norseman would be 99s. 8d. per ton, on cyanide (Cassell) 79s. 9d. per ton, on cyanide (Aero) 46s. per ton, on piping 57s. 8d. per ton, and on mining machinery, drill steel, plates, iron, etc., 43s. 10d. per ton. So members can see how important it is that we should get a regular service to Esperance. It would be helpful not only to the commercial life of the Goldfields but also to the mining industry. I would like, in order to substantiate what I have said, to quote from the report of the Royal Commission which inquired into the development of the outports of this State. The members of that Commission were Messrs. H. H. Styants, Chairman, L. L. Hill, E. K. Hoar, L. J. Triat, and the late W. H. F. Willmott, M.S.L.A. I congratulate them on the report, because they have gone to a lot of trouble in collating the information, and it should be very helpful to the outports of the State. This is what they say about Esperance—

At present a ship from the Eastern States calls at intervals of about three months with approximately 800 tons of cargo. The main drawback to this is the infrequency of the

service, because it is not suitable for general merchants to have deliveries only at quarterly intervals, also on some occasions only about eight days' notice is given importers and exporters that the ship is to load in the East. This does not allow sufficient time to get cargoes ready and delivered to the port for loading.

The following recommendations are made:—

(1) That the Chambers of Commerce and Mines respectively at Kalgoorlie, and the mining and business interests of Norseman confer and give an estimate of the tonnage that could be guaranteed per call, with a ship a month from the East.

(2) When this is done the State Government should approach the Director of Shipping and request that a 6 months' trial be given of a monthly service. It is confidently expected that from the outset of a regular monthly service, sufficient cargoes will be guaranteed to continue it. One firm alone has stated their willingness to divert over 500 tons per month from the trans. railway and the Port of Fremantle, if a regular monthly service is guaranteed.

The only fault I can find with that is that instead of a trial for six months, it should extend over a period of twelve months. Business people will appreciate the fact that it is impossible to give anything an adequate trial within a period of six months, for it would take longer than that to get matters into shape after a changeover. If the Government does anything in the matter, I hope it will provide for a trial of at least twelve months. The next recommendation reads—

That because a large percentage of the explosives imported from the Eastern States is used in the goldmining industry, the explosive ship should call regularly at Esperance and discharge all cargo there for the Eastern Goldfields. To enable this to be done magazines would be required at Esperance for storage of explosives, owing to rail transport regulations.

That is quite all right, and I certainly think that the explosives should be shipped through Esperance. I understand that upwards of 150 tons per month of explosives are imported and railed to the Eastern Goldfields. On the freight savings I have quoted with respect to Esperance, members will appreciate what it would mean if the imports were brought to that port. I may be asked why I should go out of my way to boost up the savings of the big companies. My reply to that query would be that I am not thinking of the companies but of the life of the mines. Obviously if costs are reduced, the life of a mine will be so much

longer because lower grade ore could then be treated, much lower than otherwise would be possible.

Esperance, too, is a great pleasure resort and is one of the best in Western Australia. I notice the member for Albany is watching me, and I emphasise that I do not say that Esperance is the best but it certainly is one of the most attractive in the State. It has a beautiful climate and very fine beaches. To emphasise the point I am making I desire to quote a short extract from an article written by "Martingale" in "The Western Mail", regarding the attractions of Esperance for tourists. In the course of his article the following appeared—

From now on it was the turn of the Director of the Tourist Bureau to really "sit up and take notice" for the district is rich in scenic and historical wealth. Extending for many miles on either side of the township are some of the most magnificent beaches in Australia, delightful stretches of the finest, whitest sand that could be found anywhere in the world, shelving gradually to a limpid green ocean, lace-trimmed with a triple line of foaming breakers that promise a surfer's paradise.

The words of the writer are quite sufficient amplification of the point I have been making. I have frequently referred to the possibilities at Esperance from the standpoint of its development as a tourist resort, and I am quite confident in that respect after having visited all the ports in Western Australia and most of the resorts in other parts of the Commonwealth. From the top of Dempster's Hill, which reminds me very much of Mt. Eliza, a wonderful view of the harbour is obtained. It is heart-shaped and unique in its natural designing. Fish are plentiful in the waters surrounding Esperance and particularly around the 80 odd islands of the Recherche Archipelago. Not only is the fishing good there but plenty of shooting can be enjoyed as well. Referring particularly to the fish that abound in the sea there I will read to members some extracts from a report by Mr. Gilbert P. Whitley on aerial observations of schools of fish in the South-West during May and June, 1945. The report sets out that—

Mr. S. Fowler, Senior Research Officer of the C.S.I.R. Division of Fisheries, who had observed large congregations of fish on May 20, 1945, at the western end of the Great Australian Bight, invited me to accompany him on

another flight over that region. Our trip lasted from May 30 to June 5, inclusive, the route being Perth-Albany-Busselton-Albany-Esperance-Cape Arid-Esperance-Western Bight-Esperance-Perth. The flight was undertaken in an Anson aircraft manned by a R.A.A.F. crew.

The report shows that schools of fish were noticed on various dates and at various places, and in dealing with what was seen on the 3rd June, the report states—

At 11.45 a.m. over the sea west of Israelite Bay some small clusters of fish, doubtless mackerel, were seen. Beyond the eastern group of the Recherche Archipelago, at 12.15 p.m. schools of fish were beginning to ruffle the calm surface.

Here and there they emerged, in smallish-looking patches at first, then, in three minutes, large schools appeared as well. In five minutes there were innumerable schools all around the aircraft. From low altitude, the individual fish could be seen. We worked north and north-east of the eastern group. On all but the hazy peripheral margin of the horizon, the sea clearly showed schools of fish, visible from a very wide angular range (from lines of vision between at least  $10^{\circ}$  to  $75^{\circ}$ ). I tried to count the schools but it was impossible to do so amongst so many. At a moderate computation I estimated 3,000 schools were visible at a given moment and these gave place to as many others in one minute (the actual time taken to pass a smooth "slick" on the sea surface).

At 12.35 p.m., I considered that after 20 minutes we had probably passed 60,000 schools of fish along the strip of, say, fifty miles, over which we had flown. There were, I estimated, 1,000 schools ahead at one view. The fish were steady at the surface and could therefore be netted. In whichever direction we flew, the fish appeared. Over the open sea to near Point Culver (approximately due south of Naretha on the Trans-Australian railway), thousands of schools were seen; we had to turn back at  $124^{\circ} 40'$  E. long. as flying-time was limited by petrol storage and Esperance was the nearest airstrip. On the homeward run, some 6 to 10 miles offshore, the schools were still evident until, shortly after 1.45 p.m., many of them went down and by 2 p.m. the wind and sea having made, it was difficult to trace any more of them.

On the way back, of course, not so many schools of fish were seen. The report that I have quoted emanates from a scientific organisation and obviously those associated with it have no axe to grind. There is no doubt about the fish being in the south-western waters in great numbers but unfortunately, Esperance is so isolated that the possibilities of developing the fishing industry have not been explored thoroughly and certainly have never been exploited. There are opportunities for shooting at

Esperance which is something quite unusual at most ports. When I go to Esperance, a friend usually has quite a number of ducks, which are plentiful when one knows where to get them. I notice that the Minister for Railways is looking my way.

The Minister for Railways: Just a bare half dozen.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And close season, too.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Blue ducks?

Hon. E. NULSEN: These were genuine ducks and there was also teal. We seem to get the blue ducks in this House. Out from Esperance is Cape Le Grand. The storekeeper from Norseman has taken up about 17,000 acres of land there and the place presents wonderful possibilities for development as a pleasure resort. It is close to Esperance. Let me read what "Martingale" said regarding Cape Le Grand—

Tourist Paradise: It had been a most enjoyable excursion which strengthened my belief in the possibilities of the district as a tourist centre. One could visualise a smooth road from Esperance to Cape Le Grand with camping areas, bungalows, and stores to cater for the needs of the visitors. Surfing, hill-climbing, picnicking in the coves, fishing and island trips by launch could provide a delightful itinerary for holiday-makers, and the tourist trade could be complementary to the agricultural and pastoral development of the district.

Cape Le Grand is unique in its way and there is a possibility of its becoming a favoured resort, apart altogether from the Esperance district itself. "Martingale" also said—

Excelsior! Mt. Le Grand itself, which is the highest peak of the group, towers upward to a height of 1,155 feet and adjoining it is another unnamed peak which we christened Cavern Rock, because of the immense caves which wind and weather have carved in the decomposed granite. Cavern Rock is approximately 830 feet in height and the other outstanding feature, Frenchman's Peak, is marked on the map as having a height of 858 feet. Also known as Frenchman's Cap, this conical peak has an overhanging mass of granite at its summit, which gives it a striking resemblance to the "cap of liberty" or "bonnet rouge," which came into prominence in the revolutionary days.

I have mentioned this because very few people know anything about Esperance. Were it within 100 miles of Perth, it would certainly be a flourishing town. I admit that it is moving ahead each year, when

between 2,000 and 3,000 people visit the district. Thus the place is gaining favour with those who have been frequenting it for a long time. Plenty of sport is to be had at Esperance where there is a tennis court as well as an excellent ground for golf, though money will have to be spent to develop it, and there is also provision for bowls. From a sporting point of view, Esperance can be made the equal of any other resort and, on account of the excellent climate, a stay there could be very enjoyable.

The Fresh Air League is about to patronise Esperance instead of Bunbury. I have nothing to say against Bunbury, except that Esperance has a better climate and is more convenient to the Goldfields. Hence the league is moving its premises to Esperance, where the children should recover from any disabilities suffered through living on the Goldfields so long. The Country Women's Association also has built premises there. I commend that organisation upon the design it has adopted, and also upon its choice of Esperance for climatic reasons.

There is a good hospital at Esperance now in charge of a young doctor. Previously Dr. Coote was the medical officer, but he was 80 years of age and his eyesight was failing, and consequently people did not have great confidence in him. I do not say anything against him because, in his younger days, he was a very fine physician, but the time comes to many of us when we are unable longer to do our work as we should do it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That makes the Minister for Works look worried.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I hope he is worried about Esperance and will do something for the district. We have been trying hard for a long time to get various facilities, but so far with little success. I see references to the South-West and to the North-West, but now I should like to hear something of the south of this State as well. Esperance was rather liberally treated by the Labour Party, but I hope members opposite will be even more liberal and will outdo what the Labour Party did for the district.

Boating facilities are provided at Esperance including a new boat sent from Kalgoorlie and Mr. Leidle is bringing one around from Sydney. Thus, if there are

tourists who wish to make an expedition around the islands, the facilities will be available. The boat being brought from Sydney is 33ft. in length and the fact that it is being sailed here indicates that it must be seaworthy.

Some people consider that the Esperance district is not productive. On the contrary, some wonderful crops are grown in the district and the land is suitable for vegetable growing. Excellent crops of potatoes and onions have been raised there but, owing to isolation, the growers have not persevered with them. Some of the best fruit I have tasted was grown in the district. If Esperance were only treated as it should be in accordance with its productive and climatic claims, I am satisfied that it would be one of the best districts in the State.

The Minister for Lands: What variety of fruit is grown there?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Apples, and a lot of stone fruit, but no oranges. In Pink Lake we have a feature unique in its colouration when viewed in various lights, and it contains the purest salt deposit in the world. The crude salt when analysed was found to contain 99.86 per cent. of pure sodium chloride, so one could not expect anything better than that. This deposit has not been developed on account of distance from the market. If the salt is refined on the spot, the freight rate granted for crude salt is increased. The Minister for Railways might give consideration to this matter.

The Minister for Railways: I will take a note of it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The lake contains an inexhaustible supply of salt, which is derived from subterranean deposits. After heavy rains, it forms a coating on the surface about two inches thick. Thus the industry could be developed greatly. At one stage Japan asked for 2,000,000 tons of salt per annum, but we could not supply it owing to lack of shipping and other facilities. The deposit can be worked for only three months in the year because the rain is fairly constant during 11 months out of the 12, the average for the district being about 25 inches. Hence the men have to work hard in the limited time available to get the salt out.

The Minister for Works might note the road needs of the district. Many of the roads, particularly the one from Esperance

to Cape Le Grand, as well as the one to the Duke of Orleans Bay, need to be put in order. It would not be expensive to make them trafficable. The most important road, however, is that from Esperance to Ravensthorpe, which should be put in repair. Much work has been done upon it, but owing to its sandy nature, it becomes bumpy, and when I have travelled over it, the differential on my car has got on to the centre of the road. A few thousand pounds should be spent on this road, which outlay would be beneficial to the residents of Esperance, the Lakes district and Ravensthorpe, and a convenience to tourists.

The Minister for Works: Has that road been formed at all?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Only in parts, not right through. It is very rough, indeed. I believe the time will soon come when Esperance will not be isolated. With air transport, the journey from Perth may be made in a couple of hours, whereas the train occupies 27 hours. If we could get the desired facilities, amenities and accommodation, Esperance would make rapid progress. The residents were very enthusiastic, but they have been knocked back so often that they have become more or less indifferent. They say, "It is of no use our making any application to the people living in the South-West or in the metropolitan area because they care not what happens unless it concerns themselves."

I believe that parties will soon be travelling by plane, leaving Perth on Friday at 5 p.m., reaching Esperance in time for dinner, and then probably making a trip to the islands or undertaking some expedition such as fishing or shooting. For this reason, I feel more hopeful than I did when I spoke on this subject years ago. Helicopters have a cruising speed of about 90 miles an hour and could reach Esperance in about four hours from Perth. The helicopter is a fool-proof machine and, I feel sure, will become very popular. I believe that air travel will be as commonplace in years to come as motorear travel is today, and that distance will be no bar at all. I also believe that, in the course of time, air travel will be as cheap as travelling by road or sea. So much for Esperance. I hope that Ministers opposite will be very

sympathetic and will try to outdo what the Labour Government did when it was in office.

The Minister for Works: What did it do for Esperance by the way?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I did not want to go into that, but I will do so directly. I will give the Minister some figures that will astound him.

Mr. Styants: It spent £1,000 on the jetty.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I will give the Minister the information as I proceed.

Mr. Fox: Now see what you have done!

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Esperance Plain has been proved beyond doubt to be very prolific. I have no doubt that it is far more fertile than the scrub plain north of Perth. I listened attentively to the speech of the member for Irwin-Moore and found it very informative. I have no objection to the experimental work he desires to have undertaken on the scrub plain in the northern part of the State. But the Esperance Plain is much more fertile and has been proved beyond doubt to have a carrying capacity equal to that possessed by a good deal of rich country.

The Minister for Works: The Light Lands Commission spoke very highly of it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I will read something of what that Commission said. I was a member of it and took particular notice of the districts visited and I have no doubt about the value of that plain in comparison with other parts of the State. I did not have anything to do with that part of the report concerning Esperance. Being the member for the district I left the room when the Commission prepared that section of its report, because I did not think it would have been fair to remain since people might say I used influence.

The flora on the Esperance Plain is very interesting and compares favourably with wild flowers anywhere in the State. We have had a couple of botanists down there to examine it. Mr. Gardner was there for about a fortnight and Dr. Black also visited the district. Things of that kind are of interest to tourists and I felt that I should mention them in the House on account of the isolation of the district and because nobody in the metropolitan area knows much about it—and not only in the metropolitan area either, but throughout

most of the State, except the Eastern Gold-fields. The fauna is the same as that which is to be found anywhere else. There are a few kangaroos and turkeys and black cockatoos. I do not know whether birds are covered by the word "fauna" or whether it is necessary to refer to "avi-fauna," but I think that "fauna" covers the lot.

Mr. Rodoreda: What about galahs?

Hon. E. NULSEN: We have none down there.

Hon. A. H. Panton: There is not enough to feed them on. You let him down very lightly.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Royal Commission on Light Lands and Poison-Infested Lands comprised Messrs. C. G. Latham, P.D. Ferguson, E. Nulsen, W. Patrick, and P. J. Withers. Messrs. Latham, Ferguson and Patrick are agriculturists and they would not submit a report which they did not consider worthy of them, so I feel sure that what I am about to read represents the true position. On page 11 of the report appears the following:—

It can safely be claimed that the experimental stage has been passed. Improved conditions of land settlement can be dated from the introduction of pastures in this locality at the time when the Esperance Pine Forests Ltd. decided to extend its operations to pasture production, and on the main road between Scaddan and Esperance a plot of about 20 acres of established pastures remains to illustrate what can be done. This plot was not top dressed for a period of four years until last year when a dressing of 100 lbs. was applied. When your Commissioners visited the plot a very good cover of pasture was still in existence although it had been heavily stocked. Your Commissioners recommend that this area of land should be reserved as an experimental plot and placed under the control of a reliable settler in the district, under the supervision of one of the Agricultural Department's officers.

I am sorry to say that has never been done. I feel that if it had been, the Director of Soldier Settlement would probably now be able to go there and establish a number of soldier settlers on the land. I believe that so far as soldier settlement is concerned the Commonwealth Government will not look at anything green. Land must have been developed before the Government will consider taking it over. That was my information. The report of the Commission also stated—

With the area available and with intensive settlement, there is no doubt in the minds of

your Commissioners that the district would, in the future, be capable of producing sufficient lambs to justify the establishment of freezing works at Esperance of somewhere about the same capacity as those now existing at Albany, and worked conjointly. With these a butter factory could be incorporated.

Cattle seem to do wonderfully well and no doubt dairying could be made a profitable sideline, and if the output were large enough a butter factory would be established. With dairying, pig-raising should also be profitable and it may be one of the places in the State where pork, suitable for export, could be produced. A plentiful water supply, at Esperance, together with the harbour facilities that exist there, would make export from that port quite an easy matter.

There may be doubt in the minds of some people as to the advisability of increasing land settlement in this area, because of the difficulties experienced in past years, but your Commissioners who have had an opportunity of watching its progress are convinced that there is quite a future ahead of the district, because earlier difficulties have been minimised and the importance of Esperance as a sheep-raising proposition is now realised.

Some of the farms visited clearly indicate that sufficient fertiliser is not being used to get the best returns, as this light country requires an annual dressing of anything from 150 lbs. to 2 cwt. of super. per annum; but we feel it would be safe to say that up to two sheep to the acre are being carried on the farms already established.

I want members to realise that farms already established are carrying up to two sheep to the acre. The report continued—

Perhaps the best recommendation that could be made is that a road should be put through to connect up with the Great Southern Railway, and should be laid down with a possibility in the future of providing a main road from Esperance to Albany.

It will be difficult to suggest the exact area that could be regarded as a home maintenance area, because, like all country of this type it is not possible to get uniformity.

In making a recommendation for the settlement of the Esperance Plains your Commissioners cannot forget that in the settlement of all types of land the personal equation must always be taken into consideration and should apply generally. Where one man may make a success on light land another man may also make a failure on a first-class land proposition and, therefore, it would be unreasonable to expect your Commissioners to state that every man who took a farm in this locality would make a success of it. Your Commissioners, however, are of the opinion that the problems in this district with its treeless plain are easily capable of solution.

Your Commissioners believe that the minimum area granted to any one farmer should be 500 acres, and the maximum 2,000 acres. Although



these areas are being recommended as a minimum and a maximum the extent should be governed by the amount of finance a person would have available to develop the property.

The reason I read those paragraphs was that I wanted to substantiate what I said about my district. I have not been putting up these claims with a view to ingratiating myself with my electors but from an honest point of view; and I feel certain that if Esperance is given an opportunity there can be no doubt of its success.

I come now to the mallee district, which has been quite unfortunate for the reason that in the very early days there were no experts in Western Australia capable of dealing with it. The land surveyed there and considered to be first-class land turned out to be third-class land and the third-class land proved to be first-class. The problem down there was beyond the understanding even of the supposed experts in those days. They did not account for the stumps or suckers. After clearing deeply it was found that there was a lateral forest to be dealt with and the displacement was one-third. A lot of that has been overcome and the menace of suckers is being successfully tackled. The mallee is on a fairly solid foundation and it will rise gradually and slowly to become a very good district in time. It can produce wheat as well as good stock.

There is one farmer who over the last nine years has averaged 22 bushels in the Salmon Gums area. That is not a bad average when one takes into consideration the bad years that have been experienced. I do not say that the whole district would average that, but one man's property has done so. Confirmation of that can be obtained from figures in the possession of the Agricultural Bank. In 1928 the mallee produced 260,000 bags of wheat. Then the depression came along. There was a very good crop in 1930 but the farmers had to sell for less than the cost of production. So there are drawbacks in the mallee country. First there were no experts. Nothing was known about the land and the classification was wrong. Then the menace of suckers was not realised and it was not known that there was a lateral forest to deal with. Those things have been a very great disadvantage.

Water, too, has been a problem but it should not be. If there were a 2,000-acre dam

reserve no block would be short of water. Surely it would have paid the State in the first instance to have seen that water was supplied.

Water is the most important item of all, one that no-one can do without, and provision for a proper water supply should have been made in the early days of that district. The Rural and Industries Bank is doing an excellent job in that area, and is to be commended. I refer particularly to the work of Mr. Brownlie. I take my hat off to him for the way in which he has handled the farmers. Having been a farmer himself, his experience has stood by him and he now has those people properly settled and well on the way to winning through. Mr. Abey also is an able man. He is a banker, and has been most helpful to farmers in that district. Mr. Murray, the sheep expert, has been very optimistic and his optimism has been justified by the fact that the wool clip in that district is good, the weight always being above the average. On one occasion I had Corriedales running there, and when shorn they averaged 12¼ lbs. The same thing applies to the merinos, but not to the same extent. The research station at Salmon Gums has proved a blessing, and successive managers have been obliging and of great help to the district. I think it can be said that we have won the day in that area. Mr. Thomas, the Superintendent, has been a brick. I can remember that years ago he rode a 3½ h.p. motorcycle round those roads, and stuck to his job. The farmers now appreciate his good work.

I will deal next with Norseman and the mining industry. Norseman is a prosperous little mining town, which I think is the second best in Western Australia today. It has produced a lot of gold and is in the Dundas district, which has produced 1,416,233 ozs., worth nearly £8,000,000, and has been of great assistance to the State. The pipe-line which carries the water made Norseman, and but for the ex-Premier, the member for Boulder, that pipe-line might never have been laid. I approached the then Minister for Works, who said that the project was a very risky one. He would not champion it, though I do not blame him, as he had a grave responsibility. The member for Boulder, who was then Premier, with his natural foresight said, "If you can get those companies to put up in advance

between £20,000 and £30,000 for water that they will take if the pipe-line is laid, we will see what can be done about it."

I had some trouble with the Norseman N.L., but the management of the Norseman Central said that they would willingly put up any amount of money required in advance for water that they would use later when the scheme went through. It cost £155,949, but I venture to say that if that sum has not been repaid directly it has been repaid indirectly, because the Western Mining Corporation alone spent over £1,000,000 in prospecting that area before it became established. The management now seem to think they have no less than ten years of ore in sight. But for the Treasurer of that day taking the stand that he did in relation to that and other ventures, the Western Mining Corporation would not have been there today, and there would probably have been only 200 or 300 persons at Norseman instead of the present population of about 3,000. I might mention that just before the war about 5,000 people were living there.

The Norseman Gold Mines N.L. today is not producing any gold, but something that is very important to the State. I refer to pyrites. In the course of development that company has found more pyritiferous country, and feels that it has now established itself and that the pyrites will develop into a reasonably big industry. The pyrites can be landed more cheaply and it will be cheaper for the State than the importing of sulphur. The Mines Department helped that company considerably. The manager was very determined, and on several occasions went to the ex-Minister for Mines and was always accommodated. Today that industry is helpful to the Commonwealth, even in the matter of dollar exchange. I believe it will develop to such an extent that we will not require to import the same amount of sulphur that would otherwise be necessary. Mr. Ellis, the geologist, has done excellent work in that area on several occasions. All of the districts I have mentioned now have a possibility of prosperity. One important and necessary work is the construction of a bitumen road from Coolgardie to Norseman, and on to Esperance.

The Minister for Works: For how long have you wanted it?

Hon. E. NULSEN: The ex-Minister for Works promised me the road and I hope the present Minister will see that the work is done. It is an important road and is used to a great extent. A bitumen road to Esperance would allow tourists from the Eastern States to visit that area and they could then, when proper roads are constructed, go through to Esperance and Ravenshorpe and on to the South-West. They could go to Bridgetown and Nannup and on to Busselton, and then home through Bunbury. What a wonderful advertisement that would be for our State! I think the road I have mentioned should be constructed as soon as possible. I hope that the Minister, coming from the country, will be sympathetic. He knows that people in the country produce our real wealth while living under harsh conditions, and that they are entitled to decent roads and all other amenities that it is possible for them to enjoy. I come now to the East-West road, the Eyre Highway. Although that road does not come within the jurisdiction of the State Government, I would point out that suckers are growing on it, and I hope this Government will urge the Commonwealth Government to do something about it.

I read in the Press that a certain organisation was advocating that the name of the Eyre Highway should be changed, and that it should be called the Forrest Highway. I am absolutely opposed to that. No one has a higher respect than I have for the late Sir John Forrest, who was one of those who did most for our State in the early days. It was in 1841 that Edward John Eyre opened up the land route between Adelaide and Esperance. He was indeed lucky to get through at all and probably would have perished had not some boats been in at Esperance at the time. John Forrest was not born until 1847. The only other tribute or memorial to Edward John Eyre of which I know is the naming after him of Lake Eyre in South Australia. The road I have mentioned was first explored by him and I think we should retain his name for it as a memorial. I hope the Minister will not allow the suggested change and I am sure that those along that route do not want the name changed, although they hold Sir John Forrest in as high esteem as I do.

Madura pass, which was very dangerous, is now quite safe. There is an artesian bore there, which is now out of order; but we have not been able to do anything to it. It was a great convenience for tourists and travellers who could get a hot bath at any time, and was also of value to the pastoralists. I do not know how much the necessary work would cost, but I feel that something should be done about it, as water is so very important. We have not done nearly sufficient to make sure that our pastoralists have the water to run all the stock the country is capable of carrying. The pastoralists are helping to produce our real wealth, and it is therefore up to the Government to do everything possible to assist them. In this matter I hope we will not be put off owing to different recommendations by the Minister's officers.

The Minister for Works: By what?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I hope the Minister will not be sidetracked by his officers, and that he will do whatever can be done. Higginsville, Widgiemooltha, Kanowna, Edjudina, Linden, Mt. Morgan, Laverton, Mt. Monger, and other Goldfields towns will go ahead if the price of gold is increased in accordance with the increase in mining costs. I will deal with that later. The amenities on the Trans-line have been improved wonderfully in recent years. When I first went out on that line in 1932 there was one school constructed of onion bags, with a rinder floor. Nowadays, buildings on that line have wire doors and windows. There are nice residences and good barracks, fitted with refrigerators and many of the amenities to which people living there are entitled. People in the country are really entitled to everything possible. They should have all the amenities they desire. But for them, we would not be fabricating what they are producing, whether directly or indirectly.

I have always realised the great value of water. A number of people in this country do not think that way, unfortunately. Water is something we cannot, any of us, do without. It is one of the most important elements in life, next to air. Its conservation should be explored in every light possible. John Forrest was long-sighted, and in 1898 he undertook the greatest scheme of its kind at that time, namely the water scheme for the Goldfields. But for that scheme, the Gold-

fields would not have prospered and gone ahead as they have done. No fresh water should be allowed to run into the ocean, and no river should be allowed to empty itself into the sea in this State. All fresh water should be conserved and harnessed.

Mr. Mann: During the 14 years your Government was in power why did not you go in for some of these schemes?

Hon. E. NULSEN: If the hon. member's Party remains in power for 14 years and it does as much as the Labour Government did, he will have something to his credit. I feel, however, that he would not find any John Forrests on his side of the House.

Mr. Mann: And far less so on your side.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Or any James Mitchells or Colliers. They were the three big men of Western Australia.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That will quieten the member for Beverley for the next six weeks.

Hon. E. NULSEN: We should have other schemes similar to the Goldfields scheme leading from different places where water can be impounded. Instead of having one big water supply scheme, we should have many big ones. Without water we cannot do anything. If it was possible to spend £1,000,000 a day on war, surely it is possible to spend a few millions a year on water supplies for the production of real wealth. We should be able in time to pump water up to various elevations from which it can be gravitated to the areas concerned. That is something our engineers should do. At Norseman, water is drawn by gravity from the pipe-line, but it has to be boosted because the pipe is on the small side.

On the Goldfields there is richer soil even in our arid areas than there is in better-watered districts. The alluvial soil there will produce almost anything. I remember a crop put in on a flat at Fraser's Range on ironstone country. No super was used, but Mr. Gull produced two tons of hay to the acre. That sounds an extravagant statement, but, though I did not see the crop, I am prepared to believe what Mr. Gull told me. The question of the distribution of water is of vital importance and should be tackled. Water properly harnessed means life, production, and population. Without population in this State and in Australia coloured people not far from

us will soon have their eyes upon this country. I feel that the next big war will be one of the survival of the fittest between the coloured and the white races. I do not fear another big war between the white races, but I feel that there will be one against the coloured people. That being so, we must populate this country if we want to hold it.

Some years ago I went through Mildura and saw something of the irrigation there. It was very interesting. This is a place right out in the country, and in the year that I visited it there had been only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches of rain. The population of Mildura is 17,000. I remarked upon the volume of irrigation, and people there said, "We do not want any rain because the rain puts us out of our stride. We would sooner carry on with irrigation only. A wet season is not helpful to us." This shows what irrigation can do, and what other people can do by the conservation of water. Water, in fact, is far more important than gold. If any member found a mountain of gold and his waterbag was empty, he would gladly leave the gold to look for water. When water is plentiful we do not realise its importance. Much the same can be said of salt. The Labour Government, however, did realise its importance.

The Ord River has a huge catchment area and I am told that the rainfall is between 22 and 28 inches. That will be harnessed. I am informed that this area would catch 27,000,000,000 gallons of water in 24 hours. That quantity would fill the Canning Dam 1 1-3rd times in 24 hours and the Mundaring Weir six times in 24 hours. All this time the Ord River has been there and Governments in Western Australia did nothing with it. We are now getting a water sense. I hope that in future all Governments will be prepared to spend money wisely on the conservation of water. I would be sad indeed if in 10 or 20 years' time any river were allowed to run into the ocean. The water should all be conserved and used for the development of the State. The scheme of the ex-Premier in the North-West will double the output at the Wyndham Meat Works when they are in full operation. There will be sufficient water there to irrigate 100,000 acres of rich country. That was a move in the right direction.

Western Australia will grow into a greater State than any of us ever dreamt of if we

harness the water that is available and distribute it where it is most needed. We cannot do without water; we must have it if we want to produce real wealth. There are rich deposits of iron, millions of tons of it, at Yampi. We also have other minerals that should be developed, in the interests of the State. We should conserve our water resources with a view to producing all that we wear, eat and drink. It is the foundation of prosperity and production.

We should explore and exploit all our artesian and sub-artesian supplies. Rock catchments should also be surveyed and brought into use for water conservation. If we do that, we shall be assisting pastoralists and farmers who, because they will have water, will be able to develop their industries. The pastoralists, if they have a fair distribution of water over the full area of their properties, will be able to carry more stock and will probably be prepared to pay a small amount for it. I know what has been done at Eristoun, the other side of Laverton. The owners of the property there spent £80,000 on exploiting their sub-artesian water supplies which, unfortunately, are not found in all parts of the State. Water is the farmer's security. It is security not only for the people of this State but for the people of Australia and the British Empire. The more farms we have, the more population we can carry.

The biggest water scheme in the State was recently launched by the ex-Minister for Water Supply. That was to serve 20,000 square miles of country. Had that scheme matured at the time, big towns and new industries would already have begun to develop. Landholders would have had greater security and families would have had plenty of water for their gardens and other amenities. I am sorry the scheme was thrown out. It was not thrown out by this Chamber because the House was satisfied that a thorough investigation had been made. That investigation had been going on for many years. Every aspect was considered. A minority in another place, however, said, "We do not want it." They went further than that. After all the work that had been done, one man vetoed the whole scheme, I think for the purpose of saving two or three selfish persons who had plenty of water of their own. The scheme would have affected them financially, although the Commonwealth Government would probably

have paid half the cost. That sort of thing is very bad, and it is one reason why I advocate that members of another place should be elected on the adult franchise and not upon a restricted franchise.

Mr. Perkins: The Commonwealth committee would not agree to the scheme.

Hon. E. NULSEN: That is not right. The investigation was not made until after the scheme had been turned down by another place. It was turned down by one man because a few selfish people, who had water supplies of their own, refused to contribute to a scheme that would have helped everyone in an area of 20,000 square miles.

At Esperance, people have to rely upon the railway dam. That was all right when the population was small. Now it is increasing and Esperance is going ahead, it is difficult to keep pace with the requirements especially at holiday time. I hope the Minister will listen to me attentively and will agree to send an engineer to Esperance to find out what can be done to improve the water supply there. It would not cost the expenditure for one day on the war to provide a scheme that would last for approximately 20 years and would give satisfaction to the people concerned. I hope the Minister will not lose sight of this important question.

Gold has played an important part in the development of Western Australia. I suppose it led to a greater and more rapid increase in our population than any other industry could have done. It was a means of bringing many people to the State from all parts of Australia as well as from abroad. Good men came from England, Scotland and Ireland, and amongst them were some of the best people we ever had. They were venturesome and in the early days they left very little undone. This State is under an obligation to those men for what they did and our rapid increase of population is the result of their efforts. John Forrest's name will be immortal in this State if for no other reason than that he was responsible for the Goldfields Water Scheme. I refer to him as John Forrest, because he was known as John Forrest at that time. He was unquestionably one of our greatest statesmen and he had marvellous foresight.

I undersand Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, Forrest's great engineer, was fearful of the success of that scheme. Owing to the adverse criticism of the scheme by the Press and various people who knew nothing about it, unfortunately O'Connor came to the end of his life sooner than he should have done. I greatly admire John Forrest. His first expedition in 1868 was a wonderful achievement. He ventured into an unexplored country; he faced water shortages and danger of attack by natives, but nevertheless completed his job. In my opinion, the three greatest members of Parliament we have had in this State are John Forrest, Phil Collier and Sir James Mitchell.

Mr. Bovell: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. NULSEN: Those men did things. I could narrate many of the achievements of John Forrest, but members have lately been reading so much about him and his work that is unnecessary to do so now. If Phil Collier never did anything more for the Goldfields from now on than he has done, his work will be a monument to him. It was Phil Collier who authorised the expenditure of £350,000 on the Wiluna railway. He was Premier and Treasurer of the State at the time. It was he who saved Gwalia. Had it not been for him, Norseman would not be in existence to-day. His Government financed the Lake View and Star and other mines to the extent of hundreds of thousands of pounds, and all that money was repaid with interest. The amount of wealth created for the State by the foresight of those two men alone is beyond computation.

The good work accomplished by Sir James Mitchell in the group settlements is now bearing fruit. We owe much to his foresight and vigilance. The State would not be in its present position were it not for what these men did. They saw that something was required to be done and were always willing to take a risk. People who do not take a risk, whether in politics or in business, will not get very far in this world.

It is proposed to establish a Parliamentary Standing Committee to investigate public works costing more than £75,000. I entirely disagree with the proposal. We shall not have statesmen in Western Australia if that legislation is passed. We shall not have any more John Forrests, or Phil

Colliers or James Mitchells, because the members of the Government will be restricted to authorising works up to an expenditure of £75,000 only. The consideration of works exceeding that sum will be relegated to the standing committee, the members of which will probably know very little about them and very little about finance. Such a procedure will undoubtedly restrict the development of the State.

The Chief Secretary: Is not that a great slight on members of Parliament?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Not at all! I am a member myself and if it were it would be a slight on me. We should show initiative and do things, because in three years we shall have to face another election. If then the people are dissatisfied with what we have done, they will not re-elect us. Even so, each twelve months, on the Address-in-reply, we have to submit a programme of our actions. Is that not sufficient? I myself might be appointed to the proposed standing committee and might have to deal with some matter about which I know nothing at all. I might not have the necessary foresight and might not be prepared to take risks in the same way as such men as Forrest, Collier and Mitchell did.

Mr. Read: What about the last two Premiers?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Mr. Wise did a wonderful job. His capacity is such that in three years he will probably be again sitting on the opposite side of the House. The work he has already done will make it much easier for the present Government to carry on the business of the country. Our Goldfields have produced 51,159,179 fine ounces of gold, valued at £286,589,000, up to the 30th June, 1947. That is a huge sum of money, but we have not yet eclipsed the gold production of Victoria which produced 72,911,667 fine ounces up to the 30th June, 1947. We shall have to produce an additional 21,752,488 fine ounces of gold to equal that output. The production of gold has meant a lot for Australia. Had it not been for the goldmining industry, I venture to say that our population, instead of being 7,500,000 would probably be only 2,000,000. Gold has, therefore, played a big part in the development of Australia, and I hope consideration will be given to an increase in the price of gold.

We must get a higher price for our gold, as wages have increased by 20 per cent. in the industry since the war commenced, and costs of stores and materials have increased 42½ per cent. All commodities have gone up in price; but gold, since the end of hostilities, has only gone up 2.7 per cent. Members will therefore realise that unless the price of gold is increased, ore that has been assayed as worth 4 dwts. will not be treated, and so our ore reserves will be reduced. This means that hundreds of thousands of tons in various zones will not be treated. Milling costs since the commencement of the war have increased from 26s. 10d. per ton to 34s. 8d. Both mining and milling costs have increased. This spells not only loss to the industry but also to the community. If the price of gold is not increased, mines and businesses will be closed down much sooner than would otherwise be the case.

I know the State has no jurisdiction over the price of gold; but the Government probably can go to the Commonwealth Government—I do not say cap in hand—and request that it should abolish the gold tax of 17s. 7½ per ounce. The abolition of that tax would make a vast difference to the duration of our goldmining industry. In any case, the tax was an iniquitous imposition. No Government in this State ever thought of imposing such a tax. It is a tax on a commodity, and that is wrong. Gold should not be taxed, as that commodity has produced, directly and indirectly, vast wealth for Australia. It is said that the mining companies are maintaining their profits, but that is because they treat a higher grade of ore.

Before the war, ore containing 4 dwts. of gold could be treated profitably. The gold would be worth about 10s. per dwt. but owing to the rise in costs since the beginning of the war the companies will have to treat 5 dwt. ore in order to make a profit, and this will have the effect of reducing the reserves by probably a quarter. Therefore, instead of having a reserve of, say, £2,000,000 worth of ore, that will be reduced by £125,000, leaving £1,875,000. This matter should be looked into and I ask the Government to do all it possibly can do to obtain a remission of the gold tax. We do not tax wheat, or lead or any other primary commodity.

The Minister for Works: The Commonwealth Government, as you know, does tax wheat to the extent of 10s. a bushel.

Hon. E. NULSEN: There is no comparison between wheat and gold. According to a statement by the ex-Premier, the Goldfields were, before the war, carrying a population of 15,000 directly working in the industry. If one includes those engaged indirectly in the industry in the distribution of goods and services, that figure could be multiplied by seven. That is a conservative estimate. In 1940, according to the Chamber of Mines, 4,297,000 tons of ore were treated for 1,115,000 ounces worth £12,307,000 to the State for the twelve months. No other industry in the State can supersede the goldmining industry. But that is not all. Apart from the figures supplied by the Chamber of Mines, another 391,391 tons was produced, bringing the total value for 1940 up to £12,698,391.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. E. NULSEN: I propose to deal with the iron position, because iron is very important. It is too important for us to allow our ore to be carted away from this State without our obtaining any benefit from it other than 3d. a ton royalty. At present that ore is being taken around the north of Australia. The company concerned is not even using our ports. We have some very rich iron-ore deposits and I feel that any company working them should have to fabricate or treat the ore in this State instead of carting it away. I know that the ex-Minister for Mines made every endeavour in that direction: but unfortunately Brasserts had a lease of Koolan Island, and they dealt with it in such a way that the Broken Hill Pty. Company has got hold of it. The ex-Minister for Works did his best to have the iron fabricated here. When he could not achieve that, he displayed some initiative and courage by developing an iron works at Wundowie.

What worries me is this! Why is the present Government having an inquiry into the Wundowie iron works? There are many other industries and projects that could have been investigated, such as the South-West Electricity scheme. I am a little afraid that big business has said, "We want an investigation." They have probably

said, "We want the Yampi iron-ore and the only way to get it is to prove that the industry will not be successful from our point of view." I do not think they will worry about Wundowie but they are afraid that if that industry is expanded it will be extended to Bunbury and developed at that port and that there will be serious opposition to the B.H.P. and its subsidiary companies. What I fear is that the Government may give the B.H.P.—

The Chief Secretary: Did not that company furnish all the plans for Wundowie, or assist in that connection? I understood that the company had rendered every assistance in the establishment of that work.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do not doubt that, because I do not know. That might be quite correct. At the same time that is no indication of the company's feelings concerning the future. That may have been a sprat to catch a mackerel. What I am afraid is that the company might get a lease of Yampi and cart the ore from Western Australia and we will obtain no benefit. Iron is required by everybody. Everyone who walks in the street carries iron. If it were not for iron we would not have our goldmines or our farming implements. Because of the importance of iron I hope we will retain this ore and will not allow any more to be taken from the State.

The Minister for Works: I would not worry about it if I were you.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am worrying about posterity, not about myself, because it does not affect me. But we in this House represent the people. We have a big responsibility and should look to the future and not just the present.

Mr. Reynolds: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I think the Minister for Works came in at the wrong time.

Hon. E. NULSEN: On the 23rd September, 1936, I made a speech which had a bearing on this subject. My remarks will be found on page 762 of Vol. 1 of "Hansard" of that year. I want to read to members the request I made at that time. I moved:

That a return be laid on the Table of the House showing the value of the following imports into Western Australia for the year ended the 30th June, 1936:—1, Steel and Iron for building, railway permanent way material, and general manufacturing purposes. 2, Fencing

wire, wire-netting, nails, etc. 3, Steel wire ropes. 4, Steel or iron chain. 5, Black and galvanised iron, plain and corrugated. 6, Steel tubes and tubular products.

The reason I wanted the return to be tabled was to get an idea of the imports which at that time totalled about £5,000 a year in value. I maintained that we should be fabricating the ore for the purpose of producing iron in our own State; that has been the endeavour of this Party. I might deal with the matter more extensively on the Estimates. I feel strongly in regard to iron and hope that the Government will not give any further leases or allow any more iron-ore to be taken for 3d. a ton royalty and sent around the top of Australia so that we do not get any benefit from a very valuable asset. I have a letter here from the Salmon Gums branch of the Farmers' Union of Western Australia. It reads as follows:—

The members of the branch have instructed me to write on the question of the freight on petrol and oil. Petrol here, as you may know, is 11d. or 1s. more per gallon than in Perth, say, 40 per cent. extra, the difference apparently being due to transport costs.

Members of the branch feel that those who have gone furthest out should not be called on to bear the highest costs and that the time has arrived when there should be some equalisation of burden and that the first step should be the levying of a flat rate on the railways for goods of this description. You are in touch with those who control these things and before going further we should like to have your views on this question. (Sgd.) W. Brown, Secretary.

In regard to petrol and oil it does seem to be very unfair that the people who live furthest away from the centre where these things are produced should have to pay 1s. a gallon more for them.

Mr. Mann: You were Minister for Railways for six years. Why was the flat rate not imposed then?

Hon. E. NULSEN: The war occurred in between and I am bringing the matter up now.

Mr. Mann: You were Minister for six years. Why did you not carry out that policy then?

Hon. E. NULSEN: The hon. member has not heard what I was going to say.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. E. NULSEN: That is not the question. Petrol should be dealt with in the same way as Singer Sewing Machines. Those

machines can be bought in Brisbane or Sydney or Adelaide or Perth or Wiluna for the same price.

Hon. A. H. Panton: What has the member for Beverley to say about that?

Hon. E. NULSEN: The oil companies should work it out on a basis whereby the people in the city would pay a little bit more, and the extra would go towards paying the freight on petrol and oil for the back country.

Mr. Mann: You tried to increase freights on petrol by 50 per cent. yourself!

Hon. E. NULSEN: That is a deliberate lie!

Mr. Mann: Your Cabinet did.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Cabinet never approved of it. It was suggested by an officer of the Railway Department—a highly honoured man. He said that freight should be raised by 12½ per cent., and the member for Nedlands brought the matter forward here. But we did not support it.

Mr. Mann: It was your own Goldfields members who started it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The hon. member is on the wrong track. I never approved of an increase in rail freights. I have always advocated a flat rate. I do not see why anyone, no matter where he lives, should pay more freight than a person who lives within 100 miles of Perth.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The member for Beverley is always reckless.

Hon. E. NULSEN: He is not reckless, but he does not use his mental faculty!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Kanowna must address the Chair.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The member for Beverley is wrong.

Mr. Mann: Would you like me to apologise?

Hon. E. NULSEN: No, apologies are not worth anything. They have never been worth very much. The man on the land produces the real wealth, and I think the charge for petrol and oil throughout Australia should be on the basis of a flat rate. That would be fair, and would help to develop the country.

Mr. Mann: A flat rate for water there would be a tremendous help, too.



Hon. E. NULSEN: I already have a Bill on the notice paper for the hon. member's Government to consider, dealing with the question of a flat rate for water, and he will be able to discuss it fully. I am glad I have his support. I thoroughly agree with this letter and I hope that something can be done. It is not fair that people who live in the back country should be penalised for living there. We could not do without them. They produce the real wealth, and live under hard, adverse conditions. What they produce the people in the metropolitan area merely fabricate. Without primary production there would be no fabrication.

The member for Beverley mentioned a flat railrage rate, and that is something which could be worked out. The people in the city area make no contributions to the railways, but they should, through taxation, help the people in the interior of the State. I hope the Ministers will give consideration to this matter. It might be out of their jurisdiction, but perhaps it could be discussed with the oil companies so that a flat rate, similar to what applies to sewing machines and to sugar, which is the same price in all the capital cities of Australia, could be arrived at. That would help to develop this huge State, because we are in area one-third of Australia, being some 975,920 square miles, or 624,589,000 odd acres. The member for Beverley can now understand the area over which the petrol has to be carted.

Mr. Mann: If the outports were used the freights would be reduced.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I agree with that. Every port should have its natural traffic, and there would then be a certain reduction in freight. But, on the other hand, some people have the courage to go right out into the backblocks and they should not be penalised for doing so. Rather, they should be encouraged. I will not deal with hospitals, T.B., health, railways, or education.

The Minister for Lands: You promised to.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I intend to deal with them pretty fully on the Estimates; especially with the railways. I have here a letter dealing with the National Security (Economic Organisation) Regulations. It is in connection with the proposed sale of some land at Esperance. I have no complaint against the principle of these regulations, but against their administration.

Many of our laws are quite good in principle, but their administration is bad. I will read the letter. It is from Mr. F. A. Hunter, delegate of the Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia, and is as follows:—

Representations on your behalf having been made to me by the Hon. E. Nulsen, Esq., M.L.A., and the Esperance Road Board, I have again had the matter reconsidered by departmental valuers and again reviewed by the Treasurer's Advisory Panel.

A departmental valuer visited Esperance recently and consideration was given respecting the subject land.

My advisers are still unanimous that the value of the lots concerned does not exceed £20 (twenty pounds) each lot and that the stated expenditure for levelling is not justified.

It is considered desirable that the lots should be offered in the virgin state and the question of levelling left to the discretion of the purchasers.

In view of the above, I regret approval cannot be given to a sale in excess of £20 for each lot.

The people concerned are Messrs. L. J. and C. V. Anderson. They had a certain area of land there which they wanted to level because the people who were buying wanted that done before they made their purchase. But, in accordance with the National Security Regulations dealing with the sale of land, it had to be submitted to the delegate of the Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia and, seemingly, he has a panel which investigates these requests. Esperance is fairly hilly, and when I was chairman of the Dundas Road Board I advocated that the land should be levelled before being sold. I take it these regulations are only meant to stop exploitation, and that a reasonable price is to be allowed. When the upset price is £20, surely that should allow the land to be levelled, especially now that the road board says it wants it levelled as it will facilitate its work in making roads and putting in other conveniences for those who buy the blocks.

Here we have a very fine piece of legislation, but one that is badly administered. These officers do not seem to use any discretionary power to allow the land to be levelled before being sold, and of course the additional cost of the levelling-off. I know of individual cases there where blocks have been levelled at a cost of anything from £30 to £70. The men I have mentioned are willing to take them en masse and level them at a cost of about £20 each. My com-

plaint is not about the regulations—because I think them commendable and necessary to prevent exploitation—but it seems ridiculous that one cannot buy a block of land near Perth for less than £200 or £300, and in some cases £1,000, when that inflated value is due entirely to the unearned increment created by the community.

It is the administration of the regulations that is at fault. I ask the Government to get in touch with the appropriate authorities and see whether there cannot be brought about more elasticity in matters relating to the sale of land, provided that no-one is exploited. The Andersons are fine men, and their intentions were of the best. I am satisfied that in their hands the cost of levelling the land would have been much cheaper than in the hands of individual owners. I am pleased indeed that the Prime Minister has had sufficient courage to bring in the nationalisation of banking.

Mr. Mann: He has not got it yet.

Hon. E. NULSEN: It has been suggested that—

Mr. Leslie: That is the end of the Chifley Government.

Hon. E. NULSEN: It has been said that any progressive Government—

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: This is a non-controversial issue!

Hon. E. NULSEN: It seems to me that our banking system has been operated honestly by the banking fraternity, but I am up against the system itself. There would have been no need for the depression had we had a proper distribution of the real wealth that was being produced.

Mr. Mann: What about the housing position?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You know more about pigs than finance.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I might not be an expert on finance, but I was quite successful in my own business and I think—

Mr. Leslie: It was not nationalised!

Hon. E. NULSEN: It was very much nationalised.

Mr. Leslie: You had the running of it, for your own benefit.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I did not allow other people to interfere in it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The people who control the purse-strings control this country. I recall Anstey having said, "So long as I have the banks with me, I need not have any money to develop this country."

Mr. Mann: Who said that?

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The member for Beverley would not know.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I mentioned that because I know that those on the other side of the House are very traditional and orthodox, and do not like anything new.

Mr. Bovell: What happened in Italy and Germany under the dictators?

Hon. E. NULSEN: We are not creating a dictatorship, but a control by the people themselves.

Mr. Bovell: What happened to Italy and Germany under Government financial dictatorship?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It must be good bait that you are using.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Mr. Chifley has said that the shareholders, depositors and borrowers will not be injured in any way, and that, where necessary, they will be compensated.

The Minister for Works: We have read all that in the newspapers.

Hon. E. NULSEN: And that they will have no worse conditions, and will probably be better off than they are at present. The staffs of the banks—

Mr. Bovell: We are concerned about the citizens of Australia, not the staffs of the banks.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am concerned about the citizens of Australia when we find that our interest bill is about £80,000,000 per year in Australia.

Mr. Bovell: You cannot lay that at the door of the private banks.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do, to a great extent, as they control the means of distribution.

Mr. Bovell: Who controls the financial structure of the country?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do not want to prolong this debate. I am sorry there has been so much opposition to what I have said. Whenever it affects the big financial interests, there is always a cry from the other side, where members represent such interests. I do not blame them, and were I on that side I would probably do the same myself.

The Minister for Lands: You are a big financial man. You are one of them yourself.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: About one-quarter as big as the Minister for Lands.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do not think that, financially, I would be one-quarter as big. I will deal now with the Goldfields racecourses, including that at Norseman. The clubs are greatly concerned over the legislation passed by this House whereby the fraction was reduced to 6d. instead of 1s. by the amendment to the Totalisator Duty Act last year, as it has affected them greatly. They now suggest that the Government should bring in a system similar to that obtaining in South Australia. I hope the Chief Secretary will bring down legislation to that end, so that in the smaller districts, where the tote returns perhaps £2,000 or less, it will be taxed at about 2 per cent., whereas on £5,000 or more it would be taxed at 6 per cent. or  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. That would enable the smaller clubs to carry on.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It would not help the punters very much.

Hon. E. NULSEN: It makes no difference to them, because the  $13\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. is taken out of the totalisator investment. So much goes to the Government and so much to the clubs. The trouble has been that the  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. has been going to the Government all the time, and not on a graduated scale. I am asking for a graduated scale, so that on a totalisator return of £2,000 or less the tax will be on a lower scale. If the Chief Secretary will bring down legislation such as I have suggested, that will be of great help to the Goldfields people.

Children in back-country schools, such as that at Salmon Gums, have been penalised. The ex-Minister for Education did everything possible to assist them but, unfortunately, in some of my areas he was not able to meet all requirements. The Dundas

Road Board has asked that the State Government be urged to institute a system of centralised primary schools in country districts and provide and maintain hostels to accommodate pupils, and that the away-from-home allowance granted to children attending secondary schools be substantially increased. Beyond saying that I am thoroughly in accord with that, I shall not deal further with the matter tonight. If an opportunity occurs before the Estimates are presented, I hope the Minister for Education will give consideration to the plight of those districts. I feel that the present Government will not have an opportunity to gauge the amount of work that was done by the previous Government.

Mr. Hoar: Or will not admit it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I consider that the member for Gascoyne, when Premier, put up a programme second to none. With regard to hospitals, I suggested something which the Under Secretary said there was no hope of getting approved, and to his surprise, though not to mine, it was approved. I say I was not surprised because I knew that the Premier and the Cabinet would do what was right, irrespective of the cost, so long as the expenditure was necessary and justified. We are living in a world, not of thrift but of controlled extravagance. Before very long, I believe we shall be in a position to produce all the real wealth that is required, and all that will remain then will be to determine the method of distribution and to amend our monetary system. Consequently, I can see some hope for the future.

Mr. Marshall: I cannot.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The member for Murchison looks as if he cannot.

Hon. E. NULSEN: If the Government is not prepared to take a reasonable risk, we shall find ourselves in the position of having all security but no progress.

MR. NIMMO (Mt. Hawthorn) [8.2]: I take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, of congratulating you on the position to which you have been appointed and I also congratulate the member for York on his attainment of the Chairmanship of Committees. I wish to endorse the remarks that have been made about the Premier and his Ministers. One point with which I wish to deal tonight is the bottleneck of the City of Perth, and when I use that term, I mean the Perth

railway station. We start from Rotten Row—I should not like to call them goods sheds—and what do we see? Dilapidated buildings, rusty sheds, junk! Then we come to the railway station. This is a matter that should receive the consideration, not only of members on this side of the House but also of every other member of the Chamber. In years to come I should not like to have it said by one of my children or their children, "If our fathers had shown some foresight, they would have moved the Perth railway station from its present position." The city of Perth and suburbs should carry a population of at least 1,000,000 people. If we are prepared to continue as we are going and leave the Perth railway station where it is, when the day comes that it has to be moved the cost will be much greater than if the work were undertaken now.

The site of the Perth railway station should be the centre of the city—the civic centre. While the opportunity exists, the width of Wellington-street should be doubled. The City of Perth will not grow southwards, and we do not want a long strung-out city running east and west, and so there is only one direction in which we should look for expansion and that is northwards; but the city cannot expand in that direction while the railway station remains in its present position. The main method of public transport in most of the large cities of the world is the tramcar, but elsewhere the trams run on round wheels, not square ones.

Hon. A. H. Pantou: You must have ridden along Woolwich-street.

Mr. NIMMO: The tramcars of other cities are comfortable and well-sprung with seats well-padded, not hard seats such as we have, on which it is not necessary to travel very far if one wishes to shine one's pants or the back of one's coat. From most small cities, the trams are vanishing rapidly. The chief disadvantage of trolley-buses is their lack of mobility; they are route-bound. I understand that the intention is to expand the trolley-bus system, but we should at the same time supplement the routes so served with other buses. As the city grows, we shall have to transport more people to their work and, for this, other buses will be required. If we could only put buses on our trolley-bus routes during peak periods in order to help to handle the traffic, it would solve the problem for the travelling public.

I am not at all satisfied with the trams serving the city because Perth was not built for trams, which are really the cause of all the street congestion, including the problem of parked motors. We have several one-way streets, but I believe the time has arrived when we should make up our minds to build decent trams, similar to the P.C.C. trams of America, which run almost noiselessly and are comfortable and speedy. Still, I am afraid we shall never be able to attain that ideal with the trams we have at present.

As for the tramlines, I had occasion recently with some business men to measure the depth of a hole in the road alongside one of the rails and the depth was nine inches. Why there have not been more serious accidents in the city I do not know; I think God must be on the side of the authorities. In most countries tram rails are laid on a bed of concrete; sleepers are not required. I believe that has proved a success. If we continue our present system of laying tracks, we shall never get better results than we have today. One can see that where the lines have just been repaired they are starting to crack again. The reason is that they are not laid as they should be and the movement and swaying of the trams soon shift the ground.

I desire to say a word or two on some of the tram routes in my district and the district of the member for Leederville. The No. 22 tram passes through both his district and mine. The people in both districts complain that too many small trams are used on that route. One evening, from 5.2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., I counted five small and one large No. 22 tram. I consider the people on that route are not getting a fair deal. The No. 13 tram runs through the district of the member for Leederville. I refer to this tram, as he might be able to help me.

Hon. A. H. Pantou: You pinched all my transport, anyhow!

Mr. NIMMO: The No. 13 tram also passes through portion of my district. Small trams are used on this route unless there is a football match, when we get the big ones. The trolley-bus service to Wembley is rather good at times; but one of the problems there is the number of school children who also use the bus when business people are going to work. I hope that both the Minister for Education and the Minister for Transport will see fit to bring about an alteration in the school hours. We have 12

trips per day to the City Beach commencing at 6.35 a.m. from Perth and continuing until 11.20 p.m., but in the evening one bus leaves at 6.15 p.m. while the next bus does not leave until 9.45 p.m. The last bus leaves at 11.20 p.m. I particularly mention this because in the last nine months, in the City Beach-Floreat Park-Wembley districts 47 homes have been built.

Wembley is fairly thickly populated and the people are well housed, but later on I will draw a comparison. The City Beach travellers pay a fare of 1s. 6d. return, and the distance is approximately seven miles; the Perth City Council pays the Government a subsidy of £600. North Beach, approximately 11 miles from Perth, is catered for by privately-owned buses, the fare being 25s. per month. The Scarborough Bus Co. charges less than the fare paid by the City Beach people. Permits have been issued for 77 homes in the Scarborough district in the past twelve months. That district has one of the finest bus services in Australia. What I want to sheet home is that if the City Beach people had a better and cheaper bus service, I might have been able to say tonight that 77 homes had been built in that district also. In the Mt. Hawthorn district only 11 homes have been built during the past year. Mt. Hawthorn is well populated.

On the subject of market gardens and vegetables, I point out that during the war the area needed to feed Australia, according to Commonwealth figures, was 149,670 acres. The total acreage in Australia was 246,000. Those figures make one wonder whether the number of vegetable gardens should not be reduced, but after having given the matter consideration I would not recommend that course. In Western Australia we have about 9,000 or 10,000 acres under vegetables. I would like to see more vegetables sent to the country. Most country people are grumbling because they do not get fresh vegetables. It occurred to me that we might devise some way of bringing the vegetables to the city, packing them at once and then despatching them immediately to the country on fast trains. In that way we might also benefit the vegetable growers.

Much has been said on the subject of immigration. We must have immigration if, as I suggested, Perth is to have a population of 1,000,000. However, I would like to see our own flesh and blood established in homes before we bring in immigrants. The immi-

grants we want are the children of our own stock. Various estimates have been made of the arrears of housing accommodation up to the end of the war period, and these vary from 6,000 to 8,000. The average number of homes built per year in the three years preceding the war was 1,600. During the years 1942 to 1945, as members are aware, home building ceased. On normal requirements it is necessary to estimate arrears of 4,800 homes over the war period. Requirements after the war can reasonably be estimated at 2,000 homes per year, making a total of nearly 7,000, less a few that have since been erected. As a new member, I do not propose to take up any further time of the House.

**MR. TRIAT** (Mt. Magnet) [8.21]: I join with other members in congratulating you, Sir, on attaining your present position, and I feel sure that during your term of office you will serve this House as all your predecessors have done, with dignity to yourself and satisfaction to members. I cannot congratulate the present Government on attaining the Treasury Bench; but since a new Government has taken office, I congratulate those members who have received full Ministerial honours. The House consists of a certain number of private members and of men who will administer the affairs of State as Ministers. I trust that during their term they will do their best for the majority of the people. If they do so, they will receive support from this side of the House. At all events, they will receive mine.

What has struck me more than anything else has been the number of new members who have spoken without any signs of nervousness. They have stood up and without any hesitation have gone off into quite complicated details regarding political matters. That is unusual. Each man has a different method and tone and manner. One struck me as being like the barber's cat—all wind and water. The others struck me as being sound and competent and as appearing to know what they were talking about. The speech that struck me most forcibly was that of the member for Irwin-Moore. It was exceptionally well thought-out and prepared, and well delivered. It must have been, because it received a write-up in the leading article in "The West Australian." Very few members get a leading article written about them in that paper, especially when making

a maiden speech. I give him due credit; it was ably delivered.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Hear, hear!

Mr. TRIAT: It received attention and as much applause as has been received by any other speaker this session. The only thing that worried me was that an attack was made by everybody on the propaganda that was indulged in during the election and in that respect the member for Irwin-Moore played his part. He was prepared to make a speech regarding the Opposition tactics and attitude. The tactics adopted by the Opposition would not have been used if there had not been something to warrant them; something does not come from nothing. Evidently the propaganda expounded by the Liberal Party or by the two parties opposite was so violent that people on this side of the House took exception to it. I do not feel like quoting a lot but I will refer to one piece of propaganda that was used. Because the member for Irwin-Moore was so sure everything submitted by members on this side was laughable I would like to give him an opportunity to laugh this off. On Thursday, the 6th March, 1947, there was an advertisement dealing with wages and conditions in Western Australia. In that advertisement the Liberal Party said, "The Liberal Party will fight for higher wages and reduced costs." This side of the House has always fought for those things. If members opposite will do what they have said, I shall feel like joining their ranks. It is an excellent idea and I hope they will succeed. But the part that hurt me was the inaccuracy and the sting in the latter part of the advertisement, which read:

One of the few men with a REAL rise in wages is Labour's Mr. McKell whose earnings have been increased by £10,000 per annum (1,000 shillings per week) TAX FREE, while the Basic Wage is STILL taxed.

That is true to a certain extent; but Mr. McKell's income was not increased by £10,000 as a result of his being appointed to the position of Governor-General. He was earning a salary as Premier of New South Wales when he was given that appointment and his salary could not have been increased by the amount stated. This denotes that the statement made in the advertisement was inaccurate enough to be said to be untruthful. The man who wrote it must have known what he was writing. He must have known that Mr. McKell was not out of work when he got the Governor-Generalship. It

must have been known that he was enjoying the fruits of his position as Premier of New South Wales and that he was drawing £2,500 a year. Nevertheless the public was misled by the statement that Mr. McKell had received a rise of £10,000 a year, free of tax. The member for Irwin-Moore may be able to tell me how that propaganda got in the Press. Was it a mistake or was it intentional, or was it rank stupidity? The hon. member claims that his Party is not stupid. I will quote his words later to show how accurate he considers his Party is. It would have been different if he had stood up and told the public that he intended to challenge the Labour Government for making the former Leader of the National Party Lieut.-Governor of this State in 1933 and giving him £2,500 a year, free of tax!

Mr. Graham: He was chucked out by his own electors!

Mr. TRIAT: It would have been different if he had challenged the Labour Government with making that appointment and enabling that gentleman to ride free of charge on our railways. But not a word was said about that. That is actually true. I do not know what Sir James Mitchell was receiving when he got his job. But he was not receiving £2,000 a year. Members opposite did not point out that the taxpayers had paid him £2,500 a year free of tax since he was appointed. Not a word was said about that!

Mr. Graham: He was a Conservative; Mr. McKell is Labour.

Mr. TRIAT: That is the position. If the Governor-Generalship had been given to Mr. Casey, members opposite would have said that the Chifley Government had realised the wonderful work done by him. It would have been the same if any other man of their Party had been chosen. But they would have to go a long way to get a man like Mr. McKell! Nevertheless he did not receive a rise of £10,000 as was stated.

The Minister for Lands: Only a miserable £7,500!

Mr. TRIAT: That is all. A miserable £7,500. Why not tell the people that?

The Minister for Lands: I did not tell them anything.

Mr. TRIAT: The Minister was a member of the Party; why not tell them the truth? When a man can come into the House with the ability and courage and lack

of nervousness such as were displayed by my friend opposite and can make a speech like he made, why does he not stick to the truth? Why make a statement like this? He said:

It is said that the last election was won by misrepresentation in advertisement. That coming from the Labour opposition would be amusing if it were not so ridiculous.

That is a statement made by this gentleman, who came with a speech well thought-out and who said that the excuses offered by the Labour Opposition for its defeat were laughable. There is no excuse for that kind of thing and when the hon. member is speaking again I hope he will inform us how his Party made such a terrific mistake.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He does not belong to that Party.

Mr. TRIAT: Of course he does! He is sitting on that side. I am afraid the ex-Speaker has made a mistake. In continuing his speech, the member for Irwin-Moore said that there was a Labour Government in charge of the Treasury Bench 20 out of 23 years but the election promises it made were not fulfilled.

The Minister for Lands: There was a lot of truth in that, too.

Mr. TRIAT: What were these promises that were not fulfilled? Why not tell us?

The Minister for Lands: I suppose he could.

Mr. TRIAT: The Minister knows he could not.

The Minister for Lands: You lived on promises.

Mr. TRIAT: He was prompted. That is why he made the statement. If he knew what promises had not been fulfilled, surely he would have told us, instead of making a sweeping statement about promises that were made and not fulfilled.

Mr. Marshall: Extracts from the capitalist Press!

Mr. Styants: Figments of the imagination!

Mr. TRIAT: I am not going to enumerate the promises. Some promises that were not fulfilled were made by the Party that the hon. member represents—the Country and Democratic League which lives on the land. He said—

As the newly elected member for Irwin-Moore it is only reasonable, and I believe right, that

I should confine my remarks mainly to matters relating to agriculture. Practically the whole of the electors of Irwin-Moore are to some extent dependent on the products of the soil.

That identifies the hon. member as a farmer, or a producer from the soil. If that is so, the Government has done something for the people he represents. Some of the things that the Government has done are as follows:—The Agricultural Vote, which affects his work, was £66,000 in 1933 and in 1946 it was £215,000. That affects the people of Irwin-Moore because they live on the products of the soil. The whole of that extra money goes to the advantage of the people who live on the soil—and those living within the boundaries of the Irwin-Moore electorate come in for their share.

Certain building was done at the Muresk College, and that affects these people. If they desire their sons to become experts in agriculture, they can send them there. A new college was built at Denmark. All this was done by a Government which did not carry out any promises in 20 years! These colleges do not affect me or my people to any extent. The Labour Government, since 1934, has written off over £1,750,000 of group settlement money. That has been wiped off the burden of men on the land. Labour did not carry out any promises but £1,750,000 of taxpayers' money was wiped off the liability of those settlers.

I presume that the member for Irwin-Moore does not represent only the man who grows wheat, but also the man who produces sheep and wool. I assume that he is not so parochial as to say that only within the confines of the Irwin-Moore electorate should people be attended to. He would go further and say that all pastoralists and agriculturists should get some benefits from Parliament in times of stress. But he failed to tell the House that the Labour Government assisted the pastoralists to a large extent and, if the figures are not lying, the pastoral rents relief amounted to £600,000 in the case of people on the land who could not meet their liabilities. Over half a million pounds of taxpayers' money went to assist them. But the Labour Government did nothing to assist them in 20 out of 23 years!

Mr. Mann: How much money did the Agricultural Bank wipe off?

Mr. TRIAT: Over £1,750,000 in the case of the group settlers, at any rate. The

Labour Government did not spend the money on the people it represented, but on those represented by men of the type of the member for Irwin-Moore. So, when the hon. member makes a speech to this House and tells us that the Labour Government did nothing, he should give it credit for some of the things it did. It is not too much to ask a new man, coming into the House, to try, for a start, to stick as closely as possible to the facts. When he gets more initiated he can clothe his facts with a certain number of false statements that can be glossed over quite easily. But he cannot do that as a new member, and get away with it. He must stick to the facts. I am not belittling the hon. gentleman; I believe he will make an excellent member.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Perhaps he did not know these things.

Mr. TRIAT: He claims to be a man well versed in wheat, and he is a director of Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. A little further on in his speech he said that the cost of producing wheat in Western Australia was not under 6s. per bushel. That figure astounds me. If we cannot grow wheat at less than 6s. a bushel, then do not ask men to go on the land as wheat farmers. We will not be doing the returned soldiers any good if we do that, because we will not get a competitive oversea price, in a short space of time, that will be profitable with wheat costing 6s. a bushel to produce.

Mr. Leslie: He is talking of today's prices.

Mr. Fox: The cookies must be broke now.

Mr. TRIAT: There is not a cocky dies today without leaving an estate of £15,000 to £20,000!

Mr. Leslie: Cookies do not die; they just fade away.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TRIAT: The last thing I am going to deal with in that speech is the question of the terrific imposition by the Commonwealth Government on the Australian farmers, in exporting wheat to New Zealand. That had me tricked for a long time, too. When I heard it first I thought it was an imposition by the Commonwealth Government to ask a man in Australia to grow wheat and send it oversea to another country at something less than the cost of production. It seemed wrong to me, so I made inquiries, and I presume the member for Irwin-Moore did too. I did not know much about the matter be-

cause I am not a cocky. I discovered that the wheat was sent to New Zealand at a certain cost to the New Zealand people, but the Australian farmer was reimbursed from the revenue of the Australian Government.

Mr. Ackland: And if Mr. Solomon had not opened his mouth so wide, the farmers would not have been paid it.

Mr. TRIAT: The farmers received it.

Mr. Ackland: It was an accident.

Mr. TRIAT: Why did not the hon. member tell us that when he was speaking, and not lead us to believe that the poor old farmer stood the strain.

Mr. Perkins: Do you think the wheat agreement with New Zealand was a good deal or a bad one for the Australian people?

Mr. TRIAT: I do not say. I am not prepared to pass an opinion on it, but I presume the people of New Zealand were getting the wheat at a certain figure, and the Australian farmer was getting world parity for it. The only people to squeal were the taxpayers of the Commonwealth, and evidently they did not kick up much fuss. I admired the hon. member's speech, and I hope that next time he will speak as well but will stick closer to the facts.

My next subject deals with coal. Here I join with the member for Murchison in regretting that the Minister for Mines is not a member of this Chamber. I believe the portfolio is an important one. It certainly is to me, because I represent a goldmining electorate, plus a certain amount of pastoral work. I would like the Minister to be here to debate mining questions. He is not present, so I presume we will have to do it through his understudy, who may be a very capable gentleman.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Who is he?

Mr. TRIAT: He is the Chief Secretary. I know he has interests in goldmining. But mining knowledge is not like good looks or brains; it is not hereditary—it has to be learned. Because a person happens to be born into a family that came from the Goldfields does not mean to say that he knows much about goldmining. I intend to deal with the gasification of coal, but before doing so, I would like to read a telegram, received by the Leader of the Opposition and dated the 11th August. It is as follows:—

Have reached coal seam. Thanks for your confidence and assistance; without that it would have taken months more. (Signed) Higgins.



That relates to the Eradu coalfield. They have just taken samples from there as a result of assistance given by the ex-Premier.

**Mr. Fox:** Another legacy for the Government.

**Mr. TRIAT:** And a very happy one, too. Coalmining, in my opinion, is a greater factor than goldmining in any country. Much and all as I favour gold, I believe coal to be of greater importance because it represents power, heat, industry and everything that we must have before we can produce anything. For many years now Western Australian coal has been decried by the people associated with it, and the thesis of one gentleman, who received his degree on coal, was on the poor quality of Collie coal. That is what he got his degree for in Western Australia. That was a common idea, but fortunately it has been exploded to a great extent, and we find that Collie coal is much better than was anticipated. Used properly, with the proper appliances, it will be an extremely valuable factor in the future of Western Australia.

**Mr. Styants:** If it is mined properly.

**Mr. TRIAT:** Of course it must be mined properly. Once it is found that coal is of value, men can be got to mine it properly. Until recently, Collie coal was considered as being just coal and nothing more. The Willcock Government agreed some years ago to assist a man named Fox, who came here to endeavour to gasify Collie coal. The Government advanced him a sum of money to make experiments and carry out tests. I attended every test made by Fox at Midland Junction. To me, the gas produced by his process seemed wonderful but, not being an expert, I could only say that to me it looked all right. Mr. Fox has produced gas of two qualities in Western Australia, an industrial gas suitable for all industrial work, but not suitable for use in cooking-stoves—it is of a lower B.T.U. than household gas and contains a certain amount of tar—and a high-grade domestic gas, suitable for use in domestic cooking and heating appliances. Both gases have been tested by experts and I have never yet heard any expert express the view that the gas was of low quality. On the 26th of July there appeared in "The West Australian" an article headed "Collie Coal Gas. Promising Results Obtained." The article was written as a result of a test carried out by Mr. H. V. Marr, managing

director of Plaimar Ltd. It read as follows:—

Mr. F. C. Fox, with financial assistance from the State Government, has completed his experiments into the gasification of Collie coal. As steps are being taken to commercialise the process, Mr. H. R. Marr, managing director of Plaimar Ltd., was asked to carry out tests on the calorific value of the gas produced by this means; the quantity of gas per ton of coal it was possible to obtain and whether continuous production could be secured without deterioration of the gas.

Exhaustive tests were made under the supervision of the company's chemists to obtain the information required, and after a period of continuous running for approximately nine hours a day for two days, some interesting results were secured. Mr. Marr said yesterday that Griffin coal was used throughout the tests, the results obtained being very encouraging. He had no reason to believe that the yields would not be obtained in commercial practice from apparatus of large dimensions. The plant designed by Mr. Fox might be considered a water gas plant in which the whole of the material for the production of gas was consumed. The process was distinct from the usual method of retorting coal and producing coke, etc., as by-products.

Mr. Marr said that the cubic footage of gas obtained per ton of coal, however, was higher than that which would be obtained by retorting the coal for gas and coke. Calorific value was lower. Undoubtedly the Fox process would produce, by total gasification of Collie coal, satisfactory volumes of gas (although of a lower calorific value than by retorting coal) to enable it to be a payable proposition commercially. The principal factor which had to be considered was the calorific value of such gas. Perth town gas had a calorific value of 450 to 480 British Thermal Units a cubic foot. The gas produced from the Fox plant had a calorific value of 320 to 340 B.T.U.s.

This could be enriched by the use of fuel gas as was frequently done for the production of domestic gas, or alternatively the gas could be used without enrichment, as was done in some parts of the world. In Dublin, for example, a private company supplied the needs of 119,836 domestic and 908 industrial users with a gas which had a declared value of 360 B.T.U. a cubic foot. This was four times the number of consumers using the Perth City Council's supply.

Mr. Marr went on to say that experimentation in the use of gas from the Fox plant for heating purposes demonstrated that this gas would burn satisfactorily in normal domestic gas stoves, gas rings and bath-heaters. Very satisfactory heating results were obtained in heating apparatus of that nature.

During the tests made by his company, the checking of the coal consumed, the volume of gas produced, its calorific value measured by a calorimeter and by chemical analysis were carefully carried out. The undermentioned results

could be considered a reliable guide to those who could be obtained in commercial practice. Period of run, 17½ hours; gas produced, 67,300 cubic feet; yield of gas per ton of coal calculated on a moisture basis of 15 per cent., 29,030 cubic feet; on a dry basis, 34,160 cubic feet. The average analysis taken over a period of 17½ hours gassing was: Hydrogen, 39.8 per cent; methane, 4 per cent.; carbon monoxide, 37.7 per cent.; oxygen, 0.4 per cent.; unsaturated hydrocarbons, nil; carbon dioxide, 0.6 per cent.; nitrogen, 17.5 per cent.

The statement concludes as follows:—

The capacity of the plant on which the experiments were conducted was no smaller than that which would be required for a normal country town in Western Australia, Mr. Marr explained. In considering the adaptation of the Fox process to the production of domestic gas, the whole question of enrichment or not was the matter which would require attention. There was every prospect that an efficiently designed Fox plant would produce gas of approximately 350 to 360 B.T.U. a cubic foot. As the gas produced during the tests in domestic equipment gave effective results even at the low calorific values obtained, it became a matter for decision by the respective communities as to whether they were prepared to use for domestic purposes Collie gas made under the Fox processes. If the process evolved proved satisfactory, Mr. Fox would have made a valuable contribution to the economies of the State.

That is a report by a competent engineer. Though I do not know him personally—I believe that he is competent, and that he has a staff of competent chemists—I would take that article to mean that in his opinion the plant gave a satisfactory set-up for the use of our native Collie coal—Griffin coal. I am given to understand that there is something in the vicinity of 200,000,000,000 tons of coal in Collie, more than the whole quantity in western Europe, and that is only the coal so far discovered. Therefore, the future of Western Australia is assured, as far as coal is concerned. But what are we doing? We are not utilising our coal. We import coal from Newcastle by ship, when ships are scarce, and put it through the old-fashioned process of retorting. In spite of the high calorific value of this Newcastle coal, we find that the Perth City Council has to use three-quarters of a million gallons of oil each year to boost it. That is Newcastle coal, the best obtainable in Australia. It takes three-quarters of a million gallons of oil each year.

Why should our natural heritage be left in abeyance simply because one man says we must import coal from Newcastle, Cardiff, or somewhere else, while shipping is so

scarce? I would have thought the function of any officer of any city council in Western Australia would be to forward the use of the native products of his own State. One member said that the City of Perth would grow until it contained a million people. It will only reach such dimensions if the people living in Perth utilise the products of this State to forward its interests. It will never grow to a million people if we depend upon outside production. We have to build up from within the State, not outside. So we have the Perth gas works run by a gentleman by the name of Edmondson who may be an extremely capable engineer; I do not know; I have never met him.

The Minister for Lands: He is a good engineer.

Mr. TRIAT: Where did he get his qualifications?

The Minister for Lands: At the School of Mines, Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Marshall: How do you know?

The Minister for Lands: I went to school with him.

Mr. TRIAT: Is the Minister guessing? Did he get his gas experience there?

The Minister for Lands: I suppose he did.

Mr. TRIAT: Again the Minister is guessing.

The Minister for Works: Irrespective of where he got his experience, his knowledge cannot be doubted.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Is the Minister for Works guessing?

The Minister for Works: The Leader of the Opposition knows that is so.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. TRIAT: When Mr. Fox came to Western Australia some three or four years ago, I accompanied him to the then Premier (Hon. J. C. Willecock) to find out whether the Government would give him some assistance. Mr. Willecock told me and Mr. Fox that the information he had received from his technical officers was that Collie coal could not be gasified and that, if it could be gasified, it would contain too much CO, to burn. That was the common knowledge possessed by the Government at the time. Mr. Willecock did not have personal knowledge of the matter but received his information from his technical officers. His technical officers were probably men in

responsible positions such as the Government Analyst and the Coal Technologist; they would have been the ones to advise him.

I noticed in "The West Australian" of the 13th inst., a reply to the statement made by Mr. Marr, of Plaimar Ltd. headed "Collie Coal Process tested 25 years ago." Mr. Edmondson is a gentleman who knew all about it and says it was tested 25 years ago, but he "laid doggo" all that time and did not give the information to anybody. No-one was told that Collie coal could be gasified, because the information given to the Government by its technical officers was that it could not be gasified. Let me read portions of the reply—

Commenting on the test carried out by Mr. Marr, of Plaimar, Ltd., on the gasification of Collie coal by the Fox process, the general manager of the City of Perth Electricity and Gas Department (Mr. E. C. Edmondson) said yesterday that a most popular misconception was that the process tested was new and that this was the first time that Collie coal has been gasified. His department had gasified Collie coal over 25 years ago.

So during the whole of the intervening period, no effort has been made by the Perth City Council or its engineers to exploit the use of Collie coal and ascertain whether gas of sufficient quality could be obtained from it for domestic use. Yet Perth is the chief city of the State and its officers should be the first people to advance the interests of everything pertaining to Western Australia, but they have not done so or attempted to do so.

Mr. May: And during part of that period, Collie miners were working only half time.

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. The letter continued—

After stating that he was delighted that Mr. Marr had been public-spirited enough to carry out the tests and that both he and his firm had, without publicity, pioneered valuable industries for this State, Mr. Edmondson went on to say that, strange as it might seem, the plant used by his department to gasify Collie coal was similar to that now used by Mr. Fox. The plant might be termed a modified water gas plant, so that there was nothing new in the complete gasification of Collie coal. Plants similar to that under test had been in use for many years. The most outstanding example was the Broadhead, which had operated in Melbourne for over a decade.

Gas engineers the world over were very familiar with all these processes and, in fact, the Tully process, which had been applied for nearly half a century, was almost identical with the plant under test, being a modified

water gas plant for complete gasification. There was great interest everywhere today in the complete gasification of low-grade coal and he (Mr. Edmondson) was watching the developments closely.

Thus this gentleman for 25 years knew that Collie coal could be gasified. He also tells us that there had been great interest in the gasification of low grade coal and that he was watching it carefully. Was he watching it in the interests of Western Australia or of Eastern States coal mining companies or in the interests of the people from England who put in a retort plant 30 or 40 years ago and got only a small percentage of gas? This is the statement of a gentleman who has to use three quarters of a million gallons of oil a year to boost Perth's gas supply in order to bring it to sufficient strength for domestic use. Whose interests is he watching? I am safe in saying that he is not watching the interests of the community of Western Australia in general, and I make that statement without fear of contradiction. Had he been as keen as he says he was, he could have given his assistance to the man who was endeavouring to establish a plant to gasify the local coal. But he does not do that. He dashes into print, and adopts an attitude not in favour but in condemnation of the scheme, in ridicule of it. I will continue the reading—

Mr. Marr said the Perth town gas had a calorific value of 450 to 480 British thermal units a cubic foot. Mr. Marr was probably only speaking generally, Mr. Edmondson said. He could not have measured the Perth gas or he would have known that these figures were not correct. Actually, the declared calorific value of the Perth gas was 478 b.t.u. and the daily average calorific value as supplied during the past five years was 482.2 b.t.u.

With all his public-spiritedness, he decries the ability of the chemist who analysed the gas. He has not the ability to do it; he was not trained in the School of Mines. Gas is not used on the Goldfields except the ordinary wood gas used in producer plants.

The Minister for Works: Are you sure of that?

Mr. TRIAT: His experience was gained on the Gwalia mine on a wood gas-producer plant. I asked where he was educated and one of the Ministers opposite volunteered the information.

The Minister for Works: He does not know and therefore cannot pass it on.

Mr. TRIAT: The letter continued—

For years Perth gas has never fallen to 450 b.t.u. Mr. Edmondson added that he had used the word "never" advisedly and definitely. Mr. Marr's chemists may have calculated the calorific value from a fractional gas analyser. This would account for the varying figures obtained.

Chemists in the gas industry knew from long experience that the analysis and calculation of a town's gas led to variable and not sufficiently accurate results. It had been found all over the world that the only correct method was the use of a standard gas calorimeter.

That is a strange statement. I believe that the Department of Industrial Development endeavoured to borrow a gas calorimeter. Inquiries were made all over the State and also at the Perth gas works, but the reply was that none was available. Yet the moment Mr. Marr makes a statement, it is found that the gas works has gas calorimeters, but those responsible would not lend one in order that a test might be made on native coal. That, of course, would not be right, as it might be possible to do away with the importing of Newcastle coal and use our own Collie coal. He went on to say—

In proof of this, the use of a standard gas calorimeter was the legal means in the various Gas Acts for the measurement of the calorific value of a town's gas. However, a standard calibrated measurement had not been available to Mr. Marr.

If Mr. Edmondson was so public-spirited himself and so keen on the gasification of our coal, one would have thought that he would have offered Mr. Marr the use of this instrument. I believe that Mr. Edmondson has two gas calorimeters, one on the line and one portable. The report continues—

Mr. Edmondson said that he had expected a higher yield of gas per ton than that found under test by Mr. Marr—29,030 cubic feet at a 15 per cent. moisture basis. However, he said, the meter installed at the plant was unsuitable for the purpose for which it was employed. This might account for the low figure. Mr. Marr was not responsible for the installation of the meter and had no choice in the matter.

Of course he was not. The Government, or the Department of Industrial Development, was responsible for the installation of the meter. It was purchased from the manufacturer in the Eastern States and installed at a cost of £140; but, according to Mr. Edmondson, the matter was of no

consequence, notwithstanding that it was a standard meter for the measurement of gas. I will continue reading—

Mr. Marr had stated that his chemist had obtained calorific values of 334 and 321 b.t.u. from the plant tested. These figures could not be classed as reliable because there was no calorimeter outside the gas works which had been standardised, so that the results were unreliable and might, or might not, be correct. The best was done with the instrument available to Mr. Marr.

Assuming the results were correct, however, said Mr. Edmondson, in practice it could not be assumed that the calorific values would reach as high as 371 b.t.u. with this type of plant and native coal. The low calorific value gas produced in the plant could be used, but, like Mr. Marr, he agreed that the whole question of enrichment or not would require attention. This modified type of water gas plant was of low capital cost, but like everything else—from electricity to milk—distribution costs bulked largely in the final cost to consumers. The advantage of a low capital cost plant producing a low calorific value gas could easily be offset by the larger costs of distribution.

Even though the gas might be of good quality, its lower cost could be offset by the cost of distribution. The only way of distributing gas is to send it through the gas mains. Gas mains are already laid in the City of Perth, and therefore the cost of distribution would not be increased.

The Chief Secretary: If you could get enough of it through the mains.

Mr. TRIAT: Of course we could. If Mr. Marr's statement is to be believed, we get 29,000 cubic feet of gas from a ton of Collie coal, but the gasworks at Perth get only 15,000 cubic feet from a ton of Newcastle coal.

Mr. Marshall: That refers to the oil.

Mr. TRIAT: I am talking about gas—15,000 cubic feet as against 29,000.

The Chief Secretary: I said that the gas could not pass through the pipes.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Make the pipes bigger.

Mr. TRIAT: Of course the pipes are big enough. I suppose the Chief Secretary went to the School of Mines, too. Continuing—

Another question requiring attention, Mr. Edmondson concluded, was the high carbon monoxide content. Mr. Marr's figure had shown 37.7 per cent. of carbon monoxide.

Of course we all know it is dangerous; if one inhales enough of it one dies. Concluding—

Everyone knew how dangerous carbon monoxide was. Because of this the type of gas produced in this plant was seldom solely used for domestic supply.

No one can tell me that if a person enters a room and turns on the gas without lighting it that it is not dangerous. However, this Western Australian gas is terrifically dangerous! One must not go into a room where that gas is! The other gas is not nearly so dangerous! I have not read such puerile stuff since I have been a member of Parliament. If Mr. Edmondson wanted to assist the State, he definitely could have made a statement that the gas could be improved; but, no, with all his expert knowledge he did not come to the assistance of the State. Recently I asked a question in the House of the Minister for Industrial Development. I asked what quantity of oil was used by the Perth Gas Works in 1946 and the Minister's reply was 750,000 gallons. At a minimum figure of one shilling a gallon that would amount to £39,000. That is the sum paid to foreign companies to produce our gas. A gallon of oil produces, I am given to understand—the figures are not mine—160,000 B.T.U.s.

Just fancy 750,000 gallons of oil being used in Perth, when the best coal obtainable in Australia produces twelve thousand million B.T.U.s. of gas in twelve months! Yet this man has the audacity to try to condemn a plant that is producing from native coal without any boosting, gas of sufficient quality, according to Mr. Marr, to be used by ordinary gas consumers. But even that reply does not satisfy me. Somebody is at fault. Either the gentleman who supplied the figures to the Minister was like some other members I spoke about—not too sure of his figures—or he wanted to disguise them. He did not give the correct figure. The report of the Lord Mayor of Perth for the year 1945-46 gives the quantity of coal, oil and coke used. I will quote the figures to the House; I presume they have been audited. The information will be found on page 17 of the report and is as follows:—

Coal, 1946, 33,159 tons.

Oil, 1946, 768,858 gallons.

Yet the reply to my question gave the quantity as 750,000 gallons; a difference of 18,858. That is not much, when stated in round figures! Why is the truth not told? The information given to the House was incorrect. So much for Mr. Edmondson! I sincerely hope that members opposite who are responsible for the information given to the House will make further inquiries into the question of Collie coal. I am not here to advise them; I think they know what to do about it themselves. I would like them to call Mr. Edmondson, Mr. Marr and the other people together to discuss the matter at a round-table conference.

Member: And Mr. Fox also.

Mr. TRIAT: He could be asked to attend, but he has been sacked.

The Minister for Education: Who sacked him?

Mr. TRIAT: The Government.

The Minister for Education: Do not talk rubbish.

Mr. TRIAT: I do not say purposely. I am given to understand that on the 12th July he was sacked, according to "The Blackwood Times."

The Minister for Education: He is coming to discuss this matter with me next Tuesday. He has not been sacked. There is no such question, to my knowledge.

Mr. TRIAT: He has been sacked. I give the Minister for Education my assurance on that point. He received notice on the 12th July that his services would no longer be required.

The Minister for Education: Did you get that information from "The Blackwood Times"?

Mr. TRIAT: Yes. The Minister will find it there.

The Minister for Education: I will verify it.

Mr. TRIAT: I believe it to be correct. I would very much like to see these people attend a round-table conference, because it would settle the question once and for all whether Collie coal is suitable for gas. It will also prove whether Mr. Marr, Mr. Edmondson or Mr. Fox is accurate. I know that the members sitting opposite, when this matter was under discussion 12 or 18 months ago, realised, as other people did, the great possibilities that might ensue from utilising Collie coal.

Dealing with goldmining, I would like to mention sands treatment, which has been a burning question with prospectors. Probably the House will realise some of the disabilities suffered by prospectors when having their ore treated in the State batteries under the present obsolete methods. The Minister for Mines made a statement in Kalgoorlie on the 2nd August. The report reads—

The Minister for Mines, Mr. Hubert Parker, appears to have a new angle on the 10 per cent. moisture deduction obtaining at Government mills. A spokesman for the Amalgamated Prospectors & Leaseholders' Association said this yesterday. He was criticising a statement of the Minister sent to the Association to justify the ten per cent. moisture deduction. The Association asked the Minister some time ago to reduce the moisture deduction to five per cent. The Association maintained that the actual loss would not be more than five per cent. on schistose ores.

The Minister replied: "Over the years, the average moisture content is estimated to be approximately five per cent. The other five per cent. deducted from the tonnage crushed for the payment of tailings is regarded as part of the tailings treatment charge, and has always been taken into consideration when fixing same. The present deduction of 1 dwt. 18 gr. for tailings is not sufficient to cover the loss on milling. The question of instituting a flat rate has been considered from time to time, but no satisfactory alternative to the present method has been forthcoming."

There is no doubt about the information contained in that report. The department says to the prospector, "You are not paying only for the treatment and milling. We will charge you another 5 per cent." That means that for every 100 tons treated the prospectors get a return from only 90 tons. That is rather tricky when one goes into the figures. Not only do they give him only 90 tons but they take 25 per cent. off for obtaining the gold by cyanidation. They give him 75 per cent. of the quantity of the gold less ten per cent. of the ore. Boiled down, 35 per cent. is taken off; so for 100 tons he can expect sands to the value of 65 per cent. Let us take one case! This concerns all fine gold, not standard gold. It was pure gold worth £10 15s. 3d. an ounce, because it was assay gold. There was 10 per cent. deducted for moisture and 25 per cent. for loss of recovery; so for 100 tons the return was 65 tons. The number of this particular sample was 6,211. The man took in 52.5 tons and when he received the return back he was given 47.25 tons net. The

agreed assay was 3 dwt. 4 grains fine, less 25 per cent.—that is, 19 grains. The treatment charge was 1 dwt. 18 grains, and that left him 15 grains. That is to say, he would receive 4s. 10¼d. per ton of ore taken in for his sands when the actual value of the sands was 34s. 6½d. per ton. So he would lose 27s. 6½d. per ton on his treatment charges. That is ridiculous.

There are mines in Western Australia that up to quite recently have been treating 3 dwt. head values, and after allowing for breaking out of the ground, carting, crushing and cyanidation they have got 3 dwt. to the ton and have shown a profit. That is at Big Bell; yet sands already crushed and put into the battery and ready for cyanidation have only returned 4s. 10¼d. per ton to the prospector. The rest has gone by the board. The actual value of the gold in the case I have mentioned was £88 16s. 6d. but the actual value the prospector got was £10 6s. 8d., so £78 9s. 10d. went into the discard. That is wrong and must be remedied. It is not impossible to remedy it, either. The treatment plants at the State batteries must be brought up to date. They are antiquated.

I grant that the department's officers have made a lot of investigations; but some method must be devised to obtain a better recovery of gold for prospectors. No prospector is satisfied, especially when he is told the moisture content is 5 per cent. but he is going to be charged 10 per cent. Naturally he is up in arms.

The Chief Secretary: That has been in operation for a long while.

Mr. TRIAT: It has gone on for years, I have referred to this subject ever since I have been in the House. The member for Leederville thought he had done me a good turn when the charge was reduced from 2 dwt. 8 grains to 1 dwt. 18 grains but when the department found it was light it altered the position and brought in the 75 per cent. extraction. I do not know whether the 10 per cent. was put on at that time but the 75 per cent. loss of recovery was deducted and that brought the figure back to what it originally was. I have no desire to delay the House for any length of time. I shall have a lot to say about mining when dealing with the Estimates.

Before I close, I would want to mention a trip I made to the North-West and the

Kimberleys recently. While I was there, I went inland to the experimental site of the Ord River dam. Looking at the coastline, one perceives that it is rugged and rough and disheartening; but 10 or 12 miles inland, one comes into level country, flat as a billiard table, where one can look 30 or 40 miles in each direction. It is very flat, without trees, but there is tall, beautiful, edible grass, two or three feet high. It is black-soil country and looked to be very prolific. On the banks of the river the sub-soil was 20 ft. to 30 ft. deep.

All that is required is water at the right time. The dam site is 100 miles up the river. We went 68 miles and saw the experimental farm. They planted pumpkins there on the 29th day of May and on the 2nd July these were eight inches in diameter. Rice can be grown and was well above the ground inside a week. Also sisal hemp, soya beans, cotton and edible grasses for grazing can be grown. If it were within his power; if he had the money and the time available, I would like every member of the House to go through that country. Until one views it himself one cannot believe what it is like. When I made a statement that hundreds of thousands of people would be settled there in the future when irrigation was in operation, I got a write-up in a leading article, too; but it was not laudable. It was said that I did not know what I was talking about. "Where are we going to get markets?" they asked. We know there are unlimited markets north of Australia if we had the goods to supply them. Mr. Dumas was there very recently. He is a man of capability. He made a survey and he said that the settling there of one million people was not beyond possibility.

The Minister for Education: If the customers will pay our prices, it will be all right.

Mr. TRIAT: They are paying 6s. a bushel for wheat on the spot. They would pay anything there. I think that in the Kimberleys we have a wonderful proposition, and I am glad the Jews were not successful in settling there.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: They are paying higher prices there than here.

Mr. TRIAT: When cabbages are exported to Singapore they fetch £6 15s. a bag. When people there can afford to pay that,

they can pay the ordinary wages of men who require to live in that north country.

The Minister for Education: That will not last indefinitely.

Mr. TRIAT: The flow of water coming down the Ord River must be terrific, because it is a mile wide in places and there are pools three miles long and 20 feet deep and a half a mile wide. It is beautiful fresh water which can be drunk. The river was running slightly when I was there. The proposed dam will cost £1,500,000, and it will be 258,000 acre feet bigger than the Hume dam, which is the biggest in the southern hemisphere and cost £6,000,000. We have wonderful possibilities in the north which are worthy of investigation. Any member with the time at his disposal during the recess should make the trip up there and view the place for himself, and I am sure he would return with wonderful ideas concerning the prospects of that part of our State, and the possibility of settling many people under good conditions and with good markets available. I thank members for listening patiently to me. I have taken a lot of liberties, Sir, a lot more than I should have taken, and I thank you very much for your forbearance.

MR. YATES (Canning) [9.18]: Since my entry into this Legislative Assembly I have listened with great interest to the expressions of congratulation and to the recriminations that have flown freely across the House. Being a new member, I do not think the time is opportune for me to cast any aspersions on any member for his past deeds. I am interested mainly in the future activities of this House and what they can do for the people of our State and, in a broader sense, in assisting the Commonwealth sphere. I take this opportunity of congratulating you, Sir, as others have done earlier; also of congratulating the Chairman of Committees. Those congratulations are very sincere. I know that all the felicitations that were bestowed upon yourself by the Opposition were equally sincere. Therefore I look to a very happy future in this House under your guidance. If the Opposition will bear with me until I find my feet, I am quite certain that I will come up to their expectations of what any member of the House should be able to do.

I represent the electorate of Canning, held for 14 years by a Labour member, who worked long and arduously for the district. If I can do as good a job as he did in those 14 years, I will be certain of having done my portion for this State. Many problems confront my electorate, some of which were passed on to me by my predecessor and, over quite a few of them he had no control. I am hoping that the future will bring improvements. We have problems of housing, drainage, reticulation, water supplies, and others which confront the various electorates of the State. But I think they are more serious in my electorate than in most of the others because much of the house-building programme which has taken place has gone on in the areas east of the river. Many homes are being built east of the Canning Highway. There are streets of them, but very little provision has been made for additional school facilities. The problem of getting the people into the city is, indeed, a serious one. These matters were serious three years ago, and today they are much more so.

I can say, in connection with housing, that some people in my electorate are living under the most appalling conditions. There is in Como a caravan park which is the most iniquitous thing in the State. There is approximately a half-acre block containing 24 caravans, for which a ground rent amounting to 10s. per caravan is being paid by those poor people who cannot get into homes of their own. On top of that they are paying high rents for the caravans. Recently I complained to my Government about this and it was arranged for the Public Health Commissioner to come out on a tour of inspection, but I am sorry to say that prior information was given to the owner of these caravans, and he never worked so hard in all his life as he did that morning putting down loads of sand and cleaning out the place so that when the inspection occurred it would be spick and span. Had the inspection occurred the day before, I am quite sure the place would have been condemned. I had three people from that park come to my home one wet night asking me to go and look at the area.

I went out on a Sunday morning, when it was raining, and three of the caravans were leaking badly and the water was pouring through the roof. One caravan

had a family of six living in it, and it measured approximately 10 feet by 6 feet. The husband and wife slept in one bunk and the four children, one of whom was a girl, were sleeping in another; and their ages ranged from 15 years down to eight or nine. That sort of thing is taking place today. Other people are living in garages with doors made of iron, with the bottom and top open to the weather. There is no protection for them. I am going to do all in my power to assist in speeding up the building of houses. In fact, I am going to tell the House that tomorrow we are going to build portion of a wall right out in front of Parliament House, and any member who likes to be there at a quarter to two can see a scheme that might assist in the more rapid housing of the people. If Mahomet will not go to the mountain, then we must move the mountain and take it to Mahomet, and that is what we are going to do. I feel sure that the house-building project can be speeded up.

It has been said that the Labour Government fell down on its job. I did not say that at all. It might have fallen down on many aspects of house-building, but I say this, that the task is up to the present Government, and us on this side of the House, to prove that we are going to live up to what we said, and I hope we do, because we will stand or fall by this house-building for the people! I have no qualms about saying that, because it is through a national emergency that I bring this before members tonight. I spend day after day at the State Housing Commission trying to get priorities for people in very bad circumstances. I have, on numerous occasions, attended the Local Court to assist people in having their eviction notices deferred. I know the difficulties under which the members of the State Housing Commission are working, but I say frankly that I am disappointed in the results that I have so far received. I trust that the future will bring greater rays of hope for these people. We do not want 1,000 homes a year; we want to house everyone without a home, as fast as we possibly can, and it can be done much quicker than we are doing it today; although I admit that things are moving more rapidly now than they were three months ago.

The next important item concerning my district is that of drainage. This matter has been dealt with in this House by my pre-



decessor. He raised the question of the Cannington drainage scheme on many occasions; I have read of it in "Hansard." I have been approached by the road boards in that area, and from as far afield as Gosnells. I was called out a fortnight ago to a public meeting at East Cannington to discuss this problem. Together with the Minister for Works and the members of the Cannington Road Board, I recently inspected the district, and I say that the drainage system in Cannington is the most out-of-date in any town of the State. The whole of the drainage is a surface scheme and road boards, such as the Darling Range Road Board and the Belmont Road Board and the outlying districts, seem to be quite happy about the water flowing from their areas into the Cannington district. In addition, the new Canning dam is contributing quite a fair portion of overflow water to the already over-burdened district of Cannington. We now find that the area is waterlogged.

I know of 17 homes that were completely surrounded by water, and in two cases the people have had to leave their houses. The builders have had to knock off working on two partly-constructed homes because the buildings were surrounded by water. I am told by engineers that the water will not subside until Christmas. Yet, the old settlers say that until three years ago there was no sign of water in these areas. I admit that we have had three very wet winters, but the time has come when this comprehensive drainage scheme, which has been spoken of so much by previous Governments, should be put into effect. I am quite certain also that if the Minister for Works arranges for a contour survey of the area, under the Land Drainage Act, the engineers of the various boards will put forward something on which to work out a scheme for the complete drainage of the district. I was asked to go out to the Gosnells Road Board to interview its engineer, and he put up to me a good scheme for the drainage of that district. It means the resumption of a certain amount of property—some privately-owned. He feels that if surface drainage is put through this property to the river it will be the first step towards the comprehensive drainage scheme taking shape. It is up to me to see that the Government assists in having this survey taken as soon as possible.

Much has been said about transport, and the member for Mt. Hawthorn complained about trams with square wheels, the lack of buses at City Beach, and mentioned the fine service provided by private enterprise at Scarborough and North Beach. South Perth is unfortunate in this respect. It is served by Government buses—petrol driven—and by trams. I must admit that the Metro buses operate along Canning-highway, but they are not allowed to operate beyond a certain point, the distance between the city and that point being controlled by the Government. Owing to the influx of population to the district, we find that with the present number of buses—absolutely worn out and over-loaded on all journeys during peak periods—a number of people are now not able to obtain transport from their homes to their work in the morning. I have had deputations dealing with the transport problem, especially in relation to the Hurlingham Estate, a legacy given to us under the Commonwealth Housing Scheme. It is a block of 65 homes, built on a flat where no sane person would build a home, owing to the bad drainage. It is right away from the main road, where there are no school facilities for the children and totally inadequate transport facilities for those needing them.

The present service, which runs along Canning-highway and turns into Carrington-street, supplies the needs of the people in that area, and further out to Como. To-day one may see people at the terminus of the bus crowding in, and by the time it has passed a few streets it is full and has to go straight on into Perth. Some people who start work at 9 a.m. have to leave home at 7.30 in order to get transport into the city in time for their work. It is impossible for them to get a seat with the available transport. I ask the Government to give this matter its earnest consideration, that the existing dangerous buses be replaced as soon as possible, and that the present routes be overhauled or examined to see whether more favourable routes can be laid down to cater for the needs of this ever-expanding district. Then and then only will the people be satisfied with the handling of this urgent transport problem.

In my electorate I have all sorts of things to contend with. Not many electorates contain river jetties, but unfortunately I have

a number of them, mostly without tops. To those who know the Bunbury Bridge, I would say there is one jetty in my electorate that looks like it—a few poles sticking out of the water with no top. It is time that such jetties were put into complete order, as they are there for the benefit of the public who use the river, especially in the summer months. Children use those jetties for swimming and dive from them, and have a lot of healthy fun and exercise. It would not require a vast amount of money to put them in order but, as they are non-revenue producing, the Government feels that they should not be its responsibility.

That seems to have been the attitude taken by Governments in the past, and I think I will find it difficult to get these jetties put in order, as we would like them. Yet they are important and it is up to the Government to keep our river beautiful, and not to have on it eyesores like the small jetty beside the Canning Bridge which, at the present moment, has 18 inches of grass growing round it, and no planks on it. It is very dangerous. Now that the tumult and shouting have died and the war is over, timber is much easier to obtain than it was, especially for this type of work, and I think the Government should squeeze a little out of the coffers to place all the jetties on the river in such order as those using them would desire. I commend that task to the Government.

In the matter of education, the same problems confront people in the Canning electorate as in all other districts. There we have schools that are over-crowded. The Kent-street high school is a fine structure, built by the Labour Government, and I commend that Government for having built it. It is a fine place but, though it was built for ten classes, it now houses 15, and is totally inadequate to the needs of the growing district east of the river. The Forrest-street school, one of the oldest in South Perth, has an attendance of 675. It was originally intended to house about 525. Additional rooms are over-crowded at present, and there are hat-rooms converted into class-rooms. That position obtains in other schools also.

The Collier school, of which so much has been said, is still only a myth. During the recent election campaign, promises were made—not by me—that that school would

be started forthwith. As a matter of fact, the foundations were to be laid within five or six days, but so far the school has not taken shape. Unless it is built, we will soon have a great problem on our hands in dealing with the additional children from the 200 new homes that have gone up in the Dyson-street area. It is an urgent necessity that that school be commenced, so that we may provide school facilities for these children in the coming year.

Allied with the education of the children we have the kindergartens. I am certain that all fathers in this House are keenly interested in the welfare of the infant. How often, when driving along in a car, one sees a toddler two or three years of age on the side of the road, with no protection, while an older boy who is supposed to be looking after the infant plays cricket or football? We often see such children in the streets, not knowing the danger that confronts them. The parent might be at work in the house, but if that parent knew there was a kindergarten to which the child could be sent during those hours, he or she would know that the child was safe, and not only safe, but receiving the early education which helps to mould the mind, so that when the child became of age to enter school and join an infant class, it would have some idea of schooling, and would start with some knowledge that at present it would not have.

I urge that all the consideration possible be given to the kindergarten movement. I think the Government should support any move, in any district, to see that the kindergarten movement flourishes, so that our children between the ages of two and five years are kept off the streets and may receive the early education that today is so necessary for them. We have also our infant health clinics. There is one in South Perth that is doing a wonderful job. I recommend the Government also to support infant health clinics wherever they may be established, for I regard them as helping towards the future welfare of the State.

I listened with great interest tonight to the member for Mt. Magnet when he spoke with regard to Collie coal. He went to great length in dealing with the possibilities regarding that coal and the use to which it could have been put throughout the last 20 or 30 years. I feel that the Labour Government was sold a pup if what was said about Mr. Edmondson was true, and

that instead of having its hands tied 20 years ago it should have investigated this huge coal deposit to ascertain whether it was not possible to use it in connection with our gas supply in Perth, thereby obviating the necessity for the costly process of importing Newcastle coal. If what the hon. member stated was true, I would also support a complete inquiry into the possibility of our reverting to the use of Collic coal, which would give new life to Collic, bring prosperity to the State and increase our population by many thousands more.

It has always been a matter of wonderment to me that we have not been able to utilise this great asset. So far we have only played around with it. I support the views the hon. member expressed and also those of the member for Collic with regard to the expansion of the industry, and I believe the Government should support every move to see that the coal industry of this State is explored to the fullest extent. By that means we shall be able to contribute to the needs not only of Western Australia but to participate in the coal export trade ourselves.

I next come to the matter of police protection. I have not heard that subject mentioned in the House during the course of the debate. I propose to quote some interesting figures regarding police protection in the Canning electorate. It may surprise members to know that in the electorate of Canning, which includes a fair proportion of Victoria Park, the police station in that area caters for close on one-tenth of the population of the State and that the district itself covers an area of 36 square miles. The figures I am quoting have been supplied to me and I believe they are authentic. In 1943 the staff at the Victoria Park police station consisted of one sergeant and seven other ranks. In 1945 it consisted of one sergeant and six other ranks and the position now in 1947 is that the staff consists of one sergeant and six other ranks. Since Christmas only five men have been available and at times the strength of the staff has been down to four men.

Since 1943 there has been a reduction in weekly working hours in the Police Force, which has meant that the capacity of the officers to work has been lessened somewhat at Victoria Park. Taking it that we have

there six other ranks, one requires to have a day off each week, and that leaves five men to do seven days' work and each shift at that station is of 24 hours' duration. Included in their duties is the necessity to supply a constable one day each week to attend to the Belmont district, which is attached to the station. The transport supplied to the officers to deal with the work entailed in that big district comprises a motor cycle and a horse. Besides having to police the district, the officers have a number of licenses to issue and these comprise the following:—

Bicycles .. .. .	5,000
Motor Drivers .. .. .	2,000
Firearms .. .. .	1,400
Cart and Carriage .. .. .	250

In addition to that they are required to compile 140 lots of industrial statistics and 30 lots of agricultural statistics. From the figures I have quoted, it will be evident to members that at least one new station should be established east towards Cannington. Failing that, I suggest that the existing station at Victoria Park be extended to provide more up-to-date facilities for the men who have to toil there. To visit that station and see how the officers have to work, collecting money from people and issuing licenses at a small table in a dingy room amid surroundings that are not at all congenial, would I feel sure, amaze members generally.

I also suggest that to relieve the congestion at the Traffic Department, a scheme be put into operation whereby all licenses required east of the river be obtained from Victoria Park and that a second traffic branch be established there. That would involve the extension of the existing buildings, which at present are totally inadequate for housing the staff and their records. By doing that, we would greatly lessen the work and avoid to a very great degree the congestion in dealing with licenses at James-street. It would also make it easier for people, especially those who are elderly, who went to the Victoria Park station to procure their licenses. I commend that scheme to the Government and I suggest that something be done immediately to relieve the already overburdened station where men are doing a great job with a small staff and policing a very large territory.

If a call is received from Cannington, which is five or six miles from Victoria

Park, it means that the man at the station has to leave and proceed to where his services are required, with the result that by the time he gets there the damage is done, the thief has got clean away and there is no chance of anything being accomplished. I think members will agree that the officers there are entitled to more consideration than they have received so far. I admit that the staff position in the Police Force was serious during the war years but the leeway is now being made up. However, I suggest that the points I have made should be kept in mind so that when the present Police School is terminated, first consideration should be given to the complete staffing of the Victoria Park police station.

The next subject I am going to deal with concerns the 40-hour week, which is very dear to the hearts of the Labour movement and not only to those comprised in that section but to quite a large number on the Government side of the House who favour the 40-hour week. I say quite frankly that the present Government is not against that move—despite the fact that recent propaganda hinted that it was opposed to such a change. In my opinion the 40-hour week will eventually be adopted in this country, but I do not think the time is ripe for it to be put into complete operation now.

Mr. Styants: It never is!

Mr. Needham: No, never!

Mr. YATES: History shows that the hours of the working week have improved gradually over a period of many years and right down from early times. In Great Britain, members will be interested to learn, the working week is now approximately 47 hours per week. It is also significant to note that in the cotton industry the workers agreed to waive their demand for a shorter working week in preference to giving their full support to Britain's urgent requirements for further exports. In the United States of America, where men work under various awards, the average working week is about 40 hours. In some cases it falls as low as 37 on account of shift work. But workers there are controlled by individual agreements and covered by various awards which are not always observed. Some of the agreements are frequently broken for the benefit of the State. In Canada, the average working week is close

on 48 hours. Although there are 10 public holidays in that Dominion, in most cases only five of them are paid holidays. So, in comparison with Canada, Australia is still on the right side. In South Africa the average working week is 46 hours and, in the Argentine, slightly higher than 44 hours. Sweden has a 48-hour week. In New Zealand a 40-hour week was introduced some time ago and is observed, but we must bear in mind that New Zealand is largely a primary producing country and therefore the 40-hour week does not affect that Dominion as greatly as it would a more highly industrialised country.

The 48-hour week was first introduced in Australia in 1856, and although the general working week up to the beginning of the present century was approximately 50 hours, it is noteworthy that the iron-mongers—whether they had a union, I am not sure, but they were banded together—originally introduced the 48-hour week.

Mr. Fox: Was it not the bricklayers?

Hon. A. H. Panton: I thought it was the stonemasons.

Mr. YATES: The ironmongers, at any rate, were the first to bring it before a recognised authority. Today the majority of the workers in Australia enjoy at least one week's holiday a year with full pay, and a lot of them receive public holidays on full pay. The position in Australia regarding holidays compares more than favourably with that of any other country. I wish to quote a lengthy extract from a publication entitled "The 40-hour Week" issued by the Institute of Public Affairs, Victoria. It says—

The 40-hour week is a national issue. It should be considered from a national standpoint. It will affect, in a greater or lesser degree, all members of the Australian public. It should, therefore, be decided in the light of its effects on all the Australian people and not just a section of them. The question at stake is not whether the 40-hour week will or will not benefit any particular section of the nation, but whether it will or will not benefit the nation as a whole.

The 40-hour week would affect different sections of the people differently. Among those who stand to lose least from its introduction are possibly the larger employers of labour. Among those who stand to lose most are the lower-middle and middle income earners in receipt of salaries and those whose income is determined primarily by what they receive from their investments. All sections, however, would

such serious detriment from the introduction of a 40-hour week at the present time.

The progressive reduction of working hours is regarded by the Institute to be one of the most important of the advantages arising out of industrial progress. The purpose of modern industry should be to provide not merely an increasing volume and variety of goods at a constantly decreasing real cost to the public—and thus a higher material standard of life—but also to improve progressively the conditions of work so as to provide more time for leisure and self-improvement. It is necessary to strike a balance between more leisure and more real income. But it would, in our view, be wrong and short-sighted for the community to work shorter hours at serious cost to its material standards of life, when, for many of its members, those standards are already relatively low.

Scientific studies on the relation of hours to output point irresistibly to the conclusion that a reduction of the standard working week from 44 hours to 40 would lead to a fall in the total production of goods and services. There is also good reason to believe that under present conditions the introduction of the 40-hour week would be unlikely to lead to any significant improvement in the rate of production—that is, output per man-hour. Until the capital equipment of industry is modernised and restored to full efficiency in the production of peace-time goods and services, and until the training, transference and replacement of labour in peace-time jobs is well forward, it would be optimistic to look for any material increase in man-hour output.

The key to the immediate economic problem before Australia is greater production. We are suffering from a decline in our standards of life, forced on us by the war. We need great quantities of practically every conceivable kind of consumer goods and articles. We need vast numbers of new houses. We need an improvement in the range and quality of many kinds of services. We need capital goods for industrial modernisation and national development.

But the world far more than Australia is in dire need of more commodities to make up for the economic losses and ravages of war—food to succour tens of millions threatened with famine, capital equipment to restore war-shattered industries, goods of every description to counter poverty and to raise standards. To choose greater leisure now would not only intensify our own internal difficulties, but could rightly be regarded as an act of callous indifference to the world's suffering.

Whatever the potential productivity of Australian industry and the potential standard of life it can support, it is an irrefutable fact that the present standard of life is relatively low—much lower than in 1939 and, in fact, lower than the Australian people have possessed for many years. The volume of goods and services of practically every kind at present available for the enjoyment of the Australian public is inadequate—in some instances tragically inadequate—and little greater than that of the worst years of the war. This, in our view, in itself

constitutes an almost irresistible argument against the general introduction of a 40-hour week at the present time.

One of the main arguments used to justify the introduction of the 40-hour week is that during the war the productive power and technical resources of industry have immeasurably improved. While we do not believe it is possible to measure, with any degree of precision, the movement in overall productive efficiency over the war years, the available statistics suggest that this broad claim is without foundation. But, even allowing that industrial efficiency has been raised by wartime developments, the urgent present need for greater production should take precedence over any question of shortening hours of work. In other words, if productivity has increased, the advance should be used to increase output rather than to reduce hours.

It is generally recognised that one of the most serious dangers threatening a country at the conclusion of a major war is that of inflation. This danger can be countered in two ways; first, by increasing production to the utmost so that the disparity between the supply of goods and the demand for them is narrowed, and, second, by maintaining stability in prices and costs through measures of price control, until a reasonable equilibrium has been achieved between supply and demand. The 40-hour week would be unfavourable to both these conditions—the first because of its effects on production and the second because of its tendency to push up prices.

The introduction of a 40-hour week should not, in our view, be considered until the volume of civilian goods and services per head of the population has been restored to at least the pre-war level, and until the nation's stock of capital equipment has been modernised, placed on a competitive basis with that of the other advanced industrial countries, and expanded so as to offset substantially the losses caused by the interruption of economic progress by the war.

How long this will take depends largely on the steps that are taken now to raise the productive power and efficiency of industry.

The faster the productivity of industry can be raised the more rapidly will it be possible to overcome present shortages and to restore standards of living, and the earlier will the introduction of the 40-hour week become a desirable economic proposition.

When the transition to a peace-time economy is thoroughly complete the question of a shorter working week should, in our view, be brought up for serious consideration and a decision should then be made upon it in the light of the economic industrial conditions ruling at the time. Among the likely factors which will bear upon its desirability or otherwise will be the efficiency of industry, the general economic and financial position of the country, particularly our competitive ability in relation to overseas countries, and the time spent in work by the Australian community compared with the workers of other countries.

There members have a comprehensive survey by the Institute of Public Affairs in Victoria as to the reasons why a 40-hour week, although desirable, should not be introduced at present. Members must all admit that we face terrific shortages of every commodity required in our everyday life and needed to make our State expand. This has been brought home to us time and time again in this Chamber in the many speeches which have been delivered by members concerning the shortages of this and that commodity and concerning what the Government is going to do about releasing this or that commodity. What we need in this State today is work and plenty of it—hard work.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You have been listening to Sir James Mitchell.

Mr. YATES: Our forefathers worked hard. Many members in this Chamber toiled for years and are still toiling for the benefit of the State. We need a greater effort by our people; we need a greater effort by our unionists to ensure that they get behind the Government, irrespective of what Party is in power.

Member: The workers did not cause the war.

Mr. YATES: I do not know who caused the war. I fought in it, too, and I have seen the misery that followed it. It is the cause of our present shortages. Why, therefore, do we want shorter working hours, more holidays and higher pay, when it is our duty to clear the State of its liabilities—and by that I mean its shortages? Let us get into production again and infuse new life into our younger population, so that they will not go to the S.P. shops and try to earn a living by their wits. Every man who earns his living in that way is a dead loss to the State. Let each man explore every avenue whereby he may better himself, not only for his own benefit but for the benefit of the community also. That is why I put the case for the deferment of the 40-hour week. I am quite sincere when I say that I believe in it.

My father was a good unionist. He assisted to found the Plasterers' Union in this State and toiled for its advancement for many years. No finer unionist ever lived. He has passed a lot of his ideas on to me. I believe in unionism and belonged to a union. I believe the unions can assist the

State better than they are doing today, but not all unions. A case in question occurred yesterday, where the Lumpers' Union decided what it would send out of the country. Are we not the masters and should we not decide what shall be exported from the State? The lumpers are there to see that goods do go out of the State. If we are of opinion that potatoes and onions should not be exported from the State, it is up to us to pass legislation to stop them leaving. We should not let the decision rest with any body of men; we should do the deciding ourselves.

I urge every member of the House to pull his weight and to get every person with whom he comes into contact—business people, farmers and others—to do their best to overcome the present shortages. If that be done, I am quite certain our present difficulties will be overcome the sooner, and the sooner will come prosperity, higher wages and shorter hours for the workers of our State. I commend that suggestion to all members.

I wish to speak about community hotels. I favour them, wherever possible, but a certain section of the public does not. I have here quite a number of circulars issued under the name of an association in Western Australia for the promotion of private enterprise. It is unsigned; the address given is Howard-street, but the number is not stated. It is headed, "Indirect Socialism. Community Move Exposed." It proceeds to expose community moves.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You do not think that comes from this side of the House?

Mr. YATES: I am quite certain it does not. Another pamphlet, issued by the same association, hits at the residents of Bruce Rock. It is headed, "To the Residents of Bruce Rock and District. Re Community Hotel."

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I would put that where you put all anonymous correspondence.

Mr. YATES: It goes on to describe how terrible it will be if ever there is a community hotel at Bruce Rock. I think that State hotels should now be either sold or given back to the community and run by the people. I say so for this reason, that the communities which formed co-operative stores in very many parts of the State, as

well as in England and America, have achieved outstanding successes. These movements have been of great benefit to the people of the district as well as of benefit to the State. I do not think any member of the House will disagree with me on that point. The establishment of such stores has not prevented the opening of others in the districts concerned, the carrying on of their businesses and the making of profits; all have prospered. This document, however, tries to point out that if the community were to own an hotel, utter chaos would reign among those who control it. It says that the hotel would probably show a loss and it quotes the profit made last year by our State hotels. It states—

Remember the State hotels for the last year for which statistics are at present available only made £2,179 profit between the seven of them.

That differs from the figure which I read in the annual report last week. There the amount mentioned is £8,000. That, however, is not a very high profit.

Hon. A. H. Panton: State Hotels should not be run for profit but for service.

Mr. YATES: That is just what is not happening. They are not being run for profit. The Bruce Rock hotel is not giving the service which it should as a State hotel. This fact must also be borne in mind, that once a State hotel is erected in any district the Government takes steps to see that no other hotel is built there, so that it will not be faced with opposition. If another hotel were to be built at Bruce Rock today, the State hotel could close. The time is opportune for the Government to investigate the matter of getting rid of State hotels which have a monopoly. The Government should not engage in hotel trading. The present State hotels are not showing the profit that they should, when one takes into account the tremendous outlay of capital. The State hotels should either be leased or given to the community, so that they may be conducted more advantageously than the Government is conducting them today. I commend any move which the present Government might take for the disposal of our State hotels, but suggest that priority should be given to the community to take them over, if that is at all possible under our present constitution.

The member for Kanowna said the coloured races north of Australia had their eyes on this country, or words to that effect. I agree with him. The many millions of people who live north of Australia are a definite threat to our future. No one knows it more than those who served in the islands during the war. While in New Guinea I had an opportunity to talk to a Japanese prisoner of war. He had been well educated and he spoke good English. He was very philosophical regarding his capture. He was certain his life was finished and that he would never return to his mother country; but he said, "We will be back in 10 years, 20 years, 50 years. What does time matter? We will be back, and next time we will get Australia." He was quite certain of that. It was something which had been instilled into the minds of the Japanese: that they might miss out on their first venture, but they would not on their second. The threat is always going to remain while the Japanese Empire remains as large as it is; while we have those many hundreds of islands in between Japan and Australia on which so many millions of the coloured races live. That threat is a very real one. They told us in 1919 that a war had just been concluded to end all wars. How deluded those old diggers were!

Hon. A. H. Panton: They told us that in 1914, when they wanted us to go.

Mr. YATES: And it was believed.

Mr. Marshall: No!

Mr. YATES: The same as we are made to believe it today when the same phrases are put over.

Hon. A. H. Panton: The same as it will be believed next time!

Mr. YATES: Guided by past experience, they are very careful about mentioning that there will be no more war. The evidence to the contrary is still with us. We read daily in the paper of the unrest and discontent that exist throughout the world. But leaving aside the other nations, we are interested primarily in our own country; and I think that the worst step that could have been taken in this country was to abolish compulsory military training.

I believe that compulsory military training is the best training any youth can get to assist him at some future date when he might be called on in an emergency to guard

our very shores. I used to attend compulsory military training in my early youth; and although I had some hard knocks during the many camps I attended, I am certain it gave me a different outlook on life. I came to enjoy it. I liked it so much that I took an interest in it and went through the ranks until I transferred to the fields. When training of a sort was reintroduced, in an organisation known as the Militia, I joined up with the 28th Battalion in Kalgoolie. I went through examinations and took a keen interest in the movement. Just before the war started I was going to a meeting of the Militia and was derided in the street as a "pansy," because I was dressed in a uniform with brass buttons and went along the street carrying a rifle. Not long afterwards the very man who called me a "pansy" was a private in a platoon I commanded and I was able to get a portion of my own back.

Mr. May: Two "pansies."

Mr. YATES: Quite right; but one was much larger than the other! But the man who derided the very thing I was striving for was one of the first to join up and he tried to do his best for his country. Had he been given early training he would not have derided the Militia but would have been keenly alive to what it stood for. So I appeal to our Government to support any move for the reintroduction of compulsory training. It does no harm to the lads to go through training during the week and to spend a fortnight in camp once a year. It makes men of them. It is the way for them to find out whether they can "take it" or not.

As it does not do any harm and is likely to do the country a vast amount of good, because it teaches young men the fundamental principles of welfare and of protection; and as it gives the authorities an idea of where to secure potential leaders, which would be lacking without the reintroduction of the scheme, I hope the Government will support a move for such training. The present permanent standing Army is a different set-up altogether. It does not teach youths as they should be taught. The right idea exists in public schools and colleges where there is cadet training. But let the system be introduced into civilian life and let the young men who now waste their time at week-ends take their share also. If

cadets can be trained, why not youths in the outside world?

I wish to say a little about the City of Perth. A lot has been said about bus shelters. We have our problem in South Perth where people have to wait in the rain and I have been trying to get bus shelters erected out that way. I had a proposition to submit regarding shelter for a certain number of people who use buses. As is known, buses that travel to South Perth and Como leave the old G.P.O. building in St. George's-terrace. At peak periods a queue of people is to be seen stretching from in front of the steps to Barrack-street, as far as the lane on some occasions. They have to stand there winter and summer waiting for buses. In the summer the heat of the sun pours down on them and they have no protection; and in the winter they are drenched by rain.

The proposition I have in mind is that a cantilever verandah be erected around the building from the lane in Barrack-street into St. George's-terrace and right along to Cathedral Avenue. It would not interfere with traffic in any shape or form and would provide shelter for people coming from the river if they were caught in a shower of rain. Above all, it would provide a much-needed shelter for bus patrons. I urge the Government to go into that proposition and give it fullest consideration. I am certain it would assist bus patrons during the winter and summer months when they are awaiting transport.

I also suggest that the taxis which are now able to stand right up to the edge of the bus-stop outside the old G.P.O. be removed and that the bus stand take up the whole block to the Cathedral corner. At 1 o'clock on Saturdays when people are going home from the city or going to the races, there is frightful congestion at the bus stop. Then in the centre of the road there is the underground lavatory and there are taxis backing out from the kerb and mixing with pedestrians and other traffic. There is no reason why those taxis—there are about 10 of them—should not be removed down the other side of Cathedral Avenue, between there and Pier-street, where they would not interfere with the flow of traffic.

The Government should also go into the matter of underground lavatories, which should be removed. If not, an entrance



should be made from the footpath and the surface covered so that traffic can use the road. Those lavatories are a menace to life and limb. I know of one case of death and many cases of serious injury caused through vehicles, sometimes driven by inebriated drivers, crashing into the iron railings in wet weather. The time has come in our city, which is already overtaxed with traffic, for the demolition of these unsightly structures, and for them to be moved to different areas.

The next item I am going to touch on briefly, deals with the employment of boys in the Government service. It is a well-known fact that most Government departments find it extremely hard to get boys of school-leaving age, the reason being that they are given no continuity of employment but are forced to leave when they reach the age of 16, or at latest 17, years. University students then take their place and continue their career in the Government. On the 1st July last, 16 Government departments found it impossible to secure the services of boys to do their messages and inter-departmental work. A few of those departments were the P.W.D., Lands, Forests, Water Supply, the Public Trustee, the State Housing Commission, the Electoral, and the Main Roads. Advertisements appear regularly in the Press, but the departments get no answers. I do not blame the parents. What chance in life has a boy got who wastes three years of his early youth in these departments, with no opportunity of proving that he will be a good employee? The policy evidently is that they must have a University education or, at the least, possess the Junior University certificate before being given permanent employment.

What of our many Government heads today—our Under Secretaries? How many of them went through a university before joining the service? I think that in most cases they joined as youths and gained experience as they went along. Some might have gone to night school, and some might have got junior certificates. If a lad has ability and can adapt himself to the work of the department in which he is employed, he should be given an opportunity of making a career of the job from the time he joins, and not tossed out at the age of 16 or 17 years. These children should be allowed to pass the necessary examinations

for the Government work in which they are employed.

Take a boy who has the junior certificate! After he has been a year or two in a department, he probably needs to have a knowledge of only one or two subjects to carry out his work. If, 10 or 15 years later, he is given an opportunity of transferring, he will find that he has forgotten practically all he ever learned at the time of passing his junior examination. That is what occurs in most cases. He remembers a certain amount of arithmetic and a little history, geometry and so on, but the rest is lost. The boys joining these departments should be given a chance to study for the necessary examinations and not be told, "You are on the temporary staff and must go when you are 16 or 17, irrespective of your ability." I commend to the Government the matter of making an inspection into the position of the employment of boys in Government departments today.

Another matter I must touch on is one that some other member mentioned and he nearly brought the House down. It is that dealing with the scandalous imposition on the people of Australia by the Commonwealth Government deciding to take over control of all banks. I do not think that any man in his heart here, irrespective of what Party he stands for, can honestly believe that what the Commonwealth Government is doing is right.

Mr. Reynolds: Do not make any mistake about it!

Mr. YATES: I am sorry for the hon. member, because he will be sorry for the state that this country will get into if this proposition is brought into being. We were told that King O'Malley would turn in his grave if he knew the turn that events have taken today.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: He is not in his grave!

Mr. YATES: I was told this afternoon that he was dead. At any rate, he would be a very sorry man to see this go through. This was never his intention. What he wanted was that we should have a central Commonwealth Bank, and he instituted that scheme, which has been successful. He never intended that everyone in the country should be under the complete subjugation of the Commonwealth Government because of its financial set-up, and that is what the

position will be if this scheme comes into operation. It is well known that several men now deceased, started on the same tactics. One was Hitler and another was Mussolini. They went out for all the power they could get, and when they controlled the finances of their countries they were able to do what they wanted, and they controlled every person, body and soul. Do not tell me that we would get a fair deal if the banks were all under the authority of the Commonwealth. If one bank said, "I cannot give you any money," it would be hopeless to go to any other. Today a person can try many banks and, perhaps, find one that will fit in with his requirements. I am not a capitalist but the same as most other members here, and I feel that this is a revolutionary step. It is not for the benefit of our people.

Mr. Reynolds: It is evolutionary, not revolutionary.

Mr. YATES: It is revolutionary. The time might come when we might go to a bank and ask for £100 and be told that we could only have £10.

Mr. Marshall: That has happened to me thousands of times already!

Mr. YATES: When all these banks come under the Commonwealth Bank, I might go along with a friend, and say to the bank manager, "I might be the next Premier of this State, what about giving this man a loan?" He would reply, "I will fix it up." Do not members think that political pressure will be brought to bear on the administration of these banks? It is a political move, and a political move only. It will be a sorry day for our people when this legislation is brought in.

Mr. Graham: You have ruined an otherwise good speech.

Mr. YATES: I am only saying what I feel is right. The hon. member can say what he thinks at some future time, and I will respect what he believes. If he disagrees with me, I will still be friendly with him. I believe the future of our country will be impaired by this iniquitous step. The Commonwealth Government will control us body and soul. It will have charge of our purse, and will dictate what we are to do. What will come next on the list? Probably the insurance companies!

Mr. Reynolds: They will nationalise the Liberal Party.

Mr. YATES: It has been whispered for a long time that this and that will be done. The Commonwealth Government has now shown itself in its true colours and proved itself false to the people by taking this step. No sane persons would have voted that Government into power if they had known of this. Do not tell me that it is not fraud!

Hon. E. Nulsen: It has always been the policy of the Labour Party.

Mr. YATES: It has still to get past the High Court. There will be a big battle over this. I hope that right will come out on top. I am sure this is a retrograde step, and that all decent thinking people in this country, Labour or otherwise, will agree that the Commonwealth Government should not interfere with banking in Australia. The banking institutions have carried on to the benefit of free trade in the land for over a century. The banks depend upon the goodwill of the people to remain open. They have supported the people, and between the two—the banks and the people—the country has progressed.

Hon. A. H. Panton: They smashed a few in the early '90's.

Mr. YATES: I do not remember that far back, though the member for Leederville may. If one did not get finance from a bank one would have to get it from a money-lender, who would put the screws on. The banks have done a grand job in this country especially during the last war. If all the banks were under the control of the Commonwealth and a central bank, and existing avenues were closed, I do not believe this scheme would work out at all well. As a member of this House I protest strongly against this, the most iniquitous act yet perpetrated by the Commonwealth Government. I trust that this Government will support any move to see that something is done to oppose this action by the Commonwealth, particularly when the matter goes before the High Court. When I read the article in the Press, setting forth the intentions of the Commonwealth Government, I thought a very dangerous step had been taken. I would not like to say here what I really think about it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I would like to hear Mr. Speaker on this question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. YATES: I have covered a fair bit of ground tonight and if I have trodden on anyone's corns I am sorry.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Do not mind the corns. That is what you are here for.

Mr. YATES: I appreciate the courtesy extended to me by all members since I have been here. I have made many friends among both Labour members and members of the Government, and I am certain that my future in this House will be a happy one. I will give of my best and co-operate with all members for the welfare of this great State of ours.

On motion by Hon. E. H. H. Hall, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 20th August, 1947.

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

### QUESTION.

#### RAILWAYS.

*As to Diesel for Kalgoorlie—Esperance Line.*

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Has consideration been given by the Minister for Railways to the necessity of providing a Diesel rail coach for the Kalgoorlie-Norseman-Esperance line?

(2) If so, is there any likelihood of having one in operation by the next Christmas holiday season?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) It is impossible to make any such promise at the present time, but every effort will be made to meet the desires of the Goldfields' residents in the matter.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, leave of absence for twelve consecutive sittings granted to Hon. J. G. Hislop (Metropolitan) on the ground of public business.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South-East) [4.35]: I wish to congratulate you, Sir, upon your appointment as Deputy President and trust that you will have an easy time in the Chair during the unavoidable absence of the President. It is to be hoped that before the expiration of the leave granted to Mr. Seddon he will be restored to good health, and we look forward to having him back in the Chair. I also congratulate Mr. Parker upon his appointment as Minister for Mines and Health, and Mr. Wood upon his elevation to the position of Honorary Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department. Members representing the rural areas are gratified at having a practical Minister dealing with agricultural matters because we realise that when we bring our problems before him he can visualise the difficulties from the correct angle without having to rely upon his official advisers for directions as to the course he should pursue.

This afternoon my remarks will be confined mostly to matters coming under the jurisdiction of the Honorary Minister at the Agricultural Department. The first question I wish to bring under his notice deals with the deficiencies with regard to C.S.A. sheep trucks. These are special trucks provided by the Railway Department for the conveyance of lambs to the market. They are fitted with a type of grating so as to prevent the lambs from becoming soiled in transit. Some reference was made recently in the Press to the matter, and for some unknown reason the railway authorities are not now supplying the trucks. Only a fortnight ago one of the reports dealing with stock sales at Midland Junction, commenced with the following words:—

Many lambs were submitted in a soiled condition with consequent loss to the producers.

I trust the Honorary Minister will take this matter up with the Commissioner of Railways and with the Minister for Rail-