

his purpose. Therefore, you will appreciate the need to grade the wheats which are grown, not simply by physical appearance, but by the usefulness of the flour they yield.

Australia and New South Wales in particular, is capable of growing wheats very suitable for breadmaking and it is these wheats which should be milled by the miller for the bread baker. The softer and weaker wheats, suitable for other purposes, should not, therefore, be mixed with the stronger ones. This leads to serious problems for the baker, and results in the Australian public receiving bread of less attractiveness than is necessary.

At one time, good quality wheat (from the point of view of the baker) was associated with varieties which gave only a poor yield per acre, but this is changing, and already good breadmaking wheats have been produced which also crop well. There is, therefore, a direct relationship between the consumer who eats the bread, the baker and the farmer. I believe that, if the farmers really know what is wanted and why it is wanted, they will be sympathetic. This, at any rate, is my impression from the talks I have already had with growers.

The farmer takes a pride in the wheat he produces, but he requires information as to what is really wanted. There can be no rule, either hard or soft wheat can be grown and, undoubtedly, both will be grown. Therefore, wheat grading to separate the different types of wheat is essential, if the best use is to be made of the various types sown by farmers. The old fashioned system of the Fair Average Quality standard is not helpful to the consumer, the baker, the miller or the farmer. It must, as I mentioned before, be discarded in favour of grading. In this connection it should be remembered that all other wheat producing countries grade wheat, and it is necessary for Australia to do the same.

That a number of you are aware of this is apparent by the work being carried out or projected at the Wheat Research Station at Wagga, the Plant Breeding Station at Gurler, the Experiment Farms, and by progressive growers.

Then, of course, there is the work of your own cereal chemists, as well as the progressive aims and ambitions of such organisations as your Department of Agriculture and your Master Bakers' Association.

I realise that a great deal of work is inspired by the thought of the future markets for your wheat. That when the world's hunger is appeased, your wheats may have to compete on an international market and that competition will be highly competitive. . . . But, for whatever reason, any work which improves your wheat generally, or in grading and separating, must be of benefit to your millers, to your bakers and to your bread.

This is not the last that will be heard of the matter in this Chamber. I ask the Honorary Minister and members—particu-

larly country members—to examine this proposal because I have for some considerable time, together with others in this State, realised that something must be done both in the interests of the farmers themselves and in the interests of the people who eat the bread and those that buy our flour, particularly after the famine period is over.

Dr. Kent-Jones made three recommendations: (1) abolition of the f.a.q. system; (2) examination of the proposal to introduce synthetic vitamins into flour and the necessity for a research institute; and (3) increased technical training in schools for our young bakers. I consider that to the farmers, millers and bakers of this country, Dr. Kent-Jones's visit to Australia has been of the utmost value and his statements should receive the serious attention of all concerned. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.14 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 5th August, 1947.

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

ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to swear in the hon. member for Gaseoyne.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

MOTIONS—CONDOLENCE.

Late Hon. J. M. Drew, M.L.C.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) [4.32]: I move—

That this House records its sincere regret at the death of Hon. John Michael Drew, a member of the Legislative Council, and a former Minister of the Crown, places on record its appreciation of his meritorious public service and tenders its deep sympathy to the members of his family in their bereavement. The terms of this resolution to be conveyed to the family of the deceased gentleman by Mr. Speaker.

The late Mr. Drew was first elected to the Legislative Council in 1900, and he served there for a period of 41 years. He was first appointed a Minister in 1904, and he held Ministerial office for a period of 15 years. I feel that when he took office he must have faced a somewhat difficult task. He was first a Minister in the Daglish Government, but he very quickly obtained the respect of all those associated with him. I remember, in my youth, hearing members, who were in the Legislative Council in those days, refer to Mr. Drew in a most kindly way and all, irrespective of party, expressed admiration for his sterling qualities. He was an able and a kindly man. I feel that those who were closely associated with him will always value his friendship and the sound advice that he was able to give them. The history of the Western Australian Parliament could not be written unless the name of the late Hon. J. M. Drew occupied a prominent place.

HON. F. J. S. WISE (Gaseoyne) [4.35]: I support the motion. There are many members on this side of the House who were associated for almost a lifetime, in the public affairs of this State, with the deceased gentleman. Many others served with him in various Governments and had the opportunity not only of appreciating all of the kindly attributes and great capacity alluded to by the Premier, but knew that underlying it all there was great firm-

ness, as he believed that his public office and responsibilities constituted a great trust. This House of Parliament suffers, indeed, a great loss in the passing of such men as the Hon. J. M. Drew.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Geraldton) [4.37]: I hope I may be pardoned for addressing myself to the motion before the Chair, as I am a new member of this Assembly, but I do feel that I would not be doing my duty if I allowed this occasion to pass without adding my meed of praise to the memory of our departed friend. I think I can safely claim to have known the late hon. gentleman longer than any other member of this Chamber. I was a junior officer in the P.M.G.'s Department in Geraldton when the late Mr. Drew married. For some years before that I was very closely associated with him. When, rather late in life, I entered politics it was with great regret that I found I could not range myself alongside of him. It was not to be! It is in my nature to say what I think, and when I entered another place I said what I thought, and I came in for one of the soundest thrashings that any man ever received in this, or any other Parliament, from the gentleman whose memory we are honouring today. I can safely say that the thrashing I received at his hands left no wounds. I may be pardoned for mentioning the fact that our late friend, before he passed to his rest, left a request that I should be asked to be one of the pallbearers at his funeral. That goes a long way towards proving what we all think about him. It also goes to prove a saying that we frequently hear, that although we might have political differences they do not impair true friendship. I can safely say, for my part, that that was so with our late friend.

Question put and passed; members standing.

Late Mr. W. H. F. Willmott, M.L.A.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) [4.40]: I move—

That this House desires to place on its records its profound sense of the loss sustained in the passing of the late Mr. William Henry Francis Willmott, a member of this House, and that an expression of the sincerest sympathy of members be conveyed to his widow and family by Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Willmott was first elected to this Assembly in 1938 and, as members are aware, he was returned to Parliament at the last general elections but unfortunately died very soon afterwards. It can safely be said that the late gentleman was the friend of all members. He had not only the happy knack of making friends but of keeping them. I am sure we all watched his fight against ill-health with sympathetic interest. He paid close attention to his parliamentary duties and—there is no question about it—he looked after the interests of those who sent him to Parliament. I was much impressed when I attended his funeral—one of the largest I have yet seen—to find such a large gathering of people, many of whom had travelled long distances to be present. It was an indication to me of the high respect in which he was held and the desire of many to pay a last tribute to him. I feel that when the time comes for us to look back upon our sojourn in this Chamber, especially when we think of the late Mr. Willmott, we will always associate his name with pleasant memories.

HON. F. J. S. WISE (Gascoyne) [4.43]: I desire to second the motion and to express my complete endorsement of, and to indicate my entire agreement with, the remarks of the Premier. Henry Willmott was, in this Chamber, a figure beloved by all. Not only did he possess the capacity to make friends but there was determination on his part that, whatever his incapacity and disabilities were, he would himself shoulder them and not share them with others. He was a man of great courage. I believe, as I said in the case of the late Mr. Drew with respect to the Legislative Council, this Chamber is very much the loser by the passing of Henry Willmott. I hope that in his stead we shall have in the new member representing his constituency a man whose desire and wish will be to emulate the late member.

Question put and passed; members standing.

QUESTIONS.

HOUSING.

(a) *As to Commonwealth-State Scheme Costs.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (on notice) asked the Premier:

1, What were the costs per square as at the 1st February, 1947, of two and three

bedroom brick houses constructed under Commonwealth-State Housing Scheme in all States in the official figures supplied by the Commonwealth Department of Works?

2, What were the comparative costs per square of brick and wooden houses in each State of Australia for the years 1939 and 1946?

The PREMIER replied:

1, The only information available is that published by the Commonwealth Department of Works and Housing which was compiled in January, 1947. It is as follows: Brick Houses—Two Bedrooms.—N.S.W., £140; Vic., £131; Qld., £125; S.A., £95; W.A., £95; Tas., no brick houses built. Three Bedrooms.—N.S.W., £130; Vic., £122; Qld., £120; S.A., £90; W.A., £87; Tas., no brick houses built.

2, This information is not available.

(b) *As to Homes Completed and Under Construction.*

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (on notice) asked the Premier:

1, How many homes under Housing Commission control were—

(a) Completed in W.A. for the month of March, 1947?

(b) Completed during the months of May, June and July, 1947, and for which permits had been issued in the time of the Labour Government?

(c) Under construction as at the 1st April, 1947?

(d) Represented in contracts let and for which construction had not commenced at the 1st April, 1947?

2, How many houses dealt with by private ownership were involved in aspects similar to (a), (b), (c), (d) in question 1?

3, How many houses are at present in course of construction both by Housing Commission and private contracts in connection with permits issued and contracts let since the 1st April, 1947?

4, How many homes have been completed in respect of Housing Commission contracts approved since the 1st April, 1947?

5, How many young married couples and couples with one child have been granted homes and are in occupation of such homes and which have been approved for such occupation since the 1st April, 1947?

The PREMIER replied:

The information required will take some time to prepare, but it is being extracted and will be furnished as early as possible.

(c) *As to Number of Permits Issued.*

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Premier:

1, What was the total number of building permits issued by the State Housing Commission during the quarters ending the 31st March last and the 30th June last, respectively.

2, How many of these were for the construction of houses—

(a) in the metropolitan area;

(b) in the country?

3, How many were for the construction of other buildings—

(a) in the metropolitan area;

(b) in the country?

The PREMIER replied:

1, 31st March, 1947—New buildings, 587; alterations and additions, 410; total, 997. 30th June, 1947—New buildings, 580; alterations and additions, 463; total, 1043.

2, (a) 31st March, 1947—New buildings, 235; alterations and additions, 45; total, 280. 30th June, 1947—New buildings, 255; alterations and additions, 35; total, 290.

(b) 31st March, 1947—New buildings, 267; alterations and additions, 85; total, 352. 30th June, 1947—New buildings, 241; alterations and additions, 84; total, 325.

3, (a) 31st March, 1947—New buildings, 32; alterations and additions, 219; total, 251. 30th June, 1947—New buildings, 33; alterations and additions, 250; total, 283.

(b) 31st March, 1947—New buildings, 53; alterations and additions, 61; total, 114. 30th June, 1947—New buildings, 51; alterations and additions, 94; total, 145.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES.

As to South Fremantle Power Station.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE (on notice) asked the Minister for Works:

1, Are delays being experienced in connection with delivery of plant and machinery ordered in 1944-45 for the South Fremantle Power Station?

2, If so, what are the causes of the delays?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Plant and machinery are now coming forward for South Fremantle Station.

2, Answered by 1.

COLLIE COAL.

As to Amalgamated Collieries Leases and Employees.

Mr. MARSHALL (on notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

1, What was the total area of leases held by Amalgamated Collieries at Collie at the 31st March, 1947?

2, What was the total number of employees engaged by Amalgamated Collieries on such leases at the same date?

3, What was the total number of employees required under the Mining Act to legitimately hold such area without exemption?

4, What is the present total area of leases held by Amalgamated Collieries at Collie, and what is the total number of employees manning such area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, 23,606 acres.

2, 844.

3, 1,320.

4, 23,606 acres. 834 was the average number of men employed for the month of June, this being the latest official figure available.

CHILDREN'S COURT.

(a) *As to Offenders Charged, etc., and Probation Officers.*

Hon. E. H. H. HALL (on notice) asked the Minister for Education:

1, How many boys were charged before the Children's Court during the years ended the 30th June, 1946, and the 30th June, 1947?

2, How many were convicted in each of those periods?

3, How many were committed to institutions in each of those periods?

4, How many were released on probation in each of those periods?

5, How many male probation officers were employed by the Child Welfare Department during the years ended the 30th June, 1945, 1946 and 1947?

The MINISTER replied:

1, For year ended 30/6/46, 834; for year ended 30/6/47, 744.

2, For year ended 30/6/46, 596; for year ended 30/6/47, 526.

3, For year ended 30/6/46, 50; for year ended 30/6/47, 85.

4, For year ended 30/6/46, 32; for year ended 30/6/47, 29.

5, Two were employed by the Child Welfare Department during the three years quoted. The second was appointed in August, 1944, following one of the recommendations of the Commission formed to inquire into juvenile delinquency.

It is intended to further augment the staff of male Probation Officers by two more appointments and provision has been made for their salaries in the current year's Estimates.

(b) *As to Retirement of Special Magistrate.*

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE (on notice) asked the Minister for Education:

What is the precise reason for the Government's decision to retire the Special Magistrate of the Children's Court, Mr. Schroeder?

The MINISTER replied:

Quite apart from the fact that Mr. Schroeder has passed the normal retiring age for Public Servants, namely 65; the reason was conveyed to Mr. Schroeder himself on the 12th May last, namely, that the Government proposes a considerable measure of reorganisation in the Children's Court.

EMU INVASION.

As to Ringlock Fencing.

Mr. LESLIE (on notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture:

1, Is he aware that farmers in the north-eastern areas whose properties are menaced by emu invasions have found that the erection of ringlock fencing is the most effective method of protecting growing crops and pastures from the enormous losses and damage caused by this destructive pest?

2, Is he aware that farmers in those areas are unable to obtain adequate supplies of ringlock fencing?

3, Can he say what quantity of ringlock fencing is periodically available in W.A. from manufacturers and/or distributors, and how the distribution to farmers and others is arranged?

4, Will he endeavour to arrange with manufacturers and distributors to give first priority in future to all orders for ringlock fencing received from farmers in the north-eastern districts who require the fencing for protection against emus?

5, If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied:

1, It is recognised that any well constructed netting fence will assist in preventing damage from emus.

2, Yes.

3, Ringlock netting supplied for the seven months ending 31st July, 1947, is approximately 283 miles. The manufacturer supplies netting to distributors on a pro rata basis based on their pre-war purchases. Distributors place orders based upon the date of receipt of the order; and, in view of urgent requests from all parts of the State and long standing arrears, distributors consider this method the most equitable.

4 and 5, The Department of Agriculture relinquished control of fencing material in October, 1945, and is unable to allot priorities for filling orders.

CHARCOAL-IRON INDUSTRY INQUIRY.

As to Terms of Reference and Fees.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE (on notice) asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

1, When is the proposed inquiry regarding the charcoal-iron and wood distillation industry likely to commence?

2, What are the detailed terms of reference given by the Government to the Commissioner chosen to conduct the inquiry?

3, To what extent were the members of the board of management of the industry consulted regarding the question of an inquiry before the Government made its decision to hold an inquiry?

4, When was the board officially advised of the Government's decision to hold an inquiry?

5, To what extent was the board consulted regarding the terms of reference?

6, What is the total amount of fees and expenses per week to be paid to the Commissioner in connection with this inquiry?

The MINISTER replied:

1, The inquiry is virtually concluded. The final report is awaited.

2, No Commissioner was appointed. Mr. Alexander Gibson, an eminent consulting engineer of Sydney, was asked to make an investigation.

3, They were not consulted.

4 and 5, The chairman of the board was advised immediately the inquiry was decided upon and with him the general terms of the inquiry were discussed.

6, Fifteen guineas per day, which is the minimum prescribed in the scale of professional charges issued by the Institute of Engineers, plus two guineas per day travelling allowance.

SHIPPING, INTERSTATE.

(a) *As to Arrangements for Imported Building Supplies.*

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Premier:

1, Will he advise the House—

(a) the dates of the visit, and the States visited, by Treasury officer Hopkinson to arrange for materials and cargoes from several States;

(b) the States visited by this officer?

2, Will he table the reports made by this officer in regard to arrangements made and the disabilities associated with materials supply?

3, What was the date of the appointment of the officers, Miles and Nairn, to procure materials and arrange despatch from the Eastern States?

4, Is he aware that the Australian Shipping Board has been for some years the authority finally concerned with the forwarding of cargoes to this State?

The PREMIER replied:

1, (a) 22nd August to 26th August, 1946, Melbourne, Victoria; 26th August to 29th August, 1946, Sydney, New South Wales; 29th August to 4th September, 1946, Brisbane, Queensland; 4th September, 1946, Sydney, New South Wales; 5th September to 7th September, 1946, Newcastle, New South Wales; 7th September to 13th September, 1946, Sydney, New South Wales; 13th September to 21st September, 1946,

Melbourne, Victoria; 21st September to 24th September, 1946, Adelaide, South Australia.

(b) Answered by (a).

2, Some of the information contained in the report was supplied on a confidential basis, but a copy will be made available to the hon. member if desired.

3, Mr. Miles, 1st April, 1946; Mr. Nairn, 17th January, 1947.

4, Yes.

(b) *As to Liaison Officers and Honorary Minister's Work.*

Mr. GRAHAM (on notice) asked the Premier:

1, Is he aware that placement of ships at ports for loading to Western Australia is arranged weeks and months ahead of such placements?

2, Is he aware that the officers appointed by the Labour Government and stationed in the Eastern States have rendered a wonderful service in organisation of cargoes and their despatch?

3, Will he advise the House what new ground, if any, was broken by the Honorary Minister in making supplies available?

4, Is he aware that publicity made by a member of his Government in regard to the availability of materials for building has been a serious embarrassment to both merchants and builders?

5, Is he aware that many cargoes of commodities such as the cargoes of farm machinery, motor bodies, etc., arrived by the "River Murchison" on the 6th May, 1947, and the cement bags, etc., by the "Duntroon," and in connection with which much publicity was made, were arranged for despatch to Western Australia long before the Honorary Minister went East?

The PREMIER replied:

1, Generally speaking, yes, but alterations are frequently made.

2, Yes.

3, By interviews with the Prime Minister, the Federal Minister for Supply, and Commonwealth departmental officers, and by the establishment of new contacts with commercial interests the provision and transport of supplies were stimulated and goodwill for the future extended.

4, No.

5, It has not at any time been suggested that all cargoes received were the direct result of representations by the Honorary Minister, but the following extract from a communication addressed to her by a machinery firm is typical of a number of letters received:—

“We appreciate very much indeed your activity in this direction, and it would perhaps please you to know also that the improvement and general interest by the State Government in regard to the matter of shipping is remarked on most favourably in many quarters.”

KOOLAN ISLAND IRON-ORE.

As to Transfer of Leases to B.H.P.

Hon. A. A. M. COVERLEY (on notice) asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

1, Has any application been received by him to transfer the Koolan Island mineral leases from Brasserts Ltd. to the Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd.?

2, If so, will he undertake to have the question of any proposed transfer referred to Parliament for decision?

3, If no such application has been received, will he undertake to give Parliament the right to decide any proposal that would involve the exploitation of the iron-ore deposits at Koolan Island for other than processing and manufacture in Western Australia?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

1, No.

2, Answered by (1).

3, As no application has been received the question does not arise.

EDUCATION.

As to Use of Shops as Classrooms.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (on notice) asked the Minister for Education:

1, What is the name of the centre referred to in his reported statement regarding education policy which appeared in “The West Australian” of the 24th May, 1947, where two disused shops allegedly wholeheartedly condemned by the local authority were being used as classrooms?

2, On what date were the shops referred to first used as classrooms?

3, Are the shops still being used for the accommodation of school children?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Big Bell.

2, 11th February, 1947, and 17th March, 1947.

3, Yes—but I am advised that building additions to the Big Bell School have been commenced.

ROYAL COMMISSIONS.

As to Honorary Minister's Attitude.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN (on notice) asked the Honorary Minister:

In view of her attitude as a private member, does she agree with the attitude of the Government now in appointing so many commissions?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

Yes.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) [5.11]: I move—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 4.30 p.m., and on Thursdays at 2.15 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

HON. F. J. S. WISE (Gascoyne) [5.12]: The Premier discussed with me the proposal which is now before the House and, as I understand the position, the suggested alteration in the times of sitting that were formerly the custom is mainly due to a desire to give country members an opportunity on Thursday—the last normal day of sitting during the week, in the early part of the session—to return to their constituencies. I am very pleased to note that the Premier has indicated that there will be no objection whatever but that provision has been made for the House to sit after the tea adjournment on Thursdays, if requisite. I would point out to the House, however—and I am sure the Premier will quickly discover this—that the load which he and his Ministers will be called upon to bear, particularly in the early part of their experience and in the first session of Parliament, will be increased materially by the House sitting throughout Thursday afternoons. I am sure there will be very much concern on account of the

Ministers thus being unable to be in their offices during that time. Our practice is very different from that in the Commonwealth Parliament. There the Ministers have offices in the House of Parliament itself, and are able to vacate their seats and be at their desks when required. The circumstances are very different in this Chamber. I do not desire to oppose the motion, but I say that it may be necessary to amend this provision relating to Thursdays in order that the Premier may be able to give his team a better chance of coping with their departmental work. If that is so, I shall be very pleased to consider the matter and support him later in the session.

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

On the motion by the Premier, ordered: That on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £3,100,000.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, resolved:

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

Message.

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

Election of Chairman of Committees.

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

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

Question put and passed.

In Committee of Supply.

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

The CHAIRMAN: On taking the Chair I wish to thank members for the honour they have done me in electing me to this position. I hope that, with their co-operation, I will be able to maintain the high standard that has been set over the years by my predecessors in this office. This House of Parliament in Western Australia enjoys a high reputation throughout the Commonwealth, and I trust that during this session nothing will be done that will impair that reputation in any way. During the term for which I am Chairman of Committees I will endeavour to treat all members impartially, irrespective of the side of the House on which they may sit. With the co-operation of members I hope to be able to deal with the business of the House efficiently and expeditiously.

THE PREMIER (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray-Wellington) [5.17]: I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your appointment to the position of Chairman of Committees. Ever since you first came into this House you have attended to your Parliamentary duties in a diligent manner. That applies to your activities both inside and outside the House. I know you have given attention to the Standing Orders of the House and, generally speaking, I feel sure you have qualified yourself for the position that you now hold. I believe you will carry out your duties efficiently. I now move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1948, a sum not exceeding £3,100,000.

This is the usual Supply Bill that is brought down at this stage of every session. Supply is required to carry on the services of the State until the Estimates are brought before Parliament. The amount of Supply sought in this Bill is as follows:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	2,400,000
General Loan Fund	400,000
Advance to Treasurer	300,000

This gives a total of £3,100,000. By the No. 1 Supply Act of last year Parliament granted the following sums:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	2,200,000
General Loan Fund	200,000
Advance to Treasurer	300,000

a total of £2,700,000. The additional amount sought this year is needed to meet rising costs, including the increased basic wage,

which resulted in additional expenditure. In the expenditure from the General Loan Fund it is anticipated that the Government will have to meet heavy commitments, particularly for materials for the South Fremantle Power Station, which are now arriving. The period for which it is expected that the Supply-sought will last is approximately the same as in previous years, from two to three months. At this stage it is somewhat difficult for me to say when the Budget will be ready. I have to leave for the Premier's Conference on the 13th of this month and at that conference Commonwealth-State financial relations are to be discussed. Decisions reached there may have some bearing on State budgets. However, I can give the assurance that the Estimates will be completed and brought down as early as possible, when any information desired by members will be given to them.

HON. F. J. S. WISE (Gascoyne) [5.24]: It is my desire and intention to address myself to the Supply Bill, and to deal particularly with financial matters, but, before discussing the Bill or those matters to which I will later address myself at some length, there are some pleasant duties for me to perform. Firstly I desire to congratulate the Hon. the Speaker on his elevation to the highest post this House can offer to any individual. I am sure we will receive at the hands of Mr. Speaker not merely kindly consideration, but evidence that he will leave his mark through his control of the business of the House. I had not the opportunity, at the opening of Parliament, to express my appreciation of Mr. Speaker's talents. In my view he has outstanding qualifications for that office. We will doubtless miss him as the member for Claremont, on the floor of the House. I recall with great interest the education, as well as the entertainment that members received from him on many occasions. He was sufficiently versatile to give a discourse on the abilities and the disabilities of the people of Alberta, or to enter into discussion on atomic energy. He could, at times, leaven such discussion with suggestions as to how in the small hours of the morning fowlyards should be controlled and conducted.

I desire also to take this, my first opportunity, of congratulating the Premier and those associated with him in his Government. It was my desire at the first oppor-

tunity following the defeat of my Government to consult with and to advise the Premier and his senior Ministers—where advice from me was proper and might be acceptable to them—and I hope that any suggestions I may have made to assist them to avoid certain pitfalls and worries found some merit in their view. It was my desire that the Premier should enjoy the change-over, not merely as rapidly as possible but as easily as possible. I sincerely congratulate him and those of both parties on the other side of the House who have been elected as the Government. They will, as I shall point out shortly, experience opportunities that have been given to few Governments, opportunities that follow the inheritance of a healthy Treasury and a buoyant revenue.

There will be from me, and those associated with me on this side of the Chamber, the keenest desire—interpreting, as I do, the public anxiety—that we should as a party give the new Government every reasonable opportunity of carrying out its promises. I interpret the decision of the public to mean that such reasonable opportunity should be given the Government. The Government has, in its two parties, twenty-five seats and, accepting the defeat of our Government in the proper spirit, we are anxious that the new Government should be given opportunity to show the public its ability in that connection. Of the methods that were used to convince the public, which is an entirely different matter, I will perhaps have something to say at a later stage. I wish also to congratulate the new members of this Chamber on both sides of the House. The new members replaced, in some cases, men who have held high positions in the political life of Western Australia over long periods. Some of the new members cannot, I submit, expect very long Parliamentary lives.

Mr. Leslie: That is only a hope on your part.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Whatever the length of their Parliamentary lives, I hope it will give them much satisfaction and will not bring them too many disappointments, and that they will not find the sense of frustration that they will experience very irksome, or sufficiently so to disappoint them too early in their Parliamentary careers. I believe the standard of public life in this State

is something of which we are all very jealous, that it is a very important thing, and that in the influx of new members on both sides of the Chamber we have men of high character and standing.

With regard to pairs, although my comments may be considered to be more appropriate on the Address-in-reply than on the Supply Bill, I wish to make the position clear, in case the Address-in-reply debate is not continued today, so that the Premier will understand my desires. The Premier may rest assured of this, that in the case of Commonwealth-called conferences, it will be my pleasing duty to arrange that he and a Minister accompanying him shall be granted pairs. That is only a continuation of common courtesy and decency in that connection. In addition, in cases of valid sickness, there will be no reluctance on our part to see that members so affected are granted pairs. I want to make the position quite clear so that the Premier will have no worry whatever in arranging for the absence of himself and his Ministers where interstate conferences are concerned.

I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your selection by the House to be in charge of our proceedings in Committee. I am satisfied that we shall receive from you the consideration and courtesy that you yourself have expressed as being so anxious to extend. To the new members, my only word at this stage is that they will find all old members of this Parliament from either side of the House anxious to help them and to consider them, anxious to make their early days of perhaps timidity or shyness easier for them, anxious to give advice if advice be sought or considered necessary by them; and they will find co-operators on both sides willing and anxious to make their time here happy, comfortable and useful in the extreme.

The passing of the Supply Bill is vital to the Government. That it be passed is necessary to enable the Government to carry on its functions. In introducing the Bill, the Premier, handling his first financial measure, dealt with the matter almost entirely as a formal motion. I realise that, in his former seat, he did not take very much part in the debates on Supply Bills or financial matters and am anxious that

there should be absolute clarity in the records of this Chamber of the financial position of which he might have told us. His Government inherited perhaps the best and healthiest financial position any Government of this State ever inherited. It is my purpose, therefore, to give in detail the condition of the public accounts as at the time of his taking over. I think it is pertinent to observe that this Bill gives to all members an opportunity to discuss any subject under the sun, and if, therefore, any new member is anxious to speak before the Address-in-reply debate is continued—putting the nervous players in first, as it were, to enable them to get over their nervousness—this will be their opportunity also.

The Premier: Let them leave it till the Address-in-reply. Stick to precedent.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: For my part I intend to confine my remarks to financial matters, which will include the traversing of the uniform taxation system that so affects the finances of this State. It is noteworthy that, during the election campaign and since, there has been no criticism of the finances of the State or of the position in which the Premier found himself. The trust funds position for 1946-47 was as follows:—

	30/6/1946	31/3/1947
Investments ..	£5,311,176	£5,486,245
Cash at bank ..	2,571,503	2,426,210
	<hr/> £7,882,679	<hr/> £7,912,455
Permanent amount advanced to the General Account ..	300,000	300,000
Temporary advance to the General Account from Trust Funds ..		550,000
	<hr/> £8,182,679	<hr/> £8,762,455

Therefore all trust accounts were fully met. The main road funds, too, showed a very interesting position as at the 31st March, 1947, as follows:—

Federal Aid Roads (new agreement)	£890,600
Federal Aid Roads (new agreement and other works) ..	188,681
Main roads	181,201
Main roads—contribution ..	136,491
	<hr/> £1,396,973

Prior to the 31st March, 1947, extensive reconstruction works were authorised, estimating the expenditure for 1946-47, to the amount of £700,000. Approval was given for the construction of a new Causeway at an estimated cost of £450,000 spread over a period of three years, and this was in addition to the authorised programme of road work of approximately £720,000 for the year 1946-47.

I should like to comment on the Federal Aid Roads Agreement, which has now been suggested by the Commonwealth Government, and to express my disapproval of the action of the Commonwealth in the proposal contained in the new agreement to reduce the term from 10 years, which previously obtained and was requested and pressed for by me, to a term of three years. The case presented by Western Australia prior to the new agreement being formulated and passed by the Commonwealth Parliament was for a continuation of the 10-year plan and for the formula as between the States of an area and population basis to apply, with, in addition, special grants to be available to road boards from the petrol tax for the purchase of machinery. What has happened? I am hoping that since this is a matter for discussion at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference, we shall hear much from the Premier along the lines not merely of continuing the advocacy of his predecessors, but also of pressing that the least he will accept will be the agreement that was formerly in operation between the States and the Commonwealth. Otherwise, we shall have to remind him—and I should be greatly adverse to doing so—of his suggestion at election time that under no circumstances would he sit down and be regarded as a puppet of the Commonwealth. Therefore he has a magnificent opportunity in this one matter of getting restored the agreement that was enjoyed over such a long period.

I understand that the Federal Act was assented to on the 3rd June of this year, and it will take, I readily admit, a tremendous effort—I would not in any way discourage the Premier and his colleague, the Attorney General—at the next Premiers' Conference to go to the extreme limit in an endeavour to have the former agreement restored.

The Attorney General: I agree Our campaign has started.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Minister will find some excellent matter for a back-ground. Regarding the Agricultural Land Purchase Accounts, this is something which, strange to say, received the approbation of "The West Australian" some time ago—the provision in the Public Accounts for annual contributions to meet debentures as they fell due. If members wish to refer to this matter, they will find an expenditure item under the heading "Premier and Treasurer, Division VII, Miscellaneous Services" in the Budget of last year. Very early in the history of the previous Labour Government, provision was made to pay from annual revenue amounts sufficient to redeem debentures for the estates purchased for closer settlement following the first world-war period. At one stage the condition of those accounts was very unhealthy. When debentures fell due, there was no money in the fund or in a trust account to repay them. From 1936 onwards the total sum paid from revenue to meet those requirements was £314,940. The debentures redeemed from 1940 onwards were as follows:—

Yandanooka	..	..	..	£126,400
Avondale	..	..	..	49,940
Bowes	..	..	..	18,000
Jelcobine	..	..	..	7,320

These sums, which were set aside, together with collections from those estates, fell far short of the needs of the Treasury to repay the outstanding debentures. In recent years, however, money has been paid into an account to enable the Government to find the requisite funds as the debentures fell due. The Treasurer also found an account including sums to be set aside as reserves for belated maintenance. These sums were as follows:—

	Amount created.	Balance at 30th June, 1946.
Deferred maintenance for public buildings	£150,000	£125,552
Belated repairs—Railways	215,000	170,639
Replacement of railway rolling-stock — Proceeds from sales to Commonwealth	144,759	41,192

In connection with loan funds, the total borrowings approved for 1946-47 was the

largest sum this State had ever had approved at a Loan Council meeting. The amount was £5,014,000. The amounts used and sums approved for the 1946-47 expenditure which were still in hand and were still in hand on the 31st March, 1947, were as follows:—For works the expenditure had been £1,598,623 during the nine months from the 1st July, 1946. The conversion loan expenses were £5,683, and the balance of £12,000 made a total expenditure of £2,606,695. Received during April was a share of the second Commonwealth loan in connection with the flotation to meet loan requirements. From that we received £175,000 during April plus a Commonwealth Savings Bank loan of £390,000. The position may be summed up in this way; that the fund available at the 31st March, 1947, for expenditure during the currency of the financial year ended the 30th June last was still £1,002,389. It is interesting to note some of the major works which were in hand from that loan programme, from the loan programme approved for expenditure in this State from loan funds as from the 1st July, 1946. The amounts are as follows:—

Railway Department—

	Total estimated cost. £
Re-organisation of workshops and new machinery ..	108,000
Under-water storage of coal and new machinery ..	28,000
Improved Canteen facilities—Midland Junction Workshops ..	29,000
Purchase of 14 "U" class locos. from United Kingdom ..	210,000
Six Diesel-electric coaches and 12 trailers ..	208,000
Tramways—	
Fifty trolley buses ..	288,000
Electricity Commission—	
South Fremantle Power Scheme ..	3,734,000
Frequency Changer ..	270,000
Acquisition of Collie Power Undertaking and New Station ..	140,000
Public Works Department—	
Fremantle Harbour Works—	
North Quay Extensions East and West ..	42,000
Reconstruction of Berths 1 and 2 North Quay ..	125,000
Bell mouthing ..	26,600
Swan River Improvements—	
Improvements to Causeway ..	50,000

	£
Water Supply in Agricultural Areas—	
Stirling Dam ..	400,000
Goldfields Water Supply—	
Mundaring Weir—Raising wall ..	425,000
Public Buildings—	
Perth Hospital Construction ..	950,000
Plant Suspense A/c. (Purchase of new plant) ..	125,000
Met. Water Supply Department—	
42in. Main—Cannington, Victoria Park ..	87,000
Mt. Yokine Reservoir ..	156,000
Various Sewerage Works ..	256,000
Department of Agriculture—	
Midland Junction Abattoirs ..	72,000
Department of Industrial Development—	
Alunite Production—Chandler ..	624,000
Charcoal-Iron and Steel—	
Wundowie ..	400,000
Welshpool Industries—	
Foundry for Chamberlains Industries ..	80,000

There were some of the notable loan works put in hand from the loan fund which was available to the Government and which put the Government in credit by an excess of £1,000,000 at the time of its taking over on the 1st April. I think the Treasurer will admit that an inherent budget position which comes about because of the case stated for him to the Grants Commission and which almost meant the balancing of the Budget, created a remarkable position for any new Government to be put in. There have been few occasions in the State's history where a Government has inherited such a position. One contribution to the present and future taxpayers of Western Australia made in the last few years is due to the financial milestone in our history. I refer to the repayment of the deficit for the years 1945-46 and 1946-47. These deficits would have been £912,000 for the year 1945-46, but that was all repaid, and for the last financial year the amount would have been £675,000, of which £628,000 was repaid.

If these deficits had been in fact incurred and there had not been any repayment under Section 6 of the Taxation Reimbursement Act there would have been a continuing charge on the State revenues of at least £50,000 per annum by way of interest alone. That is a remarkable position for any Government to have created for it meant an improvement in the State's finances of over one and a half million pounds. The late Government had the

opportunity under Section 96 of the Constitution Act of presenting the State case to the Commonwealth Government, and it did so with the result I have just indicated. The financing of deficits has been a source of continuous worry to past Governments. The manner of financing them has changed from time to time.

I will deal now with the method used in the past for raising money prior to the Financial Agreement of 1927. At that time deficits were financed by borrowing under special Parliamentary approval. Those facilities were granted under the Treasury Bond Deficiency Acts, the first of which was passed in 1916. Although there was provision for a sinking fund contribution, this was suspended by Commonwealth Executive Council minute. Ultimately the deficits debt was merged in the public debt under the Financial Agreement on which a sinking fund contribution of 5s. per cent. by the State and 2s. 6d. per cent. by the Commonwealth operated. Up to 1927 there were occasions when the financing of deficits from loan gave the State Treasurers considerable concern. Under the Financial Agreement deficits have to be financed by borrowing through the Loan Council in the ordinary way, but whereas on borrowing for public works the State has to pay a sinking fund contribution of 5s. per cent. per annum, which is subsidised by a Commonwealth contribution of 5s. per cent. per annum, borrowing for deficits carries a sinking fund contribution of £4 per cent. per annum all of which had to be found by the State.

It will be clearly seen that any achievement in any State that enabled deficits to be repaid by what may be termed Eastern States taxpayers from the common pool of Commonwealth resources was a very important payment so far as recurring debt and liability for Western Australian taxpayers were concerned. As to the amount still owing for past deficits, the total funded at 30th June, 1946, was £9,543,092. Past deficits represent 9.845 per cent. of our public debt, which is approximately £97,000,000. If we take the division of that sum of 9½ millions and the proportion which was funded under the Financial Agreement of 1927, 4.3 millions still averages 3¼ per cent., and it costs £150,000 per annum in connection with the Budget

of Western Australia. We have represented in the debts of the past, incurred because of the interest to meet the deficits, an annual charge on our Budget of £259,000 per annum.

It is very important to note the sums which have been received by this State as a special grant from the Commonwealth Government in recent years. Including the deficit of £912,000 the grant under Section 96 of the Constitution was £950,000 making a total of £1,862,000 which was received from the Commonwealth in addition to the uniform taxation contributions for 1945-46. For 1946-47 under the Taxation Re-imbursement Act we received £747,000 more, quite apart from that which we received as special grants namely £1,245,000. In connection with the deficit of £628,000, I understand the Commonwealth refused to pay, £47,000 but the Premier received at the end of his first financial year £1,873,000 from Commonwealth grants. Taking into account the recurring cost of past deficits with other contributions under careful financial administration, it can be seen that anything that reduces the State interest burden must be an important contribution.

I say with all modesty and humility that it has not been the lot of many men in public life in Western Australia to have an opportunity of saving the State millions of pounds, firstly, in the repayment of the deficits and secondly in the recurring charges upon them. In connection with our public debt and interest on sinking fund charges, the charge on revenues for 1945-46 was £4,083,814. It takes over £4,000,000 of State revenues annually to finance the interest requirements of the public debt of Western Australia. The public debt incurred in the main by our producers is represented in the moneys borrowed for the development of the State.

Mr. Leslie: What year was that?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I refer the hon. member to the Budget table which will give him all these particulars. I submit that on a budget of approximately 14 million pounds that is a very heavy burden. Our per capita debt as well as our total debt has shown a reduction in recent years. I remember a very elevating and instructive address made on that subject some years ago by the member for Nedlands as to the necessity for careful watch to be

kept on the likelihood of a serious position arising in this State because of the assets on which this money had been spent not showing a return sufficient to service the debt on the national debt. It is a very important point in our history that we find the opportunity within the national income to carry a bearable portion of the interest required to service moneys expended on public works of the past. All the costs of public works, railways, land settlement, port and harbour facilities, water supplies and many others are represented in the £97,000,000. I am sure that if members will study this position, which is clearly set out in the 13th report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission, they will find it very enlightening.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How do you get those now? We used to have them circulated at one time, but we do not get them now.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I do not know how they are obtained. This was sent to me. I know that six copies are sent annually to the Premier's office. Whether sufficient copies have, in the past, come forward so as to permit of circulation to private members, I do not know.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Surely members are entitled to them.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I think they are. I think that copies of these reports are available in the library of Parliament, and I am also of the opinion that extra copies could be made available to the Premier. The supply of former numbers will be found to be very restricted.

The Premier: We will try to obtain them.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It is difficult to obtain them because only a limited number is sent, unless special application is made.

The Premier: They used to be sent to all members.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That was before my time in this Chamber.

The Attorney General: No, I do not think so.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: These reports are very important documents, and if members wish to trace the changed circumstances of Commonwealth-State financial relationships they will get a very fine background in the 13 reports, which have already been made by that Commission. I would like to quote from the 13th report of the Grants Com-

mission, which clearly sets out as at October, 1946—a very recent date—the position not only of Commonwealth finances, but that likely to be experienced in State budgets of the future. On page 16 of that report will be found these words:

State Budgets of the Future.—In future, the budget problems of all the States will be affected by a combination of many factors, some of which are clear, while others are obscure and difficult to assess, since the Australian economy is closely linked with, and partly dependent upon, external conditions.

Federal-State Financial Relations.—All States contemplate post-war works of considerable magnitude, but, owing to the present dearth of physical resources, it is difficult to estimate the probable rate of progress of these works.

The need for improved social services has been recognised by all governments, and public expenditures thereon are still increasing.

Revenues from railways are receding rapidly from the record levels reached during the war years, and future competition from other forms of transport may accelerate the downward movement. Revenues from racing and lotteries have reached high levels owing to abnormal spending power. There is some doubt whether the buoyancy of these revenues will be maintained.

The Premier: They are already going down in racing.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The report continues:

The salaries of some State Public Service Departments have recently been substantially increased, while those of others are at present under review.

Finally, State expenditures will naturally be materially affected by the course of prices which will depend upon complex relationships between the Australian economy and economic and financial conditions in other countries.

Federal Finance.—Total expenditure disclosed in the Federal Budget for 1944-45 amounted to £610m., of which £461m., was for war purposes. Expenditure from revenue excluding taxation collections of £33.4m. reimbursed to the States, amounted to £343.4m., while expenditure from Loan Fund totalled £266m. Of the total war expenditure of £461m. Revenue provided £195m. and Loan Funds £266m., compared with £168m. and £377m., respectively, in 1943-44.

It will be seen from that that there is a tremendous expanse in the response attaching to the servicing of war commitments and continuing war debts which must be borne by the Commonwealth for many years to come. The report continues:

Taxation (excluding collections reimbursed to the States) yielded £304.5m. (£41 11s. 9d. a

head) compared with £74m. (£10 13s. 9d.) in 1938-39. The major items of taxation in 1944-45 were Income Tax (£181.6m.), Customs and Excise (£67m.) and Sales Tax (£30m.).

Total expenditure on defence and war (1939-45) services to 30th June, 1945, was £2,116m., of which £729m. was provided from Revenue and £1,387m. from Loan Funds.

The Public Debt of the Commonwealth at 30th June, 1945, was £1,729m. compared with £397m. in 1938-39. The debt at 30th June, 1945, was £234 a head, compared with £57 in 1938-39. The annual interest charge on the public debt at 30th June, 1945, was £44m. (£5 19s. 5d. a head) compared with £12.5m. (£1 16s. a head) in 1938-39.

Trust Fund balances at 30th June, 1945, amounted to £137m., compared with £24m. in 1938-39. Of the balance of £137m. at 30th June, 1945, £53m. is allocated to the National Welfare Fund, £14.6m. to the War Damage Fund and £13.6m. to the Superannuation Fund. Substantial balances in accounts connected with the war largely make up the remainder.

The Commission concludes that chapter with this paragraph:

The foregoing brief survey is not intended as a criticism of policies pursued or contemplated. Its object is to throw light on some of the consequences of war for Australia as a whole, and to direct attention to difficult problems facing the Federal and State Governments in their joint and several tasks of conserving, reconvertng and expanding the resources of the nation to meet the needs of peace-time conditions.

It will be seen that the changing circumstances of this nation's responsibilities must bring about a revolutionary change in the people's attitude to financial problems. The changed circumstances, which would have been impossible to contemplate many years ago, have resulted in the national debt of the Commonwealth approaching £3,000,000,000.

I next refer to remarks made during February and March last in connection with this State's attitude to uniform taxation. I first refer to the amounts this State has had recouped to it by the Commonwealth following the two Premiers' Conferences. At the first one the sum of £34,000,000 was decided on, and at the second a disbursement of £40,000,000 was agreed to. It is very interesting to note the per capita repayments to the various States in connection with the £40,000,000. The advocates for this State placed, at Federal conferences, before other State Premiers and the Commonwealth, a special plea in connection with Western Australia's special disabilities.

We represented, at no stage, that this subject was approached as if we were mendicants. We tackled the problem with the satisfaction of knowing that Western Australia was deserving of the greatest consideration, and that the resources of Australia, wherever they were—and particularly those of this State, where they were to be found—should be developed by Australian wealth, and by a tax on Australian wealth wherever it was to be found. That was the approach to the problem with the result that after the 1946 conference of Premiers this State emerged with a per capita repayment, from uniform taxation, of £6 16s. 10d. The total list is as follows:—

	Repayment per head of population.		
	£	s.	d.
New South Wales ..	5	12	11
Victoria ..	4	7	6
Queensland ..	6	1	6
South Australia ..	5	9	4
Tasmania ..	4	17	11
Western Australia ..	6	16	10

That result was brought about after many days of discussion during which the Premier of this State was accused of being obstinate in the extreme for standing out for a better deal for his State, and from which he emerged with £740,000 more than from the previous allocation. Today the States have very little opportunity to increase their own taxation, and when we recall that the average tax collections, including financial emergency tax, of the two years prior to uniform taxation, were used as the basis for uniform taxation, I think it will be readily conceded that since then this State's voice has been heard and the Commonwealth put into the position of acknowledging its indebtedness to Western Australia.

If we exclude land tax, dividend duty, totalisator tax, probate duty and stamp duty there are no fields for the Premier to exploit. In the unlikely event of his having the taxation rights returned to him I would venture the opinion that if he wanted to increase his income from taxation he would find it difficult not to increase the tax rates; in fact, I think he would have to do that to receive the same increase in spite of the increase in the national income. I will enlarge on that point a little later because I have a reference taken from the hon. gentleman's policy speech in which he made certain promises which, perhaps, he now might wish were not like the spoken word, but

could be recalled. He will, I am afraid, find them in some ways an embarrassment to him in later times.

But passing that over, I wish to refer to a comment made in a rather scurrilous way in a newspaper known as the "Liberal News" which is the official organ of the Liberal Party of Australia. I quote from a copy of January, 1947 in which are rather more than usually damaging statements, because they appear in a journal which belongs to an accredited and supposedly reputable organisation but which casts reflections in the most unvarnished terms. There are statements which not only impute motives, but which go further and affect the public life of public men and even intrude into the domestic sphere which all public men hold as sacred. This newspaper, however, begs no pardon, and in its scurrilous statements makes use of such words as I will quote directly.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: At the tea suspension I was about to quote from the official organ of the Liberal Party of Australia. In this issue is one of the most scurrilous editorials that one could read in any offensive paper. I believe that several issues of this paper are in the possession of members of Parliament. In those issues are disclosed tactics that are neither creditable nor honest. Dealing with uniform taxation, the following statement appears:—

Liberals should remember Mr. Wise selling out on the restoration of State taxing powers at the Premiers' Conference.

Because of that statement in this, I presume, widely-circulated newspaper, and because of remarks based on it, and used with indiscretion—even during the heat of an election—I propose to give the Chamber, however wearying it may be, the full statement that I made at the Premier's Conference in January, 1946, at which so much success was achieved for the State of Western Australia. The Premier, in his policy speech, promised to have the State resume control of its own finance and to arrange for taxation reductions on a substantial scale. His comments on Governments being puppets of the Commonwealth I will pass over, generously, as one of his election-time indiscretions, until we see results later.

I suggest to the Premier that if he will study the 80-page report of the proceedings at the Premiers' Conference, the conference of the Prime Minister and Ministers of State held in Canberra on the 22nd January, 1946, he will get an excellent background not merely of this State's disability, but of the whole picture and the true position as to uniform taxation as a means of collecting taxes satisfactorily, as well as the position of the States under that system. I think it is necessary that all members of Parliament in every State should become versed in the difficult circumstances that Federal and State financial relationships will bring to State Treasurers. I am certain the Premier will then have a very different attitude and will find circumstances different from those that he anticipated during February and March last and, as I will show later, it will not be my desire to criticise his efforts for this State, but I suggest that he has a lot to live up to. Following the statement of the case by the Premiers at the Premiers' Conference, the Prime Minister became very angry. I will quote from "The West Australian" of the 23rd January, 1946. This is from the report sent to Western Australia through "The Herald" news service, not contributed to by anyone but a reporter in the Eastern States. The report says—

The six State Premiers, one by one, attacked uniform taxation, explaining the difficulties of his particular State. The Queensland Premier (Mr. Cooper) was particularly outspoken, as was Mr. Wise (W.A.), who said that Western Australia's difficulties were such that the State could not be developed properly unless it had control of its own finance. The other Premiers differed only in detail.

Further down it continues—

Even Mr. Chifley's accustomed grin was gone by the time the Premiers had finished their attack, and he got grimmer and grimmer as he replied.

After listening to the Premiers Mr. Chifley said that the States had not surrendered any sovereign rights during the war, that they had no rights to surrender, because the High Court ruling on uniform taxation had made it abundantly clear that the Commonwealth in peace and war had prior claim on income tax revenues and that there would be very little margin for them to take after inescapable commitments had been met by the Commonwealth.

I crave the indulgence of hon. members to give the statement for Western Australia as it was delivered. I think it will serve not merely to clarify the issues, but to refute nasty and unpleasant statements such as I have read from the "Liberal News," and which I can quote in greater detail, used by speakers during the last State election. It is noteworthy that the case for this State as submitted at the Premiers' Conference, receiving, as it did, the commendation of the Eastern States Press, did not receive from the Press of this State any comment, favourable or otherwise, but the fact remains that the Premier, in attending the forthcoming Premiers' Conference, has the responsibility to emerge successfully with £50,000,000 instead of £40,000,000, which I claim is what he should fight for. I quote only from the public proceedings and not from proceedings held in camera. The statement is as follows:—

Mr. Wise: It is very obvious, Mr. Prime Minister, that in your introductory remarks you made no comment on your submission to the States or on the States' submissions to you. It is therefore necessary to traverse some of the ground contained in the submissions which the States made to you and which were interchanged between the States. But, before getting to that point, I think it is vital that we do not lose sight of the fundamentals of this problem while discussing in a piecemeal fashion only a part of the problem. There are many aspects that must be examined. Those aspects include the constitutional, the war-time expediency, the political, and the ethical. Taking the first the constitutional aspect, there is no necessity to repeat the history and detail of the changes in the financial relationships between Commonwealth and States since framers of the Constitution made their first anticipation as to the financial requirements of the Commonwealth and States. The financial needs of the States were then intended to be assured. Changes both drastic and rapid took place, and usually the States were asked to accept some altered system. It has been the experience that methods were altered to their detriment every time financial adjustments were made. With the introduction of uniform taxation for war purposes, the States rightly feared not only a further intrusion, but also that a permanent alteration would be very prejudicial to their interests.

It would be interesting to imagine what the views would be of those who 50 years ago hammered out the Constitution of Australia if they were present at this Conference. These men attempted to weld six separate sovereign entities into a Commonwealth whose resources would be so allocated that both Commonwealth and States would be financially sound. Their main problem was to protect the finances of the States if the

States were to surrender their rights to impose Customs duties. If those men could have foreseen the weakening of the States and the strengthening of the Commonwealth that has taken place over the past 44 years there would have been no Federation. If their bodies were ever exhumed I am sure the skeletons would show evidence of convulsions. Uniform taxation was introduced for the duration of the war, and Mr. Curtin said that, because "of the sheer necessities of war," it was unwise not to leave untaxed and untouched resources which should be at the disposal of the Commonwealth for war purposes. It was the only method whereby the heavy burden of taxation necessary for war would be distributed over the people of Australia with reasonable conformity to the principle of ability to pay. He said also that the tax was for war purposes; the Commonwealth Government had no extravagant plans for improving social services, but desired amendments to existing State services. Mr. Chifley said that uniform taxation was necessary because of the impecunious position of the Commonwealth and the prospect of a £70,000,000 deficit; the Commonwealth had ever-growing greater financial obligations. He also said that 1,000 tax-gatherers would be released for war purposes. It was proposed to ally with uniform taxation what might be called a modest scheme of pensions for widows and for the first child to cost approximately £1,600,000.

The Commonwealth Government decided to apply a uniform taxation scheme for the duration of the war and twelve months thereafter. Both Mr. Curtin and Mr. Chifley said many times that the proposal which the Commonwealth Government had placed before the conference was that the States should suspend the right to impose income tax for the duration of the war and twelve months thereafter. Honourable members present will remember how pained was the late Prime Minister that the Premiers should have any doubt that that was the intention. He chided the Premiers; he lectured them; he told them that various sections of the community who had the position fully placed before them had agreed to the curtailment of their rights which it was necessary to impose because of the war. When the Premiers, all of them with the experience of the past, had reason to suspect what I initially said, namely, that this ultimately might prove to be a permanent plan to the detriment of the States, we were chided as "doubting Thomases," as people not prepared to accept the word of the Commonwealth. That was what we were told then; now the request is that uniform tax should remain permanently with the Commonwealth.

If I were to go no further, there is the lie direct to the statement in that scurrilous newspaper.

The idea of modest social service schemes also appears to have gone. During the intervening period income tax collected from individuals and companies has jumped from £77,500,000 in 1941-42 to £215,500,000 in

1944-45. But reimbursement to the States is only £32,666,000. Entertainments tax has gone up £2,000,000. Nearly £250,000 has been collected in Western Australia, and £98,000 returned by the Commonwealth. Social services expenditure which was to be altered during the war only to iron out inequalities, has grown from £17,366,000 in 1939-40 to an estimated amount of £77,000,000 for 1946-47. So it is clear that the Commonwealth, when introducing this "temporary" scheme in 1942, needed money, without any question or quibble from the States, for war purposes, and to meet the serious position. The Commonwealth was in desperate need and we had to do our utmost in its defence. Now the Commonwealth needs finance for servicing war debts, war pensions, post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation, and no-one will deny its responsibilities or the need for the utmost assistance to the Commonwealth to meet those very important needs and commitments.

First of all, the handing over to the Commonwealth, even under protest, of the sole right to impose income taxation was tantamount to the completion of an agreement between all parties for the successful prosecution of the war and all that it entailed financially. The Commonwealth became the trustee with power to raise money to an unlimited amount for war purposes and the protection of Australia. The agreement did not authorise the trustee to enter into new avenues of expenditure for the improvement of social conditions or the expansion of existing ones.

The question may therefore be asked very pertinently, without any criticism of the social services in existence or to be rendered whether the application of increasing dependency of the States on the Commonwealth was an important factor involved. It is obvious that the raising of money by taxation from all States to meet expanded social services provided by the Commonwealth must reduce almost to nil the taxing capacity of the States, making it almost impossible for them to levy tax. This is evident by comparing the increase of the amount required by the Commonwealth in 1946-47, and is very clearly expressed in the statement that has been submitted by Mr. Chifley for our consideration. The Commonwealth's proposals for altering the present method take no notice of expenditure by the States except on social services. That point has been stressed by the other Premiers who have spoken. Those who framed the proposals believe that no further development of Australia is necessary or, if it is necessary, that it should be carried out only by the Commonwealth, or by the States only if the Commonwealth approves. That is a very vital aspect of the whole plan, this patchwork plan that you have submitted to us.

It should be repeated that the Commonwealth proposals for the continuation of uniform tax are based on the assumption that the only item of State expenditure liable to expansion and which is financed from the proceeds of income tax is that relating to social services. It may be accidental that the method proposed by the

Commonwealth benefits chiefly the two States whose opposition to uniform tax would most probably be associated with the provision of funds for social services. Victoria had a low scale of social service expenditure and imposed a low severity of income taxation. One of the chief objections raised by the then Premier of Victoria when uniform tax was introduced was that his people would be called upon to contribute much more to the Commonwealth war effort than would the people of Queensland, largely because Victoria had not "indulged in the extravagant social services" that Queensland had introduced, and therefore Victoria had lower income tax. In consequence, Victoria was penalised under the uniform tax legislation by receiving a proportionately smaller grant than Queensland. Now Victoria is to be placated, Tasmania during the past few years has greatly increased social services expenditure and has been in dispute with the Grants Commission because that body would not fully recoup to Tasmania the amounts spent on such services, the commission's contention being that Tasmania was providing a social service above the fair Australian average. The dispute reached such intensity that the Commonwealth Government, under pressure from Tasmania, appointed a special committee to investigate the matter. The committee's report has not been made public, but it is significant that the representatives of Tasmania have been helping materially to solve that problem.

There is a serious difficulty in referring the matter to the Commonwealth Grants Commission. If we were to increase our social services expenditure more rapidly than Victoria did, we would be prejudiced in the report of the commission and would receive a smaller amount as a penalty for having social services higher than those of the standard States. That is a very important point if this scheme is ever to receive serious consideration. Under the Commonwealth's proposals, Victoria and Tasmania will receive increases in compensation immediately the new scheme operates.

I may interpolate that one of the serious difficulties of the future will be the relationship between the Commonwealth-provided social services, those provided by the States, those which are of the average standard of the States by which is measured by the Grants Commission the allocation or weight of benefit this State is to receive because of impaired social services. It is a very important point in the whole structure of uniform taxation recompense.

Tasmania will receive a substantial increase which, if it were applied to Western Australia on a per capita basis, would mean to us about £400,000 per annum additional compensation. One of Western Australia's objections to the new scheme is that the cost of servicing the public debt and not social service expenditure constitutes the item of expenditure which would be related to income tax receipts. For many

years, Western Australia has imposed heavy income tax, the receipts from which have exceeded the cost of social services.

It is a fundamental weakness of the Commonwealth's proposals that they have no regard to debt charges or for the cost of developing Western Australia. The cost of development of the States has been the responsibility of the States. Some States have been rapidly developed and some have been developed more cheaply than others. Where the population is small and the areas are large, development and other costs per capita and in total must be large. I submit some examples to illustrate that point. Would it be said that Western Australia could neglect such services as the Goldfields Water Scheme? That does not meet its interest and redemption charges. Would it be reasonable that a State constituting one-third of the whole area of Australia should continue to have less than 500,000 people in it?

If we traced in retrospect the cause of loan losses, we would find that agricultural railways and all the things that have given to the Commonwealth some advantages in value of exports are very important contributors to the bad position reflected in our Budget, and I think that developmental losses mean much more than making too easy some aspects of social services. Surely development and production, which mean much effort, are vital to the nation's future! Australia cannot expect to expand so rapidly as during the last few decades. Therefore, wherever expansion is undertaken, it will be costly, but no regard is paid in the plans submitted to us to the need to maintain Australia's present production and to develop latent resources. Production and development of the whole nation cannot be lightly sacrificed. This scheme gives no consideration whatever to the prospects of such things which have had Australia-wide publicity as the Ord River irrigation proposal, a project to encourage population in the Kimberleys, that will cost from £9,000,000 to £12,000,000.

The scheme gives no consideration whatever to any project for the establishment of power schemes and the reticulation of electricity to our sparsely populated areas or to areas where industry is already established. It gives no consideration at all to comprehensive water schemes, not only those that the States have envisaged but also those for which plans have already been drawn. Take a part of Western Australia in which I have a particular interest, the north-west, an area of about one-sixth of the whole continent. Under this plan, we are going to meet competition from social services. The very urgent need for better shipping services, refrigeration at ports, better transport, better air services, and better medical schemes, including expansion of the "flying doctor" services, are neglected in this plan.

The last few sentences clearly show that there was no originality in some of the suggestions in the policy speeches applying to the North-West. The report continues—

All things that small populations in isolation are entitled to demand are neglected. It may be said that the Commonwealth Grants Commission would give consideration to our case and would correct injustices. If there is truth in that, in any case there is a lag of two years, and it is not certain that the Commission would approve of such proposal in the north-west as I have specifically referred to. What sort of a position would the States, both claimant States and standard States, be placed in if the Commonwealth Grants Commission had to consider developmental policies which, in their wisdom, those in charge of administration had properly investigated, in a State sense, and wished to apply? The fact that the States had imposed on them a war-time limitation of their powers imposes on the Commonwealth an obligation when the war is over to reach agreement with them on any financial adjustments that circumstances may now require. The fact that the Commonwealth stressed the time limit imposes on it a great and moral obligation to endeavour to honour the political promise. It is a bad thing if political principles are to degenerate into political expediency.

The Commonwealth may argue that insofar as our taxation was imposed to help to meet loan losses, we are already getting the benefit in the amount paid to us under the present uniform tax legislation, and that if these losses increase our financial needs will be met by the recommendations of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. Even if the States do not spend another penny of loan money, which is unthinkable, the cost of servicing their Australian debt will increase annually if interest rates are maintained at their present low level or are kept below $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Our own Australian debt at 30th June, 1945, was £50,700,000 and the interest charges for the year 1944-45 were £1,700,000 or an average rate of £3 7s. 1d. per cent. As our debt becomes cancelled by the operation of the National Debt Sinking Fund our interest, paid as sinking fund, increases to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

This is a matter I dealt with earlier in the evening. The statement continues—

This is a very substantial variation. Increases of expenditure must occur regardless of whether you try to fix the amount to apply today or in the distant future. One factor to be remembered is that development in some States commenced at a time when it was impossible to induce pioneers to undertake the work, and the costs of development in them were very high compared with those of neighbouring States which had the advantages of protected industries. The tariff has imposed a very heavy burden on Western Australian development, and represents a substantial loss in the State budget. That position has been intensified during the war. Large sums of money have been expended by the Commonwealth, at a time when costs were no consideration in the light of the national peril. Much of that expenditure will remain as a permanent asset of great value

in the States where it was expended, but that is not the case with Western Australia. My State is left with no permanent improvements of substance as a residue of the war. Yet Western Australia, under the plan, is to receive no special consideration except consideration based on social services expenditure. The suggestion in the plan that variations of other forms of ordinary expenditure, that is expenditure on other than social services, can be covered by a non-income tax revenue is absurd. Where is this flexibility to come from?

On this point, if I may again interpolate, I strongly stressed to the Prime Minister in subsequent statements which appear in this document that it was nonsense to argue that a State with a population of a little under half a million could be expected to have any flexibility whatever in revenues when compared with the opulence of such States as Victoria. I went on to illustrate this and said—

Let us examine the available sources—

(a) Increased returns from land tax and probate duty—the only two substantial avenues of taxation left to the States: As the Commonwealth is also already in both fields what is our chance of getting any substantial increase?

(b) Territorial revenue: our revenue from land is a diminishing amount and if we dealt with it properly a portion of our annual return should be set aside for development purposes. We have not been able to do this in the past and our hope in the future is considerably less.

Timber.—We need more money, not for revenue, but for reforestation and afforestation.

Mining.—We might get another £10,000 or £20,000, which would be a mere bagatelle. If the Commonwealth passed over the tax on gold it would help.

Departmental.—The greater part of our revenue from this source comes from interest earnings. Present low rate for borrowing will reduce our returns and the invasion of the civilian housing sphere by the Commonwealth Bank may seriously affect our returns in the future.

(c) Business undertakings and trading concerns.—Any policy to raise the returns from these sources will place burdens on development and secondary industries. There may be a margin for improvement in return, but it is not nearly wide enough to cover our needs.

After making those points, I went on to say this:

There is no adjustment for increasing population and no provision for variation in conformity with the price level. Rising costs and pegging of price prevent adjustments by States. For instance, our railways would need an increase of 25 per cent. in fares and freights to cover increased costs. The weakness in the

Commonwealth plan is illustrated by our anticipated deficit, which this year will be a million pounds, without much increase in social service expenditure. This disposes of the contention in the Commonwealth case that "there should be enough flexibility in the field of other revenue items to cover variations in other items of expenditure." And this is before we commence our deferred development programme.

I shall refer more particularly to gold-mining. Western Australia's gold-mining industry was sacrificed for the war. Thousands of men were deliberately taken out of it for war employment. Gold-mining was most seriously affected, and is now employing only a small proportion of the men engaged in the industry in 1939. This industry was one of the largest contributors to State income tax, but with the serious curtailment of its activities during the war its contribution to the State's national income is now very much reduced. If the State regained the right to impose income tax before gold-mining were revived, it is certain that the industry could not contribute to income tax in anything like the proportion collected before the war. To enable the gold-mining industry to revive substantial assistance will have to be forthcoming. I have already said that Western Australia has not had the benefit of any permanent industries resulting from the war. Its dependence upon the Eastern States has increased. Western Australia is not able to sell its primary products in other parts of Australia but must dispose of them in the markets of the world, often at prices that are not satisfactory.

In 1942 the Commonwealth stressed that one of the reasons for imposing uniform taxation was the increasing financial burden of the Commonwealth and the lessening of State expenditure. The position is now reversed. As Mr. Cooper has pointed out, the responsibilities of the States have increased greatly since hostilities ceased, and there is now a clamour on the part of the public for "business as usual" under peace-time conditions. The costs associated with developmental works which no State can deny to its people have increased tremendously. One of the important things in the system adopted by the Commonwealth Grants Commission is the principle of a balanced budget. That is used as a standard with which to measure the needs of the claimant States. That means that there is no opportunity whatever for the weaker States to build up surpluses comparable with those which the standard States have built up during the war. The claimant States must be more than parsimonious because they are living below the bread-line.

Let us look at the national aspect of this matter. Some States have been greatly enriched by money drawn from all over Australia as payment for the products of highly protected manufacturing industries. If all the States in the Federation, together with the Commonwealth, supported a policy to tax wealth wherever it is to be found, for developing resources wherever they are found, not only the

distant States but all Australia might reap an advantage from a uniform tax system. If the uniform taxation proposals are actually an effort towards unification, how will Western Australia fare with five members out of 74 in the House of Representatives? New South Wales has 28 members in the same House.

Not only does Western Australia need all the money contributed by the State in uniform tax, or any other tax, but it also needs additional money for its resources to be developed. It is of supreme importance to Western Australia to know how the Commonwealth is to arrange to finance our inevitable and heavy needs. The Commonwealth is silent on that point.

Whatever merit may be in the uniform tax proposals does not apply to the entertainments tax. Why should the Commonwealth be in this field at all? From this tax £240,000 was collected in Western Australia in 1943-44, but only £98,000 was refunded to the State.

I repeat that if uniform tax is to remain and wealth is to be taxed uniformly irrespective of its location, the formerly highly taxed States with undeveloped resources should have those resources developed if we are to be national in our outlook. I therefore oppose the proposals of the Commonwealth on the constitutional principle involved and on the actual demerits of the scheme itself.

Does that sound like selling out to the Commonwealth? I went on to say—

This patching system is extremely unsound. It could be safely stated that the framers of the Constitution were anxious to ensure adequate financial resources for the States. Federation has not worked out that way, and before we continue with the plan suggested by the Commonwealth for a permanent arrangement a very close examination should be made of the financial relationships between the Commonwealth and the States. At the appropriate stage I shall move—

That a conference be arranged between the representatives of Commonwealth and States—on a basis of representation mutually agreed upon—to review the whole of the financial relationships between Commonwealth and States.

In the review of income tax the committee to consider the possibility of adopting methods which will preserve to the States the right to levy their own taxation while at the same time preserving to the taxpayer the benefits of the adoption of a uniform code of taxation.

Is it any wonder that one becomes very disappointed at tactics such as were used in this paper from which I have quoted, when those were the facts? I continued in this strain—

I shall do so because, in my opinion, the plan which has been submitted by the Commonwealth merely tinkers at the problem. What is needed

is an examination of the whole of the financial relationships of the Commonwealth and the States. Included in that examination should be an inquiry into the inequalities of the economic structure of the States with their need to develop their latent resources in the interests of Australia as a whole. An examination of the financial resources available to Australia as a whole is involved. There should be a clear demarcation of the obligations of the Commonwealth and the States, and a distribution of the financial resources of Australia between the Commonwealth and the States in order to enable each authority to carry out its responsibilities. If the present system is to continue, all the States will in time become claimant States and, therefore, consideration must be given to the functions and methods of the Commonwealth Grants Commission in order to achieve an equitable balance in regard to the points that I have mentioned. For income tax purposes, the possibility of adopting methods which will preserve to the States the right to levy their own taxes and at the same time preserve to the taxpayer the benefit of the Commonwealth Income Tax Assessment Act, should be examined. We must have a uniform code of taxation. We come to this conference knowing that the Commonwealth Government proposes to continue the system of uniform taxation, modified by the consideration of only one factor, namely, social services expenditure. We must go farther back. The inequalities as between the Commonwealth and the States can be adjusted only if we are prepared to face the constitutional, political and ethical problems involved.

I regret the necessity for testing the patience of this Chamber by reading the case I presented. Had I the notes that I used at that conference, I would not have worried members by reading the statement I made. That statement was made publicly. After three days of wrangling, Western Australia emerged on a basis better than that of any other State. I have read the figures that will be found in the last financial statement and that prove the success, if not the force, of the argument that was used both to the Prime Minister and to the other Premiers concerned. I think it well to have it on record without, as I originally intended, going into the merits and demerits of and the necessity for a continuation of the present code of uniform taxation. I think it necessary also to record the last word of the Premiers in a joint statement handed to the Prime Minister at the conclusion of the conference, which statement expressed the attitude of the Premiers of six States. This is what we said—

We adhere without qualification to the statement that we presented at the beginning of this

conference. We stated that we were opposed to the Commonwealth's proposals for a unified tax system; that we believed that the benefits of uniformity could be achieved while retaining the right to the States to levy income tax; and that the Commonwealth should agree to a conference between Commonwealth and States for the purpose of formulating the necessary method. The Prime Minister intimated that his Government proposed to proceed with their proposals despite the unanimous views expressed by the States. As to the proposals now before us and those originally submitted by the Commonwealth, we consider the former immeasurably the superior. Our acceptance of the agreed upon proposals is the exercise of a choice between the two alternative proposals in regard to a reimbursement payment, and in no way involves our acceptance of the unified tax scheme proposed by the Commonwealth.

Whether for political purposes or not, the persons who had a knowledge of the State's case and the fight put up by me at that Premiers' Conference, stooped to very low methods when a summary of their views is that "Liberals should remember Mr. Wise selling out on the restoration of State taxation powers at the Premiers' Conference." I was prompted to answer that charge in order that there might be placed on record in one document a clear statement that is irrefutable, taken from the public proceedings of the Premier's Conference held from the 22nd to the 25th June, 1946. I now come to the assurance of the Premier regarding reductions of taxation on a substantial scale. Those words are to be found in his policy speech.

The Attorney General: Do you disagree with that?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I agree entirely with the desirability of a reduction of taxation. The hon. member knows that. Members opposite cannot, in this Chamber, get away with the statements that have been made elsewhere. Here we meet face to face and they must be prepared to receive an answer to their statements and to any evasion concerning the interpretation of my remarks. Both the Premier and his Deputy—I refer to the Minister for Education—claimed that in my comment on the aspect the Premier raised in his policy speech concerning taxation, I was averse to a reduction of taxation. They know that was a mere quibble. In this Chamber they cannot get away with that. Let me analyse the difficulties associated with reduction of taxation on a substantial scale. That is a fundamental and vital

point. If the Commonwealth relinquishes its claim on the £40,000,000 it now disburses, and the collection of that sum reverts to the States, those States would have to collect at least the same amount for their own use. I venture the opinion that on the average Western Australia would have to pay more tax than now. With the buoyant national income of the present and the greater number of taxpayers contributing, taxpayers would contribute more than the average of the two years that preceded uniform taxation. I have no doubt that would be the position.

The Premier: Substantially more.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I have no doubt that would be the position. But I also hold this point of view and I state it with some conviction: That the Premier would find that if the right to tax were returned at this stage to this State there could not in this State be a substantial reduction in taxation and at the same time a substantial increase in the services rendered by the State. Thus, the promises must come side by side. I would not be at all surprised, particularly in the higher income group, if a greater rate would have to apply in Western Australia to ensure the same income as we are getting. This is particularly so, if, as I hope, the Premier can be a party to convincing the Commonwealth that the total pool should exceed £50,000,000 instead of £40,000,000.

The Premier: Why do you say £50,000,000?

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Because in the per capita, as well as the per State allocation of the difference between £30,000,000 and £40,000,000, we emerged with £740,000 more than the average collection of the two years preceding uniform taxation. It is necessary for the development of this State, and for its progress under the control of any Government that, as its responsibilities increase so must its income increase. I think, therefore, that an extra £10,000,000 distributed between the States on the same basis as the present per capita allocation—that is the important point—is necessary for us. I wish the Premier every success in stating the case in his way, and I am sure he will be ably assisted by his Attorney General. But I am certain of this that they will have to come back to the fundamentals I expressed in the speech I have read to the

Chamber. I am hoping that when he returns he can say that Western Australia has again emerged as successfully as it did in 1946.

The greatest task the Premier has is to convince the other States that Western Australia has latent resources which it cannot, of its own volition and from its own earnings, develop and that their development, therefore, becomes the responsibility of all Australia, and not necessarily from a uniform tax applied and controlled by the Commonwealth. Also, there should be no apology for the possibility of recoupment under Section 96 of the Constitution. There need be no apology for any advocate of this State going to the Commonwealth and saying that Western Australia, vital as it is, being one-third of the area of the Commonwealth, and vital in population and in defence matters, must receive from the more highly developed States more than a quid pro quo; it must get generous contributions from the States which it has assisted to establish.

I hope that the Premier will go to his first Premiers' conference—and I am sure he will—fully convinced of the justice of his case, and I hope that he will return from it feeling that much satisfaction is due to him for any successes he might achieve. He can rest assured that I will adopt a very different course from the one to which I have already referred, if he does so, and I will be pleased to be generous in acknowledging any achievements of his in that connection. I sympathise with him. I do not detract at all from any effort he can make in convincing the other Premiers, as well as the Prime Minister, of these things. But, of course, wishing him well will not help him, and I make the forecast that he will not come back with the State's taxing rights restored. That was a promise made by the Deputy Premier during the election. He said that that would be strongly fought for. Of course it will; it has been already, but what did Mr. Chifley say? He said, "The States have no sovereign rights to surrender." He will retain the purse. We must be very careful. If the Premiers press too hard, and he says, "All right, take back the taxing rights," we must make sure that the Commonwealth, which will be the first in any taxing field, under the judgment of the High Court of Australia, does not leave us really as mendicants and the impoverished citizens of the Commonwealth.

Those are the things to be guarded against. Never mind about the attitude that we approach the matter cap in hand! I care not for any such suggestion coming from the other States. I care not for any such attitude on the part of the Government of New South Wales or Victoria when they disregard the duty that they and their citizens owe to the people of this State. I suggest that the Premier is fully conscious of the great responsibility which attaches to him at his first Premiers' conference. He will have this consolation, if there be any consolation in it, that whatever is the result he will receive the plaudits of "The West Australian." I hope that they do not turn out to be a serious liability to him.

HON. A. R. G. HAWKE (Northam)
[8.16]: I desire first of all to offer my personal congratulations to the Premier and to each of his Ministers on their elevation to Ministerial rank in this State. It is given to but very few people in a generation to become Ministers in a Government. There are many reasons for that, but we need not discuss them now. I am sure the members of this Government have already found, in their short term of office, that Ministerial responsibilities are more numerous, heavier and more worrying than they had imagined prior to the 1st April of this year. I do not propose, at this stage, to say anything about the political methods employed during the election campaign, by the present Ministers, in their successful endeavour to reach the positions they now hold, because comments in that regard will be more appropriate at a later stage of this speech. I would like also, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you upon your promotion. I am sure you will give to your new position the very close attention which distinguished your work in this Chamber during the years you were member for York without the additional responsibility you now have as Chairman of Committees.

The first matter I wish to discuss is related to the inquiry into the charcoal-iron and wood distillation industry at Wundowie. The first announcement by the Government regarding the inquiry was made on the 14th May last. The public was then told that the inquiry was to ascertain the prospects of success for the industry. It would have been appropriate, and would have portrayed the mind of the Government

better if, after the word "prospects of success" there had been printed in parenthesis in "The West Australian" report, the words "if any." More recently we have read of a substantial change of front as to the reason for this inquiry. In an official (Government publication circulated in this State last week the public is told that the reason for the inquiry is to ensure the best possible use of the resources available. I can only think that between the 14th May and the 31st July the Government must have come into possession of a good deal of information which indicated to it that there could be no doubt at all about the prospects of success of this industry.

The Premier: You are guessing, now.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I submit that when a Government decides to hold an inquiry and at the time of the decision tells the public that the inquiry is being held to ascertain the prospects of success of the industry concerned, and some weeks later tells the public that the inquiry is being held to ensure the best possible use of available resources, there must in the interval have been a substantial change of front on the part of the Government. I want to know why this inquiry has not been held in public. Concurrently with this inquiry another is being carried on, by the same Mr. Gibson, into the railway workshops at Midland Junction and also, I believe, into coal supplies. That inquiry is open to the public and is being reported in our newspapers from time to time. Yet, so far as I am aware, there has not been one word to the public, officially, as to the inquiry into the charcoal-iron and wood distillation industry at Wundowie.

The public was led to believe, only a few weeks ago, that the inquiry into the Wundowie project was being delayed through the necessity for a considerable amount of information to be prepared by officers of the Department of Industrial Development, to enable Mr. Gibson to proceed, and that in the meantime he would carry on with the railways inquiry. More recently, if I remember rightly, a statement was made to the effect that his report in connection with the railways and with Wundowie would probably be available by next October. Since the time when the statement was made that Mr. Gibson could not proceed with the inquiry at Wundowie, no

other public statement has been made to the effect that he has been able to proceed with it, yet this afternoon we received from the Minister for Industrial Development the surprising information that Mr. Gibson's inquiry into the Wundowie industry is virtually completed.

It is most unfortunate, and unfair to the public and to those who were vitally concerned with the initiation and establishment of this industry, that the inquiry has been held in secret. As far as I can understand the position there is no excuse for that proceeding. Members of two previous Governments in this State are vitally concerned in the result of this inquiry. Those Governments were, first of all, the Willcock Labour Government which initiated the proposals for the establishment of the industry, and, secondly, the Wise Labour Government which carried on the work of establishing the industry at Wundowie. I think members of those two Governments might have been offered the opportunity of being represented before the inquiry, or on it, in order that their interests might have been protected from the beginning of the inquiry until its end.

The Premier: Why did you not make a request to that effect?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I hope the Premier, after four months of office, has realised that he is governing this State now.

Mr. Marshall: He is trying to.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: And that any move of that description should come from him and his Government. I was waiting for some public announcement to the effect that the inquiry was to be commenced and I took it for granted—as I am sure most other people in the State did—that it would be a public inquiry. As soon as the public inquiry commenced members of the two Governments that I have mentioned, if they had not been offered by the Government the right to be represented at the inquiry, as they should have been, would have made the request to the Government or to Mr. Gibson to be so represented. I do not desire tonight to discuss the technical features of this industry, not that I have the qualifications to discuss them in detail. I think it would be improper at this stage, when Mr. Gibson is probably finalising his report

and before the inquiry has been completed, for the technical side of the industry to be discussed publicly.

I do not propose to say anything about Mr. Gibson, and certainly nothing against him, because I take it for granted he is a man whose integrity is beyond question and who will base his findings upon the information and evidence made available to him in this State, but I would point out that he will be depending nearly 100 per cent. on the information and evidence that he will receive from the Government's own technical experts who have been associated with this industry from the beginning. It is quite clear that the Government made no effort at all, prior to deciding to set up the inquiry, to ascertain whether it was necessary or justified. This afternoon the Minister for Industrial Development told the House that there had been no discussion of any kind with the board of management of the industry prior to the Government making the decision to hold the inquiry.

Mr. Marshall: What was the motive?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I point out that the board of management of this industry is set up under a special Act of Parliament and, apart from the courtesy that was due to the members of that board, I believe that, on legal grounds, it was the bounden duty of the Government or of a member of it to consult with the board of management on the question of whether an inquiry was necessary and as to the form such an inquiry should take, if the Government was finally satisfied that such an inquiry should be held.

Mr. Needham: Perhaps they consulted the Broken Hill Pty., Ltd.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I make no comment at all on that point. I say that Parliament passed special legislation to set up a board of management for this industry and the Government of the day, under the terms of that legislation, appointed highly-placed officers of the Government on the board and also appointed an outsider to represent the workers in the industry. I contend that it was the bounden duty of the Government to make every reasonable investigation, to hold every reasonable consultation to ascertain whether an inquiry was necessary or justified. But it did none of those things. In effect, Ministers slapped in the face the

members of the board of management and proceeded, without any consultation of any kind with anyone, so far as we are aware, and appointed this person from Sydney, Mr. Gibson, to come here and conduct an inquiry. If my arithmetic is any good—and I admit it is not the best in the world—the Government is paying this man about £107 a week on the basis of a 6-day week and over £130 a week on the basis of a 7-day week for the work he will carry out in the Wundowie inquiry.

The Premier: How does that compare with the capital cost of the undertaking—probably ultimately half a million?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: It does not matter how it compares with the capital cost; what I have stated is a fact, and I maintain that the Government, before it committed itself to this inquiry and to the expenditure associated with the inquiry, was in duty bound to make some investigation and hold some consultation with members of the board of management, who have the legal responsibility of seeing that this industry is established properly and upon the most modern basis possible.

The Premier: That is why the inquiry is being held.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: But there was a step the Government was bound to take before it made any decision to hold an inquiry of this sort and the Premier did not take that step. None of his Ministers took that step; they ignored entirely, even on the ground of courtesy alone, the necessity for consulting with the board of management, which had been charged by Parliament to ensure that this industry is properly established. That is the main responsibility of the members of the board of management. They are paid to do that, and, according to the Act of Parliament under which they work, that is their first and main duty. Yet the members of this Government did not consider it advisable to have one word with the members of the board of management or any member of the board, according to the answer given to the House this afternoon by the Minister for Industrial Development.

The two Governments immediately prior to the present one, who were responsible for the initiation and establishment of this industry, exercised the greatest care and precaution in the planning, the design-

ing and the establishment of the industry. For instance, our technical officers were in close consultation for a long period with the appropriate experts of the B.H.P. regarding the blast furnace side of the industry and in connection with other aspects on which those experts could guide our technical officers. Furthermore, we sent an industrial chemist from the Department of Industrial Development to America to investigate the most modern methods applying in that country to the wood distillation side of the industry and also to the charcoal-iron production industry of that great industrial country. He was in the United States for six months and, when he returned to Western Australia, we found that the plans and designs upon which the Government was working required no alteration in principle and not very much alteration in detail.

At a later date, the Indian Trade Delegation came to Australia. One of the members of that delegation was the general manager of the charcoal-iron and wood distillation industry at Mysore in India. We quickly took advantage of the opportunity of his presence in Perth to enlist his interest in the industry we were establishing at Wundowie. He visited the centre, inspected the industry as far as it was then established, closely examined and studied the designs and plans and every phase and feature of the undertaking, and his final judgment was that he wished very strongly that he could have the industry we were establishing at Wundowie transferred to Mysore, so that he could have a modern industry to operate instead of the more or less out-of-date one which it was his responsibility to manage and control.

We took many other precautions to ensure that the industry should be established upon the soundest, safest and most modern basis possible. I am sure that if the present Government had adopted the ordinary precaution of investigating closely with members of the board of management the cautious steps and care taken from the very beginning, even it would have been satisfied with what had been done.

I am very concerned about the bad effect which the decision to hold this inquiry has had upon the industry, because it has indeed had several bad effects, very bad effects, costly effects, which will add greatly to the amount which the Treasurer will

have to pay to Mr. Gibson for his inquiry. For instance, the announcement of the decision to hold an inquiry into the industry destroyed the confidence and the hopes which the great majority of people in this State had in the industry.

The Premier: Why has it done that?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Because the natural tendency, especially when an industry is being established by the Government, is for people to conclude immediately the holding of an inquiry is announced that something is radically and drastically wrong.

The Premier: I do not think so at all.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am sure of it, and I know that has been the effect on this industry, because I meet a great many people from time to time who are interested in the industry and I have received letters from many people who have taken an interest in it from the beginning, and everyone concerned was and is still saying that there must be something radically wrong about the place. In addition, the decision to hold an inquiry has fed the ignorant and evil minds of many people in this State who, from the very time the decision to establish the industry was announced, have been prophesying that it would end in total and costly failure. Many people of this type have invented and spread wilful lies about the industry and about those most prominently associated with its initiation and establishment, and they have done that in the majority of instances for political purposes. Probably the worst offender in that regard is Hon. C. F. Baxter, M.L.C. Furthermore, this inquiry has had a bad effect upon the industry so far as manpower is concerned. It has had the effect of bringing to an end, for the time being at any rate, the building programme at Wundowie to house the men who will work there, especially as key men.

The Premier: Houses are still being built there.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I tell the Premier—and I am sorry he does not know, he should—that there has been an interruption in the house building programme at Wundowie. If the Government has made a decision in recent days, or in recent hours, to re-commence that programme the sooner the Government says so the better, because it will have a most beneficial effect upon the manpower position at Wundowie. From information made available to me by men

working in the industry, I know that a number of capable men have left because of the uncertainty and because of housing difficulties, and that a number of other skilled men, who might have gone to Wundowie, will not go because of the uncertainty in the industry at the present time. These men have taken other employment which will be permanent for them and from which it will be difficult for the Wundowie industry to take them when the time comes for that industry to need them.

I urge the Government to make a public statement as soon as possible as to the whole position. If Mr. Gibson can give the Government some interim report then let the Government publish it at the earliest possible moment. Surely, if Mr. Gibson has virtually completed his inquiry into the industry it should be possible for the Government to clear the air tomorrow so far as the public is concerned in connection with this industry. The Government should be in a position now—or very soon, judging from the reply given by the Minister for Education today to one of my questions—to say whether the industry is to proceed or whether, because of some fatal misplanning or mis-designing, or something else, the industry is to be closed down and never to operate. So, from the point of view of all concerned, and in the interests of the industry in the future, if it is to operate, as I feel sure it will, the Government had better clear the public mind of the doubt and fear felt by the public at present. I should hope that Mr. Gibson, when he makes his report to the Government, would say that the industry should be continued and that the Government should—to some extent, at any rate—follow the plans developed by the previous Government for the establishment of a fully integrated iron and steel industry in Western Australia, because that was the objective which the previous Government had in mind when it decided to establish the industry at Wundowie.

The Minister for Education: Now you are coming down to earth.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: We believed that it was necessary to test the economics of the industry upon a comparatively small basis, and, once the success of that test was proved, to use the small-scale industry as a foundation upon which to build in the future a large-scale, fully integrated iron and steel industry. I hope it may have been

possible for Mr. Gibson to devote some attention to and make some inquiry into that vital aspect of the industry.

I want to tell the Committee that last year the previous Government had confidential discussions with a man highly placed in the iron and steel industry in Australia. We made an arrangement with him under which, in a tour oversea, he was to test out certain possibilities of the early prospect of establishing in the State a much more advanced form of iron production, with steel production added, than would be possible at Wundowie. This man went oversea. He has since returned to Australia and I understand that he has reported to the Government. However, the matter is still confidential and I propose to say no more about it except to point out that if Wundowie is to be the beginning and the end of this State's efforts in the field of iron and steel, it will not benefit Western Australia a great deal in the future. Any Government in this State should always keep in the forefront of its mind the necessity for trying to establish a much more advanced industry after the economics of the industry at Wundowie have proved to be successful. I hope the members of the Government will keep that in mind.

The large-scale industry which the previous Government had in mind was planned to be established in the South-West close to the town of Bunbury, which, strangely enough, played its part at the last election in assisting to strike down the previous Government which was planning an industry ultimately of the type I have mentioned for that part of the State. The estimated production of charcoal-iron at Wundowie is 10,000 tons, with 500 tons of acetic acid and 120,000 gallons of wood naphtha per year from the wood distillation side of the industry. The planned or proposed or suggested large scale iron and steel industry for the South-West would have a production at least ten times greater than that and would, of course, process the iron into sheet steel and thus greatly add to the industrial development of Western Australia. I want briefly to mention some other items of industrial development in Western Australia, because it is probable that I will not participate in the Address-in-reply debate that will be taking place in this House during the next few days.

Mr. Leslie: That is cheering.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Yes; I should say it would provide some comfort for the member for Mt. Marshall.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I wish the member for Mt. Marshall would give us that guarantee.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: All old members and probably some of the new members—if not all—know that there is operating at Chandler, 30 miles from Merredin, an industry for the production of potash. This was established during the war by the Government and has been carried on by the Government ever since. If the present Minister for Industrial Development has studied the files in connection with this industry or carried out careful inquiries in connection with it, he will have some appreciation of the worries, the headaches, the sweat and the tears, and all the rest of it, that were used up in its establishment.

The Attorney General: Not tears, I hope.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Yes, tears indeed!

The Minister for Education: I can see traces of a few on the files.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I should say the Minister would. The establishment of the industry under war conditions was almost impossible; but in view of the urgent need for potash fertiliser for the agricultural industry we believed it was our bounden duty as a Government to push on in an endeavour to establish that industry and put it into production irrespective of the cost. The cost, as most members know, has been very heavy, and the industry has operated at considerable loss during every week it has been in existence. Continuously there has been carried on a system of research by the State's own technicians, trained in our own University, to devise new ways and means of improving the quality of the product and of increasing the production. I believe the results achieved in that direction in recent months have been very gratifying and establish solid grounds for confidence that the industry will, when the developmental costs are written off, be able to produce potash at a price that will compete with imported potash. If the Government triplicates the industry, as was the in-

tention of the previous Government, the potash industry at Chandler will be able to produce the whole of Australia's requirements, and there is sufficient raw material in the Chandler district to enable that to be done for 100 years to come.

I think probably every member is fairly well informed about the industry now being established at Welshpool for the production of agricultural tractors. When in full production, this industry will produce 2,000 tractors a year and will provide employment of a skilled and semi-skilled character to over 1,000 people in the industry itself, apart from the considerable number who will be provided with indirect employment. I hope the Minister for Industrial Development has read the files in connection with this industry.

The Minister for Education: I will tell you in a few minutes.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I hope he has. They are well worth a study; and I say quite deliberately that it was something in the nature of a miracle that this industry was obtained for Western Australia. It was not secured for this State without a tremendous amount of work and worry; without a tremendous amount of negotiation and consultation with the Commonwealth Government, with different banks, and with many other people and organisations. Western Australia is indeed fortunate that there has been established within the boundaries of the State an industry of this size and importance.

There is to be established in Western Australia an industry for the manufacture of wool tops, all arrangements in connection with the establishment of this industry having been finalised by the previous Government with the South Australian firm concerned. I understand this industry will process 15,000 bales of wool a year to produce 2,000,000 lbs. of wool tops, 1,500,000 lbs. of which will be available for export to other States and other countries. It will be seen, therefore, that in connection with secondary industries, the previous Government achieved very substantial and very creditable results and what applies to the field of industrial development in this State so far as the previous Government is concerned, applies also in respect of every other field in this State.

I want to quote briefly from a speech delivered at Geraldton by the Minister for Industrial Development dated the 16th July, in reply to a civic welcome given to him on that day at Geraldton by the local Municipal Council, his speech having been reported in the "Geraldton Guardian and Express" of the 19th July, 1947.

The Minister for Education: A good report, too!

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Is there a chance of its being correct?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: So far as I know, it has not been necessary for the editor of that paper and the Minister for Industrial Development to have a public argument as to whether what was published was actually said by the Minister on that occasion. After expressing some worry he had about the portfolio of Industrial Development before taking it over, the Minister said—

I have since found the portfolio of Industrial Development most interesting but perhaps more difficult than those of Education and Local Government. In recent years—and I want to be fair to my predecessors—there has been a number of industrial ventures in this State, both small and large, which have been financed and assisted by the State Government. The majority of these ventures are today making some contribution towards the production of essentials in this State and in some degree to its export trade. One or two of them are somewhat ambitious and only the future can tell what that ambition will be.

Speaking of the Chamberlain tractor industry the Minister said in effect that the firm concerned promised to make a great contribution to the development of the State and he had been greatly impressed with the plant already assembled for the industry.

The Minister for Education: Quite true. I read the report, and it was quite a good one.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Members will see from that portion of the speech made by the Minister at Geraldton that he very fairly and frankly confessed that the previous Government not only had ideas in regard to secondary industries in this connection but indeed had ambitious ideas and acted upon them, which is probably more than he might have been inclined to do if he at that time had been a Minister—

The Minister for Education: Do not work on a series of assumptions.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE:—and had followed his naturally conservative inclination in connection with a matter of this kind. Whether that be so or not, does not matter. The fact is that he publicly said that the previous Government had achieved a considerable amount of progress in the field of industrial development.

The Minister for Education: I think, incidentally, I used the plural.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: So the fact is established, out of the mouth of the Minister himself, that the previous Government did have ideas, some of them ambitious in regard to industrial development. I have no doubt that each of the other Ministers, if he were to tell the truth about the department he controls, would say that his predecessor in office had many ideas, and good ones, and that he put many of them into practice.

The Minister for Education: And some very bad ideas too.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I wish to quote now from an election advertisement issued by the Country and Democratic League. This is where I come to a brief consideration of the political methods used during the election campaign by the parties to the present Government. This advertisement carries a youthful photograph—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And not so very good looking.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: That is a matter of comparison. This is a photograph of the then leader of the Country and Democratic League. He is still the leader of that organisation, but he is now, of course, the Minister for Industrial Development, and Deputy Premier. This advertisement is authorised by Hugh A. Leslie of 97 St. George's-terrace, Perth. This is what it says in part in connection with that portion of my speech which I have just expressed—"Everywhere you can see the muddle of Labour's administration. No materials."

Mr. Styants: There are cobwebs everywhere.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Which, of course, was and is a lie. It goes on to say, "No houses." That was and is a lie. It then says, "No transport." Which was and is a lie.

Mr. Marshall: They knew it when they wrote it.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The advertisement states, "No education," which was and still is a lie. "No hospitals," which was and still is a lie; "In fact, no ideas," which was and still is a lie; "No enterprise," which was and still is a lie; "No progress," which was and still is a lie.

The Minister for Lands: Tell us what you said about the Causeway.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: This proves that the campaign carried on by the parties of the present Government, prior to the last election, was one based largely on lies and half truths. If these lies and half truths had been created and circulated ignorantly there could not have been so much complaint about them, but when they are created and circulated wilfully then of course the position is entirely different; and any Government which wins its way to power by the use of such methods cannot hope to have a long term of office, or a very pleasant one. But it can certainly look forward to a sticky end when the end comes!

The Premier: I am afraid you are suffering from the sting of defeat.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Not in the slightest degree, and the Premier cannot escape from his personal association with advertising of the sort I have mentioned, because other advertisements, issued by the Liberal Party, will be produced here. They contain as many wilful lies as does the one which I have just read, and those Liberal Party advertisements must have had the personal approval of the present Premier before they were issued.

The Attorney General: We will produce a few, too.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I think I am saying nothing but the truth when I remark that the election, by making it impossible for me to continue as a Minister of the Crown, probably added ten years to my life. On that account I have something to be thankful for. I am not the slightest bit hurt, disturbed, sore or sour because of the defeat our Government suffered at the election.

The Premier: You do not give that impression.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am not concerned with what impression I give the Premier. I do not want to talk about my-

self, but if the Premier cares to make inquiries about me—and I do not care how many years he goes back—he will find that whenever defeat has come my way I have accepted it without complaint, more particularly when it has come as a result of the decision of the people democratically expressed at the poll.

The Minister for Lands: They will decide that again in the future.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: If the Minister for Lands has anything worth saying, and he speaks up instead of mumbling in his whiskers, I will reply.

The Minister for Lands: You have a hell of an opinion of yourself.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: We can ignore the infantile outpourings of the Minister for Lands. As a matter of fact, I understand that the main worry of his colleagues is in connection with the extra outside size in hats that he now finds necessary!

I want to say a few words about the decision of the Government to retire the special magistrate of the Children's Court, Mr. Schroeder. I can quite understand the legal members of the Government—and there are four of them—being anxious to retire Mr. Schroeder, and appoint a legal man in his place. I well remember the outcry which took place when Mr. Schroeder was first appointed. It all came from the legal profession. They condemned his appointment in wholesale fashion and prophesied that he would, as magistrate of the Children's Court, become hopelessly boxed up in the first few weeks with the legal aspects of this, that and the other, and that the Court would be thrown into a state of more or less confusion.

Mr. Schroeder's service, as special magistrate of the Children's Court has, of course, disproven all that, and has won for him a very high place in the estimation of nearly everyone in Western Australia. The reason given by the Government for his retirement is not at all convincing; in fact, it is the weakest excuse or reason that one could possibly imagine. There is no logic in it. In effect the Government says that, apart from Mr. Schroeder's age of 65 years, it is intended to reorganise the Children's Court, to establish it on a new and wider basis, to give it greater powers and so on. If that be so, I suggest there is no one more suitable or better qualified to set this proposed re-

organised court off on the proper footing than the man who has been magistrate of the Children's Court during the last ten years or so.

The Minister for Education: That is entirely a matter of opinion.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Surely his practical experience over the last ten years or so would be invaluable during the first six or 12 months of the proposed new court. Surely the new court would have a much better chance of success—we all desire that it should achieve success—with Mr. Schroeder as its special magistrate, than it would have with an entirely new man in that position. I have no doubt that this is the reason for the decision of the Government to retire Mr. Schroeder, but I have some doubt as to whether it is the real reason behind the move first made to retire him. Many weeks ago—early this year—Mr. Schroeder told me that he had had a severe disagreement with a man who is a Minister of the present Government, and that the gentleman concerned had threatened him with dire consequences if he were ever in a position to take action against Mr. Schroeder. I propose to search much more carefully into this phase of the matter, as it could be that one member of the Government is using his position to victimise the special magistrate because he dared to give a certain decision early this year. If my further investigations prove what I think they may prove in this regard, the matter will be discussed again in this Parliament.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about another Royal Commission?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: If the Government had retired Mr. Schroeder because he had reached 65 years of age—

Mr. Marshall: A magistrate continues to 70 years of age, under the Act.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Not all. Those appointed under the Stipendiary Magistrates Act carry on until they are 70 years of age, while those appointed under the Public Service Act retire at 65 years of age. If the Government had decided to retire Mr. Schroeder on account of his age, there could not have been much complaint about the decision, except that this Government since coming into office has appointed other men over 65 years of age to carry out important Government works. I therefore suggest that the Government cannot say it is retiring a

man partly because he has reached 65 years of age, while at the same time taking into its employment men already past that age.

I wish also briefly to discuss the recent increases in commodity prices in this State. On Monday last housewives in the South-West land division were called upon to pay $\frac{1}{2}$ d. more for each 2-lb. loaf of bread purchased. Housewives in the metropolitan area and the South-West land division were called upon to pay more for bread tickets than they paid previously. The South-West land division takes in many towns such as Bunbury, Albany, Geraldton, Merredin, Busselton, Northam, Toodyay, Kellerberrin and so on, and thousands of housewives in the State are, since this Government came into office, paying more for their bread.

The Attorney General: Through the agency of the Commonwealth Government.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: They are paying more for other commodities that have increased in price since this Government took office.

The Attorney General: That is entirely through Commonwealth action.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: What is?

The Attorney General: Price-fixing.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Is that correct?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Does the Minister say the Deputy Prices Commissioner in this State is responsible for increases in prices?

The Minister for Lands: You cannot increase prices without his sanction.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The Minister for Lands is looking at this matter in a superficial way. The Deputy Prices Commissioner is in effect only a sort of yardstick or super accountant. On the application of a manufacturer, a distributor, a shopkeeper or someone else, he examines the application for an increase in prices. He studies the cost. He allows certain margins for profit and other items and, if he considers costs of production have increased sufficiently to warrant an increase in price, he authorises the business-man concerned to make that increase.

The Attorney General: And he operates under the Commonwealth prices regulations.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am glad the Attorney General is so well informed in this matter, because that has been my in-

formation also, but before dealing further with that point, I want to make it clear that the Deputy Commissioner of Prices is no more actually responsible for increased prices than is the man in the moon, because he allows such increases only when costs of production or distribution or some other costs to the business man concerned have increased. Therefore, costs of production are not always necessarily completely under the control of the Commonwealth Government.

The Attorney General: Almost entirely.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: That is not so. They could be under the control—especially in this State—of the State Arbitration Court, because the great majority of men and women working in this State work under awards or agreements of the State Arbitration Court. I now go back to the information that the Attorney General was good enough to offer a few moments ago, that prices are fixed by the Deputy Prices Commissioner in this State under legal authority given to him by the Commonwealth Parliament and, subsequently, by the Commonwealth Government. That is extremely interesting information. I am surprised that the Attorney General is in possession of it.

The Attorney General: If it is wrong, tell me how it is wrong.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I intend to do that and to quote the authority of the Liberal Party of Western Australia.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Surely that party never makes a mistake!

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I have no doubt that either the Premier or the Attorney General, or perhaps both, saw a proof of that statement before it was published in "The West Australian" during the recent election campaign.

The Attorney General: We do not see those statements, any more than you do, but I have no doubt it is right.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I am glad that the Attorney General is in no doubt that the statement in this advertisement is correct.

The Attorney General: Read it.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I intend to do so. It stated—

The Arbitration Court gives, but the Labour Government takes away! Housewives! A word about that 5s. increase in the basic wage. How

Labour robs the worker! The worker fondly imagines he has had a real 5s. rise, but his wife—the soundest little economist in the country—knows otherwise. She knows that extra income tax takes its toll. She also knows of the increases which have recently been made or which are about to be made by the Labour Government in the price of cigarettes, clothing and tea.

The Attorney General: Is not that true?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: The advertisement continued—

Increased rail and road fares and increased water rates are next on Labour's list. The housewife knows that this is the Labour Government's cunning method of turning the increase of the basic wage into a cruel and bitter farce.

So it is surprising, and indeed pleasing, to find the Attorney General now educating us to a knowledge that prices are under the control of the Deputy Commissioner of Prices by legal powers given him by the Federal authority.

The Attorney General: By the Federal Labour Government.

The Minister for Lands: What was the date of that advertisement?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I will pass it over to the Minister. He seems to be very suspicious-minded.

The Minister for Lands: Not at all.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: I hope the Attorney General is not going to be an individual of the type who would say that the advertisement was meant to apply to the Commonwealth Government.

The Attorney-General: It does refer to Federal matters.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: As a matter of fact, any man carefully reading or bearing the advertisement read and honest with himself must frankly admit it was invented and published for the purpose of misleading the womenfolk of this State into believing that the State Labour Government was responsible for the increases.

The Attorney-General: I do not agree with you.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Then I say that the Attorney-General is assuming a mental obscurity that does him no credit at all. As a matter of fact, if one carefully reads the advertisement, one will find that the prices of cigarettes, clothing and tea are mixed up with the prices of rail and

road fares and water rates. What has the Commonwealth Government to do with rail and road fares and water rates? Nothing at all! This was one of the most discreditable and dishonest advertisements issued during the election campaign. Even though the Attorney-General or the Premier might not have seen and approved of it before publication, neither of them subsequently said publicly anything about its dishonest character. So I say that here again is additional proof of the highly discreditable methods used by the leaders of the Government parties during the recent election campaign in what proved to be a successful endeavour to obtain Ministerial office. There are, in the very scheme of things, certain inexorable laws which operate—

The Attorney-General: I quite agree.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: —to strike down in due season those who employ such methods to gain promotion, office or power.

The Attorney-General: I shall quote something to the hon. member.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: Therefore those laws will operate to defeat this Government in due season, though when that will be, nobody can say. Perhaps one of those inexorable laws struck at the Government last Saturday when the Pilbara by-election was held. Whether it did not have a candidate—

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I could read some of the Liberal Party literature sent up.

The Premier: I did not take any part in the election.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Will you deny that Liberal Party literature was used?

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: No doubt the Liberal Party had a candidate in the field.

The Premier: I wish I could have helped him.

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: No doubt the Premier does, but, had he offered to help, the candidate would not have dared to accept it. There are other items I shall discuss during the session and as opportunity offers and, as I think the occasion appropriate, I will perhaps find it necessary to criticise the Government in some matters, to praise it in others and to assist whenever it proposes to do anything, or is actually doing something, that is in the best interests of the State.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

(Hon. A. F. Watts—Katanning) [9.28]: I have listened with very considerable interest indeed to the remarks made by the member for Northam, particularly in regard to certain matters now under my charge. Unfortunately, a great portion of his remarks was based on a number of suspicions, suspicions which I should say were completely unfounded and for which he had little, if any, justification. I refer first to the obvious assumption made by him that the inquiry which was directed into the Wundowie charcoal-iron and steel industry was aimed at the closing down of that industry. I tell him that the phraseology which was used in the first and practically the only public statement which I made on behalf of the Government in regard to this matter, and which he quoted himself, was a true statement of the Government's intention to ascertain the prospects of the success of the industry. A little later in his speech, when he referred to an integrated iron and steel industry in the State, I said by way of interjection, "You have now come down to earth," because so far as I was concerned—and I say this without any fear of successful contradiction—I was responsible for the inquiry being held, and it was because I was concerned about the importance of the possibility of having in Western Australia such an iron and steel industry of which Wundowie would form a part, and because I was satisfied that without some further inquiry and investigation the Government could not be clear as to the future prospects of both, that I suggested the inquiry be made.

The member for Northam made a great point about the fact that, in coming to a decision as to whether this inquiry should be held, the Government—as I told him this afternoon—did not before that time consult with the board of management. One of my ideas of the responsibility of government is that the Government should come to a decision in a matter of this kind. It is unlikely, in my opinion, with every respect to the members of the board, that they would have thought it necessary to have an inquiry into something upon which undoubtedly they had spent, in conjunction with the member for Northam, my predecessor in office, a great amount of time and which in my view they were satisfied was the best that could be done. But as I also

told the member for Northam this afternoon, as soon as this inquiry was decided upon, before it was commenced—before any preparations were effectively made for it—discussions took place with the chairman of the board.

The second suspicion which the hon. member appeared to have was this: That we anticipate that the report of Mr. Alexander Gibson, when it is received, will be of such a nature as to lead the Government into the belief that the industry ought to be closed down. That is purely an assumption, which is based and can be based on nothing but imagination. There has not been one word anywhere, at any time, to indicate that that is the desire of the Government or that it will be the likely result of the report. Indeed, I will go no further than this, but I think I go far enough when I say, that the very fact that the building of more homes on the Wundowie townsite having in comparatively recent days been authorised is an indication of what I, at least, believe. It was my responsibility to authorise them.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I hope you will make a public statement about it, elaborating what you have just said.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I told the member for Northam this afternoon that the inquiry was virtually concluded and that I was now awaiting the report. It would not be proper for me to anticipate the report and therefore I am prepared, as I stated, to go no further than I have just said. As soon as the report comes to hand and it has been examined by myself at least, then I have no doubt whatever that publicity will be given to it. I desire to assure the member for Northam and, indeed, the whole Committee, which is of much more importance, that this inquiry was entered upon in the hope that advice would be received which would place it beyond all reasonable doubt that the industry could be proceeded with and which would suggest any improvements likely to be conducive to that end. As I say, I cannot at this stage give a definite indication of what the engineer's report will be, although I have no reason to think that it will be other than satisfactory to those who are interested in the development of the industry. The member for Northam observed that the

inquiry had destroyed confidence in the industry. Well, I would say that that is so much nonsense.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Yet it is true, unfortunately.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I would say, on the other hand, that the fact that an inquiry has been held by a person who is undoubtedly an expert and a man of vast experience will, if the industry is to be carried on, establish in the public mind the certainty that it ought to be carried on and will be carried on efficiently to a far greater degree than could have been or was the case before the inquiry was instigated.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: In the meantime, it has destroyed a great amount of confidence.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It has destroyed no confidence at all; or, if it has, it has done so in persons who could make very little difference to the ultimate success of the industry. There is nobody's money in the industry except Government money. There is a very considerable amount of Government money in the industry, and in my view the amount will be greatly increased before the industry can be brought to a condition where it will be a valuable contribution to the State. We expect, or I hope, anyway, to receive advice as to what that expenditure ought to be and in what directions it should be employed in order to achieve that end. I find in my movements around the State, and they are fairly extensive, that the greatest satisfaction has been expressed at the decision of the Government to take the action which it took in this matter. There was no political significance in the inquiry at all. Our aim was to ensure that whatever resources were available should be used to the best advantage. If that is the result of the inquiry, which I am very hopeful it will be, then I shall be very satisfied and I have no doubt that the member for Northam will be very satisfied too.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I most certainly will be.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The member for Northam also referred to the confidential discussions which had been taking place in regard to an integrated iron and steel industry in this State. Those dis-

cussions being of a confidential nature, as he said, it is not for me at the moment to disclose them, except that I can tell the member for Northam that they are still proceeding. In regard to the Chandler industry, there are very different considerations. It is quite obvious, as indeed it has been all the time, that that industry was established because of the need for potash for war and agricultural purposes during the war. That need could not be met from other sources. I have regarded this industry, and I regard it now, as a gallant though somewhat expensive attempt on the part of the then Government of Western Australia to provide something that was essential to the State.

I do think that the Commonwealth Government has not lent the support, up to date anyway, to the work done there and the expense the State was put to that it should have lent. After all, as I understand the position, the supplies of potash were essential for the carrying on of certain industries in Australia. The efforts at Chandler made some contribution to those supplies and yet, notwithstanding the significance of this activity in regard to the war and agriculture during the war period, up to date the whole capital expenditure has fallen upon the somewhat slender resources of the State. In addition, while imported potash has to some degree been subsidised by the Commonwealth Government, there has been no direct assistance of that nature rendered to any product that came out of Chandler. So it still seems to me that there is a clear case for the Commonwealth to render some direct assistance in this matter and an approach has been made to it on that subject.

The research work done there in recent months does, I think, indicate that a very substantial improvement can be made in the product and that in all probability if the results of those experiments turn out as well as are expected we shall have an exceptionally high grade product which can be used with advantage. But there will be a very considerable amount of further capital expenditure involved if that state of affairs is to be brought about, and we are now facing up to the position of ascertaining just what is required and just how this industry at Chandler can be made to carry on successfully.

Had it continued on the basis of production prior to these experiments being regarded as successful, the loss would have been so colossal that there would, in my opinion, have been no option but to cut that loss by one means or another, unless there was substantial assistance from the Commonwealth. But the more recent research does hold out a prospect that the industry can ultimately be made self-supporting if the capital cost is not too high and if a ready market can be found for the production. That appears fairly easy at the moment but, of course, this is a long-term proposition, and if one is going to indulge in the considerable extra expenditure required, one has to have some certainty of markets in the future, if one is to be assured of a reasonable margin of success.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Does that not apply to most things?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Of course it does, but one has to form a judgment and then back it. That is the position, and at the present moment I think we can say that the judgment is in process of formation and the question will be answered as early as possible as to what is best to be done. The hon. gentleman was good enough to make some passing reference to a few remarks I made at Geraldton. I seek no commendation for them. As I put it at the time, I believe they were fair. That does not mean to say I offer commendation for all the activities of the previous Governments in regard to industrial development. I advised the hon. member to use the plural, because I think it was the plural I used at Geraldton. But it did mean to say that in regard to certain industries I had in mind at that time, there was a considerable contribution made by the activities displayed during the period that those Governments were in office. But I would like to observe at this stage that there is an old saying that opportunity is a fine chance.

Hon. A. H. Panton: By Jove, you ought to use it now!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member had 14 years of that opportunity and I have had about four months.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I would not talk about 14 years too much!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If I do not produce in 14 years as much as the hon. member did I will be very surprised.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You will be surprised all right!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Notwithstanding that I am prepared—and have done so publicly at a civic reception, as the member for Northam reminded me—to make recognition of what has been done by those preceding Governments, of all of which I think I can say he has been a member, I trust that at some future time when a similar opportunity may present itself to him, he will not be backward in taking similar action where it will be similarly justified.

Mr. Rodoreda: Not during an election!

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I will do that early next year.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I would like to say, too, in regard to the Chamberlain industries, that I am still of the opinion that was an ambitious project. Unfortunately, however, the activities of Chamberlain industries have been very considerably delayed by factors entirely out of the control of anybody in Western Australia.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is a shame! I thought you would be able to blame the Government for that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No. It is mainly due to industrial difficulties in the Eastern States. In consequence the hope that the works would start some reasonable production by the end of this year at the latest has, I am afraid, had to be postponed. Nevertheless, it is true that the plant and equipment there, obtained mostly from Commonwealth Disposals, is of a very high character indeed; and if we retain our optimism and industrial troubles do not continue to beset the prospects of the industry, there is a reasonable hope of its being a very great help to Western Australian agriculture.

Unfortunately, the final financial arrangements with the Commonwealth had not been made at the time of the change of Government in April last, and a great deal of negotiation is still necessary before the actual cost of the machinery and plant that have been provided can be ascertained. In any event, it is quite clear that the

State Government will be assuming a fairly considerable responsibility in respect of these works and will therefore be vitally interested in their success. The negotiations to which I refer are still taking place. The exact figure has not been arrived at, but I am hopeful it will be in a very short time.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Commonwealth Government will, of course, give the State Government a guarantee for part of its financial responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, there is a guarantee for part of it. That is true; but it is not a very substantial part of it, when one reviews the whole of the expenditure that will be involved.

The only other matter I desire to mention is that of the retirement of the special magistrate of the Children's Court. Here again the remarks of the member for Northam were obviously based on a series of suspicions, all of which I state quite definitely are completely unfounded. My answer to the question this afternoon was that in addition to the matter of age, the reason had been given to Mr. Schroeder himself that the Government proposed a substantial measure of re-organisation of the Children's Court. Nobody had any influence on the decision to remove Mr. Schroeder from his position, save myself; and I had no complaint or vendetta against the special magistrate such as was suggested by the member for Northam.

I could, however, find sufficient evidence on the files of the Child Welfare Department, and sufficient evidence expressed in two or three instances by my predecessor in his communications, to warrant me in the belief that it would be impossible satisfactorily to re-organise or carry on the Children's Court with Mr. Schroeder in his present position. I therefore recommended that reasonable and decent steps be taken to retire Mr. Schroeder, and that has been done. I was extremely reluctant to make any such reference about Mr. Schroeder, as I have now been forced to make. I would have much preferred to have left it as it was, but when the member for Northam impugns any member of this Government for conducting a vendetta against him for personal reasons, then he has to be told the truth.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: We had better have an inquiry into this matter.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I think the hon. member had better have no inquiry at all! It was, as I have said, unreasonable to suggest that the task of controlling a reorganised children's court, for a considerable number of years, should be entrusted to the magistrate who was in charge of the court in the past. In my letter to the magistrate, and in the public statement I made, I gave him credit—and I do now—for the service he has rendered. But I will not allow the member for Northam or anyone else to suggest that there were any personal reasons of the nature he expressed, that had anything to do with the suggestion that Mr. Schroeder should be retired.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Would the Government make a judge of the Supreme Court available to inquire into this matter?

The Attorney General: Repeat your statement outside and it might go before a judge.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is the quickest way.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I know that the member for Northam was very interested in the appointment of Mr. Schroeder. Unfortunately he appointed him in such a way that he was not entitled to any privileges. Mr. Schroeder was not appointed under the Public Service Act. He was not entitled to long service leave—he has had no leave for some years—and he was not entitled to superannuation. He was appointed by the member for Northam as a special magistrate of the Children's Court under no particular Act, and he had no particular privileges. It fell to my lot, therefore, to determine whether that appointment should be extended for a further period, or whether it should come to an end.

I came to the conclusion, on what I believe to be perfectly proper grounds, that the best thing to do would be to have some change, and that change will take place. Allowances equivalent to what Mr. Schroeder would have received had he been appointed in some recognised way under some Act, carrying with it the usual privileges applying to officers of the Public Service, will be granted to him upon his retirement, and I have no doubt that that treatment of the matter is extremely reasonable. As far as I am concerned, any suggestion of victimisa-

tion, which has been made by the hon. gentleman is so much nonsense.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: You will probably hear more about it during the session

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In conclusion, a great deal has been said about the election advertisements, and so forth, that have been read by the hon. member. Time, and opportunity, I have no doubt, will be afforded me to bring before this Chamber samples of similar things produced from time to time by publicity experts of the Labour Party, that are, in my opinion, equally, if not more objectionable.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That is no answer.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (North-East Fre-mantle) [9.56]: Although I propose shortly to condemn the Government for a certain act of commission, which I consider blame-worthy, I nevertheless desire to congratulate the Premier and his Ministers upon their elevation to office. They have achieved success, and whatever I might have against some of the things that they have already done I do, without reservation, congratulate them upon that success. To you, also, Mr. Chairman, I extend my congratulations. From my observation of you in this Chamber, over a period of years, I am satisfied that you will carry out your task with efficiency and impartiality. The Government may be somewhat impatient at the delay in the passage of the Supply Bill, but so far as I am concerned the Government has brought it on itself. I believe that the new Cabinet should be afforded every chance to make good its undertakings, and that is not to be done in two, three, or four months.

Policies dealing with housing, education, transport and such matters, cannot be proved in a matter of two or three months. The Government must be given ample time to try itself out in connection with these things, and I am prepared to give it that time. But there are other matters which do not come within that category. For example had the Government decided at the election that it was in favour of the 40 hour week, and had, shortly after attaining office, taken steps to oppose it, it would not be necessary to wait two or three years to see what was to happen. Such a fact should be pointed out immediately. The matter with which I propose to deal is one of that nature. The Government might say that

I could withhold my remarks until I get the opportunity on the Address-in-reply. But I might have to wait a fortnight for that.

The Premier: I do not think so.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This matter is of such a nature that I should take the earliest opportunity—and this is the first I have had—of letting the people know what has actually occurred. It is already more than two months old and I am speaking on this Bill not because I desire to delay Supply to the Government. Supply is very necessary, though I think I can show this Government is unworthy of it—but because I wish to ventilate at the earliest opportunity this serious act of commission. I say deliberately that the Government obtained control of the Treasury bench by fraud.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: There is no doubt about that.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: When I use that word, which is an ugly word, I do so with a full sense of responsibility as a member of Parliament, and a full appreciation of the fact that such a charge should never be laid unless there is adequate proof of its truth. There are four lawyers in the present Cabinet and they will know whether the definition that I propose to give is correct. Fraud is a false representation of fact made with a knowledge of its falsehood or recklessly without belief in its truth, with the intention that it should be acted upon by the other party and, actually, to induce him to act upon it to his cost. I propose to show that that definition fits exactly what has been done by the Government in the matter that I desire to ventilate. I have here a cutting from "The West Australian" of the 14th March, the day before the election.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The Ides of March.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It contains the final appeals of the three different party leaders. In the column setting out the Liberal Party's policy appears the following:—

Liberal Policy is efficient impartial administration of the people's business, cutting out waste, making appointments to public offices according to ability and knowledge.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Good Heavens!

The Premier: What is wrong with that?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Nothing!

The Premier: I agree.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I say it is a very commendable policy, unequivocal and impressive, calculated to gain the support of the people, which it did. That policy was not declared haphazardly. It was well thought out and every clause in it was included for a reason, the last part, which I shall read again for a special reason—"Making appointments to public offices according to ability and knowledge." Members well know that there had been some disturbance of the public mind, a few months before the elections, owing to the appointment by the Commonwealth of Mr. Mountjoy to the C.S.I.R. and Mr. McKell to the Governor Generalship. The Premier knew full well that there was a possibility of capitalising that to a considerable extent and, like an astute politician, that is what he did. I do not blame him for it as it was handed to him, and he would have been foolish not to take the fullest advantage of it. That part of his policy, which he enunciated, was deliberate. He wished to show the people that he would not do as the Commonwealth Government had done in making appointments such as it had made, but that any appointments he would make would be according to ability and knowledge. I say the Premier did not make that offer to the public honestly, and that is why it is a fraud, because he had no intention of carrying out what he had said. To prove that he was capitalising the situation and that he knew what he was saying, I will quote what he said regarding the appointment of Mr. McKell. I quote from "The West Australian."—

Grave concern. Appointments criticised. Liberal Leaders' comments. It will be a bad day for Australia if the appointments to the service of the Commonwealth are to be determined for reasons of political rewards and not on the grounds of knowledge of and fitness for the duties of the post to be discharged.

That was the Premier's opinion. As to the appointment of Mr. Mountjoy, "The West Australian" in a leading article had this to say—

Such barefaced Government exploitation of the dominant party's opportunities of political patronage.

Mr. J. L. Paton, President of the Liberal Party, referring to the appointment of Mr. Mountjoy, said—

This was purely a political appointment and if the Government possessed any honesty of purpose it would have admitted as much without trying to make lame excuses.

Attempts were being made to stir up public opinion against such appointments on the grounds that the appointees were not fitted for the positions to which they were being appointed. I wish members to recall that nobody was being sacked to make way for Mr. Mountjoy or Mr. McKell, as the vacancies existed, and, whatever might be said or whatever opinions might be held about the fitness or unfitness of those men for the positions, they were not displacing anybody. But Mr. Paton, "The West Australian" and the Premier thought that was all wrong, and that appointments should only be made according to ability and knowledge for the job. I repeat that, in his policy and his offer to the electors, the Premier made his statement deliberately, with the intention of capitalising what had occurred in the appointments of Mr. Mountjoy and Mr. McKell. The question I desire members of the Committee to decide is whether that statement by the Premier was made by him honestly, with the intention that it should be carried out, or whether, in fact, it was false representation made without any belief in its truth. I hope to prove that the latter was the case. This Government took office on the 1st April.

Mr. Needham: A very appropriate day.

The Premier: For a childish mind.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Within six weeks it fell down badly on the policy enunciated by the Liberal Leader. It so happened that appointments to the Dairy Products Marketing Board came up for review. The consumers' representative on the board was Mr. P. J. Ryan. He was the president of the District Council of the A.L.P. Mr. Ryan had been on the board for four years, during which time he had served efficiently and with complete satisfaction to all interests, including the producer interests on the board. In proof of that, I propose to quote what was said at the final meeting that Mr. Ryan attended. The minutes of that meeting read—

The chairman expressed regret that this would be the last meeting at which Mr. P. J. Ryan would be present, as his term of office would expire on the 7th June and his appointment had not been renewed. He spoke in appreciative terms of Mr. Ryan's services on the board and, through the board, to the dairy-

ing industry. He believed that Mr. Ryan had capably and efficiently represented the interests of the consumers, and his connection with consumer organisations and bodies had peculiarly fitted him as a consumers' representative. All members spoke in laudatory terms of Mr. Ryan's work on the board, producer members particularly referring to the sympathetic attitude adopted by Mr. Ryan at all times towards producers. All the members expressed regret that Mr. Ryan's term of office was about to end. A presentation was then made to Mr. Ryan on behalf of the members of the board.

The Premier: That is not an unusual thing for fellow-members on a board to do.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There was no question but that that was the opinion of all members of the board and of those associated with Mr. Ryan. I remind members that producers' representatives very jealously safeguard their interests, and are not likely to commend a man who is antagonistic to them and their interests. Without exception they praised Mr. Ryan and spoke in laudatory terms of his work on the board. Mr. Ryan was a man who had rendered four years of service on the board and, in the words of the chairman, was peculiarly fitted for the task he was performing. What happened? The Minister made no inquiries as to who Mr. Ryan was. He did not endeavour to ascertain whether he was a success or otherwise. Mr. Ryan might have been the most outstanding man in Western Australia for this job, but the Minister would not know.

The Premier: How do you know the Minister did not make any inquiries?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will tell the Premier, if he will give me an opportunity.

Hon. A. H. Panton: The Premier is a most impatient old man!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Neither does the Premier know. Without the Minister knowing this man, or knowing whether or not he had been a success, Mr. Ryan was put off the board and another man appointed in his place. Is it just a coincidence that the name of the other man was Garnett Hawkins Philp? The Honorary Minister in another place, who is administering the legislation dealing with this board, happens also to be named Garnett—Garnett Wood. Is it merely a coincidence that the man who was appointed to the board was also called Garnett?

The Premier: It is.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We will see.

The Minister for Works: Do you allege otherwise?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not allege anything. I am asking a question.

The Attorney General: What if the man's name had been "Jack"?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Jack is not an uncommon name, but Garnett is.

The Premier: Oh, dismiss it!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will not dismiss it like that; I want some information.

The Minister for Works: This is about the weakest thing you have ever put up.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What is Mr. Garnett Hawkins Philp's fitness for this position? Was the appointment made by the Government according to his ability and fitness for the job? So, without inquiry as to the ability or knowledge of Mr. Ryan, he was put off the board after four years of service.

The Premier: I think you are quite wrong about no inquiries having been made.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am not.

The Premier: You should know better.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Did not the Minister for Lands meet Mr. Ryan in the corridor the other day when he said he did not know him?

The Minister for Works: That could easily be so.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Was this appointment a Cabinet decision or the decision of the Minister?

The Minister for Works: You will find that out.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Perhaps the Minister will be surprised at what I know about this matter.

The Minister for Lands: I will tell you one thing: I will not talk to you in the corridor and then repeat what you say in this House.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister did not talk to me.

The Minister for Lands: That is all right; you know!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Don't you infer anything about me.

The Minister for Lands: You were there.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I was not there.

The Minister for Lands: That is all right.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: You know I was not there.

The Minister for Lands: I was looking at you and was talking to you.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister was not looking at me, and, what is more, I was not within 12 yards of him.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member address the Chair.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Very well, Mr. Chairman.

The Minister for Lands: I spoke to him when I was in front of you, and you said it was time to go home.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I was not.

Mr. Marshall: At any rate, the Minister did not know Ryan.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What is the good of the Minister saying that and endeavouring to cast aspersions on me when he knows that I stood at the door of the lobby and beckoned Mr. Ryan to come out, and that I was not within earshot to know what he had said?

The Minister for Lands: I do not.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I did not hear a single word the Minister said.

The Minister for Lands: That is good; I was talking to you.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What I tell the Minister is this, that the appointment of Garnett Hawkins Philp was absolutely contrary to the undertaking of the Premier.

The Premier: He was not appointed because of any political affiliations he may have, because I do not know what they are.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Was it on account of personal relationship?

The Premier: No, not even on account of personal relationship.

The Minister for Lands: Fitness for the job.

Mr. Marshall: What would you know about his fitness for the job?

The Minister for Lands: I will tell you about that, too.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: All I know is that no inquiry was made as to Mr. Ryan's peculiar fitness for the job. That did not matter at all. All that mattered was that

Mr. Ryan was the president of the A.L.P. so he had to be got rid of, and as quickly as possible.

Mr. Styants: He had the taint of the Trades Hall!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Irrespective of his peculiar fitness for the job he was marked down for dismissal, just as, I suppose, are other members of boards who from time to time have supported the principles advocated by the Labour Party.

The Premier: I think you will be mistaken.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I hope I shall be.

The Premier: I think you will be.

Mr. Marshall: Do not give us that sort of stuff!

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The earliest moves by the Government do not reassure me on that point.

The Minister for Lands: I will tell you of something your Government did in making appointments some years ago.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I believe in the policy of spoils to the victors.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There is an interesting sidelight to this matter because I told Mr. Ryan before he was put off the board that he would go.

The Minister for Lands: That is why you did not deal with the matter while you had the opportunity.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We did not have the opportunity.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, you did. You referred it to me.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I never had the opportunity.

The Minister for Lands: We will bring the file to light.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I wish the Minister would do so.

The Minister for Lands: I will do so, and I will read your minute on the file. There is another appointment you did not leave to me, and I will remind you of that.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I will be glad to hear of it.

Hon. A. H. Panton: We will have another Royal Commission to inquire into this matter.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister cannot urge against me that I sacked any man

of an opposite political persuasion in order to replace him with a man of the Labour persuasion.

The Minister for Lands: You cannot do it against me, either.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am doing it now.

The Minister for Lands: You are trying to.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am doing it and in a way not palatable to the Government.

The Premier: He was not sacked; his services were terminated.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: He was sacked, and the man who replaced him was put on by the Government, without any regard to ability and knowledge.

The Premier: In your view.

The Attorney General: I think you will find that to be a very unpopular statement.

The Minister for Works: Do you know the appointee?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes; I have nothing at all against him.

The Minister for Lands: Do you think he has any ability?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If there were a vacancy on the board, in ordinary circumstances the Government would have a perfect right to put him on and I would not object, but let us not forget that this is a Government that capitalised a situation that arose because the Labour Government had attempted to do something like this, but not nearly so bad, inasmuch as it never sacked anyone to make its appointments. This Government, after protesting its innocence in this regard said—"We would not do anything like that; only Labour would do it. Put us into office and we will make appointments according to ability and knowledge". That in effect was what the Government said. But what does it do? Sacks a man to make room for someone else, which is something far worse than anything that was done by the Federal Labour Government in the matter of appointments!

The Premier: There was nothing political about this appointment.

Mr. Marshall: You cannot get away with that.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Then what was it?

The Premier: We shall deal with that when we come to it.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have little more to say at this stage. I shall await with interest the production by the Minister of the file.

The Minister for Lands: You will get it all right.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Then I shall have a further opportunity of telling the Minister something more, for I know quite a lot.

The Minister for Lands: I hope to give you many opportunities.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It is not necessary for me to fire off all my ammunition at once.

The Minister for Works: Is the rest of it as sound.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have some for the Minister, too.

The Minister for Works: There is not much in what you have given, anyhow.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If an explanation is forthcoming, we shall be glad to have it. Explanation there might be but justification certainly not.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [10.23]: May I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, upon your promotion to the honorable position you occupy? I know that your adjudication will be based upon integrity and impartiality. I wish also to congratulate the Speaker upon having attained that high position. To all members of the Government, may I offer my congratulations, particularly to the Premier who, I consider, was the most fortunate of all. He was very fortunate indeed. By a series of happenings, incidents and accidents, the hon. gentleman finds himself occupying the position of Premier of Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands: A very good one, too.

Mr. MARSHALL: It was regrettable that the member for Nedlands and the member for West Perth should have suffered afflictions that rendered them incapable of continuing in the leadership of their Party.

The Attorney General: Not afflictions.

Mr. MARSHALL: Had they enjoyed good health, or had the change of Government occurred three years earlier, I do not know whether the Premier would have been in the Ministry. However, I congratulate him on his good fortune.

Mr. Leslie: That is a left-handed compliment.

Mr. MARSHALL: What will be the outcome of his leadership of the Government, only time will tell. We respect him as a highly honorable gentleman and I feel he will make a bold endeavour to lead his party along different lines—at least I sincerely hope so—from those along which he led them on the hustings. I do not want him to revert to that sort of leadership because the public of Western Australia will not be fooled all the time. A wise man once wrote that you can fool all the people part of the time and part of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.

The Premier: I have heard it before.

Mr. MARSHALL: I suggest that the Premier would be wise to take cognisance of the statement. To the new members, I also offer congratulations. I rose to enter a protest against the allotment of the portfolios in the new Ministry. During the 26 years I have been a member of this Chamber, what I complain about has never happened before. I do not desire to make any threats, but I want the Premier to understand that his Government cannot possibly escape severe criticism and constant opposition from me while the portfolio of Mines rests in the custody of a man who is not a member of this Assembly. In my 26 years as a member, I have never known of a major portfolio being transferred from this Chamber to the silence of another place. I am at a loss to understand the reason why it has been done on this occasion. It would have been difficult enough had Goldfields members been placed in the invidious position of having to deal with a Minister in this Chamber who knew nothing about mining, but the Government, by its action, has stultified any possible opportunity for debate on mining matters.

The Minister is in another place completely free from criticism of his administration by Goldfields members. There is no Committee of Supply in another place and no possibility of the Minister's administration being questioned. So we have a major portfolio such as Mines resting silently in the seclusion of another place. Even those members of another place representing Goldfields provinces will be unable to criticise the Minister or his administration be-

cause that Chamber does not deal with Supply. What is going to be the position? Here we have a major portfolio embracing the goldmining industry which ranks about third as a wealth producer in this State. Fortunately for the State, this section of the industry is one the produce of which always commands a ready market, irrespective of whether there is prosperity or a depression. We know full well from history and records that the goldmining industry of Western Australia has often saved the situation during depression periods.

When my honourable friend's predecessor in 1930 promised normal work and happiness for all, everyone knows what happened. There was neither work nor happiness for all; a depression came. The goldmining industry absorbed about 15,000 breadwinners, when every other industry had practically gone out of existence. No industry absorbs labour in the same proportion as does the goldmining industry. From now on, unless there is a re-shuffling of portfolios and the portfolio of the Minister for Mines returns to this Chamber, the representatives of the all-important goldmining industry need never rise to speak upon it. How can we communicate with a Minister who is not in the Chamber? This afternoon I found that my friend, the Chief Secretary, is to represent the Minister for Mines in this Chamber. The deepest hole he has looked into is the hole in the lapel of his coat—the buttonhole.

The Chief Secretary: That is hardly a correct statement.

Mr. MARSHALL: This Government can expect me to protest bitterly against the Mines portfolio being transferred to another place. I put it to the Premier that he would be wise to return it to this Chamber. Never since the Premier or any other member has been in this Chamber has a major portfolio been given to a member in another place.

The Premier: Yes, there was a Minister for Lands in another place in my time.

Mr. MARSHALL: Never in my time.

The Premier: Think again.

Mr. MARSHALL: Never since I have been a member.

The Premier: It was before you entered Parliament.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not want to go back as far as the Premier wants to go.

The Attorney General: There was a Parliament before the member for Murchison entered this Parliament.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is the goldmining industry or metalliferous mining which will open up and settle the isolated parts of the State. I am sure of that. But what can we members representing goldfields districts do in this Chamber while the Minister for Mines is in another place? What is the use of our making suggestions, trying to obtain information, or criticising the administration of the department in those respects in which it fails? Is it any use our standing up here and speaking on the subject at all? All the members who represent goldfields districts will have to remain silent, or say very little. Again, it must be borne in mind that the coalmining industry is administered by the Mines Department. That department is left to be controlled by a Minister who is not a member of this Chamber. I do not know what other goldfields members and the member for Collie have to say about the matter, but it will be very little use for them to make suggestions about the department or to criticise its administration while the Minister is not here.

The Premier: You need not adopt that attitude. Anything you have to say with respect to the goldmining industry will receive attention.

Mr. MARSHALL: I want the Minister for Mines to be in this Chamber.

The Premier: All the Ministers' cannot be in this Chamber.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not want a despatch carrier to go from this Chamber to another place. Let the Premier understand the position. When we criticise the administration of the Mines Department in this Chamber, the Minister ought to be here to reply to us.

The Premier: The member for Murchison will get his reply.

Mr. MARSHALL: When and how? Once the Estimates are passed that is an end of the matter.

The Premier: The hon. member will get his reply on the Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: But how can we get a reply on the Estimates?

Hon. A. H. Panton: The Minister for Shipping is here.

Mr. MARSHALL: How can we get a reply to our criticism after the Vote is

passed? Long before our comments or criticism will reach the Minister in another place, the chances are that the Legislative Council will have adjourned. It generally does during the discussion on the Estimates. It is nonsense for the Premier to say that we can get a reply to criticism. The same remark applies to the answering of questions. When we ask a question the Minister in this Chamber representing the Minister for Mines will reply; but should we follow that question up by another without notice, what is the use of asking the Minister representing the Minister for Mines to answer it? He is not supposed to answer it. He merely represents the Minister for Mines. He has not the knowledge nor is his the responsibility for the administration of the department. I am surprised the Premier did not suggest that the railways portfolio should go to another place also and so silence criticism on transport. It would have helped the Government materially.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The Minister for Railways probably wishes the portfolio had gone there.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not doubt that he does wish it now. The portfolios of Local Government, Police and similar ones are insignificant compared with the portfolios of Mines and of Agriculture.

Opposition Members: And Health!

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know where the Assistant Minister for Health is at the moment—probably resting where any respectable person should be at this hour of the evening. I assure the Premier that unless there is a re-shuffling of portfolios and the Mines portfolio returns to this Chamber, I shall not be at peace with the Government. The present position is a positive insult and may act detrimentally to the development of the industry. Members on this side of the Chamber are, I think, the only members who have had a long and practical experience of all phases of mining. We are now so circumstanced that we shall be unable to express our opinions on the industry or to exchange ideas with the Minister. We shall not know what he intends to do or does not intend to do, except through the medium of another Minister who represents him. I enter my emphatic protest against such a situation. I am not threatening the Gov-

ernment and at this stage do not wish to repeat what I have said, but I shall not be at peace with the Government unless there is a re-shuffling of portfolios and the Mines portfolio returns to this Chamber.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. R. McDonald—West Perth) [10.38]: I think there have been a lot of words said, but, if I may say so, without any substance, and it might be just as well if we tried to reduce the position to something like its true proportions. The Leader of the Opposition, in what was in many parts a very informative speech, dealt with a matter of great importance, and that is the financial relationships of the Commonwealth and the State. He referred to the Government as having been fortunate enough to enter upon the Treasury bench at a time when—I paraphrase his words—few Governments had in front of them so rosy a future. He pointed to ample credits, to the healthy state of the finances and to great opportunities, and he suggested by implication that unless very spectacular results came from the Government, it would not be living up to the opportunities which it possessed on its entry into office.

Allow me to say at once, Mr. Chairman, that I think any Government of this State that is prudent and enterprising should have opportunities to see the State progress rapidly in population and resources, especially after the few difficult years which are the aftermath of the war have passed away. But I want to remind the Leader of the Opposition that these things will not be accomplished easily, and this Government has a full realisation of this fact. The Leader of the Opposition made that clear when, though opening on such a note of optimism, he quoted from the Grants Commission's latest report a statement that the members desired to draw attention to the difficult problems that confront the States.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They are always there.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes, but they are there more than ever in a period which follows six years of world war.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is an interesting admission.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is; and no person who has any sense of values would possibly overlook the fact that there must be a serious dislocation of any country following a world war.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I am afraid I will be provoked into quoting some more of your statements of six months ago.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There was also a period preceding the world war.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And subsequent to it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. Those were periods when opportunity was very much larger.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And two years following the war.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They are times of difficulty and those times of difficulty, as the Grants Commission rightly says—and I take it with the full approbation of the Leader of the Opposition—will remain for some time to come. But let me agree with him at once that as soon as we can surmount—and the Government hopes to do so as rapidly as possible—the immediate post-war problems, there should be for the Government in this State an opportunity to see the expansion of the State on an extensive scale; and we believe that this can be accomplished and that we will be able to play our part in accomplishing it.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke of the indiscretion—I think that was his word—of the Premier in his pre-election speeches, in voicing the aspiration of this State to regain control of the State's finances. But I venture to think that that policy and that aspiration have the complete agreement of the Leader of the Opposition. In fact, the whole tenor of his statement to the Premiers' Conference of last year, which I heard with interest, was a claim that the Government of this State should regain control of its own finances, and at the present time by public announcements, the Labour Premier of Tasmania and the Labour Premier of Victoria intend to lead a campaign at the forthcoming conference that their States should regain control of their finances.

So I venture to think that that is their expressed intention and that the Premier's remark that the States should endeavour to get control of their finances is one of the

wisest statements of policy he made and one which has struck a very warm response in the minds of the electors of this State; because it has not always been the case that demands have been made on the Commonwealth for some protection of the sovereign rights of this State such as I am pleased to see the Leader of the Opposition did make last January when he was Premier. This Government intends to do so and told the people of the State that that was its intention. It pointed out that it intended to be co-operative with the Commonwealth Government but not to be dominated by it; that it was zealous, and would be zealous to preserve what remained of our sovereign powers. For there are not a few people in the State, many of them electors, who will remember the Commonwealth Powers Bill of 1943 which was brought down by the Government of which the hon. member was a distinguished ornament, and under which the then Labour Government proposed to strip this State of practically the last vestige of its sovereign powers for, according to the terms of the Bill, the period of the war and five years afterwards.

Every person in his senses knew that if we passed over the powers that the then State Government proposed the people of this State should surrender to the Commonwealth Government, the chances of getting back those powers were remote to the last degree. Fortunately that abject surrender of our sovereign powers which the then Government proposed in 1943, was avoided by the vigilance of the Opposition and the opinion of the members of both Houses. But I do say to the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues that the people of this State were not unmindful that there were on the one side parties led by the present leaders who were zealous and had fought in 1943 for the State's sovereign powers; and on the other side a Government whose policy was and is all sovereign power in the Commonwealth Parliament at Canberra and which, in 1943, had fought to strip our State of its last vestiges of its right of self-government.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is what the people of Western Australia voted for by a large majority.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: To a large degree, yes. I can assure the hon. member that that influenced their minds to no small degree.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I do not think they ever heard of it or thought of it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The test was between parties that stood for the preservation of our rights of self-government and a party which stood for the destruction of those rights, by their constitution, by their policy and by their actions in 1943; and we need not go beyond that basic issue of the rights of the people of this State to find the reason why they preferred a change of Government.

Now a word on finance. The Leader of the Opposition can be assured that this Government will fight for the most advantageous terms which can be obtained from a Government of his own party, now situated in the Federal sphere; and it will be a test of the statesmanship of the Labour Party in the Federal sphere whether this Government and the other States get a more just proportion of the National income than they have had in the past. It comes back to that, and there is no escaping that issue; because it is the Federal Labour Government that holds this matter in the palm of its hands. The test is not so much that of the Premier, but of the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister of the Labour Government of Australia.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I think you could say, of any Government of Australia.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am going to speak of the Government that has been in power for practically all the time since the war commenced and which brought about uniform taxation and created these problems. It now has the responsibility of solving them.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You do not think its attitude would be any different from that of any other Commonwealth Government on that point, do you?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think the attitude of a Government of a different political complexion would be different from that hitherto adopted by Mr. Chifley.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I do not think so.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am quite convinced of that.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I have experienced them both.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: When the change takes place we will be able to get some practical demonstration of that difference.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We have experienced it already.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Do not let us have any misunderstandings. At this forthcoming Premiers' Conference the test will not be that of the Premier, whose attitude is clear and unequivocal, but a test of the Rt. Hon. the Prime Minister of the Labour Government of Australia.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Of the Government of Australia.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: And it will depend upon his statesmanship. The Leader of the Opposition was very fond of using that word in his address to the Premiers last year. Whether this Government gets what is due to it for its development and the expansion of its resources will be a test of the statesmanship of the Prime Minister. As the Leader of the Opposition has rightly said, the income tax alone drawn by the Commonwealth Government has risen from £77,000,000 pre-war to £215,000,000—a rise of approximately 300 per cent. in a few years. To imagine that the States with all the added problems and costs which they have to bear are being adequately treated by getting £40,000,000 out of £215,000,000 is to imagine something which cannot be justified by any reasonable man, and I am all in agreement with the Leader of the Opposition when he suggests that the amount distributed amongst the States should be £50,000,000. I would say that it might be £60,000,000 or even £80,000,000, without going beyond an equitable distribution of the enormous revenues of which the Commonwealth Government has obtained control to the exclusion of the States without, to use the words of the Leader of the Opposition himself, or the sentiments he expressed at the Premiers' Conference last January, any great recognition of its pledged word. I recollect that I sat in another part of the Chamber when the Uniform Taxation Bill came on and I voted for it, although I knew it would for a time largely affect our sovereignty as a State.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You must have sold out too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I was sold out! When people said to me, "You may find they will not keep their word," I declined to believe them.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You do not support the sentiments in that paper that I read, that I sold out.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In all fairness and justice to the Leader of the Opposition, I think he fought well and with his usual ability for this State in January of last year at the Premiers' conference, but I do say this, that he must accept the responsibility of having been a member of a Government which tried to force on Parliament and the people of this State, the Commonwealth Powers Bill, which would have left us far worse off than uniform taxation has ever done. There would have been nothing left for us. As the member for Nedlands said, "If the Government had had its way and forced through Parliament, and on the people, the Bill it introduced in 1943, there would have been nothing left." Nothing can take that away from the responsibility of the Government of those days, to which the present Government is a lineal successor. So do not let us be too nice and finicky, even for political purposes and for staging a debate on the first night of Parliament, in order to draw attention to what clever fellows we are. Do not let us speak too finely and nicely about these things!

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That is very interesting, coming from you.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I am pleased to hear that. I have something I did not intend to say, but I think I will say it now!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Let us look at the position and reduce it to its normal proportions. If it is said—and it was said, but I think not correctly—that there has been, or was, a failure to fight for this State in a certain direction, it can be said correctly that that was so in another direction, in connection with the Commonwealth Powers Bill.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: We will see about that later, too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Just a word about taxation. Who is there in this State, or in the Commonwealth, who has any claim to be responsible, and who does not believe that there should be some reduction in taxation? The present Commonwealth Government has reduced taxation to some extent, but I venture to say that the best opinion is that there must be a much greater reduction. When the Premier referred to that—and I heard him deliver his

policy speech—I thought he was completely right, and he struck in that one sentence at what is the biggest cause of our difficulties of supply today, namely high taxation and particularly taxation on overtime. The Premier also referred in his policy speech to the fact that taxation was a Federal matter. He made that perfectly clear. But I believe that State Parliaments are not meant to be silent on Federal matters. They are the spokesmen of the States and they should be vocal on any matter which they think affects adversely the people of the State.

I see no reason whatever why this Parliament should not make representations to the Commonwealth Government and express its clear opinion that the time has come to reduce taxation, and do so as a Parliamentary body and make its influence felt on behalf of the State, in the Federal sphere. In all elections we feel that the other side says unfair things. That is not peculiar to the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues. It is felt also by members of other parties.

I remember something in the last Federal elections that I felt was about the extremity of political propaganda. It appeared in "The West Australian" and in Eastern States papers in September last, and purported to be a facsimile reproduction of a page taken from the speaker's notes of the Federal Liberal Party. It appeared just as if it had been photographed. It was so worded as to damage, as far as possible, the interests of the Liberal Party and of Liberal Party candidates. Mr. Chifley was questioned about it in the Federal House and admitted that it had been referred to him. After he had made that admission in the Federal House, it appeared in the State of Western Australia.

That document was meant to deceive the electors and, to my knowledge, it did so. People came to the Liberal Party and asked, "How can your party produce such stupid and damaging things?" Not to put too fine a word on it, that was a forgery, something directly under the Criminal Code. It was a piece of paper fabricated to resemble a page from the Liberal Party speaker's notes and it was published on behalf of a great political party during an election, in order to damage the other side.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I wonder how much "The West Australian" got for publishing it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I believe it would not have been published had "The West Australian" known what it was, and it was not published again by that paper. Things are said and written by all parties, on both sides, that we feel are unfair, and sometimes very unfair. I have given a case of a forged facsimile of the Liberal Party speaker's notes—which, as the Eastern States papers said—was unprecedented in the political history of Australia. Do not let us lose our sense of proportion over that. There was ample reason for the electors of Western Australia on the 15th March to decide that, after 14 years of Labour rule, it was not unreasonable for the other parties to be given an opportunity to show what they could do. That alone would be sufficient reason. Disraeli said, in the House of Commons, that every Government loses ground from the first day on which it takes office. I suggest that, with a sense of proportion, we would be rendering no service to the people of the State, who sent us here to do their work, if we spent our time in recriminations of this kind as to what happened during an election, when in every election things happen in the enthusiasm of the moment that would not occur in calmer moments. I have already cited an outstanding example of what can happen during an election.

My last word is about the remarks of the member for North-East Fremantle, one of our most able and industrious members who, on this occasion, I think was not doing himself complete justice. As the Minister himself said, the sentiments of the Premier and his undertaking to the people as to the kind of appointments he would make were entirely proper at a time when the public mind had been disturbed over political appointments. It was right and proper that any Party, either the Opposition or the Government Parties, should say to the people, "We will make appointments according to fitness and knowledge."

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, if you intended to do it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: You have not done that. What about Simpson?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know the full details of this matter.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It would be wise to find out the full details before saying any more.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I know sufficient about it, and if I am wrong I can be corrected. Members of the Dairy Products Marketing Board are appointed for a term. When the term expires, they leave the board, unless they are re-appointed. They are not sacked.

Mr. Marshall: No, they are just fired.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Will you fire the Commissioner of Railways in the same way?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If he was not re-appointed, his term expiring, he would go out. He would not be sacked.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: He would only be dumped.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In the case of the gentleman concerned on the Dairy Products Marketing Board, I would mention that I have met him and have great respect for him. I think he stands high in the opinion of everyone who knows him. His term expired and it was a question of whether he should be re-appointed.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Do you not think he should have received a letter notifying him that he was not to be re-appointed?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think that to write and thank a man for his services is the proper thing to do.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The only warning he got was a notice in the "Gazette" saying he had been superseded.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think that must have been an oversight. According to my colleague, the Minister for Lands, his term having expired, the question of whether he should be re-appointed was quite properly left by the member for North-East Fremantle to his successor.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is not true. It never came before me.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is a matter on which we can refer to the file.

The Premier: It came before you. Your minute is there.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for North-East Fremantle says—I do not question his recollection—that the matter never came before him.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Do you not realise that the vacancy did not occur until the 8th June, and we went out of office at the end of March?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: But these vacancies are usually filled some time before.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Not that long before.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: What happened here? A most estimable gentleman who held the respect of all who knew him, he had rendered admirable service on the board for a period of four years. He was not a young man. I do not know his age exactly and I hate to speculate about people's ages. Is not this gentleman 70 years old or more?

Hon. A. H. Panton: Oh! He is 106 not out!

The Minister for Lands: He was over 70 years of age.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I take the hon. member's statement that the man was 106 years old, and he will agree that such a person is very old. As a matter of fact I do not think he is anything like as old as that—and he is a very active man for his age.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The same age as P. D. Ferguson.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: So you replaced him with a much younger man!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes, with a man who was a returned soldier.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is good.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not think anyone will disagree with that policy of the Government in their desire to give opportunities to returned soldiers.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That is not the desire of all members of the Government.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is our policy.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: According to this little pamphlet I have, that is not so; and they complain about it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Never mind about that for the moment.

Hon. A. H. Panton: We will deal with that.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Let the hon. member keep that for another occasion. After all, what did the Government do? When the term expired of this excellent man who had held a paid post for four years, it thought that a returned soldier

might have an opportunity to hold the position—a much younger man, too.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Are you certain of that?

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: He was not a very much younger man. He had retired on superannuation.

The Minister for Lands: At 60 years of age.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The man is, I believe, 61 years of age. Having retired on superannuation, he had time at his disposal to undertake the work. The member for Leederville will agree that 60 years is not very old.

Hon. A. H. Panton: A man that age is only a baby.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Fraud has been mentioned.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, it is fraud.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Here we have a man who has reached a considerable age, much beyond the ordinary retiring age for a civil servant, who has served four years in a paid post, and it came to a matter of finding a man for the next term. The offence of the Government is that it appointed a returned soldier to the position, a man 61 years of age, with time at his disposal to attend to the duties of the position.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. L. Thorn—Toodyay) [11.13]: I would have preferred to have the files with me so that I could prove to the member for North-East Fremantle that he had minuted the file to the incoming Minister.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: But you are going to bring the file to the House?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, very definitely, and some others too. The hon. member left it to the incoming Minister. What did I do?

Mr. Styants: Tell us, and we will know.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Do not commit yourself too far, because you are wrong.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That shows how faulty is the hon. member's memory. The file was minuted to the incoming Minister. I made a check of Mr. Ryan's age and found that he is well over

70. I decided to carry out the policy of the Government and give preference to a returned soldier.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Are you certain of that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Quite definitely.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What about P. D. Ferguson?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am certain about what I state.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I thought Cabinet made the appointment.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows how the appointments are made. Certainly Cabinet made the final appointment, but I made a recommendation.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I thought so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I made this appointment of a man who had left the Civil Service, a man well-experienced and 61 years of age. The position to which he was appointed was worth roughly about £12 12s. a year, or £1 ls. per meeting of the board. There was another appointment that the Minister made. He referred the matter to the Trades Hall and asked that a panel of three names should be sent along. That panel of three names was duly received and the names mentioned were those of men holding down good and well paid positions. The Minister made his choice and appointed Mr. C. H. Webb, the secretary of the Enginedrivers, Firemen and Cleaners' Union, who already had a good position, and added to his salary £180 a year by virtue of the post on the Metropolitan Market Trust to which he was appointed. I want Labour members to know what was the policy of their own Minister.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That man was nominated by the movement and replaced a Labour man. No-one was sacked in order to put him on.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is no excuse at all. When he was a Minister, the hon. member appointed the secretary of a union who already enjoyed a very good salary, to a position on the Metropolitan Market Trust and added £180 a year to his salary. Personally, I would not do anything like that.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: No, you would have sacked someone.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would appoint a man who required the position, one with knowledge. However, I will pro-

duce the file and members can look at it. There is no doubt about what I am saying.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Yes, there is plenty of doubt about it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will not go further at this stage.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The Minister would not be wise to go any further because he might commit himself too far.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member need not worry about me. When he was a Minister he stood up to his job, and I hope I will stand up to mine.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: At any rate, we will not do the worrying.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Seeing that the discussion had proceeded so far, I thought it best to explain to members exactly what happened; and I hope to produce the file tomorrow to show that the former Minister avoided making the appointment and referred it to the incoming Minister.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: Just imagine that! The Government is defeated and makes an appointment three months ahead. What would have been said had it done so?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Other appointments were made.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: No, I declined to do so. The only other appointment I made was at the request of the Premier. I declined to make an appointment to the Potato Marketing Board until requested by the Premier to do so.

The Premier: That is true.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is all right, but I am not talking about the Potato Marketing Board.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You are not telling the truth. That is the trouble.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: My statement is correct and I will bring the file along tomorrow.

HON. A. H. PANTON (Leederville) [11.18]: I had put my papers away for use on another occasion but in view of the speech delivered by the Minister for Lands and Labour in which he emphasised the fact that the present Government stands for the appointment of returned soldiers, which point was also emphasised by the Attorney General, it is as well for me to make the position clear.

Mr. Mann: Are you out for an all-night sitting?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The hon. member should talk about all-night sittings!

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should disregard interjections and address the Chair.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: If the member for Beverley wants an all-night sitting he can have it, but I claim your protection, Mr. Chairman, from him.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should address the Chair and disregard interruptions.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I have no complaints to make at all about what the Government is doing with regard to appointments.

Mr. Leslie: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I have no complaints because Ministers believe, just as I do, in spoils to the victors.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Too right, they do.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Ever since they have been in politics that has been so.

The Attorney General: I am glad to know your sentiments with regard to spoils to the victors.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I learnt that from members sitting on the Minister's side of the House. If the Attorney General wants some examples I can give him some very interesting ones.

The Minister for Lands: All you have to do is go back 14 years when you sacked every representative we had on a board.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: And one of your members said that immediately they got back, out those men would go, and I agreed with him.

The Minister for Lands: That is my policy. I will put them out all right.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: They know they are going; they are ready for it. I congratulate the Government on the appointment of a publicity officer.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Another returned soldier?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: It is essential that a Government should have a good publicity officer, and I think the Minister for Railways will agree with me that, having got one, he should take him along in future so that he will know what the Minister intended to say,

even if he did not say it. I understand that Andrew Clementson has been appointed Publicity Officer at a salary of £832 to £850 a year or thereabouts on a three-years' contract. Evidently the Government was not optimistic about lasting longer than three years. However, he has been appointed, and I congratulate the Government, because it went out of its way to select a man who had been very well trained in the trade union movement.

I remember when Andrew Clementson went to the Trades Hall, a mere stripling, and Mr. McCallum was going to train him to become secretary of the Trades Hall in his place. That did not eventuate and he became a journalist. He had an opportunity to receive training at the hands of a particularly good man in the person of the late Prime Minister, John Curtin. In the last two or three years, he arrived at the position described by another eminent ex-labourite, who said that the Labour Party was so poor it was not worth while staying with that party. So Andrew Clementson left. The significant fact is that the member for Mt. Marshall who, in the last Parliament, constituted himself a representative of the R.S.L. in this Chamber, remained silent about this appointment.

Mr. Leslie: I did not know anything about it.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: And the hon. member is a vice-president of the R.S.L.

Mr. Leslie: I am not.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Thank God for that! I thought he was. There have been two meetings of the R.S.L. executive since the appointment was made and I have been anxiously watching to see how far the executive would go and particularly the member for Mt. Marshall. Incidentally, the Minister for Lands is a member of the executive. I do not blame him. He is one of a team and I should expect him to be loyal to the decision of the team. But the Attorney General has come along, followed by the Minister for Lands, both returned soldiers, and spoken about this Government standing for the appointment of returned soldiers, while at the same time deliberately appointing a man at a salary of £800 odd per annum who religiously and successfully dodged serving in two wars to my know-

ledge. He was not old enough to go to the South African war or I would have taken him with me. I want to know where is the consistency of the Government.

The Minister for Lands: It is not nice to say of a man that he dodged two wars.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Well, he did not go to them.

The Minister for Works: Is it essential to bring that matter up here in such a way?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Members opposite have flaunted their views about appointing none but returned soldiers and it is essential to tell the people just where they stand. Years ago I remember the R.S.L. secretary, Mr. Benson, reading a typewritten letter signed by the then Premier, Sir James Mitchell, which stated—"We stand for the appointment of returned soldiers." So they did—with the pick and shovel. I have nothing personal against Andrew Clementson.

The Premier: You seem to have.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: No, I congratulate the Government on its shrewdness in getting him.

The Minister for Works: Why not leave it at that?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I object to two Ministers standing up and disputing something the member for North-East Fremantle brought out and talking this sentimental stuff about the appointment of returned soldiers.

The Minister for Lands: Do you stand for preference to returned soldiers?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: No; preference to unionists, and the Minister knows it. I told the R.S.L. in 1919 that, so long as it kept the organisation apart from political matters, I would assist, and I did so for 20 years.

The Minister for Lands: You announced in the House one night that you stood for preference to unionists.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I have announced it from every platform as well as in the House. When I have anything to say, I say it, and do not hide behind the R.S.L. badge.

The Minister for Lands: Neither do I.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The Minister tried to do it tonight, but did not get away with it. I suggest that Ministers give us some explanation why certain returned sol-

dier journalists in this State were passed over for a non-serviceman.

The Premier: Is it not preference to soldiers, all things being equal?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: No.

The Premier: Have we to sacrifice efficiency to give preference to soldiers?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: A few weeks ago a case was taken against the Fremantle Council and the council got out of it by saying that it was transferring the man from one department to another, a man already employed. This, however, is a new appointment; there was no publicity officer when the present Government took over. I think this matter should be cleared up; either that, or the Government should honestly admit where it stands. The Attorney General said, "Let us be honest." Let the Government then admit that it does not stand for preference to returned soldiers on all occasions. This is an instance where applications might have been called and let the best man win. I shall defer offering congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, until another time.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

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

The PREMIER: I move—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June, 1947, a sum not exceeding £2,400,000 be granted from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £400,000 from the General Loan Fund and £300,000 from the Public Account.

Hon. F. J. S. WISE: In the very brief remarks which the Premier made when introducing this Bill, he made a slight comparison with the amount of Supply sought in the first Supply Bill of last year. The present Bill is seeking Supply for a sum of £400,000 in excess of the amount asked for in the first Supply Bill of last year. I am wondering whether the Premier will give the Committee details showing whether during the past two months, or the past completed month and the anticipated expenditure of this month, there is necessity for the increase of £400,000 for which he now seeks approval. It is a very large

additional sum to seek in a Supply Bill prior to the presentation of the Estimates. It may mean that he will need, before the Appropriation Bill is passed, an additional Supply Bill. I would like the Premier, if he can, to give the Committee details of the major sums involved in this additional amount.

The PREMIER: I have some information here, and if the Leader of the Opposition so wishes I will give the Committee a brief account of the additional Supply asked for. I explained, when introducing the Bill, that the increase was largely due to the increase in the basic wage and the resultant increase in costs generally. Again, we are met with a heavy expenditure on the South Fremantle power house. Materials for the power house are coming to hand, and, of course, money has to be found for them.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Will they not be paid for out of Loan funds?

The PREMIER: Yes, that is so. I can give the Leader of the Opposition some of the figures. On looking up previous Supply Bills, I found that there had not been a great deal of debate on them and that the information now asked for was given when the Budget was introduced and the Estimates brought down. Members then had every opportunity to obtain the information they desired. Besides, Ministers introduced their departmental estimates, when all details were available. Another reason why I did not bring all the information tonight is that I realised there would be a full debate on the Budget and I did not see that any useful purpose could be achieved by having the debate on the Supply Bill this evening.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It is vital information.

The PREMIER: The amount from Consolidated Revenue, £2,400,000, is to provide for expenditure other than that under special Acts. Departmental comes to £1,124,000. The main items are—

Education	£300,000
Miscellaneous Services	261,000
Police Department	80,000
Public Works	76,000
Public Health and Mental Hospitals	75,000
Premier and Treasurer	66,000
Public Utilities	1,276,000
The main items under Public Utilities are—	
Railways	£1,000,000
Goldfields Water Supply	48,000
Tramways	112,000
Metropolitan Water Supply	45,000

From the General Loan Fund of £400,000, the expenditure will be as follows:—

Railways, additions and improvements to railways and rolling stock	£35,000
Tramways, mainly works in progress, such as additional feeder cables, additional garage and workshops, machinery for car-barn and amenities at car-barn	11,000
Electricity supply, (metropolitan power scheme will be mainly responsible for this expenditure)	100,000
Harbours and rivers, expenditure on Bunbury and Fremantle harbour works and improvements to the Swan River	22,000
Water supplies, town water supplies, agricultural areas and Stirling Dam construction; Goldfields water supply renovations and enlarging of main conduit, raising wall at Mundaring Weir, metropolitan water supply, Mt. Yokine Reservoir, construction of 42 inch main, Cannington and Victoria Park, Perth main sewer diversions and new service connections	120,000
Development of mining advances for prospecting and loans generally	3,000
Development of Agriculture	7,000
Public buildings, including construction of new buildings, schools and other necessary buildings	36,000
Hospital equipment, mainly for Royal Perth Hospital	10,000
Welshpool Industries (Chamberlain Industries)	10,000
Administration	16,000

The Bill is really the Bill of the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I thought so. That is why I wanted the information.

The PREMIER: I took office after nine months of the financial year had passed. The Leader of the Opposition, therefore, has a good knowledge of the Bill, and I knew he would have that knowledge before I came here this evening. I hope the figures I have given are what he is asking for.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They appear very familiar to me.

The PREMIER: I thought they would be.

Question put and passed.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

All Stages.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages without debate and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 11.45 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 6th August, 1947.

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

MOTION—COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.34]: I desire to move the appointment of members to serve on the standing committees during the present session.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I rise to a point of order. This has been a hardy annual with members of this House. Although I was not present yesterday owing to ill-health, I am glad to know that the Chamber did the right thing and when an appointment was to be made, held a ballot. That is what we should do now. I appreciate that the Minister himself is not to blame in this matter, but rather the Standing Orders Committee, although the Minister himself was, I believe, a member of that committee. I would like to know whether the Minister is in order.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The Minister is quite correct in moving his motion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the following members be appointed to serve on the standing committees during the present session, namely:—

Standing Orders.—The Minister for Mines and Health, Hon. C. F. Baxter and Hon. G. Fraser.

Library.—Hon. J. G. Hislop and Hon. A. Thomson.

House.—Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, Hon. W. B. Hall, Hon. C. B. Williams and Hon. C. H. Simpson.

Printing.—Hon. E. H. Gray and Hon. W. J. Mann.

As to Election by Ballot.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South) [4.36]: I want to move that ballots be taken in order to select the members of the standing committees. As I mentioned before, I am very pleased that the House adopted that method yesterday with regard to the appointment of the Deputy President. I thank the Minister for nominating me to the House Committee, but I want members to take this matter seriously. That was not done on the last occasion when I was appointed to the House Committee. This time I do not want to be on any committee. That is why I desire the ballot to be taken so that these jobs may go round and other members be given an opportunity to take part in the work. The House Committee has started to do a good job with the real work entailed in its duties. Those members have done that rather than act—I shall refer to them by name if necessary—like some members who were on the House Committee for 15 or 17 years and did nothing. If Mr. Gray likes to take umbrage at that, I cannot help it. The House Committee has started to do something now and I want members to take positions on that body with a view to helping the new Controller of the House. He is a young man, although he has been with us for 19 years and we should assist him in his task. There were some members who kept the "Hansard" staff from getting their meals, but that is ended. That was done by some of the younger members of the House Committee—younger in point of service with that body—and for the reasons I have set out. I ask for a ballot.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (East) [4.38]: I would refer you, Mr. Deputy President, to Standing Order 34 which sets out that, at the commencement of each session, the Council shall "appoint" a specified number of members to serve on the standing committees. Yesterday we had the experience of