

Safety Council is trying to deal with over the radio today in an endeavour to educate the people to its way of thinking.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The country motorists are very careless.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I do not think they are any more careless than the city motorists. Any motorist, country or city, who goes to the Central Railway Station is likely, on returning to his car, to find a mudguard knocked off. I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT
(Hon. C. H. Simpson—Midland): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 5th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 29th August, 1950.

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

QUESTIONS.

BUSHFIRES.

As to Commonwealth Aid and State Contribution.

Mr. HOAR asked the Premier:

(1) Has he had confirmation of the recent statement attributed to Mr. H. A. Leslie, M.H.R., that the Federal Government had approved a grant up to £10,000 for bush fire relief in this State?

(2) Does he consider this a reasonable contribution by the Federal Government to one of the State's worst fire disasters, the estimated cost of which to farmers approximates £186,000?

(3) If not, has he made further approaches to the Federal Government for a greater contribution?

(4) As the Federal contribution is a free grant, will this be issued debt-free to farmers suffering damage?

(5) Does the State Government intend to match the Federal Government £ for £ in debt-free money, or even increase that ratio if necessary? If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) A larger sum was requested but as the Commonwealth money is to be granted to distressed and necessitous cases only and is to be augmented by a like amount from the State Government, it may be sufficient. In addition to grants it will probably be necessary to make some interest free loans, and this money will be found by the State.

(3) If it is found that the Commonwealth grant is insufficient, an application will be made for more money.

(4) Yes, in distressed and necessitous cases.

(5) Answered by (2).

MINING.

(a) As to Iron Content in Pyrites Residues.

Hon. E. NULSEN asked the Minister for Industrial Development:

(1) Has an inspection been made by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, or other organisation, concerning the percentage of iron contained in the residue of Norseman pyrite, after treatment for the extraction of sulphur at the chemical works of the superphosphate companies, or elsewhere?

(2) If an investigation has been made, what is the percentage?

(3) What is the percentage of residue of the pyrite ore received from Norseman?

(4) What is the total accumulation of pyrite residue from the inception of Norseman delivery?

(5) Could the residue be commercially and economically treated for pig iron?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) No, but the information has been obtained by the fertiliser companies.

(2) The pyrites is normally concentrated. There is about 60 per cent. of iron in the residue of the concentrate.

(3) There is up to 40 per cent. of sulphur in the concentrates, the remainder is residue.

(4) There is about 85,000 tons of residue from the concentrated pyrites.

(5) As a source of iron for smelting, I am advised that the residue could not compete economically with available iron ores, because of the presence of about 2 per cent. residual sulphur, and because the residues could not be introduced into a blast furnace without being briquetted, or sintered, or subjected to some similar process.

(b) As to Quarry Control in Unproclaimed Districts.

Mr. OLIVER asked the Premier:

What authority controls the working and inspection of quarries in parts of the State not proclaimed mining districts under the Mining Act?

The PREMIER replied:

There is at the present time no authority, but from time to time inspections are made by officers of the Mines Department. Consideration is now being given to bringing such quarries under the provisions of the Mines Regulation Act, 1946.

HOUSING.

(a) As to Assistance for Purchase of Existing Homes.

Hon. E. NULSEN asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) Is there any provision in the Workers' Homes Scheme for approved workers to purchase homes already erected?

(2) If not, why not?

(3) Is he aware that homes are being pulled down and carted away for re-erection in other centres?

(4) Because seekers for homes are unable to find the cash required to purchase same, would he consider extending to approved workers on the Goldfields (as under the War Service Homes Scheme) advance of money to purchase homes already erected?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Answered by (1).

(3) Yes.

(4) At the present time it is the policy of the Housing Commission to utilise its funds for the building of new homes and for the purchase of homes erected by the Commission.

(b) As to Payments in Excess of Instalments.

Mr. FOX asked the Honorary Minister for Housing:

(1) Are people who are purchasing homes from the Housing Commission permitted to make payments in excess of instalments?

(2) Will such excess payments be deducted from the principal outstanding?

(3) If not, why not?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Wherever any lessee, purchaser or mortgagor pays to the Commission under his lease, contract or mortgage any instalment of principal money in excess of the prescribed instalments payable by him, such excess instalment is paid by the Commission into the "Advance Instalments Deposit Fund" to the credit of such lessee, purchaser or mortgagor. Excess instalments remaining in the fund are credited with compound interest. Deposits and interest accumulated in the fund to the credit of a lessee, purchaser or mortgagor, shall at his request, be available for payment of—

(a) any instalments as they fall due;

(b) any arrears of instalments;

(c) expenses incurred for repairs, etc.;

(d) rates and taxes;

(e) any other expenses incurred by him with the approval of the Commission in connection with the land or dwelling.

If at any time the deposits and interest accumulated to the credit of a lessee, purchaser or mortgagor in the fund amount to the whole of his liability, the Commission may apply the sum in discharge of his liability.

(3) Answered by (1) and (2).

SERVICEMEN'S LAND SETTLEMENT.

As to State Holding Farms and Dairy Stock.

Mr. HOAR asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) How many State holding farms are in existence for the rearing of dairy cattle for soldier settlement?

(2) What is the holding capacity of these farms?

(3) How many heifers have been purchased, or acquired, over the last three years up to the 30th June, 1950, for the holding farms?

(4) How many heifers have been made available to soldier settlers from these farms for the past three years up to the 30th June, 1950?

(5) Is any of this stock used for other purposes than the stocking of soldier settlement farms?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) One.
- (2) 400.
- (3) 1,063.
- (4) 1,334.
- (5) No; other than normal wastage by culling.

HEARING AIDS.

As to Issue to Indigent People.

Mr. FOX asked the Minister for Health:

- (1) Are hearing-aids issued to persons in indigent circumstances?
- (2) If not, why not?

The MINISTER replied:

- (1) The Commonwealth provides hearing aids for children of pre-school and school age.
- (2) It is a matter for consideration by the Commonwealth under social services.

ONIONS.

As to Items of Production Costs.

Mr. FOX asked the Attorney General:

Would he inform the House of the costs for the growing of one acre of onions allocated to each item of expense for each separate month, November to June of this coming season, also for out of season white onions?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

Under the Prices Control Act, 1948-1949, the Prices Control Commissioner is prohibited, excepting for the purposes of the Act, from directly or indirectly communicating or divulging any information relating to any matter which comes to his knowledge in consequence of his official position.

RAILWAYS.

As to Improving Footbridge, Cottesloe.

Mr. HUTCHINSON asked the Minister representing the Minister for Railways:

Will he give early consideration to turning the present footbridge crossing the railway line at Cottesloe station, into a ramp bridge so that aged people and women with prams might cross with greater ease and safety?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied:

It is intended that the steps shall be replaced with ramps when bridge renewals are necessary, but owing to limitations of available manpower and material and the demands for other essential works, it is not possible to give this work early priority.

ELECTORAL.

(a) *As to Melville Postal Vote Officer.*

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Attorney General:

If, as he told the member for Hannans in reply to Question No. 2 on Wednesday, the 23rd August, the control of postal vote officers was in the hands of the Chief Electoral Officer, how was the Attorney General able to have returned to a postal vote officer, who had been operating in the Melville Electorate, postal voting ballot papers which had been called in by the Chief Electoral Officer from that postal vote officer?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

The postal vote officer concerned was re-issued with a postal vote book by the Chief Electoral Officer in the ordinary course of his duties subsequent to a satisfactory investigation and inspection of the postal vote book recalled.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: If that is the answer, then the Attorney General will hear more about it.

(b) *As to Boulder Postal Vote Officers.*

Mr. McCULLOCH asked the Attorney General:

What are the names of other postal vote officers in the Boulder district whose names have been removed from the list of postal vote officers in addition to Mrs. Teahan and Mr. W. J. Kenneally?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

There were no other names of postal vote officers within the Boulder district removed from the list at the same time as Mrs. Teahan and Mr. W. J. Kenneally.

MEAT.

(a) *As to Suggested De-control.*

Mr. W. HEGNEY (without notice) asked the Attorney General:

(1) Is he aware that in "The West Australian" newspaper of the 26th August, 1950, a report of proceedings of the conference of Prices Ministers included the following statement:—

An application that Western Australia be allowed to de-control meat, thus breaking away from the general understanding reached between the States, was rejected.

(2) Is this statement correct?

(3) If it is correct, can he inform the House who made such application and the authority on which it was made?

(4) If the statement is not correct, will he take steps to have a denial published in the newspaper referred to?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

At the meeting of Prices Ministers concerned the whole question of control of meat was thoroughly considered and every angle was investigated. At that meeting I asked what would be the views of the other Prices Ministers as to the State of Western Australia de-controlling meat on an individual basis. An intimation was then expressed, through the Chairman, that the Prices Control Ministers would not favour any de-control by one separate State.

(b) *As to Explanation of Position.*

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

In view of his very recent assurance that the Government would continue control of meat prices, and in view of Mr. W. S. Kelly's recommendation that removal of control should not be permitted, can he explain why an application was made by the Prices Minister for Western Australia, to the recent conference of Prices Ministers in Perth that Western Australia be allowed to de-control meat?

The PREMIER replied:

I have no knowledge of the Minister for Prices making an application to the Prices Ministers to de-control meat in this State. I did meet all the Prices Ministers and explained to them the general position in regard to meat supplies in Western Australia. I gave them the recommendations of Mr. W. S. Kelly and also put before them the request of certain master butchers to de-control meat and their statement that they thought there would be no rise in the price of meat if it was de-controlled. I then left, but I did not make any request to the conference that Western Australia be permitted to de-control meat.

(c) *As to Accuracy of Press Report.*

Mr. W. HEGNEY (without notice) asked the Attorney General:

In view of the answers to the foregoing questions, is the report in "The West Australian" correct or incorrect?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied:

What I have now stated is correct.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Report on Up-River Extension.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN (without notice) asked the Premier:

Will the Premier make available, before the inquiry takes place the precise terms of reference which are to be supplied to the visiting engineer who is to carry out an investigation of the proposed harbour extensions at Fremantle?

The PREMIER replied:

Perhaps I might make an explanation at this stage. A request was made by the member for Maylands, by notice of question, for an engineer to be brought to Western Australia to confer with our engineers about up river extensions in the Fremantle harbour scheme. I made representations to Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, when he was here. I asked him whether he would make his engineer for Harbours and Rivers available to confer with our engineers in regard to up river extensions. Mr. Playford, through the Attorney General, said that he would be pleased to make his engineer available.

COOGEE BEACH.

As to Pollution.

Mr. FOX (without notice) asked the Premier:

While the engineer from South Australia is in Western Australia examining matters concerning the Fremantle harbour, will the Premier ask him to look at Coogee Beach to see whether anything can be done to prevent pollution of the beach in that district?

The PREMIER replied:

I should think that our engineers would be competent to advise on the pollution of Coogee Beach. I will ask my colleague, the Minister for Works, to bring that matter under the notice of his officers.

STATE PRODUCTS.

As to Total Recorded Value.

Mr. KELLY asked the Premier:

What is the recorded total value to W.A. of the following (for all times since records have been kept):—

- (a) Wool;
- (b) wheat;
- (c) gold;
- (d) coal?

The PREMIER replied:

The following is the recorded total value to W.A.:—

- (a) Wool, 1901-1949, £196,011,040;
- (b) Wheat, 1900-1901 to 1948-1949, £237,014,157;
- (c) Gold production to 30th June, 1950, £310,270,125;
- (d) Coal production to 30th June, 1950, £16,348,658.

PERTH ELECTRICITY UNDERTAKING.

As to Alleged Condition of Sale.

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

(1) Has his attention been drawn to the discussion which took place last evening at the Claremont Council wherein it was

stated that one of the conditions of sale of the Perth City Council electricity and gas undertaking was that a possible knighthood be offered the Lord Mayor of Perth, who happens to be a member of this Chamber?

(2) Will he confirm or deny that report?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) and (2) I did read the report of that meeting, and I should think the remarks made as to the knighthood of the member for West Perth could only emanate from an irresponsible person.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Twelfth Day.

Debate resumed from the 23rd August.

MR. YATES (South Perth) [4.52]: A matter which is causing grave concern to the Traffic Department and the transport authorities is the ever-increasing congestion of traffic within the city limits and, to a lesser degree, in the outer portions of the metropolitan area. This congestion is growing week by week. I venture to say that the density of traffic in the city streets, not only during peak periods but also in the off-periods, is greater than ever before in the history of Perth. It is also quite certain that the congestion will continue to increase unless something drastic is done to relieve the flow of traffic within the city limits and this will call for the best of knowledge, not only from the Government authorities, but also from the Perth City Council.

We have been waiting for the completion of the Causeway for quite a long time. It appears that it may be completed within the next couple of years; it might be longer.

Mr. Marshall: There is a long way to go yet.

Mr. YATES: It has been stated that the completion of that structure will do away with the congestion in Adelaide-terrace of traffic which leaves the city to travel across to the opposite side of the river. At the present time there can be seen practically every evening a line of cars and other vehicles stretching from Christian Brothers' College on the corner of Victoria-avenue to the Causeway and drivers have to move slowly, with stoppages at frequent intervals, before they reach the other side of the river.

A bottleneck is created at Riverside-drive by a line of vehicles coming from that road into the Causeway. This requires a pointsman to be on duty at peak hours to control the traffic flow. So that one stream can enter the Causeway he has to hold the other one up and that in itself is adding to the general congestion. With the completion of the new Causeway it is to be hoped that this evening congestion will cease. However, a new

problem will arise in the morning when three lines of traffic enter the Causeway from the south and east of the river at a fairly fast speed, and merge into a single line of vehicles in Adelaide-terrace. This will create congestion at the corner of Barrack-street and St. George's-terrace in the same way as it now occurs at the Causeway. Even now, with the slow inflow of vehicles to the city, it is not uncommon for a traffic line to be banked up for 300 or 400 yards.

I can visualise the same procession of cars and trucks stretching further down Adelaide-terrace when the new Causeway is finished, unless some means are devised to divert this traffic into by-ways so that it enters the city by three or four different routes. If we use Adelaide-terrace as the main artery then I am afraid we are in for an extremely sorry time. I cannot see any alleviation of the problem at all unless our experts get their heads together to devise means whereby this traffic can be diverted before it reaches the centre of the city.

The Minister for Works: Could it not be dispersed through the side streets?

Mr. YATES: Yes, if it were under control which will require to be enforced. It is only natural for a motorist to take the shortest route in order to reach his destination. When he desires to enter the city he, naturally, will come by Adelaide-terrace and unless car traffic is diverted into one street, heavy bus traffic into another and trucks into another, we are going to have all this traffic combining for future congestion in St. George's-terrace.

In the past suggestions have been put forward not only to the Government but also to the civic authorities to assist in overcoming this problem. The greatest single factor which would tend to at least halve the city congestion is the building of a bridge across the Narrows or the construction of another causeway from Barrack-street to Mends-street, South Perth. Either proposition would be most suitable to halve the traffic travelling from the east and south sides of the river to enter the city. Nearly four years ago I was approached by a member of the South Perth Road Board who is a qualified engineer. He had studied bridge-building to a great extent and was quite conversant with traffic problems also. He put up the suggestion that a bridge should be built from Mill Point on the south side of the river and on the shores of South Perth proper, across the narrow strip of water known as "The Narrows." This bridge was to have a gradual drive on to Mount's Bay-road with one lane leading to Fremantle and the other to Perth. He estimated that to build that bridge, three years ago, would cost under £80,000.

Mr. Marshall: It would not have been much of a bridge at £80,000.

Mr. YATES: The figures he submitted at that time proved quite conclusively that even if the Government could not build it at that price, private enterprise could. It was not to be a bridge of heavy construction such as the Causeway, but to be one similar to that over the Canning River. It was to have jarrah piles and a timber superstructure wide enough to take four lines of traffic.

The Minister for Works: How much did you say it would cost?

Mr. YATES: Under £80,000. I am talking not of today but of nearly three years ago. The cost today I would not care to estimate. I, myself, was a little doubtful of the figures but on paper this engineer showed that it was possible to build the bridge at that cost provided that there were no under-water supports. According to engineers' reports such a difficulty would not present itself at the Narrows and such a bridge could be built. I approached the then Minister for Works and he told me that owing to the heavy bridge construction programme the Public Works Department had under way, including the Causeway, it was not possible for him to release any of his engineers or his experts even to consider at that time the construction of a second bridge across the river.

From time to time I called at the Public Works Department to gain the latest information on the matter. I was told that, although it had not been shelved, it was still not possible for any such proposal to be considered until such time as engineers were available, and equipment which was being used in other works could be made available for work of this nature. It is apparent to members that in the future we must have some other way out of the city to relieve this congestion of which we have heard so much. If the Narrows were bridged I can see most of the Fremantle traffic, and also the traffic coming from South Perth, Como, and Applecross using that route to come into the city.

It would save a lot of time and a lot of wear and tear, and I think would cut down by at least one-third the traffic at present using the Causeway. It would also mean that these vehicles—or a fair number of them—would cross the Narrows and, not having business to transact at the other side of the city, would go into some of the parking areas on the outskirts of the city, thus reducing traffic congestion on the main roads of Perth. I ask the Minister for Works to give this matter urgent consideration and set the ball rolling now, not in three or four years time, and have a scheme prepared so that when the present Causeway is finished, engineers will be ready to start the building of a bridge across the river in a suitable area and in one that will assist in relieving the Causeway traffic. It could be so constructed that it would not impede the flow of vessels using the river.

Another factor which is causing congestion in the city is underground conveniences. I was very pleased to read in the Press this morning that an agreement had been reached between the Government and the Perth City Council for the removal of the conveniences situated in St. George's-terrace near the Treasury building. This will materially assist in doing away with the present congestion and the danger caused by the narrow bottle-neck and by buses swinging in and out from their bus stops and coming very close to the protecting fences of those conveniences. I would be very pleased to know that at some future date the Government and the Perth City Council combined had agreed to remove the convenience situated at the corner of the Terrace and William-street. These are very bad danger spots and, strange to say, both carry the danger sign warning the public to be careful how they drive.

Another matter affecting traffic is the parking problem. Many suggestions have been put forward. One was put to me some time ago—some members may deride it, but I think there is something in it to give the authorities food for thought. It concerns the building of a parking area on the Swan River. We have a large area of water commencing at the foot of Barrack-street and going around Riverside-drive to the Causeway. It is not suitable for swimming as it is very shallow and full of bottles, rocks and mud. Commencing from the boat sheds to approximately Plain-street, a distance of 30 yards out into the river could be filled in and covered with a bitumen surface. It would take many hundreds of cars and materially assist in relieving the parking problem in the city. Quite rightly the Perth City Council will not let us touch the area from the Esplanade down to the Causeway. It has been set aside for sporting bodies, public bodies and beautification.

Mr. Totterdell: What about parking stations?

Mr. YATES: Yes, we must have parking stations. This difficulty has been overcome in certain American cities. I was reading an article on congestion in some big American cities a few months ago, and was astounded to learn that some of the big business firms were losing custom because the customer could not park his car near those places of business. In some instances they had to park a mile away and therefore these people lost a lot of trade. The position became so serious that the heads of firms got together and had a conference and decided to buy a property close to the central area of their shopping centres. They built a large parking building, so constructed as to enable vehicles to be taken up in lifts to upper floors, where attendants looked after them and brought them down and handed them back to the customers on presentation of their tickets. Not only did they do that

but, as an added incentive, motorists who did business with one of the stores would get a discount or have their parking fees reduced. In consequence, business looked up to such a degree that the venture was successful financially as well as in relieving the congestion of traffic in that city.

That is a problem which can be faced by the business people of Perth if they desire to help in relieving the congestion. They could assist greatly in this matter, not only by financing a scheme such as this, but by assisting the civic authorities and the Government to overcome the very important problem we are facing now and are doomed to face for a very long time—unless we give more than lip service in the relieving of traffic congestion.

I should like to have a little to say on the McNess housing scheme, not only as it affects the tenants who are lucky enough to be in one of these homes, but also as it affects those people who would desire to be tenants and are not able to be so. Some years ago the late Sir Charles McNess left a large sum of money, most of it in securities, to be put to some useful purpose. It was resolved that this money would be spent in the building of homes for aged people and those in indigent circumstances who could not purchase homes or pay high rentals for houses. The scheme was introduced in, I think, 1930, and was legally tied up by an Act of Parliament which gave powers to the trustees to spend not only the income derived from the securities but also to expend a certain amount of money that was made available by the Government of the day. That Government aid was to assist the scheme, and it proved of great benefit. In the intervening years, about 260 McNess homes have been built, of which 50 have been purchased, a section of the Act giving tenants the right to buy their homes under certain conditions.

Mr. May: It is a bigger percentage than that.

Mr. YATES: I am not sure of the number but I was informed that about 50 of the homes had been purchased by the tenants. In any event, a number of the people availed themselves of the opportunity to purchase the houses. At the present time there are approximately 200 McNess homes that are tenanted. In most instances, after due consideration, those homes were made available to individuals that required them most. We have been informed that there is to be no more building of these homes because the finance available has run out. There are no plans made for the construction of more homes to assist aged people to secure some benefit under the McNess scheme.

Mr. Fox: There is about £40,000 in the fund.

The Honorary Minister: Some more are being built this year.

Mr. YATES: The capital originally was in the vicinity of £126,000, on fixed deposit or in bonds. The sum actually left is £26,000 and there is a floating amount of approximately £14,000. The last-mentioned amount is used for normal business transactions, such as payment of rates and taxes and expenditure in connection with repairs and renovations. In addition, some of it has been earmarked for the completion of the balance of the homes. The invested capital was, as I have mentioned, £126,000, plus the Government grant, and that money has remained untouched since the inception of the scheme in 1930. In that year, the cost of building the one-bedroom home was £250. The Act set out that, unless special permission were granted, the price of each such home was not to exceed £250. Thus, had that money been spent in 1930, we could have built four homes for each £1,000 spent on the work, whereas today homes of that description would cost approximately £800.

Mr. J. Hegney: Some of the homes cost more than the amount you say, because they had to be lined to make them more comfortable.

Mr. YATES: They did increase the cost of some of the smaller homes, special permission having been obtained to spend more than £250 because the places were found to be not quite suitable. In the early stages, the homes cost from £250 to £300, and they were not bad homes, by any means. At the present time, we are faced with a shortage of houses. I am not concerning myself about the accommodation of large-unit families, but with the aged couples who have no chance in life of securing a home under the Commonwealth-State housing scheme.

Mr. J. Hegney: How many are on the waiting list for McNess homes?

Mr. YATES: I have not the exact number, but the applications are increasing in number all the time. The fund is practically extinct and the time has arrived when we must either close down the scheme and use the income in keeping the homes already constructed in good repair, or there must be a Government grant to enable the scheme to be carried on. My suggestion is that the £26,000 that is held in trust should be spent now. It is bringing in some income, but not any great amount. It certainly will not bring in enough to enable 30 additional homes to be constructed within the next 50 years. If the money were expended now, in view of present-day values, we would be able to construct at least 26, and probably 30, homes. The money so invested would bring in as income almost as much as is being derived under present conditions.

Would it not be better to house upwards of 26 necessitous cases rather than wait so that we could build one or two houses at a time over the next 30 years? With

the constant rise in prices and the value of the £ gradually decreasing owing to various circumstances, it is but natural to imagine that in ten or 15 years' time, taking into consideration the upward trend in the cost of building, these homes will not be constructed for less than about £1,100. As a matter of fact, we are gradually losing the value of the capital involved in the scheme in respect of the income derived from the interest on the amount invested and on the stocks and bonds. The return so derived is not large enough to enable the trustees to do what is required, and much benefit would accrue if they were to go ahead now and build 26 more homes, investing the money in that direction.

More good would be done by adopting that course than is possible now by means of the certain amount of income derived annually. I therefore suggest to the Minister for Housing that he should go fully into this matter and see if this scheme of mine could not be investigated and approval be given for the money to be spent. He could also consider whether the Government would agree to setting aside a grant of money either by way of annual payments or by providing a lump sum contribution to keep the scheme alive. It must die out unless we come to its aid. The income from the homes in 1948 was £3,339. That is the amount in round figures, leaving out of consideration shillings and pence.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Was that for one year?

Mr. YATES: The expenditure on rates and taxes, together with other expenses, amounted to £1,493. With the addition of a further 26 homes, there would be enough income derived from the total number built to keep the homes in good repair and to pay the rates and taxes on the properties. Many local authorities assist with regard to the payment of certain rates. I understand that the Perth City Council, within whose boundaries a certain number of the homes have been built, has waived certain charges, which has proved of assistance not only to the scheme but, in many instances, to the tenants themselves.

Now is the time to do something about the scheme. Are we going to let it die? If so, let us kill it straightaway by spending what little money there is in giving relief to 26 more families. If the Minister is not agreeable to that, I urge him to see whether it is not possible for the Government to make a grant to ensure that the scheme is carried on.

A grant was made by a previous Government when money was not so plentiful. The amount, I think, was £15,000, and, if that sum could be granted in those days, the present Government should be able to find £30,000 or £50,000 to keep the scheme

alive. The intention of Sir Charles McNess was that people in his lifetime should benefit from the proceeds of his investments, not people in 50 or 100 years time. The Minister should consider my suggestion immediately and let us know where we stand as to the continuance or otherwise of the McNess Housing Scheme.

I was greatly interested in the remarks on communism by the member for Kalgoolie and also his impressions of the intentions of Russia. He said there was a curtain that could not be penetrated and yet at times somebody got behind it and information came to the outside world. The hon. member thought that the production of Russia had fallen somewhat, that Russia was not in a position to wage war and that its intentions were peaceful. I should be very pleased indeed to agree with the hon. member if I could, but I cannot do so. Russia is not as badly off as some people think. I intend to quote from "The Sunday Times" of the 9th July of this year.

Mr. Styants: "The Sunday Times"! What would it know of what is going on in Russia?

Mr. YATES: I will read these extracts and the hon. member can judge for himself. These figures are set out, as follows:—

What Hitler had in 1938—

- 27,400,000 tons steel (annual production).
- 62,300,000,000 kwh. electric power (annual production).
- 215,000 tons aluminium (annual production).
- 15,800,000 barrels oil (annual production).
- 400,000 trucks (stocks on hand).
- 1,177,000 machine tools (inventory).
- 500,000 youths coming of military age each year.

What Stalin has in 1950—

- 35,200,000 tons steel (annual production).
- 115,000,000,000 kwh. electric power (annual production).
- 230,000 tons aluminium (annual production).
- 355,500,000 barrels oil (annual production).
- 2,000,000 trucks (stocks on hand).
- 1,300,000 machine tools (inventory).
- 2,000,000 youths coming of military age each year.

Mr. Styants: "The Sunday Times" must have got behind the iron curtain to obtain all those details.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That seems to be a very good advertisement for the efficiency of Soviet industry.

Mr. YATES: I shall now quote, from "The Daily News" of the 27th July last, a message from London headed, "Britain's Shinwell Lifts a Corner of the Iron Curtain." It states—

Britain last night learnt from her Defence Minister the might of Russia—and learnt of her Government's determination to put the country in a position where she could resist aggression "from the only quarter from which it might possibly come."

Mr. Shinwell said that Britain knew a great deal about the preparations the Russians were making behind their smokescreen of peace propaganda. He was not going to tell the world all he knew about these preparations, but it was certain that the Soviet was spending not less than 13 per cent. of her national income on defence.

Russia was maintaining an Army of about 175 active divisions. One-third of these were mechanised and tank divisions—a total of about 25,000 tanks. An appreciable number of these tanks were in immediate readiness in the Soviet zone of Germany. Russia also had—

Two million eight hundred thousand men under arms, and could double this number on mobilisation.

Nineteen thousand military aircraft, including jet aircraft of the latest design, both bombers and fighters.

Considerable naval forces, including strong submarine fleets, many of them of modern design.

"The existence of this vast force in the hands of a totalitarian State where pressure of public opinion does not operate and whose intentions are uncertain represents a potential danger of which other nations must take full account," said Mr. Shinwell. "However, there is no question of Britain facing that threat alone. In any future struggle, British forces will take the field as members of an Allied Force following an Allied plan."

Mr. Styants: It would be worth knowing how Russia made such development.

Mr. YATES: Now I shall quote from a book entitled "Inside Red Russia" by J. J. Maloney, M.L.C. I consider these facts and figures to be the most authentic that have come out of Russia in the period since World War II. First of all I shall read from a "Note on the Author," as follows:—

In 1943 he was asked by the Commonwealth Government to become the Australian Minister to Moscow, a post he filled for two years.

This book is the story of Mr. Maloney's visit to the Soviet. It is also a frank record of an appalling system, as he saw it. He saw Russia, let it be remembered, as a Labour man

officially visiting a supposed Socialist State, and he returned to Australia horrified at the regimentation of an entire nation enslaved by its Soviet rulers.

Mr. Maloney pulls no punches, hides nothing, reveals with almost brutal candour the things he saw and experienced. He met all the Russian heads, from Stalin down, and he had unique opportunities of examining the Russian Socialist system. His Labour training enabled him to assess Russian labour conditions at their true value.

Mr. Graham: Are you going to tack the contents of that on to the Labour Party?

Mr. YATES: I am not blaming the Labour Party for anything. On page 13, the writer refers to the rations available for the higher strata.

Members of the Government, senior Soviet administrators, and other very high officials, together with the members of their families, receive the fullest and best rations in the Soviet Union. They want for nothing and do not have to worry whether or not a commodity will be available when they send for it. Their shopping places are exclusive to their class. Admission is by special pass. A director of one of these closed shops would soon find himself in serious trouble if he did not have on hand all the requirements of his customers.

Next come the senior officers of the Department of Internal Security (N.K.V.D.). These are the high officials of both sexes of the Soviet police organisation, and they have their own exclusive closed shops in which they can purchase at special State prices all their requirements—commodities which are available to the general public, only in the open markets and commercial stores at fantastically high prices.

Mr. Styants: It sounds like the capitalist system.

Mr. YATES: The writer goes on—

This organisation has its own auxiliary farms and workshops conducted with prison labour, to supply its own special stores and, like their colleagues in the highest strata of Soviet officialdom, the members want for nothing in the way of food and comforts.

The men and women in the lower ranks of the N.K.V.D. receive the same food ration as the army.

With the exception of members of the Government, senior Soviet administrators, etc., and the high ranking officers of the N.K.V.D. the personnel of the army, especially officers in the field, get the highest and best food ration in the country.

High ranking Red Army officers receive all their rations free, and members of their families (limited to wife and one dependant) have the privilege of obtaining their food with the top worker's ration card in Red Army co-operative stores at specially reduced State prices. Should the officer be at home, then his food is delivered to him daily.

Officers of the Soviet Militia (police), corresponding to the rank of inspector and higher, are given a more generous ration than junior commissioned officers in the Red Army, and those in the lower ranks of the militia receive the same ration as the Red Army.

Heads of foreign missions and foreign Press correspondents receive rations amounting to about double those of a worker in the highest grade category.

Mr. Styants: You would know something of rations here and the way they get food.

Mr. YATES: As a quartermaster of four years' standing I can say that the men and the officers got the same food, with one exception.

Mr. Styants: I have heard that before, too!

Mr. YATES: It came from the same source of supply. There was one exception. The officers used to put in so much per week and, from the money, rations were bought outside. That often happened in the men's messes, too. The writer continues—

Members of the foreign diplomatic corps in the lower ranks receive a smaller ration than the heads of their missions, and the non-diplomatic members of a foreign mission receive a lower ration again than those with diplomatic status. These varying scales of rations are all higher than those of the Soviet worker in the highest grade category.

I turn now to page 89 of the book, headed "The Law and the Secret Police." There is a sub-heading, "Control Through Fear." In this section of the book the writer says—

There is one difficulty in writing of the machinations of this secret police organisation, and that is the knowledge that if one quoted specific cases of Soviet citizens being taken from their beds in the early hours of the morning by the N.K.V.D. to disappear, sometimes forever, from the knowledge of their friends or relatives, one would be committing the families and friends of those people to a like fate.

Mr. Styants: Did they have a search warrant?

Mr. YATES: The book continues—

Under the Soviet interpretation of justice there would be no hesitation in casting into prison any, and every, Soviet citizen suspected of having given such information.

It says nothing there about the Communist Bill! It continues—

This principle of making relatives suffer is held over the heads of every Soviet citizen fortunate enough to obtain an exit visa. In case such a citizen, while abroad, should speak of conditions in the U.S.S.R. other than officially, the Soviet authorities will, whenever possible, detain a relative to whom an exit visa has already been granted, or allow a mother an exit visa and refuse one for her child or children. In no other country is the value of hostages so deeply appreciated as in the U.S.S.R.

Finally, I will quote from page 94. The chapter is headed, "The Soviet and the Church." It reads—

From the date of the seizure of power in Russia by the Communist Party, a vigorous and at times ruthless, campaign against religion and those associated with it was commenced. All church property was confiscated by the State. Priests and nuns were expelled from their monasteries and convents and thousands were cast into the prison labour camps that had become part of the "New Order" for the Russian masses.

Many leading churches and monasteries were converted into anti-God or anti-religious museums. Others were used by anti-religious organisations for political purposes. Thousands of beautiful buildings were converted to living quarters, storehouses and workshops. Today most of these churches and monasteries are unsightly and neglected. In 1921 the Communist Party, to obtain foreign exchange, stripped many Russian churches of all valuables for shipment abroad. Even the cupolas and other parts of the buildings were torn down.

That is what this book has to say about the Russian system.

Mr. Styants: That is only part of it. You have only quoted the sections that suited you.

Mr. YATES: I could have quoted from every page in this book. There is not a page that is not an indictment against the Soviet regime. I could have quoted the calorific values of the food given to the masses as against that supplied to those higher in authority. Does that sort of thing take place in Australia? Of course not! It does not matter whether a man is on the lowest rung here, he still has the

right to enter any store and make purchases. We still have freedom of speech in this country and the right to go where we like.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Did not your party advocate preference for communists in the last election?

Mr. YATES: I am not saying anything about preference. I am entirely opposed to them.

Mr. Styants: Did you ever hear me speak in favour of the system of communism?

Mr. YATES: I did not say the hon. member spoke in favour of it. I quoted a few words that he used. One statement he made was that he did not think the Russians had warlike intentions. I am going to say that they have and always have had. It is so this year and it will be so next year and in 20 years' time. The pattern set many years ago by the communist heads was that Russia would eventually dominate the world—the British speaking people and all other races. They have commenced their pogrom; they have gone through China and the satellite states of Russia, and now we find matters coming to a head in Korea.

If the United Nations had not intervened in Korea, hostilities would have gone on until a halt was called in some other place. It might have been Australia. However, a halt has been called in Korea. Whether it will be effective or not, no-one can tell. We do not want their sort of system in Australia, much as they would like it. I am not saying that anyone in this House or outside of it is for or against the Russian system.

Mr. Ackland: They are touchy when you talk against the Russian system.

The Minister for Lands: My word, they are!

Mr. YATES: I cannot understand any person who thinks the Russian system would be of benefit to the Australian people and the Australian way of life. I want to quote now from the "Daily News" of the 16th August. This article is headed, "These Red Laws ARE a Bit of a Shock." It is a message from Geneva and reads as follows:—

A joint British and United States attack on Russia's slave labour system was launched at a meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council in Geneva yesterday.

British delegate G. T. Corley-Smith produced photostatic copies of Russian laws and decrees to show that people could be exiled to Siberian labour camps even when their innocence was admitted by the authorities, simply on the grounds that they were related to people alleged to have committed offences.

"It has long been known that hard punishments were inflicted upon the innocent relatives of persons who escaped from the Soviet Union, but it still comes as a bit of a shock to see this in cold print in an official text issued by the Soviet Ministry of Justice," Mr. Corley-Smith said.

The British Government estimated in 1948 that 10,000,000 people had been forced into Russian slave labour camps.

Mr. Styants: They must have got behind the Iron Curtain, too.

Mr. YATES: Any sane thinking person who today is against the anti-communist Bill in Australia wants to take note of what is being written by Mr. J. J. Maloney and other people and also of reports that come from time to time from reliable sources. One or two may be exaggerated, but they cannot all be wrong.

Mr. Styants: Why does not Menzies ban the communists and take their property? He has the power to do that.

Mr. YATES: I am in this House to give my views not only on the Bill dealing with communism, but on other matters affecting the Address-in-reply. It would take me too long to tell the hon. member why the communist Bill should be passed. I respect his point of view because he is in the Opposition, and, as in the case of the Opposition in the Federal House, he is loyally supporting his leaders. In his heart he might think the Bill a very good one, but that is for him to decide. Something has to be done to deal with this menace which has grown throughout the world and is now in our own country.

We are told there might be 18,000 or 20,000 communists in Australia, and they can do a lot of damage; and they are doing it! What of the fifth columnists in France just prior to World War II? A handful of people there completely disorganised the country. What of a gentleman in our own city who in 1944 was found to be in possession of subversive literature and information relating to the defence of this State and who, when imprisoned by the magistrate, suggested that he be interned for the duration of the war? What happened when he came out? He was given a job in the C.S.I.R.O. That information is public property. It is men of that type who infiltrate not only into our Government departments, but into our every way of life. It is their job to be disruptive, and not only in times of peace, but in the event of war they can be a greater danger to us.

Mr. Styants: Communism has been a wonderful asset to your party.

Mr. YATES: A communist has not always meant a man who comes from Russia, but has had many meanings. I do not think any person could define its

true meaning but, as we know it, a communist is a traitor to this country, and I suggest that any Bill brought down by any Government, to deal with them, should be applauded by all the people of Australia. I would be happy to see such a measure introduced in this House to control them in this State; and I am certain that the majority of members would, too.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Why does not your Government bring one down?

Mr. YATES: That might happen, too.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You are getting into deep water.

Mr. YATES: No, I am not, but if the hon. member gets communists here, he will be getting into deep water. I shall quote another article from the "Sunday Times," which seems to rile the Opposition. This was written by Mr. Victor Courtney, a man well known not only for his political writings but for his comments made from time to time on the trend of events overseas and in this country. I was interested to read what he thought of the 40-hour week when it was first introduced. I was not in favour of his point of view, nevertheless he printed it and it was read by many people. Recently, on the 20th August, an article headed "Whom Does the 40-hour Week Benefit?" appeared over his name in the "Sunday Times" and he had this to say—

I was one of those who strongly advocated the 40-hour week. Therefore I can claim to be as much concerned as anybody with the question: "Whom does the 40-hour week benefit?"

In the beginning it was cheering to think that we could reduce four hours of the workers' weekly toil, enjoy four hours additional leisure and keep everybody in work and, at the same time, reap to the full the harvest of peacetime production.

Somehow it hasn't worked out that way.

Enjoyment of leisure involves also the capacity to pay for it. Our enjoyment of leisure is limited because everything has increased in price and the job of meeting the bill for ordinary living expenses has become for most people tougher than ever.

Reaping the harvest of peacetime production is another dream which somehow seems to have become lost in transit, because peacetime production has fallen woefully short of our expectations.

No person can be quite happy without a house to live in and the housing problem is possibly as bad as ever it was because there is not enough material being produced to provide the amount that the increasing population demands.

Most of the things we use have increased substantially in price and one of the reasons advanced, and with a certain amount of justification, is that a factory deprived of 10 per cent. of its working hours cannot produce its goods at the same cost.

And so to most of us the time has come to sit down and calmly review the position.

One of the main thoughts behind the 40-hour week was that by working less, the spectre of unemployment would be warded off because more people would be required to do the work in the reduced span.

Unfortunately, never since the end of the war have we got to a stage approaching fulfilment of our manpower requirements. Look at the manpower columns in any daily paper in Australia and you will realise what a clamour there is for people to do vitally essential work in this country.

Not only have we failed to keep up but there are indications that despite migration, we are, in some avenues at least, falling behind in the demand for labour.

As a result we are not only failing to meet requirements in production, but we are also causing higher wage costs for even unskilled jobs.

We would be fools to deny that all this is not increasing the menace of the inflationary spiral and affecting the living conditions of every one of us.

Finally, Mr. Courtney said—

General remedy is one covering many phases of our economy and in the end price fixing must also come into the picture. But as things are now we must face this bleak fact: Nobody is getting very much fun or very much enjoyment out of the 40-hour week.

And likewise, I repeat, the 40-hour week is being paid for largely out of the pockets of the people who asked for it.

Mr. Styants: Are you advocating a reversion to 48 hours?

Mr. YATES: In my maiden speech on the Address-in-reply three years ago, I spoke at some length on the 40-hour week which was then in the process of being introduced into Australia. I believe that at that time some people in New South Wales were working the 40-hour week and it was to be granted to workers in the other States within a few months.

The Minister for Lands: The New South Wales Government forced the issue.

Mr. YATES: At that time we had not had much experience of it. I said I was in favour of the 40-hour week but suggested it should be deferred for two or

three years so that we could catch up on production. The 40-hour week came in at a most inopportune time.

Mr. Graham: You are criticising the Arbitration Court now.

Mr. YATES: No, I am criticising the fact that men were working 40 hours a week when they should have been working 44 hours.

Mr. Graham: The Arbitration Court heard all the evidence.

Mr. YATES: If the member for East Perth was in the army or in business for himself he would know he had to work long hours at times to suit circumstances, and on other occasions he would not have to do as much. This country needs more work and man hours, not less, in order to produce the necessary goods for the people who require them; and in the main they are the working people. Not many people in Australia today live on the interest from moneys invested. I would say that over 80 per cent. of our working population can be classed as working people. The other 20 per cent. are in receipt of bigger incomes.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Winterbottom's shareholders are doing very well.

Mr. YATES: I am talking of the average working person.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Of course you are. You are putting the boots into the worker.

Mr. YATES: I do not know of any worker who would not take Winterbottom's shares if they were offered to him. I would not be surprised if members opposite have shares in some company or other, or receive moneys from investments, the same as members on this side.

The Minister for Lands: Some of them die wealthy.

Mr. YATES: Some die leaving a large sum of money. I am interested in seeing this country get out of the mess in which it has been since the end of the recent world war—a mess caused mainly by that war.

Mr. Graham: We tried to get out of the mess on Wednesday night.

Mr. YATES: What a puny answer that is; causing unnecessary discussion on the question of price fixation—

Hon. A. A. M. Coverley: Talk sense!

Mr. YATES: We know that the recent war was the main cause of the problems facing us today. During the course of that war Mr. Churchill said that we would be on our bended knees for many years ahead, until we had not only overcome the miseries of war, but had also got back to full production again. We, in this country, have not yet reached that stage. A few nights ago the Leader of the Opposition mentioned that production of many items had dropped. The production of

wheat, one of our most important commodities, has dropped by many millions of bushels annually since 1939. In many fields of industry, rural and otherwise, it will be found that production has decreased instead of increasing.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: There are too many middle men.

Mr. YATES: Is it because the workmen do not want to work? It might be said that they must work, to keep their jobs. Is it because they are not working sufficiently long hours? Some of the blame can be attributed to the 40-hour week. The loss of four man hours per week per employee runs into tremendous figures in the course of a year. I realise that not all workers work 40 hours a week, although they are paid for it. One has only to go round various Government jobs to see what is taking place.

Mr. J. Hegney: Why do you always reflect on workers on Government jobs?

Hon. A. H. Panton: What about the Legislative Council? It is not working at all today.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Why does not the Minister for Works appoint you foreman on a Government job?

Mr. YATES: The position can be clearly seen in the Railway Department or anywhere. Inefficiency can be seen in the activity of any Government department. Any hon. member can go to any Government department, find out where its men are working and make an inspection. Anyone doing that will see how hard the men are working.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is a reflection on the Ministers controlling those departments.

Mr. YATES: No workers work as hard now as they did 30 years ago. The present trend seems to be towards leisure, luxury and less hours of work. The full week-end is now general, with a free Saturday for most workers. Only those working in shops or in essential positions, such as in the railways, tramways or on shift work are not off for the whole week-end. The general trend is to cut out Saturday work and, when that is universal, only employees of our hospitals and other such institutions will work at all over the week-end. I am not saying anything against the 40-hour week, and my speech four years ago was in favour of it.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Are you still in favour of it?

Mr. YATES: Yes. I said then that I was in favour of its coming into operation in another three years. The intervening period has proved to me—if not to members opposite—that the 40-hour week was one of the greatest blows ever suffered by production in this country.

Hon. A. H. Panton: They said that, on the anti-Labour side of the House, 50 years ago.

Mr. YATES: I was not here then, though the hon. member may have been.

Hon. A. H. Panton: I made it possible for you to be there, sonny! Put that in your pipe and smoke it.

Mr. YATES: I am sure the hon. member is not as old as he feels. The Prime Minister struck the right note in his speech to the nation yesterday, when he called on all sections of the community—leaving politics out of it—for greater effort and more production in this country. He called for greater loyalty and effort, so that we might build up our resources and be ready to meet any emergency that might arise. We are not ready today. That fact may not mean as much to those who have not seen war or taken part in it, as it means to those who have. Of course, it was not possible for everyone to go to war, but those who did go and saw its miseries and suffered as a result of it, know only too well that when a threat of war exists the country likely to come off best is that which is prepared.

Today our country is not prepared to engage in war. We have practically nothing with which to defend ourselves and are behind in all our production. We are short of steel, iron and many other necessities, as well as house building materials. We have immigrants housed in our Army camp at Northam, because there is nowhere else for them to go. What would happen to them if war broke out tomorrow? Would our soldiers have to go into tents, as they will during the forthcoming camp? The trouble was that there were nowhere near enough homes available to house our own people, let alone migrants, when the immigration scheme was rightly introduced. Unfortunately, it came at a bad time.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: There are not enough homes for our own people.

Mr. YATES: These facts should prove a greater incentive for those who are in industry. I am not referring only to the employees, but to the employers also. They could do much more than they are doing to assist in this great production drive.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What could they do?

Mr. YATES: Many of them could cut their profits, as the hon. member has suggested. I am not in favour of huge profits, though what margin of profit is to be allowed is for someone else to decide. Until we have laws to control profit on shares, nothing much can be done about it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: The laws exist, but not the Government to put them into operation.

Mr. YATES: Many thousands of people have put their money into new businesses and have lost it during the past 50 years, owing to various difficulties. Some of them probably had the wrong type of people on the staff, or something of that nature, and those firms became bankrupt. What of the people who invested their money and took a risk? There is no risk when money is simply put in the bank. I would sooner support a man who invests his money in some venture that embodies a chance to advance the prosperity of the country, than the man who puts his money into the bank or Commonwealth bonds where he is certain of a return and where there is no risk at all. Winterbottoms may be on top of the world today, but if a war broke out tomorrow it might bring that firm to the bottom of the financial ladder overnight.

Mr. Marshall: Then there would be no bottom in Winterbottoms.

Mr. YATES: That could be so. We have to analyse the basis of profit-making when we are dealing with business houses and profits on shares, in order to decide whether the person investing is entitled to such a large reward when a company does better than some people consider it should. Not all companies are making large profits today. Many pay little more than bank interest and some are paying no dividends at all, as they are not making sufficient headway. We cannot penalise the vast majority of shareholders on account of the few who are lucky enough to have struck the jackpot in their investments. To revert to the 40-hour week and its effect on production; I would be happy to see a still shorter working week, if we had reached full capacity in production.

The Minister for Lands: Did not the Labour Premier of Tasmania say that the 40-hour week was introduced before its time?

Mr. YATES: Yes, that was the opinion he expressed, and he got the cane for saying it. Whether I will get the cane or not is a different matter. I believe that we require a different incentive from now on. We will never go back to a 44-hour week. Let us now all pull together, boss and worker alike. Let there be a greater spirit of co-operation between employer and employee. The Arbitration Court has been a wonderful thing for the working classes of this country. The men have received a great measure of protection through their trade unions and their interests have been guarded by the Arbitration Court and by their representatives in this House. If any member says anything against the worker, immediately 10 or 12 members opposite are up in arms against it. They are the watchdogs of that class whom they represent, and we represent

that class also. I would say that we are doing as much for the worker as Labour Governments have done in the past.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Ask your Minister for Prices about that!

Mr. YATES: One has only to look at the legislation introduced into this House over the last three years to see that we have been sincere in our endeavours to assist the working people in this State. I was interested to hear the member for Collie compliment the Government for making some sort of fund available for the benefit of the miners in his district.

The Minister for Lands: Trades Hall is very appreciative of what we are doing for them.

Mr. YATES: I have no doubt that that is so, and any Government which assists that body would be welcomed.

The Minister for Lands: Trades Hall is very pleased with what we are doing.

Mr. YATES: Now I turn to the question of the drift from the country to the metropolitan area. This has been gradual, but over the past 12 or 18 months the population in the metropolitan area has increased rapidly, while the population of the outer areas of this State is not, in most cases, making any headway. The drift to the city has been most marked.

Mr. Graham: Split some of the properties down at Pinjarra.

Mr. YATES: It is not a matter of splitting up properties at all. I believe that the member for East Perth is jealous of any person who owns a property, or has purchased a property, which is bigger than his own.

Mr. Graham: Not a bit.

Mr. YATES: Let people like that have what they own without quibbling. Any person who owns a property has really earned it, and I am sure if the hon. member had been left an agricultural property in a will, he would be against any person who wanted him to give it away. He would want to keep it, the same as everyone else. Leave the Pinjarra people to themselves. The hon. member's job is to be interested in the drift of population from the country to the city. Our job as members of Parliament is to stop this drift. What are we going to do about it? Are we going to see that the men who want to work in the country receive proper amenities?

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Are we?

Mr. YATES: I was at Cranbrook some months ago, and while there I spoke to the secretary of the road board. He told me of the gradual drift of population from that district to the metropolitan area.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What is the member for the district doing about that?

Mr. YATES: I am quoting Cranbrook because it is one of the many places in this State similarly situated. The secretary of the road board told me that if men went to work on farms in that district, there was no accommodation for them.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: With wool at 15s. a lb.!

Mr. YATES: If a farm worker wanted to work on a farm at Cranbrook he would have to leave his wife and children in the metropolitan area because the farmers cannot provide houses for their workers. The houses are simply not there. One suggestion is that in all those wheat centres, such as Cranbrook, Bencubbin, Bruce Rock, Merredin and others, a certain number of homes should be built by the Government for the use of rural workers.

The Minister for Lands: Such as they do in England?

Mr. YATES: Yes, in the same way as they do in England. There is also a similar scheme in Canada. All these homes are owned by the Government, and the person who occupies a home signs an agreement to the effect that he occupies the home until such time as the work on the farm is completed, or the work in the town is completed.

Mr. W. Hegney: Is not that a form of socialism?

Mr. YATES: That is not a form of socialism at all. That is providing amenities for the workers whom the hon. member represents—

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is all socialism stands for.

Mr. YATES:—and whom we represent.

Mr. Hoar: You just thought about that.

Mr. YATES: I always bring in our side last, because it makes it more effective. We on this side also represent the workers.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That sounds like our views.

Mr. YATES: We on this side of the House work the same as do those on the opposite side of the House.

Mr. J. Hegney: You would not be over there if some of the workers were not supporting you.

Mr. YATES: Eighty per cent. of the people supporting me work for their living.

Mr. J. Hegney: I do not doubt that, but when they wake up they will vote otherwise.

Mr. YATES: I trust I shall always have their confidence. One of the ways to overcome this drift to the city is by providing homes in country centres, where at present houses are not available. Men will not go into the country to work if they cannot obtain places in which to live.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: How many houses has the Government built at Cranbrook over the last 3½ years?

Mr. YATES: I do not know. It is a small place, and I suggest that the hon. member takes a trip down there, because it might do him good, and his health would be much improved. If the hon. member did that, he could discuss these problems with the secretary of the board and farmers in the district, and would most certainly find that they are not able to provide accommodation. If accommodation could be provided in the townships, then workers could take their wives and children to these towns, and the men could go out to the farms and work. The men could probably go out to work on push-bikes and then come back to the town after work and spend the evening at home. In that way they would have the amenities which are not now provided. If this could be done, more people would look for work in the country areas.

Houses that have been built in larger towns, such as Narrogin and Katanning, have not been let to the people working on farms. They are being occupied by people who work in business houses in the town. Why has no consideration been given by the Housing Commission to people who follow rural pursuits? The men who work on farms assist in production, but most of the occupants of houses in the larger country towns are people who work in lawyers' offices, business houses, and so on. Why is no consideration given to people working on farms? Let us change our ideas about the housing of our people in the country areas. We have taken a step in the right direction and provided amenities at our coalmines, as the member for the district has mentioned. Eventually, conditions at Collie will be the best in the Commonwealth, irrespective of whether our Government is here to see this done or not, because all future Governments will carry on under the same scheme.

Great strides have been made in the past 10 or 12 years not only at Collie but also at Kalgoorlie. Before the war the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council built one of the finest swimming pools in the Commonwealth. This has proved of great benefit to the Goldfields people. The council made a wise decision when it committed itself to a large amount of money for the building of that pool. The Boulder Municipal Council, also, has done quite a lot for the working people in its district. As we progress I hope all our country centres will assist in providing better amenities for their residents. The Government, however, should help wherever possible and especially from a financial point of view. It is all very well for a big mining town such as Kalgoorlie, which has quite a deal of wealth in its midst, to provide such facilities, but it would prove very difficult for smaller centres.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I believe there is a lot of money at Kalgoorlie just now.

Mr. YATES: A number of the small centres such as Williams, which is only a small township with a hotel and a few shops, nevertheless represent large districts, but the income they can obtain is not sufficient to provide amenities which the people in the surrounding districts can enjoy. That is where the Government of the day could assist financially and could thus help in encouraging workers to go to the country and check the lag in production. I therefore ask that the Government in the future gives more time and thought to our problems in the country.

We are always calling in experts to report on various matters for us and to investigate all sorts of things. Why not call for an expert to inquire into our production lag in the country? Whilst in Melbourne last year I read a series of articles written by one of the reporters of the daily Press who had made a trip through the country districts. He wrote these articles from day to day following interviews he had had with the people in the country, and pointing out the alarming rate at which people were migrating from the country areas to the city.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I think more Country Party Ministers and less Liberal Party Ministers in the Government would help.

Mr. YATES: They might.

The Minister for Lands: The member for Northam might have helped if he had supported us in the last election.

Mr. YATES: These articles were so important to the Victorian people that they were fully featured from day to day. Many letters were written to the Press in reply, and debates at the University and other places took place as to the drift of the population from the country to the city. We are facing a problem which exists all over the Commonwealth. Let us tackle it and be the first State to take the lead. If the city is so attractive that people are leaving the country areas to come to the metropolitan area, then let us create attractions in the country which will cause them to leave the metropolitan area and return to the country and thus assist in building up our production.

Mr. Marshall: How would you get on if love were instrumental? They seem to love the city.

Mr. YATES: Metaphorically speaking! I also suggest that this matter should be the subject of discussion at our University.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That would be the end of the discussion.

Mr. YATES: We have all sorts of faculties at the University. We are about to create a Faculty of Medicine in the not too distant future.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is something new. When was that put in train?

Mr. YATES: I read something in the newspaper to the effect that we were to have a medical school.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You read nothing about a faculty.

Mr. YATES: I anticipated that it would come. However, with all the knowledge at the University and with the love of the community as one of their objectives, the University authorities could probably get their students to discuss this problem to try to find a solution. After all is said and done the lads and girls attending the University come from all parts of the State and they probably realise what production means to the State as a whole. Are they taught, when they finish their studies, that they should return to the country and carry on the work their fathers and mothers are now doing? Once they come to the city we seem to keep them here.

I would be interested to see the figures showing how many students have returned to the country after completing their studies. I should say that a great percentage have set themselves up in the metropolitan area and intend to stay there for the rest of their lives. Our greatest problem today is the lack of production. We want the country to expand and prosper and it is up to this Government and all connected with it to see that the best is done for the people of our State. Finally, it was with great pleasure that I voted to place you, Sir, in the Chair for a further three years. Many well-merited congratulations have been showered upon you from both sides of the House and I trust that for the next three years the proceedings of this Chamber will be bright and happy under your jurisdiction.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.43 p.m.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [7.43]: May I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on again being elected to your position in this House? I trust you will occupy it as long as the Government occupies the Treasury benches. I must say that I am undecided how long that will be. Taking "The West Australian" as my guide, I find that when the New South Wales Government was returned with a majority of two independent Labourites, this is what "The West Australian" had to say:—

Precarious Labour win in New South Wales. Two unendorsed Labour candidates appear certain to hold the balance of power in the New South Wales Parliament as a result of yesterday's general election. The election has practically created a deadlock in the State Parliament, a position unique in New South Wales political history.

We find, however, that "The West Australian" did not think there was anything unique or precarious about the election results in Western Australia. One of its references was—

Election Success for Ministry—Close Fight; Grayden May Win Nedlands.

So we see that in Western Australia it was an election success for the Ministry but in New South Wales, where a Labour Government was returned with two Independent Labourites supporting it, it had a very precarious existence according to "The West Australian." I do not know how long the Government of Western Australia is likely to last. If the position is precarious in New South Wales then it is certainly precarious here. We are told that the two Independents here are not of the same political opinion as the State Government, but in New South Wales they were referred to as Labourites, not Independents, standing as Labour candidates not endorsed by the Labour Party. On that assumption this Government may go out any day. I hope it does. We will see how long the Independents will support it. In New South Wales the Independents are not likely to turn down the Government because they are Labourites and have the same political persuasion as the Government itself, so I will leave it to you, Mr. Speaker, to see if you can fathom how long this Government will last.

The Minister for Lands: We are here for a long time.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Mr. Speaker has his fingers crossed.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not think it is here for long. This evening we listened to a diatribe on communism. As a matter of fact, the communists are the best friends the Government ever had, and the Government is the best friend the communists ever had.

The Premier: That will pass for the month's funny story.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Not at all funny! Have you, Mr. Speaker, ever known a communist to contest a seat against a Throssell or a McLarty, or any of the old W.A. families?

The Minister for Lands: Yes, of course we have.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Have you ever known communists to contest a seat against an L.C.L. candidate? Never! They oppose Labourites—they went to East Perth, Midland Junction, the Goldfields and Fremantle. On one occasion a communist went to see someone who was a very important member of this House to get some advice. The member said, "I suppose when you chaps take over, I will be the first to have my throat slit?" The communist replied, "Oh no, you will be a long way down the list; that is reserved for those greasy Bs at the

Trades Hall—they come first." As a matter of fact, in America not so long ago one of the communists who turned away from his party made a public statement to the effect that the communists got their money from big business people. They are very valuable to the Nationalist Government—they are very fond of them.

The Minister for Lands: But they give their preferences to Labour.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I will tell the Minister about that. They are so fond of them, they even give their preferences to communists. At the last election there were four candidates for Fremantle and on the cards the communist was given No. 3 and the member for Fremantle was given No. 4. They then come here and, as the late Mr. Collier would have said, talk a lot of balderdash about communists. If I were not here I could call it something else. While they can keep things in disorder it will suit them down to the ground. The communists are the best friends they ever had. So let us not hear any more from the Government on that subject.

I should like to make a few remarks about the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the present Government. I think the member for Melville had a few words to say about it the other evening. Some time ago the manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust retired and applications were called to fill the position. As the member for Melville has said, the successful candidate was not actually an aspirant for the position. This was held up for many months simply because the Government did not want the man recommended by the Fremantle Harbour Trust committee—it wanted somebody else. The Government said to the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners, "You cannot have the man you desire. You must have the man we require"—and so the Fremantle Commissioners gave in. I have nothing against Mr. Tydeman. I realise that he is a very able man.

Mr. Bovell: Then everyone is happy.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: But I have this against him, that he has been made a part-time officer. Let members imagine the business that is transacted by the Fremantle Harbour Trust. It is a money spinner for the Government, and it contributed £200,000 to Consolidated Revenue last year. The Government says that the manager of such a concern need only be a part-time officer, and that is ridiculous. Mr. Tydeman can do a very good job, but he should be in his position not as a part-time manager but a full-time officer, because it is certainly a full-time job. I trust it is not too late even at this stage for the Government to decide that the manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust should be a full-time officer and not one who will devote part of his time to the duties of the Trust and the rest to whatever else may be required of him.

I shall not dwell at great length on the question of Fremantle harbour extensions because the member for Melville has already dealt with that problem fully, and I trust good will result from his observations. The point I make is that we should know just where we stand. Which is the best scheme of those that have been propounded? What the people of Fremantle want to know is whether the harbour extensions should go up-river as far as Point Brown or whether they should proceed seawards. We must plan not for the next 10 or 20 years, but for the next century. I hope you have read the Tydeman report, Mr. Speaker, for I know that if you have, you will have realised that his remarks are very contradictory. At times you might gather that he was in favour of up-river extensions and in other parts that he was in favour of extensions outside the river altogether. I hope something will be done to straighten out the whole matter before we go too far. I propose to read a few paragraphs from the report. On page 9 of Vol. 1 Mr. Tydeman says—

If port development takes place seawards, away from existing township areas, the bridges will remain sited as they are and cross-river communication problems will remain, but in less concentrated form initially than for upstream development. Other problems arising from re-siting existing rail and road bridges, as the first initial stage, will thus be avoided.

On the same page he says—

A graving-dock 500ft. long capable of docking two-thirds of the port's shipping—

It will be noticed that Mr. Tydeman refers to a dock capable of dealing with two-thirds of the port's shipping whereas we should really have one capable of dealing with all the shipping likely to use the port.

—is suggested as the type and size most suitable, costing least for initial construction and subsequent maintenance, operation and subsidy. Such a dock would take some six and a half years to complete from initial inception to commencement of use, and might cost from two to two and a half million pounds, dependent on site and other conditions.

Next we turn to page 10 and we find the following—

Purely from the viewpoint of cross-river communications, in order to avoid immediate complications, or to hand on to posterity intensification of future insoluble or extremely expensive problems, upstream development of the port is better avoided. Port expansion, therefore, if undertaken, would better be seawards and not upstream unless there are cogent reasons for doing so.

Then he points out that there are several reasons for this. He goes on to say—

Such important reasons exist. Both rail and road bridges should be re-sited upstream in the near future. This will automatically open up the river for expansion, which even including the bridge structures and approaches is more favourable in cost initially than seawards expansion.

A very important reason why the existing rail bridge must be re-sited further upstream, is that reasonable and economic port railway operating efficiency is impossible with rail approaches as they are today, limited by the location of the existing rail bridge. The rail river crossing is too close to the berths for proper port rail lay-out. Re-siting the rail bridge further upstream near the road bridge would only improve rail approaches partially, and though it would open up the best up-river dry-dock site and permit limited upstream berth expansion, would not improve port rail operating efficiency sufficiently to justify the cost involved. Re-siting the rail bridge upstream to at least Point Brown would be essential for full operating efficiency, for which purpose the road bridge would have to be re-sited there also.

At page 20 he says—

The maximum annual port tonnage, 1,983,464 (s) tons in 1945, can be accepted as the capacity of existing facilities. By re-modelling North and South Quays, this maximum capacity can be increased to 4,000,000 (s) tons per year.

Thus, by re-modelling North and South Quays, the maximum capacity of the port can be doubled. At page 21 he says—

Development seawards suffers from no restriction of land, would cause lesser problems of cross-river communication, and impose no restriction on the number of berths possible. It thus offers to posterity an area for unlimited port expansion for all time. From the engineering and navigation standpoints, seawards development schemes are possible.

Lower down on the same page he says—

The width of the existing waterway in the port, viz., 1,400 feet (and the existing narrow, curved harbour entrance), limits the general use of the port to ships of about 750 feet long in favourable wind and current conditions and with full tonnage requirements. Thus in upstream development, unless this stream width is increased in the existing Inner Harbour or a larger diameter turning basin created at the expense of many of the existing berths, ships of no greater size than at present will ever

be able to use the inner port. If seawards expansion takes place, there will be no difficulty in creating immediately a turning circle of sufficient size to admit the largest ships afloat today or likely to exist in the reasonable future. Thus seawards extension has an advantage in the matter of ship size; this is not likely to be a matter of immediate importance as there are but few regular ships of 750ft. length calling today or likely to call in the near future.

In Volume 2 at page 21 he says—

If future extensions of the port are ever carried seawards, many unfettered sites for graving docks will become available. There are no bores in these areas. Seawards sites are the favourable solution: this is a point in favour of seaward extensions.

At page 49 we find the following:—

If regular calling ships of greater length than 750ft. are contemplated, either seawards extension of the port will be essential for providing larger turning circles, or the entrance channel must be widened at great cost, and the Inner Harbour amended to accommodate a larger turning circle, at considerable expense and the loss of three berths.

Length limitation would restrict any upriver dry-dock to suit an 800ft. ship maximum, or more practically to suit a 750ft. ship. Dry docks for ships over 750ft. would have to be sited in a seawards expansion scheme. Thus choice of size of dry-dock may govern choice of site of future extension of the port.

At page 149, Mr. Tydeman deals with the flexibility of the scheme and says—

The ultimate development scheme now proposed is flexible enough to take into consideration many important factors of policy including—

(a) The need for improving the existing facilities before providing new berths, and requiring more land mainly for improved rail facilities. This necessitates the use of land which, to avoid the dislocation and expense of resumption, is best created on undeveloped foreshore.

(b) The possibility that decision may be made in favour of seawards extension either before or after, or instead of, up-river extension.

(c) The possibility of decision in favour of either seawards extension north or south of the river, or both together, or neither.

(d) That although railways consider the hinterland rail approach will be north of the river, it may in future be from the south, or both.

Port development on the lines of the ultimate scheme, either separately north or south of the Swan River, or both together, is possible as dictated by considerations of trade centre, township development, municipal or political reasons.

At page 150 appears the following:—

As indicated by the dotted lines (Appendix 23), both north and south seawards extensions can be further extended if ever necessary to an almost unlimited extent. Marginal development of land-backed quays with coastal land for rail, road and ancillary requirements, is possible to fit the developed scheme outlined, or any other scheme of the future.

Further down he says, under the heading "Seawards Extension South"—

The added protection of the south breakwater would permit 15 more berths to be provided in the north development as well as 26 berths south, a total of 41 more.

The two breakwaters provide a navigable entrance of 1,000 feet wide capable of entry of the largest ships under all likely conditions. Immediately within the entrance and in the lee of the north breakwater is area for a turning circle of 2,000 feet. This will be in the river tidal and flood stream and with adequate tugs is suitable for ships of about 1,000 feet long. This is about the largest type of ship afloat today or ever likely to use Fremantle as far as can be foreseen, and the few ships of this class can be catered for in the 40-foot depth turning circle, manoeuvring area, six berths, and graving dock sites, located conveniently and economically near the harbour entrance and the main channel as shown.

He was speaking there about going southwards. On page 158, he had this to say—

There is insufficient information from bores or geological data to determine exact quantities of rock or sand involved in dredging, either in the river or seawards. Where it has been possible to determine quantities of rock and sand involved, separate items have been given for these. Elsewhere, where reasonable, it has been assumed that half dredging is in rock and half in sand and an average price quoted.

So he does not seem to have had very much information about what lies before him when he starts dredging—whether he has to go through sand or mostly through rock. A lot has been said about cost. Here is the comparison of costs.

The cost for an 11-berth scheme upriver is cheaper than seawards (vide the proposed 11-berth scheme upriver at £12,400,000 and the seawards 10-berth scheme at £14,530,000).

That means a couple of million pounds. But what is a couple of million pounds in a scheme like this, which will take 50 to 70 years to complete? It will not be finished under 50 years, in my opinion, and what is £2,000,000 in that event?

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Chickenfeed!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes, that is all it is. What will happen, in my opinion, if the scheme goes up the river is that North Fremantle will be practically annihilated. The west end will be wiped out and the people who are concerned about river pollution say that the river will be polluted. We are not satisfied that that will not be so. Then we will not have an efficient harbour up the river. It will only be able to take ships of a certain size. Let us do the job properly. All the engineers who have investigated the Fremantle Harbour, including Mr. Tydeman, have considered that extension should go seaward. Let us improve the north and south quays as much as we can, which will increase the berthing tonnage, and let us make a job of it and go outside. I was reading only the other night how Sir John Forrest, in 1892, came to the House and proposed that he should be granted some money to make a harbour in Cockburn Sound. Later on, a Select Committee was appointed to go into the matter, and the committee favoured the mouth of the river scheme, because C. Y. O'Connor assured them that he could make a harbour in the mouth of the Swan. I say we should find out where we are in this matter. Let us come to some decision and determine what is best for the next 100 years, and not for the next 10 or 20 years.

The Minister for Works: Who do you recommend should find out?

Hon. A. H. Panton: Sir John Forrest, he said!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I notice that, in answer to a question tonight, the Premier made this statement—

Perhaps I might make an explanation at this stage. A request was made by the member for Maylands, by notice of question, for an engineer to be brought to Western Australia to confer with our engineers about upriver extensions in the Fremantle Harbour scheme. I made representations to Mr. Playford, the Premier of South Australia, when he was here. I asked him whether he would make his engineer for harbours and rivers available to confer with our engineers in regard to upriver extensions. Mr. Playford, through the Attorney General, said he would be pleased to make his engineer available.

There is nothing very definite in that. What is this engineer going to inquire into? What will be the terms of reference? What job will be set him? Will he investigate the whole scheme and its ramifications, or

will he have a look at it and try to pacify the people who are objecting to the scheme on account of the pollution of the river?

The Minister for Works: If his report is not satisfactory, should we get a man from England to report on his report?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: No.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is where it will finish.

The Minister for Works: Yes. What did the member for Fremantle say about the Stileman report made when the late Mr. McCallum was Minister?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That was criticised by some people, and commended by others.

The Minister for Works: I'll say!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: His report, of course, made provision for quite a lot of docks outside the harbour.

The Minister for Works: Mr. McCallum's speech was in defence of upriver development.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I am not very worried as to what he spoke about.

The Minister for Works: You may not be now, but you were at the time.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I was not then. Let the Minister not speak out of his turn. Those who were here when Mr. McCallum was Minister will know that I never took his opinion as gospel. I always had my own opinion.

The Minister for Works: I was not challenging that.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I trust that the Government will do the right thing and see that the harbour is made sufficient for the port that is going to cater for the next 100 years. It is no good making provision for up river extensions if they are not going to be able to take ships coming in within the next ten years. The Minister will agree, I think, that the harbour is getting busier and the ships are getting bigger, and we have to provide for vessels that are likely to come here within the next 20 or 30 years.

The Minister for Works: I agree that something has to be done very soon.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Something has got to be done with the railway bridge soon. It has to be re-sited somewhere. The Government must get on with the job and discover where it is going to put that bridge. It should have been started before.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The visit of the South Australian engineer is just a gesture.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Judging from the reply of the Premier, it is not definite what the engineer will do. It seems to me that the Government's majority has got wor-

ried about the scheme and whispered in the ear of the Premier, and he has said, "I shall have to do something. These are the only people between me and annihilation." So he said to the member for Maylands, "I will do something and try to enlighten you." He knows that once he loses the support of the member for Maylands, that gentleman can influence the member for Victoria Park, and that will be the end of the Government.

The Premier: No such conversation took place.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: No, but that is what the Premier had in mind.

The Premier: No.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I can read the Premier to a T. That is what he had in his mind. He knew that the member for Maylands had been asking questions, and he said, "I shall have to appease this chappy somehow"; and he agreed to ask Mr. Playford to send over an engineer to see what could be done about it.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: That is all the Premier did have in his mind.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I would like to have a word about another part of the harbour, namely, the slipway. Over 12 months ago, Mr. Tydeman was at a public meeting in Fremantle, and I asked him about the docking of the "Koolinda" on the slipway. He told me they were making inquiries then, and he thought everything would be all right. The "Koolinda" was sent East and remained there for months. That cost the Government a large amount of money, and it is going to happen again. I am told that there are people in Fremantle who could dock the "Koolinda" on our slipway. Some men who have worked in the game nearly all their lives tell me that all that is necessary is to strengthen the cradle and alter the purchase, and the "Koolinda" could be docked there with a consequent saving of months of time.

The State Engineering Works were called in to advise what they could do with regard to the bearings of the cradle, and I understand they said they could fix them, but that has never been gone on with. Now we find the "Koolinda" is to be sent East. The people in the North will be without her services for a very long time, and many thousands of pounds will be spent outside of Western Australia which should be spent inside. I hope that even at this late hour, the Government will have a word again with the engineers to see whether the "Koolinda" could be docked at Fremantle instead of being sent elsewhere.

I wish to have a word or two on the maternity hospital at Fremantle. "Bundi Kudja" was taken over by the Government, and so was Hudson's property, but

there was a mix up, and Hudson's was transferred to the Fremantle hospital. "Bundi Kudja" was purchased for use as a maternity hospital, but it is much too small and so the Government proposed to take over Woodside Hospital. That has been suggested for a long while, but nothing has yet happened. I know there is some opposition in respect to this matter. I am not prepared to say that Woodside is a suitable place, but personally I cannot see anything wrong with it. In any event, something should be done. "Bundi Kudja" is too small for the district with the result that cases are being turned away from there all the time. If the Government decides to go on with the Woodside proposition I hope it will do so quickly because a lot of renovations will have to be carried out.

There is another matter that we have not heard much about, and that is S.P. betting. When the present Government was on this side of the House we heard a lot on this subject. Motions were moved and the Government was told that it was only on account of the money it was getting out of the game that nothing was done. It was suggested that the Government was corrupt in getting money from S.P. bookmakers by way of the fines imposed, that any Government could rectify the position, and that the then Labour Government could do so but would not. Now the same people are on the Government side of the House and they have altered their opinions quite a lot. At page 1794 of "Hansard" for 1936 the present Minister for Health had this to say—

I want to say this in conclusion that I entirely agree with the Leader of the Opposition that if the law had been enforced there would have been no need for this Bill. It is useless to make laws unless we enforce them. There is a suspicion abroad that starting-price betting shops are allowed to continue because they are making revenue for the Government. That is horrible. We can only ask the Minister for Police to see that the law is enforced.

Right through the discussion, members on this side of the House mentioned the money the Government was making, and that the police could stop S.P. betting if we told them to do so. But we find it is going on just the same now. Again in 1940 the present Minister for Health moved the following motion:—

That this House instructs the Government to give instructions to the Chief of Police to immediately use all statutory powers to close all betting shops, houses, dwellings, and places of whatsoever kind where illegal betting is conducted, so that the law of the land may be honoured and Government departments duly respected, the responsibility for the execution of this motion to rest with the Government.

So the hon. member placed the whole responsibility on the Government. At the bottom of the page she had this to say—

I stress in the latter part of my motion that the Government should accept responsibility in this matter. If the Minister is interested in his department—and I am quite sure he is—the question of starting-price betting must be of burning interest to him. It would be laughable to suppose that a Labour Cabinet, including of course the Minister, and Caucus, had not discussed this question. That the matter had been one of burning interest for many years past is evident by what I read in the report of the Commissioner of Police for the year ended the 30th June, 1929.

Further down the hon. member said—

Therefore I ask, "What is one to think? Who is to blame?" In this Chamber I have repeatedly asked who is to blame for the existence of so many betting shops in the city. I myself have no hesitation in saying that the onus of this open flouting of the law by a fraternity that must use graft to enable it to carry on rests entirely on the Government. In making this statement I do not single out any particular Minister and say that the onus rests on him. My speeches in this House have always been impersonal.

Then we come to the gem of them all—

It has been traditional in the British Parliament that should a member of the Cabinet disagree with his colleagues, he is in honour bound to withdraw from the Cabinet. Therefore, if the Minister for Mines would follow the practice of Ministers in the most honest Government of the world, he would immediately withdraw because I presume that his statements about betting were sincere.

What is the Minister for Health going to do about it? Is she going to stay in this Cabinet, or get out, because this Government is not doing what she wants? She said, "It has been traditional in the British Parliament that should a member of the Cabinet disagree with his colleagues he is in honour bound to withdraw from the Cabinet." She certainly disagrees with her colleagues. She says that any Government can stop S.P. betting, but that the Labour Government did not want to do so; it wanted to keep it going because of the money derived from it. But her Government is keeping S.P. betting going, and wants to get the money to be gained from it. Why does not the Minister show her independence and say, "I will no longer be associated with you people who accept money from S.P. bookmakers as part of your revenue." She has not done that yet.

Mr. Marshall: She would not go when you caught her out over women being on the Milk Board.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: She got outside.

Mr. Marshall: Yes.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: In 1946 she said—

That is the real reason behind the Bill. The Government does not care about the morals of the people but today, when its taxation has been curtailed, it intends to get money out of the S.P. betting shops if possible. Thank God, the Bill will not pass.

She went on to say—

One member said tonight that the police have been suspect because nothing has been done, but that motion was inspired by the policemen who told me they could not do anything because the Government was not behind them.

I want to know whether this Government is behind the police and, if it is not, then what is the Minister doing remaining in the Cabinet? Why does she not get out? And why does she not tell the Government to do something against the S.P. bookmakers? She talks about the morals of the people. Well, there is nothing immoral about betting, S.P. or otherwise. If we stop S.P. betting then we should stop betting on the racecourses. I am privileged, and can go to the racecourse, and I have a few bob on at times. I can do that with impunity. I can go to a bookie out there and say, "I will have a pound to ten shillings about such and such a horse," and no policeman takes any notice of me. Or I can go to the tote, which is a legal machine. The W.A. Turf Club registers bookmakers to carry on their illegal game, but we do not see the police taking any action.

I believe on one occasion an informer took a policeman out to the racecourse with the result that a bookmaker was brought before the court and do you know, Mr. Speaker, how much he was fined? He was fined one shilling for betting on a racecourse; whereas S.P. operators are fined from £20 to £50, and on occasions suffer 14 days in gaol for obstructing traffic in the street, when they are not obstructing at all. Why are they not charged with the proper offence? It is not obstructing. The thing is ridiculous. It is farcical in the extreme to say that half-a-dozen men talking to a bookmaker on the street must be charged with obstruction, instead of betting, while the big theatres can obstruct the streets with their crowds from morning until night and nobody does anything about it. It is time this Government woke up and either stopped bookmakers operating on racecourses or anywhere else, or did something to control betting properly so that people of all classes might have a fair go.

A little while ago the Attorney General, in answer to a question in this House, said there was no way of preventing S.P. betting whilst broadcasting and telephone facilities were allowed to be used by bookmakers. If the Government is quite satisfied on that point, why does it not do the proper thing and control betting? It is no use members saying one thing when in Opposition and another when they are on the Government side of the House. The funniest thing I have heard of is the latest action of the Minister for Health, who apparently has had another brainwave. On the last occasion when she received a complaint about betting, from Subiaco, the Minister for Health wrote to the Ministers Fraternal and said that the only way to stop betting was by prayer and preaching.

She suggested that the ministers of religion should go down to where the bookmakers were operating on Saturday afternoons and pray for the welfare of someone—I do not know whom. If I were to do any such praying I would pray for the punter who does his money. First of all, the Minister said the Government should do this and that but now she appeals to ministers of religion to stop betting by means of prayer. That is a lot of humbug. Betting cannot be stopped by prayer or the police or anyone else. If the Government were honest it would either stop betting altogether or control it properly.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Did you say that the Minister for Health wrote to the Ministers Fraternal suggesting that betting could be stopped by prayer?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Yes. I do not know whether they have yet done that, but I will be informed if they do, as I have some scouts down there and will know immediately. In this Legislative Assembly the member for Merredin-Yilgarn asked the Minister for Police the following:—

(1) In view of the very unsatisfactory conditions applying to starting price betting, is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this session for its effective control?

(2) If not, why not?

To which the Minister replied:—

(1) No.

(2) No effective method of control is apparent as long as the facilities of the broadcasting stations and other facilities not provided by the State are available as at present.

It appears that the Attorney General now wants to drag in the Commonwealth Government in order to see whether the Prime Minister can help him out of the difficulty. I have never known a Government to make so many excuses as on this S.P. betting question. It is time something was done. The Government should either wipe out betting altogether or—

Mr. Marshall: How can it do that?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Members of the Government say they can.

Mr. Marshall: When they were on this side of the House they said they could. They could do wonders, until they got to that side of the House, and now they can do nothing except what is detrimental to the community at large.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I come now to the report of the Royal Commission that inquired into the Claremont Mental Hospital. I asked the Minister for Health the following:—

(1) Is she aware that in her absence the Government adopted the Royal Commissioner's report on the Claremont Mental Hospital?

(2) Does she now agree with the Government's action?

(3) Does she consider her attack on the Royal Commissioner warranted?

(4) If not, does she intend to apologise to him?

The Minister replied:—

(1) No, but certain action is being taken by the Government, of which I approve.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) No attack was made on the Royal Commissioner.

(4) Answered by (3).

I am sorry to disagree with the Minister, but I think an attack was made on the Royal Commissioner. In order to see what did happen, I will refer to "The Sunday Times" of the 25th of June last, where the Minister for Health is reported to have said—

The conclusion of the Commissioner that the principal responsibility should rest on the Chairman of this board is unkind, unjust and illogical. I do not agree with the Commissioner's view that the board submitted a misleading statement. I am assured that the statement was intentionally restricted to the terms of reference, and was never intended to deal with the activities of the board as a whole.

Over leaf, in the same issue of "The Sunday Times" appears the following:—

At the commencement of his evidence, Dr. McWhae as chairman of the board, submitted a prepared statement which, he stated, had been approved by the other members of the board.

The Royal Commissioner there points out that Dr. McWhae came along and said he was appearing for the board, and therefore anything put down to him is put down to the board, and not to Dr. McWhae personally, as he was only a member of it.

The report continues—

During the course of the inquiry (in fact, four days before the close of the hearing), I had occasion to indicate to counsel that I was astounded by Dr. McWhae's evidence, and that some of it was a matter for the gravest concern. I indicated the passages to which I referred, viz., pages 464 to 483. I did this in the light of Dr. McWhae's statement that the board had an impossible task, in order that an opportunity might be given to call further evidence or to show that the board had protested to the Minister against the difficulties of complying with the provisions of the Act. On the following day, Dr. McWhae stated that he wished to make an explanation in answer to my comment that the board had failed by far in its statutory duties. The explanation consisted of the tendering of a minute by the Chief Secretary of 21/11/38 acceding to the board's request to dispense with the counting of patients.

The Commissioner continues—

If, in Dr. McWhae's opinion, that evidence is an answer to my comments, then his simplicity is astonishing. I am satisfied that no complaint has been made to the Minister in recent years that the Act imposes an impossible task on the board. On the contrary, I am convinced that the chairman of the board has been satisfied to allow the members to perform a fixed inspection of portion of the hospital and some of the patients, occupying four hours per month. It would unduly prolong this report to set out all the unsatisfactory matters contained in the evidence above referred to. The matters mentioned below, however, taken from Dr. McWhae's evidence are sufficient, to my mind, to indicate that the board has failed to carry out its obligations under the Act.

He was unaware that a boy aged 10 had been at least six months in a ward with criminals and violent patients. This would indicate a failure to see every patient in order to give them full opportunity of complaint, when it is remembered that medical opinion was that the boy would not be capable of making a complaint.

The board makes no inspection of the day report book and Dr. McWhae saw them for the first time at this inquiry.

The board fails to make a satisfactory inspection of the medical journal and failed to make any inspection of it for the month of January.

The board was unaware of the bathroom incident.

The board was unaware of any steps taken to instruct new attendants in the handling of violent patients, nor had it endeavoured to find out.

The board was unaware of what method was adopted in employing new attendants nor had it endeavoured to find out.

And last but not least—

The board had failed to attempt to pay unexpected visits to the hospital as permitted by the Act. Dr. McWhae's evidence that "surprise" visits are impossible, is in conflict with Dr. Prendergast who stated, "They might attend without my knowing anything about it."

Dr. Prendergast said that they could attend at any time but Dr. McWhae's evidence is in conflict with that statement. He failed to pay any unexpected visits to the hospital. Then we find that the Minister for Health had this to say about the Royal Commissioner's report—

The conclusion of the Commissioner that the principal responsibility should rest on the chairman of this board is unkind, unjust and illogical.

Mr. Marshall: His report was unbalanced and illogical according to the Minister for Health.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: That is what she said.

Mr. Marshall: She said that of a Supreme Court Judge!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The Minister for Health said—

Responsibility rests with the Minister to see that the law is carried into effect, or, if it is obsolete or impossible of administration, to have it amended suitably.

The Government was fully satisfied with the statement tendered by the Inspector General in rebuttal of the administrative findings, and it reaffirms its confidence in him and his medical staff.

It goes on—

The Royal Commissioner elected to place the greatest blame on the chairman of the Board of Visitors—not on the board which consists of five persons—but solely on the chairman, a medical man whose professional, military and civilian services over a long lifetime are most meritorious. The chairman should not have been singled out for blame, as any responsibility belongs to the board as a whole.

The board has important powers which it has exercised freely and fairly. Over many years, the board has been conscientious in the discharge of its duties and deserves the thanks of the community. It has my complete confidence.

That is what the Minister said about the doctor. She said that she agreed with his report and stated that the Royal Commissioner's report was unbalanced and illogical. Then the Minister says that she made no attack on Judge Curlewis! Fancy a man of his standing being told that his report was illogical and unbalanced! If you, Mr. Speaker, as a judge of the Supreme Court came over here from the Eastern States to give your services free, gratis and for nothing, and having done your job conscientiously were told by somebody, not in the street, but by a Minister of the Crown, on behalf of the Government, that your report was illogical and unbalanced, I think you, Sir, would be very hurt about it. I think we ought to move an amendment to the portion of the Governor's Speech which states—

Consideration has been given to the report of the Royal Commission on the Claremont Mental Hospital...

I think we should attach the following words to that portion of the Speech:—

and this House etc. etc disassociates itself with the attack made by the Minister for Health on Judge Curlewis.

Something should be done and done quickly

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Move something to that effect before you sit down.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Something should be done by the Government and before I sit down I may move an amendment to the Address-in-reply in order that steps might be taken. We ought to move an amendment on the lines I have suggested so as to assure Judge Curlewis that he has, and had, our confidence and that we are quite satisfied that he came over and did the job he was asked to do. Can members imagine what will happen in future if we want a judge from the Eastern States? Of course there will not be anybody available. In this instance our own judges were not available and we had to send East in order to obtain a judge to conduct the inquiry. That is the treatment meted out to him when he came over here.

Mr. Marshall: The funny part about it is that the Government somersaulted. It is going to give effect to his report with which the Minister for Health does not agree.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Then let her get out of the Government. This is the second occasion tonight I have drawn members' attention to the fact that the Minister for Health disagrees with the Cabinet. Yet, she still sits on the front benches as a Cabinet member.

Mr. Marshall: It is just for the honour and glory.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: It is not only the member for Fremantle who has had something to say about this matter. The following extract is from a letter written by a man with a wonderful brain, although politically opposed to this side of the House. This letter was written by Sir Norbert Keenan to the editor of "The West Australian." He said—

I find myself in full agreement with the general tenor of the leading article but regret that in no part of it was any comment made on the extraordinary action of the State Government associating itself with an unwarranted personal attack on Judge Curlewis.

Those are the words of a member of the Minister's own party—a man of standing in the legal world—and are not the words of the member for Fremantle. He goes on—

Now I do not for one moment suggest that the finding of Judge Curlewis as a Royal Commission is not open to criticism. The finding of the highest court in the British Empire, the Privy Council or the House of Lords, is of course open to criticism. But this criticism must be at least decent in its tone, and not mere vulgar abuse.

That is what Sir Norbert Keenan thinks of it. He thinks it is mere vulgar abuse. That abuse was condoned by the Minister for Health on behalf of herself and the Government. It is time that something was done to see that an apology is sent to Judge Curlewis for the unwarranted attack made on him. Sir Norbert Keenan's letter continues—

I admit that Dr. Thompson, if he conceives that he has been unjustly criticised, is entitled to defend himself, with or without regard to his personal dignity, or the dignity of his office, as he himself chooses. What I am concerned about, however, is not the conduct of the Inspector General, but the fact that the State Government has announced its approval of that conduct, and its adoption of all that the Inspector General has put forward in his statement.

That is what a man with great legal standing in the world thinks about it and something should definitely be done. I want to know from the Deputy Premier, is he going to do anything?

Mr. Marshall: He did a wonderful thing in saving the face of this Government.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: An unwarranted attack was made on Judge Curlewis but up to date no apology has been sent to him. I have quoted not only my own words, but also the words of the "Sunday Times" and a colleague of the Deputy Premier's, Sir Norbert Keenan. It was

vulgar abuse and an unwarranted attack was made on Judge Curlewis. This attack came from the Minister for Health who was the spokesman for the Government on that occasion.

Mr. Marshall: They would make wonderful tumblers in a political circus.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I now come to another subject, and that is the mass searching of workers on the Fremantle wharves. I asked the Attorney General the following question:—

(1) Is he aware that the Police Department carried out a mass search of all waterfront workers as they left the wharves on Friday, the 28th July?

(2) If so, with what result?

(3) Is it his intention to allow wharf workers to be humiliated in this way in the future?

The Attorney General tried to put me off with this answer:—

(1), (2) and (3). There has been an increase of pillaging of cargo at Fremantle recently, and complaints have been made to the police in this connection. On the 28th July last, the Officer-in-Charge of police at Fremantle considered it was advisable to request all persons, including Customs officers, ships officers, seamen and members of the Wharf Labourers' Union, to permit the inspection of any case or other container carried by them when leaving the wharf. No stolen goods were found on that occasion, although two days previously stolen goods were found to be in the possession of a member of the Wharf Labourers' Union upon inspection of the container carried by him when leaving the wharf. The administration of prevention of crime is in the hands of the Commissioner of Police, and it is not intended to interfere with it.

I tell the Attorney General that his answer is not correct. Pillaging on the Fremantle wharves has not increased this year and I challenge him to produce figures to show that his statement is correct. I have the figures with me and if the Attorney General cares to take up the challenge then let him produce his figures. As a matter of fact there was no need for him to put this sting in the tail when he said—

Two days previously stolen goods were found to be in the possession of a member of the Wharf Labourers' Union.

That was only a foul, dirty sting in the tail. What was found on this person a couple of days before was a simple thing and of no value. Members must not for-

get that the wharf is not the only place where pillaging is done. It is called by a different name in different places. On the wharf it is called "pillaging," on the Goldfields it is called "stealing" and in Parliament House it is called "souveniring." I have seen members of Parliament souveniring. I have seen them take things and if they took them on the wharf they would get 28 days for it.

I tell the House that pillaging on the Fremantle wharf has been exaggerated and what they do there is regarded as a grave offence. I know of a case where a worker was handling greasy pipes on the wharf and because his hands had become dirty and greasy, he called out to a mate who was standing near a broken box of Persil, "Put some of that on my hands, Bill. I want to clean them." His mate put some of the Persil on his hands and was immediately arrested and fined £10.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Was that the new Persil?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not know, but it was a good advertisement for Persil. Do you call that stealing, Mr. Speaker? Of course it is not. There are half a dozen different ways by which one can pillage. I have the figures relating to pillaging up to the 31st May, 1950, and all of it cannot be put down to the Fremantle lumpers. Some of it is done before the goods ever reach the ship. I know of an instance of two or three years ago where a Fremantle firm took possession of a case which, to all intents and purposes, had never been opened, but when the firm opened it, it was full of bricks. I know of another instance of a case of Beecham's Pills being opened and the contents proved to be nothing but rubbish. That occurred before it reached the ship and not on the wharf.

I know of another recent case of a worker who was in the hold, and whilst jumping from one place to another he put his foot through a crate which was supposed to hold cigarettes, but instead it contained a red-dy-black bituminous gravel. That must have been substituted before it reached the ship and not done on the wharf, and I do not think the Adelaide Steamship Company, which was the company involved, would pay that claim. It can therefore be seen that there are quite a number of ways by which pillaging can be effected. As I said before, on the wharf it is pillaging, on the Goldfields it is stealing, and in Parliament House it is souveniring. Some time ago the House Committee received a letter from a lady who was complaining that she had not been sent an invitation to the opening of Parliament. The House Committee replied telling her that if she cared to return the things which she took from Parliament House when she was present at previous openings, she would perhaps

receive the invitation requested. Therefore, it is only souveniring with the Fremantle lumpers, the same as it is in Parliament House. When it is realised that the lumpers comprise a body of men numbering 1,400, 1,500 and very shortly 1,600, it is quite obvious that there are bound to be some misdemeanours but that does not necessarily mean that everyone in the Lumpers' Union is a thief and a pillager.

I challenge the Attorney General to produce his figures that the pillaging on Fremantle wharf has increased recently. Up to the 31st May, 1950, the claims on the Fremantle Harbour Trust were down £1,000, and we still have one month to go. I want to see the Attorney General stand up to his statement and produce his figures in support. I think he will find that he is mistaken and his information is wrong.

The Attorney General: What were the total figures?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: The claims on the Fremantle Harbour Trust, up to the 31st May, 1950, totalled £1,440. That means they are down £1,000. Further, the Fremantle lumpers cannot be blamed for all that is involved in those claims because the amount includes breakages that occurred in other parts of the world en route and everything else. I earnestly wish to know where the Minister obtained his figures and that which I desire to know even more is: What does he propose to do about it? Is he going to persist in this mass searching of workers before leaving the wharf? If he does so, then I warn him that he is looking for trouble, I advise him that if he goes on with this proposal he will certainly strike trouble and I would not blame the workers if they took such a step.

The member for Leederville can inform the Minister what happened to someone else when they tried to humiliate the Fremantle lumpers. On that particular occasion they had the lumpers down and out and someone tried to erect barricades on the wharf. If members want to know anything further of that incident, they should ask Sir Hal Colebatch who, I am sure, will advise the Minister not to go on with his present proposal for a mass searching of the workers.

The Attorney General: You know that the Fremantle waterside workers are just as keen as anyone else for the pillaging to be stamped out.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I know they are against it.

The Attorney General: Of course they are.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: And they do not intend to stand for mass searching of their fellow workers who are just as honest as anyone else, including those in the legal profession.

The Attorney General: Of course they are.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: What if we checked up on all the information available as to the offences committed by lawyers and made a mass search of them to see if anything was wrong!

The Attorney General: No-one was discriminated against. Everyone was searched.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Why do that? Why humiliate them? I repeat that the Minister is looking for trouble. He says the matter is in the hands of the police. I would point out to him that the matter was in the hands of the police at the time of the battle of the barricades. Sir Hal Colebatch was badly advised and I bet he would not try to erect any more barricades should a similar occurrence arise. Even the worm will turn and the Minister cannot say I have not warned him if he proposes to continue with such action.

For quite a while we have had a promise of a high school at Fremantle. The boys' school and the Princess May school are in an awful state and I thank the Minister for the promise he has made—it has not come off yet, but I hope it will shortly—to place something like £7,000 on the Estimates so that both those schools can be put in order. A promise was also made years ago that a high school would be built in Fremantle and I am wondering when it is to be fulfilled. I have a statement by the then Minister for Education, the Hon. J. M. Drew, M.L.C., dated the 3rd July, 1929, and the following is an extract taken from a newspaper cutting:—

Mr. Sleeman was one of eight members who spoke in support of the proposal, and the Minister's reply was reported in "The West Australian" the following day. According to the report, Mr. Drew said that the request for a high school at Fremantle had his complete sympathy. He realised that the establishment of a Fremantle high school could not long be delayed, and for that reason he had refrained from making additions to the central schools. Whether the new school could be financed at present, was a matter beyond the control of himself or the Treasurer. However, Fremantle had waited patiently for a long time, and he would do his best. He had had frequent requests from country districts, and in all his replies he had given them clearly to understand that the next high school must be at Fremantle. He could promise nothing immediately except his vigorous support. He would interview the Treasurer as soon as possible, and he trusted he would have no difficulty in getting his sanction to the placing of a sufficient amount of money on the Estimates to make a start with the buildings.

I would point out to the present Minister for Education that that promise was made in 1929. I have been trying ever since with National Governments, L.C.L. Governments and Labour Governments to have that school established, but without success. However, I hope that in the near future the Minister will ensure that Fremantle will get its school because quite a number of other centres have obtained their high school. I would also stress that the opinion given in that letter is not mine or Mr. Drew's, but that of the department. I want to know; oh! Lord, how long we shall have to wait for this high school.

And what is the Government going to do about the reform of the Legislative Council? When we made a move once against the Legislative Council, the Government came in with another move, and ours was placed at the bottom of the Notice Paper. When it was eventually pushed through here, its colleagues in another place threw it out. I wonder if the Government expects the member for Fremantle or the member for Murchison to bring down a Bill to reform the Legislative Council. Seeing that it claims it is the Government policy it should see that the Legislative Council is reformed, and the next time the Bill reaches that Chamber it should make sure that its supporters vote for it.

Mr. Marshall: It has two policies—one for the Legislative Assembly and one for the Council.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There is another matter to which I wish to refer, and that is fishing boats, not small fishing boats but large boats, like whaling boats, etc. There is no control over them, and I think something should be done under the Marine Act. Division 3 of the West Australian Marine Act, No. 72 of 1948, gives authority to the Department of Harbour and Light to make preliminary inquiries into casualties to coast trade or harbour and river ships. If the department considers that a formal investigation into a casualty is expedient it may, with the approval of the Minister, refer the matter of the casualty to a Court of Marine Inquiry, but this does not apply to hire boats—fishing, pearling or whaling boats.

The Act reads that preliminary inquiry shall be made by the department or a person appointed by the department, but does not state the qualifications required for the person making the inquiry. In other words, it could be possible for the preliminary inquiry to be made by an office boy. This particular point is similar to the Commonwealth Navigation Act whereby any person authorised by the Minister can conduct an inquiry. In actual fact, the person so authorised is always a fully qualified nautical surveyor or deputy director and, if the same procedure is

followed as far as the department is concerned, it would no doubt be quite satisfactory. Part VII, Section 119, of the Marine Act concerns the manning of coast trade ships only.

It thus appears that legally a fishing vessel, irrespective of its size or number of persons on board, may go to sea without any qualified master or officers and could be lost by sheer neglect without any possibility of an official inquiry being held. The three whale-catchers owned by the Australian Whaling Commission are up to 600 tons, the two trawlers in Albany are several hundred tons, and the whale-catcher owned by R. Moore & Sons is 118 tons gross tonnage. Crews vary from 10 to 17 each, and yet the Act treats them exactly the same as one-man fishing boats. There are quite a number of these boats now, and I think something should be done to bring them under the Marine Act instead of their being classed as ordinary fishing boats.

I have one more thing to say, and that is on behalf of the forgotten men down at His Majesty's establishment in Fremantle. I refer, of course, to the prisoners and to their being allowed out on parole, and I had intended to introduce a Bill in this connection. I was ignorant of that at the time, but was informed that it was already provided for in the Criminal Code. My Bill provided that where a man or a woman was serving a sentence, the Minister could release him or her on condition that if the prisoner committed another misdemeanour that person would have to finish the term he was serving when he was let out on parole. To my surprise I find exactly the same provision in the Criminal Code. Section 705 of the Consolidated Criminal Code reads as follows:—

In any case in which the Governor is authorised, on behalf of His Majesty, to extend the Royal mercy to an offender under sentence of imprisonment with or without hard labour, he may extend mercy upon condition of the offender entering into a recognizance conditioned to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for a period from the date of the sentence equal to the term of the sentence or for any less period. Upon complaint being made on oath before any Justice of any breach of the condition of the recognizance, such Justice may issue his warrant for the apprehension of the offender, and for his detention in custody until he can be brought before a Justice to be dealt with hereunder, and any Justice, on such offender being brought before him, may, on due proof of such breach, declare the recognizance forfeited, and commit the offender to prison to serve, as under the sentence aforesaid, any unexpired balance of

the term of such sentence, which, for this purpose, shall be deemed to be revived.

The Bill I had prepared contained provisions similar to that. I got it from the papers that a Bill for ticket-of-leave had been introduced some years ago in Canada and had worked well—only two per cent. let out on ticket-of-leave ever returned. I think it would be very handy and appropriate in a State like this to have such an Act, but I was informed, after my Bill was drafted, that it was provided for in the Criminal Code. That being so, I do not know why more use is not made of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member withdrawing the Bill?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I have not introduced it yet; it is only prepared. It will not now be introduced. There are numbers of people in the Fremantle Gaol who are not really criminals, and I think it is economically unsound to have them there where they could soon become criminals. The Attorney General could release many of them under a provision like that. It was put there to allow these people to be released on parole by the Attorney General. A number of them are not dangerous to the community. They might have made a slip and gone there. The Attorney General might investigate and see how many of them could be let out under the Code. I trust he will make inquiries and see what the gaol authorities have to tell him in regard to the number of people there who could be let out under this provision.

Mr. FOX (South Fremantle) [8.58]: At the risk of monotony and repetition, I desire to join with other members in congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, and the Chairman of Committees, on being re-elected to the positions you and he held in the last Parliament. When the member for Fremantle sat down, he was appealing to the Attorney General to let out of Fremantle Gaol some of the people who had been there for some time and were not really criminals. His appeal will, I think, be like water falling on a duck's back—we will get very little response.

The Minister for Education: He is the softest-hearted fellow in the House!

Mr. FOX: I put one or two hard cases to the Attorney General. There was one man in particular who was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. That man had done about 2½ years in gaol when he was sent to the Fremantle Hospital for two major operations. He went back to gaol, and then his wife died suddenly. I made another appeal to get him out of gaol on that occasion, but failed. Until we have a change in Attorney Generals, I should not like to put up any other case for the consideration of this Minister. I think the portfolio could with advantage be shifted to some other Minister. Indeed, I should like the Premier to take it over.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You do not know him!

Mr. FOX: I do not know whether it would be the right title to give the position, but I should like to see the Premier take over as Minister for Prisons, so that if we know of a case which merits some consideration and is one where the offence has been purged, we would be able to make an approach with some chance of success.

Mr. Styants: That would be all right if the man was not imprisoned for sheep stealing!

Mr. FOX: Anyhow, hanging is not the penalty for sheep stealing now. With regard to the remarks by the member for Fremantle in relation to pillaging, the advice he gave the Attorney General was not to continue with the searching of waterside workers, such as took place on the wharf recently. I remember some years ago an incident when the detective in charge of the C.I.B. lined up a whole gang of lumpers on the ship and searched them in front of all the passengers. I was secretary of the waterside workers' organisation at the time. I saw the detective the next morning and said that if ever he did a thing like that again he would not have enough policemen in Fremantle to complete the search. That was the last we heard of that sort of thing until the other day. The Attorney General would be wise to adopt some other procedure if it were thought necessary to search a person because it was suspected that he had in his possession something he should not have. I assure the Minister that that is very good advice. I agree with the member for Fremantle when he said that waterside workers are not the only people who steal. In proportion, the number of lawyers who steal is greater than that of waterside workers in that category.

Mr. Styants: I believe that is so.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Much more!

Mr. FOX: There was a case in which a lawyer was suspended in Perth for stealing and there was another instance of a lawyer embezzling trust funds amounting to £12,000.

Mr. Marshall: Lawyers go in for it in a big way.

Mr. FOX: Yes, in a respectable way. If a lumper comes off a ship and is found to have in his possession something worth 6d. or 1s., he is hauled up before the police court and fined £10, whereas if a lawyer is found to have stolen a considerable sum of money he gets out of it provided he makes restitution.

Mr. Marshall: Yes, that has happened.

Mr. FOX: Why not allow the lumper to make restitution and get out of it?

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: They should, in some instances, apologise for arresting him.

Mr. FOX: The member for Fremantle quoted cargo shortages that had been reported this year. Anyone who knows something about waterside work is fully aware of the fact that cases of cargo are often broken in transit. At Fremantle a special place is set aside in the sheds where broken cases are taken from ships when they berth. Those cases are broken before the ship reaches Fremantle. The goods are checked when they are taken into the shed so that the Harbour Trust will not be responsible for shortages of goods of which they have to take charge. The Harbour Trust is responsible for cargo after it is swung overboard in the ship's slings to the wharf and unhooked by the ship's servant.

Broken goods are put on to a truck, wheeled into the shed, checked over and the responsibility for shortages placed in the right quarter. Sometimes the cargo does not go into the cases at all, and in certain instances it is removed from the boxes when consigned. There was one instance where stone was found in a case. That stone was analysed and it was proved that no such stone was to be found in Western Australia. It had been put in the case at the port where the cargo was shipped.

Mr. Marshall: It might have been at a port in transit.

Mr. FOX: It could have been put in at any stage. In this instance it was not Western Australian stone at all. Waterside workers are often blamed for things that happen, although they have had nothing whatever to do with them. As a matter of fact, who are the greatest pillagers? They are the wholesale butchers who pillage, with the connivance of the Attorney General.

Mr. Marshall: Hear, hear!

Mr. FOX: Almost every wholesale butcher and retail butcher in Western Australia is pillaging large sums from the pockets of the people and no action has been taken by the Attorney General to suppress it. They are the pillagers, but they do it in a respectable way in the course of business. What about milk? What about potatoes? What about the storekeepers who give light weight? In fact, are there any honest people in business? The member for Fremantle suggested that there was not even honesty in Parliament House.

I shall not deal with a number of subjects that have already been traversed by other members but there is the question of starting price betting. Incidentally the least that the member for Fremantle could have done was to give the Minister for Health adequate notice of the question he put to her, when he asked whether she was going to retire. He sprung it upon her altogether too hastily and the Minister should have been given a little notice!

Starting price betting is a very controversial topic, but I hope that some member sitting on the Government side of the House will be prepared to introduce legislation to legalise S.P. betting. Personally, I advise young people not to indulge in betting; but we have to recognise that we cannot wipe that sort of thing out. There is no possibility of doing it. The next best step to take is to exercise control over it. If the Government is in earnest as has been suggested, why does it not stamp out the illegal betting that takes place on racecourses?

It is a matter of common knowledge that a person can approach a bookmaker on the racecourse and ask him to lay a bet on a horse running in a race in Melbourne. The bookmaker will say that he will give starting price odds. Every bookmaker who makes a bet on a racecourse does an illegal act. We have totalisators installed on racecourses here and people can bet legally if they so desire. All the present Government has done is to give a small number of big bookmakers in Perth and other districts places where people can bet with them by phone. Anyone whose name is good or who knows a bookmaker can use the telephone and lay bets with a bookmaker to his heart's content. He can bet up to thousands of pounds if his name is good enough.

On the other hand, the individual who has only a couple of shillings to bet with is arrested if he indulges in that practice, and is charged with obstructing the traffic—when there is no traffic on the road to obstruct. That is what happens to the man who prefers to take his amusement in the form of a two-bob bet, returning to his home and listening to the race over the radio. If he is caught, he is up for obstructing the traffic. To me it appears to be much better for a man to take his amusement that way than go to an hotel and have a few pots of beer, or even if he were to go to a picture show. I certainly trust that some member on the Government side of the House will introduce legislation to legalise S.P. betting, for he can be assured of support from Opposition members.

Mr. May: Whom would you get to introduce it?

Mr. FOX: I am sure that members of the Opposition would lend support to such a proposition. When Bills have been introduced to register S.P. bookmakers, Opposition members have lent their support and there were some sitting on the Government side of the House who were not opposed to it but were absent when the vote was taken, with the result that the legislation was not passed. I commend my suggestion to some of the newly elected members, and I assure them that they will get support for such a proposition. The situation at present is ridiculous. Let us

be honest about the matter. If we cannot stamp it out, the least we should do is to control it.

Next I shall draw attention to some of the Premier's remarks after the recent election. He expressed great pleasure at being again returned to office. I think he said that with his tongue in his cheek, because he has only 24 members on the floor of the House.

Mr. Cornell: That is enough.

Mr. FOX: It is not enough.

Mr. Cornell: It is enough for three years.

Mr. FOX: The Premier lost Bunbury, Geraldton and Middle Swan. He held Albany and Canning by small majorities. That was accomplished after spending thousands of pounds at Albany to sweeten up the electors. It was not done for love of the member for Albany because he is not a member of the Premier's party, and a candidate was put up against the sitting member in the hope of adding to the numbers of the Premier's own party in the House.

Mr. Bovell: Your majority at Geraldton was not as substantial either.

Mr. FOX: It was bigger than the Government member's majority was at the previous election. The majority last time was 66 and three years ago the majority was about 11. Consider what the Labour Party achieved at the last elections! The Government, by legislative action, abolished one of the North-West seats and the electors of the North showed their disapproval by returning three Labour members to this House and also a Labour man for the North Province of the Legislative Council. We have been promised by the Leader of the Opposition, that when other vacancies occur in the North Province, they, too, will be filled by Labour men.

The Premier: He is not right in making a promise like that.

Mr. FOX: We do not make promises unless we can carry them out. In that respect, we are unlike members on the Government side of the House.

Mr. Marshall: And we are never far out in our judgment.

Mr. FOX: We held 18 seats and we won Bunbury, Geraldton, North Perth, Middle Swan and Mt. Hawthorn, so, if the Premier can find any comfort in the result of the elections, he is welcome to it. If he had another result like that, he would be out of office.

There are some disgruntled members on the Premier's side of the House. One who has shown his disapproval is the member for Moore. He has expressed his disapproval of the treatment meted out to his district in the matter of hospital facilities as compared with the prodigal treatment given to the South-West. Then we

have the member for Avon Valley who went to Beverley with the high priest of the Liberal Party last February or March and made an attempt to lead the members of the Country Party into the lush pastures of the Liberal Party or, perhaps, lead them up the garden path. This was a bold step that required some courage, but after having done all that, he did not get a crumb from the Cabinet table and was justly indignant. I consider that the member for Avon Valley would have made an excellent Minister for Agriculture. A man with his experience of agriculture and of everything pertaining to the land would have been well fitted for such an office.

Mr. Marshall: That portfolio should be held by a Minister in this House.

Mr. FOX: The member for Avon Valley must have been greatly disappointed. History records many such instances—men who have started out with high hopes only to have them dashed to the ground. I might compare him to Cardinal Wolsey when he fell into disfavour with the King. Anyone who has read Shakespeare's "Henry VIII" will recall the words of Wolsey—

Farewell! A long farewell, to all my greatness!

This is the state of man: today he puts forth

The tender leaves of hopes; tomorrow blossoms,

And bears his blushing honours thick upon him;

The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,

And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely

His greatness is aripening, nips his root,

And then he falls, as I do.

I think the member for Avon Valley experienced a similar killing frost that prompted him to find a more hospitable seat away from the Government side. My only regret is that after all his endeavours in the interests of the Liberal Party, the Premier did not take him into the Ministry. I am aware that the hon. member's standing in his own electorate is sound and I express the hope that at the next election, he will survive.

Mr. Marshall: He will survive all right!

Mr. FOX: It is rather a pity that we could not have witnessed the touching reconciliation between the member for Avon Valley and the Premier that induced him once again to return to the fold. The hon. member signified his intention of occupying a seat on this side of the House, but after a trip to York with the Premier, during which the reconciliation took place, he returned to the fold. The reconciliation, I repeat, must have been very touching indeed.

Mr. Mann: I shall explain all that when I speak tomorrow night.

Mr. FOX: I wish to refer to the disabilities under which people in portion of my district have been labouring and which are becoming aggravated as time goes on. On previous occasions, I have referred to some of these matters, but I have found that unless a member is very persistent in his advocacy of the wants of his district, he has not much chance of getting anything done. My intention is to keep these matters before the attention of the Premier until they become accomplished facts.

The first need I shall mention is that of a reticulated water scheme for Rockingham. Safety Bay is in the Premier's district, but Rockingham is portion of my district, and I have been asked to bring this matter before the House in the hope that the Premier will lend a sympathetic ear. Rockingham is a very popular holiday resort and the need for a reticulated water scheme must be evident to all. The water for domestic purposes is drawn from very shallow wells—I do not suppose the water level is more than six or seven feet from the surface—and the district is becoming thickly populated. Every house is required to have a septic tank and a couple of dry wells and, consequently, there is a grave danger of the well water becoming contaminated as the population increases. There is a pipe-line already within a few miles of the district and to provide a reticulated scheme at Rockingham and Safety Bay would not cost a great deal of money.

Mr. Mann: How far away is the pipe-line?

Mr. FOX: It goes as far as the Naval Base. Thousands of tourists visit Rockingham every year and they are amazed at finding the place dependent upon such a primitive water supply. There would not be so much cause for complaint if settlement there were scattered, but when the place is becoming so thickly populated, the danger of an epidemic of typhoid or some other disease is grave. If such an outbreak occurred, I can picture the Premier falling over himself to have the pipe-line extended to Rockingham.

Another disadvantage is that no water is available for fire fighting purposes. At Denmark recently a fire occurred and there was not a drop of water with which to fight it. That would be the experience at Rockingham if a fire occurred. This is a matter to which the Premier should give early consideration with a view to having a reticulated supply provided.

The Premier: Consideration is being given to it.

Mr. FOX: I shall tell the Premier something that might be helpful when he visits the Eastern States. This is a very vital matter for the people living in that district; and in the hope of pushing matters forward before the Labour

Government went out of office, a deputation waited on Mr. Lemmon who was member of the House of Representatives for that district. It was hoped that the Commonwealth Parliament might be induced to do something to help Rockingham obtain a water supply. Mr. Lemmon forwarded the deputation's request to Mr. Chifley who in due course sent a reply. I propose to read a very small portion of his letter and I hope the Premier will take it into consideration when he attends the Premiers' Conference. Mr. Chifley wrote as follows:—

A water supply scheme for Rockingham district is one which normally might be expected to be carried out by a local authority or the State Government. A direct contribution in this case would create a precedent under which the Commonwealth would find it extremely difficult to decline to extend similar financial assistance to numerous local and municipal works in Western Australia as well as in other States.

Later on he said—

It might, however, be brought to the notice of the board that the Commonwealth indirectly makes a substantial contribution to the capital costs of works of this nature by virtue of its annual sinking fund contribution in respect of State loan raisings. Further, in the case of claimant States such as Western Australia, losses on these works would be taken into consideration by the Commonwealth Grants Commission in recommending the amount of the Commonwealth's annual grant to the State's general finances.

So there is something the Premier might bear in mind when he goes to the Premiers' Conference. I believe he would be able to obtain a substantial grant from the Commonwealth Government and in that way assist the people of Rockingham and visitors who go there from all parts of Western Australia, and who are dependent at the moment on what might be an unhygienic water supply. If the Premier can get a little extra cash it may be possible to install a pipe-line.

The member for West Perth said that we were badly in need of a master plan for Perth. We are still in the horse and buggy stage so far as some planning is concerned. The pioneers who laid out some of the streets in Perth—particularly Hay-street and Murray-street—had no vision at all. They should have looked 50 or 100 years ahead, visualised what the State would be like and should have made the streets wide enough to carry the traffic of the future. As time goes on, no doubt some of the property in Hay-street and Murray-street will have to be purchased and the streets made wide enough for the increasing traffic.

As I have said, we are still in the horse and buggy stage in regard to some of our planning. I have in mind particularly the pollution of Coogee Beach, and that is in no way associated with the committee which is making a fight to prevent the pollution of the Swan River. Coogee Beach is one of the best beaches in the metropolitan area and yet noxious trades are being established there at present. Members should see the 15 or 18-inch pipe at the Wilcox Moffin works which is pouring slush and muck on to the beach! That stuff should be collected on the shore and none should be allowed to run into the ocean. The country is short of manures, yet we have this stuff pouring into the sea and polluting one of the best beaches in Western Australia.

The Fremantle Road Board has gone to a great deal of trouble in popularising the beach. It has laid down an excellent lawn and a running track and nature has provided shade, and I believe it is the safest beach in the State for children. It is sheltered by Carnac and Garden Islands, the water is never rough and it is an ideal spot for youngsters. The Fremantle Road Board has erected a number of holiday shacks and these are occupied for a good part of the year, not by people living in the district but by those who come from the farming and Goldfields areas and look forward to a holiday near the sea where it is quiet and comfortable.

The Health Department, however, has notified the Fremantle Road Board that within five years the beach will have to be closed owing to the presence and the increase in number of noxious trades. I am not blaming any particular Government for the establishment of those industries there—all Governments have been responsible—because when the first noxious trade was located in the district years ago, it took people a long time to get there in a horse and trap. But now one can travel from Fremantle to Coogee Beach in a motorcar in 10 minutes quite easily. Transport has thus brought the beach much nearer to the general public. On top of that, there is a large population in the Spearwood area who look on Coogee Beach as a place to which they can go for relaxation. It is quite handy to them and to a large number of people in the Fremantle district and Hamilton Hill.

It is a shame that noxious trades should continue to be established on any beach; let alone Coogee. What a howl there would be if the Government put one or two of them at Cottesloe Beach! I can imagine the member for Cottesloe getting up and making a bit of a stir about that.

Mr. Hutchinson: My word!

Mr. FOX: Why not put one or two at Scarborough? Why single out Coogee Beach? We should have a long-range policy for the removal of these noxious trades from the beach, within a specified

time—I do not care how many years it takes—and all the effluent from those trades should be run into a pit and treated, none of it being allowed to run into the ocean at all.

The Minister for Lands: To what place would you remove them?

Mr. FOX: To Jandakot. There is any amount of land there which is not too good, and the Fremantle Road Board has recommended their removal to that area. There is a railway line running to the place. We all know that, with the introduction of tractors, market gardeners are becoming very short of manure, and that is another reason why we should conserve every bit of effluent that we can from all noxious trades and other industries. It is essential that we should do so.

I remember you, Mr. Speaker, putting up an argument in this House some time ago against running sewage into the sea. I do not know whether we agreed with you at the time but I agree now and I think you were on the right track. It is a shame to see this effluent running to waste when market gardeners are so badly in need of fertiliser. There is one firm of wool-sourers at Jandakot that supplies 2,500 tons of excellent manure every year and it is all used by market gardeners. Wilcox Moffin conserve a little but not a great deal, and the man that uses it tells me it is some of the best stuff obtainable. Quite recently, a largely attended meeting was held at Coogee Beach and people from almost every part of the metropolitan area were present. As I have said previously, this is not a party question. At that meeting a chairman and secretary were elected and it was decided to fight for the preservation of Coogee Beach. The fight will be a pretty hard one. The people will stop at nothing until they get what they want.

I am very concerned about this matter because beaches are a heritage of the people and we should keep them in the best possible state. That is our duty. Although we have erred in the past, we should not do so in the future. Recently I asked the Assistant Minister for Housing if he had purchased some land near Coogee beach. It is a poor piece of land and unsuitable for housing. He said in reply that it was intended to use some of it for industrial purposes. I do not know whether the Government has power to hand over land to anyone for industrial purposes; I am hazy on that point, but I hope it has not. The Government should not deliberately set out to cause more noxious trades to be established in that area. I appeal to the Premier and his Cabinet to see that no other trades are established there that are likely to pollute the beach; and to ensure that the existing establishments shall be compelled to collect the effluent so that nothing but

pure water shall run into the ocean; if it is necessary that anything at all should run into the ocean.

The Minister for Lands: It would improve the position a lot, I think, if they had filter beds. The Swan Boys' Orphanage is very interested in this, too.

Mr. FOX: Quite a number of people are. The Church of England has a girls' home at Coogee, and the children spend a considerable part of the year there. The Lumpers' Union gives the Swan Boys' Orphanage a holiday there every year of five to six weeks at a cost of £700 or £800. Also many industrial organisations use Coogee beach as a picnic ground. It is availed of practically every week-end during the year, with the result that some thousands of people annually make use of it. It would be a shame to see the place polluted.

Mr. Hearman: What type of fertiliser would you get?

Mr. FOX: We would get the refuse from the wool; and there is a lot of solid matter in it. At Jandakot some 2,500 tons a year are produced, so we can realise its value from a fertiliser point of view.

The Minister for Lands: It is of great value, and it is all required.

Mr. FOX: In Carrington-street there are works from which effluent can be collected. I have the following reports from an inspector of the Public Health Department:—

Two visits by an inspector from the Public Health Department in connection with the drainage disposal at Woolcombers Ltd. resulted in a report being submitted by him to the Commissioner of Public Health recommending that no action be taken in this matter as the disposal of wastes had considerably improved since they were first reported on and as Woolcombers contemplated installing a centrifuging plant for recovery of fats in the near future and the effluent would then be only water which could be absorbed by the soakage pits without creating any nuisance.

That may be one solution of the difficulty, but these establishments are far removed from the sea. My opinion is, that no more noxious trades should be established there. We should do our utmost, as time goes on, to see that all these noxious trades are shifted. I know that would be expensive because some of them are old-established firms. A petition is being largely signed at the present time in all parts of the metropolitan area for presentation to Parliament, or to the appropriate Minister, whichever is thought the better. Probably it will be presented to the Minister because then we shall be sure to get an answer whereas we might not get one from Parliament. It might be like so many of the pious resolutions carried here.

Mr. Needham: That is a reflection on Parliament.

Mr. FOX: That may be so, but I have seen many motions carried here and nothing further heard of them.

I want to say a few words on the Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act. It is being interpreted by some courts in a manner never contemplated by some members here when the measure was passed. I thought rents were pegged at the amounts being paid on the 31st August, 1939, and that no increases could be charged unless structural alterations were made, or rates were increased. But I find this is not the case. I looked up the Act and I had some expert advice on Section 7, the marginal note of which states—

Fair rent for land first leased after 31st August, 1939.

The various paragraphs of that section refer to land let after the 31st August, 1939, and paragraph 5 provides, that in the case of—

the existence of special circumstances which in the opinion of the court make it just and reasonable that the rent shall be in excess of or less than the standard rent, the rent to be charged and payable under a lease of such land or premises shall be a fair rent, to be determined as hereinafter provided.

Not very long ago a case was taken in one of our courts for an increase of rent. The house involved was bought in 1935 and the purchaser left it by will in 1936 to a relative. The purchase price was £575 and the house was let for 25s. a week. Since then the rent has been increased by 1s. on account of rates that were imposed by the local authority, which was quite in order, making the rental 26s. Apart from that, nothing has been done to the place since 1936 when three rooms and the passage were calso-mined. So, in 14 years the owner has collected £975 by way of rent, or £400 more than was actually paid for the house in 1935.

The court, as I have said, was recently approached and the rent was raised to £2 a week. Yet, that house has had practically nothing done to it since it was bought in 1935. A valuer employed to value the building assessed it as being worth £1,100. The only reason that could be advanced for the raising of the rent was that there must have been some special circumstances. Well, where were the special circumstances in this case? The owner had done absolutely nothing. I spoke to a well-known lawyer in Perth about the matter and he said, "Magistrates give different interpretations. Some magistrates would hold that that would not come within the words 'special circum-

stances' and the owner would have no chance of getting any increase in rent." I can quote another case for the more stringent control of rent.

Another landlord applied to the court to have his rent increased. The rent stood at £2 5s. per week and the court increased it to £4 10s. A widow was renting that house and, at £2 5s. a week, she got enough from sub-letting rooms to keep her from applying for the widow's pension. When the rent was raised to £4 10s. she thought she would raise the rent to the lodgers, but they called in the Fair Rents Court, which allowed her to increase her room rents by only about 2s. 6d. per room. Her position consequently is that she might just as well be on a widow's pension, and the only reason she is keeping the house on is that it provides a home for her son, who is renting part of the building.

The fair rents people can strike a rent only for part of a house, and not for a whole house. I think the whole question of rents should be left in the hands of the Fair Rents Court. People would then get a better deal. The officers of that court examine a house and make a determination on what they see for themselves. They do it on the spot, whereas a magistrate never goes near a house but gives his decision on the evidence put before him. As it is, people renting homes have to employ a lawyer, who charges anything from £5 upwards, when they face a claim for increased rent. If there are many cases on the list the magistrate may adjourn a particular case when it is nearly knock-off time, and that means that the persons concerned, both landlord and tenant, are faced with additional expense.

The Government should see what can be done to find a better way of fixing rents, instead of leaving it to the magistrate. We should determine what special circumstances are, without leaving it to the sweet will of the magistrate to determine what he thinks best, particularly in view of the fact that magistrates are not unanimous in their opinions on the question. I hope the Government will give consideration to bringing about some of the reforms I have mentioned. The member for West Perth advocated the abolition of the Housing Commission and said that private enterprise was the only solution to the present housing muddle—I think that was the term he used.

Mr. Marshall: That was what he said.

Mr. FOX: The Government believes in private enterprise and in giving it every reasonable assistance, and often more. What is the member for West Perth going to do about it? Will he insist on the Government abolishing the Housing Commission? Is he to be another disgruntled member on that side of the House?

Hon. A. H. Panton: He will knuckle down, like the rest of them.

Mr. FOX: I wonder has the Government any notion about abolishing the Housing Commission?

The Minister for Lands: What would you suggest?

Mr. FOX: I am in favour of maintaining the Housing Commission, because if it were abolished thousands of workers would never get homes.

The Minister for Lands: There is no such thing as a worker's home today.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: There should be. It was promised in the Government's policy speech.

Mr. FOX: A man I know summed up the position nicely. He is buying a home from a speculator, on the instalment system, and he has to pay so much interest. He says he has come to the conclusion that he will never be able to own the home, and therefore he is going to give his family all the amenities he possibly can, rather than try to build up an equity in the house, because he would lose that equity if adverse circumstances came his way. He said, "I am not going to try to pay the house off, as I have no chance of doing it." Somehow I feel that man is right, because if he paid a fair bit off the house and then adverse circumstances came along the speculator would get the lot, just as it happened in 1929 and 1930 when the slump came. People were then not able to buy sufficient food, let alone pay the rent demanded at that time, and thousands lost the homes they were purchasing.

When a man is renting a home from a paternal Government and bad times come along, I feel sure the Government would fix the rent in accordance with the man's ability to pay, and that is as it should be. The nation should then carry the liability rather than the worker who has taken on something more than he can handle. Housing nowadays is a social service and when a couple are buying a Commonwealth-State rental home on terms I think that, after the birth of their fifth child, the house should be made over to them. That is our only chance of populating this country, and it would give people an inducement to own their homes.

Hon. A. H. Panton: If that is done there will be a lot of quadruplets about.

Mr. FOX: At present every child that comes along makes it so much harder for the tenant to pay his rent. It is very difficult for the small family to get a home and very few small-unit homes are being built. I will read a letter which shows how difficult the position is from the viewpoint of the Housing Commission. I do not blame the officers of the Commission, who are doing all they can with the small number of houses at their disposal, and I do not envy them their job. People living

under all sorts of distressed circumstances, living in one room, on verandahs, in tents or on the beaches are constantly interviewing the officers of the Commission, but have no chance of getting homes.

Mr. Marshall: This Government promised that all such people would get houses.

Mr. FOX: It said it would overlook the needs of none. After I have read this letter I hope the Premier will strike his breast and say, "Mca maxima culpa." The letter reads—

Dear Madam,

I desire to acknowledge receipt of your form of application for the tenancy of a home under the Commonwealth-State Rental (Small Unit) Housing Scheme.

Your circumstances have been noted and an inspection of your accommodation will be made in numerical order (due to the large number awaiting inspection this may be some time).

What has the Premier to say about that, considering the promises he made four years ago? The letter continues—

Upon receipt of the inspector's report, further consideration will be extended to your application and your classification determined. I desire to point out that as there are over 3,500 applications for these small-unit homes and as the number under construction is limited, only the most distressing and urgent applications or those that have been waiting for a very long period can be considered at the present time.

This is dated the 12th June, 1950. I have several letters such as this which is more or less a circular letter. It goes on—

My Commission is very sensible to the conditions under which applicants are living and is doing its utmost to remedy the position but the task is not one easily or quickly accomplished. It is desired that you recognise the difficulties of the Commission in the matter of building sufficient rental homes to meet the immediate needs of all applicants inadequately housed. Applications already on hand, prior to lodgment of your own, include many who have been waiting for some years for alleviation of their circumstances. Thus it will be seen that early relief of your housing problem cannot be anticipated.

That was a reply to a woman with two young children. She is living on a verandah. I do not blame the Commission for sending out those letters because it has to do so. In fact, I have the greatest respect for every member of the Commission and I am sorry to hear that Mr. Telfer, the Assistant Secretary, is very ill at present.

Mr. Nimmo: He is back at work.

Mr. FOX: The other day I was told he was very ill but I am pleased to hear he is back at work because he is a most efficient and courteous officer. Not only is he efficient and courteous but he is also most conscientious, as are all members of the staff. I am quite satisfied that there would be little private home building going on if it were not for the advances made by the Commonwealth Bank. I think it costs about £1750 to build a wood and asbestos home, and of that sum the Commonwealth Bank advances a maximum of £1,350. If it were not for those advances little building would be proceeding at present but I am sure that many workers are not anxious to build now because of the excessive cost.

People who have applied to build under the twelve squares find it difficult to obtain any material. I have met a number of people looking for timber, bricks and other materials. They have told me that the supply of bricks is six months in arrears and tiles three months. Then, of course, it is almost impossible to obtain flooring. Therefore, there seems little likelihood of our overtaking the lag in housing and the Government is not living anywhere near up to the promises it made three years ago. Actually, the Government has fallen down lamentably on the job. Every time I speak I stress the fact that the housing position is worse now than it has ever been.

The Premier: Did you expect this great influx of population?

Mr. FOX: Do not try to get out of it that way. The Premier said—

We will overlook the needs of none.

There are 3,500 people looking for small unit homes alone. Then there is the question of McNess homes. The other night I asked a question in the House and I was told that nine have been built in the Belmont and Fremantle areas. If some have been built at Fremantle, or in the Fremantle area, then I do not know where they are. I do know that one or two are under construction at present but I do not know of any that have been built recently.

I agree with the member for South Perth that the money standing to the credit of the McNess Housing Trust should not be permitted to lie idle. That money should be used for the alleviation of distress. A number of old people are living under such conditions and cannot obtain homes. Many of them cannot pay the rents demanded by landlords to whom they go seeking accommodation. Therefore, I agree with the member for South Perth that all this money should be spent. I know of one way that this could be done. Two or three years ago I approached the McNess Housing Trust and told the members that there was a man and wife who

were badly in need of a home. The proposition was that the man would build a house himself and the Trust would supply the materials. The McNess Housing Trust agreed to this proposition. The man had his own block of land and the Trust supplied the materials for the building. The man made the block of land over to the Trust and the idea was that he and his wife were to remain in the house as long as they lived. When they die, the house is to become the property of the McNess Housing Trust.

I consider that to be a practical way of continuing the operations of the Trust as long as nobody gets an unfair advantage from it. If a person has had an application in for some years, and is prepared to build a house himself—provided the Trust supplies the materials—I think he should be issued with an approval to go ahead. In this way houses are put up cheaply. I do not know the cost of the house but when the secretary of the Housing Commission, and Mr. Millington visited the home, they were agreeably surprised and said that it was a splendid effort.

The man had paid out about £100 from his own pocket for labour and materials. He made application to the Trust for a refund of £60 and the members of the Trust were so pleased with the job that they paid him £100. It really was a good job and if that practice could be continued I think it would benefit many people. New applicants, of course, should not be permitted to build in this way because it would react unfairly on applications that had been in for a number of years. If recent applications were approved in that way they would receive preferential treatment and that would not be fair.

Now I want to say something to the Minister for Lands. I realise it is difficult to obtain good land in the State—or land near the metropolitan area. But, I have had requests from people east of the 10-mile well, on the Wattalup-road, which runs east in the direction of Thompson's Lake.

Mr. Marshall: What area is that?

Mr. FOX: Foreigners would not know anything about it. It runs off the Rockingham-road. This road runs east and the people in that locality are anxious to have a road built. There are half-a-dozen families there at present and they have been endeavouring to get the Rockingham Road Board and the Fremantle Road Board to co-operate in building this road. However, the road will be in the district of the Fremantle Road Board but the people to be served at present are in the Rockingham Road Board district. That is where the difficulty comes in. There are about three square miles of land, 50 per

cent. of which is most suitable for market-gardening, potatogrowing and dairying. It is south of Thompson's Lake and towards the Peel Estate. I went through there the other day and the road is terribly rough. The people living there now want an outlet and that is another question I will put to the Premier. If the land is as good as these people say it is then the Minister for Lands may be able to settle some families on it. There would be room for market-gardeners, potatogrowers, etc. This district has a good rainfall and is reasonably close to the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Lands: Do you want it thrown open for selection?

Mr. FOX: I do not know whether it is Crown land or not, but some of it has been taken up at present and I would like the Minister to make an inspection. We want the road for the people living there now and with a view to increased settlement of the district.

The Minister for Lands: I will have it investigated for you.

Mr. FOX: Some of these people have been there for some time. Another matter I would like the Premier to take up at the Premiers' conference is that of giving a grant to the Fremantle and Rockingham Road Boards from the petrol tax. I think the ex-Minister for Works was most sympathetic in that direction and I hope the new Minister for Works will be as sympathetic as his predecessor. Those two road boards are agreeable to do the work and if it is done new land will be made available for settlement. It will also give an outlet to the people from Wattalup-road on to Russell-road or from Wattalup-road to the Rockingham-road. The member for Moore voiced his displeasure about £130,000 spent on the Pinjarra hospital, and I join with him in that issue.

Mr. Marshall: So do I.

Mr. FOX: I think that money could have been better spent on the Fremantle Public Hospital which is badly in need of additional accommodation. Two hospitals in the Fremantle area have been closed and as they represented about 30 or 40 beds it has emphasised the need for additional hospital beds. The Pinjarra centre could have done without that vast sum of money being expended on its hospital, but if the Minister has another £130,000 to spend on Fremantle hospital, well and good. With modern fast-moving transport and good roads between the metropolis and Pinjarra any patient now requiring treatment can be brought to Fremantle because it is only about one hour's travelling time.

The Minister for Lands: It is more than that.

Mr. FOX: The beds at Fremantle hospital are always full and, because there are so many people awaiting medical treat-

ment, the patients are pushed out well before their time. Nothing has been done for Fremantle hospital for quite a long time. It is a growing centre and the hospital there must be prepared to take patients from any ship that enters the harbour. Members know full well how shipping has increased in the past year or two and the Seamen's Institute is always full to capacity. In the circumstances I entirely disagree with the expenditure of that money on Pinjarra hospital when it could have been put to better use at Fremantle hospital. We have not the nurses to staff hospitals in places such as Pinjarra.

The Premier: Yes, we have.

Mr. FOX: When we have large hospitals such as Fremantle, patients from the nearby centres could be treated there quite well. It is already known that quite a number of patients come from those areas to the Fremantle and Royal Perth Hospitals for operations.

Mr. Read: There are as many people in Mandurah as there are in Pinjarra.

Mr. FOX: That is not many then. However, I again voice my disagreement as to the expenditure on Pinjarra hospital which could have been put to better use elsewhere. Market gardeners are very dissatisfied with the price fixed for onions for the coming season.

Mr. Styants: We will be lucky to see an onion.

Mr. FOX: We will be lucky to see any from the Fremantle district unless a better price is obtained for them.

Mr. Styants: Ninepence a pound.

Mr. FOX: We on this side of the House are industrialists and believe in the 40-hour week, but the market gardener works 80 hours a week, seven days a week.

Mr. Styants: I have heard that story before.

Mr. FOX: They do. Every Sunday they can be seen working in the gardens and they work every other day in the week. The only people who make a success of market gardening are those with large families who do not have to pay wages.

The Minister for Lands: Would not that put the cost of onions up to the worker?

Mr. FOX: It does not matter how it puts the price up so long as the men producing them are able to enjoy decent conditions. I think a man working 80 hours a week, seven days a week, is entitled to conditions as good as those enjoyed by workers on a 40-hour week. I think everyone on this side of the House will agree with that. The market gardeners have closely investigated the cost of producing a ton of onions and estimate that it is at least £35. That calculation is based on a

40-hour week, to which they are entitled, and are therefore justified in passing on the cost of production. However, the Prices Commissioner has told them that £35 is a long way above the cost of production. Market gardeners today are working under similar conditions to those which the people in the dairying industry were before the Labour Government put them on their feet by granting them subsidies. They had to work any old hours.

Mr. Manning: How much a pint would milk be if they worked a 40-hour week?

Mr. Hearman: What would the price of butter be on a 40-hour week?

The Minister for Lands: Let us stick to onions.

Mr. FOX: The cost of production in everything has risen. The cost of fertiliser has gone up, power has increased in cost by 100 per cent. since last season and overall costs have increased out of all proportion. The Prices Commissioner has fixed the price for this season's onion crop as follows:—

November	£26
December	£24
January-February-March		£23
April	£24
May	£26

There is no loss whatsoever during November, December and January but there is great loss after May. Any onions kept after that month would deteriorate by at least 50 per cent. I do not suppose onion growers are prepared to blackmarket their products in the same way as the meat producers have done. I wonder what the attitude of the Prices Commissioner would be if the growers put their onions into the market and regulated their flow slowly with no specific price at all. The Attorney General would be down on that like a ton of bricks. Yet the meat producers can do what they like. I do not think the market gardeners would even get a look-in. At present the growers are pulling their onions green and putting them into the shops in that state rather than waste extra labour on them and perhaps receiving no further remuneration for it.

The Minister for Lands: I was passing through that area on Sunday last and the onions were all in the ground.

Mr. FOX: The following are four resolutions which were submitted to the Minister for Prices following a meeting at which 110 growers were present:—

1. That it takes strong objection to the manner in which the deputation of growers was received at the Prices Office on Tuesday, the 15th instant, when detailed consideration and discussion of costs carefully compiled and submitted by growers was refused.

The Prices Commissioner refused to accept their calculated costs for the growing of the crop. The other resolutions were:—

2. That the growers do not favour a varying price as between early, mid-season and late-season onions for grade.

3. On the basis of the costs submitted, that growers demand throughout the season a ceiling price of £29s. 10s. delivered merchant's store, for No. 1 grade.

4. That growers strongly object to the ever-increasing margin being allowed at their expense to retailers.

This is something with which the members of the Country Party will agree. The Prices Commissioner has allowed the wholesalers £2 10s. per ton merely for selling the onions. Supplies are put on the market and wholesalers are allowed £2 10s. a ton and the retailers are allowed £12 10s. a ton. It means that £14 10s. per ton goes to the middlemen alone, and the growers are expected to be satisfied with £26 per ton. The middlemen make more out of it than the growers themselves. Is it a wonder that they are dissatisfied? The other day I asked the Minister what it cost to grow an acre of onions. The Minister replied that he was prevented by the regulations from giving such information. What is wrong with getting that sort of information?

We hear a lot of talk about education. This is the sort of education that should be provided for school children. They should be taught what it takes to grow a crop of onions. They should be told how much labour goes into the growing of that commodity and how much the wholesalers, retailers, and all the other middlemen get out of it. That is the type of education children should receive at school. It should apply not only to onions but to every other commodity we grow. Why withhold from Parliament particulars regarding the cost of growing anything?

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The Minister could have given the information if he had wanted to.

Mr. FOX: Of course he could. I suppose we cannot compel him to make the information available, but the market-gardeners have the particulars and can supply them. They know, but the Prices Commissioner tells them it is ridiculous and that it does not cost as much as they say.

The Minister for Lands: What part does the Onion Board play? Does it help the growers at all?

Mr. FOX: Yes, but the board cannot go beyond the Prices Commissioner. The board regulates the flow of onions on the market.

Hon. F. J. S. Wise: This is some of the orderly marketing that Government members used to talk about!

Mr. FOX: Fancy a man like the Minister asking such a question!

Mr. Yates: The Onion Board should put up recommendations to the Prices Commissioner.

Mr. FOX: The board would recommend prices somewhere near what the growers desired.

Mr. Hearman: What happened with regard to the potato growers.

Mr. FOX: They are the people who know the cost of growing a crop of onions and that is the information that the Minister should give—but he is prevented by the regulations from making it available! What a ridiculous answer! I do not know what the market gardeners are going to do about the matter. I do not know whether they propose to regulate the quantity of their product that will go on the market or whether they will do what the wholesale butchers did. I would like to know what would happen if they came at that. They might as well have a go at it because everyone else seems to be able to get away with it—although it is pretty hard on the consumer. Next I shall deal briefly with the crayfishing industry, and I have a few letters that throw light on the subject.

Mr. Marshall: Did you get one from the Minister for Health about the crayfishing racket?

Mr. FOX: No, but I will present the information I desire to place before the House, from the correspondence of men engaged in crayfishing. On the 15th August the Chief Inspector of Fisheries wrote as follows:—

With reference to the Fremantle-Lancelin Island-Cervantes Island crayfish fisheries, I desire to say that it has been decided to open the crayfishing season on November 15, 1950. A further communication, giving complete details, will be addressed to you immediately after the necessary proclamation has appeared in the "Government Gazette."

The directors of a company operating in Fremantle wrote to the Minister for Fisheries on the 17th August as follows:—

Yesterday we heard that a proclamation was being passed by you, closing the whole of Western Australia for catching crayfish.

We have been preparing for the past five months for an experimental voyage to Jurien Bay for the purpose of discovering new grounds for the future. Also we have spent an extra £1,000 for this experiment and hereby make application for a special license for this purpose.

We are prepared to submit a report of our catches to your department every month and our vessel will be ready for operations at the end of August.

Hoping this application meets with your approval.

The Chief Inspector of Fisheries, on the 22nd August last replied to the directors of the Phoenix Coy. Pty. Ltd. at Fremantle as follows:—

The Hon. Minister for Fisheries has considered your request of the 17th inst. that you be permitted to fish for crayfish in the vicinity of Jurien Bay prior to November next. The Hon. Minister has directed me to inform you that as the proclamation includes this area and has been enacted in the interest of conservation, he regrets he cannot accede to your request.

This matter is of importance to the men engaged in the crayfishing industry, who reside in the Fremantle district. At least 250 men are employed on the work and that number, including their families, represents about 1,000 individuals. I have a lot of information on the subject but I shall not delay the House long in presenting it. One of the directors of Phoenix Company Pty. Ltd. had this to say on the matter:—

Following a recent announcement by the Department of Fisheries to the effect that the whole of the coastline of Western Australia would be closed to the industry until the 15th November, 1950, the following information may prove of certain interest:—

Some time ago it was considered that the taking of Western Australian crayfish in such large quantities in a season would in due time make serious inroads in the source of supply, and it was felt that something should be done in order to conserve this potential Western Australian asset. A Select Committee was therefore appointed to inquire into the advisability of declaring a closed season.

When this committee was originally constituted a number of professional fishermen were included, but when the committee commenced to function these fishermen were informed that their appointment had been cancelled.

Who would be better able to give information to the Fisheries Department than the men who had been engaged in fishing all their lives, men who had a perfect knowledge of the English language and were acquainted with all types of fishing, particularly crayfishing? They were told their services were not required!

The feeling of the fishermen was that there was no immediate necessity to institute a closed season north of Rottnest. In substantiation of this opinion held by the fishermen, it is claimed that in close proximity to the 2,500 miles of coastline worked in the industry by the Fremantle fleet—

I do not know whether that reference to the coastline is correct, and I rather think it is a mistake—

—approximately 60,000 square miles of suitable crayfishing grounds are available and of this total the Rottnest area (approximately 40 square miles) has been worked since 1900, the Abrolhos Islands area (approximately 30 square miles) since 1944, the Lancelin Island area (approximately 30 square miles) since 1947 and the Cervantes Island area (approximately 10 square miles) during the last season only. It can therefore be seen that of the 60,000 square miles available for the propagation of crayfish, only 110 square miles have been touched by fishermen.

The Rottnest area has been fished over since 1900, and they are catching more crayfish there now than they did 50 years ago.

Mr. Marshall: Perhaps they are using better technique.

The Minister for Lands: They are doing more fishing because the crays are worth something.

Mr. FOX: To continue the statement—

It must also be realised that the season in any year is dictated by weather conditions for approximately six months and during this period it is impossible to carry on the industry because of adverse seas, winds and tides.

The recent declaration by the Fisheries Department has come as a great shock to the Fremantle fishermen and has been received by them with a great deal of alarm, as since the conclusion of last season in April, 1950, the Fremantle fleet, which is conservatively valued at £400,000, has had spent on it approximately a further £50,000 in making the vessels and gear ready for an early start in September this year, and many of the fishermen are committed to the banks for much of this financial assistance. Some have been financed by the Rural and Industries Bank whose policy of redemption is confirmed to three years.

It is felt in the industry that if a "closed season" was imminent the declaration should have been made at the end of last season rather than at this late stage, as an earlier declaration would have enabled the men to secure other employment ashore for at least two or three months.

The position now appears to be that a considerable number of applications for social services benefits will have to be made by the fishermen in order to support themselves and their large families.

Some of the fishermen have already approached the Fisheries Department, expressing their objection to this latest move to curtail their occupation; but were informed that they were lucky that the "closed season" had not been for a longer period.

In the interests of the large number of persons dependent upon this industry for their livelihood, as well as the dollar-earning assistance which it affords the Commonwealth of Australia, the Fisheries Department should give serious consideration to rescinding its decision to declare the crayfishing season closed until the 15th November, 1950, or alternatively to allow part of the area to remain open.

I think the industry would be the means of earning about half a million dollars for the Commonwealth. The suggestion to allow part of the area to remain open for fishing is a very sensible one. These men know what they are talking about. There is an area of about 60,000 square miles of ground suitable for crayfishing, and only about 110 square miles have been touched by the fishermen.

The Minister for Lands: But the officers of our Fisheries Department should know their job.

Mr. FOX: They do not know it as well as do the men who have been fishing for years.

The Minister for Lands: The point is that the fishermen are getting the money, and so they have no interest in conserving the industry.

Mr. FOX: They are vitally interested to ensure that the supply is conserved. This is their livelihood and they are not likely to do anything that would jeopardise it. If they thought that the quantity of crayfish would be diminished, they would be only too willing to support the department in declaring a close season. I believe that Nature has a way of bringing about the requisite balance. Consider the number of eggs that a crayfish spawns! I have forgotten the number, but it is enormous, and if every one of them came to maturity, ships would not be able to use the ocean. I have it on the authority of Dr. Serventy, who gave evidence before the Royal Commission on the fishing industry, that it is not necessary to have a close season in order to conserve the industry.

Mr. Read: Dr. Serventy is wrong.

Mr. FOX: He is associated with the C.S.I.R.O. and should know what he is talking about. Anyhow, I would rather take his opinion than that of the member for Victoria Park. If we were discussing a pharmacy matter, I would be prepared to accept the hon. member's opinion, but on a question affecting the crayfishing industry, I prefer the opinion of Dr. Serventy. If there is no danger of the quantity of crayfish available being diminished, why have a close season?

The Attorney General: A large number of the Fremantle fishermen agree with the policy of the department.

Mr. FOX: I will tell the Minister the men who agreed with the policy of the department. An invitation was issued by the department to a number of fishermen well acquainted with the industry to act on the committee, but they were afterwards told that they were not wanted. Others came along who could not understand English too well, and I suppose the department got them to say what it wanted. The fishermen I have referred to have been engaged in the industry all their lives, and know what they are talking about.

The Attorney General: Some of those who approved of the department's policy were amongst the most senior men fishing out of Fremantle, and they are the men I take notice of.

The Minister for Lands: I can quite understand that men who could not speak our language would not be interested in conserving the industry for the future.

Mr. FOX: Yes, they would be men working on wages and would not be so much concerned, but I am speaking of men who have spent thousands of pounds on the purchase of boats. A boat is worth about £10,000, and these men are under an obligation to repay the Rural and Industries Bank some £3,000 or £4,000 in 18 months, and so they are anxious to be able to continue fishing in order that they might honour their obligations.

The Minister might well consider the alternative suggestion that portion of the area be thrown open in order that these men might be able to earn a livelihood and not be rendered idle until the 5th November. It is a matter of only two months. We have the evidence of Dr. Serventy that there would be no diminution in the quantity of crayfish available; in fact, he told us that the Japanese caught every fish they could, large and small; all were fish that came to their net, and yet there was no diminution in the number of fish available in the following year.

The Attorney General: There is a special representative of the C.S.I.R.O. dealing with crayfish. That is his one job, and he approves of the date of closing, so it is no use your talking about what Dr. Serventy said.

Mr. FOX: That is all I have to say about the crayfishing industry except to repeat the hope that the Minister will give some heed to the views I have expressed on behalf of the fishermen. There is only one other matter on which I intend to touch, and that relates to schools.

The Premier: You touched on schools earlier in your speech.

Mr. FOX: The Premier could not have been listening. In order to supply projectors for schools, about £50 is made available by the department and parents and citizens' associations make up the rest of the purchase money. A new school is being built at Hilton Park and will probably be opened after Christmas. Some time may elapse before a projector can be provided for that school, because a couple of hundred pounds is quite a large sum for the not very large population of that district to contribute. In this instance, I hope that the Minister for Education, when opening the school, will make a presentation of a projector.

This method of providing visual education is essential in order to give the children an insight into the industries, not only of this State, but also of other countries, and to acquaint them with some of the happenings in other parts of the world. I have seen some of the films shown at schools by Mr. Uren, who is doing a very good job. I hope the Premier will authorise the Minister for Education, when opening that school, to present a projector in order that the children of Hilton Park may not be denied this aid to their education.

On motion by Mr. Brady, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.29 p.m.