

# Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 27th August, 1952.

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

## ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to Supply Bill (No. 1) £13,000,000.

## QUESTIONS.

### WATER SUPPLIES.

*As to Goldfields Scheme, Consumption and Capacity.*

Mr. MOIR asked the Minister for Water Supply:

(1) What is the average daily amount of water drawn off from Mundaring for the Goldfields Water Supply?

(2) Is this the full capacity of the station? If not, what is the full capacity?

(3) What is the daily through-put for Nos. 3, 4 and 5 stations?

(4) Is this their full capacity? If not, what is their full capacity?

(5) What is the daily consumption of water between Mundaring and—

(a) No. 3 station;;

(b) No. 4 station;

(c) No. 5 station,

in summer and winter, respectively?

(6) What is the holding capacity of each reservoir between No. 1 Station and No. 5, and what amount of water is now held?

(7) What is the amount of water pumped daily at present by—

(a) No. 6 station;

(b) No. 7 station;

(c) No. 8 station?

(8) Is this their full capacity? If not what is the full capacity?

(9) What is the capacity of the reservoirs between No. 5 station, and including Bullfinch, Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie and Norseman? What amounts are now held?

(10) What is the daily delivery of water to—

(a) Coolgardie;

(b) Kalgoorlie;

(c) Norseman?

(11) What is the average daily consumption at each of these places—

(a) at present;

(b) estimated consumption in the summer?

(12) What daily amount of water is estimated to be required by Great Western Consolidated at Bullfinch?

(13) Will this affect the supply at point further east?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Water Supply) replied:

(1) Average daily throughout year 1951-52—7.3 million gallons.

Average daily throughout summer period (December, 1951-March, 1952, inclusive)—9.0 million gallons.

(2) Yes, after allowing for normal running maintenance of plant.

New electric pump station to be constructed will have a maximum capacity of 15.9 million gallons.

(3) No. 3 Pump Station—

Average daily throughout year 1951-52—5.5 million gallons.

Average daily throughout summer period—6.5 million gallons.

No. 4 Pump Station—

Average daily throughout year 1951-52—4.9 million gallons.

Average daily throughout summer period—5.7 million gallons.

No. 5 Pump Station—

Average daily throughout the year 1951-52—4.0 million gallons.

Average daily throughout summer period—4.5 million gallons.

(4) Existing full capacity No. 3 Pump Station—7 million gallons per day.

Existing full capacity No. 4 Pump Station—6.5 million gallons per day.

Existing full capacity No. 5 Pump Station—5.7 million gallons per day.

Note Full capacities for No. 3 and No. 4 Pump Stations will increase progressively with main conduit improvements.

(5) (a) Mundaring Weir—No. 3 Pump Station—

Summer—2.5 million gallons.

Winter—1.4 million gallons.

(b) Mundaring Weir—No. 4 Pump Station—

Summer—3.3 million gallons.

Winter—1.9 million gallons.

(c) Mundaring Weir No. 5 Pump Station—

Summer—4.5 million gallons.

Winter—2.7 million gallons.

(6)

	Capacity Million Galls.	Present Content. Million Galls.
No. 1 Pump Station Suction Tank	1	1
No. 2 Pump Station Suction Tank	.5	.38
Sawyers Valley Summit Tank— Small	.25	.25
Large	2	2
Bakers Hill Reservoir	.5	.5
West Northam Reservoir— Small	.25	.15
Large	1	.8
Northam Town Reservoir— Small	.25	.25
Large	1	1
Cunderdin Reservoir	47	26
Kellerberrin Summit Tank— Small	.25	.25
Large	2	2
No. 4 Pump Station Suction Tank	1	.5
Booran Summit Tank— Small	.25	.25
Large	2	2
No. 5 Pump Station— No. 1 Tank	1	1
No. 2 Tank	1	1
Totals	61	39.25

(7) (a) No. 6 Pump Station—

Average daily throughout year—3.8 million gallons.

Average daily summer period—4.2 million gallons.

(b) No. 7 Pump Station—

Average daily throughout year—3.7 million gallons.

Average daily summer period—4.1 million gallons.

(c) No. 8 Pump Station—

Average daily throughout year (pumped for 10 months only)—3.3 million gallons.

Average daily summer period—4 million gallons.

(8) Full capacity, 5½ million gallons per day, if and when sufficient water available.

(9)—

	Capacity Million Galls.	Present Content. Million Galls.
Nulla Nulla Summit Tank	1.25	1
Bullfinch (when completed)	.5	
No. 6 Pump Station Suction Tank	1	1
Brontti Summit Tank	1.25	1
No. 7 Pump Station Suction Tank	1	1
Koorarawallye Summit Tank	1.25	1
No. 8 Pump Station— No. 1 Suction Tank	1	1
No. 2 Suction Tank	12	12
Bulla Bulling Reservoir	12	10
Toorak Reservoir	1	.75
Mt. Charlotte Reservoir, Kalgoorlie— No. 1 Standby	10	10
No. 2 Standby	25	24
Spargo's Reservoir, Norseman	.25	.25
Norseman Service Reservoir	.25	.25
No. 1 Emergency Storage	2.75	1
No. 2 Emergency Storage	3.75	1.75
Totals	75	68

(10) (a) Coolgardie—Average 3½ million gallons.

(b) Kalgoorlie—Average 3 million gallons.

(c) Norseman—Average 270,000 gallons.

(11) Coolgardie—

Present—150,000 gallons.

Summer—200,000 gallons.

Kalgoorlie—

Present—3 million gallons.

Summer—4.2 million gallons.

Norseman—

Present—220,000 gallons.

Summer—350,000 gallons.

(12) 200,000 gallons.

(13) Yes, to some extent, particularly if a dry summer is experienced. Since the Company commenced development at Bullfinch the Development has provided additional storage for the Goldfields proper of 36 million gallons (No. 8 and Kalgoorlie) and this storage is virtually full at present and is equivalent to six months' Bullfinch consumption.

## HOUSING.

As to *Austrian Pre-fabricated Homes, Willagee Park.*

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

(1) Is there a "rise and fall" clause in the agreement with Messrs. Sandwell and Wood in connection with the erection of the Austrian pre-fabricated houses at Willagee?

(2) Have any calculations yet been made by the Housing Commission with respect to increased charges under this clause, and have any amounts been charged for this against the cost of the houses?

(3) If no charges under the "rise and fall" clause have been made against the capital cost of the houses, have any debits been raised in the Suspense Accounts? If so, what are the amounts?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) "Rise and fall" calculations are made from time to time during the progress of the contract. The estimated cost previously quoted included "rise and fall" calculations.

#### TRANSPORT.

*As to Concessions for Pensioners.*

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

(1) Has he received a request from any organised body to provide pensioners with transport over the Government tramways system on the payment of a quarterly fee of 7s. 6d. in a manner similar to that provided for retired members of the tramway staff?

(2) If so, will he indicate who made the request, and what reply was given?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Education) replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by (1).

#### PRISON SENTENCES.

*As to Schedule of Offences.*

Mr. JOHNSON asked the Chief Secretary:

With reference to the report of the Comptroller-General of Prisons, will he have prepared a schedule setting out the comparative lengths of sentences awarded to prisoners, received during the period under review, for offences—

(a) against persons;

(b) against property;

(c) against good order;

(d) for breaches of Acts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

The number of persons serving sentences for the four types of offences mentioned is tabulated, but the length of sentences is not similarly recorded. It is therefore not possible to give—without heavy delay—the information sought by the hon. member.

#### AIRPORT, GUILDFORD.

*As to Change of Name.*

Mr. HUTCHINSON asked the Premier:

Now that the inaugural International Air Service linking Perth with Johannesburg, South Africa, will commence on Tuesday next, the 2nd September, will he, for obvious reasons, make the appropriate representations to have the name Guildford Airport changed to Perth Airport?

The PREMIER replied:

I understand that all Australian capital city airports take their names from the district in which they are situated.

#### KALGOORLIE POWER CORPORATION

*As to Supplies of Collie Coal.*

Mr. MAY asked the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

(1) Is he aware the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation has changed the boilers of the Kalgoorlie Power House from wood to coal burning at a great cost?

(2) Is he aware this change-over will be completed by October of this year?

(3) Has any arrangement been made to supply 1,100 tons of coal per month as from October, 1952, to this Corporation?

(4) Does he agree that this quantity of coal can be made available from the deep mines and open-cuts in operation at the present time?

(5) If not, will he immediately approve the opening up of another open-cut, in order to ensure sufficient coal being made available to supply this Goldfields requirement?

(6) Is he aware that if this coal order is not fulfilled, the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation intends to use fuel oil, and as a consequence this field of consumption for Collie coal will be lost to the State for all time?

The MINISTER FOR HOUSING replied:

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Owing to the recent metal workers' strike it is unlikely that the transport of this coal to Kalgoorlie could be undertaken before the end of this year.

(4) It is possible that the coal required for Kalgoorlie could be supplied from the present operating mines and open-cuts.

(5) The difficulty is one of transport rather than availability of coal.

(6) I am not aware of any alternative intention by the Kalgoorlie Power Corporation to use fuel oil. The new boilers are, I understand, designed specifically for coal fuel. The Power Corporation has had frequent discussions with me and is fully aware of the transport and coal position resulting from the recent strike.

#### OIL REFINERIES.

*As to Kwinana Project and Commonwealth Shares in Commonwealth Oil Refineries.*

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Will he inform the House when the Commonwealth Government will finalise matters in connection with the establishment of the oil refinery at Kwinana by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co.?

(2) Will he make a statement on the movement by the Commonwealth Government to dispose of its shares in the Commonwealth Oil Refineries Ltd.?

(3) If the Commonwealth Government decides to sell those shares, would such decision have an adverse effect on the agreement between the Government of Western Australia and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. to establish the oil refinery at Kwinana?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (for the Minister for Works) replied:

(1) The Government has urged the Commonwealth Government to make a decision as quickly as possible.

(2) This is entirely a Commonwealth Government matter.

(3) No.

#### HEALTH.

*As to Migrant Mental and T.B. Patients.*

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Health:

(1) How many new Australians are patients in the Claremont Mental Hospital?

(2) How many new Australians are patients in the Wooroloo Sanatorium?

The MINISTER replied:

Exact answers cannot be given without a definition of the term "New Australian" and an identification of names with the Migration Authorities. Even then, unassisted arrivals and transfers from other States would be omitted.

The estimated numbers are—

(1) 30.

(2) 34.

#### STATE FUNERALS.

*As to Case of Late Mr. W. M. Marshall, M.L.A.*

Mr. GRIFFITH (without notice) asked the Premier:

I would like to ask the Premier a question without notice, and to preface that question with a few remarks. In this morning's issue of "The West Australian" appears a letter written by a man named Sampey. In writing to the paper that gentleman made reference to the death of the late member for Murchison, stating that he was a very good member—with which I heartily agree—and in the final sentence expressing the opinion that the late hon. member should have received a State funeral. Did the Premier see the letter in question, and has he any comment to make?

The PREMIER replied:

I did read the letter referred to in this morning's paper. A certain procedure is laid down concerning State funerals. This provides that State funerals should be accorded to Ministers in office. There is no provision made that an ex-Minister be given a State funeral. I do not know when these particular rules were laid

down, but any person who has occupied the position of Premier is given a State funeral; otherwise it is confined only to Ministers when in office.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Third Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. NEEDHAM (North Perth) [4.39]: In the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor I noticed that the first reference was to the untimely death of His Late Majesty King George VI. It was a very appropriate reference because the people of the British Commonwealth certainly lost not only a friend but a man who possessed every kingly attribute. The Empire has reason to be grateful to him for the wonderful work he performed during his reign, more so when we realise that His Late Majesty took over the heavy responsibilities of presiding over the destinies of his far-flung empire at a most critical time of the Empire's history, namely the very distressing conditions relating to the abdication of his brother. Accordingly we have every reason to respect the name of His Late Majesty and to revere his memory.

Reference was made in His Excellency's Speech to Her Majesty the Queen having taken over the responsibilities of the office, and we have every cause to say that in no part of this far-flung Empire has she any more loyal subjects than in this portion of the Commonwealth. I trust she will long be spared to reign over this Empire. I also hope that her subjects will not ask too much of her. I fear we have been in the habit of expecting too much from our Rulers. When we realise that our young Queen is the mother of a young family, I think it would be better to spare her many of the duties that normally the Sovereign would be called upon to perform, until such time, at least, as the children are older.

She is not the kind of mother that leaves her children to the mercy of the nursery; she takes a proper motherly part in looking after her children. While we can assure her that she would be welcomed very heartily by the people of the Commonwealth in the projected tour in 1954, I would prefer that she did not come at that time, but waited until she had reached a more mature period of her reign, when her children would be a little older. The tour for that year, in my opinion, might well be undertaken by some other member of the Royal House.

The Speech also refers to the fact that His Excellency was making his first Speech at the opening of Parliament. I am pleased to say that, in the short period he has been here, Sir Charles Gairdner has won a place in the hearts and minds of the people of this State. He is an excellent type of man, a man of culture, and one

who has shown a desire to take a very keen interest in all matters pertaining to the State, and, being himself a primary producer, he is naturally keenly interested in our agricultural development. He is a man for whom I have the highest regard, and I hope that he will be blessed with health and strength to carry out the duties of his high office.

Having said that, I consider the time is long past when we in Australia should not look oversea, but should select local men to fill the position of State Governor, or the higher position of Governor General of the Commonwealth. I am confident that there are men in Australia who could carry out the duties of Governor faithfully and well, and I say that without any intention of reflecting in any way upon the present occupants of those positions. We in this State, and also the people in other States, have had experience in this direction. No-one could fail to admire the work performed by the late Sir James Mitchell, a son of the soil—to use a colloquialism—a native of Western Australia, and a man who admirably filled the position, first of Lieutenant-Governor and then of Governor of the State. In other States where local men have been appointed to the position of Governor, the experience has been similar.

As to the position of Governor General, we have had some illustrious examples of the ability of Australians to fill that high and honourable office. I need only instance the first local Governor General, Sir Isaac Isaacs, a very able intellectual and cultured man, who was appointed by the Scullin Labour Government. No-one could deny that he filled the position with grace and dignity. Another instance is the present Governor General, also an Australian, who has filled the position equally well. I refer to Sir William McKell.

I see no reason why anyone should be averse to such appointments. One of the reasons advanced in favour of Federation was that the office of the State Governor would be abolished and that also the State Legislative Councils would be abolished. Unfortunately, we still have the Legislative Council with us, and if like bodies in other States are similarly constituted, these Legislative Councils will be with us for all time, and thus the hope that Federation would lead to the abolition of State Legislative Councils will never be realised.

I see no reason why the Chief Justice of the High Court should not fill the position of Lieutenant-Governor General of the Commonwealth, or why the Chief Justice of our Supreme Court should not fill the position of Lieutenant-Governor of the State. The Governor's Speech mentioned that Her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to appoint the Hon. Sir John Patrick Dwyer, K.C.M.G., Chief Justice of Western Australia, to be Lieutenant-Gov-

ernor. That is a very good appointment. I hope the day is not far distant when we shall refrain from bringing men from oversea to act as Governors, that the office of Governor will be abolished and that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court will take over the duties.

During the debate on the Supply Bill (No. 1) I referred to matters in connection with transport and prices, and a few other subjects, in which I criticised the present Government. My remarks this afternoon will be devoted, in the main, to a criticism of the work of the Commonwealth Government, although I will also be indirectly criticising the Government that occupies the Treasury bench of this House because it and its supporters are indirectly responsible for the existence of the Menzies-Fadden Government. In that regard they must bear a share of the responsibility for the economic muddle in which the Commonwealth Government has placed Australia. I have had a long experience in the public life of this country, but I have never seen it in such an economic mess as it is today; if I except the economic blizzard of 1930.

The present economic trouble has been brought about entirely by the ineptitude of the present Commonwealth Government. The principal plank in the platform of the Menzies-Fadden parties in 1949 was to "put the value back into the pound." But instead of that occurring, we find the value of the pound has receded further, and no increase in value has gone into it. I am not alone in the charge I am levelling against the Commonwealth Government because this contention is shared by men and women in this country of all shades of political belief—Labour and anti-Labour—because the policy pursued by the Government has been disastrous to every section of the Australian community. It is scarcely credible to find that the Menzies-Fadden combination has allowed the credit balance of £508,000,000 which was in London in 1949, when it took over from the Chifley Government, practically to disappear before taking action to stop the rot.

During the time they have been in office, two of their top-ranking Ministers have been oversea in a period of six-months—firstly, the Commonwealth Treasurer, and then the Prime Minister. The Commonwealth Treasurer, Sir Arthur Fadden, went to London to take part in a conference supposedly to try to place the financial structure of the various component parts of the British Commonwealth on a sound footing. He was away some little time, and then returned. I do not think anyone in Australia yet knows what he did at the conference, or what happened there. He had not long returned when the Prime Minister found he had to go to London, obviously to clean up the mess created by Sir Arthur Fadden. Fadden's actions in London led to the drastic import cuts that

have placed the Australian economy in the greatest muddle in its history; and we see at the present juncture no possible sign of improvement.

These trips of the two top-ranking Ministers of the Commonwealth Government have cost a lot of money. In the midst of this financial and economic trouble, Menzies went off on another trip. I would like to know the difference in the costs of the tours made by Mr. Menzies and Sir Arthur Fadden and those of the tours made by Mr. Curtin and Mr. Chifley when they went to London. Curtin went, I think, once, and Chifley twice.

The Premier: And Evatt every few weeks.

Mr. NEEDHAM: These men have paid their debt to Nature, but I venture to say that if the accounts were examined we would find a considerable difference in the costs of the tours. I can only look on the last occasion that Menzies went overseas as a modern version of Nero fiddling while Rome burned, because Menzies was feasting while Australia was fuming with befuddled economic conditions, and he returned with but doubtful benefits. He told us, when he came back, that he had got dollars through America. Why did he get a dollar loan from America? It was because the people of the Commonwealth refused to grant him sufficient money through the Government loans. Having lost confidence in his Government, the people refused to contribute to his loans.

One of the finest examples of the unpopularity of a Government is the fact that it cannot successfully float its loans. The last two or three Commonwealth loans were floated at considerable loss. One reason why they were not successful is the drop in value of Government bonds. Some Government bonds have brought as low as £88 on the Australian stock exchange. It is no wonder the loans were not fully subscribed. Many people who subscribed to earlier loans in the hope that in time of need they would be able to get some assistance from them, have been hard hit. Numbers of them have been compelled to dispose of their loans at a loss—they have had to sell £100 bonds for £88.

Let us look at the position during the war years, and after, when Labour was in charge of the Commonwealth Government and the destinies of the country. All the loans floated by the Curtin and Chifley Governments were not only filled, but in many instances oversubscribed. That was at a time when there was considerable anxiety in the public mind. The lack of public confidence in the Menzies-Fadden Government, and the refusal to subscribe to recent loans, is all the more pronounced when we realise that there is more money in the Commonwealth Savings Bank today than there was

during the war years. Compare the deposits in the savings bank during the years 1939 to 1945 and the amount held during the years 1945 to 1951! More money has been deposited in the savings bank since the war than was the case during the war, and yet we still find that two or three recent loans failed miserably!

Another feature of the loan campaign is the enormous cost to the Commonwealth Treasury of advertising the loans. The cost of advertising recent loans was greatly in excess of the cost of advertising during the war years when loans in this State cost less than one quarter per cent. That, I think, is a record. I was chairman of the War Loans Organisation Committee during the years 1941 to 1945 and in that time the cost of advertising was less than one quarter per cent. But when we look back upon recent loans launched by the present Commonwealth Government we find page after page of the newspapers of this country taken up with advertising. Hoarding after hoarding is covered with advertising matter, booming the loans and asking people to subscribe. Every night on the radio, on every station, speakers advertise the loans. Yet, notwithstanding all that advertising through the Press, radio and the Stand of Honour in Forrest Place, those loans have failed. That, I repeat, is a sign that the people of this Commonwealth have lost all confidence in the present Commonwealth Government.

The Prime Minister has made a great to do, I might say, about the American dollar loan. But neither the Prime Minister nor the Commonwealth Treasurer has informed the public as to the rate of interest on that loan. I have heard a rumour that the rate is six per cent. and if that is so, as I believe it is, let members compare it with the interest rate on loans floated during the regime of Labour Governments. Whichever way we look at it the financial affairs of this country have deteriorated considerably since this Commonwealth Government, headed by Mr. Menzies and Sir Arthur Fadden, came into office.

Now I come to the question of the Loan Council meeting for 1952. The Press gave us a full report of what happened there.

The Premier: How could it? The Press is not admitted to Loan Council meetings.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Nevertheless a good deal of information was published in the Press and not one of those statements has been contradicted. If my memory serves me right, the statement made by the Premier on his return from the Loan Council meeting gave us a fair idea that the Press information was correct. At this meeting, as at others of the kind, the Premiers demanded certain sums of money. On other occasions they have been fairly successful, particularly this State, but this

time the demands were ignored. The Prime Minister told the Premiers that they would have to take what they got and be satisfied with it. As I have often said before in this Chamber, so much for State sovereignty! Here we have an alleged sovereign State, represented by its Treasurer, repeatedly approaching the Loan Council on bended knees asking for money from the Commonwealth Treasurer. In this instance, the State Treasurers were told that they would have to take what they could get.

That brings me to the very interesting question of the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the States. This subject has been repeatedly referred to in the Chamber. I can remember asking the Premier, on two or three occasions, when there was going to be a conference of responsible officers to determine some definite line of financial relationship between the Commonwealth and the States. On every occasion the Premier has informed the House that certain officers from the Treasury were in conference. I have not heard much about it lately, but I think the recent doings of the Loan Council emphasise the necessity for some definite line to be taken so far as those relations are concerned. In fact, I would go further than that: I think the time is opportune to revise the whole Constitution of the Commonwealth.

We have worked for 51 years under a Constitution agreed to by the people of the Commonwealth, but considerable changes have taken place in this young island Continent since 1901. Those changes have taken place not only in this country but also in other parts of the world and they affect us considerably. It is only reasonable to assume that many weaknesses have been discovered in the Constitution, and the further we go the more apparent they become and the more harm they do to the economy of the country. Consequently, I consider it would be a wise move to hold a conference similar to the one held when the Constitution was first framed. We could have so many men from each State representing the legal, financial and business sections of the community, together with workers' representatives elected by the people or nominated by the Government. Such men could meet in an endeavour to make some drastic alterations to the Constitution because, after 51 years, there are many weaknesses in it that should be strengthened.

Members may think that we should not take up the time of this House in discussing or criticising the Commonwealth Government. But I consider that the functions of the Commonwealth Parliament and the Commonwealth Government are of importance, not only to this Parliament, but also to the people we represent. Consequently, criticism of the Commonwealth is not outside the province

of this State Parliament because it is vitally affected. This becomes even more apparent when we realise that the policy pursued by the Tory Government, as I call the Menzies-Fadden Government, has caused stagnation in many industries, both primary and secondary, created unemployment, increased costs of production, increased the cost of living and increased taxation. That is my reason for taking up the time of the House in criticising the sins of omission or commission of the Commonwealth Government.

The opinions I hold of the work of the Commonwealth Government are shared by men and women of every political shade of thought in this country. I have here a cutting from "The West Australian," dated a few weeks ago, and headed "Distortion Attributed to Ministry." It reads—

Canberra, Thursday.—Bitter criticism of the Federal Government was expressed today by the Associated Chambers of Manufactures. The chambers normally support the Government. Today the federal director of the chambers (Mr. Latham Withall) used such words as "half truths," "distortion," "diatribes" and "plainly stupid" to describe ministerial statements. He accused the Minister for Labour (Mr. Holt) of maintaining a vendetta against the Australian manufacturing industry. He said that the Government's "disemployment" policy was as bad for primary production as it was for secondary industry. "Quite obviously Government policy has bogged down," he said. "The bureaucrats are taking the Government for a one-way ride and in this they are being eminently successful." "Serious unemployment is developing in many sections of industry." "The productive work force of the country is being seriously diminished." Mr. Withall described as "plainly stupid" a suggestion made by a Federal Cabinet spokesman in Sydney yesterday that over-concentration on manufacturing had reduced the production of food. Most of the food produced went through manufacturing processes, he said.

That statement was made by a man in a most responsible position. He gave his opinion of the results of the government of the Commonwealth and that statement bears out to the letter the charges levelled by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday in connection with the unemployment crisis that is upon us. There is no shirking that fact. Various statements have been made as to the number of unemployed, but I think the nearest estimate would be approximately 100,000 people waiting for employment in the Commonwealth—that is the result of 2½ years of Tory rule, the principal Tories being Robert Menzies and Arthur Fadden.

The Premier: Of course that must be a pure guess unless you have facts and figures to substantiate it.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I am sorry that my range of audition will not permit me to give a proper answer to the interjection and I hope the Premier will excuse me if I cannot reply to it. At this stage of our development there should not be any unemployment in this young and virile country. As my Leader said yesterday afternoon, every man that is willing to work should have work given to him and it is available for him under proper and sound government. When the Chifley Labour Government was defeated in 1949 it left an overseas balance of £508,000,000. Sir Arthur Fadden was appointed Treasurer and what happened? High wool prices increased this overseas reserve to £843,000,000 by the end of June, 1951, but in less than 12 months that sum was reduced to £470,000,000. Surely this suggests frenzied finance if not Menzies' finance. On the 20th August, 1952, "The West Australian" had something to say on this matter. Its article is headed—

**Huge Fall in Reserves in 1951-52.**

Canberra, Tuesday.—Australia's international reserves fell by £464,000,000 in 1951-52 according to a preliminary survey of the balance of payments made today by the Acting-Commonwealth Statistician (Mr. S. R. Carver).

This compared with increases of £192,900,000, £185,700,000 and £178,200,000 in the three preceding years.

The adverse trade balance was £383,700,000 and the invisible balance £192,300,000 making a total adverse balance of £576,00,000 compared with a favourable balance of £94,200,000 in the previous year.

This deterioration, Mr. Carver says can be accounted for almost entirely by the decrease in wool exports and the increase in the value of imports.

The figures show a dollar deficit of £73,600,000 against a favourable dollar balance of £31,700,000 in the previous year.

To meet this Australia drew £25,000,000 from the International Monetary Fund and International Bank and £58,600,000 from the sterling dollar pool.

Those are interesting figures and, in reading them, we must not forget the difference now in the purchasing power of money and the higher prices. What I am trying to ascertain is: When the Commonwealth Government saw the overseas reserves beginning to dwindle, why it did not take action in a less drastic manner than that which it was forced to take later on? The overseas reserves practically disappeared before any attempt was made to stop the rot and when action was taken

it was so drastic that it upset the whole economic position. I have here a copy of the annual report of the W. A. Chamber of Commerce for the year ending the 30th June, 1952, which has something to say about the import licensing and the drastic cuts which have caused such a great deal of confusion in the business world. This is what the report contained—

The sudden introduction on the 8th March, 1952, of drastic import restrictions was not welcomed by Commerce and Industry throughout Australia, and also by overseas exporters, particularly in the United Kingdom. The financial considerations responsible for this are referred to elsewhere in this report. The severity of the restrictions however, and the blanket coverage of all sterling imports cut deeply into every branch of trade from essential capital equipment, basic materials for food, drugs and manufacturers, and component parts not available or made in or only partly available in Australia, to the wide range of part-manufactured, and manufactured goods not available in Australia or necessary to meet consumer demand.

That is a very critical statement in this report by the Chamber of Commerce in this State. It goes on to say—

These broad categories fall into the following divisions of goods:

- (a) On form order, or
- (b) "In transit," prior to the 8th March, 1952.
- (c) Manufactured especially for the Australian market.
- (d) Essential to the Australian economy but for which no quota or an inadequate quota exists for the base year.
- (e) The non-importation of which causes serious hardship, and
- (f) Seasonal supplies.

In another part of this report the following statement appears:—

The year 1951-52 has seen a remarkable change in the Australian economic and financial atmosphere. At the end of 1950-51, there was an air of real prosperity.

Further on in the report they realised that air had disappeared and, instead of there being an air of prosperity, we are entering into an air—I would not say of depression—where that prosperity is beginning to disappear.

I now come to the question of taxation. During the 1949 election campaign we were informed that not only would value be put back into the pound, but that taxation would be reduced. However, quite the contrary has happened. The purchasing power of the pound today is considerably less than it was when Sir Arthur Fadden



became Treasurer, and taxation is certainly higher. A special levy of 10 per cent., hitting the people in the middle or low income groups, has been particularly severe.

The Premier: That has been taken off.

Mr. NEEDHAM: The Labour Government, during its eight years in office, reduced taxation by £280,000,000 a year. The reason given by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth for increased taxation was the necessity for special defence works. There may be something in that, but I venture to say that a considerable change has come over the scene of defence preparations since 1949, because even the Prime Minister himself has not gone on with the defence works which he thought were necessary and yet, notwithstanding the fact that those works have not been undertaken, taxation has remained high. Despite election promises the Menzies-Fadden Government increased sales tax from £39,000,000 to £117,000,000 in the year 1951. Fancy an increase such as that in sales tax alone! It is true that the Budget recently brought down by Sir Arthur Fadden indicated that some slight relief from sales tax was to be given, but it is not of the slightest benefit to the people because of the extremely high prices and the substantial increases in the prices of those goods on which sales tax has been levied. Therefore, the reduction in sales tax is of infinitesimal benefit. We all know that the sales tax is passed on to the consumer. The pound during Labour rule had twice the purchasing power that it has today, and if the Labour Government had remained in office the purchasing power of the pound would not have depreciated to the extent that it has done.

Another feature of the present position is this: Let us assume that the position had been reversed and that Messrs. Menzies and Fadden had been in charge of the finance of the country for some years prior to 1949 and had been replaced by a Labour Government, and the rot that has set in and which has carried on since 1949 had taken place under a Labour Government. What would have been the attitude of the Press? The newspapers in every capital city of the Commonwealth would have had banner headlines appearing every day criticising the Government. But the Press adopts an entirely different attitude with the Menzies-Fadden Government. It protects it and eases the position for it every day through its leading articles. A 50 per cent. reduction in the sales tax is of no benefit to the people or to the purchasing power of the pound owing to the high prices that have been placed on goods.

The subject of increased charges and prices, to which I have referred, was also dealt with yesterday afternoon by the Leader of the Opposition. I will now

quote from "The West Australian," dated the 12th August, 1952, which published an article on increased charges. Surely this Government has done a lot of increasing apart from the Prices Commission. It has not effected a reduction in the prices of goods to the consumer and I do not think it has ever taken any corrective action on the question of margins of profit. Apart from the increased charges approved by the Prices Commission the Government has been busy increasing railway freights, tram fares, bus fares and many other charges.

Hon. E. Nulsen: And electricity and gas as well.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Yes, there have been increases in the charges for electricity and gas. Not only were the charges increased for every unit of gas and electricity consumed, as the member for Eyre reminds me, but the Commission, if the increase were made on the last day of a quarter, applied the increase retrospectively over the whole of that quarter. However, this is what "The West Australian" had to say on the question of increased charges—

But it is wrong, and self-destructive from the business standpoint, to imagine that mounting deficits can be satisfactorily dealt with by continually increasing public charges which are already so onerous that "customer resistance" has become apparent. Last financial year the increase in Post Office revenue was £3,129,000 less than was expected following the higher postal charges levied in December, 1950, and July, 1951. In the Budget papers issued last week, it was stated that "revenue was affected by some slackening in demand for postal and telephone services".

Is it to be wondered at? There have been increases in the rental of telephones, in the charge for calls, in the postal rates for letters and, as for the increases in the charges for telegrams, the added cost has made them practically prohibitive for many people. Not long ago I noticed a statement in the Press where it was mentioned that the revenue from the despatch of telegrams had considerably deteriorated since the latest increases were announced. "The West Australian" in its leading article went on to say—

Since additional imposts must inevitably mean a further slackening of custom, there is a limit to expansion or revenue by this means. The ledger might be brought nearer to a balance if Mr. Anthony were to take a sterner look at the estimated expenditure of £74,000,000. Despite allowance for "savings . . . as a result of staff and other economies", there is an increase of £9,739,000 over the actual expenditure last year. This includes £6,963,000 more for wages and salaries

(of which £1,750,000 is to cover the basic wage adjustment which took effect this month). Provision is also made for higher costs of materials and mail contracts.

A point has been reached where more rigid economies should be considered to offset these growing expenditures instead of passing them on.

There is the advice of "The West Australian" which, in effect, says that the increased charges have reached the saturation point and, instead of passing more on to the consumer, something should be done at the top to bring about some system of economy. We have often heard it said that there has been a lag in production, that the workers have not pulled their weight and are not doing their bit. That slander has been repeated very often. I have here a cutting from a newspaper which furnishes some idea of the profits that have been made in some industries, and these would suggest that the worker has been doing anything but lag in his efforts but, on the contrary, has worked very effectively for industry. The Press report is as follows:—

#### Seven Million Profit!

##### Record for Car Employees.

##### Holdens and Austins Score.

Australian workmen, who may be slandered from time to time by irresponsible captains of industry (who work overtime on the golf links during business hours) are entitled to a large share of the credit which enabled the big motor firm of General Motors-Holden to announce a record profit for Australia, namely, 7½ million pounds!

As was the case with the Austin works at Birmingham, the employees in the car-production industry have given the lie direct to the non-producers, who are fond of branding toilers as "shirkers," "loafers," and so on.

Arbitration Court witnesses, who are always eager to smash down union standards, will not find it easy to explain away these fancy profits, as well as the secret thousands traced to key-employers in the liquor industry.

By instituting inquiries into other business rackets, the arbitration authorities might be able to unearth other sources of hidden wealth—money "spirited" away by business people to strengthen their case for bigger dividends and reduced salaries.

The profit for General Motors-Holden for the year was announced officially to be £3,387,024.

Broken Hill Proprietary Co. Ltd., Australia's largest industrial organisation, also announced its highest profit ever, of £1,957,011.

Before striking its record profit, General Motors-Holden provided £4,149,505 for taxes!

Income tax alone equalled 10s. 9d. for each £1 of gross income.

Sales tax on products sold was estimated at from £1,690,000, bringing ascertainable taxes for the year to about £9,120,000.

Since its establishment 25 years ago the company's assembly plants have produced nearly 500,000 motor vehicles, and sales have totalled £275,673,000.

Last year the company stepped up its production of Holdens to 25,177 from 20,113 in 1950.

Total cars sold by the company in 1951 were 45,505, against 43,968 in the previous year.

A London report says that a red-letter day at the Longbridge, Birmingham works of the Austin Motor Company marked the production of the three-quarter-millionth postwar Austin vehicle.

Of the 750,000 postwar Austins, half-a-million have been private cars.

If any evidence were wanting to indicate that the workers have certainly not been lazy or lagging in their efforts, I think the profits indicated in that article provide the necessary proof. I have also further evidence to indicate that the worker is not lagging and is not lazy but is playing his part manfully in assisting Australia. The March issue of the "Quarterly Statistical Abstract" for this year contains some interesting figures dealing with the value of production in this State. Table No. 32 embodies seven columns under the headings: Agricultural; pastoral and trapping; dairy, poultry and bee-farming; forestry and fisheries; mining and quarrying; total primary; manufacturing. I will quote some of the figures dealing with manufacturing industries. Members will recollect that the period from 1941-42 to 1945-46 covered the war years when the men were not here to produce anything at all. They were away on battlefields, trying to save this country from invasion. However, the figures I shall quote, which show the year and the total value of the manufactures, are as follows:—

		£
1941-42	....	10,100,531
1944-45	....	12,960,009
1945-46	....	13,826,527
1946-47	....	15,748,476
1947-48	....	18,384,197
1948-49	....	21,473,887
1949-50	....	26,044,026
1950-51	....	34,220,384

Without taking into consideration the value of the production under the heading of mining and quarrying and so on,

these figures give additional proof that the workers of this country are playing the game.

Now I come to the question of uniform taxation. At the last Loan Council meeting the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, took up a very determined stand against the request of the State Treasurers for additional money for developmental purposes, and he certainly put the State Treasurers on the spot when he said he would give them back their powers of taxation. I venture to assert that most of the Treasurers did not like being put on the spot in that regard. The only two who were likely to have looked upon the proposal with favour were the Premiers of New South Wales and Victoria. I suggest that the other Premiers, including our own, did not view the proposition with favour to any extent. However, it was determined that certain Treasury officers would be put to work to discover ways and means of returning taxing powers to the States and thus do away with uniform taxation. As one of the residents of this State, I hope that does not take place, and I venture to say that our Treasurer here is not greatly in favour of it, because under uniform taxation, if we consider last year's position, the State did better than when it imposed its own taxation.

Be that as it may, speaking as a taxpayer, I would not like to see the State recover its taxing powers, because I paid more in taxation when there were two taxing authorities than I do under uniform taxation. I am just wondering where, if uniform taxation is abandoned and the States get their taxing powers back, they will get the money from. What will be left after the Commonwealth has had its say? The Commonwealth has no intention of retiring from the profitable fields available to it, in view of its prospective expenditure on defence and in other directions. Just as we have developed a programme of public works which are essential to this State, so has the Commonwealth visions of heavy departmental works, not only of a defence character, but of a civilian character also.

Take, for instance, the Snowy River scheme! That in itself is going to need a lot of money. Looking at the matter by and large, I cannot see where any benefit will accrue to the States, and particularly Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia, if we revert to State taxation. The last reference I saw to the matter was a few days ago when it was suggested the States would have their taxing powers returned to them in 1954, and there would be one taxation form, with the Commonwealth acting as agent for the States. Apart altogether from my personal considerations, I repeat that if that occurs it will not help to improve the financial position

of this State, and the Treasurer will find himself in a more difficult position than that which obtains today; and that will apply to any Treasurer of any political party.

Those of us who have dared to criticise the Commonwealth Government for placing Australia in such an unenviable position have been charged with destructive criticism and with not offering anything in the way of constructive criticism. I will offer a simple remedy. It is this: The people of Australia have it in their own hands to exercise power through the ballot box a little more wisely than they exercised it in 1949, and I believe that at the next election they will return to the Treasury Bench of the Commonwealth Parliament another Labour Ministry. If that Ministry carries on the policy, the foundations of which were laid by the late Mr. Curtin and the late Mr. Chifley, Australia will not be long in getting out of its financial muddle, because the financial policy of the Curtin and Chifley Governments kept the economy of the Commonwealth on an even keel. If that is to be brought about again, it must be done by the rejection of Menzies and Fadden and the return of another Labour Government.

**MR. HILL (Albany) [5.50]:** As you, Sir, commenced the sitting with prayer, perhaps I may be permitted to base my speech on a sermon which the Bishop of Bunbury delivered at Albany a few weeks ago. He told us of another bishop who was visiting a parish in his diocese. In that parish was a very fine farm, of which everyone was proud. It was a real show place, and the bishop thought he would like to inspect it. So the owner showed him round. As he was leaving, the bishop said to the farmer, "My word, God has been very good to you!" The farmer looked at the bishop and replied, "My word, you should have seen the place when God had it on His own!" The Bishop of Bunbury went on to say that both were right, and the lesson was that we should co-operate with God. Does that not apply to Parliament and the Government of this State?

I am not going to preach a sermon, but I will tell of a remark made by a man who said the same as the bishop, only in other words. I think members have heard of the comparatively small town and port of Albany. That port and town have made very little growth because, a few miles away, another place has been developed as the port.

This has grown very rapidly and today has a population of something like 8,000,000 people. I refer to Albany in the State of New York, and its port, New York. Some years ago, a port authority was appointed in New York, and its first chairman was E. H. Outerbridge. In an address, this man said that the authority's

job was to catch up with past mistakes and recover lost opportunities. He said that briefly the problem was to apply modern science, experience and invention to the natural advantages that were at hand.

I consider that the task this Parliament and Government have today is to catch up with past mistakes and to recover lost opportunities, and it is our duty to endeavour to apply modern science, experience and invention to the natural advantages which we have at hand. Our State has many natural advantages. The North-West is entirely unknown to me, so I will not talk about it; but the South-West Land Division, which extends from about 100 miles north of Geraldton to 100 miles east of Esperance, is the area we must concentrate on developing. In that area we have the four equally spaced ports of Geraldton, Fremantle, Albany and Esperance. I feel safe in predicting that they are the only four ports that will survive in this State.

Perhaps the worst feature of this State is that within a 12-mile radius of this building we have approximately 55 per cent. of our population, and this in spite of the fact that all political parties and a large number of politicians have preached a policy of decentralisation. We must ask ourselves why this disproportionate growth has continued. I think it will be found that the answer is that Fremantle is the only port in the State which has been developed ahead of production.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Hear, hear!

Mr. HILL: All over the world there is a tendency towards the policy of decentralisation. There has been a revolution in transport during the last 60 years. On land, the bullock-wagon has been replaced by railway trains and motor transport. At sea, the revolution has been just as great. The old sailing ships have been replaced by big and costly steamers and motor ships. The improvements in land transport have increased the area which one port can serve, and the increased size of ships has occasioned a demand for fewer ports. We want to adopt a policy of—and I am going to coin a new word—“centres-lisation” we want to establish as centres Geraldton, Fremantle, Albany and Esperance.

Mr. Bovell: What about Bunbury and Busselton?

Mr. HILL: They are two ports which are going to die out. If the hon. member likes, I will tell him more about that later on.

Mr. Bovell: You have been endeavouring to be the executioner for a number of years, but you have not succeeded yet.

Mr. Guthrie: What does Colonel Tyde-  
man say about it?

Mr. HILL: I will deal with that later. We can refer to the hinterlands of those four centres as the northern, central, southern and eastern provinces. While I think the production of the northern province can be considerably increased, we must realise that the shortage of rainfall there is a severe handicap.

There is no need for me to refer to the central province; that is progressing satisfactorily. On the east, we have the province of which Esperance is the natural centre. It is a matter of very great regret that the railway to the Goldfields was not developed there 50 or 60 years ago. Had that been done, I am sure the port of Esperance would have grown. One development would have led to another and there would have been a considerable amount of production in the hinterland of Esperance.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You will have to wait for a Labour Government to do that.

Mr. HILL: I am afraid it will be difficult to put Esperance on the map now, but we must try to do so. I noticed in the Press recently that they are going to export pyrites from South Australia. Could we not build up a pyrites trades with Esperance as a port? I have here the engine loading table of the Western Australian railways, which shows that there are very good grades from Norseman to Esperance. A short distance around the coast is the port of Thevenard in South Australia, which exports 20,000 tons of salt a year. I think it would be a practical proposition to build up a salt trade from Esperance; and, from a tourist point of view, Esperance has certainly many attractions. I would like to see the Government give every encouragement to the development of that centre.

I come now to the southern province. I went to Parliament House in South Australia at one time and paid my respects to the Speaker, Mr. (now Sir Robert) Nicholl. He said to me, “You have a great country at the back of Albany which should be carrying a population of 2,000,000.” I came back and managed to pick up an old map of the South-West Land Division of Western Australia, and my eye was taken by the Blackwood River, which was marked in black lines. I followed the course of the river up to the rabbit-proof fence, and followed the fence to the coast. As I looked at that big area, I thought, “Another Victoria!” And there, holding the same geographical position as Melbourne, we have Albany.

I am afraid our southern province has no reason to love various Labour Governments that have taken office. My mind goes back to 1910, when I had an engineer staying with me who was surveying and taking bearings of the Albany Harbour in connection with what is now known as the Thompson scheme. While he was

with me, he received an urgent telegram ordering him to return all plant to Fremantle. When Colonel Tydeman was given the job of reporting upon Albany, I saw him, and he had the whole file dealing with Albany Harbour in front of him. "Here," he said, "why was not this scheme carried out in 1911?" I said, "There was an election in 1911 and Albany helped to put a Labour Government in office. That scheme was scrapped, and in 1914 we had to accept that arm of the deep water jetty." The difference between the Thompson scheme of 1911 and the Tydeman scheme now under construction is that in the Thompson scheme the wharf was to start where the deep water jetty is, whereas now it is being built between the two jetties.

In 1924 Sir James Mitchell had very ambitious plans for the development of the Southern province, which today carries a population of something like 50,000. I do not say that we should aim at a population of 2,000,000 for that area, as envisaged by Sir Robert Nicholls, but if we do not populate that portion of the State we will not hold Australia. Sir James' proposals included a railway from Pemberton to Denmark but the succeeding Labour Government, when it took office, built a railway from Pemberton to Northcliffe and another from Denmark to Nornalup, leaving a gap of 50 miles in the middle. Another proposal was for a railway from Manjimup to Mt. Barker and a still further line from Cranbrook to Boyup Brook. The Labour Government, in 1926—

Mr. Bovell: Why not advocate railways for some centre other than Albany?

Mr. HILL: We have not a Government-built railway within 90 miles of Albany. The Labour Government passed the plans for those railways, which were never constructed. In 1926 it put through the Albany Harbour Board Act but the board was not proclaimed until two or three years ago. From 1924 until the present Government took over office there was only £175 of loan money spent on Albany harbour. In February, 1946, after years of battling, the Labour Government drew up a proposal for a conglomeration of wharves, which was the harbour scheme for Albany. That scheme was kept on the secret list until October of that year, when it was used for propaganda purposes.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: How much money do you think the present Government has to spend on Albany this year?

Mr. HILL: I do not know, but when it took office this Government set out to develop what I call our southern province. The first thing it did was to scrap what I have referred to as the Hawke harbour scheme. I might mention that when the then Minister for Works was describing that scheme he said he would have 18 acres of land on which would

be bulkhandling facilities, wharves, sheds, railway yards and industries. At the present moment they are reclaiming ten acres at Albany for the Shell Oil Company, and as soon as the Government gives that organisation the all-clear it will put in an installation at a cost of £220,000.

One of the factors contributing to the failure of the railways to carry super is that there has been no super works at Albany. Now, thanks to the assistance given by this Government, the super works is being constructed there at a cost, I understand, in the vicinity of £750,000. This new project is to be the best laid out super works in Australia. Its capacity is to be 60,000 tons per annum, but that is only a boy to do a man's job and I am glad to say that the super companies are providing a full man-sized suit of clothes, inasmuch as the works will be capable of rapid expansion. If members wish to go from one extreme to the other I would recommend them to visit Rocky Bay and see the lay-out of the super works there. They will find it is nothing but a congested bottle-neck, whereas the new works at Albany will allow for the most expeditious possible despatch of trucks laden with super.

Dealing with land development, I would mention the schemes at Rocky Gully and Many Peaks. We hear a lot about those projects but nothing of the development that is being undertaken by private farmers. There is a definite feeling of confidence in the southern end of the State, and that is borne out by the way in which large business concerns are getting ready to develop their interests in the Albany area. One firm of wholesale grocers was considering opening a branch at Albany. The Adelaide branch of that firm was in favour of the idea, while the Fremantle branch was against it. Finally the management decided to open a branch at Albany. The local manager told me that they were prepared to make a loss there for the first five years, but in the first few months the balance-sheet, in spite of the fact that the cost of transferring the manager and his family was included, showed the firm a profit.

Messrs. D. J. Fowler, Wood Son & Company, Elder Smith's, Harris Scarfe's, Westralian Farmers, Shell Oil, the Albany Superphosphate Company and many other firms are showing an active interest in that centre. In addition to that, there is a constant demand for land in the southern province. The member for Vasse interjected and asked why we wanted a railway there. Railways are still necessary and a line that should be constructed now is that from the Great Southern through to the lower South-West, where there remains a 55-mile gap between Northcliffe and Nornalup. There is a mill today at the Shannon River and it is only 45 miles from the railway at Nornalup.

The charges on our railways are computed on a mileage basis but goods or timber going from the Shannon Mill, Northcliffe or Pemberton to Bunbury have to go over a grade of 1 in 40. The load of the W class engine on that grade is 190 tons. The grade from Nornalup to Albany is 1 in 60, on which the W class engine could haul 315 tons. If that railway were continued through to Albany it would mean that that residents of the South-West would enjoy the benefits of two first class ports. Some people say to me, "Your land is being developed. You have your ports, you have your super works; you have nothing to talk about". I have a confession to make. I have suffered disappointment whilst I have been in this House and I am disappointed today. Ever since I have been in this Chamber I have advocated sound transport administration. I even got as far as to have this question included in the platform of the Country Party. Portion of that platform item reads as follows:—

12. Transport:—

(a) Appointment of a Minister for Transport to co-ordinate transport and port facilities to the best advantage of the State and to control railways, tramways, ferries, State ships, all harbour boards and the functions of the present State Transport Board.

(b) Appointment of a transport council to advise on any matter affecting more than one form of transport, all major harbour works, the extension or closing of any line of railway, etc. In addition to departmental heads, this council to include representatives of the primary producers, the transport trade unions and the commercial interests. It will be required to revalue all State railway assets with a view to relieving the railways of excess charges and enabling reduced costs and greater efficiency and provide for future depreciation.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Those Country Party Ministers are not doing their job.

Mr. HILL: It is interesting to note that that policy was supported by the recommendations made by the South Australian Royal Commission on Transport which submitted its report last year.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: The hon. member can go further than that. The Government that he supports has promised to put it into operation. It is in the Premier's election speech.

Mr. HILL: In any case, the hon. member had over 20 years to do the same thing.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: But your Government promised to do it. Why did it not carry it out?

Mr. HILL: If the hon. member will look up "The West Australian" of the 31st May, 1929, he will see published those recommendations which were taken from a report by the Commonwealth Transport Committee.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I am not concerned as to whose idea it is, but your Government promised to do it.

Mr. HILL: In 1929 that report was submitted to the Premiers' Conference at which Mr. Collier was present.

Mr. Guthrie: The hon. member will have to wait now; the Government has no money.

Mr. HILL: I will tell the hon. member how it can save money. The essential fact that we must consider in relation to transport is that it is one big problem.

Mr. Guthrie: What about Kwinana?

Mr. HILL: I will deal with that in proper time.

The Minister for Lands: That is the way! You make your own speech.

Mr. HILL: I am going to make it, and I am also going to give the member for Bunbury the advice of a friend before I am finished.

Mr. Bovell: That will be a change!

Mr. HILL: I think that we in this State can rightly say that we have the most simple transport problem in Australia, but I am afraid our administration is very close to being the worst. Our transport organisation is similar to an army that has gone into action without its general staff and has suffered in battle. Our Minister for Transport today has an impossible job. The Minister for Works has a Co-ordinator of Works, a Director of Works, an Assistant Director of Works, an Under-Secretary and an Assistant Under-Secretary. The Minister for Lands has an Under-Secretary for Lands, and our Minister for Health has an Under-Secretary for Health, and also a Commissioner of Public Health, but our poor old Minister for Transport, who has to deal with the most complicated problem of any of the Ministers, has no permanent head or officers to advise him.

Mr. May: Whose fault is that?

The Minister for Lands: The Labour Government's, of course.

Mr. HILL: That state of affairs has been going on for 60 years. An army must have all its various branches. It must have armour, artillery, infantry, engineers, A.S.C. and all the other various branches working for a common object.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: And a stomach on which to march.

Mr. HILL: We want all branches of the transport organisation working as one complete machine. When we do get this transport administration, the first thing

that will have to be done is to decide on a sound port policy. Last year I was travelling with the general manager of the South Australian Harbour Board at Port Adelaide. I said to him, "There is no doubt that you have excellent port facilities. Ports are the clearing houses for sea and land transport. Upon their efficiency and proper administration the whole system of transport very largely depends." Mr. Meyer said, "There is no doubt about that."

I have here in a bound volume, the report of the Outports Royal Commission. I was a member of that Royal Commission. The member for Kalgoorlie was chairman. The other members were the member for Warren; Mr. Triat, the ex-member for Mt. Magnet; and the late Mr. Willmott. I will not say that we were a lot of experts. We were just five jolly good pals. We tried to do our job without fear or favour. The most important recommendation that we made was that there should be a State Harbours Board, and how I wish that we in this State had the same set-up as they have in South Australia.

When I was in Adelaide and visiting Parliament House I was talking with the member for Port Pirie, who was also the mayor of that town. I said to him, "How do you like local harbours boards?" He replied "What power would they have?" I said, "We have a local harbour board at Albany and its job is to handle shipping at the port. It is under the control of the Minister for Transport. Pilots and harbour lights are under the Chief Secretary, who is Minister for Harbours and Lights. If any work has to be done the board has to refer to the Minister for Works who is the Minister for Harbours and Rivers, and when it comes to bulk-handling, the matter has to go to the Minister for Agriculture." The South Australian member laughed and said, "Efficiency under those conditions is impossible."

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

Mr. HILL: While I am dealing with the subject of ports it may be interesting for members to hear what the Commonwealth Grants Commission had to say. This is an extract from the report of the Commonwealth Grants Commission, 1941—

178. Harbours.—The expenditure out of loan funds on outer harbours in Western Australia is large and it does not appear to us that a sufficient attempt is made to get an adequate return from the users in the districts served. If the traffic will not stand the cost, there is no reason for expenditure on harbours unless it is essential for the industry of the district, in which case the industry should be charged through a special rate. This policy has been tried in other parts of Australia and insistence upon it

has on occasions led the people of a district to decide that the expenditure on a harbour was not really necessary for their interests. A multiplication of harbours is uneconomic. It is true that in Western Australia the port of Fremantle returns a large profit, but this does not make up for the losses on the other ports. In any case, the profit of Fremantle is no excuse for an unscientific and unco-ordinated policy of harbour development. A large expenditure has been made on the Bunbury harbour, which is only about 100 miles from Perth, and it is doubtful whether it has succeeded in overcoming the disadvantages of the port.

I have already referred to the fact that South Australia has a State Harbours Board and it may be interesting to know that when the Transport Royal Commission was taking evidence there was not one word of criticism about the administration of that board. The difference between the port administration in South Australia and that in this State is that in South Australia the ports are run as business and economic propositions. Over here the ports are nothing more nor less than political footballs, and some peculiar ideas have been expressed concerning them. We had an example of ports being treated as political footballs in 1946 when the present Leader of the Opposition started an election campaign at Albany. He produced a plan of a conglomeration of wharves which he called ports. He then went on to Bunbury and said that work had been started which was to cost £800,000. The start was made at Bunbury against the recommendations of Sir George Buchanan, the Commonwealth Grants Commission, the Commonwealth Transport Department and our own Outports Royal Commission.

Mr. Hoar: The only mistake that was made was that they never consulted the member for Albany!

Mr. HILL: The hon. member remembers what took place when we were taking evidence on the Outports Commission: I made a mistake by not agreeing with him!

Mr. Hoar: That is something.

Mr. HILL: In South Australia the Harbour Board is allowed to spend £5,000 without the consent of the Minister. The Minister can authorise expenditure of £20,000, but any expenditure in excess of £30,000 has to be fully investigated by the standing Public Works Committee. If we had a standing Public Works Committee here in Western Australia the poor old taxpayer in this State would not have seen millions of pounds wasted as it is in Bunbury.

Mr. Mann: You opposed the Bill.

Mr. HILL: I did not.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Of course you did.

Mr. HILL: I am sorry the member for Kalgoorlie, who was chairman of the Outports Commission, is not here at the moment. When he was at Bunbury he handed me a map and said, "How do you like that?" I said "I do not like it at all."

The Minister for Lands: What did he say?

Mr. HILL: I wonder if members have ever read that; I will quote from it in a moment.

Mr. Needham: What is it?

Mr. HILL: I will tell the hon. member in a minute, because I propose to quote an extract from it. The Labour Government wanted to win the Bunbury seat and that is why it started the work there. That Government, however, did not win the Bunbury seat; it was won by a Liberal candidate. The present Government had to carry on with the job or go out of office. Those are facts. If I were giving evidence before a court of law I would have to tell the truth.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Why?

Mr. HILL: The Leader of the Opposition is very smart. Does he know the financial return for Bunbury in 1951?

The Minister for Lands: He does not know.

Mr. HILL: I have not a copy of the Auditor-General's report with me at present but in 1951 the Bunbury Harbour Board failed to meet working expenses by £22,000, representing with interest a loss of £55,000. Sixty-three ships used the port, so that for every ship that used the port the taxpayer had to pay £876.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: On the argument of the member for Albany he would close down the railways.

Mr. HILL: No, I would not; but if there were three railways running parallel and the centre one was running at a loss, while the two outer ones were able to cope with the traffic carried by the railway in the centre, I would recommend the closing down of that railway. The member for Melville, speaking on one occasion, said that the expenditure on Bunbury was justified because it served the lower South-West district. I challenge the hon. member to deny that the Bunbury zone can be more economically served by the ports of Fremantle and Albany. The following is an extract from the report of the Royal Commission on the Development of the Outports of the State, and there were two members representing the South-West on that Commission, the member for Warren and Mr. Willmott. It reads—

Bunbury's greatest drawback is the continuous silting up of the harbour and until this is effectively con-

trolled it will be a costly and unsatisfactory port to maintain. For many years before the last war it was costing about £10,000 per year for dredging and this is far too much, when considering the small amount of cargo handled.

To get an expert opinion as to whether the silting can be controlled and at what cost, Mr. R. J. Dumas, Director of Public Works, was furnished with a number of questions and called by the Commission as a witness. His answers to these and other queries are set out on pages 712-717 of the typewritten evidence.

Mr. Dumas considers that the silting can be controlled at a cost of approximately £500,000 and if this is done the cost of maintenance should be very light. In view of the large sum involved, and as we now have an engineering expert here in the person of Colonel Tydeman, we suggest that he and Mr. Dumas confer as to the best method of controlling the silt.

The greatest depth of water available at any berth has been 27 feet 6 inches, but owing to silting this depth is not now available. Mr. McKenna, Chairman of the Bunbury Harbour Board, stated that judging from prewar experience, 90 per cent of their troubles would be eliminated if they had 27 feet 6 inches of water; because 90 per cent of the cargo ships do not need more than that depth. The bottom of the harbour is basaltic rock and it will prove costly to deepen the harbour sufficiently to take refrigerated vessels. At present there would not be much cargo for this class of ship.

The estimated cost of providing two berths of 32 feet with a passageway to the ocean and sufficient manoeuvring room is £500,000. As already over three-quarters of a million pounds has been spent there and the estimated cost of preventing constant silting and providing two berths with 32 feet of water is £1,000,000, it will require a great tonnage of cargoes to warrant this expenditure.

It is recommended that the first requirement is to put in hand the works to prevent silting. When it is established that silting is no longer taking place, no dredging will be needed to maintain a 27 feet 6 inch depth of water. This depth should be generally sufficient for present needs and the further question of providing two berths of deeper water can be held in abeyance for further consideration as the development of the district warrants.



That was the report of the Royal Commission and it was ignored by both Governments, except that the Liberal Government did get Colonel Tydeman to report. That report has never been laid on the Table of the House and members do not know what it contains.

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

Mr. HILL: In South Australia, the report would have been considered by the Standing Committee on Public Works which in turn would have submitted a report to Parliament.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: What has the Premier to say about that?

Mr. HILL: What has the Leader of the Opposition to say for starting it?

The Minister for Lands: That is more to the point.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Wait till I pull my head in!

Mr. HILL: I shall quote from the report of Colonel Tydeman, paragraph 37 at page 19.

Mr. Guthrie: Is that the report you read last year?

Mr. HILL: No, I have not previously read this. It states—

Mr. Stevenson Young put a scheme in 1946 (see Appendix 17) embodying proposals to perform these requirements. His scheme includes—

- (i) Extension of main breakwater by 700 feet. On the calculations of paragraph 35 (ii), this would defer northwards sand-drift for some seven years, when the position would have to be reviewed. It would serve also to deflect the main ocean currents more seawards into deeper water and to reduce harbour swell.
- (ii) Extension of existing spur groyne at breakwater head by 300 feet to localise sand and prevent it from depositing at the berths and anchorage area.
- (iii) Construction of a new groyne near the root of the main breakwater, to break continuity in the oblique swell and to check sand movement. There is a little data available to estimate when this groyne would require lengthening, but there is every indication that it would trap its full capacity in a few years and that it would need relengthening or reviewing at the end of that period.

(iv) A 750 feet extension to North Beach groyne, i.e., a limited number of years capacity.

(v) A new exit for river and estuarial inlet waters at Turkey Point. Not only would silt be carried away from the harbour, but this new cut could be reasonably expected to form prevailing currents as shown in Appendix 13. These would assist in pushing the main northward ocean current away from the end of the main breakwater and assist in limiting sand deposit at its head.

The cost of these works today, together with new jetty berths and dredging, would be £1,050,000 as indicated in the revised estimate of Appendix 7.

Apparently, from the question asked by the member for Bunbury last week, the cut into the estuary is proving a failure. The report continues—

Mr. Stevenson Young's proposals are logical and acceptable. They must not be regarded as final. They constitute a stage in maintenance and full-scale logical experiment. From resulting data after their construction, the next steps in maintenance would be decided, whether extension of the breakwater and groynes, or whether to provide a programme for full-scale dredging.

These steps in maintenance are designed to defer sand-drift or even possibly to divert some of it into the ocean current. The full quantity of sand moving can be deferred for a few or many years, but must become an annual charge of the port ultimately. This must be accepted, as must be the artificial methods of breakwaters and groynes to reduce and defer the sand movement.

It would be wise to collate annual data of currents, hydrographic surveys, sand and silt movement, etc., in order to finalise future maintenance works, for which purpose funds would be necessary.

Mr. Bovell: Are you talking about Albany?

Mr. HILL: I am pointing out the difference between Albany and Bunbury. At Albany we are co-operating with Nature, but at Bunbury we are working against Nature.

Mr. Bovell: Why not tell us the virtues of Albany and not the disabilities of other ports?

Mr. HILL: Members have a duty to the taxpayers to ensure that the State as a whole gets the most economical transport system possible. In order to do that, we must make the best use of the money available.

Mr. Hoar: What would you do at Busselton?

Mr. HILL: Busselton will die out. In paragraph 38, Colonel Tydeman said—

**Proposed Cost of Maintenance Works:** The cost of maintenance works in Mr. Stevenson Young's scheme was made in September, 1946. Prices have increased in the ratio of 143 to 179, or 25 per cent. in the interim.

No wonder the Commonwealth Grants Commission referred to our unscientific and unco-ordinated policy of harbour development! I challenge anyone to justify this expenditure. The report continues—

Costs are now as follows:—

	Cost, September, 1946.	Cost, August, 1948.
	£	£
Northward Sand Drift:		
Main breakwater extension 700ft. ....	250,000	312,000*
Extension of Inner Head groyne 300ft. ....	34,700	43,500
New root groyne .....	30,000	37,500
Southward Sand Drift:		
Extension of North Beach groyne 750ft. ....	63,350	79,000
River Silt Diversion:		
New opening and groyne .....	56,670	70,500
		543,500

\*The breakwater also protects the new berths as well as deferring sand movement.

That is the cost of the present effort to fight against Nature at Bunbury. Now let us look to the future. The report continues—

At five per cent. capitalisation, this expenditure could be regarded as equivalent to annual maintenance dredging of £27,000. This compares very favourably with full annual maintenance dredging, which would have to be done ultimately (i.e., very many years ahead) in lieu (and for which no plant is specially available) as follows:—

**Full Future Annual Maintenance Dredging Costs**  
(Excluding River Silting).

	Quantity (in situ) (Cubic yards).	Unit rate.	Annual Maintenance cost. £
Northward Sand Drift	70,000	5s.	17,500
Southward Sand Drift	65,000	5s.	16,250
	135,000		33,750

Bunbury port must ultimately equip itself for annual dredging maintenance quantities and costs of these amounts.

I shall not quote further from Colonel Tydeman's report, but he proceeded to point out that about £600,000 was being spent at Bunbury to prevent silting and that a dredge would have to be maintained there to keep the silt clear. Further,

the breakwater and groyne would have to be extended, and that would mean an expenditure of another £50,000 a year.

Mr. Guthrie: No money is being spent there now.

Mr. HILL: And I hope none will be spent there. After the groyne and breakwater have been extended to the limit, two dredges will be necessary at that port.

Mr. Bovell: You could not keep two dredges at Albany. One broke away and went ashore.

Mr. HILL: It is working at Albany now.

Mr. Bovell: What about the dredge "Sir James Mitchell?" She ran aground.

Mr. HILL: On many occasions ships have grounded in the Bunbury Harbour.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You have not the Lobnitz rock-breaker down there, have you?

Mr. HILL: No. Members on this side of the House will recall when Colonel Tydeman gave a talk on harbours in the party rooms upstairs. He truly said "You can spend money on a port, but if the business people and ships do not want to use it, it will not be used." I appreciate that the member for Bunbury is trying to do his job as the representative for that district. With the assistance of the Associated Chambers of Commerce a big conference was convened to see what could be done to get ships to use Bunbury harbour. I did not see any report of that conference; I may have missed it. The conference was held when a by-election at Albany was fairly close, and I missed one or two copies of "The West Australian." However, I do not think the conference was reported. One gentleman who was present told me that a question was put to those present: "Who is interested in getting ships to go to Bunbury?" A representative of the superphosphate company said, "We are." But not another soul was interested. Members can laugh at me and joke about it, but they will find that in a few years' time Bunbury will provide another example of the fact that money can be spent on a port in vain if ships and business people do not want to use the port.

Mr. Guthrie: We want a transit shed.

Mr. HILL: What would be put in it? I was a member of the Royal Commission which went to Bunbury and the question was put to the Chamber of Commerce whether they wanted their cargoes taken to Bunbury by ship. They said, "No, we do not. It pays us better to deal with Fremantle." Then there is the deep water berth. The Mayor of Bunbury said, "You give us a deep water berth. We are shipping a thousand tons of butter from Western Australia and that will go from Bunbury." I asked him, "Do you know the

ships by name?" He replied, "Quite a lot of them." I said, "I have a list of the ships that took butter away from Fremantle for the last normal year, 1939. I will not read the lot; there are too many." But I read all those that took over 1,000 tons. I asked him how many of those he would get to call at Bunbury if the butter were there and he said, "None; they are all mail boats." One of the harbour board members interjected and said that the shipping people would call for 500 tons of butter. I said, "Can you see the people shipping butter and storing it in a cool store for two shipments a year when there are two a week from Fremantle?" The reply was a laugh.

I have had 42 years' experience of shipping fruit. Why do not the ships call at Bunbury to pick up fruit? It is because growers find that it is more profitable to pay the extra railage to Fremantle. I am anxious to see Bunbury hold the place it should hold in the economy of the State; but nature never intended it to be a port. Bunbury has three things that Albany does not possess—coal, power and water. I will support any move to develop Bunbury for industrial or tourist purposes, but I could never conscientiously agree to see money wasted on a port that nobody wants.

Mr. Hoar: Who said nobody wants it?

Mr. HILL: Who wants to use it?

Mr. Hoar: Strike me lucky! You should know!

Mr. HILL: The Royal Commission on Railways recommended that we should aim at the maximum load and the maximum speed. To my mind the system of charging freight on a mileage basis causes trouble. It brings about a demand for the shortest possible route. Take, for example, the distances between Wagin and Albany and between Wagin and Bunbury! The difference in railage is only 21 miles, but the grades are definitely in favour of Albany. From Mt. Barker to Albany a "Pr" engine can haul 820 tons and a "W" class engine 645 tons. Collie is about the same distance from Bunbury as Mt. Barker is from Albany, but the line will not carry a "Pr" engine. A "P" class engine can draw 490 tons and a "W" class only 432 tons. We need to arrange our port zones on an economic basis instead of on the railway mileage basis which exists at present. I think I have dealt sufficiently with transport and would now like to make some reference to the proposal to develop Kwinana.

Mr. May: You mucked Bunbury about a bit.

Mr. HILL: With the development of Kwinana, it is a case of goodbye to any chance of Bunbury being a big industrial centre. That has to be faced. In his book "Carpenter to Cabinet," the late Sir George Pearce is rather mixed when he

talks about Lord Kitchener's arrival at Albany. I was there and remember it very well. When he inspected the port, Sir John Forrest went to one of my friends and said, "You have been neglected and there is a change coming." Unfortunately the change was a change of Government. A Labour Government took office and Senator Pearce became Minister for Defence. It was then that I first heard of Cockburn Sound because the people of Fremantle took him there and asked him to have it made into a naval base. Sir George was not a bit proud of the fact that he was the father of the Henderson Naval Base.

I remember my last words to John Curtin. I told him that if he pushed for the establishment of the Naval Base at Cockburn Sound he would have my opposition. I think he must have thought of that before he died. I am sorry the member for Kalgoorlie is not here. One day he and I were at Robb's Jetty freezing works. He was called away, but I stood on a hill overlooking Cockburn Sound. I turned to the gentlemen with me—senior State officials—and said, "Curtin's big blunder." I added, "I think that place had a lot to do with Curtin's death." One gentleman said, "I think you are right. He had a lot of opposition not only here but also in the Eastern States."

That place was condemned as a naval base by Admiral Fraser and Lord Mountbatten. But if it had not been started, Cockburn Sound would never have come into the picture as a site for an oil refinery. I think the Government is taking on a gamble, but I support it because I believe the odds are 10 to 1 in favour of the Government. The dredging of the channel will be a fairly big job. It entails the dredging of 8,000,000 cubic yards of material. I saw by the paper that the estimated price was 10s. a cubic yard. I am inclined to think we will be able to get it done for less than that. Although 8,000,000 cubic yards seems a lot, it is not so far as dredging is concerned.

Before 1939, 100,000,000 cubic yards had been dredged at Melbourne and 20,000,000 cubic yards have been used for reclamation. At Fremantle 12,000,000 cubic yards have been dredged and the harbour scheme at Cape Town involved 14,000,000 cubic yards. The 8,000,000 cubic yards to be dredged at Cockburn Sound is not excessive and I think the job is fully justified. At first I did not think it would be practicable to establish an oil refinery at Kwinana because of the bank, but I can see that from the information I received the probable cost was considerably exaggerated.

The Premier might recall that when it was mentioned that the oil refinery would possibly go to Kwinana I said, "You can bet that if the oil refinery goes there it will not be the only enterprise that will

be established there." I had in mind the steel works. I am of the opinion that Cockburn Sound has a very big industrial future. I am confident that the time will come when we will be able to use Collie coal for smelting iron, and when that day comes we will probably have at Cockburn Sound the biggest steel works in Australia. I also feel safe in predicting that we will have the biggest shipbuilding yards at Cockburn Sound. I am sorry it is so close to Fremantle because that increases the problem of centralisation in this State. As a Western Australian, I am glad to know that the oil refinery is to be established at Kwinana; because, although it will be increasing centralisation here, it will be preventing centralisation in the Commonwealth. I would far sooner see an oil refinery and steel works and other big enterprises in Western Australia than in the congested areas in the Eastern States.

In Western Australia we have a wonderful State. Nature has been very good to us; and as we travel over the State, I think it will be evident that we need to apply modern science, experience and inventions to the natural advantages at hand, whether those natural advantages are at Wyndham or at Albany.

**HON. E. NULSEN** (Eyre) [8.0]: I have listened attentively to the member for Albany, and I feel he is quite competent to speak on ports because he has had a good deal of practice in that regard. He always speaks highly of the potentialities of Esperance, and with that I have no quarrel. I agree with what the member for North Perth said about the Royal Family. I think the late King did a wonderful service, and was highly regarded by everyone in the British Empire. I feel that Queen Elizabeth II will play a great part in the future, and she might bring as much fame and advancement to the Empire as did Queen Elizabeth I.

I also agree with the member for North Perth that the Governor is a highly regarded gentleman. I like him very much. He is a good sport, and there is no doubt that he is a well regarded representative of the Queen. I do feel, however—although I would not say anything detrimental about him because we all like him and appreciate his good work, his nice approach, genial disposition and his contact generally with the people—that it is nearly time, as the member for North Perth said, we gave consideration to appointing to this position someone from within Australia. I do not see why we should have to go to the Old Country to get a Governor. We have learned and highly regarded persons here who have done a good job for our advancement.

The Minister for Lands: Why was the position created?

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: It was created for the purpose of importing a Governor. But we are living in a different age compared with when Governors were first sent here. If we continue to go back a hundred years we will be so traditional that we will never make any advance other than by hanging on to the tails of the Old Country.

The Minister for Lands: I hope we never let go of them.

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: It is nearly time we considered appointing Australians to these high positions. Sir James Mitchell played a wonderful part in this State and we have had others. There is no reason why we should not have the present Premier as Governor of the State.

The Minister for Lands: You cannot get him in like that.

**Hon. A. R. G. Hawke**: We might appoint him early next year.

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: That is a very good offer. I think the late Phil Collier made a wonderful gesture when he appointed Sir James Mitchell as Lieut.-Governor. He did not even appoint a member of his own party. We should consider this matter; and it should also be considered from the Commonwealth point of view. Why not have a change? Members on the other side of the House do not want changes.

**Hon. A. R. G. Hawke**: They have closed minds.

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: That is so.

The Attorney General: Do you not think we should take the most highly qualified man we can get, whether he is an Australian or not?

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: I have no objection to that, because I say we have just as highly qualified men here as there are in other parts. In fact, they are more highly qualified because they know our conditions and understand our psychology and requirements.

The Attorney General: That is a matter of opinion.

The Minister for Lands: That is not the purpose of the appointment.

The Attorney General: You know that Australians occupy some of the highest positions in the British Empire—doctors, university professors, soldiers and airmen. Do you want them to be debarred from holding those position simply because they are Australians?

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: We have them in Australia. Why not pick one of them?

The Attorney General: We do.

**Hon. E. NULSEN**: It is nearly time we got away from the old traditional system. This is one reason why I say, generally speaking, that the Liberal Party or the Tories fail in their duty. They will stick to the old tradition. They do not change their minds, but stick to what was done 100 or 200 years ago.

Mr. Hoar: They cannot keep abreast of the times.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Now I am going to be parochial and I shall not be ashamed of it. I shall start on Esperance because it is a very important place. Esperance hinterland embraces between 37,000 and 40,000 persons but it has never been given a fair go because of its isolation. Esperance is 602 miles from Fremantle and 590 miles from the capital city. I always start on Esperance because it is the foundation of my electorate. It has wonderful potentialities which, generally speaking, have not been recognised by the people of the State. The dairying industry could be developed down there more cheaply than in the Southern part of Western Australia because the clearing costs are so much cheaper. There is a good rainfall and everything else that is necessary for the establishment of dairies. The Minister for Lands has, on many occasions, promised to come to Esperance, and I do not know why he has not yet done so. I feel he must have committed himself to the South-West portion of the State. I know that when he does come to Esperance he will be agreeably surprised.

The Minister for Lands: The promise still holds good.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Fat lambs can be raised down there. What the district can do has already been proved. If, after the next election, the present Government remains in office, I hope it will do something for Esperance. On the other hand, I do feel that we will be returned, and if we are I am satisfied that Esperance will move along as it should do, and will be able to produce the real food that is so necessary in Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands: It did not move too quickly when you were in before.

Hon. E. NULSEN: There were not many opportunities to do anything, especially when I was in the Ministry, because I joined the Ministry in 1939 when the war began.

The Minister for Lands: I agree.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Minister for Lands should bear that in mind. On the other hand, there was a move to develop the Esperance district when we were defeated at the last election.

Mr. Hoar: We gave this Government a very good start.

The Minister for Lands: No, we took the initiative.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Esperance has never been given a fair deal in the matter of shipping. The port is isolated and the big vessels that should call there go on to Fremantle with the result that Esperance has not been used to the best advantage, although it is the natural port for the Eastern Goldfields, being nearer

than Fremantle is to Kalgoorlie by 134 miles, nearer to Norseman by 352 miles and nearer to Salmon Gums by 470 miles. Members can see the wonderful advantage that a regular shipping service would have been to Esperance. We have the necessary population there and they are desirous of dealing through their port if shipping is available. Before the war the Chamber of Mines suggested that the people of the Esperance area should buy a vessel of their own and, had that been done, I feel certain the port would have been much farther advanced than it is today.

I read in "The West Australian" this morning a paragraph emanating from the secretary of the Primary Producers' Association. It referred to the freights paid on many items to Grass Patch, which is 18 miles beyond Salmon Gums. The freight on 200 lb. of grass seed was £1 1s. 3d., or 14d. per lb. Freight on 13½ tons of super was £36 13s. 8d., or £2 14s. 1d. per ton. Galvanised water piping that cost 11½d. per foot in Perth cost a further 9½d. per foot in freight to Red Lake. Petrol, in drum lots, cost 9½d. per gallon more than a single gallon sale in the city. That shows how badly Esperance and its hinterland fared. The "Kybra" which used to serve Esperance has been taken off that route and placed on the North-West run. That has been most unfair to the Esperance people and has done a lot to keep the district from developing. The Government should give consideration to returning the "Kybra" to the south coast to trade between Esperance and Fremantle.

The research station established by the late Hon. G. B. Wood has been an outstanding success and the people of the Esperance area are grateful for it. Experiments at that station have proved what has so often been said and printed in the past regarding the potentialities of that area. The research station has produced clover and other fodder plants equal to anything to be seen elsewhere in this State. That is one thing that the present Government has done for us. Mr. Helms, who was manager of the pine plantations there, has always been optimistic about the possibilities of the Esperance area. After the last visit of the Premier to that part of the State I sent a copy of the Press report to Mr. Helms, who was very grateful and replied as follows:—

It was a very pleasant surprise to receive your letter with the enclosed cuttings from "The Western Mail." It really looks as if Esperance at long last is being placed on the map of Western Australian agriculture. Now the picture of the possibilities of this district or region is being unfurled once again I sincerely hope that sound planning and means to carry it through on a fitting scale will be found. It is too good and too big a proposition to fritter away by our

usual methods of land settlement. Would it not be possible for the State or Commonwealth or possibly a chartered company partly backed by Government funds to take hold of the problem of farm production in a big way and let them roll off the production line, as it were, as a going concern. Such procedure would enable sound planning of production, settlement, roads and perhaps even railways, together with all the amenities that go with prosperous land settlement. Such an organisation could on a co-operative basis run its own research station, be equipped with the best advisory and technical staff available, and result in a saving of some of the tremendous waste and heart-break that usually accompanies the settlement of refractory areas such as the marginal land of Esperance. Again many thanks for remembering R. G. Stewart and myself. Before leaving Esperance I was convinced of its bright future, if "know how" and the means to make it function could be marshalled. It is rarely one gets the opportunity to work with a really big venture and of this I was not in the slightest doubt during the last few years at Esperance. It looks as if early defeat may now be converted to victory.

(Signed) A. Helms.

Mr. Helms was a highly qualified agriculturist who was unlucky in being down there during the depression with the result that, owing to shortage of money, he could not carry on. I approached Sir James Mitchell—or Mr. Mitchell as he then was—the Premier of the State, but it was not possible to raise sufficient money to help that area, although he was sympathetic towards it. Members will see that in spite of the possibilities that exist in the Esperance area the district has not been given opportunities to advance. I am hopeful that in the near future—or at all events before I leave this House—Esperance will be recognised and developed on a great scale. Although the port has received little help from Governments, in the last two years something in the vicinity of £200,000 has been spent there by private persons who can see what the possibilities are. I believe that after the Premier visited the district he thought much more highly of it than he did before.

Sir Charles Latham, or Mr. Latham as he then was, was the chairman of a Royal Commission set up to inquire into the light lands of this State. He wrote a glowing report of the possibilities of the area, and now that he is Minister for Agriculture I am hopeful that he is still sympathetic and will assist the people in those districts by convincing the Minister for Lands that the whole area is well worthy of consideration.

The Minister for Lands: I take your word for it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am very glad to hear the Minister for Lands say that. I tried to get Mr. McEwen, the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture, to visit the district and see it for himself, but he did not have the time. He has asked Sir Charles Latham to advise him of the district's possibilities. It has been a very dry season in the mallee area, but fortunately there is plenty of water. There is not much feed about but we are hoping to get more rain which will improve the wheat prospects in the district.

The Premier: What are things like in Salmon Gums?

Hon. E. NULSEN: It is very dry so far, although the stock are in good condition because there is plenty of water available. As I said, the crops are dependent upon the rain, but we are still living in hopes. The dingoes are a constant menace to the district, even extending as far south as Esperance. The people consider that a sum of £1 a scalp is not sufficient to cover the cost of petrol and so on and that it should be raised to £2, if not £3 a scalp. At the moment it does not pay other than the settlers in the district to chase and catch the dingoes.

The inauguration of a school bus service in the Esperance and mallee areas has been most satisfactory and the people are very grateful to the Government. The member for Melville, when Minister for Education, advocated this service but unfortunately was unable to put it into operation. There is no doubt that the school bus is doing a very good job for the district.

We want a station master for the mallee areas and the logical place for him to reside is at Salmon Gums. I have applied on several occasions and, although promises have been made, he has not yet arrived. Apparently the main trouble is accommodation and as soon as that is provided we will have our station master.

I now want to pay a tribute to Charlie Murray for the work that he did in the mallee areas. Members on the other side of the Chamber know him and his work. If it were not for Charlie Murray, the mallee would not be the place it is and unfortunately he has left the bank owing to ill-health. He has not been recognised in any way and to my mind some recognition should be given to men of his calibre. They are entitled to have honours conferred upon them by the Queen. It is an omission on the part of any Government not to recognise men like Charlie Murray. He has done a wonderful job for Western Australia and is recognised throughout Australia as an outstanding expert on sheep.

The Premier: Why did not you write to me and suggest that he be considered?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am very sorry that I did not do so. At the time I felt that I would not be doing the right thing, but I can assure the Premier—

The Premier: Or speak to me.

Hon. E. NULSEN: —that I shall be very glad to contact him about Charlie Murray and men of his calibre. They are entitled to more recognition than members of Parliament, most of whom come here for their own glory and because they like it. I think both you, Mr. Speaker, and I are in that category and I am sure the Premier is too. The Premier could have lived quite comfortably without having to worry about Parliament, although I do not know about the member for Melville.

The Premier: Oh, you can include him.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I think I could too, and most of my other colleagues as well. We are here to do the best we can for the country and also because we like it. Norseman is the next place on the line and it is one of the best little towns in Western Australia. It is certainly next to Kalgoorlie and Boulder so far as the Goldfields are concerned. On the share-market the mines at Norseman compare more than favourably with the best mines in the State. The Western Mining Corporation has done a wonderful job but the company would not have established itself in that town had it not been for the late Phil Collier. Although the company had a reservation in the town, its directors said that they would not commence operations unless a water supply system was established. At that time the Minister for Works, on the recommendation of his departmental officials, turned down the proposal. However, when the company stated that it would spend a considerable sum of money on working the reservation, the late Mr. Collier agreed to establish a water supply system, and I venture to say it has been paid for many times over either directly or indirectly.

Water is more important than gold in those areas. One cannot do without water and unless one has water one cannot find gold. If one finds a mountain of gold and one's water bag is empty, one would give away the mountain of gold for a bag full of water. Also, there has been the development of pyrites. That will be a most important industry because of the shortage of sulphur, especially when we realise that there is from 50 to 100 years' supply available. Copper, too, has been discovered but we do not know what will happen in regard to its development. We are hoping that it will prove to be another great industry for Norseman. Copper was £285 a ton, but recently it has risen to £350 a ton, so that should be an incentive to develop the field.

At Norseman we have the champion fire brigade team of the State. I always mention that fact because it is a wonderful achievement. It is not only the champion fire brigade team of the State, but also of the Commonwealth and for a small town like Norseman that is something of which to be proud. There is plenty of sport in the district and one of our local footballers, Don Matson, plays with East Perth. The Western Mining Corporation has great faith in the district. Although I tried to get the Premier to grant us sufficient funds to establish a swimming pool in order to entice the young people to remain in the country, in the present circumstances he could not grant my wish; so the Western Mining Corporation is putting in a swimming pool which will be of great benefit to residents generally. I had the Leader of the Opposition down at Norseman and Esperance a short time ago, and the people at those centres asked me to thank him for making the visit because they appreciated it very much.

The Premier. The hon. member must not keep him travelling too much; he must think of his health a bit.

Hon. E. NULSEN: He is travelling a good deal, and is an extremely hard worker. I wanted him to go down there, which he did, and I was pleased that he did so. The Premier has also visited those parts and I am hoping that he and the Leader of the Opposition will again honour us with their presence, because they are two very important persons.

The Attorney General: You are betting on a certainty; 5s. each way.

Hon. E. NULSEN: There is no certainty about it, but if they do agree, we shall be pleased to have them. The Eyre Highway is an important road. It has been mentioned by the member for South Perth and I agree with what he said. Mr. Boylen, M.L.C. and I had the pleasure of travelling with the secretary of Dundas Road Board on his annual inspection along the section between Norseman and Eucla. The distance is 422 miles. The road is good except for potholes, which are extremely dangerous. However the Minister for Works has men from the Main Roads Department now engaged filling in holes and on general maintenance to make the road safe. The danger of the potholes is that they cannot be seen until one is right on them, and there is every probability of breaking an axle or chassis of the vehicle.

The Eyre Highway is so important from a defence point of view that it should be bituminised. It is equally as important as the road between Alice Springs and Darwin which covers a distance of 954 miles which is about the same distance as that between Norseman and Port

Augusta. Apart from defence, there is considerable interstate traffic travelling over the Eyre Highway at present. When our party reached Fraser's Range we saw the famous notice, "Shut This Bloody Gate." It does not sound very nice, but it is effective to a great extent. Travellers over that road are very careless, and when they leave gates open they cause hundreds of pounds worth of damage to the stock and property of the settlers. To be fair, however, there is only a small percentage of travellers who offend. I consider that where the road goes through boundary fences there should be a run-over twice as wide as the existing one, which is only 6ft. wide. If dogs see sheep on the opposite side, they are able to jump that distance, whereas they could not jump a width of 12 ft.

Settlers have recommended that the boundary gates be removed, because not only do people leave them open but they also run right through them and smash them. It is therefore considered advisable to do away with boundary gates and instal run-overs and that the width of the run-over should be increased from 6ft. to 12 ft. and the grilles across the road from 12ft to 14ft. Posts should also be erected through the grilles perpendicularly linking the boundary fences. Something should be done by the Government because I consider it is its responsibility. Those people have spent thousands of pounds on the erection of boundary fences to protect their stock, and they suffer great loss when travellers run through them, or do not close the gates. I have here a Press cutting which refers to Balladonia. It reads—

**An Open Gate Gives Dingo Many Sheep.** Norseman, Wednesday. The increase in traffic on Eyre-Highway—it has more than doubled during the past fortnight—is proving to be a menace to pastoralists along the highway. Complaints have been reaching Norseman to the effect that station gates on the highway are being left open by drivers. A dingo entered a paddock through an open gate on Balladonia station last week and destroyed a large number of sheep before it was tracked down and killed by station hands. A daily average of eight heavily laden transports is now passing through Norseman from the Eastern States and station-owners have to make a constant inspection of their gates. At Balladonia, over £100 worth of damage was caused through a gate being left open for one night.

I think it is time we did something for those people who are doing so much for us. Those stations were taken up years ago, and the cost of fencing them would

probably run into hundreds of thousands of pounds. Yet gates are left open by travellers who have no regard whatever for the pastoralists and who are extremely worried about the position. Mr. Boylen and I stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Hogarth at Mundrabilla and that was one of the subjects they discussed with us. I am sure that if the Premier could only visit those parts, he would say that something should be done to alleviate this problem.

**The Premier:** What can one do to keep them closed?

**Hon. E. NULSEN:** I have just made the suggestion that if the run-overs were widened from 6ft. to 12ft. and the width across the road of the grille be also increased it would remedy the trouble. That would prevent dogs from jumping over the grille; an I am told that they will not walk over it. If this were done, it would not only save a great deal of stock and be of benefit to the settlers but it would also be a good thing for the economy of the State. Generally speaking, at Fraser's Range, Balladonia, Mundrabilla, Madura, Eucla, and Noondoonia, the feed was reasonable and there was plenty of water. The pastoralists at those centres indicated that their greatest problem was the gates and the travellers passing through them.

Another problem which faces them and also the travellers themselves is that not far from Cocklebidy there is a huge roof for conserving water, and under that roof there are ten tanks. They are connected with the roof for the purpose of serving travellers as they go along. It would surprise members to know that out of the 10 tanks people have wrenched seven taps and these tanks are, of course, now useless. When we passed through there were only two or three tanks with a rim of water. I will say that it is only a small percentage of the travellers that does this sort of thing. The people who wrench these taps from tanks and so make them useless are potential murderers, because there is always the possibility of a traveller coming along and wanting water and having to walk perhaps another 15 or 20 miles when he finds there is none in the tank.

**The Premier:** It is a pity we cannot give them a good stretch in gaol.

**Hon. E. NULSEN:** If they ever came before me as a Justice of the Peace I would give them the full stretch, but I would prefer to commit them to a higher court which could give them years of imprisonment instead of months. I made application to the Commissioner of Police to see if he could not get a border policeman established at Eucla. After he investigated the matter he thought it was not warranted. We should have a border policeman there and we should seek the co-operation of the South Australian Government in that respect so that a tab



can be kept on these people going in and coming out, because in the summer the number is very large.

Do you know, Sir, that as many as 53 cars have obtained petrol at Madura in a single day? So it will be seen how great is the traffic on the road during the summer. At Eucla the highest number that got petrol was 28; of course a number of cars would go through without getting any. Something should be done about having a safeguard on the border between Western Australia and South Australia. As we all know the pastoralists are generous people; they help travellers and welcome anyone whom they know to be respectable. But they do hate to see the number of people that go through without considering them in any way.

I hope that the Coolgardie-Esperance road will be bituminised as soon as the Coolgardie-Southern Cross road is completed. When the Leader of the Opposition was Minister for Works, about eight miles of that road was bituminised, but nothing has been done since. Work has been going on, however, on another important road and I trust that when that work is finished we will have the road to Norseman and then to Esperance. Esperance is a natural port and pleasure resort for the people on the Goldfields. As I pointed out we serve between 37,000 and 40,000 people and there is usually a yearly influx of about 3,000. So it will be seen that we are entitled to a decent road and I am hopeful that it will be made. When it is completed it will be beneficial and helpful to the people on the Goldfields. I would now like to say a few words about a flat rate for water. I will not have much to say on this because we had a unanimous decision in this Chamber—

The Premier: I do not think so.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Yes, I am positive it was unanimous.

The Premier: Try it again.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Premier's Minister would have been included if he had not been resting.

The Premier: He was resting at the time the vote was taken.

Hon. E. NULSEN: We did have a unanimous vote. There are a number of people in Norseman today who are charged 10s. for 1,000 gallons of water. This is ridiculous when one considers that at Subiaco I pay 1s. for 1,000 gallons excess water. Ministers have been reasonable and have endeavoured to do all in their power, but they have not done all that the people in the back country require of them. There should not only be a flat rate for water, but for petrol as well. I know we do not own petrol, but we should nevertheless advocate a flat rate. Getting petrol by the drum to Grass Patch costs 9s. 6d. a gallon, compared with the price out of

the bowzers in the metropolitan area. How can we expect people to develop the back country if they have to pay so much for their fuel. It is an enormous amount. The same thing applies to dieselene, crude oil and kerosene.

The Premier: What about electricity?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Yes, I think we should also have a flat rate for electricity. I am in favour of that. I know that I voted against a flat rate for electricity, but that was a mistake and I shall never do so again.

The Minister for Lands: You should be careful what you say!

Hon. E. NULSEN: If the oil companies desire it they could give us a flat rate. The oil companies have made huge profits.

The Attorney General: Not now.

Hon. E. NULSEN: They are still making huge profits; they are the richest people in the world. At the moment they are concerned with a cartel even though they are attempting to deny it. There is no smoke without fire and there must be something in it. I feel the oil companies should have been approached about a flat rate when consideration was given to the establishment at Kwinana of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. But I do not think it was even mentioned. It should have been part of the negotiations and the company should have been told that if the Government is going to do what it is it would also expect the company to help it in every way. I think the Government has been very generous to this company and we should have bound it to a flat rate so far as its commodities are concerned.

The Premier: Are you speaking for your party when you say you are in favour of a flat rate for water and electricity?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am speaking for my party when I say I am in favour of a flat rate for water, but I speak privately in connection with a flat rate for petrol, oil and kerosene. There has been a flat rate on motor tyres throughout the State. One can buy a motor tyre at Norseman for the same price as one would pay in Perth; the same applies to sewing machines and a few other commodities. But somehow people do not like getting away from the old methods of trading.

Steps should be taken by the Government to foster the goldmining industry. Thirty-five dollars an ounce for gold is not nearly sufficient. I cannot understand why the International Monetary Fund should control the price of gold. Why should it dictate to the rest of the western world, except Russia, what the price should be?

The Attorney General: I think the American buyer controls the price.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Attorney General must be aware that it is the International Monetary Fund that is exercising control. We are permitted to sell some gold on the free market and it would be of benefit to the industry if we were able to get a reasonable price for that. With costs generally increasing all the time, gold, to be comparable with other commodity prices, should be not less than 50 dollars per fine ounce.

The Attorney General: Do you think that Australia should go on the gold standard again and limit its currency by gold?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I have not investigated that aspect and do not know what the effect would be. I am aware that gold plays a very small part as money throughout the world because there is not sufficient of it, though it does play a big part in balancing trade as between nations. However, South Africa has been selling on the free market 40 per cent. of its production and has thereby derived considerable benefit. However, since the rest of the world has traded on the free market, the price has fluctuated from 34s. 9d. to 12s. 6d., so this is not now of great benefit to the industry.

I believe that the Gold Producers' Association has done everything in its power to obtain an increase in price and has also exerted all possible efforts to keep down costs. Consequently, there is only one way by which the industry might be helped and that is by securing an increase in the price of gold. Unless an increase is obtained, the lives of the mines will be considerably shortened. In the reports of a year ago, the average grade of ore being worked was 4.94 dwts., whereas the latest reports show the average to be 5.24 dwts. Those responsible are not anxious to pick the eyes out of the mines because they fully appreciate that all the low-grade ore left in the mines will be lost. This, in turn, would mean the loss of real money to the State. I fully believe that the Chamber of Mines and the industry generally are doing their best. Wherever possible they have installed improved machinery and have taken steps to keep down costs.

What worries me is that we have so few people in our midst, especially amongst those in authority, who are gold-minded. Whom have we in this Parliament? Not many, and I think most of the few we have are on this side of the House. Who is there in the Commonwealth Parliament that is gold-minded? We have Mr. Johnson, the member for Kalgoorlie, who was brought up on the Goldfields and who is doing his best in the interests of the industry. The trouble is that we take the industry for granted.

The industry has played a very important part in the economics of the State and in its development, and it is a bad sign when a mine like the Sons of Gwalla,

that has been operating for 50 years, shows a deficit for the year of £7,000. This loss might be due to the breakdown that occurred and the current year might show an improvement. At any rate, I hope so. The Big Bell is also showing a loss, and this is one of the largest mines in the State. It has provided excellent amenities for the employees and is equipped with the best plant that was obtainable at the time, but unless it is given assistance, there will be no alternative to closing down.

If the Commonwealth cannot be persuaded to assist the Big Bell in some way, the State Government should undertake the responsibility. The closing down of that mine would entail tremendous loss. About 350 men directly employed on the mine would be thrown out of employment, and if we multiply that number by five as representing the town of Big Bell dependent on the mine, we shall appreciate the seriousness of the position because, if the mine closed down, the town would be finished and quite a number of unemployed would have to be provided for.

On several occasions I have advocated the establishment of an explosives magazine at Esperance. Such a magazine located there would be of great benefit to the Eastern Goldfields, because fracture is carried at a very high freight rate and there would be a saving in the distance hauled of 134 miles between Esperance and Kalgoorlie as against Fremantle and Kalgoorlie. Norseman, which is a very prosperous town, also would benefit. I believe that Mr. Telfer, who is the Under Secretary for Mines, would, if permitted to express an opinion, favour the establishment of a magazine at Esperance.

The value of the gold produced in Western Australia last year was £10,000,000 and production is still on the upgrade. Such an industry is worth fostering, and we should do our utmost to make the people gold-minded. The member for Dale knows all about goldmining as also does the Minister for Mines. Mr. Simpson is a very good Minister for that department and is doing an excellent job. I believe he was in the metallurgical department of Bewick Moreing & Co. and was sent to South Africa to gain further experience. I should like to hear his comments on the establishment of an explosives magazine at Esperance. The State production of gold since the inception of the industry totals 54,442,468 fine oz. of a value of £330,507,464 so members can realise what an important part gold has played in the economy of the State.

Now I wish to say a little about the prospectors who, in this State, are becoming very scarce. Without prospectors, we shall get no new fields. There might be scientific means of locating the presence of gold, but I have not yet learned of any new fields having been discovered through the medium of science. The

amount of sustenance, £2 10s., granted to a prospector on the Eastern Goldfields, is not sufficient. On such a small amount, a man simply cannot live nowadays. The amount for a prospector in the North is £3 10s., which also is insufficient.

Some of the old woolly-noses, as they are known, go out and kill a few rabbits or catch a few goannas and eat their tails and manage to subsist on the sustenance allowance, but the amount should be increased. I believe that the prospectors are loaned equipment free of charge and are provided with fracture if they need it, but younger men are not prepared to go out prospecting unless greater inducement is offered. At present there are only 31 prospectors receiving sustenance, of whom 25 are on the Eastern Goldfields, two on the Murchison and four in other parts of the State. I do not know whether young men have lost the old adventurous spirit, but they do not seem to have the same sense of adventure as did men of the early days and they have no incentive. I think the Government should give serious consideration to assisting prospectors and providing them with more inducement to continue their labours.

I come now to a consideration of native affairs. The Minister and the Commissioner are doing a reasonably good job, following the work of the member for Kimberley who, when he was Minister, tried to put the natives on a better footing. I congratulate the Minister and the Commissioner on the establishment of the native girls' home at Mt. Lawley. Inquiries reveal that their behaviour has been a credit to them. I believe there is also a hostel for boys, though renovations are required to it. I am glad that the Commissioner is inclined to give young coloured people an opportunity to be brought up in the environment of white people.

The Norseman mission is doing a good job. The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition called in and saw the work being done there. The young natives are doing well, and I congratulate the mission on its activity in helping these people to prepare for citizenship. I agree with the advocacy of the Rev. A. C. Hull in respect to better housing for the natives. These people have never been given houses. The only place where they have been so accommodated has been at the Mt. Margaret mission, where they have their own homes, which are laid out the same as ours. They are a credit to the mission and to Western Australia. Our treatment of natives in the past has only tended to cause them to become communists. Unless we treat them as they should be treated, in accordance with their dignity and mentality, we cannot expect them to be anything but averse to us and our way of life.

I have a man in my district known as Jackieboy, and he has done a good job for the people of this State. One day he said to me, "Why haven't I had more consideration than I have had? Is it because I am black? I cannot help my colour. I was bred in the North-West." I told him to write me a letter and give me a little of his history and I would see what could be done for him. I have the letter here and propose to read it. Whether he dictated it to someone or not, I am not sure, but he himself is very well spoken. He is over 6 ft. tall and has done a very creditable job. Here is the letter, just as I received it—

Aboriginal Jackieboy left centre of Australia some time about 1894—so I am giving some of my reputation.

I left centre of Australia to come over to Western Australia. I started with a mob of horses with a man named Charlie Wilson and George Brown—two coloured boys we were about fifteen years of age—one took sick and died at Albany Hospital. Some places we had to shepherd the horses until we got to Esperance. Norseman rush was just started and Dundas was a town.

I remember well Mr. Dowl had a store and it had a few sheets of iron on it. There was no telegraph at Norseman, only Dundas had a telegraph—I remember that well. After a while they started carting telegraph poles from Esperance to Dundas.

We were camping at Grass Patch, there was no farms, just a grass plain and a condenser. A man named Kesier used to have the condenser.

We hobbled our horses out. I got up early and went after the horses. I got to plain, the horses were not there. My mate and myself went after them. We got about a mile along the road the horses turned and went West into the bush, we saw a lot of blackfellows' tracks and we got frightened, we could hear the bells, we stood there and considered whether to go and get the horses or not. We turned back to go and get the boss, because we got frightened, took him back to where we left off, and we saw a big gate swamp. We got there, the horses were all there. There was a big lagoon, water in it, plenty of ducks and swans and divers.

They told me to make a road to Gibson Soak to ride ahead of the teams after all the roads made to Swan Lagoon to the nearest of Gibson Soak.

All the teamsters met load and empties at Swanny Lagoon because water was cheap in Queen jubilee times. If the men of those days were alive today they would tell you the same.

So the Afghans started coming about with their packed camels, so the teamsters started going away up to Coolgardie some of them.

One of our bosses died at Daylup, so we got used to the others and kept on. The police took us over—a man named Sergeant Maccedy and a constable. He was a mounted police and Constable Jack Commery and a constable called Jack Lynch, so after stopping there a few years in Esperance the country was bit bad in Norseman. I was transferred to Norseman police. When I got to Norseman I saved women and children and prospectors from getting lost. I stayed five years with the police in Norseman and that's where I learned my experience with the police. They had a tracker but he would not track another black-fellow.

Then I left the police and went to work droving for Mr. Andrew Dempster from Esperance to Fraser's Range, then after that I got job droving team from Fraser Range to Islete Bay.

So they gave me a wife by tribal law—she only passed away last Easter, then I went away kangarooing and after I went shearing for Mr. Turnbull, then I came back to Southern Hills shearing, got a few bob together and went kangarooing again. They then wanted camel drivers so I got another job, then carted boring plant to bore water. Before the Trans line was ever put up, I was working for Mr. Blackburn and Graham—left that and came back and got a job at Balladonia working for Ponton Brothers and Sharp. I went fencing for them and dam sinking. I worked for Dimers after I left. I left Dimers, worked for Cook Bros. at Noondoonia Station.

Then I got a job from Mr. L. Gull fencing—no more job there so I went to Southern Hills and got a job from there working for Mr. George Anderson one year. I was shearing around Salmon Gums farms for Mr. Spratt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Cobins, Mr. Spouge and Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Linin, Mr. Downbull, Mr. Logan, Mr. Teddy George. I shored sheep for all those farmers for Berryman. I shored sheep with blade.

If I was a white man, the work I done I ought to be sitting back. I am staying another two or three months then I think I will be leaving for home. I am finished with W.A., because they promised to build a home for me but they never did anything. Tom Egan beat me for the copper while I was away shearing. I found the copper first, another man named Cecil Wilson and I. I took the stone into the School

of Mines to Mr. Thomas, the Manager, and got it assayed. He told me it was a pure copper. This is in the Native Reserve about a mile from the Mission. I thought it was quite safe, but another blackfellow named Charlie Poopdie took Tom Egan out and showed him while I was away, so Tom Egan pegged the land out for himself and Charlie Mitchell. My name is Roxurua.

That is Jackieboy. He is a very fine chap. When I was storekeeping at Norseman he often used to come to me and say, "I have no money, but I will go out kangarooing if you will give me some provisions." I have given him credit to the extent of £20, and he has brought the skins back to me, and never really owed me a shilling. What I have said applies not only to Jackieboy but also to other natives there. The conditions of citizenship are too severe. The work these people do is not recognised. I know the Minister is sympathetic. These are cases which could be inquired into.

A note has just been passed to me to say that a flying saucer has been seen around Norseman. I will make inquiries and determine what action should be taken.

I want now to speak about the railways. Despite the terrible reports we have heard from time to time, the railways have done a wonderful service. They have helped very much to develop the State. If it were not for the railways, the farming industry would not be on the basis it is today. During the war the railways did a marvellous job, and so did everyone working in them. They must have surprised the whole of the people in Australia; not only those in this State. The average freight charge, up to 1946, when I was the Minister, was only 1.76d. per ton per mile, which was much cheaper than that of any competing road transport. Although the railways got only that much, on no occasion from their inception did they earn less than their working costs. They always had a surplus of earnings over working expenses, although they carried fertiliser at ½d. per ton per mile and wheat at 1.12d. per ton per mile, and other items at much below 2d. per ton per mile.

In spite of this, the railways always paid a dividend—not a very big one directly—in the way of some interest on capital. Indirectly, of course, the railways paid handsomely. Yet we hear that they are terrible and rotten, and the Labour Government is blamed for their position. The Westland sleeper has no equal in Australia. The only train that might come up to it is the one operating between Adelaide and Melbourne, as far as sleepers are concerned. We made provision for second-class sleepers which the other States did not. This Government, when it came into power, criticised the state of the railways,

but I suggest that members should read the Stead report which is contained in our Votes and Proceedings for 1922-1923. It was Stead, under the Mitchell Government, who really hampered the railways. The Commissioner at the time, Mr. Pope, wanted to spend £400,000 or £500,000 on the rehabilitation of the locomotives and rollingstock, but according to this report he was not allowed to do so. That was the Mitchell Government operating, as it were, under the same colours as the present Government. In spite of this, the railways did a wonderful job up to 1946, even though the period included six years of war.

The Collier Government was in office from 1924 to 1930, but, because of the Stead report, did not do much about the railways. The Mitchell Government took over in 1930 and remained in office until 1933, and did nothing at all in this regard; although I admit that was the depression period. Even the permanent way was going to rack and ruin. When Collier came back in 1933, he spent about £500,000 on the permanent way and the railways generally, in spite of the fact that money was then very scarce. The present Government, which is always decrying the Labour Governments, told us that we were to blame for the condition of the railways, but what has it done about them? Nothing! The war came on us in 1939, and nothing could be done then. During the period of hostilities the railways, and everyone working in them, did a wonderful job. All the employees were extremely patriotic, and worked long hours in adverse conditions. Today the railways deficit has been increased. It is going up by millions.

The Minister for Lands: Yes, because we have had to do the work you neglected to do while you were in office.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I have just pointed out that we did not neglect it. I defy the Government to put up an argument to prove that we did. This Government has written down the capital by more than 12 million pounds, from 30 million pounds, leaving a small capital of 17 million pounds, but even so the railways are showing a terrible deficit. They have also increased the average freight charges from 1.76d. to 2.72d. per ton per mile.

The Minister for Lands: We have to keep up with the increase in the basic wage.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Government is not keeping up with it. It is showing millions of pounds deficit in this regard so there must be something wrong with the administration. The previous Labour Government is being blamed for the state of the railways, but I was Minister for Railways and know the facts. It would have been much easier had Sir James Mitchell not appointed a Royal Commis-

sion to inquire into the railways in 1922, following which development ceased. In 1939 the war broke out and that interfered with the upkeep of the system. The Premier has been reported in the Press as saying that the state of our railways is due to the Labour Government, but that is entirely wrong.

The Minister for Lands: It is right.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Minister cannot justify that statement. He has never looked at the report.

The Minister for Lands: I have read it from end to end.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Tell me something that is in it.

The Minister for Lands: I am not here to be cross-examined.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Minister for Lands is not in charge of the railways and cannot put that over me. Freight and fares have been raised and the capital has been written down, yet the deficit increases each year.

The Minister for Lands: You growl if we raise the fares in order to keep up with the basic wage.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Had Mr. Ellis still been Commissioner and were we on that side of the House at the present day, the present state of affairs would not exist.

The Chief Secretary: What would you have used for engines?

Hon. E. NULSEN: There were 354 engines in commission at the beginning of the recent strike. When that strike had been in progress for a fortnight—it would have been different had we been on that side of the House—the Government should have closed the railways down. Had that been done, all the engines would have been available for service when the strike was over, whereas now there are only 79 in operation.

Mr. Griffith: Do you really mean that if you had been in control you would have closed down the railways after the strike had been going for 14 days?

Hon. E. NULSEN: If I had been on that side of the House and had had the hon. member's politics, I would have closed the railways down in order to preserve the asset.

The Minister for Lands: You would have had some trouble.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Not as much as the Government will have now. If it could not carry the railways on efficiently, it should have closed them down.

The Minister for Lands: And put everyone out of work?

Hon. E. NULSEN: That would have finished the strike in a couple of weeks.

The Chief Secretary: Did you give the Government that advice?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am not here to advise the Government, though I did advise it to keep Mr. Taylor on.

Mr. Griffith: You say we have no regard for the workers, but you would have put every man in the railways out of work after two weeks.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I said I would have done that had I been on the Government side of the House, with the hon. member's politics. Although the Government has written down the capital of the railways by over £12,000,000, the deficit is continually increasing, so there cannot be any businessmen in the administration of that department. It will now take 12 months to put the railways back on a decent footing, and the Government will blame the strike for all its troubles.

Mr. Griffith: Was the Government to assume that the strike would last six months?

Hon. E. NULSEN: It should have said, "If we cannot give efficient service, we will close the system down."

Mr. Griffith: You are wise after the event.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I said that soon after the strike started. I do not say all my colleagues agreed with me, but I think that is what should have been done.

The Chief Secretary: Did any of your colleagues agree?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I did not ask them, but I think some of them would have done so. Our point of view differs from that of the Government in relation to the workers of the State. We would never have brought down legislation such as the Government forced through this House the other night.

The Minister for Lands: I thought you were all for it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Our railway system has done a wonderful job but, as soon as Labour went out of office in 1947, the deficit of that department grew and it has continued to increase ever since.

The Minister for Lands: You are a bit biased.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Government is biased, and will not admit its inefficiency.

The Minister for Lands: Of course not.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Government tramways' deficit has increased steadily since the Railway Department took over, in spite of the fact that fares have been increased by over 100 per cent.

The Minister for Lands: Due to increase in costs and wages.

Hon. E. NULSEN: In 1951, the tramways showed a surplus of £20,956 over working costs, the trolley-buses a deficit of £11,956, and the motor-buses a surplus of £2,334. Had the increase of fares been

kept on an equitable basis and the private bus proprietors been prevented from picking the eyes out of the traffic offering, the present position would not have been brought about. At the present juncture, the Government does not know where it stands in the matter of public transport. In 1948 the excess of working expenses over earnings was £85,973 and with interest it amounted to £136,949; in 1949 it was £88,700 and with interest £141,977; in 1950 it was £88,608 and with interest £161,293. There is something wrong with the administration.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think so.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am sure of it.

The Minister for Lands: Then explain it.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am certain of it because when a Labour Minister was in charge we did not have a deficit and the average interest on capital up to 1946 was over five per cent. From the time our tramway service was put into operation, until this Government came into office, we never had a deficit and our revenue always exceeded our working expenses. The reason is that the private buses are getting the profits and the rake-offs. They are coming in on Government pick-ups as well as their own. I will have more to say on that point when speaking on the Estimates because I think it is a crying shame that we should have incurred such deficits since 1947. The private buses are carrying all the passengers that rightfully belong to the Government services.

We have a catastrophic situation so far as the supply of electricity is concerned, the interest being £97,302. Yet the price of electricity has risen by over 100 per cent., and the Government has written off £1,368,727 at East Perth. This cannot go on; something will have to be done about it. On the 11th August, 1948, a question was asked in the Legislative Council and this report appears in the Press—

Sale of electric current: Replying in the Legislative Council last night to Mr. Thomson (C.D.L.) the Chief Secretary (Mr. Parker) said that the Government supplied electricity to the Perth City Council under a 50-year agreement terminating in 1963 at 0.75d. a unit. The Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board was charged 0.85d. under an agreement due to terminate in 1966 and the Midland Junction workshops received it at 0.8d. The total working loss for the past two years in supplying electricity to the three interests was about £90,000.

That is £45,000 a year.

The Minister for Lands: Who was responsible for making those agreements?

Hon. E. NULSEN: This has nothing to do with the agreements. Despite the fact that at that time the price of electricity was only 0.75d. per unit, 0.85d. a unit and 0.8d. respectively, a loss of only £45,000 was shown each year, but where are we going now? The Government is receiving 6.37d. a unit for light and 2.37d. a unit for power whereas at that time they were getting only 1d. a unit for power and 3d. a unit for light.

The Minister for Lands: What is the domestic rate? You are not quoting the correct figures.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Government is supposed to have rectified it by its increases and it has written off £1,368,727.

The Minister for Lands: Most people are on the domestic rate, which is about 4d.

Mr. Griffith: The average householder does not pay 6d. a unit.

The Minister for Lands: Of course he does not.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Householders pay 6.37d. a unit.

The Minister for Lands: No, they do not.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am quoting in accordance with the figures I have with me when the rate was 3d. and 1d. It was exactly the same basis.

Mr. Griffith: The hon. member has a different sort of meter to mine.

The Minister for Lands: He is quite wrong.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I am positive about it.

The Minister for Lands: It has been suggested that you are reading it upside down.

Mr. Cornell: He has the decimal point in the wrong place.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Minister for Lands might read things upside down, but I am not in the habit of doing so.

The Minister for Lands: Then your figures are not correct.

Hon. E. NULSEN: When the Minister speaks to the debate we will see what he has to say. The Government has lost £1,000,000 on the Electricity Commission, millions on the railways and hundreds of thousands of pounds on our tramway services. Where are we going? What is going to happen to the finances of the State?

The Minister for Lands: We are on our way.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do not know where we are going, but it might be hot there.

The Minister for Lands: We will all meet there.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I now want to have something to say about the super position. Super is the lifeblood of this State and its price is getting out of control.

In bags it costs £15 4s. 3d. a ton, in farmers' bags £12 3s. 6d. a ton, in paper bags £13 9s. 6d. a ton and in bulk £11 14s. 9d. The economy of the State is going to rack and ruin. The primary producer will not be able to pay that price for his super if he wishes to compete with the world's parity for the commodities that he produces. Yet what is the Government doing about it? It is still going along in the old-fashioned way and not making any alteration at all.

We have six or seven different works instead of concentrating or merging them into one factory which would bring down the cost. The Government has not considered using brimstone in place of pyrites; instead it intends to distribute pyrites throughout the State, and at a tremendous cost, for the production of sulphuric acid with which to manufacture super.

The Minister for Lands: You are not in favour of the Government using pyrites?

Hon. E. NULSEN: Of course I am, but the Government should alter its system as circumstances change. This has been left to the super works and they are quite content to go on as they have been doing for years. The companies are sure of their sale because the farmers must use super. The companies are just as old-fashioned as the Government and they do not want any alteration; but we must look to the economic aspect. I was hoping that the Government would do something along the lines of the South Australian idea. A large plant is being erected at Adelaide for the purpose of making sulphuric acid from pyrites. The plant is to cost about £2,000,000. Those concerned are doing something tangible and are trying to keep abreast of altered conditions, but we have done nothing whatsoever here. Nevertheless, the primary producer still has to pay. I ask the Government whether it has anything in mind by which it can reduce the cost of such an expensive product as super, which is the lifeblood of the State.

The Minister for Lands: What does the hon. member suggest?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I want the Government to submit some concrete scheme, but it seems to me that the subject has never been discussed in Cabinet.

The Minister for Lands: A man of your experience must know how such costs add up. You must know the cost of new bags, for instance.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Is the Government going to allow things to continue as they are? South Australia has not done so.

The Minister for Lands: The price of super there is just as high as it is here.

Hon. E. NULSEN: It might be, but something is being done in an effort to remedy the position, because they feel that the primary producers, who grow those commodities that balance our ex-

ports as against our imports, must be assisted. If we do not assist them we will not effect that balance. The Government intends to spend £10,000,000 on industrialisation at Kwinana instead of on rural development. I am not adverse to the Kwinana project because it might achieve some good, but I still do not think we will get petrol any cheaper. If portion of that £10,000,000 were used to assist the primary producer by making available to him cheaper super it would be of great benefit to the State generally.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member should be on this side of the House.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: He will be soon.

The Minister for Lands: No, he will not, unless he joins this party.

Hon. E. NULSEN: I agree with the member for Melville that if the Government of this State does not soon wake up to a sense of its responsibility, the public will.

The Minister for Lands: They will be the judges.

Hon. E. NULSEN: Yes, their judgment will be good and wise and, in consequence, we will have our leader as the next Premier.

The Minister for Lands: My word! That is wishful thinking!

The Chief Secretary: Let him have his little joke if he wants to.

Hon. E. NULSEN: The Government has not shown any progress in its administration. It has not shown any initiative in relation to transport or primary production. It has gone on in its same old way and in its same old traditional style.

The Minister for Lands: You surprise me! You do not believe that is correct, do you?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I do. It is only too evident, otherwise I would not utter those words. I consider that we should have cheaper super and the component part is, of course, pyrites. The Government should assist the companies in this State to merge into one for the purpose of having one super works and thus concentrate on the production of super in the one place. Those works should be erected close to where the pyrites is being produced. I am satisfied that if that could be achieved the cost of super would be 25 per cent. less than it is today.

The whole problem surrounding the production of super should be investigated by a Royal Commission in order to ascertain how we stand in regard to a commodity which the farmers must have in order to produce. The price is going still higher and yet the super works want further protection; they want a 20 per cent. tariff placed on sulphur. They do not intend to alter their system or try to make super cheaper. If they erected super works at Esperance they would have only a distance of 125 miles over which to carry the pyrites, and I might add that it is on a down gradient. As mentioned by the mem-

ber for Melville, that would prove of great assistance in the production of cheaper super. In recommending the merging of the super companies, I point out that banks and other financial institutions have followed this practice in order to cut down administration expenses.

I wish now to refer to the use of lime. In September last year an honorary Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the use of lime with super. That commission did excellent work and I compliment the chairman on the way he handled the proceedings. Twenty-six witnesses gave evidence and they all provided valuable information which was both interesting and educational. The results achieved by Mr. Eric Farleigh of Boyup Brook, by the use of lime with super was the reason for the commission being appointed. We visited his property. What he has achieved by the use of 50 per cent. lime and 50 per cent. super is exceptional. The member for Moore, after viewing the property, commented that many of the paddocks were only fit for use as gravel pits. However, the growth on them was remarkable and the stock was better than any I have seen in Western Australia. Every member should read not only the report submitted by the Royal Commission but also all the evidence, especially that given by Mr. Farleigh and Mr. Kerr, the latter having had considerable farming experience in New Zealand and being one of the directors of Cuming Smith. Mr. Kerr showed no bias as to the use of either lime or super.

I was in New Zealand about 12 months ago and I do not think I saw better pastures there than those on Farleigh's property. In that country lime is used extensively; as much as two tons to the acre. As a result of the use of super, some of their best land has gone right back, but now, through the use of lime, it has reverted to what it was and is producing as well as in the past. There is a variety of soils on every property and the farmer should know the various constituents of those soils. He should also know whether they are acid or alkaline. I believe there is a simple instrument by which that can be ascertained.

Concerning that evidence, I would like to warn farmers not to use lime blindly because they can get into as much trouble by using too much as by not having enough. Witnesses made it very plain that every plant requires certain soil acidity; clover, for instance, requires soil acidity. We also had evidence on trace elements. I hope members will read the whole of the evidence given to that Royal Commission, which did a good deal of travelling and showed great interest in its work. The member for Blackwood is to be complimented on having the commission appointed and I feel sure that the evidence produced will prove very beneficial to the State.



I would now like to say a few words about the Egg Marketing Board. I trust the Government will take action in regard to it as it is at present constituted. The board is detrimental to the State generally and, farmers in my district at any rate have been served very badly. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that there are hundreds of dozens of eggs that could be disposed of on the Goldfields at a profit and in a way that would be beneficial to the people there.

The Premier: I am sorry I was not in my seat when you spoke about the Egg Marketing Board. What do you want done?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I was hoping that something could be done to abolish this board altogether, or have a new one set up. It is very hard luck for the farmers because they have to make application for licenses; they have to stamp their eggs and go to a lot of bother and humbug which is altogether unnecessary. If there is a shortage of eggs, the board can surely obtain sufficient quantities from the metropolitan area without interfering with the agricultural areas. If, however, the people in the agricultural areas are desirous of sending their eggs to the board, and if the board is still in existence, that opportunity should be afforded them. The cost of living is rising from day to day, and every board that is set up means an increase in costs.

I know it is necessary to have some boards, but too many are being appointed. I would like to know what the boards set up in this State are costing Western Australia today. I feel sure the amount would be a huge one. Surely there is some method of control other than by these expensive boards. The personnel appointed are generally very good and able men, who could quite easily be put on to some other work that would be of much greater advantage to the State than that which they are at present doing. I am not blaming the personnel, but the system. I feel that where it is possible to do without a board, one should not be appointed.

The Premier: Do you think the egg board should have no jurisdiction in country districts?

Hon. E. NULSEN: I think the Egg Marketing Board, if it is to continue, should have no jurisdiction at all in the country districts. It is detrimental to the farmers and I know a number of them have complained about it. I have been told by farmers that if it were not for the Egg Marketing Board they could dispose of hundreds of dozens of eggs and supply Norseman and parts of the Goldfields. The farmers in my district say it is detrimental to them, and it is not helpful to the people who would consume the eggs they could supply if permitted to do so. Those eggs

would be much cheaper than they are, particularly if they were released in the country districts without any reference to the board.

I have nothing further to say but I hope that before the Estimates are brought down that the Government will give us—

The Premier: About Christmas Eve, I think!

Hon. E. NULSEN: —a very clear picture concerning its administration of transport and all other concerns in this State. I feel that administration is lacking and that the Government has tended to be too traditional. The Government has also been too sympathetic to private concerns and in consequence they have reaped the profit while the Government has been left holding the baby.

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [9.55]: I would like to take the opportunity the Address-in-reply debate affords me of mentioning three matters. The first is concerned with my electorate and has to do with a series of questions which I asked recently of the Minister for Police. The purport of those questions was: Why does the Police Department allow a lack of control of high-speed traffic along Stirling Highway, and more particularly through the shopping areas of Cottesloe and Mosman Park? In the course of my question I managed to explain that very great concern is felt by the people of Cottesloe at the apparent disregard that is paid to cross-walks in the vicinities of those shopping areas. The answer the Minister for Police gave to me, when I asked him if he would take some positive action to endeavour to eliminate the menace that is constituted by high-speed traffic through these areas, was an enumeration of something that has proved entirely ineffective so far and has not been a deterrent to the offenders.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Quite right!

Mr. HUTCHINSON: It is imperative that further action be taken and that some strict measures be adopted to force upon offenders the realisation that they are a menace to pedestrians; I refer particularly to my electorate. When one considers Stirling Highway as a whole, one may at once realise that there are along it a number of danger points for pedestrians. Travelling from Perth I should say that the first danger point would be Broadway. But there, even the casual observer would note that there is a slackening of speed on the part of the great majority of vehicles travelling past that intersection. The next point of danger would possibly be Bay View Terrace, Claremont. This, too, is a danger point for pedestrians, but here again it is most noticeable that vehicles slow down quite considerably and do pay some regard to cross-walks.

The next danger point would be the Cottesloe shopping area. We find here that the vehicles race through this area and, as I said before, almost completely disregard the crosswalks. A speed of 30 miles an hour, which is supposed to be the limit there, is not adhered to, I should say, by more than one vehicle out of every eight or nine. The next danger point is in the Mosman Park shopping area facing the railway station. Here again the same menace is apparent because the drivers pass through there far too quickly. Further south possibly the Victoria-st. crossing is another danger spot, although not so dangerous as the others. Then again, I suppose North Fremantle would be regarded as another sphere of danger. The point is that Broadway and Bay View Terrace in Claremont are regarded by the drivers themselves as real danger points, in consequence of which they slow their vehicles down.

The Premier: Where a motorist does not observe the rule regarding crosswalks, he should be severely dealt with.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I quite agree. The Minister's answer to my questions did not indicate the slightest consideration for the position.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: I should think not.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: The answer furnished to me was not good enough for my electorate. In answer to my question regarding some positive action being taken to eliminate the menace of the speeding motorist, the Minister said—

The Commissioner of Police has reported to me that there is a continuous motor cycle patrol in Stirling Highway in the area referred to during peak periods morning and evening, and intermittently at other times of the day. Attention is also given to this matter by the local police and as a result of these measures, many offenders have been brought before the court on speeding charges.

I do not think there is any necessity for me to dwell further on this matter. The measures so far adopted by the Police Department have not proved to be a deterrent to offences of the nature I have referred to, and I again appeal to the Minister who, unfortunately is not in the Chamber at the moment, to see that some real action is taken and that offenders are dealt with positively and drastically.

The second point to which I desire to direct the attention of the House is one of State-wide significance. It concerns the opening of the international air service between Australia and South Africa. The inauguration of that service will link Perth with Johannesburg and South Africa generally, and this will take place on Tuesday, the 2nd September next. It will be an historic occasion of considerable im-

portance to Australia and more particularly to us here in Perth because, with the exception of the war years when international air line companies were forced, through the exigencies of the wartime position, to route their aircraft through this city, our State has been starved of the manifold advantages that follow in the wake of international air traffic. In Western Australia we know only too well how far we are off the regular beaten track and how lightly our real strategic value is regarded by even the powers-that-be in the Eastern States. The commencement of this international air service is a step in the right direction but it is only a step, and we must regard it as such.

The ultimate goal is by no means achieved with the inauguration of this air service to South Africa. We must strive with all our might to ensure that international air services from the United Kingdom and Europe generally are routed through this city. For almost 18 months now I have practically continuously and, I hope, forcefully pressed the claims of this State in that respect. Both on the floor of the House and by oral and written communications to the Premier, I have insisted that the strongest possible representations be made to the Prime Minister on this matter, with a view to making Perth the principal airport of entry to the Commonwealth.

I endeavoured to point out that the retention of Darwin as the port of entry was a survival of the exploratory and elementary stages of aviation when aircraft were limited by a maximum range of a few hundred miles. It is pleasing to know that the Premier did make strong representations to the Prime Minister somewhat along the lines I suggested to him, but the outcome so far has only resulted in a reply from the Prime Minister stating the bald fact that the matter was under consideration. There are one or two sub-topics relating to this question that I would like to mention in the House, although I have dealt with them more lengthily on previous occasions. The information I have gleaned on this subject is that the air companies themselves would greatly prefer to enter Australia through Perth and are keenly desirous of doing so. They feel this preference because of the obvious economic and operational advantages. It is also important to note that the flying distance involved would not be an important factor.

The distance between Singapore and Melbourne via Darwin, which is the present route, is roughly 4,560 miles, compared with a distance from Singapore to Melbourne via Perth, which is the proposed route, of 4,150 miles. I would say, too, that the Eastern States would not suffer under this proposal. They have nothing to lose by the adoption of the proposed new route through Perth, but, on the other hand, there would be very

considerable advantages to Western Australia if it were to be adopted. It is pertinent to note that Darwin, which is the principal airport of entry at present, proved useless during World War II, because of wartime events and the approach of the enemy close to our shores. That is a possibility that must be envisaged again. I feel that the Premier should once again make strong representations to the Prime Minister and claim that Western Australia should be recognised as the real and admirable port of entry for international airline companies flying between the United Kingdom and Australia.

I regret that the Minister for Works is absent through illness, because there is a third matter that I wished to bring under his notice. He should realise the necessity for having a definite controlling body vested with the requisite powers to deal with the many problems associated with the preservation of the Swan River and the care and maintenance of its finer characteristics. Speaking generally, Governments have been too prone to take for granted the wonderful natural aesthetic value of the river. I believe that the people of the State are keenly aware of its value and are most desirous that its beauty should not be further sullied. They appreciate that the river has not only an aesthetic value and is good to look upon but is also a real tourist attraction, as well as making a wonderful playground for many people.

This feeling, I believe, is largely shared by even the most hard-headed and practical members in this House. However, as yet little evidence has been shown of the obvious need to place the care and maintenance of the river in the hands of an organisation which, by the exercise of its authority, could preserve this natural heritage for posterity. I have no desire to be over-critical at the lack of positive action because such an attitude might possibly frustrate the end for which I am striving. In many ways, it has been apparent that the Works Department is cognisant of the need for providing for the care and maintenance of the river, but there has been a general apathy in Government circles toward any move to rationalise such conservation. I use the word "rationalise" advisedly, because it could be rationalised by the simple and effective expedient of creating a Swan River board.

I am somewhat in agreement with the remarks of the member for Eyre in his criticism of boards generally but, when it means the preservation of a natural asset, I believe such a board would redound to the benefit of the State. A board could pursue the course of co-ordinating activities designed expressly for the preservation of the river. At present, the care of the river is nobody's baby. We have the Swan River Reference Committee dealing with matters pertaining to the river. This committee is recognised by

the Government, but it has only advisory powers. Nevertheless, it has done much good work, and I consider that praise is due to the men who compose that committee. However, there is no shadow of reasonable doubt that had the committee plenary or even statutory powers, together with sufficient finance to pursue its course, it would be more effectively and efficiently able to control the river in every way.

The Government is prepared to spend a good deal of money annually on the care and maintenance of the river by paying half the cost outlaid by local government authorities, and I have been informed by the Minister that only a very small percentage of the money the Government is prepared to find has been spent. Therefore it is obvious that such means have proved unsatisfactory. It has been found that, without a central authority, there is a woeful lack of co-ordination and possibly because of this, the local authorities show an understandable apathy. What is definitely needed is the driving force of an energetic board, vested with full powers.

Mr. Griffith: Not all local authorities have been apathetic in the matter of foreshore improvement.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I am in entire agreement with the hon. member.

Mr. May: And not all of them have shown driving force, either.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Many of them have not done their job. Then there is another body called the Swan River Conservation Committee, composed of a band of civic-minded men who realise the limitations of present-day river administration. This committee has attempted, with some success, to clear up some of the more obvious points of pollution, and there are also a number of individuals who, of their own volition, have attempted to do what they could to keep the river as pure as it should be.

In these circumstances, it must be patent to all that such a diverse handling of a precious asset is, to say the least, highly unsatisfactory and entirely irrational. I have little doubt that a board such as I envisage and others before me have advocated will be brought into being in the years to come, but the time to take action is now, when it would be so simple to do it. Practically next door to us here is another national heritage of beauty—King's Park. The experience is that the park, contrary to the river, has been wisely administered over a period of about a quarter of a century by such a board, whose parallel in the case to which I am referring could do so much necessary work for the beautification, conservation and preservation of the Swan River.

I appeal to other members who could more ably espouse this cause than I to take up the cudgels and press that action

be taken to create a board such as I have mentioned. I am convinced it is imperative that a board should be created with plenary or statutory powers in order that the problems and obstacles which confront us may be overcome. I suppose there are obstacles and problems associated with the creation of such a board, but if there are they would only be technical or, what is worse, perverse. Let us follow in the footsteps of those who have already planned for the preservation of our heritage of beauty.

**MR. GUTHRIE (Bunbury)** [10.21]: To-night the member for Albany made a vicious attack on the Bunbury harbour. I really do not know his reason, for I am sure that if we of the outports worked together we would do much better than by taking a lone hand and making absolutely vicious attacks. The remarks of the hon. member constitute a hardy annual for him. I have been in this Chamber for only two years, but members who have been here for six or seven years have come to expect such comments from the hon. member and I suppose that those who have been here longer still remember his talking in that way. Putting the boots into Bunbury seems to be a phobia with this gentleman. I do not think anyone takes him seriously.

**Mr. Cornell:** He does himself.

**Mr. GUTHRIE:** I know. I doubt whether as much money has been spent in Bunbury as has been spent in Albany. I think that the Albany harbour is being dredged at present by a Dutch firm which has signed contracts involving hundreds of thousands of pounds, but I doubt whether the harbour is anywhere near deep enough to take big ships. I know that plenty of wheat ships have had to leave Albany on account of the inadequate depth of water. So I do not know that Albany is much better than Bunbury. We admit that there is silt at Bunbury, but the problem has been solved by Col. Tydeman. I can give the hon. member an assurance that the Minister for Works has told me that as soon as the financial position has improved, work will be continued at Bunbury, and will eventually be a first-class harbour.

**Mr. May:** You had better send for the member for Albany when you say that.

**Mr. GUTHRIE:** If the hon. member concentrated on Albany he would be doing a much better service than he is at present. Co-operation is the keynote of progress, but the hon. member's remarks are clouded by petty parochialism. I do not know what is wrong with him.

**Hon. A. R. G. Hawke:** You do not?

**Mr. GUTHRIE:** He should not pick out one spot and concentrate on that. We of the outports should work together instead of working against one another. Fre-

mantle is the big port, and we will not get anything from Fremantle unless we co-operate with one another.

**Mr. Bovell:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. GUTHRIE:** I have here a cutting from "The South-Western Times". It is a letter having reference to the harbour dismissals and reads as follows:—

Sir,—I wish to thank your excellent paper for the splendid editorial dealing with Bunbury harbour dismissals.

The works have now been retrenched to the bare minimum, despite the fact that the work is only half completed. Tens of thousands of pounds worth of material and equipment will now deteriorate and rot.

We have heard much in the past regarding decentralisation, the outports and the hinterland. As far as Bunbury is concerned they are words without meaning, or just stock phrases, platitudes and catcheries. The official excuse for retrenchment, cuts in loan funds, is not a sufficient reason. Should war come to this country, Fremantle, the main port in Western Australia, is the logical No. 1 objective for attack. If the port installations were destroyed or damaged, there is not an efficient secondary port in the State capable of handling a fair volume of shipping, therefore, the Bunbury harbour works should have a priority as a defence project, and money allocated from the two hundred million pounds earmarked for defence.

In conclusion, may I suggest that the Bunbury Chamber of Commerce send a deputation to the Minister for Works without delay, not waiting until the end of October or until the business people of Bunbury are done irreparable injury when they feel the full impact of unemployment.—Yours, etc.

I, too, suggest that we should approach the Commonwealth, from the point of view of Bunbury and of the State as a whole, to see whether we cannot get some defence money. The war position must be easing and the Commonwealth should be able to spend some money in Bunbury. Once again I would say that I do not know what is wrong with the member for Albany. He gets on to one subject—Bunbury! When he mentioned it first tonight, I thought he was going to say something nice about it, but he only spoke about the Bishop and not of the work that is going on down there. I hope the next time the hon. member speaks, he will talk of something else besides Bunbury.

**Mr. Bovell:** Next time I think he might say, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

**Mr. GUTHRIE:** I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. J. T. Tonkin, debate adjourned.

**ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.**

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. D. R. McLarty—Murray): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.30 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.*

The **MINISTER** replied:

(1)

1950—597,681lb. = 264 tons.

1951—437,573lb. = 195 tons 4 cwt.

1952—January 1 to July 31—

462,671lb. = 216 tons 11 cwt.

Pro rata quota to the 31st July, 1952—475,822lb.

Under the Margarine Act the year commenced on the 1st January and the annual quota is 364 tons.

(2)

1949-50—2,131,085lb. = 951 tons 7 cwt.

1950-51—2,212,541lb. = 987 tons 14 cwt.

1951-52—2,218,708lb. = 990 tons 9 cwt.

Although there is no segregation in the keeping of statistics between the imports of cooking and table margarine, it is known that the great bulk of, if not all, the margarine referred to above was cooking margarine. There is no knowledge of any table margarine being imported during those years.

(3) There is no information available regarding the actual composition of margarine. The main ingredient is usually coconut oil with smaller proportions of others such as peanut oil. Supply is mainly through the Lever organisations and the exact origin of the oil used in Western Australia is not known.

## Legislative Council

Thursday, 28th August, 1952.

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

### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

The **PRESIDENT**: I am prepared to swear in Hon. H. K. Watson who was returned for the Metropolitan Province at the biennial election.

Hon. H. K. Watson took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

### QUESTIONS.

#### MARGARINE.

*As to State Manufacture, Imports and Ingredients.*

Hon. C. H. **HENNING** asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What was the amount of margarine manufactured in Western Australia for the years 1949-50, 1950-51, 1951-52 respectively?

(2) What was the amount imported during each of the same years?

(3) What are the principal ingredients used in the manufacture of margarine, the percentage of each used, and the country of origin?

### MILK.

*As to Action to Increase Production.*

Hon. L. C. **DIVER** asked the Minister for Agriculture:

Further to my question of Thursday, the 21st August, 1952, in view of the fact that the farmers in the agricultural areas now specialise in the production of grain, wool and meat, how does he propose to increase milk production?

The **MINISTER** replied:

There are approximately 8,000 farms producing grain and wool, and, allowing two cows per farm, the production should equal a total of 48,000 boxes of butter nearly the equivalent of what we imported last year. In addition, it would provide a good supply of milk, butter and cream and a by-product for feeding pigs and poddy lambs, as well as a return from the sale of calves, which would also be an added source of meat production. It has always been Government policy to encourage farmers to be self-supporting in dairy produce.

### BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 26th August.

**HON. E. M. DAVIES** (West) [4.40]: I rise to oppose the second reading of this most repressive measure which is bristling with plenary clauses apparently directed at one section of the community that is most important in this State. The relationship