

sold. The industry has asked for this increase, which I think is justified, to keep this fund in line with the all-round increase in costs and to provide for compensation for loss of potatoes due to disease or flood damage. The increase in the fund will allow the people concerned to look after themselves rather than seek assistance from the Government.

The other amendment recommended by the Trust Fund Committee is that the financial year for this fund shall end on the 30th September instead of the 31st July. This is purely for the convenience of the administration, as it places the fund in line with the Potato Marketing Board and the Potato Growers' Association, whose financial years end on the 30th September. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. L. Roche, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE
(Hon. G. B. Wood—Central): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 18th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 12th September, 1951.

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

QUESTIONS.

SERVICEMEN'S LAND SETTLEMENT.

(a) *As to Dairy Farms, Allottees and Development.*

Mr. HOAR asked the Minister for Lands:

(1) How many dairy farms have been occupied under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme to date?

(2) How many of the original allottees to these farms still occupy them?

(3) Have any of these farms reached the standard of development, viz., 40 cow standard, as laid down in the original agreement? If so, how many, and where are they situated?

(4) Is it his intention to enable purchase of these farms before the above standard is reached?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) One hundred and ninety.

(2) One hundred and sixty-six.

(3) Yes. One hundred and forty-three. Perth, 15; Kudardup, 30; Pemberton, 37; Denmark, 19; Northcliffe, 5; Hester, 32; Albany, 5.

(4) No.

(b) *As to Use of Esperance Areas.*

Hon. E. NULSEN asked the Minister for Lands:

In view of the fact that numbers of applicants, trained and experienced in farming are unplaced, and thousands of acres on the Esperance Downs await development—

(1) Why has the War Settlement Scheme Board not considered opening up this land for soldier settlement?

(2) Has he given any thought to the potentiality of the Esperance Downs?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Because of extensive commitments for land settlement in other parts of the State.

(2) Yes. Large areas have been made available for general selection under special settlement conditions.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

(a) *As to Results of Pollution Tests.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) Have the results of the monthly tests for pollution in Fremantle Harbour, carried out over the last 3 years, been collected and collated?

(2) Will he make them available for perusal?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Tests taken have been collected and collated.

(2) Yes. They can be inspected by prior arrangement with the Engineer in Charge, Public Works Drawing Office.

(b) *As to Bacteria in Water Samples.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Works:

(1) What types of bacteria were discovered in the samples of water gathered in Fremantle on the 9th October, 1950?

(2) What was the count of the bacteria in the samples taken from the central part of the harbour?

The PREMIER replied:

(1) Unspecified, but some B. Coli were present.

(2) Victoria Quay—170, 150, 80 organisms per cc. North Wharf—65, 115, 120 organisms per cc.

These represent a very small amount of organisms of which only a fraction would be B. coli.

(c) *As to Discharge of Waste by Ships.*

Mr. GRAYDEN asked the Minister for Works:

How many cases have occurred since 1946 of agents, or masters of vessels, being warned or charged regarding the discharge of oil or rubbish into Fremantle Harbour?

The PREMIER replied:

Thirty, mostly in regard to the escape of oil.

BILL—RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT AND CONTINUANCE.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Education, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clauses 4 and 7.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Section 15 (2):

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I rang the member for Melville this morning, and as a result of our discussions yesterday it was understood that by agreement we would make an effort to proceed with the recommittal of this measure this afternoon. The hon. member now has before him the amendments that I propose to move concurrent with the recommittal of this Bill. The first of them deals with the last line of paragraph (d) (b) of

Clause 4. It will be remembered that the hon. member sought to strike out all the words after the word "where" in line 9 of paragraph (d) (b) down to the end of that paragraph, with the idea of clarifying what he considered to be a possible anomaly or something that might lead to a misunderstanding. I undertook to have the matter discussed with the Parliamentary Draftsman to see whether he concurred as to the possibility, but at the same time I could not agree that the hon. member's amendment was satisfactory. The point was the question of one tenant other than the owner being in the building. To clear that up, I move an amendment—

That at the end of paragraph (d)

(b) after the word "Act" the following words be inserted:—"there being one tenant only in the building."

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I think the amendment exactly meets the position with which I dealt last night. In cases where there is only a tenant, it will ensure that the tenant is not protected, and the lessor if he feels that the tenant is unsuitable, may give notice, but he cannot serve notice on other tenants if there is more than one in the building. That is what I desired and I have no objection to the Minister's way of doing it.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7—Section 15A amended:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move an amendment—

That after the word "hardship" at the end of paragraph (b) of proposed new Subsection (2a) the following words be added:—"but the provisions of this paragraph shall not prejudice or affect the provisions of Subsection (3) of Section 18M of this Act, which relates to consideration of hardship where the tenant is a protected person in the circumstances referred to in that subsection."

Last evening the opinion was expressed that there was a remote possibility of the word "hardship" in this instance conflicting with Section 18M relating to service personnel. I thought it desirable to mention this to the draftsman, and his opinion is that the words proposed to be added arise out of an abundance of caution, because he holds the view expressed here last night that it is a very remote possibility. However, as our purpose, as I have endeavoured to explain all along, is to remove opportunities for doubt wherever humanly practicable, I decided to adopt the amendment.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am pleased that the Minister has moved the amendment in this way. I was prepared to accept the view that there was no danger of a protected person's being prejudiced by the wording of the Bill, but there was a doubt and previous experience has shown that

sometimes when we are reasonably sure of the position, opportunities are found to evade the provisions of the law. On the principle that it is better to be sure than sorry, we would be wise to incorporate this amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move an amendment—

That after the word "common" at the end of the clause, the following words be added: "and at that date did not own any other premises being a dwelling-house whether solely, jointly or in common."

As I have explained, the idea of giving a paramount right of re-entry to an owner without further proof of need was in favour of those persons with only one dwelling-house. Doubt was expressed regarding the reference in the second paragraph to the notice or declaration that might be given and made after the 1st September, 1951. The question was whether it would not be possible for circumstances to creep in so that the paramount and specific provision aiming at benefiting the landlord might not benefit persons who had other properties and were merely doing some transferring for reasons other than an absolute need. Such persons have their rights under other provisions of this legislation. They are not deprived of their rights because they will have an opportunity to prove their need to the court. This particular type of person, however, should have a paramount right, and the amendment should make the intention clear and prevent opportunities for evasion.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: This amendment represents a very real step forward in clarification, and rules out the possibility of some of those actions which I contemplated might be taken by persons who own a number of properties and might wish successfully to get them back by the expedient of leaving the premises they are already in for the purpose of complying with the provisions of the measure. As I see it, the amendment will still not prevent a person who has two houses from selling one and putting a tenant out of the other.

The Minister for Education: Possibly not, but I could not find any way of going any further.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If an owner had two houses and had been living in one and renting the other to a tenant for a considerable time, he could still sell one and immediately afterwards make application for the other to be restored to him, and he would not have to prove anything.

The Minister for Education: That might be so in the case I have mentioned, but it is covered in another part of the measure.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What hardship would be imposed if such an owner were required to come under the other provisions and prove reasonable need?

The Minister for Education: We do not consider that he should be under that obligation.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is where we differ. We must have regard for the fact that, while we do not want to deny the owner in reasonable circumstances the opportunity to get his own home, we do not want him to have that opportunity regardless of what might happen to tenants and little children. It is all very well to say the rights of ownership should have full consideration, and that if a man owns a house he should be able to get into it, but we are a Christian people and should have some regard for what is going to happen to the tenant and his wife and children, and other people, if the owner gets possession of the house. I do not think it is too much to ask that when an owner has already sold one house, he should prove that he has reasonable need of the other. If my proposal was to preclude him from getting his house, I could understand the Government's attitude, but I have no intention of preventing an owner from attempting to get his house in the proper way. An owner who owned a house, and within a short time of getting out of it tried to obtain possession of another that he owned, should be called upon to establish some reasonable need when he went to the court to have the tenant put out. I hold that view very firmly. Why should a man, because he owns a house, simply apply to the court and get it, irrespective of whether he wants it for the purpose of legitimately living in it, or to make a show of living in it so that he can subsequently sell at a high figure?

The Attorney General: He must have sold his house and been out of it for six months.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Where does the Bill say that?

The Attorney General: He has to give six months' notice. The second one is not the date of application, but the date of declaration.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: He has to be out of his home when he makes the declaration.

The Attorney General: That is so.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: He can make the declaration the day after he gets out.

The Attorney General: Yes, and then he has to give six months' notice.

The Minister for Education: He has to wait six months, and you want him to wait 12 months. I thought we had made a fair compromise.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I thought that with a wait of 12 months we would get 18 months in the aggregate.

The Minister for Education: In our opinion that is far too long.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The idea was not to make him wait for that length of time, but to show him it would not be worth his while trying to do what he had in mind. Some persons who feel they could take

advantage of a high market would be tempted to get their tenants out for the purpose of selling.

The Attorney General: They would need to have somewhere to go.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That would not be difficult for a man with money. There are plenty of hotels.

The Attorney General: You cannot get into hotels now.

The Minister for Education: The owner of a maximum of two houses might not have much money.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, and that, I admit, alters the position considerably from what is was last night. But there is still the possibility that the interests of tenants would be completely disregarded, and the way made too easy for owners to get their houses back. I cannot see what hardship we would impose on a landlord if, when he wanted one of his homes for himself, having already sold the other, we required him to do the same as he has to do if he wants the home for his father and mother. The Bill will provide, when it is passed, that if the owner wants to get a house for his father and mother, he has to establish reasonable need. Why should he not establish reasonable need for himself, if he has just sold a house? I would agree that if it is a case of getting one house, and he has not just sold another, for the purpose of living in it himself, the position should be made as easy as possible for him. He should merely have to say that he requires the house for his own use, and not have to prove other things.

The Attorney General: He might not have been living in the house he sold.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If he has just sold a place, why should we not say to him, "Seeing you have just sold a house and put a tenant out, you must prove reasonable need with respect to this other house." If he had a good reason for selling the house he was in, he would not have the slightest difficulty in proving reasonable need of the other but, if not, he would be in trouble. The question is: Should we protect a tenant who is occupying a house, one of two belonging to a landlord, if that landlord, without proper cause, has just sold the other? That is the question we have to face. My view is that the tenant should be protected. If the owner had a good and proper reason for selling the house that he disposed of, and required the other, he should get it.

Mr. Griffith: What would you say is a good and proper reason for selling?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: A man might have lived at Esperance for some time in a house he owned, and he might also own a house in Perth. He might be transferred from his job, or retire and wish to live in Perth. So he would sell the house in

Esperance and go to Perth. Such a man should be allowed to live in his own home in Perth. I could quote a number of similar illustrations. But if a man has two houses in Perth and he chooses one to live in and remains in it for some years, and then someone offers him a high figure for it, he should not be allowed to sell it solely for the purpose of capitalising on existing conditions and then be able to put his tenant out straight away, without having to prove anything. I would allow him to sell his house at the high figure, if he wanted to, but then I would make him go to the court and establish reasonable need for the other house. I would not say that he should get it automatically. That is where we differ on this question; and I am not going to budge on this point.

If a man wants to get a house for his married son or daughter, the Act requires that he shall go to the Court and prove reasonable need. I think he ought to do the same thing if he has already sold the house in which he is living. I would only exempt him from that necessity in cases where he owned only one house and was not therefore living in one which he owned at the time when he made application. I am sorry the Government does not see it my way but I hope that it will agree to my proposition.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I propose to support the proposition put forward by the member for Melville. I think it is a reasonable one. All it asks is that in the case of an owner selling one of his houses for the purpose of securing a high figure on an inflated market, he shall have to prove reasonable need to occupy one of his other houses. Some of my own friends, who own more than one house, have sold properties at inflated values and, after all, this Bill is one which is supposed to give protection to tenants. If we threw the whole measure overboard there would be civil strife and commotion and it is because of its need that the Act is still in existence. The Minister says that he has gone halfway in this matter, but I suggest a period of at least 12 months is not unreasonable in the circumstances.

If I were an owner of property and sold one of my houses for the purpose of securing an inflated price, I would be quite happy if I could go ahead and evict the tenant in one of my other properties. I know many women who are tenants of houses and they are bundles of nerves, not knowing what is going to happen next. If this amendment is agreed to it will mean that the landlord will put up with some inconvenience for at least 12 months and that is a fair and reasonable proposition. I know of many people in my own district who secured permits to build after having proved hardship. Many of them sold those houses because

of the high prices offering, and were quite prepared to get out and live under difficult circumstances again. A-number of them secured a further opportunity to build but because of price increases they now find that they are paying as much, if not more, for the new houses than they received for the ones they previously sold. The proposition submitted by the member for Melville concerns landlords who own two or more houses and is, therefore, quite reasonable.

The cases submitted by the member for Melville in regard to people living in country districts who owned houses in those districts, and in the metropolitan area, were quite correct. People in such cases are entitled to repossession of their homes if they have retired and wish to come to Perth or have been transferred to the metropolitan area. In those circumstances, I support the member for Melville and the proposition he has put forward.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported with further amendments.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
(Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling) [5.10]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the further report of the Committee on the Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act Amendment and Continuance Bill to be adopted at this sitting.

I do this so that the Bill may be reprinted and sent to another place early next week.

Mr. Marshall: You have no right to do that. This Government does not seem to know where it is for five minutes.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: As this motion must be passed by an absolute majority of members, I have counted the House and assured myself that there is an absolute majority present. There being no dissentient voice, I declare the question duly passed.

Question thus passed.

Reports.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
(Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling) [5.10]: I move—

That the reports of the Committee be adopted.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [5.11]: I do not intend to hold up the Bill because I would like to see it get a swift passage through to the Legislative Council where I know that it will come before the political gallows and be hanged and quartered in no uncertain fashion, as it

was on the last occasion. However, I want to ask the Minister, who is a legal man, whether this Bill, as it is titled, could not be challenged at law and its operations prevented from becoming operative. The Bill is titled "Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act Amendment Act," implying that we are still at war and that abnormal circumstances prevailing during the war period warrant the passage of a measure of this sort. In my judgment there is no war in existence and I think the title of the Bill should be altered to imply that there is a necessity for legislation of this kind and without any reference to a war, or the necessity for restricting increases of rents because there is a war in existence.

Mr. Griffith: Does it not protect certain Servicemen who are at war?

Mr. MARSHALL: One does not know what will happen when lawyers get on to these things in the Courts. They start to argue about them and one does not know what the decisions of these learned gentlemen will be. The Commonwealth Government has had competent draftsmen prepare certain legislation similar to this and yet when it has been taken to the High Court it has been declared unconstitutional and therefore null and void. I am not really concerned but I would not like to see the Act become inoperative because of its Title, which implies that it is necessary only because there is a war in existence. I leave it to the Minister to decide whether it is all right and that there is no chance of its being successfully challenged at law.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
(Hon. A. F. Watts—Stirling—in reply) [5.13]: I have no doubt whatever in my mind; the position is perfectly satisfactory to me. The Bill is before us to amend and continue an Act which is known as the "Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act."

Mr. Marshall: But the word "known" is not here.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Well, it is the "Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act" as it appears on the Statute Book. It would be impossible, therefore, to amend or continue anything else unless the hon. member considers that we should have brought down an amendment to the original Title of the parent Act. I do not agree with that proposition. I would also suggest to the hon. gentleman that there are two reasons whereby a war is concerned in this Bill; firstly, because I think we are still legally at war with some of our former enemies and, secondly, because this Bill makes provision for certain Servicemen.

Mr. Marshall: The High Court did not agree with you on that point, according to the decisions it gave.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Yes, it did, but it took up a doubt about there being actual hostilities. The point the

hon. member is thinking about could not be successfully held. As I said, the second and most important point in the Bill is that there are certain parts of it which deal with Servicemen engaged in hostilities, or circumstances arising out of those hostilities. In that case it would be quite wrong, in my view, to even alter the Title of the parent Act. I have no doubt at all in the matter.

Question put and passed; the reports adopted.

MOTION—RAILWAYS.

As to South-of-River Link with Fremantle.

HON. J. B. SLEEMAN (Fremantle)
[5.15]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should proceed with the building of the south of the river railway which many engineers in the past have recommended, including Mr. Meyer who was brought here by the Government in connection with the Fremantle Harbour Scheme.

In moving this motion it is not my intention to take up much time of the House because I think it presents an unanswerable case and most members will have the commonsense to see that it is necessary.

Mr. Marshall: You refer to commonsense and yet you are looking towards the Ministerial side of the House!

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I anticipate that there will be few members who will vote against the motion. Most of them will agree that the time has long since past for the railways to continue going through the centre of Perth. We all know what a bottle-neck the trains cause through travelling through the heart of the city and how that restricts the development of the city northwards. If the city were extended to the north where there is more room, its growth would proceed much more rapidly. We have been told that in about 30 years Perth is going to double its population. If that is so, we must make way for the increase in its numbers and ensure that the present bottle-neck in Perth continues no longer. We are also told that at some future date the proposal for the unification of all railways throughout the Commonwealth will be realised, and the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge will terminate in Perth instead of at Kalgoorlie at present if it is extended through to the coastal cities.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The conversation in the Chamber is too great.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: Brisbane saw to that when the 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge was put through to Queensland. They made South Brisbane the terminus and did not allow the railway to reach the city. I think we could follow its example. I do not think there is any need for the railway to run through the city if the south of the river railway is built. The Premier fully realises

the loss that is being incurred in the railways at present. The terminus should be outside the city limits and a beautiful boulevard built right through to the port of Fremantle. With the introduction of diesel buses and other modes of transport, the railways in the metropolitan area could be dispensed with completely.

Some years ago I remember the member for Claremont addressing this House and he advised that that was the proper course to follow. I feel sure that if the hon. member were in his old place on the floor of the House today, he would still be of that opinion. However, I am not going to invite Mr. Speaker to do that as a member did once when speaking on the debate on the Esperance railway-line. On that occasion the hon. member said, "I think, you, Mr. Speaker, should come down from your perch and fight for the Esperance railway-line." In the past the member for Claremont did support the idea that the railway line running through Perth should be scrapped, and that a beautiful boulevard should be built right through to the port. We propose to move the railway yards and the loco. sheds. I am sure the member for East Perth is pleased to know that he is going to get rid of them.

Mr. Graham: Yes, but I did not get much assistance from the member for Fremantle when that proposal was aired.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There is no need for the hon. member to remind me of that at present. At the Bassendean end there was some reason for that at the time until a few points were satisfactorily cleared up. As the loco. sheds are to go and the railway yards are to be shifted, the terminus should be in one of the suburbs instead of being in the heart of the city, thereby making possible the extension of the city northward, as should be done. The railway should branch off somewhere near Guildford or Midland, run south to Fremantle and cross the river near Riverton. If members know Riverton, it will be realised that it would not be a costly job to span the river in that area. It would not require the expenditure of £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 to bridge the river there. That is the route the railway should follow, and nearly every engineer to whom I have spoken agrees with me in my contention. A Select Committee in 1944 recommended that the south of the river railway line should be built. "The West Australian" newspaper, Mr. Meyer, the visiting engineer from South Australia and, last but not least, all the town-planners, recommend the building of this railway-line. To quote "The West Australian" for a start, I will read an extract from its leading article, dated the 18th June, 1951—

So much is at stake that the Government would be well advised to think again before it commits itself irrevocably to a policy which will certainly

make it more difficult to abate the railway nuisance in the metropolitan area, which will involve costly and probably very protracted bridge-building, which will inevitably add to congestion in Fremantle and which will necessitate large-scale resumptions in the built-up areas of North Fremantle.

The following is another extract from the leading article published in "The West Australian" of the 7th May, 1951—

Mr. Meyer was influenced by the prospects of South-West development on Fremantle's trade. Even if he made insufficient allowance for Bunbury's claims, his views on railway transport were logical and far-sighted. They were not new; he, himself, quoted Sir George Buchanan and Mr. Stileman in support of them. Their acceptance, combined with the Railway Department's own metropolitan proposals, such as the new marshalling yards at Bassendean and the removal of the Perth goods and carriage sheds to East Perth, would make for a much more efficient system without heavy expenditure and would help to remove one of the main obstacles to Perth's progress.

I will now quote from the "Daily News." This cutting reads—

Town Planner Visits Fremantle.

Noted British town planner, Professor W. G. Holford,—

Hon. A. H. Panton: We have no town-planner at Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I want to tell the member for Leederville that Fremantle can boast a town planner and it is just as well for him to know that we do have one.

Mr. Marshall: You would not think so to look at Fremantle.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: If we received assistance from the Government we would see that town planning would be possible, but if the harbour is built where it is proposed to build it, there will be no town planning for Fremantle. It is well for the member for Murchison to realise that. We are doing our best to make town planning available to Fremantle. I agree there is a need for it, and I do not think there is any other place which requires it more. The opinion of the person I am going to quote, however, is not that of a Fremantle town planner but a very noted world-wide town planner from abroad. In the "Daily News" we have an article which reads as follows:—

Noted British town planner, Professor W. G. Holford visited Fremantle this week and met Mayor, Sir Frank Gibson, M.L.C., and members of the council's town planning committee. Asked by the chairman, Councillor W. F. Samson of his opinion on the need for a south-of-the-river railway to Fremantle, Professor Holford replied, "I'm all for it. It is absolutely vital."

I think that is a very definite statement. There is no humbug about it whatever. He said "I'm all for it. It is absolutely vital." In "The West Australian" of the 27th August we have another statement by this eminent town planner, a part of which reads as follows:—

Roads and railways must be planned to feed the port and industry must be closely allied to the roads. A south-of-the-river railway was inevitable as a feeder to Fremantle, the gateway of the Continent.

This is another very definite statement and he points out that it is essential to have a south-of-the-river railway run to Fremantle.

Mr. Styants: How long was he here?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I do not think he was here very long.

Mr. Styants: Three days.

The Chief Secretary: Three working days.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: There have been engineers who have passed through and have given us their opinions on bigger subjects than that. But if the member for Kalgoorlie does not think it long enough, we may be able to arrange for some other eminent town planner to come here and give us his views. I notice that the Minister said that our local town planning committee was in favour of this, and since the Minister answered the question I take it for granted that he is also in favour of it. In "The West Australian" of the 26th August, we have the following:—

Town planner sees need for more parking space.

And Professor Holford in the same article commented as follows:—

You cannot have the centre of a town a goods yard. One side or the other will have to develop as the main shopping centre.

That also applies to Perth where we have the railway line running right through the shopping centre and preventing the city from expanding northwards. If we were to cut out the metropolitan railway and re-site the termini, we could have a south-of-the-river railway taking goods to Fremantle. It would also be possible to have a beautiful boulevard built up to the port and it would save the £4,900,000 estimated by Mr. Tydeman for the construction of the bridge. I do not think there would be any need for a bridge as expensive as that if the railway were taken to Fremantle from the south. We require a bridge for a while, but I do not think there would be any necessity for such an elaborate bridge as has been suggested, if the railway line were taken south to Fremantle. I feel sure it is the opinion of most members that this south-of-the-river railway is very essential.

Mr. W. Hegney: What point in Perth would you suggest would be an appropriate place for a terminus for the railway?

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN: I will leave that to the authorities to decide; they will have to take the various aspects into consideration. As long as we get the railway from Guildford or Midland south of the river, they could then decide where it would be best to have the terminus and the boulevard. If that were done it would not cost very much; we have the land cleared and we also have the metal along the railway line. I think that metal could be used for making a beautiful highway from Perth down to the Port of Fremantle.

On motion by the Minister for Education, debate adjourned.

MOTION—LIME-SUPER MIXTURE AS FERTILISER.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

Debate resumed from the 5th September on the following motion by Mr. Hearman:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the efficacy of the agricultural practices of Mr. Eric Farleigh, the desirability of their wider application in heavy rainfall areas, the effect of their adoption on the sulphur supply position and the railway position, and the availability of lime for agricultural purposes.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. L. Thorn—Toodyay) [5.30]: The Government does not intend to oppose the motion. Members listened with great interest to the case put up by the hon. member for an inquiry. He was able to give us quite a lot of information on the use of lime for agricultural purposes. Some doubt has been expressed departmentally as to the value of using lime for this purpose, but I, as a man of the land, consider that it can be used to very great advantage. The hon. member mentioned the property of Mr. Eric Farleigh and told us of the use that gentleman had made of lime.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It is in no sense a fertiliser, is it?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not the knowledge to say definitely, but I do know that lime is a neutraliser. It will neutralise unfavourable acids in the soil, and I have been given to understand that it does release dormant deposits of fertiliser in the soil. I have used lime in large quantities, and have proved that it is a great sweetener of the soil.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: I understand that it stirs the bacteria into action.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. Grasses grown on lime formation have a great value and a great influence on the health of stock. As an example, I refer to the Belmont area, where some very fine pastures are growing on limestone

formation. We know that in the coastal areas, cattle can be left too long on limestone country and they become "coasty." Under proper management, however, the stock is moved inland to the ironstone country and the two types conjointly have a great value in the breeding and the health of stock.

We have been told about the difficulty in providing supplies of super and, if lime or ground limestone in any form can be used in such a way as to be beneficial in agricultural practice, we should employ it to the best possible advantage. The hon. member, in moving his motion, set out to prove that lime could be used with good results. Seeing that on the information available to us we may be faced with a shortage of super, the Government feels that a full investigation into this matter may prove of great value to the State.

Reverting to the use of lime as a neutraliser, I have a suggestion to make to men on the land distant from medical assistance. When I was living on the land and we were raising a young family, we always kept a bottle of distilled limewater—it was made from quicklime—mixed with olive oil into an emulsion for use in case of accidental burning. My experience was that when one was engaged in clearing operations, the children were apt to wander through the property and sometimes would unwittingly walk through hot ashes. That happened to members of my family and we found the emulsion effective. The Government is prepared to encourage all the scientific investigation possible into the value of our lime deposits and the use of lime on the soil, and therefore proposes to support the motion.

MR. KELLY (Merredin-Yilgarn) [5.37]: I was pleased to hear the Minister's statement that the Government intends to support the motion. I believe that an inquiry will have far-reaching possibilities and that the extensive use of lime mixed with super could partially solve quite a number of problems that from time to time confront the man on the land. In view of the shortage of super and the importance of its sulphur content, I am hopeful that the difficulty may be eased in the way suggested by the hon. member and, therefore, the motion for an inquiry has much to commend it.

My belief is that the use of lime mixed with super would have far-reaching effects in that the stock-carrying capacity of the grazing areas would be greatly increased. I am satisfied on this point from personal experience and from personal experiment. The hon. member mentioned that the use of lime in this way would lead to a great saving in the jute requirements of the State. To my mind, there is no doubt on that point; the reduced severity of the action of the lime-super mixture would be beneficial in view of the very meagre and costly supplies of bags available at

present. There is no doubt that the pastures of the State would be greatly improved if more producers had at hand greater supplies of lime.

For some months the Press, not only in this State but also in other parts of the Commonwealth, has given publicity to this subject, as a result of which there has arisen a very keen controversy regarding the use of lime on the soil. But far more important than the possibilities of lime is the controversy which has taken place in the Press over the last 18 months about super shortage, railage difficulties, allocation priorities, late deliveries of super, and attendant problems that have been ventilated, a controversy that has shown the extreme anxiety which exists concerning the supply and transport of super to the various parts of the State.

I am afraid that I cannot find in the statements of the Minister for Agriculture any suggestion of a reasonable solution of the difficulty facing us with regard to possible shortage of super. In fact, I think the Minister has been of very little help in the matter of solving problems of supply and rationing. It appears that the companies are being left to dispense what super is available in any way they think fit.

I know there has been a committee dealing with this matter, but it has not solved the difficulty; and I repeat that producers throughout the State have become very concerned about the situation they are facing. There is no guarantee that future supplies will meet the increasing demand. Many farmers have been delayed in formulating plans because of the uncertainty of the supply of super. The present methods of allocation are obsolete, inasmuch as we are basing the requirements of 1951 on the 1941 formula.

It is ridiculous that we should continue to allocate the super available on the basis that applied in 1941. At that time many farmers required less super than is needed today, bearing in mind that wheat was not worth anything like what it is now and that the raising of our pasture standards was not regarded as so important as is the case now. We are very unwise to live in the past when it comes to the question of the distribution of super. Today's altered circumstances demand a more modern approach. The scientific application of the available supplies is also most essential.

There should not be any haphazard method in vogue; and, with all the brains available, I feel that a far better method could be evolved of distributing the super at our disposal than a straightout 10 per cent. reduction, or whatever other percentage reduction is decided upon. It is ridiculous for any arbitrary body to say to a farmer who has been accustomed to obtaining 11 tons of super in the past

that his amount must be reduced to 10 tons and expect him to make do with that quantity. We know from travelling in the country that some farmers, even with that percentage reduction based on the 1941 allocation, are obtaining many more tons than they require.

That is a matter which could come within the scope of the committee's inquiry. A thorough investigation of all the alternatives is essential and urgent. The member for Blackwood is to be commended on the address he gave this House and the information which he imparted in reference to the pre-mixing of lime and super. His evidence must have convinced everybody; and there is no need for me to labour the point, particularly as the Minister has agreed to accept the motion.

I would, however, ask that this committee also fully investigate the advisability of using greater quantities of ground rock phosphate not only in the areas that the hon. member has in mind, but also in the drier areas. There is an increasing feeling amongst farmers that ground rock phosphate, as distinct from super, would have beneficial and lasting effects in areas not so happily situated with respect to heavy rainfall. The use of rock phosphate would also remove to some extent our worry about sulphur supplies. I support the motion.

MR. BRADY (Guildford-Midland) (5.46): I feel that the member for Blackwood would have served his purpose better, and probably the general community, if he had asked for wider powers in connection with this inquiry. His main objective is to try to relieve the drain on the super supply and ascertain what virtues lime has as applied to agricultural pursuits.

For four or five years I was associated indirectly with the lime industry, and I would point out that there are a number of different types of lime in this State. Along the Wanneroo-rd., in the Toodyay electorate, there are at least a dozen or 15 kilns from Wanneroo to Yanchep on the right hand side of the road. Although I have travelled all over Western Australia, I have never seen a richer soil than is to be found there. A very deep, dark loamy soil exists in that area, which is very valuable for vegetable growing and intense culture.

The committee might gain valuable information by visiting that district and noticing in what close proximity the rich land is to the lime kilns. In some lime deposits the product is of practically no value from an agricultural point of view. It may be good for making roads or for building purposes, but not for agriculture. If the committee interviews some of the owners of the lime kilns, I think it will find that the percentage values of lime fluctuate from 50 per cent. pure to nearly 98 per cent. pure. In the Dongara area there are lime kilns, as the Minister for Lands will know, and one is actually burn-

ing beach sands to get lime for mining purposes. There are lime kilns at Fremantle, but the lime they produce is good only for roads and buildings, and not for agricultural purposes.

The committee might, in dealing with the question of relieving the strain on the super pool, have regard for doing something with compost. I do not think sufficient has been heard in Western Australia of the method of getting manure by this means. A friend of mine from India told me a little while ago that he was being paid £30 a week by the authorities there to gather the refuse from the streets and make it into compost for agricultural purposes. Also, recently a man in the Herne Hill district wrote me a long screed on the value of sewage to agriculture. I pass this information on to the member for Blackwood in the hope that it will be of some value to him, and his committee, in the course of their inquiries. I do not think we make sufficient use of the sewage that is available.

I would also mention seaweed, which I have heard of as being used extensively, in some countries, because of its chemical value. That is something I can quite understand, because when I visited Busselton some years ago I saw hundreds of tons of seaweed impregnated with millions of maggots which were eating it. That gave me the impression that seaweed would have some chemical value, and I am of the opinion that it is of considerable manurial worth. The stuff was rotting there and, strangely enough, some millions of herring came close to the beaches, in the vicinity of Busselton, simply to get the maggots as they floated from the seaweed out to sea. The use of seaweed might help to relieve the strain on the super factories. Another aspect to be considered is that of the cost of super which, I think, is in the vicinity of £11 or £11 10s. a ton.

Mr. Ackland: It is £16 a ton.

Mr. BRADY: When I, as secretary of the union, was associated with the super industry in about 1933 or 1934, super could be bought for about £4 10s. or £5 a ton. Anything that can be done in the way of using lime, compost, sewage, seaweed or anything else of a like nature that can be mixed or used with super to add chemical values to our agricultural lands should be inquired into by the committee. I hope full consideration will be given to the points I have raised.

Question put and passed; the motion agreed to.

Select Committee Appointed.

On the motion by Mr. Hearman, Select Committee appointed consisting of Hon. E. Nulsen, Messrs. Hoar, Ackland, Mann and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, to move from place to place, and to report on the 10th October.

MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

As to Upstream or Seaward Extension.

Debate resumed from the 5th September on the following motion by Hon. J. B. Sleeman:—

That in view of the fact that Mr. Tydeman, in his report states—

(1) if the harbour extension goes upstream, insoluble difficulties will be left to posterity; that port expansion is better seaward, and not upstream;

(2) expansion seawards in the vicinity of the Swan River mouth is the most rational, providing not only for immediate needs, but unlimited adequate space for port requirements of posterity;

(3) seaward extension more to the advantage of town planning;

(4) one accident to a tanker, just inside the port, may put the port out of commission for years, but No. 1 berth will have to continue until seaward expansion takes place;

(5) schemes for seaward expansion provide all requirements, but upstream schemes have insufficient land for unrestricted layout;

(6) upstream development is more expensive than seaward development when the whole scheme is considered, but in the initial stages is cheaper;

and that Mr. Meyer, in his report, states—

If the harbour be extended upstream there will be occasion for special precautions against this nuisance occurring, namely, physical pollution finding it way into Freshwater Bay

this House requests the Government to go on with the outward to the south scheme instead of the upriver scheme that it has adopted.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. D. Brand—Greenough [5.55]): The problem of the expansion of Fremantle harbour, and the decision of the Government to accept the recommendation of Mr. Tydeman, for upriver development in the first place, has been subject to much criticism from certain quarters, and the cause of some newspaper controversy. Even today the leader in "The West Australian" is what I would call a parting shot, or broadside, to demoralise, if possible, the Government before, as I hope, this motion is defeated.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: It contains some sound arguments.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It was a pretty good article.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I felt that members opposite would agree with the thought expressed in it in connection with the decision of the Government to go upstream.

Mr. Graham: Does anyone agree with the Government's decision?

Hon. E. Nulsen: There must be collusion between the members representing the Fremantle district and "The West Australian."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. In the first place I remind the member for Fremantle that when, during the course of his speech on the last motion, he replied to an interjection by the member for Kalgoorlie, he said about Professor Holford, who is a worldwide adviser in respect to town planning, "Who do we want more than this? Do we have to get another expert?" So I say that the history of the investigation into the extension and development of the Fremantle harbour has been thoroughly dealt with; and it goes right back to the time of the late C. Y. O'Connor. We have had reports from Mr. Stileman, Sir Alexander Gibb, Sir George Buchanan, Mr. Tydeman and, lastly, Mr. Meyer. Each one of these engineers recommended development in the first place; upstream, more or less. Surely it is sufficient for any Government, when it calls upon experts for advice on a most complex problem such as this is, to accept the advice offered. How can the lay mind arrive at a satisfactory decision on this problem which, Mr. Tydeman tells me, is one of the most complex harbour problems he has ever experienced?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: We have his own statement.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of course we have Mr. Tydeman's statement, as the hon. member reminds me, and in it Mr. Tydeman weighs the pros and cons all the way through. He has advised me that because of the difficulties confronting the extension and construction of the harbour, he has gone from point to point placing the pros and cons of seaward and upriver development in order that the position might be clearly assessed. Then having assessed everything, he has recommended that the Government, in the first place, should proceed with an upriver development to the extent of 11 berths. I think it was Sir George Buchanan, of whom we have heard something in this House, who recommended that the whole extension, involving 22 berths, be upstream, even to Blackwall Reach. Mr. Stileman recommended 11 berths, and Sir Alexander Gibb who, following the recommendations of Mr. Stileman, was brought out to inquire into the position, also agreed that there should be a limited development upstream, and then a northward extension. This was agreed to by the last engineer to come here to report on the project, Mr. Meyer.

The Government, in accepting this recommendation, did not do so lightly. It appointed a committee comprised of the Director of Works, Mr. Dumas, the Under Treasurer, Mr. Reid, the Chief Civil Engineer of the Railway Department, the late Mr. J. S. Hood, and the then General Manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, the late Mr. G. V. McCartney. That committee met on a number of occasions and Mr. Tydeman's advice on his report was always available to them. They were quite happy to recommend to the Government that it should accept the report of Mr. Tydeman on the Fremantle harbour. The Director of Works is a man of very real experience in the engineering world. Mr. Reid was there to look after the economic side of the proposition, and the Chief Civil Engineer of the Railway Department was on the committee to see that the upriver extensions would not be in any way detrimental to the railway lay-out and that the best use could be made of the existing rail system in relation to upriver extension. The General Manager of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, the late Mr. McCartney, was there to look after the interests of the Harbour Trust as affected by the proposition. Mr. Tydeman did not complete his investigation in a few days but was engaged for about two years going very fully into the question. He was appointed by the previous Government, as a man with a world-wide reputation and one who had been adviser to Lord Mountbatten in the South Eastern Command in respect of harbour facility problems in that sphere of operations. Nowhere can one get more real and practical experience in such matters than is to be had under war-time conditions. Mr. Tydeman was called on to try to demolish Singapore harbour and was also, from time to time, requested to develop harbours and construct berthing facilities in as short a time as possible. I do not think there is any doubt as to the integrity, efficiency or ability of the engineer—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No one is doubting that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: —who finally recommended to the Government that the first stage of development should be upstream. In moving his motion the member for Fremantle endeavoured to emphasise—he did so by reading from Mr. Tydeman's report—the fact that there was some ambiguity in the recommendation of this engineer, and that it was, as it were, a "Yes-No" recommendation. On one previous occasion the hon. member quoted from the report, but I would point out that he did not always read a full paragraph but rather took from the body of the report the statements that suited his argument. I would make special mention of the question of cross-river communications, which has been raised on many occasions. I believe the member for Melville last year raised this point for the first time by drawing attention to the fact

that the Tydeman report stated that, if upriver extensions were proceeded with, we would pass on to posterity insoluble problems of cross-river communication. On page 9 of Volume I of the report, under the heading "Cross-River Communications," there appears the following:—

Existing rail and road bridges are sited more than one mile from the Swan River mouth and upstream of existing port facilities. Below these bridges, in the port area, there are no cross-river communications of major character and the large adjacent area of town land which ultimately will develop into highly populated and industrial zones will have no direct cross-river access for growing volumes of road and rail traffic.

As normal development of more intensive conditions eventuates, direct communication by means of continuous highways between these isolated town areas and downstream of existing bridges will become essential, creating familiar and difficult problems faced today by many older ports. Posterity will thus be confronted with what may prove to be insoluble problems resulting in impasse. Cross-river communications, essential nearer the mouth of the river than at present to cater for the developing township, and practicable only in the form of extremely expensive bridges or tunnels of sufficient height or depth respectively to permit navigable passage of ships in the river, may prove economically and/or engineeringly impossible.

If port development takes place upstream, existing rail and road bridges also must be re-sited further upstream. In consequence there will be an even greater extent of intensified township area downstream on both river banks, requiring direct cross-river communications for the greater traffic involved; more high level bridges or tunnels (the only positive communication method that does not obstruct shipping) will be required in consequence.

This problem to posterity, of virtually insoluble difficulties of bridges high enough to pass increasingly large ships beneath, or tunnels deep enough to allow gradually deeper navigable dredged depths of water, will thus be intensified by upriver development. High level bridges and tunnels are costly structures running into several millions of pounds.

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

He goes on to say—

Purely—

Let me emphasise that word.

Purely from the viewpoint of cross-river communications, in order to avoid immediate complications, or to hand on to posterity intensification of future insoluble or extremely expensive problems, upstream development of the port is better avoided.

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

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He continues—

Port expansion, therefore, if undertaken, would better be seawards and not upstream.

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

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is where the member for Fremantle stopped.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No, I did not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, he did.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I did not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member stopped at that point.

As to Point of Order.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I quoted the cogent reasons, and discussed them; they are the reasons the Minister is about to read. This can be checked and one of the reasons was that the bridges would have to be removed. I said that if the bridges are removed he will not be handing on those problems to posterity. That was one of the cogent reasons he gave. Also, he did not say he would get enough land, but more land.

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of order, but a matter of personal explanation.

Debate Resumed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am very glad of that assistance because this question was mentioned in the Press and in the notes I have with me. It was also quoted in the House last year by the member for Melville. He quoted this passage, but only referred to the insoluble problems we were leaving for posterity.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I gave the cogent reasons.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The engineer covered himself by saying "unless there are cogent reasons for doing so." He then goes on to say—

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

A very important reason why the existing rail bridge must be re-sited further upstream, is that reasonable and economic port railway operating efficiency is impossible with rail approaches as they are today, limited by the location of the existing rail bridge. The rail river crossing is too close to the berths for proper port rail lay-out. Re-siting the rail bridge further upstream near the road bridge (see Appendix 27) would only improve rail approaches partially, and though it would open up the best upriver dry-dock site and permit limited upstream berth expansion, would not improve port rail operating efficiency sufficiently to justify the cost involved. Re-siting the rail bridge upstream to at least Point Brown would be essential for full operating efficiency, for which purpose the road bridge would have to be re-sited there also.

In addition, the existing rail bridge has a limiting gradient of 1 in 60, small curves of nine chains maximum, and a low 20ft. 8in. river headroom clearance. These limitations are inadequate for present-day needs and will be more so in the future whether the present railway gauge is retained or standard gauge introduced. In like manner the existing road bridge headroom clearance, though greater than the rail bridge, is unacceptable for future development needs. In order to reduce gradients, to increase curves, to give headroom in keeping with standards which must ultimately be adopted, the existing road and rail bridges should be sited upstream, the best site for which is at Point Brown. The proposed design for both road and rail bridges is indicated in Appendices 4 and 23.

Use of this site would not only improve upriver flood conditions and downstream currents causing inconvenience in ship manoeuvring, but would permit more land to be acquired by resumption and reclamation—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I discussed that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: —

—land essential for ensuring improved existing and future port and railway operating efficiency at both North and South Quays.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He does not say "enough land." He says "more land."

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Before the tea suspension, I was referring to the insoluble problem of cross-river communication. I read the report that Colonel Tydeman made, in which he said, "Posterity will thus be confronted with what may prove to be insoluble problems resulting in impasse . . ." I have called

for a report from Colonel Tydeman in respect to this part of his report. He says—

It will be noted that the word "may" is used. I do not say that insoluble problems will result due to the future need of cross-river communications conflicting with harbour extensions and requirements of ship movements. Having drawn attention to this problem, which has proved difficult in some of the world's older and larger ports and towns, I then recommend to Government that initial extension of the port is made upstream for eleven berths. By making this recommendation I assess the value of this problem.

From what I can understand of the report, that is exactly the position. In all the criticisms that have been raised from time to time, I could not understand that, if after what the engineer had said in favour of seaward expansion and that it was preferred to upriver extension, in the final analysis he should have recommended to the Government that it proceed upstream. No-one has yet been able to explain that. If Colonel Tydeman in his report has impressed members sufficiently with his arguments in favour of seaward development; if we are to take for granted that he is right in his arguments in favour of seaward expansion, then surely, following such a report as this by a world-famous engineer, the Government is entitled to proceed on the recommendations he made which were, in short, that initial development for 11 berths should proceed upstream.

I believe that no matter how desirable it might be to give effect to those recommendations in the future interests of town planning, the existing lay-out will remain for many years to come. As most members know, the present railway bridge is in a state of collapse. In fact, not so many years ago it was found necessary to deposit tons of rock around the piles to prevent it from tipping over.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: How long ago?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not quite sure. It was in 1929, was it not?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No, 1909.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is further back still, and leaves less life for the bridge and makes it all the more urgent for something to be done. We believe that the railway system will continue for many years and will be necessary as a transport system, because even if the railway yards are shifted out of the city there will remain a passenger and light traffic service to the port. Therefore, we must have a bridge. It is in the interests of the future that we not only build a bridge that will last and

will be a credit to the Public Works Department of Western Australia, but also it is in our interests to build it in the right place. Further, in building it we must ensure that we do not leave an insoluble problem of any kind, because once the bridge is erected I feel sure that the envisaged permanent structure will be there for perhaps the next century or two.

Colonel Tydeman has pointed out that if the railway bridge is reconstructed on the present site we shall certainly restrict the efficiency of the existing port on the south side for many years to come. He claims that almost 50 per cent. of the efficiency of the berths on the Victoria Quay side is being lost because the railway system is such that there must always be back shunting to get trucks in to the quays. As members know, there is an extremely small area suitable for shunting and marshalling yards at the back of the Victoria Quay berths. It is envisaged that the marshalling of trucks and their sorting out should be done away from the harbour and they would run on the proposed new line direct to the berths. Although only a layman, I feel sure it is obvious that the loading and unloading of these trucks will be expedited and we shall be able to take full advantage of the berths in that area.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Mr. Meyer tells us where to put them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Meyer suggests that there might be a railway south of the river, with which Colonel Tydeman finds no quarrel. The Government is prepared to admit that there will be a south-of-the-river railway but, seeing that we cannot proceed to rip up the present line in the middle of the city and that running down the coast, it seems that the existing railway must remain for some years and also that the new line must go in at the right angle to overcome the difficulty I have explained. Do not forget that Mr. Meyer said, "I agree with Colonel Tydeman that upriver development should be carried out in its first stage, and I believe that a south-of-the-river railway really can be introduced and may be beneficial, whether we go upstream or seaward." But Colonel Tydeman points out—

Where difficulties have occurred in older ports in the provision of navigable channels for ships passing under or over expensive high-level bridges or tunnels, the conditions have been those of large intensive population concentrated in the immediate locality and highly developed hinterland, such townships, e.g., London, Liverpool, Tyneside, New York, San Francisco, Chicago, all have populations from 2 millions up to 15 millions or more. One must examine the probability of the Fremantle-Perth locality in developing such a population.

And he, in his investigations, arrived at a decision that perhaps there might be a limit of three to four millions of population for many years, if not for ever, because our water supplies will always be a limiting factor. He also points out that if the new railway bridge is constructed on the present site there will be no headroom; there will be a severe limit and the navigation of small ships upstream will certainly be restricted in every way. Whilst I am on the subject of bridges I might refer to the question of foundations that has been raised from time to time. The member for Fremantle in putting forward his motion reminded us that the borings or records of borings, indicated that they were done some 25 years ago, and that they went only half way across the stream.

No one seems to have been able to explain that, but on investigation I find that it is proposed at that particular point to straighten the river and that there is to be a reclamation of almost half the river from the south side. This will, of course, be extended on the north side in order that it may be straightened, and would mean that there would be no need for further investigation at least down to 80 ft. when it is obvious that from halfway across the stream the area would be reclaimed. The engineer has pointed out, therefore, that it was only necessary to make the examination half way across.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The foreman said they left it because they could not get a satisfactory bottom.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know what the foreman said, but that is the explanation that was given to me and it seems quite logical. What was the use of going on to make further investigations when they knew it was to be reclaimed and would become solid ground? The actual foundations are, I believe, as the hon. member pointed out. These may prove difficult but we cannot assess the position until we receive the report of the surveyors, under Sir Alexander Gibb, now being prepared on the present site. As for the difficulties of dredging, I feel sure that they in their turn will be no greater than those associated with the present harbour when it was constructed.

The member for Fremantle also made mention of the difficulty of manoeuvring large ships and said that in the event of upriver development there would be a limitation imposed on these ships entering the harbour, and that great difficulty would be encountered in manoeuvring the great hulks and turning them around in the harbour itself. The engineer has pointed out that there is a tendency today for smaller ships. This may be so on grounds of economy, but it is being thought that there is a tendency for shorter and smaller ships rather than for ships the size of the "Queen Mary" and others.

It will be remembered that when H.M.A.S. Hood, which is 861 ft. long, came into port very special arrangements had to be made to turn her round and to handle her in the harbour. But that was done, and I daresay that for special cases we can surely handle these large ships when they come into the harbour even though it be further upstream than at the present time.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: How would you go if there were a wind blowing?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is a leading question, but I feel that the engineer in charge and the authorities controlling the harbour have gone thoroughly into that aspect and that in making their recommendation they have borne in mind the question of wind or storm. Not only have they done so, but the shipping companies themselves and the naval authorities have also taken these factors into consideration.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: If a ship were to blow up it would block the harbour for more than 12 hours.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That might happen at any time.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: It would completely block the harbour.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I assume the hon. member is referring to enemy attack.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: A peacetime accident.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That has always been possible in every harbour and is something we cannot always account for. How many times has such an accident occurred? Has it ever happened in Fremantle? I feel that in the seaward extension a ship which is sunk at the entrance either by enemy action or by accident would present the same difficulty and, as the engineer has pointed out, this problem of ships being sunk in harbours by enemy action is receiving the consideration of authorities all over the world, because they recognise that it is not a question of the facilities or the size of the harbour but that a ship sunk in the entrance would always present a problem no matter what the harbour was like.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You know what Mr. Tydemann said would happen if a ship blew up.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He was probably right, and I have no doubt that such a possibility exists in other harbours, but I do not see how it would in any way be alleviated if the same ship were tied up in a harbour extended seawards. The same danger would exist from burning boats.

I am sure the engineer in summing up the position and in making the recommendation for upriver extension took into consideration, firstly, the economics of the

matter and, secondly, the time factor. Perhaps he considered the time factor more important than the financial consideration and has pointed out, after making all the investigations possible from the information available from all sources, that for a 10-berth seaward extension as against an 11-berth upstream there would be a difference of some £3,500,000 at the date of his report. He did not only take his own figures but those of previous engineers like Sir George Buchanan and others, therefore I feel that while some people may consider that £3,500,000 is not a real consideration it is a very substantial amount of money especially for this time of our history. We must also consider that upriver development is recommended by an engineer, and it is from the engineering angle that we are now considering the position. With regard to construction, all engineers state that to go seaward to build a harbour is to fly in the face of nature.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: That is most remarkable, seeing that Mr. Tydemann himself recommended us to go seaward.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He recommended seaward extension after taking advantage of what he considered to be a reasonable extension upstream. There would then be no alternative to facing up to seaward extension if further harbour accommodation were needed.

Hon. J. T. Tonkin: You still have to extend seaward whether you do it first or last.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That may be so, but it may not be necessary for many years. For this reason, he has recommended upstream extension. The construction of a breakwater would be a colossal undertaking. To ensure that there would be continuity of work, the breakwater would have to be constructed first of all. Some mention was made of the protection afforded by the islands and reefs outside, but I have been informed that they would afford only primary protection and no real protection in the face of a storm. When the Haifa harbour was under construction and a contractor's risk was taken a storm of the century occurred in the Mediterranean and washed away all that had been done. There are many instances where, during the time works have been under construction, storms have arisen and washed completely away the work already completed.

Mr. Marshall: Like the Cottesloe shark-proof fence.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not acquainted with the history of that fence and shall leave the hon. member to deal with it. The member for Fremantle told us that round about Fremantle, rock would be available. I have not seen any rock around Fremantle except limestone and I believe, as I have been informed by engineers, that to get the solid granite

necessary for the construction of a break-water, the quarries in the hills would have to be drawn upon, and to do that a railway would have to be constructed and the latest mechanical devices provided to handle the stone in quantities. Even in the preparatory stages, there is a colossal amount of work to be done and as we are sadly in need of increased accommodation at Fremantle, I am satisfied that the Government, in accepting the recommendation of Colonel Tydeman, is doing the right thing in the interests of the State.

The Premier: What can one do if one does not follow expert advice?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mention was made of the disparity in some of the estimates by Colonel Tydeman and particularly of his assessment of the requirements of the port in the future. The programme for the development of the port was planned on a 5 per cent. increase of port trade per annum or the doubling of cargo to be handled in 20 years. I expect the hon. member to remind me that, since the report was commenced in 1946, the position has altered tremendously. The port's tonnage has increased from 1,622,567 in 1947 to 3,015,000 in 1951, and the number of ships using the port during the same period has practically doubled. This represents an increase of approximately 13 per cent. per annum or more than two-and-a-half times that estimated by the engineer.

We should at least make some allowance for the fact that last year 29,000 people entered the State, an increase of population never previously envisaged by anybody. As the engineer has reminded me, not only was there an increase of population with its attendant demands on the port, but there has also been an increasing number of ships coming to Fremantle for repairs and berthage of one sort or another. They come to Fremantle, I understand, to be prepared for the bulk handling of wheat, for fitting out for whaling expeditions, etc., and the Navy uses the port from time to time. Therefore some allowance should be made. Knowing that there is a 13 per cent. rather than 5 per cent. increase, we have to set to work to provide additional accommodation immediately, and the way to provide it most expeditiously is by developing the upstream harbour.

I am told that the depth of water in the Fremantle harbour is something less than the 36ft. it should be—somewhere in the vicinity of 33ft.—and, because of the continuous use of the berths, the authorities have not been able to carry out the requisite dredging. Therefore, if for no other reason, we must have another berth or two in order to relieve those areas where there is some silting up or deposit lessening the depth.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You had better not remove the stonework at the bridges or you will have Preston Point in the harbour.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The engineer has made no mention of that. Numbers of people agree from the engineering angle that the Government is doing the right thing by extending the harbour upstream, but there is some doubt in their minds as to whether the beauty of the river can be maintained owing to the risk of pollution. Members of this House and officers of the departments concerned are very anxious that all requisite precautions be taken to ensure that no further pollution results from upstream development. Engineers who have reported on the matter from time to time claim that they are not chemists and are not learned in the growth of algae and the details of river pollution, but they are well aware of what occurs in respect of currents, etc., because that is their job.

The tests made from time to time reveal that the river nearer to the port is cleaner and that bacteria is not in evidence in such numbers nearer to the port. Let me remind members, further, that the present condition of the river cannot be attributed to harbour extension upstream. There are half a million people living on the banks of the Swan River, and it would be quite stupid to expect that in those circumstances the natural beauty of the stream as it existed when the first settlers came here could be maintained. But no matter how people have, from time to time, contributed directly to the pollution of the river, we must bear in mind that it drains many thousands of acres of agricultural land, which has been tilled and has carried hundreds of stock which, in turn, have contributed to the pollution of the ground.

It must not be forgotten that some of this soil and the residue of the hundreds of thousands of tons of super and other fertiliser of one kind or another which have been distributed over the area have, during winter months—and especially at flood times—been washed downstream. I am not an expert in this matter, but I believe that if we were to go into the subject thoroughly we would find that these factors have contributed and will continue to contribute a great deal to the pollution of the river.

Mr. McCulloch: The Mersey would be in a similar position, although the Liverpool docks are well up the river.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I could not say anything about that, but it has been found difficult in all countries to keep rivers clean. It has been proved that, even where no harbour exists, rivers are polluted and filthy. It is the population that lives in the area drained by the river and along the river banks which, I think, contributes most of the filth and

ultimately causes the dissatisfaction arising from the dirtiness of the river. Great emphasis has been placed on the fact that raw sewage is discharged into the harbour. That is quite correct; but it will be recalled that Mr. Meyer, in his report, pointed out that any harmful bacteria being discharged from the ships would be quickly killed because of the antiseptic action of the seawater. It is recorded in his report, at page 8, that—

... It has been observed (1936) by C. E. ZoBell, of the University of California, who has done a great deal of work in the field of marine microbiology, that colon bacilli occur far less frequently in the vicinity of sewage effluents than can be accounted for by dilution or circulation and tests carried out by him—A note in the report intimates that details of the results were reported in the Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, 1936. The paragraph continues—found that, after being introduced to natural seawater in semi-permeable tubes, the number of sewage bacteria surviving at the end of 120 minutes were less than 3.3 per cent. of the numbers that were present one minute after the commencement of the test; also that 99.9 per cent. of the sewage organisms were killed after two days suspension in seawater.

There are other tests quoted which indicate that what Mr. Meyer has reported is quite correct.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I am afraid you are doing what you accused me of doing—you are not reading the lot.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member can read the complete account.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about Mr. Meyer saying that if we go upstream special precautions must be taken?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will deal with that. I feel sure that what I have quoted is evidence sufficient to allay any fear that bacteria harmful to human beings will find their way upstream and be detrimental to those who use the river for swimming or sport of any kind. Before dealing with the point raised by the member for Fremantle, I would remind the House that from time to time questions have been raised regarding the discharge of oil and other rubbish into the harbour—the flotsam, as it were. It has been emphasised in the Meyer report that the Harbour Trust could be relied upon to take all steps necessary to ensure against physical pollution occurring around Freshwater Bay as a result of upstream extension of the harbour.

It will be recalled that Mr. Meyer was asked to advise whether there was any better means of disposing of rubbish and

of dealing with this problem than that practised at Fremantle. He recommended that we might adopt the Melbourne system, which consists of chutes taking the rubbish from the sides of the ships to an incinerator, where it is destroyed.

Mr. Marshall: It would not make much difference what went into the Yarra. It would smell just as strong.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I would not like to comment on that at this stage, except to say that we do know the condition of the Eastern States rivers and we are anxious that the Swan River should not reach such a state. I feel sure that any Government would take any action within reason to ensure that the present condition shall be maintained. I want to emphasise that the Government is prepared to increase the penalties, to make them as severe as may be necessary, to deter any captain or shipowner from discharging rubbish and oil into the harbour. That is absolutely necessary. There are bylaws prohibiting such action, and I understand there is a force of detectives or police keeping a watch on this matter. If it is necessary—and, from reports, I believe oil is being discharged into the river from time to time—we should tighten up the regulations. If we do that—if we provide a suitable barge or other means by which owners of ships can dispose of rubbish—we shall be doing all that is necessary to ensure that flotsam and oil do not go into the river and ultimately upstream.

The point has been made that even with seaward extension the provision of arms or breakwaters will merely mean an extension of the river itself. Although the point made by the member for Fremantle that the proposed extension will bring the port nearer to Freshwater Bay is correct, the fact remains that the rubbish and oil would still be within the harbour and would have to be dealt with.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: You told the House it was impracticable to catch the undiluted raw sewage going into the harbour.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was advised that it was not possible, nor was it the practice in any port in the world, to catch the raw sewage being discharged into the harbour. The hon. member is about to say that Mr. Tydeman stated it could be caught in barges and carried out to sea. I do not know why he has such a sudden liking for that point raised by Mr. Tydeman when he will not accept his recommendation in the final analysis that we go upstream. I had been advised by the engineers themselves, when I replied to the question, and, if Mr. Tydeman made such mention, I suppose he felt there was a possibility and nothing to stop the authorities—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He says one thing, and you say it is not practicable.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There may be a little misunderstanding on the point, but I feel it has no important bearing on the issue. Mr. Meyer's report states—

I have carefully weighed the pros and cons of this measure against those of the alternative of seawards development either to the north or south of the entrance to the Inner Harbour, and find upstream development to be more advantageous as a first measure than either of the alternatives.

Quoting from Mr. Meyer's report, the member for Fremantle said—

If the harbour be extended upstream, there will be occasion for special precautions against this nuisance occurring, namely, physical pollution finding its way into Freshwater Bay.

That is the point which the hon. member raised.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Right up to Claremont.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. Meyer has been read out of context in the above quotation. The full paragraph is as follows:—

As to physical pollution by way of flotsam cast into the harbour in contravention of Harbour Trust regulations, the possibility of flood tidal current, as traced from the harbour, extending well into Freshwater Bay, introduces the possibility of floating material, holding to the thread of the stream, finding its way into the Bay and fetching up on the beaches thereof, so that if the harbour be extended upstream as proposed, there will be occasion for special precautions to ensure against this nuisance occurring. Physical pollution of this kind can be controlled by vigilant policing and drastic penalties for any and all who infringe the regulations prohibiting the casting of waste matter into the harbour.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: They thought they could do that on the Mersey, but they have not done it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I feel sure this matter can be controlled. The Government is prepared to take the necessary action to prevent owners of vessels from freely casting oil or rubbish into the harbour. Mr. Meyer says—

It is my considered opinion, therefore, that under present conditions, the existing harbour contributes nothing, bacteriologically or chemically, to pollution in Freshwater Bay or compartments of the river upstream thereof.

Therefore, because we have proof that bacteria are dealt with very quickly through the antiseptic action of sea water, and that if we care to be vigilant enough we can cope with the discharge of other rubbish from ships, the extension of the harbour upriver will not further contribute to the pollution of the river. I should say there is a great deal of discharge from yachts and people who actually picnic on the beaches. In the "Daily News" recently there appeared a picture of pollution—froth and bubble, or something of the sort—of the river. I do not suggest for a minute that it came from Fremantle harbour, but from time to time people try to infer that the polluted state of the river results from the extension, upstream, of the harbour. I feel sure that is absolutely wrong.

Mention has been made of the difficulty of obtaining the materials necessary to proceed with the construction of the bridge. I realise that quite a certain tonnage of steel and cement will be necessary, but seeing that we have no alternative to proceeding with the extension of the harbour, steel will be found either locally or oversea, and delivered progressively, because not such a great tonnage will be required at one time. I am advised that the amount of steel necessary for the purpose of constructing the bridge can be obtained so that the contractors, whoever they happen to be after tenders are called, may proceed with the work. The same thing, of course, applies to cement. In the event of a decision to go seaward, surely we would have some real problems in obtaining the necessary machinery to handle the rocks. Everything today must be mechanised if we are to make progress. Steel for railways would be needed and, of course, equipment in the harbour to provide ways and means of forming foundations for the work. Therefore I feel that that point, too, raised in defence of the seaward extension, can be dismissed.

Much more can be said, but I feel that following the reports of the many engineers who have been appointed, not only by this Government but its predecessors, to inquire into this project, the Government is on the right track in deciding that the initial stages of the harbour development shall be upstream. When the bridge, which will be a steel structure, is complete, it will not hinder the flow or tidal effect of the water. In addition, it will provide a limit, so that no Government in the future will think of extending the berths further up the Swan River. Something has been said of the fact that the entire centre of the district of North Fremantle will be demolished as a result of the upriver development. Well, I feel it will be 50 years before the upstream scheme will be complete, so that there will be a progressive change-over; and further, until the survey is completed we cannot

assess the number of houses and other buildings that will be demolished or affected by the immediate work.

With regard to the upsetting of populated areas, I am quite positive that even if we decided to develop the port seaward there would be the same outcry and response from those people who found they would be affected. Someone must be affected, no matter whether we develop the harbour upstream or seaward. There are many people who now say nothing about seaward extension, but immediately a decision was made in that direction I am sure they would rise in righteous indignation and say, "What about going upstream?" As Minister for Works, I am quite satisfied that, taking all relevant matters into consideration and bearing in mind the urgent need for the immediate provision of further accommodation for ships at Fremantle—realising as I do that upstream development is an expedient way of obtaining the necessary accommodation—some upstream development is necessary. I am satisfied that it will cause no further pollution of the river and that it will be much more economical than would seaward extension at this stage. I hope the House will not agree to the motion but will let the Government proceed with this especially urgent work.

HON. J. T. TONKIN (Melville) [8.21]: I am sorry that the Government has adopted the attitude it has in regard to this most important question. Properly viewed, it is not a party matter at all but one which should be approached objectively.

The Minister for Works: We have not made it a party matter.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, but that is how it will probably develop. The mere fact that Mr. Tydeman came to Parliament House and addressed members of the Government only is an indication in that direction.

The Minister for Works: It was done at their request. Your party could have done the same.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If the Minister had been wise to the effect of such a meeting, I think he would have taken steps to see that it was open to all. However, I am not much concerned about that, personally. Even if the Government did not agree to upstream development, that would in no way derogate from Mr. Tydeman's prestige, efficiency or standing. One can expect to find differences of opinion between engineers, just as between doctors, lawyers or—

The Minister for Works: There has been no difference of opinion between the engineers.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Before I sit down, I will prove the Minister to be wrong. We can expect to find differences of opinion with regard to what ought to be

done in a case such as this. The Minister for Works says there has been no difference of opinion—

The Minister for Works: With respect to the initial stages.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Now we get a qualification. I would point out that Mr. Tydeman recommends a scheme which involves, firstly, going upriver to Point Brown, and then, secondly, seawards extension, both north and south. That is his scheme.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It is not an upriver development scheme at all but one which involves upriver development and seawards extension.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Minister is also aware that Mr. Meyer was absolutely against any extension northwards.

The Minister for Works: That is so.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: There is a difference of opinion.

The Minister for Works: I qualified my remarks.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Stileman thought we should go north and not southwards. There is a further difference of opinion. Sir Alexander Gibb and partners thought we should go seawards and not to the north, but to the south, and so there is a wide divergence of opinion as to where the harbour should be developed.

The Minister for Works: But they were unanimous that we should take advantage of 11 berths upstream.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But they were not unanimous that we should go to Point Brown.

The Minister for Works: With one exception.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It was recommended that we should make the fullest use of the existing area where the bridges are at present.

The Minister for Works: Whose recommendation was that?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Sir Alexander Gibb and partners.

The Minister for Works: They agreed with Stileman with regard to the 11 berths.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: They recommended that the fullest use should be made, in the first instance, of inner harbour accommodation which was available with a minimum of work, so we can expect that there will be some difference of opinion, and Mr. Tydeman would have no ground for being hurt if the Government decided to take the harbour extensions outside and to the south. He would have no reason at all for feeling ashamed of what he had put up.

The Minister for Works: We were not considering that issue.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, the Minister is, because I have seen statements from time to time referring to it.

The Minister for Works: What statements?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What Mr. Tydeman did was to examine various proposals and place the result of his examination before the Government, leaving it to the Government to decide which of the propositions was most attractive to it.

The Minister for Works: And making a recommendation.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: A very weak one.

The Minister for Works: He made a recommendation.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, but in such a way that he could not take umbrage if it were not accepted, because he said that seawards extension possessed all the requisites of a successful harbour. Will the Minister deny that?

The Minister for Works: No, and by going upstream for 11 berths we will still, according to him, be able to obtain the ultimate efficiency as envisaged.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Mr. Tydeman did not say that. He said that the development of the harbour seawards would provide all the requisites, with no exception, and he then went on to say that extension up-river would not provide all the requisites.

The Minister for Works: Where did he say that?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: In his report.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Unrestricted lay-out.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is it. Nevertheless, he did recommend going upstream because he believed that in the initial stages it would be cheaper. He made a calculation and I think said it would cost approximately £13,000,000. I am informed that the cost would be nearer £20,000,000.

The Minister for Works: Of course, on present-day costs.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, on the costs that he used.

The Minister for Works: He took Buchanan's costs.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: To give an idea of how engineers can differ in the matter of costs, I propose to quote an excerpt from the report on the Fremantle harbour by Sir Alexander Gibb and partners, and made to the Government of Western Australia, on the proposal for improvements to and extensions of the harbour at the port of Fremantle, under date July, 1929. On page 8 of that report appears the following:—

Sir George Buchanan's estimate for the whole of the works as shown on the plan which accompanies his report amounted in all to £6,750,000. In our opinion, the figures he gives are

altogether insufficient, not only for the cost of the respective sections into which he has divided the work but for the scheme as a whole. Applying rates similar to those we have used as explained in paragraph 85 of this report for working out our own estimates, we have calculated the cost of constructing the works proposed by Sir George Buchanan in which must be included not only the wharves and their equipment but also necessary dredging, filling in, reclamation, rail and road deviations, the approaches over the Swan River and the usual allowances for unforeseen and contingent works, and have come to the conclusion that it cannot possibly be less than double the figures he has provided, or the sum of approximately £13,500,000.

Let us take that statement alone. One of these eminent engineers was so divergent as, in one instance, to give an estimate which was exactly double that submitted by the first engineer. So it is just too futile to talk about expecting agreement on this question when there is such a wide divergency. In such a case we have to look a little further. At the outset, I admit I am not an engineer and have no pretensions to being one. I have no qualifications in that direction, but this is not solely an engineering problem and I have to regard this from the point of view of the possible development of the State of Western Australia.

Mr. Hutchinson: Where would you place the rail bridge?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Alongside the road bridge.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: If the Minister will look at page 88 he will find that quotation, if he wants it.

The Minister for Works: He goes on to say that it will not give you full efficiency on the berths north.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No, it does not.

The Minister for Works: Yes, it does.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We know that the richest part of the State of Western Australia is in the South-West, and in the last 20 years by far the greatest development has taken place in that area.

The Minister for Works: What about wheat?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What about wheat! The Minister can take wheat into the fullest calculation, and I still say that the greatest development in this State in the last 20 years has taken place in the South-West. We have only to look at the town of Manjimup, for example, to get an idea of how, in a comparatively short space of time, a town can grow tremendously. We know from our development schemes, our irrigation works and the like, that we anticipate that the South-West will carry the densest population which we expect

to have in Western Australia. Is it intended that in future years we shall bring the produce from that productive land, and closely settled area, up through the Perth bottleneck, then down to the Fremantle harbour or to the north side? The development must all be from the South-West corner, entering the port by the shortest possible route and avoiding, as much as possible, the closely settled area of the city.

The Minister for Works: It would not be impossible to bring the railway in from that side, anyway.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No; there was a proposition to build a bridge at Blackwall Reach and, after bringing the produce from the South-West, to take it by rail over that bridge. An engineer put that forward in good faith but how many people would accept that proposition today? I do not think the Minister made any attempt to answer the arguments submitted in this morning's editorial of "The West Australian." That paper is admittedly on the side of the Government; it put the Government into office.

The Minister for Works: That is beside the point.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I hope it puts the Government out.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: What I say is perfectly true and the Government knows it.

Mr. Griffith: The ballot papers elected the Government.

Mr. Grayden: What do we have elections for?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: "The West Australian" did that, or next door to it. Is it likely that that paper, which is so strongly behind the Government, would deliberately set itself out to embarrass the Government or prevent it from taking a course of action which was in the best interests of the State? The mere fact that the paper has come out in the way that it has is the strongest evidence that it believes the Government has not got a case. In a previous article that paper showed the Premier a way out from the stand which the Government had taken.

I believe there was a distinct responsibility on the Minister for Works this evening to attempt to answer the arguments used by "The West Australian." But he sheered right off; he would not face up to them at all. I read that article very carefully and I believe that the arguments were sound. If there is anybody here who believes otherwise then I wish he would get up and prove where the arguments submitted were unsound, or at least attempt to do so. If that were done then by the clash of opinion we might be able to get to the real kernel of this nut. This is not a question of standing to some engineer, who has submitted certain proposals, in the belief that he should not be let down. The

engineer would not be let down in the slightest degree if the Government decided to alter course.

Mr. Rodoreda: It would not matter, anyhow.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Of course it would not matter if the interests of the State are to be taken into consideration. But it is influencing the Government. I think that to some degree the Government feels that it is under some obligation to stand by the engineer. In my view there is no such obligation.

The Premier: In other words, to act on expert advice.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We do not always act on expert advice; we act on it only when it suits us and the Premier knows that is right, too. When we do not get the right expert advice we look for some further advice.

Mr. Rodoreda: We get another expert.

The Premier: Yes, in this case we did.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Let us see just how far the Premier looked for further advice. When Mr. Tydeman made his report and certain objections were raised in this House by the member for Fremantle, myself and others, we asked that another opinion be obtained. Does the Premier remember what was the reply? It was to the effect that no further opinion was to be obtained because there was enough already.

Mr. Rodoreda: What about getting the member for Albany?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That was the attitude the Government immediately adopted. But there were special circumstances in Parliament last year. The member for Maylands was alive then and he and the member for Victoria Park were the Government's majority. The member for Maylands became interested in this question.

The Premier: In the pollution factor, mostly, I think.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I do not know from what particular angle but he became interested in this question, and became vitally interested in getting another opinion. Strangely enough, so did the Government. We had been told that it was not the intention to get another opinion. The late Mr. Shearn asked, in this House, would the Government get another opinion and he was told that it would. This is how the Government got the opinion. The Premier of this State is very friendly with the Premier of South Australia, who was over here on a visit. During that visit a discussion took place on the possibility of an engineer being made available to give an opinion on the harbour. Mr. Playford offered to make available the services of Mr. Meyer, his engineer. Although I have not been able to check this information, I have been told that Mr. Meyer's qualifications were inferior to those of Colonel Tydeman.

The Premier: I understand he has a very good reputation as a whole.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am not doubting his reputation. I believe he is a man with outstanding qualifications, but I also believe that his qualifications are inferior to those of Colonel Tydeman.

Mr. Ackland: Do you know of any engineer who has qualifications higher than those of Colonel Tydeman? I do not think there is one.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That proves my argument and makes it all the stronger.

Mr. Griffith: A guess coming good.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, it was not a guess. I am not in the habit of guessing. Before Mr. Meyer came to this State it was put to me that his report could recommend only one way, and when I asked the gentleman who put that proposition to me why he said that, he replied, "Because Mr. Meyer's qualifications are inferior to Colonel Tydeman's" and he added, "What position would Mr. Meyer be in if he submitted a report condemning the harbour proposals?"

The Premier: I do not think that argument would hold water for a second.

Mr. Ackland: Where could the Government get a better man?

The Minister for Works: He was most forthright as to going north.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am only stating what was told to me in that regard. Unfortunately, the man who mentioned it to me is now dead and therefore I will not mention his name. Nevertheless, he put it to me that I need not expect anything else but agreement in the circumstances. Furthermore, it has to be remembered that Mr. Meyer had already submitted a proposal for an upriver harbour extension in South Australia. I ask members: What would be the chances of getting an engineer of inferior qualifications and who himself had already put forward a scheme for an upriver extension in his own State, to come to another State and recommend that proposals for an upriver extension were all wrong? The chances would not be one in a hundred. I ask members to have a look at Mr. Meyer's proposal for harbour development in South Australia. They will see there is no outlet for the water. It is an extremely shallow stream. When the tide comes up that river in South Australia, carrying silt in suspension, it would continue well up into the river and then, as it turned, the silt would drop. It is obvious to the layman that in that proposal one has to expect a considerable silting up and, not only that, but also considerable pollution. I can well imagine the stench at the top end of that harbour. There is a basin at the end of the harbour which it is proposed to use as a sort of a settling tank.

Members can imagine what would be in that settling tank with the ebb and flow of a narrow river such as that carrying the

shipping that that harbour can be expected to carry. Furthermore, if there should be an accident to a ship in that channel, all the shipping upstream would be completely and effectively bottled up. The man who put that proposal forward was asked to submit a proposal in Western Australia which was vastly superior to that one. It could not be expected that he would do otherwise than what he did. So, without in any way trying to disparage Mr. Meyer's qualifications, in those circumstances, I say his hands were tied before he came here. Therefore I do not think we need attach too much importance to his report on our harbour development. It is as well that we should have some other learned opinion on this matter in order that we can see what engineers think from time to time.

The Premier: You know the names of a number of eminent men who all think the same way in regard to the upriver extension.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We will see whether they all agree or not. I have a report here by Sir Alexander Gibb and partners. Firstly, I will quote the preamble so that the Premier can see who was interested. This report was submitted to the Government of Western Australia. It reads—

In accordance with the instructions of the Honourable W. C. Angwin, the Agent General for Western Australia in London, as conveyed in his letter dated 17th October, 1928, in which, on behalf of your Government, he requested us to visit Western Australia and investigate and report on the proposed extensions of the harbour at Fremantle, we arranged for Mr. Rustat Blake, M.Inst. C.E., a senior member of our firm, to proceed to Australia for that purpose, and have now the honour to report the result of our investigations.

2. Mr. Blake arrived in Fremantle on the 12th February of this year, and proceeded to Perth, where he received the following letter containing the terms of reference relating to the work in question:—

Department of Public Works,
Perth, 5th February, 1929.

Rustat Blake, Esq.,

Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners.

Dear Sir,

Amongst other papers forwarded to you in October last were copies of Sir George Buchanan's report and that of the Engineer-in-Chief in regard to the future extension of the Fremantle harbour.

It is the desire of the Government that you will advise them not only on the proposals recommended in these reports, but also to consider and report upon any other proposals which may be brought under your notice or which

may occur to you during the course of your investigations and advise them as to what form future extensions to the harbour should, in your opinion, take.

All available information for the purpose of your report will, where this has not already been done, be placed at your disposal.

Members will see that these engineers had the widest terms of reference possible in the circumstances. That was signed, "Alexander McCallum, Minister for Works and Labour." Continuing—

On receipt of this letter Mr. Blake made arrangements with the officers of your Department and visited and inspected the Swan River from Perth to Fremantle, the approaches to the harbour by land and sea, the harbour and its equipment, the railways and roads serving the port and such other works and places as were necessary to obtain a comprehensive view of the existing physical conditions.

Plans, documents and data relative to the works carried out since the inception of the existing harbour were furnished, together with all the particulars available regarding schemes and proposals which have been submitted from time to time for extensions of the harbour.

Meetings were arranged with Government departments and public bodies interested in the improvement of the port, at which questions arising out of these proposals were discussed and information was obtained in conversations with, amongst others, the chairman and members and officials of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, representatives of the Railways, the Director of Agriculture, the Mayor of Fremantle and members of his Council, the chairman and members of the Royal Commission Metropolitan Town Planning, and the chairman and members of the Perth Chamber of Commerce.

Meetings also took place with the representatives of the State and Mail Steamship Companies using the port, as also with members of various firms having business interests in Perth and Fremantle who desired to state their views regarding the necessity of increased harbour facilities and the means by which these should be obtained.

Having completed his inspection and obtained all the information and data necessary for the making of our report, Mr. Blake left Fremantle for England on the 18th March.

The whole material and data collected by Mr. Blake, with his reports of his various meetings and other relevant matters, were, on his return, very carefully considered in the light

of the views which Mr. Blake had already formed, by Sir Alexander Gibb and his other partner, Mr. John Ferguson, M.Inst.C.E., and the present report is the result of the closest examination of all the evidence that exists on this matter.

Before stating the conclusions we have arrived at, it may be appropriate in the first instance to refer briefly to the conditions existing in the present harbour and the necessity for extension thereto, and to outline briefly the proposals for the extensions contained in the reports of—(1) Sir George Buchanan, and (2) the Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works Department.

It can be seen, therefore, that when this investigation took place the engineers concerned had made available to them the fullest information on the subject, and they said in making their report that they had given the matter the widest consideration. So we should take some notice of what they said in connection with the matter. I do not want to be accused of selecting pieces that suit my argument, though I have the right to do so if I wish, but I do not propose to read everything as it would be far too long and would only serve to weary members. The report is available for anybody to read if further information is required. I have selected some parts of this report which I think are sufficient to indicate that there is a good deal more in going seaward than the Government is prepared to acknowledge at this stage.

The Premier: We have to make up our minds and go somewhere.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is true, but we do not want to go the wrong way. I quote from the bottom of page 6. The heading is "Proposed extension to seaward of the existing harbour." Paragraph 41 reads—

If all further extensions could be made in this direction, namely on the north or south foreshores outside and seaward of the present harbour, it would avoid interference with the existing bridges over the harbour and the necessity of extensive alteration of railways. The ground on which the wharves would be built is better than in the upper harbour, the railway connections can be provided at a minimum expense and the whole working of the harbour would be centralised in a compact area which is a consideration of the greatest importance. There would be the disadvantage that the site would be somewhat more exposed to wind than an inner harbour but with the protection of a wind screen we are of the opinion that the inconvenience would not be very serious.

There definitely is a paragraph in favour of the extension of the harbour seaward. Paragraph 42 of the report says—

The main arguments, however, against dealing with the problems of Fremantle Harbour wholly on the lines implied by the view we call "B" are that they would involve an immediate expenditure of a very much larger sum of money than extension up-river would, and larger than in our opinion is necessary or justified by present conditions. Secondly, it would be uneconomical in our opinion to leave undeveloped any suitable site contiguous to the present harbour where the facilities, arrangements and interests already exist. We are accordingly of the opinion that all the available sites in the existing harbour should be dealt with before deciding on extension outside.

That to me appears to recommend that on the score of economy the greatest use should be made of existing facilities upstream under present conditions, but that then extensions should be seaward because of the advantages mentioned in this report—advantages which are several in number and weighty in consideration. To show that Sir Alexander Gibb and partners appreciated the difference of opinion amongst engineers I would like to read paragraph 52 of the report which appears on page 7 and is in the following terms—

In broad outline both schemes are of old standing and each has its strong supporters. The upriver or inner harbour project is attractive on first examination but the more it is studied the less attractive it becomes.

I hope the Government will take some notice of that because it is possible that it has not studied this enough. Let me repeat that—

In broad outline both schemes are of old standing and each has its strong supporters. The upriver or inner harbour project is attractive on first examination but the more it is studied the less attractive it becomes.

There is a very deliberative statement from engineers whose qualifications cannot be questioned. The report proceeds—

Cross-river communication for rail and road traffic somewhere in the vicinity of the existing bridges cannot be dispensed with without great inconvenience, and the introduction of opening spans to permit of the passage of vessels to an inner harbour would cause delays, and would obviously interfere with the freedom of working the ships in the harbour as well as with traffic on the road and railway, and could not fail to result in dislocation to both.

On the other hand, if the bridges were removed to a point higher up the river, thus allowing free access to an inner harbour, an objectionable ferry service would be necessary to connect the north with the south side of the city, and further, very extensive deviations of the railway would be required.

The site of the proposed inner harbour would be very costly—

I hope the Minister will pay attention to that.

Mr. Hill: Which is the site referred to there? Is it Rocky Bay?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, proceeding up beyond Rocky Bay. To continue with the report—

The site of the proposed inner harbour would be very costly, particularly in respect that the ground on each side of the river is high and ill-adapted for laying down the necessary road and rail accesses and a marshalling yard which a modern wet dock requires. For a distance of 1½ miles the width of the river would only be 1,000 feet with a turning circle of 1,250 feet in Rocky Bay, which is not sufficient to cover probably future developments in the lengths of ships. There would also frequently be congestion in the proposed wet docks hampering the movement of ships.

Sir George Buchanan's estimate for the whole of the works amounted to £6,750,000. I do not propose to read this again. I have already pointed out that these engineers believe that Sir George Buchanan's estimate ought to be doubled to get somewhere near the mark. There are a large number of recommendations and I do not want to read them all, but I have selected some which will suit my purpose. One of them is as follows:

There are, however, in our opinion certain points in his proposals for the upriver extension as well as for an outside harbour which could with advantage be modified in order to secure the best results.

As the existing road and railway bridges should, in any event, owing to their condition, be renewed at the earliest possible date, it is opportune that a re-location of these bridges should be effected so as to facilitate the extension of the harbour. We suggest the removal of both bridges to a point in the vicinity of Bruce-st., but a little higher up the river, as shown on Drawing No. 3, and recommend that they be independent structures.

In this scheme the Perth-Fremantle railway would be diverted from a point south of Leighton Station, and would proceed on a line parallel to and immediately east of Bruce-st., crossing

Victoria Avenue by an overhead bridge. A new North Fremantle station would be formed between Victoria-rd. and the river in substitution for the existing station, whose site would be utilised for additional railway yard accommodation.

There is his recommendation for going northwards beyond Leighton—something which Mr. Meyer reported against, something which Mr. Tydeman was in favour of and something which Mr. Stileman also favoured. Here again we find that there is no unanimity of opinion amongst engineers on this subject. I hope the Government will give this matter further consideration.

The Premier: Well, I do not know! We cannot go on forever giving the matter further consideration. We must make up our minds some time.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is very true. On the other hand, the first step the Government should be expected to take is to get busy using the area already available in the river as the bridges stand at the present time. A good deal of work remains to be done in that connection; and, if it is undertaken, it will provide for the immediate needs of the port. That could be done before it is necessary to arrive at any decision about going further upriver or going outside, with this exception—I admit it quite readily—if the condition of the railway bridge is such as to make it imperative for an early decision to be made regarding the re-siting of the bridge itself. The Minister will remember Mr. John Higgins who some time ago suggested that, instead of going in for a very expensive steel structure for a new bridge, we should utilise our local timber and build a wooden bridge. I notice that "The West Australian" in this morning's issue supported that idea and gave cogent reasons for so doing.

It seems to me that if this problem is difficult of solution and we are worried about getting on with the job as quickly as possible, without being obliged to adopt one scheme or the other, at this stage we could go on with the provision of additional berths within the limits of the existing harbour. That would not involve going further upstream or going outside for the time being, and would give the Government the opportunity to devote further consideration to the question. In view of altered circumstances and the certain development that will take place in the South-West of this State, which will require the deviation of the railway south of the river, a changed decision might be necessary, involving an extension of the harbour seawards. We have well protected waters to the south of the existing harbour. I am advised by naval men, who know of their own knowledge, that the channels that have been dredged between the banks have not silted up to any extent in the last 40 years.

Mr. Hill: Are you now referring to Cockburn Sound?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes. There is no sand drift in the channels between the banks, indicating that we need not anticipate trouble with sand drift, if we were to build harbour works seaward. There is ample sheltered water in that direction. There is plenty of land available, so that there would be no restricted layout for railway communications as would be the case if we were to go upriver, which is admitted by Mr. Tydeman. There would be no restriction there in connection with the railway layout. Much cheaper land could be acquired there, and plenty of space would be available for the development of wharves and the like. It seems to be a ready-made area for receiving the produce from the South-West. We expect tremendous development to take place in that section of the State in the coming years.

We do not plan for today nor do we plan for tomorrow. We must have some regard to posterity. If our forbears neglected our interests because of lack of information, we might regret it; but we could not blame them for the position that has arisen, knowing that they did their best. If they had had the requisite knowledge and did not act accordingly, we would be entitled to blame them, just as posterity will be entitled to blame us if, having requisite knowledge at our disposal, we do the wrong thing. Although the Minister endeavoured to show that when Mr. Tydeman talked about passing insoluble problems on to posterity, he did not really mean it, Mr. Tydeman nevertheless said it.

The Minister for Works: I quoted his words.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, he said it. He is telling us that if we adopt the proposal for upriver extension—

The Minister for Education: Or seawards.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: No, he does not say that.

The Minister for Works: He says it near enough, but only to a lesser degree.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Where does he say that?

The Minister for Works: Under the reference to cost of communications.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Even if I give the Minister that in, it will simply prove my argument.

The Minister for Works: That is so, unless there are cogent reasons for doing what is decided upon.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: If we go upriver, there will be the problem of cross-river communications, which will mean passing on to posterity insoluble problems. Whether they are insoluble or not, they will be most difficult to deal with.

The Minister for Works: He said we might pass them on.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Is he doubtful about it?

The Minister for Works: That was an actual quotation.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: He knows very well that in that very circumscribed area between the harbour as developed upriver and the very narrow part of the land there with a very thick population, the people will have to be given access to the port. It does not require Mr. Tydeman to tell us that the problem of cross-river communications will be most difficult. We know it. We know that it will require the construction of high level bridges. It is that fact which causes me so say that we may be passing on to posterity insoluble problems. Are we to contemplate that with equanimity, and in the face of it go upriver? Are we to do that or are we to push aside the suggestion that upriver extension is cheaper initially and say, "Well, if seawards extension with all the requisite provisions—all of them—is best why not let us go seawards in the first place and make preparations for posterity, upon which posterity can build." An upriver extension might see us out. We might provide sufficient berths for our time, and then we would not need to worry, but those who come after us would have cause to worry. They would then have the job of extending the harbour seaward and they would have to make a start where we refused to go.

The Premier: Do not you think that all the arguments that have been brought forward by yourself and the member for Fremantle and others have had the consideration of the Director of Works, Mr. Tydeman, and the rest of our advisers?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The Director of Works is a very busy man. His job is not that of engineer for harbours and rivers.

The Premier: He is greatly interested in this work.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But this is not his job; he has his hands full of other things. I know that those who have sought to discuss this question with him have been referred to Mr. Tydeman as the man who has the knowledge and the information about the proposal. The Director of Works would be the first to say, "I am not the engineer who put up these proposals. I am the Director of Works." That is his attitude.

The Premier: He has had many long discussions with Mr. Tydeman.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have no doubt about that, but consider the position he is in. Mr. Tydeman has put up his report. I cannot see that he has strongly recommended upriver extension. It seems to me to be a report tending to lay the whole matter bare. He says, "This is what you

require for a harbour. If you go seaward, this is what you will get. You will get everything. If you go upriver, you will get this. You will not get everything, and you will have problems as well." Then he speaks of upstream extension being cheaper initially, and it seems to me that, on the score of its being cheaper initially, he has recommended to the Government upriver extension.

I would say to Mr. Tydeman, "Will it be necessary for the State eventually to extend the harbour outside?" To that question his answer must be, "Yes." Then I would ask, "Will it be more costly to go outside in the future than it would be now?" He would not know, but he would have to try to form an opinion upon the trend, and I think his answer would be "Yes." If we look back over costs in the last hundred years, we realise that there has been a steady rise. Once, a sheep could be bought for 3s.

Mr. Styants: Provided you had the 3s.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Costs have risen and apparently they will continue to rise. If we must go outside eventually, why take the risk of passing on these difficult problems to posterity and of damaging the river in various ways? It is all very well to say that there will be no pollution of the river. All we have to do is to consider places where harbours have been extended upriver.

The Premier: Yes, and Mr. Tydeman and Mr. Meyer tell us that this will improve the river from the standpoint of pollution.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: See how the Yarra has been improved! Just imagine how the Port Adelaide river will be improved by the proposals there!

Mr. Griffith: Do you think the Yarra is a comparable river?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It is a river.

Mr. Griffith: But is it comparable?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: We have to make the comparison. We are talking about ports and about their extension upriver. The Premier interjected a moment ago that the river is likely to be improved as a result of the upstream extension. I cannot see it.

The Premier: I am only quoting the experts.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I am judging by what I have seen. The Premier has doubtless seen much more than I have and would know where rivers have been improved by reason of shipping going up them. If a harbour is extended upstream, what do we get? We get wharves and warehouses and rats.

Mr. Hoar: What about the rivers in England?

The Premier: There is a lot of shipping on the Thames and on the Mersey.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I have not been to many places, but in those places I have visited I have seen what happens when harbours are extended upstream. From time to time I have seen many pictures on the screen and in books of harbour extensions up rivers, and it is fairly obvious that the rivers are not improved by those extensions. For my part, I much prefer the Swan River as it is.

We ought to decide, in considering the matter of harbour extension, to make a start in the interests of posterity. Let us provide the berths that are now needed, leaving a comparatively easy job for those who follow us to add the berths then required for the development of the State! If the Government at this late hour will change its mind, so far from its being a sign of weakness, it will be a sign of strength.

The Premier: It will be a sign that we shall not get anything done for a very long time.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Why should that be so? Mr. Meyer did not think it would take a long time to get the work going outside. He suggested starting straight away.

The Minister for Works: Yes, by the re-sumption of land. He did not say anything about any other work. That was to avoid built-up areas.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: He said that a start could be made on reclaiming areas.

The Minister for Works: That is so.

The Premier: To start with, how long did he say the breakwater would take to build, what with the railway, etc., required?

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I think he said something about getting ready to prepare the protections required.

The Minister for Works: To buy land and resume land as it became available from time to time. That was sound advice.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: It would be well to clear up that point by referring to Mr. Meyer's report. At page 6 he said—

Returning to the question of an outer harbour extension of the port of Fremantle, this is a measure that could not be rendered effective, even in a first instalment, for a good many years from the time of commencement of breakwater construction. By operating suction dredging plant at favourable seasons of the year any desired measure of reclamation could be put up without the cover of a breakwater, but, beyond that, the actual construction of an outer harbour, it would seem to me, could very well be deferred against the march of events. In the meantime the necessary investigations by way of borings, etc., could be carried on as opportunity occurred.

Well, I have explained my views. I repeat that I consider it would be a tragic blunder to extend the harbour upstream. Time, of course, will show whether that opinion is right or wrong.

The Premier: Well, you disagree with the most expert advice obtainable.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But the expert advice differs so much.

Mr. Hutchinson: Not on this point.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Of course it does. We need not necessarily be concerned with the one point only. If expert advice differs on other points, it cannot be relied upon absolutely on one point.

Mr. Hutchinson: It would be logical to assume that if all the experts agreed on the one point of upriver extension, that would be correct.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: But they do not, because some recommended going to Blackwall Reach.

Mr. Hutchinson: Upriver.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: Yes, but a long way up. How many would be prepared to go as far as Blackwall Reach today? Yet that was recommended by an engineer. Mr. Stileman recommended extension northwards. Sir Alexander Gibb favoured extension northward. But Mr. Meyer, who came over to report on Mr. Tydeman's plan, was not impressed with the northward extension at all. So we get differences of opinion as to where we should go. After all, it is not solely an engineering matter. It has to be regarded from other aspects as well.

The Minister for Works: We have reached the stage where we must get on with the job and provide accommodation.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: The job is to use what is there already; to put berths in existing areas.

The Minister for Works: The engineers are doing that.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That will keep the Minister busy for as long as he can cope with the job.

The Minister for Works: But you talk about the railway bridge and the need for doing something there.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: That is so. There is a need for that, and therefore a decision has to be made fairly quickly as to how far it can go or where it should go. The Minister has no strong opinion as to how long it will take to build the bridge.

The Minister for Works: I have not.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: He can only guess at that. It might take years. As this morning's issue of "The West Australian" pointed out, if we take the speed at which the Causeway is being built as any criterion, it will be many years. The member for Fremantle has pointed out to me that on page 5 of the Meyer report there is a reference to the outer harbour. He states—

In any event, whether the pilot plan for the outer harbour development be that offered by me or some other, I strongly urge that outer harbour development should be on the south side rather than on the north. If this issue can be resolved now and in favour of south side development, any well balanced plan of development will involve a considerable work of reclamation between the Fish Haven and, say, Robbs Jetty and it appeals to me that that is a work that might advantageously be embarked upon in the comparatively near future.

The Minister for Works: "If this issue can be resolved now and in favour of south side development." That is, when a decision is made to go seaward.

Hon. J. T. TONKIN: I cannot follow that. "Now" to me means the present, and I think that is what Mr. Meyer meant. However, I hope the Government will have a further look at this matter. The member for Fremantle is to be congratulated on the tenacity he has shown on this question; on the research he has carried out in connection with it and the study he has given to the reports; and on the way he has presented the facts to this House. If the House carries this motion, it will be an indication to the Government that it should have another careful look at this matter. May I remind the Premier of what Sir Alexander Gibb said: Up-river extension was attractive in the first place, but the more it was studied the less attractive it became.

MR. HUTCHINSON (Cottesloe) [9.25]: I desire to add a few remarks to the discussion on the motion. I, too, have had my layman qualms regarding the necessity for upriver extension over and above that of seaward extension, and I reasoned with myself for some time that it would be better to build the harbour seawards. But in face of expert opinion I cannot continue to hold those original tenets. I have often asked myself what would be my action if I were the Minister acting in this matter. Would I give further consideration to this great problem? Would I ask another engineer to report on this matter; and if that engineer were to endorse the opinions of the other experts, would I give further consideration to it and again seek advice of yet another expert?

Mr. Hoar: It is a matter of tossing up the penny until it comes down heads.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I feel the matter has gone far enough and it would have been well had the Government of 25 years ago gone upstream at that time. I consider that as each and every one of the experts has suggested that upstream development must be carried out in the initial stages, we must follow that view. I have asked myself how, if I were Minister, I could go contrary to the views of the experts and take the harbour seawards in the initial stages of the scheme.

I feel that an important point has been overlooked; not exactly overlooked, but not given sufficient emphasis. I refer to the condition of the present railway bridge. It is well known that that bridge must be rebuilt. I think it is also accepted by members of the Opposition, and even by the member for Fremantle—though he can correct me on this point if I am wrong—that the railway bridge must be shifted further upstream.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Not necessarily.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Does the hon. member believe that it can be rebuilt on the present site?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Somewhere near the present site.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Very well! Let us assume that the railway bridge must be rebuilt. We are all agreed on that point. Its life has practically ended. It appears from all the expert opinion that the bridge must be shifted further upstream, one of the most vital reasons being the fact that there are nowhere near the adequate port rail facilities that are required. I reasoned along similar lines to those of the member for Melville, that it would be well not to shift the railway bridge as far east as Point Brown but to take it as far east as the present road and traffic bridge. But once again I found that expert opinion has it that port rail facilities are inadequate, particularly having regard to the cost of transfer to that region. It would be far wiser to increase the efficiency of the harbour by taking both the road bridge and the rail bridge as far east as Point Brown.

Mr. Hoar: What do you think of upstream development from a defence point of view?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: If the hon. member will wait awhile I will touch rather fully on that point. I am speaking advisedly when I say that port rail facilities will not be adequate for the efficiency of the harbour if the rail bridge is taken only as far east as the present traffic bridge. Although the following words appearing in a certain paragraph in volume 1 of Mr. Tydeman's report, may have already been quoted, I intend to read them again—

The existing railway bridge at Fremantle, with only a few years of useful life left, should be re-sited further upstream beyond the road bridge to allow for efficient port rail approach and operation, and for modern and future requirements of gradients, curves, loadings, and river headroom. The best new bridge site is at Point Brown, and both rail and road bridges should therefore be moved and re-sited in this locality as two separate modern structures within the next two decades.

On page 10 of the same volume, Mr. Tydeman said—

A very important reason why the existing rail bridge must be re-sited further upstream is that reasonable and economic port railway operating efficiency is impossible with rail approaches as they are today, limited by the location of the existing rail bridge. The rail river crossing is too close to the berths for proper port rail lay-out. Re-siting the rail bridge further upstream near the road bridge (see Appendix 27) would only improve rail approaches partially—

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Have you the paragraph where he says that if you go upstream you will have insufficient land?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Mr. Tydeman continues—

—and though it would open up the best upriver dry-dock site and permit limited upstream berth expansion, would not improve port rail operating efficiency sufficiently to justify the cost involved.

That was the paragraph which persuaded me that the shifting of the rail bridge as far east as the traffic bridge only would not suit the purpose of the engineers with regard to rail facilities. I feel that the arguments of those who contend that the motion is a proper one place too great an emphasis upon selected sections of Mr. Tydeman's report. I should say that the comprehensive nature of his report precludes the extraction of certain selected passages, and their use to prove a point. The report is one which seems to deal with a number of sides of the problem, and after having summed up the various aspects, to reach a conclusion which is set out quite clearly; and that conclusion is for an upriver extension. How can I, or any other layman, disregard such advice?

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: If you read some of the other paragraphs, you will change your mind.

Mr. HUTCHINSON: Not at all. The views that he states are part of the comprehensive nature of his report. They are paradoxes, or seeming paradoxes. Another matter I want to mention is that it has been said the extension of the harbour upstream may add to the pollution of the river. This is something I feared might happen, but here again I am assured that it will not. Rather than that the river should be further polluted by upstream development, it appears that expert advice has it that the clearing away of the close-piled rail bridge, with its present weir, can have only beneficial results so that the beauty of our lovely Swan River will not be affected.

I am informed that the clearing away of the weir will bring about a flushing effect of the lower reaches, and so cleanse them. It should be remembered, too,

that if we extend the harbour seawards we will really be extending the river banks seawards. When all is said and done, we will still have our restricted opening for our seawards extension, and so we will only be extending the river a little further seawards, and the result on the river, so far as pollution is concerned, will be largely similar to what it is at present. If we have a seawards extension, the waters there will still be enclosed.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Have you looked at the plan?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: I have. The possibility is that those waters might still be carried upstream. We should remember that point. It was not so very long ago that I was asked what I thought about the defence angle. Here again, naval opinion is that it would be far better for the harbour to be extended upstream.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Which admiral said that?

Mr. HUTCHINSON: If the hon. member will wait a while I shall give him incontrovertible proof that that is the opinion of the Department of the Navy. The Minister for Works has handed me a letter from the Department of the Navy, Navy Office, Melbourne. It is dated the 22nd December, 1949, signed by A. R. Nankervis, Secretary, and addressed to the Minister of Works, Department of Public Works, Perth, and is as follows:—

Future Development of the Port of Fremantle.

As a result of the meetings between yourself and Naval representatives, it has been suggested that you would like an official expression of opinion from this department on the report on the port of Fremantle prepared by Mr. Tydeman.

For the following reasons, the upriver extensions in the report, including the shifting of the rail and road bridges, are strongly supported:

- (a) The congestion of the port at present is such that delays occur in peace-time in the operation of the port, and during the last war, in order to meet the essential needs of the Navy for berthing naval vessels, it was necessary to take over harbour berths even though this involved substantial delays to merchant shipping.
- (b) In the event of hostilities in the future, naval plans envisage at least as much use of the port of Fremantle by naval forces as in the last war.
- (c) Unless the rail bridge, which is soon due for replacement, is moved upstream of the present road bridge to Point

Brown, the harbour cannot be adequately expanded upstream. An increase in the number of berths is considered to be a national requirement to allow shipping to be expeditiously handled.

- (d) Although there is no foreseeable naval requirement for a graving dock or dockyard in the next 20 years, the extension of the harbour up to Point Brown would make a site for these available should they ever become necessary.

Then he goes on, in the body of the letter, to say—

Although the Civil Defence Committee is the authority on dispersion to meet mass destruction weapon attacks, it is the opinion of this department that the seaward extension of the harbour planned for the 21st century would not be sound and should the need arise consideration in the light of the then existing circumstances would have to be given to the creation of a separate port. Should you wish you may use these opinions in any approach you may make to the Federal Government.

Here finance raises its ugly head.

But it must be emphasised that port construction is not in any way the financial concern of this department and that funds from naval sources could not be made available for such developments.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I hope the hon. member will table that letter, seeing that it is an official document from the Department of the Navy.

MR. SPEAKER: That is quite in order.

MR. HUTCHINSON: Apparently there will be no opposition to that. I contend that we must pay great regard to those reasons—

MR. RODORÉDA: There is not a reason among them.

MR. HUTCHINSON: When one considers those facts together with the expert advice that has been given to Governments of this State over the last quarter of a century I feel that the Minister for Works can do nothing other than approve of the upriver extension of our harbour.

MR. HILL (Albany) [9.42]: About 40 years ago I had an officer of the Harbour and Rivers Department staying with me and we often discussed harbour matters. I think he was responsible for the great interest I take in the question of port development. Since I have had the privilege of being a member of this House I have met the leading port engineers and administrators of Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. Those gentlemen have taught me

a lot. One of the main points that I have learned from them is that the question of harbour construction, development, administration and control is not one for amateurs. I will go briefly into the qualifications of the experts who have been mentioned here tonight.

Sir George Buchanan had wide experience in India, the Far East and other parts of the world, and was given the job of reorganising water transport in Mesopotamia during the war. He was rather a pugnacious individual and used to get into a good deal of trouble, but he did a good job. He was brought out here by the Commonwealth Government in 1927 to report on transport in Australia, with special reference to port and harbour facilities. When he visited Fremantle he referred to the "God-sent gift" or words to that effect, of the Swan River and he was an advocate of upriver extension.

I never had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Stileman but I believe he was a fine gentleman and capable engineer. Sir Alexander Gibb, and partners, are one of the leading engineering firms of the British Empire. It was they who were called upon to select the site for a battleship graving dock in Australia. I have spent many hours discussing port problems with Mr. Tydeman. I have great respect for him and admiration for his qualifications. He was chief engineer at Singapore when war broke out and during the war was chief technical adviser to Lord Mountbatten. When I first met Mr. Meyer 40 years ago he was chief engineer of the South Australian Harbour Board. Since then I have followed carefully his work in the reports of that board. In Adelaide, in June last, I spent two hours with him and his engineer, Mr. Manuel, in their office, discussing port problems. I spent an afternoon with Mr. Meyer going round Port Adelaide.

The member for Melville has said that Mr. Meyer has not the qualifications that Mr. Tydeman has. I do not think he had the advantages that Mr. Tydeman had in his early youth, but the hon. member knows that the man with the highest university degree does not always make the best teacher. I think Mr. Meyer has made good through his own ability, and a few years ago he was sent all over the world by the South Australian Government to inspect ports and report back. Sir George Buchanan favoured upstream extension at Fremantle. There was almost unanimous agreement about a limited extension of the Fremantle harbour upstream, and it would be absurd to say that providing five berths on one side and six on the other is an upstream extension. I do not like the outer harbour scheme. We have not King George's Sound at Fremantle and it is a pity that Fremantle has none of the advantages of that port.

MR. MARSHALL: It is a shame.

Mr. HILL: When in Melbourne I spoke to the chairman of the Melbourne Harbour Trust and he arranged for me to inspect the Appleton Dock, which was under construction. On my return from the inspection I said to him "I have a spare harbour which I will sell to you for £2,000,000." When I saw him at Albany he said "If I could only shift one or two of your coves over there it would suit me."

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about the southerlies?

Mr. HILL: The Minister referred to that. When one embarks on harbour construction one meets what are called contractors' risks. The "Sir James Mitchell" was anchored and had attached to her a long pipe-line. She was struck by a severe southerly gale against which no small craft could stand up. She dragged her anchor a bit and hit the bank but next day, when the gale dropped, they put the anchor out and hauled her off. Mr. Meyer said "You have to pick your weather at Fremantle." If that dredge had been on the outside of Fremantle when such a gale struck her we would have needed a new vessel.

The Minister for Education: She would have finished up in High-st.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Mr. Meyer says we could make a beautiful harbour there.

Mr. HILL: But he favours upstream extension and I think that is the only course that can be considered by the Government at present, because the work can be done progressively, as required. I strongly favour it and like the layout of what the port will be when the upstream extension, or the extension of the existing harbour, is completed. Actually it is misleading to refer to it as an upstream extension. The difference between what I have referred to as the Hawke harbour scheme and the Tydeman scheme for Albany is that the Labour Government scheme was of the pier and slip type but the Tydeman scheme is for a continuous berth of 22 berths. I asked Mr. Manuel and Mr. Meyer what type of berth they liked and without hesitation they said emphatically "Give us the long continuous berth." I think Fremantle will be better served by two long berths than by the shorter pier and slips that are included in the outer harbour scheme.

The great disadvantage of the outer harbour scheme is that an enormous sum of money must be spent before any harbour work at all can be done. In my opinion that puts it out of the picture for many years. The member for Melville condemned the port of Adelaide. I wish the hon. member had been with me when I was there. First of all I had a trip round with my cousin, on the lower side of the river, which is shown on the plan on the wall. Apparently the defence authorities are not frightened of the port of Adelaide being

blocked up because during the war they had nearby the biggest munition works in Australia. Today these munition works have been leased to private firms on the condition that should they be required for war purposes they revert to the Government. When I was going around Port Adelaide with Mr. Meyer I told him I thought he was building up the best port in Australia. I still hold that opinion. The Swan River is a thing of beauty and it would be a pity to spoil it. I would have nothing at all to do with anything that would spoil it.

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

Mr. HILL: However, no one would call the Port Adelaide river a place of beauty but it is worth untold millions to South Australia. All round Port Adelaide it is dead level ground and I went all round the area. I put the pollution question to Mr. Meyer when I was talking to him and he said, "We are never worried about it." We were standing on one side of the river and as we looked across to the other side I said, "You have a wonderful lot of oil tanks over there." He said, "Yes, we are getting them shifted as quickly as possible because one ship, if a collision occurred, could cause a disaster."

Members will notice on the plan that the authorities over there are going to have an oil depot at the entrance of the river and the oil wharves will be in an enclosed lock. As far as insoluble problems are concerned, Fremantle has a very narrow entrance and that certainly is a disadvantage to the port. That is one of the reasons why Fremantle was condemned as a site for a dock by Sir Alexander Gibb and partners. I have their report here which concerns the graving dock for a capital ship.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Mr. Meyer did not condemn it for a dock.

Mr. HILL: Fremantle is condemned in this report for that reason.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: But not in Mr. Meyer's report.

Mr. HILL: I will deal with that.

Mr. Needham: What is the date of that?

Mr. HILL: It is dated 1940. It was a toss-up whether the dock should go to Sydney or Adelaide. However, I will lend this report to any member who wishes to read it because I do not want to weary the House by quoting from it.

Mr. J. Hegney: What about Cockburn Sound as a naval dock?

Mr. HILL: It might interest members to hear about the last conversation I had with the late John Curtin in 1939.

Mr. SPEAKER: In connection with this motion?

Mr. HILL: It has reference to the motion because the hon. member has referred to the channel leading into Cockburn Sound.

Sir Leopold Saville, an engineer from the firm of Sir Alexander Gibb was out in Australia selecting a site for the dock. The late Brigadier Street was Minister for Defence and while over here he was to have flown to Albany. Owing to the bog at the aerodrome the trip was abandoned and I met him in Perth. While we were talking Colonel Collett came in with a list of the things that had to be done, and mentioned the Henderson Naval Base. I said to him, "That is the biggest bit of political jobbery that has ever taken place in Australia."

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: Who said that, the late John Curtin?

Mr. HILL: I said that to Brigadier Street. I left the Commonwealth Bank buildings and went across the street and met the late John Curtin. I told him what had transpired between myself and Brigadier Street and Mr. Curtin laughed. As he was leaving me, I said, "If you push for the Henderson Naval Base you will have my opposition for all time."

Mr. Bovell: That must have frightened him!

Mr. HILL: The allied authorities wanted to use Albany but Mr. Curtin was the member for Fremantle. Colonel Tydeman told us yesterday that they spent 2½ million pounds dredging the channel to which the member for Melville referred. Admiral Fraser came out here and he said, "I am not going to use this place. One ship sunk in the channel and the harbour is finished."

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The Navy used it in the last war.

Mr. HILL: Only for a lot of little boats and things like that.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: No, a lot of big ships.

Mr. HILL: During the war it was intended to close down Fremantle as a commercial port and utilise the outports. The question of how that could be done was considered by a committee of the experts in Australia; they were Mr. A. J. Debenham, Chief Engineer of the Maritime Services Board; Mr. McKenzie, the Chairman of the Melbourne Harbour Trust; Mr. H. V. Meyer, then Chief Engineer of the South Australian Harbours Board and Major Howse, Commonwealth Director of Rail Transport. The idea was that the main offensive of Australia was to be based on Western Australia. Those experts decided that if they closed down Fremantle as a commercial port they would almost have to close down Western Australia. They reported that that proposition was not practicable.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That is quite right; I agree with that.

Mr. HILL: That is correct and then when Admiral Fraser saw Cockburn Sound he refused to use it. When Lord Mountbatten came out he condemned it as a

naval base and said, "You have a place called Albany, have you not?" They flew him down and as he stood on the top of Mt. Clarence and looked over the harbour he said, "There is your naval base already made for you." The member for Melville referred to the channel at Fremantle and Mr. Tydeman told us yesterday that it would cost at least £10,000,000 to put that channel right through.

Mr. J. Hegney: Somebody must have recommended that.

Mr. HILL: Admiral Henderson.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: The Yanks used Fremantle as a naval base.

Mr. HILL: The member for Fremantle mentioned the name of Rustat Blake. This gentleman came out on behalf of Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: I did not mention his name.

Mr. HILL: No, the member for Melville did. I have heard a little tale about Mr. Blake and I have reason to believe that it is true. An engineer showed Mr. Blake round and was talking to him just before he left. After Mr. Blake left this engineer he came down to spend a holiday with one of my neighbours. As Mr. Blake was going this neighbour said to him, "Look Mr. Blake, you have done your job as engineer. Now, as man to man, what is your opinion?" Mr. Blake looked at him and said, "Well, speaking man to man, I consider the Government are damn fools to want to spend all this money up there when they have Albany."

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that is a bit away from the motion.

Mr. HILL: I think it deals with the motion insofar as it has been referred to. One accident at Fremantle would put that port out of action for years.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: That is quite right. One of those ships sunk in the entrance would do that.

Mr. HILL: I used to think Fremantle was a good port, but the member for Fremantle has altered my views; it must be a very awkward port, and I think we should adopt a policy of not concentrating all our trade at the port of Fremantle.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is the stuff.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bovell: You are getting somewhere now.

Hon. J. B. Sleeman: What about refuelling with coal and so on?

Mr. HILL: We have oil refuelling units at Albany now and it might interest the member for Fremantle to be reminded of what took place when the "King George the Fifth" and the H.M.S. "Anson" were at Fremantle. They called at that port within three weeks of one another. A bit of a blow was on at the time and they had

to pick up anchor and with their tankers to steam to Albany to take aboard fuel. The member for Melville also referred to the fact that we have to look to the southern end of the State for our future development. Might I suggest that the hon. member looks at a map to see the geographical position of Fremantle. We have to consider this problem from a State-wide point of view. Ports present complicated problems. A hundred years ago a port was a place where one could anchor or tie up a ship. Nowadays, a port must be able to handle large and costly ships, large quantities of cargo, provide accommodation for cargo, and have ample rail and road services, and there is as much difference between a modern port and one a hundred years ago as there is between a modern motor garage and the old village blacksmith's shop.

As far as this State is concerned our two ports, Fremantle and Albany, must be the deepest and best in Australia. Some years ago, Mr. Bickford, who is chief engineer in N.S.W., and, incidentally, a Perth man, was told that following an inquiry as to whether Sydney wanted more cranes for its port, the reply was given that it did not because the shipping gear was quite adequate for the requirements. He then said that should not be taken as a criterion for Western Australia as Sydney was a terminal port but when ships arrived at Western Australian ports they were almost fully loaded and needed only to be topped-up. Therefore, the ports in this State would need to be the deepest and best equipped in Australia for the purpose of giving expeditious despatch. I support the Government in its decision to adopt the report by Colonel Tydeman. I am confident that it is the best scheme that we could get under existing conditions for the future development of the harbour.

On motion by Mr. Rodoreda, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.2 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 13th September, 1951.

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

QUESTIONS.

FREMANTLE HARBOUR.

(a) As to Outside Berth for Oil Ships.

Hon. J. B. SLEEMAN asked the Premier:

(1) Is he aware that in "The West Australian" of the 21st August, 1951, there appeared a report of a violent explosion on board the British tanker "Dromus" at Paula Bukom 5 miles from Singapore, in which 28 lives were lost?