

traffic stopping to allow one car to get through—at times, two to get through—but one has to have a bit of nerve to do that. This wriggling snake effect, which of course is created wherever there is a bus bay, quite unnerves one when one is driving beside it.

I am reliably informed that the road markings are to conform with the shape of the median strip. So, when driving up alongside this monstrosity, one will find one is going from a width of 30 ft. to a width of 21 ft., and that in a fairly short space. It is a most unpleasant effect. It is not so unpleasant as yet, because it is not marked, but members can appreciate what it will be like when it is marked, particularly if it is marked in double lines and one is not allowed to cross them. This will have a detrimental effect on anyone driving along the road.

If room must be secured for the bus bays, there is a fair amount between the old trolley poles which could go into the foot-path at least some feet. It has been done on the highway further down. A 10 ft. cut would not be obtained, but it would be possible to get a 3 ft. or 4 ft. cut-in, and that would give us all the safety we require on the highway. Members can also appreciate that when these buses take off from their bus bay in a 30 ft. area they very smartly approach a 21ft. area, and with cars coming behind them we can imagine what is going to happen.

Yesterday I had two men here from Melbourne, and it was my duty to drive them to Perth. To put it quite frankly, they were amazed. They said they had never seen a road—a reasonably straight highway—mutilated to the extent that this road has been mutilated.

Mr. W. Hegney: What does the Minister for Works think about it?

Mr. CROMMELIN: I think the Minister for Transport, who after all is responsible for traffic and transport in the metropolitan area, should not ask the public—the people who live on the highway, and those who live in the side streets between the highway—to go those extra hundred yards that they will have to traverse each day, unless he is firmly convinced that this strip is necessary to create safety from the vehicles themselves. If we can have safety zones in the middle of the highway on every bus stop, well marked and well lit up at night, the pedestrians at least will have some protection. They deserve and need the protection.

A series of these safety zones would automatically create for the driver an impression that he had to keep on a reasonably straight line as he does at present on the part of the highway that has not been affected. I would imagine that most of the work on this strip, has been labour and material composed of cement slabs. The higher type of slab—the cement square slab—has been set in the middle. I feel strongly about this; and now that the work

has ceased in the last few days, I think all the material that has been put there could be used somewhere else to much better advantage.

The bad feeling that it has created down there has to be lived amongst to be appreciated. I do not think we have achieved anything for which we can say with pride, "There is something that is an improvement on the highway". It has been done hastily; it is ill-conceived; perfectly carried out, possibly, but still ill-conceived. Accordingly I ask that the Government remove this and proceed with our safety zones; give us our new type of lighting which has been agreed upon by the authorities concerned, and I am sure that everybody who finds it necessary to drive up the highway would not only feel happier but a lot safer.

**Question put and passed.**

**Bill read a second time.**

*In Committee*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*Third Reading*

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Treasurer) [11.51]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Mt. Hawthorn) [11.51]: Would I be correct in assuming that remarks which can be made on the third reading of this Bill can be made with equal effect on the Address-in-Reply?

The SPEAKER: I think so.

**Question put and passed.**

**Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.**

*House adjourned at 11.53 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 3rd August, 1960

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

## TABLING OF PAPERS

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.32]: As the list of papers I have here to be tabled is quite lengthy and reading it would involve some time, I move—

That the list be taken as read and the papers be laid on the Table of the House.

**THE HON. F. J. S. WISE** (North) [4.33]: In regard to this motion, while I do not wish to raise this point in any unpleasant attitude or atmosphere, I think that the tabling of papers without stating the title or contents of the papers, is not a good practice to continue. I know it has been done. I am not blaming the Minister as being the one who initiated such a procedure; but if we do not continue to read these lengthy lists, which must be lengthy following opening day, unwittingly—not with any desire on the part of the Minister to do so—papers in which members are vitally interested will pass their notice and be hidden. It would mean that a search would have to be made daily through the papers tabled to locate the ones in which particular members were interested.

I repeat that I am not cavilling, or blaming the Minister. Nor am I raising this point in any nasty fashion whatsoever. But I think it is a very important one because we are all used to listening for the title of something in which we are interested. While I do not intend to oppose the motion, I would draw attention to the matter and suggest that even though abbreviations may be used in the headings of the papers, the old practice should be resumed.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (Suburban—Minister for Mines—in reply) [4.35]: I think the honourable member is perfectly right, and I appreciate the manner in which he has addressed the Chair on this motion.

What he has said, of course, is entirely correct inasmuch as there was no intention on my part—and I am sure there would be no intention on the part of any Minister—to hide anything, because there is nothing to hide in the first place.

I submitted the motion only for the purpose of saving time. I ask leave to withdraw the motion; and, if leave is granted, I will then table papers in the proper form.

*Motion, by leave, withdrawn.*

The papers were tabled.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

## MARY AGNES BROWNE

*Claim for Damages*

1. The Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister lay on the Table of the House the file and all papers relating to the claim for damages by Mary Agnes Browne, widow, and children v. Frederick George Parker heard in the Supreme Court on the 28th June, 1960?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Rules of the Supreme Court (Order 61 Rule 20) provide that no record of the court shall be taken out of the Central Office without the order of a judge or Master.

The file in question is open to public inspection at the Central Office, Supreme Court, on payment of the usual search fee of 3s.

## WOOROLOO HOSPITAL

*Sale of Cattle Herd*

2. The Hon. G. BENNETTS asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Is it correct that the herd of Cattle from Wooroloo Hospital has been sold; and, if so, how many cattle were sold?

(2) What average price per head was realised?

(3) Who was the successful tenderer?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) Yes. Wooroloo farm was leased in July, 1958, to Mr. W. B. Wallace. 262 cattle were sold.

(2) 4 bulls at £100 each.  
130 cows at £35 each.  
60 heifers at £30 each.  
68 calves at £10 each.

(3) Answered by No. (1).

## GOVERNOR STIRLING HIGH SCHOOL

### *Additional Accommodation*

3. The Hon. G. E. JEFFERY asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of the situation prevailing at the Governor Stirling Senior High School necessitating the housing of approximately 230 students in the Midland Junction Technical School, will he inform the House—

- (1) Is it the intention of the Government to continue this unsatisfactory arrangement during 1961?
- (2) If the answer to No. (1) is "No," what alternative plans are envisaged for the future?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The annexe will be closed as soon as possible, but it may take a year at least to overcome entirely the excess numbers at Governor Stirling High School.
- (2) The first year intake will be reduced in 1961 by directing more first-year students east of Midland Junction to Mt. Helena Junior High School.

## ALBANY TRANSIT SHED

### *Plan and Tenders*

4. The Hon. J. M. THOMSON asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Have plans and specifications for the construction of the transit shed at the port of Albany been prepared?
- (2) When is it anticipated that tenders will be invited by the Public Works Department for this work?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) Plans and specifications for the shed structure have not been finalised.
- (2) In the second half of this financial year.

## ALBANY POLICE STATION

### *Additional Accommodation*

5. The Hon. J. M. THOMSON asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Are plans and specifications in course of preparation for the provision of additional accommodation necessitated by the increased number of police officers stationed at Albany?
- (2) (a) Is it intended to carry out the work during this financial year?  
(b) If so, when is it anticipated the work will be commenced?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) (a) No.  
(b) It is proposed to list this work on the programme for 1960-61.

## CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS FOR NATIVES

### *Applications and Cancellations*

6. The Hon. J. M. THOMSON asked the Minister for Mines:

- (1) How many natives applied for citizenship rights during the years 1957, 1958, 1959 and to the 30th June, 1960?
- (2) How many of the applicants referred to in No. (1) were successful?
- (3) In the period referred to in No. (1) above how many certificates of Citizenship were cancelled?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	1959-60	Totals
(1)	203	98	161	172	634
(2)	135	75	116	130	456
(3)	3	—	—	3	6

## SUPPLY BILL, £23,500,000

### *Standing Orders Suspension*

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.50]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended so as to enable a Supply Bill to be taken on receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly, and to have precedence each day before the Address-in-Reply, and to be passed through all stages at any one sitting.

This is the usual motion that is moved by the Leader of the House to introduce a Supply Bill. As I have already mentioned to Mr. Strickland, I thought the most practical step to take this evening would be to deal with the addendum to the Address-in-Reply that had been moved by the honourable member and, when that had been dealt with, then to introduce the second reading of the Supply Bill, and offer an adjournment of the debate on the Bill until tomorrow, if Mr. Strickland so desired.

Question put and passed.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

### *Third Day*

Debate resumed from the 2nd August, on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to which the Hon. H. C. Strickland had moved an amendment to add the following words:—

We wish to protest strongly against the Government's failure to honour the promise given by the Attorney-General last year to issue a fresh

proclamation under the Electoral Districts Act of 1947, and against the Government's failure to take or propose any effective action to bring the prices of essential commodities under reasonable restraint.

We wish also to protest strongly against the Government's policy of undermining the manufacturing capacity of the Government's own railway workshops at Midland Junction by refusing to even allow the management to tender for large scale jobs, such as the building of the new Westland trains, and against the policy of disposing of State Trading Concerns.

Furthermore we would protest strongly against the Government's mishandling of the finances of the Metropolitan Water Supply, and recent severe increases in water rates.

**THE HON. C. H. SIMPSON** (Midland—on amendment) [4.53]: The amendment moved to the Address-in-Reply by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Strickland, consists of a protest raising three points which are tantamount to, and are intended to be, a vote of censure and a vote of no confidence in the Government. As a supporter of the Government, I must, of course, oppose the amendment. However, as it is mainly the responsibility of the Leader of the House to deal with this amendment, I will not attempt, at this stage, to go into the various points that have been raised.

Nevertheless, I want to take advantage of the occasion to comment on the substance of a letter which had been circulated among members by Mr. Bennetts, which letter he received from Mr. Ford of the Commonwealth Railways. This letter has particular reference to the two speeches that I made during the last two sessions. Mr. Bennetts paid me the courtesy of showing me an advance copy, as it were, of the communication from Mr. Ford, and told me what he intended to do; and, of course, I had no objection. As a matter of fact, before I had the opportunity of seeing Mr. Bennetts in regard to the letter I had already sent a reply to him dealing with some of the points raised by Mr. Ford, and a number of other matters which I thought were associated with the proposal in question.

I want to say at once that Mr. Ford's letter touches only on one or two matters mentioned in my speech. These matters were not initiated by me, but were the subject of a quotation from *The West Australian* which, in turn, had taken the article from the *Adelaide Advertiser*. I understand that the author of this article was Mr. John Eddy, an economist employed by the *Melbourne Herald*. I am not qualified to say to what extent Mr. Eddy is right or wrong, but obviously he is

a man who knows his job and there is at least some substance in some of the statements he makes.

I take it that Mr. Ford is a public relations officer for the Commonwealth Railways. He must be, because, in the course of his letter, which I think most members will have read, he said that he waited upon the managing editor of the *Adelaide Advertiser* and also discussed the matter with Mr. Loh of *The West Australian*. However, he does not take up any of the matters that I mentioned in the speech I made in 1958 or in 1959, nor does he take up any of the points that were featured in the questions asked by Mr. Cornell in the Assembly and replied to by the Premier on the 13th October, 1959.

However, there are some points raised by Mr. Ford which I think may be amplified. He partially admits the claims made by Mr. Eddy when he says that the Commonwealth Railways do not pay pay-roll tax, and he also admits that, in some cases, they do not pay interest on capital. He makes a very long explanation on why this is so. He gives instances where loan capital, free of interest, is made available to the Commonwealth Railways although, at the same time, he claims that such items as the Commissioner's salary, and accident and superannuation contributions, etc., which Mr. Eddy says were paid by the Commonwealth Government as distinct from the Commonwealth Railways, were, in fact, paid by the Commonwealth Railways.

If members will refer to page 33 of appendix 3 of the Commonwealth Railways Commissioner's report, they will probably be rather confused by a recital of certain items at the foot of what is called a Treasury conciliation of figures in regard to railway revenue. However, I do not want to labour this point because it is a question between Mr. Eddy and the Commonwealth Government Railways, and I think that each side is quite capable of proceeding with its own arguments in that regard. However, Mr. Eddy makes reference to certain matters which I think merit some mention and consideration in this House. For instance, on page 6 of his letter he says that some of the States had made capital reductions. He cites, for Queensland, £28,000,000 from the 1st July, 1931; for Victoria, £30,000,000, from the 1st July, 1937; and for Western Australia, £12,326,349 from the 1st July, 1950. I was the Minister for Railways at that time and I can explain the item in respect of Western Australia. The first thing which struck me on a casual reading was that it was curious that the Western Australian figure, instead of being a round figure, was an odd figure. There is a reason for that.

Prior to that date no depreciation had been allowed in the railway accounting system. It was decided from then on that

depreciation should be allowed as in ordinary business accounting. It was worked out that if depreciation had, in fact, been taken into account from the start, then the figure which I quoted, namely, £12,326,349, would have been written off; and that figure was adopted. Therefore it was an adjustment, and it was not the amount of capital reduction. Depreciation is now allowed for in the system, and for the year 1959 it totalled £1,555,708, which is equal to 48.29d. per train mile. So it is an appreciable item in the actual cost of running the State system.

Regarding interest, Mr. Ford says in his letter—I quote from page 7—

Commonwealth Railways at present carry, under non-interest bearing capital, an amount of £12,000,000, approximately, which was the cost of the standardisation of the Stirling North-Maree railway.

This is a point of interest which should be examined. The Stirling North-Maree railway section of the line runs north from Port Augusta to Alice Springs. That is run by the Commonwealth Railways. Originally it was a 3 ft. 6 in.-gauge line, and the portion to which I refer between Maree and Stirling North, which is the junction point of Port Augusta, was standardised at Sir Thomas Playford's request to enable coal to be transported from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta where a big power house had been established.

The Wentworth Committee, when considering that line, which had almost been completed when the report was submitted, cited certain costs in connection with its construction, and referred to the carriage of coal on that line as an example of what could be done in regard to the carriage of iron ore in Western Australia.

That is the matter which is in dispute between the South Australian and the Commonwealth Governments. It is interesting to note how the comments of the Wentworth Committee panned out in actual practice. The line had almost been completed, so the cost should have been known. It was put down as £37,955 per route mile. The claim was made by Mr. Ford that the line represented £12,000,000 of loan-free money, and that the 217 miles of line cost that amount. The actual cost, therefore, was £55,300 per mile. The estimate appears to have been exceeded by 46 per cent.

The Wentworth Committee makes special reference to haulage arrangements in regard to Leigh Creek coal, and applied that as a pattern or guide for hauling Koolyanobbing ore. The Commonwealth charge which was actually made on that coal was 1.225d. Under the South Australia-Commonwealth agreement the charge was 45d. Here is an interesting point: the actual cost, according to the Commonwealth Commissioner's report of 1959, was 1.78d.

The Wentworth Committee expressed the view that in their opinion the Commonwealth figure of 1.225d. was excessive, yet in actual practice, as pointed out, it was 1.78d. as compared with the other figure. That was 45 per cent. above the actual estimate. That is only one instance of a mistake or a mis-statement.

I refer to the Commonwealth Railway Commissioner's report, page 5, which refers to freight rates on the carriage of coal. The following is stated:—

The Electricity Trust of South Australia was debited at the rate of 11s. 6d. per ton, the special concession rate granted the Government of South Australia by the Commonwealth Government for the haulage of coal from the Leigh Creek North Coalfields to the State Government's Power House at Port Augusta.

The earnings figure in respect of this traffic, however, has been computed at the ordinary freight rate for the mileage involved. The figure so computed exceeds the amount received from the Electricity Trust of South Australia, on the 713,710 tons carried, by £767,238.

That is equivalent to about £1 1s. 6d. in excess of the agreed rate.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the honourable member will connect his remarks to the amendment which refers to the Midland Junction Workshops.

The Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: The amendment is to the Address-in-Reply, and that gives me scope to cover these matters.

The PRESIDENT: I suggest that the honourable member should connect his speech to the Midland Junction Workshops, otherwise I shall have to say that the subject matter is not in conformity with the amendment.

The Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: With all due respect, as the amendment is to the Address-in-Reply, any matter which appertains to the Address-in-Reply is permissible under this heading.

The PRESIDENT: On the motion to adopt the Address-in-Reply that is the case, but not when speaking to an amendment. The amendment requires the honourable member to deal with the amendment itself, as distinct from the Address-in-Reply. The honourable member will have an opportunity to deal with the subject matter he is now raising during the Address-in-Reply.

The Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: It was my advice that this matter was quite in order when speaking to the amendment, just as it would be in order when speaking to the Address-in-Reply or on the Supply Bill.

The PRESIDENT: As long as the honourable member connects the subject matter of his speech with the amendment to the Address-in-Reply I shall be quite happy.

The Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: The matter I am now discussing deals with railway questions. As both directly and indirectly the subject matter I am referring to will come back to the question of railways generally, it does affect the operations of the Midland Junction Workshops and the new *Westland* trains. Both these questions are embodied in the amendment. I therefore submit that what I am saying is pertinent.

The PRESIDENT: I do not want to stop the honourable member from making his speech, as long as he connects his remarks to the amendment.

The Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: I have referred to the recommendations of the Wentworth committee, which is now the Government Railway Committee, and these have not proved to be accurate over the period given in regard to railway operation. What they say may affect the question of standardisation in this State, and that, in my opinion, will affect the workshops and thus have some bearing on the amendment before the Chair. I would like to proceed along the lines I have been pursuing.

Mr. Ford's letter, on page 8, quotes Mr. Hannaberry as saying that railway losses in the main are caused by interest payments. I entirely agree, but I pointed out that the question of interest, which was very small so far as the Commonwealth railways were concerned, but which was a very considerable item so far as the State railways were concerned, robbed the comparison of being a just assessment in regard to relative values of both railways.

For instance, the Commonwealth railway interest, as quoted by Mr. Ford, was £379,024, whereas the railway interest for Western Australia was £2,254,664, which amounts to 70.2d. per train mile. If that is equated to ton mileage, which is much bigger in the Commonwealth system than in the State system, it works out at .06d. per ton mile. The Western Australian interest figure is .85d. per ton mile or 14 times greater. So obviously there could be no comparison.

On page 25 of the Wentworth report the committee stated in regard to the suggested rail carriage of Koolyanobbing ore to Fremantle:—

At present this ore is virtually useless because the existing railway system is not capable of transporting ore to the coast at a reasonable price. Given a first class track, however, and adopting the principle applied by the Commonwealth Railway Commissioner to the transport of coal from Leigh Creek to Port Augusta, the 300-mile journey to Fremantle might not be a bar to the development of these reserves.

That is not only a reflection on the capacity of the State railway system, and on the best line we have in the State, but

it is an implication that a standardised line could operate at a very much cheaper rate than a 3ft. 6in. line.

The facts that I put before this House are these: Our own railway system is the lowest of any in the various States, in regard to the cost per train mile. The following figures are taken from the reports of the various Railway Commissioners in Australia:—

	Gauge ft. in.	Miles	Cost per Train Mile s. d.
South Australia ....	5 3	1,651	45 2½
Victoria ....	5 6	882	41 7
New South Wales ....	4 8½	4,359	40 4½
Queensland ....	3 6	6,103	38 0
Western Australia ..	3 6	6,426	37 8½

The Commonwealth railways system has mixed gauges: 1,330 miles with 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge; 922 miles with 3 ft. 6 in. gauge. The cost is 36s. 1½d. per train mile.

As I said, these are official figures taken from the commissioners' own reports and, in commenting on them, we have to remember that Melbourne and Sydney operate electric train systems in the metropolitan areas, which are a good deal cheaper than some. And in each of the respective States of Victoria and New South Wales, about one-third of the total train mileage is taken up by the electric train system; and that accounts for the fact that their systems, although of lower gauge, show a slightly better rate than South Australia.

For a true comparison of costs, we must compare South Australia, 45s. 2½d. per train mile, with Western Australia, 37s. 8½d. per train mile, a difference of 7s. 5½d. in favour of Western Australia.

I think those are facts well worth noting, because we desire to preserve our own gauge, and our own workshops which are necessary for our own gauge, and shall resist any suggestion that there should be an alteration in the existing set-up.

As a further example, the Commonwealth Railways runs four lines—two short lines which do not pay, and two long lines which do pay. Of the two long lines, one is a narrow gauge and the other is broad gauge; but the narrow gauge pays twice the profits of the broad gauge. This can be confirmed by looking at page 37 of last year's Commonwealth Railways report.

I will give a third example: One Australian railway, with a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line, carted, in one year, 3,371,000 net tons of iron ore. That was equal to nearly 90 per cent of Western Australia's total net tonnage, and equal to over 80 per cent of South Australia's net tonnage. The trucks used were 50 tons net—78 tons gross—and loaded four ships per week. The total tonnage amounted to 65,000 tons per week, and the gross ton mileage was 17,000 tons per day. The comparable tonnage for Western Australia, on the heaviest traffic line—Armadale to Brunswick Junction—is 8,000 tons per day. The line from Northam to Merredin carries 4,000 tons a day.

I quote, as my fourth example, the Mt. Isa to Townsville railway line. Members will recall that this line, which is 605 miles long, with a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, was inspected by the Wentworth Committee which recommended that it be superseded by a standard gauge railway; and the Prime Minister approached the World Bank for a loan of £30,000,000 for what he called a "project loan." The World Bank refused his request. The Commonwealth Government then offered £20,000,000 to regenerate the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge. Only yesterday, it was mentioned over the air that tenders had been called for a line expected to cost £29,000,000.

The question I am asking is this: Why did the World Bank refuse the Prime Minister's request; and why—seeing that the contract price is £29,000,000 as against the £30,000,000 envisaged for a 4 ft. 8½ in. gauge line—is money being spent on a 3 ft. 6 in. line? My answer is this: World experts, who are governed by economic considerations and receive plenty of applications for loan moneys, feel that with proper reconditioning a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line is equally able to handle all the tonnage it may be called upon to handle; besides which—and I think this is the point—it would connect at Townsville with existing 3 ft. 6 in. gauge lines, so that any traffic could be taken up and down those lines. I am speaking of a line to be preserved, which I regard as being connected with the motion indirectly because it has some bearing on the future of the workshops.

If we go outside of Australia for a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge line, I would refer to Japan which has 13,000 miles of railway line. Japan has nine times the population of Australia and uses only 3 ft. 6 in. gauge lines. In 1958, Japan hauled 172,891,410 tons, as against Australia's 46,391,540 tons, or a ratio in favour of Japan of 4 to 1. There were 4,000,000,000 passenger journeys as against Australia's 473,000,000, or a ratio of 8 to 1. These ratios, in favour of Japan, could be doubled in relation to carriage per mile.

We all know that Japan, industrially, is one of the foremost nations in the world. Surely, if she can handle that tonnage on a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge, which is equal to her requirements, we in Australia should be able to do the same?

The popular assumption that a 3 ft. 6 in. gauge is inefficient is not supported by actual facts and experience. Well-constructed and well-graded narrow-gauge lines, with adequate track and equipment, are especially suitable for those sparsely populated areas where cheap running, cheap construction, and cheap maintenance are essential. If we look for an example of that, we can find, over the past 50 years, two outstanding examples: Africa, five times Australia's size and with many times its population, has 45,000 miles of railway, of which 86 per cent. is narrow

gauge and 14 per cent. is of standard gauge. I might explain that the standard-gauge line was put down before the turn of the century by countries which had vested interests in Africa: one in Algeria, by the French Government; and one, by the United Kingdom, in Egypt, where there was a dense population around the Nile Valley.

Over the past 50 years during which the African railways have been developed, no railway line other than a narrow gauge line has been constructed for opening up the country and developing it in areas which were sparsely populated. In Brazil, a country of 50,000,000-odd people and exceeding Australia in area, there are 22,859 miles of railway, 93 per cent. of which is narrow gauge. World experts have taken the view that the answer to development in sparsely populated areas is a combination of road and rail. As road transport is increasing in efficiency all the time, obviously Governments are not going to spend money on expensive standard gauge when the 3 ft. 6 in. gauge meets their requirements equally well. That has been the position.

The preservation of our present gauge—where the essential factors are exactly the same—is equally as important as opening up and developing new areas. There is a widely-accepted belief that narrow-gauge railways can only carry light loads at slow speeds. It all depends on whether the line is a solid one with reasonably heavy rails and with proper ballasting. If it is carefully constructed, it can do any job required of it. In Queensland, New Zealand, South Africa, and Japan there are examples of that. They have fast trains; they carry heavy loads; and they do the work required of them. We also have an example in the United States of America, where there has been a tendency to correlate road and rail transport; and the United States, which is far-and-away the country with the biggest railway mileage, reached its peak of 252,845 miles in 1920. Since then, the mileage dropped to 220,221 miles, in 1959, a difference of over 30,000 miles. Rail transport has been superseded by road transport, which has also taken care of a population increase of 30,000,000 people. Road transport has taken up the slack.

The policy of Australian transport—of heavily subsidising standard lines—is not, therefore, in accordance with approved world trends and experience: yet both road and rail services serve the needs of the public; and, in the ultimate, the public foots the bill.

Another question which, I think, is of interest is the misconception in Australia in regard to costs of transport in relation to those overseas. Mr. Calwell stated that Australian transport costs amount to 33½ per cent. of all commodities we buy, and that this compares with 10 per cent. in

Canada and Great Britain, 8 per cent. in Japan, and 9 per cent. in the U.S.A. This mistake needs to be corrected.

Australian transport costs are substantially in line with overseas countries, but the bases of computation are different. In Australia, all costs are included, i.e., running costs, capital cost of roads and equipment, costs of private vehicles, farm transport costs, and the costs of businesses providing their own transport. The last Transport Authority report gave this total as under 30 per cent. Overseas countries' statistics cover public utility running costs only. Just recently there was a survey conducted in Canada which gave 8 per cent. as the running cost figure, and a further 19 per cent. for all other costs. This total represented 27 per cent. of the gross national product, and it is a fairly close approximation to the Australian figure.

I apologise to members if I appear to be thrashing this question unduly, but I consider it important that these facts—and they are facts—should be placed on record for the consideration of members when they are called upon to study railway matters. As I have said, the figures I have quoted, regarding Australian railway operations, have been taken from the various commissioners' reports and also from Mr. Ford's letter, which can be regarded as an official document. The other facts have been gleaned from the *Railwaymen's Directory*, which is a standard publication published every year, and is known as the Railwayman's Bible. It can be referred to to check on the figures and the statements I have made.

I shall make a suggestion regarding road and rail transport, because I think this has reference to the question under discussion. This most important question is not peculiar to Australia; it is common to countries all over the world. So I think it would be a good idea if a committee of experts, with overseas experience and knowledge—say, from the World Bank—was invited to come to Australia to consider our problems, particularly with reference to road and rail transport; because if our experiences are different from those of overseas countries, which are facing the same problems and using instruments of transport which are mostly run by private enterprise with no Government subsidies, and if we are on the wrong track, we should be told. We as citizens, and as taxpayers of both the Commonwealth and State, having to foot the bill, whatever it might be, should require a committee of that kind to examine the position in this country so that we can be assured that we are working along the right lines. I think such a move is eminently desirable. Such a committee would be able to give us the facts we want, and would be able to reassure us, if we want reassurance, in regard to the position; or it could tell us, if necessary, where we are going wrong.

The Hon. A. L. Loton: Or confirm our views, if necessary.

The Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: Yes. I will not dwell on the details of the rest of the amendment which, as I explained previously, is a motion of no confidence. All I shall say in conclusion is that it is my intention to oppose it.

**THE HON. E. THOMPSON** (West—on amendment) [5.34]: I wish to endorse the action of our leader, Mr. Strickland, in moving an amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech made at the opening of this session of Parliament. It is quite clear that the Attorney-General has not carried out, at least to the satisfaction of our party, the promises he made on the 1st July, 1959.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What were the promises?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I shall quote them so that they can be checked. The promises were made during the debate on the Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation) Bill, and I shall refer firstly to the second reading speech of the Attorney-General where this statement appears—

On the other hand, if Parliament should reject those amended proposals, or any proposal which might be brought forward, then it is quite clear that the present statute will remain and the onus would be placed upon the Government of issuing a fresh proclamation to ensure the law is carried into effect.

To my way of thinking, that is near enough to a promise; and the Attorney-General has failed to issue that new proclamation, although the subsequent legislation, the Electoral Districts and Provinces Adjustment Bill, was withdrawn in the closing stages of the session because the Government did not have a constitutional majority in the Legislative Assembly. I now turn to page 57 of *Hansard*, for the 1st July, 1959, where the Attorney-General said—

As far as I can see, there has not been a reasonably valid argument raised against the passage of this measure. There have been all sorts of suppositious cases put forward. We have been told of the terrible things that the Government is going to do if it gets this Bill through the House. So far as I am concerned, the Government is going to do its best to present to Parliament a proposition that will be reasonable and fair to the electors of Western Australia. We ask that members of Parliament agree to that proposition. If they do not agree, I have already said in my opening speech that it will be obvious that the provisions of the existing Act will continue and must be brought into operation at an appropriate time.



That speech was made on the 1st July, 1959; 12 months have elapsed and, evidently, this is still not an appropriate time for the Government to see its way clear to issue a fresh proclamation so that our electoral districts can be brought into balance. It is for that reason that the Government is being censured, particularly as the statements were made by one of the most responsible Ministers. He has not put into effect the guarantee he gave 12 months ago.

Now let us look at the other items contained in this motion of censure. We find that after scraping—and I use this word because the Government just scraped into office, and took over in April, 1959—into office, it was the Brand Government's policy deliberately to sabotage and dispense with the assets of the people of Western Australia. A lot of those assets will be given to the Government's friends. In its first five months of office the Government relieved the Public Works Department of approximately 1,000 of its trusted tradesmen—people who had done a marvellous job in building houses, roads, schools, and hospitals; men who helped to establish the greatest record of any Government—the Hawke Labor Government's record during its six years of office.

These people—these workers and tradesmen—were dismissed and thrown on to the labour market, despite the promise made during the election campaign when the Premier said that no-one would be fired. At a later stage in the House, Mr. Court said that if anyone was fired he would see that that person was placed in employment. It is true that some workers were placed in other employment, but of a very casual nature. It was to make the promise look good that these workers were put into temporary employment; and I have yet to meet one of them who has continued in the job in which he was placed by this Government after he was dismissed from the Public Works Department. It has been a sham all along the line, and the unemployment situation in this State today is perhaps worse than it has been at any stage that I can remember over the last 10 years.

Despite this we find that these workers will be readily accepted by, and given employment in, the Eastern States if they are prepared to shift their families there. It is true, as I think most members know, that during the last 12 months the Queensland Government, through officials of the Queensland railways, has made representations to workers in Western Australia to try to entice them to go to Queensland to work.

The Hon. J. D. Teahan: The Victorian railways have done the same thing.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was going to mention that. Likewise, the Victorian railways have offered our workers the same

conditions. Those organisations are prepared to accept tradesmen whose training has been paid for by this State. These workers have been trained; we have the machinery for them to do work at the workshops; and the workshops could get the orders to keep these tradesmen in full employment. Yet we find that they have been deliberately dismissed, and now the Victorian Liberal Government is prepared to offer them an incentive; it is prepared to take them to Victoria and offer them security, even though the people of Western Australia have paid for their training.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Are these men who have been retrenched from the Midland Junction Workshops?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I am speaking to the amendment. The Minister was absent from the Chamber when I started to develop my argument along that line. I am sorry he missed it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It was for that reason I wanted to catch up with you.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was saying how the Queensland and Victorian Governments had sent representatives to this State to attempt to enlist workers from the Midland Junction Workshops. I was not speaking of the men dismissed from the workshops; I will deal with them shortly.

After dismissing most of the work force of the Public Works Department, the Government introduced legislation to deprive the State of some of its assets. Firstly it dealt with the State Hotels, and legislation was introduced to dispose of those hotels. Admittedly some provisions were inserted in the legislation to allow the local communities to purchase them; but, unfortunately, we found at Gwalia that the local people could not afford the price asked by the Government, and they have asked for a three years' lease of the hotel. It appears, from my limited knowledge of the matter, that that is the only State hotel which is likely to be handed over to a community committee.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What part of the addendum is this you are talking about?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The disposal of State enterprises. The Minister did not raise any queries when the last speaker was on his feet; I noted that.

The PRESIDENT: The honourable member will please continue.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It does not appear to be an answer to the question.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The State Building Supplies also are being permitted to run down and get into a state of disrepair. When this concern is placed on the market it will be worth only a fraction of the value it had when the Labor Government was in power. The workers, and

the businessmen in particular, are very concerned about the timber mills at Pemberton; they are most anxious to know what is going to be the attitude of the Government. If there is any truth in what I have heard it would seem that the mill at Pemberton is to be reduced to a one-shift mill; which of course means that in the near future this town could quite easily be converted into a ghost town. It is, perhaps, in the centre of one of the world's best forest areas.

The type of timber won from Pemberton and the surrounding districts is equal to any in the world; and yet we find that it is possible that this timber mill will be reduced to a single shift; at least that is the advice I have received from Pemberton. Whether it is true or false I do not know. Let us say it is rumoured in that town that the mill will be reduced to one shift. This of course will be a great disappointment to the people in the township; particularly to the workers and their families who have resided there for many years, and who have been instrumental in building for Western Australia a name in timber.

I would now like to refer to the Midland Junction Workshops where, it would seem, the work force could be broken down in the near future. The way I see it is that the Midland Junction Workshops could be reduced to the standing of a service station where only minor repairs would be carried out, and where many of the workers would have to seek the opportunities of which I spoke earlier, by having to go East to look for a job. That is not necessary, of course.

Like many other members, I took advantage of an invitation to tour the Midland Junction Workshops. I feel sure that other members, were as I was, anxious to see things for themselves. While we were there we saw material which, we were told, had been ordered for the construction of the new Westland trains. What will happen to that material if the order for the construction of those trains is not placed with the Midland Junction Workshops; and I believe that the workshops at Midland Junction are not to be given the order for the construction of the two Westland trains?

I would like to draw the attention of members to the question of KA wagons. After the closing of the last session of Parliament, I was informed that the Railway Department would not take delivery of the KA wagons from Tomlinsons, because they were not in a fit state to be delivered—the doors would not close, and so on. Whether that is true or not I do not know, but that is what I was told at a meeting I attended just after the end of the last session; and I might add that this was told to me by a prominent person who works at the Midland Junction Workshops.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You do not seem to have any definite information at all, do you?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The only definite information I have is the certain knowledge that this Government has brought more displeasure to more people in Western Australia than any other Government in the history of the State. It appears to me, therefore, that if these things are true—if the KA wagons made by private enterprise were not up to standard—then the Midland Junction Workshops should have been given the job of making them; particularly when their quote for manufacturing the wagons was much lower than the cost which was charged the Government by private enterprise.

As we all know, Chamberlain Industries is our largest secondary industry in Western Australia. Recently, however, we saw in the paper that this instrumentality was going to be put on the open market. Over the last seven years Chamberlain Industries has started to show increasing profits; and last year it was the State's largest exporter of secondary products. If any change of policy takes place in respect of Chamberlains, we could find that over 50 per cent. of the factories in and around Perth which do subcontracting work for that organisation could greatly suffer. So not only would Chamberlain Industries suffer, but many of the small workshops that do subcontracting work for that firm would also suffer.

Perhaps the most interesting item during this Government's term of office has been the increased cost of living. I do not know whether this was meant lightly or heartedly, but the parties that comprise the present Government have become known as the "Tax-Us Rangers"; although I think it was actually the McLarty-Watts Government that was so-called.

Be that as it may, it is quite factual that during its first session of Parliament this Government increased water rates, land taxes, hospital charges, railway freights and fares, betting tax, motor registration fees, fees for drivers' licenses, and stamp duty for hire-purchase agreements. The increases, of course, did not stop there, because other people also wanted their cut and, accordingly, doctors' fees were increased, as were the contributions payable to the Hospitals Benefit Fund. The price of milk was increased, and on two occasions the price of bread was raised. In so far as the price of meat is concerned, we all know that the increase in price has taken this necessary commodity out of the range of the man on the basic wage.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: It is scandalous.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: So far as fish is concerned, I would say that snapper at 2s. a pound at Fremantle is perhaps the best seller.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: Did the dentists get anything extra?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I have not been to a dentist for many years so I am not in a position to answer that. The price of beer has increased, and the cumulative effect of all these increases has been to place an extraordinary burden on local authorities which, in turn, have passed the increases on in the form of increased rates. So the average family with three or four children finds itself faced with a cost of living which has increased in the last twelve months to the extent of about 30s. on basic commodities such as butter, milk, sugar, bread, rentals, groceries, doctors' fees, hospital benefit fund contributions, and fares.

Accordingly I feel that this part of the censure motion is very necessary indeed. It should be appreciated that people on small incomes—the workers—are expected to raise their families while being burdened with a reduced standard of living. This has all happened in the last twelve months.

I would now like to refer to the part played by the Country Party in these various increases. The members of that party will have good reason to feel embarrassed when they face their electors in 1962, because, as members of a coalition Government, they must bear some responsibility. They have contributed towards the lowering of the standard of living as it affects country people. Farmers have been faced with a lower price for their wool; their fruit exports have declined, and the majority of their wheat and cereal crops is being stored. It does not look as if the entire cereal crop will be disposed of this season; and yet we find the price of cereals has remained static. There has been no increase.

A few years ago honey was a major export of Western Australia, and was being sold regularly to Germany, England, and the Baltic States. The producers were receiving 1s. 3d. a pound. But the present price of honey is 5d. a pound.

As a result of the increase in the basic wage, we are told that the Brand Government will increase freight charges. These increased prices for food, increased charges for medical attention, and increased taxes affect the country people considerably. The members of the Country Party must share the responsibility for these increased charges, because, after all, it is a coalition Government. There is no doubt that they are equally responsible for the inflationary trend that has developed.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: They ought to be ashamed of themselves.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Complacency on the part of the Country Party members will not help the State generally. I am sure they will not be complacent when they are faced with reduced prices for their exports, and with increased shipping charges—though of course this is not part

of the increases made by the Brand Government. We do find, however, that overseas ship-owners propose to place a heavier burden on this country by increasing shipping freights.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Plus the additions as a result of the seamen going on strike.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Have the seamen been on strike? I do remember that they had something taken off them.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: So have the farmers.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Something which these men had for many years was taken from them. I am pleased the honourable member raised this question, and I would like to answer him. If people have won something through legal battle and struggle over the years through the Arbitration Court, and then suddenly the judge sees fit to take away that privilege from the organisation, or the people concerned, I say they are entitled to voice their opinion and their dissatisfaction at it. I endorse their action.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: I agree that they are entitled to voice their dissatisfaction, but they should not go on strike.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I was talking about increased freights. The policy of the present Government has been to increase everything that it can in order to raise more money to spend on tourism, perhaps, or some other matter as the fancy may take it.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do not be silly.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The Minister says "Do not be silly." Let him tell me of one works programme he has put into being since his Government has been in power. All this Government has done during the 12 months it has been in office is to carry on the programme initiated by the Hawke Government, and to take the kudos for opening various schemes started by the Labor Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You go ahead; you are making this bad speech.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would now like to refer to the brickworks. Mr. Baxter will know something about this, because I read a news report which stated that he went to a meeting in Armadale which requested that he lead a deputation to the Premier in respect of the proposed sale of the brickyards at Armadale. It is interesting to note that the Minister for Works could not attend this meeting, although the brickworks are in his electorate.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: He attended the previous meeting.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: He did not attend this one. Mr. Baxter was then charged with the responsibility of introducing the deputation to the Premier.

These brickyards were built when the need was most urgent. Even now, for State cream bricks there is a waiting period of five months before they can be delivered; but I feel sure that if any attempt is made to dispose of this particular industry, the people of Western Australia will really get up in arms, as the bricks manufactured are definitely the best obtainable. The moment these brickyards are handed over to private enterprise, the price of bricks will either go up or the quality will go down.

I now wish to speak of the State Engineering Works at Leighton. It is interesting to note that just prior to the Legislative Council elections I, in conjunction with the Hon. J. T. Tonkin, had the pleasure of addressing the persons employed at that establishment, and every member of the works came out and listened intently. Previously, we found that perhaps 5 per cent. or 10 per cent. would come out and listen to us, but on this occasion every member to a man was outside listening to what was going to happen, or what could happen in regard to his job and to the State Engineering Works.

This establishment is now run with a skeleton staff, and many machines are idle. Virtually no apprentices are being trained there, and in a few years' time the works will more than likely be sold for a song. In regard to the disposals that have taken place over the past 12 months, there is one pleasing aspect: the Brand Government has not seen fit to attempt to dispose of the Robb Jetty Works. I was told recently, when I visited those works, that the workers said that if the Liberal Party attempted to sell the Robb Jetty Works, it would be the end of the coalition Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You hope.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I did not say that I hoped; I know it will, because the Country Party members of the Cabinet will walk out.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That would make you happy, wouldn't it?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would feel sorry that the Minister had been in office for such a short period.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do not weep tears for me; weep them for yourself.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Perhaps the most flagrant action of any Minister who has had the honour to be a Minister in Western Australia was that of the Minister for Water Supplies. The people of the metropolitan area should be congratulated on the way they conserved water during last summer. I think 99.9 per cent. of the people played the game 100 per cent. I recently received my water rates and I found that they had risen. I am called on to pay extra for a service that

could not be supplied to me. I could not use the water that I wanted, yet my rates have been increased by about 12s.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What have you got to growl about?

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: I wouldn't complain.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: The honourable member would complain if he had spent years developing lawns and gardens in order to have his house in decent shape. I suppose he could employ someone.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: Don't get personal.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Thousands of people have spent many years in developing lawns and gardens, and they should be congratulated; but in many cases people had to let those lawns and gardens die. In addition, they lost valuable trees which took years and years to grow. I lost several myself, and I am not an orphan in that respect. Despite all this, increased rates are foisted on us even though we are not able to maintain our gardens in the manner we desire.

The Hon. N. E. Baxter: Is it not still the cheapest commodity you can buy?

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Yes. It is a wonder this Government has not decided to sell the Water Supply Department.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: It would if it could.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If it could get a fair price, it would.

The Hon. J. G. Hislop: You tell us how.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: I would not be responsible for putting foolish ideas into the head of the Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You could put foolish ideas into everyone's heads.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: If the Minister casts his mind back to the 30th April, he will find that the people of Western Australia, particularly those in the metropolitan area, then demonstrated their disgust at the present Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Cast your mind back two years before that.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Never before has there been a higher percentage of voting for the Legislative Council, to my knowledge.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Yes, there has.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Possibly in one seat, but not over-all.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: When your Government held elections for both Houses on the same day.

The Hon. R. THOMPSON: Perhaps that is the only way some members will be able to retain their seats in this Chamber. When this Government next goes to the electors of Western Australia, it will be able to claim the distinction that in three

years of office it sabotaged more Government enterprise than any other Government could develop in 50 years. I support the amendment.

**THE HON. F. R. H. LAVERY** (West—on amendment) [6.8]: Before supporting the amendment which is now before the House, I wish to add my personal congratulations to you, Sir, for the high honour that has been conferred upon you. I am one of those chaps in the Chamber who, at times, causes the President a little worry, but I am satisfied that when you make a decision, it will be a fair one. With that in mind, I intend to be a little provocative at the moment.

*[Several members laughed.]*

**The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY**: It would be a poor old world if we could not laugh now and again; and even if we are attacking the Government, which does deserve some censure, surely we can do it without being bad friends. I had no intention of speaking to this amendment, but I want to go on a little further in regard to the remarks made by the Hon. R. Thompson in regard to the State Engineering Works at North Fremantle.

We all know—particularly country people—that the State Engineering Works were brought into being many years ago to produce farming machinery for the people of this State. Over a period of years, many changes have taken place in that establishment. During the war it played a noble part in its services to the American Navy, the British Navy, and the Australian Navy. I happened to be in a privileged position to know this, as I worked for an oil company and was stationed at the wharf for a long time.

Coming to a later date, we know there is a story—one which cannot be denied—that many Government instrumentalities do not show a monetary profit. I sometimes think we get away from the fact that these Government instrumentalities have shown an enormous indirect profit to the people of the State inasmuch as they have been a medium of price control. I say that in all sincerity, because where there is no Government instrumentality to counter the tenders of private enterprise, there is always a higher price charged for the product.

During the last session of Parliament, it was said in another place—I am going to repeat it now—that already in the short period of private enterprise doing the tendering, there had been collusive tendering at an increased price. There is no doubt about that, because it is borne out by the figures in relation to one item alone. In regard to plasterboard, I think the figure is about 4d. per square yard.

Where there is an organisation similar to the State Engineering Works, there is a tendency for prices to be kept in control.

Before moving away from the State Engineering Works, I wish to point out that in 1954 they made a profit of £31,600; in 1955, £439,000; in 1956, £61,500; in 1957, £62,400; and in 1958—that dreadful year under Labor control—it made a profit of £98,300. The total profit over the period of five years was £595,400.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith**: What was happening to private industry while this was going on?

**The Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY**: I am pleased the Minister made that interjection because the State Engineering Works were carrying out many jobs for private enterprise. As a matter of fact, they were even carrying out work for people like Ledgers, who contracted for specific jobs. The State Engineering Works tendered for the same works, but Ledgers received the contract because of a lower price, and then had to have the State Engineering Works do the work. I know that to be correct, and it should answer the Minister's query.

In June, 1959, the staff numbered 530; and with natural wastage, such as those retiring, this figure dropped to 490. Up to September last year, which is the latest figure I have, the number had been reduced to 384; and it has been reduced since then. It is now under the 300 mark, and I am led to believe that it will be under the 250 mark before long. I want to draw attention to the fact that these workshops contain some of the finest machinery in the metropolitan area.

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

Before the tea suspension I made a statement which I would now like to correct. I quoted the annual profit of the State Engineering Works as £595,400 gross, but, I misread my own figures. I should have said £59,540 average profit for the previous five years. I would not like to mislead the House, because it would make me look silly as well.

I was about to say that some of the finest machinery in engineering shops in Western Australia has been installed at the State Engineering Works at North Fremantle. There are ten lathes there worth over £1,000 each, and they are absolutely idle now. In addition, I could enumerate many other machines which are in the same position. As I said last session, the present Government considers it has a mandate to hand everything over to private enterprise. I am not in agreement with that and I believe the method is wrong.

If the Government is going to sell these industries, then let it sell them for the best value it can obtain. I draw the attention of the House to the value placed on these works, which is recorded in a report placed before this House. On the 28th June the State Engineering Works' assets were valued at £827,000. I wish to have

that recorded, because although I hope I am wrong, I have a great fear in the back of my mind that when the property is disposed of it will be for an infinitesimal percentage of that amount.

Although I have not much more to say, I would like to convey to the Minister the substance of a story which has been circulating. I have no proof of it but I think the House should know of it, and the Minister should be given an opportunity to clear up the furphy if it is wrong; and I, for one, will be pleased if he is able to do so. I am given to understand that the State Brickworks have already been sold and that they have been sold to Sir Halford Reddish on behalf of a company he represents. If these works have been sold I believe it is time the public was advised.

I would like to add one further point before I close. I feel the Government is deserving of censure in regard to the water rating system. In Applecross, and in parts of South Perth that are in my province, a number of people have installed their own water systems. I know that altogether over 2,000 installations have been made. These people, because of the new rating system, are very hostile to think that they have spent many pounds, some of them up to £1,000, in installing water supplies which was done firstly, admittedly, to save their gardens but was also in response to the appeal sent out by the Minister for Works to conserve water.

On top of this they are having salt rubbed into their wounds. I mention this to the Minister, and I am sure he will convey the information to the Minister responsible. It seems to me that the system by which these rates are being raised is all wrong. However, not being a financier myself, I am not going into that part of the question, but I do think it is the unfair system which is responsible; and it is because of this that there is great hostility towards the present Government, not from Labor supporters but from supporters of the Government's own party.

One further point before I conclude: I would like to ask the Minister if he could assist in regard to the unemployment position in this State; and this is not a castigation. There seems to have crept into employer-circles the idea that no-one over 40 or 45 years of age should be employed; and there are a great number of people over 40, both skilled and unskilled, who are out of work.

In the *Sunday Times* recently there was a very good article on this subject—I think it was early in July—which commented on the prosperity in the State and the necessity to bring migrants here. I think the article stated that it would be necessary to bring approximately 3,000 migrants, both skilled and unskilled, here within the next twelve months. Had it been only skilled workers, I would not have worried but when there is a suggestion that

unskilled workers will be brought here, I feel I must say something. We have many good workers here unemployed, and because they are over 40 years of age they are not able to find employment. This is all because of the Bill which was passed a few years ago in regard to long-service leave. I think that the Employers' Federation would do well to advise the Chamber of Commerce, and the Chamber of Manufactures to give consideration to this matter. I would ask the Minister to ensure that something will be done along those lines. With those remarks, I support the amendment.

**THE HON. E. M. DAVIES** (West—on amendment) [7.39]: I rise to support the addendum to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. We all know, of course, that during this debate an opportunity is given to members to speak on many matters, and to the Opposition to move for an addendum to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. This is done because the Opposition believes there are shortcomings in the Government's administration.

Whilst we know that no-one is perfect, our parliamentary system does provide that there shall be Her Majesty's Government and Her Majesty's Opposition; and it is incumbent upon the Opposition to take the opportunity, when available, to tell the Government where, in its opinion, it has done the wrong thing.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Sometimes the members of the Opposition even compliment the Government for things done.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: Yes, I would not say that is not so. That has been known. I do not know that anyone would be so bigoted politically as not to give some recognition to a Government at a time when it had done something worthy of commendation. However, I feel I must join the Leader of the Opposition in this House and support the addendum.

We know that prior to the election the Government attempted to remove a number of people from the roll, particularly in West Perth and East Perth; and, having failed in that objective, it set about having an early session of Parliament to alter something which had been done by the previous Government. The proclamation for the redistribution of electoral boundaries was issued by the Hawke Government, and the present Liberal Government had an early session of Parliament to introduce a Bill to repeal the proclamation. Of course, we cannot say that the Government did not have a right to do that if it so desired, but in my opinion it at least had the right to submit another Bill, or issue another proclamation, which it has not done.

It has now been in office well over twelve months, and I would like to know from the Minister the reason the Government has not introduced that proclamation.

That is one of the factors which has been responsible for the addendum. Secondly, we notice that since the Government has taken office, protection of certain Statutes has been removed and, as a consequence, we find that there have been increases in the cost of quite a number of commodities; and for these increases the Government must take the responsibility. One example of these increases is in the price of bread. Previously the price was controlled under the Bread Act; but, by virtue of an amendment submitted by the present Government, it is now possible for the manufacturers of bread to increase the price in accordance with their own desires.

The question of water rates has been mentioned here on one or two occasions, and I would like to say that I believe it is only to be expected that there would be a protest about increases in water rates, particularly from those people who went to the expense of sinking bores to supply their own water to help in the conservation of the water in the reservoirs.

We know these people spent a lot of money; and they did not use the amount of water they were permitted to use in accordance with the rates they were paying. As a result the Government was not able to levy the excess water rates that it had levied in other years. The ordinary domestic user of water could not use even half the amount of water to which he was entitled. Unfortunately the Government has lost revenue in consequence, and now it has raised the rate in the pound, and people are compelled to pay pounds more for water than they did in previous years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I assure you it had nothing whatever to do with the excess water situation last year.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: That may be so, but the fact that the Government was not able to collect a fair amount of revenue for excess water is one of the factors which has made it necessary for the Government to increase the rate.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is not correct.

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I do not know about that; my limited knowledge of finance would lead me to believe that it is. It is remarkable that in this, the second year of office of the present Government, the water rates have had to be increased. One can realise that people are expressing themselves forcibly about the position. As a member of the Opposition party, I have been asked why the rate has been increased; and I am endeavouring to bring the matter before the House so that the Minister will have an opportunity of answering it.

Another important matter is the question of the railways. Those of us who can throw our minds back a few years will remember that the workshops at one time were at Fremantle, but they were in such a position there that they could not expand.

So it was thought fit by the Government of the day to transfer the workshops to Midland Junction where there was a greater area of land available for them. That was done in the belief that the progress and expansion of Western Australia would mean the expansion of the railway workshops; and they were the only reasonably large engineering works in the State.

The railway workshops have played a most important part in the development of Western Australia. I can remember, as an ex-railway man, that when the agricultural lands were opened up by the late Sir James Mitchell, it became necessary for the railway system to be extended in many directions. Lines were built into the agricultural districts to provide means of transporting the goods that were produced in those parts.

So, from time to time, the railways have played an important part in the life of the State. The Midland workshops have been recognised, not only by Western Australians but by representatives of other countries, and of other organisations, as being one of the best engineering establishments, not only in Australia but in the Southern hemisphere. Not only have the workshops played an important part in the development of the State, but they have also played an important part in the protection of this country during war.

One knows, from what one has heard on many occasions, particularly in Fremantle, that the workshops were used by the American Navy. In one instance the United States Navy employed the workshops in connection with some balancing parts for its submarines. This was a delicate piece of engineering work, and the navy claimed it was done as effectively and as well as work of that description could have been carried out in other parts of the world. Apart from that, in World War I the workshops played a most important part in providing munitions of various descriptions.

The Government policy is to endeavour to undermine the workshops by having certain work made available, by tender, to outside organisations. In view of the fact that the workshops have been able to build and to plan for the construction of railway machinery and rolling stock, one cannot understand why they have not been permitted to tender for certain work. There are many pieces of machinery that are required for locomotives that could be produced in the workshops at much less cost than that at which they can be purchased from outside sources.

One can readily understand that the people who have built homes within the vicinity of Midland Junction, and down as far as Guildford and up into the ranges at Greenmount, in order to rear their families, are perturbed. One can imagine that when they went into the workshops

they expected to have security of employment until they reached the age of 65 years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: How many have been put off?

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I am not suggesting that any have yet been put off, but I venture to say that no new employees will be taken on; and I say further that those serving as apprentices in these engineering works will not be able to find work there when they come out of their time. We have proof that some of the other States have seized the opportunity, realising the blunder that has been made by the Government of this State in not giving to the workshops the work to which they are entitled, to send representatives here to entice the people who have served their time in the railway workshops to leave Western Australia and go to the Eastern States where they will get security of employment.

I feel very disgusted at the position. I have always been one who has stood up for Western Australia. As a matter of fact I have heard it said many times that the wise men come from the East, but after coming to Western Australia they have become so wise that they have stayed here. If the present trend continues, we will not be able to say that in the future; because we have representatives of the Eastern States' Governments—not Labor Governments either—endeavouring to entice our engineering workers to accept the security of employment in the East.

It is idle to say there are not many people out of employment. From time to time we have statistics showing the number registered for unemployment; but the statistics do not disclose, of course, how many tradesmen have drifted out of the trade to which they served an apprenticeship. I know of at least four plumbers who served their time in the Public Works Department and who are not now working at their trade. One of these men has gone crayfishing; another has gone into the meatworks at South Fremantle; another is driving a truck; and another is working in the markets.

These people have drifted from the trade because there is not sufficient work for them in it. Yet we hear that we should have migrants, who are tradesmen—and some who are unskilled workers—brought to Western Australia. But what is going to happen to those who are already here? I am most concerned about the position. I am also concerned about the fact that when we entice people to migrate to Western Australia we expect they will be able to obtain work so as to keep themselves and their families. But if we have tradesmen who cannot use their skill here, but are asked to go to the more populous States in the East, it is not fair to ask migrant tradesmen to come to Western Australia.

I feel that Western Australia is being done an injustice, because I have heard on many occasions of British migrants who have gone back to England with certain growls about the employment position here. They have said, "We should have been told these things before we came to Western Australia." I agree with that. I like migration, and I feel that we must have migrants in this State, but I do not think we should bring people here and tell them there is plenty of work when we have men who served their time in the railway workshops, in the engineering shops at Leighton, and in the Public Works Department, who are not now wanted.

It is quite idle for the Government to say that none of these men have been put off. We know that quite a number have been put off, particularly from the Public Works Department. We know also that the railway workshops will eventually be only token workshops able to do a few repairs. As I have already pointed out, we have people who desire to enter a profession or a trade; and some who are less fortunate, of course, are not able to have the advantages of getting into a profession or of learning a trade, and they have to take unskilled work. The railway workshops have, in the past, provided a great amount of that work; and, of course, the people employed there are citizens of the State, and I am sorry to know that the Government, by not allowing the workshops to do the work that is essentially railway work—the making of spare parts and the building of engines and rolling stock—is not allowing for work to be provided for those who have served their time in the State.

It appears that the Government is on the wrong track, and I urge it to have another look at the circumstances in order to find out what the people are thinking and saying.

At one time Western Australia was recognised as being the saviour of the Commonwealth. My people came to this State and brought me here when I was at an early age. My parents came to Western Australia because things were not good in Victoria—the building trade had slumped; the banks had closed; and there was a severe recession. Western Australia, with the discovery of gold, was one of the States to assist in maintaining the solvency of this great Commonwealth of ours.

Then the opening of the agricultural lands brought quite a number of people from the Eastern States to Western Australia; and the Railways Department played a most important part in the opening up of those lands. In the early stages the railways went as far as Southern Cross.



When gold was discovered, the railways were continued on to what is now known as the Golden Mile. Agricultural districts were then opened up and many more miles of railway were laid for the benefit and development of the State. There is no doubt that the railways have played an important part in the development of the State and the men employed on the railways have played their part, too. They have come to expect that they should at least be provided with reasonable and adequate facilities, because there is a large State with not a very great population.

Unfortunately, our geographical position in the Commonwealth does not lend itself towards making Western Australia the best State for the establishment of secondary industries because there are 1,000 miles of no man's land between here and our next-door neighbour. So we have to try to do what we can with our own organisations and our own State instrumentalities to provide the necessary wherewithal to enable our youth to be taught trades and so have their future welfare ensured.

In conclusion, I feel that I am justified in adding my voice to the protests that have been made in this House against the action of the Government, and I trust that the present Administration will, with a view to effecting some improvement in the future, have a second look at what has resulted from the implementation of its policy. In actual fact, some people are losing faith in our State. They are of the opinion that if they are to continue to live in Western Australia, trades and other openings for employment should be made available to them. These people have no desire to go to the Eastern States to seek employment if it is at all possible for them to remain here. In my opinion the Government's representatives in the Eastern States are misleading the people in those States by enticing them to come to Western Australia with the offer of plenty of work and security of employment because, if any tradesmen do come to this State, I am certain that they will be disillusioned and will have no option but to return from whence they came.

This is a most important question that we are discussing and I believe the Government has done the wrong thing. It is the first Administration, in all the years of responsible Government in Western Australia, that has taken upon itself the power to deny the right of State enterprises to operate as they should. During the regime of the McLarty-Watts Government we all know that a large sum of money was made available to modernise the Midland Junction Workshops. The modernisation of those workshops was done for one particular purpose; namely, to equip them fully with up-to-date machinery and make it possible for the

men employed in those workshops to build our own machinery, our own locomotives, and our own rolling-stock.

I hope the Government will not proceed with the attitude it has adopted, because irrespective of what is happening to the men most concerned, a great deal of criticism is being levelled against the Government at present for the policy it is pursuing.

**THE HON. J. D. TEAHAN** (North-East—on amendment) [8.4]: I think I would be remiss in my duty if I did not voice the protests that I hear from many people each and every day. If such protests were not voiced, how would the Government know whether its policy was a solid one or not? Therefore, as I have said, it is my duty to voice this protest against the action of the present Government. I travel regularly on the trains and I hear protests not only from the railwaymen but dissatisfaction from those employed in other avenues of industry, because they realise that what is happening to the men employed on the railways could happen to them.

It is this atmosphere of uncertainty which is causing so much concern. I am referring now to the atmosphere of uncertainty surrounding the Midland Junction Workshops. In the past, parents who were successful in having their boys apprenticed to any trade in that organisation regarded such an achievement as something worth while. If parents had a lad apprenticed to carpentry, welding or boilermaking, or to any other trade at the Midland Junction Workshops, they knew that the lad would be well trained and that he would be able to take his place in any workshop after he had completed his indentures. That situation has existed for years, and highly skilled artisans have been turned out from those workshops, and, in turn, the men have performed excellent work on any job that has been given to them. Members know how often many people have pointed with pride to the work that those tradesmen have performed on the wagons, coaches and other rolling stock manufactured in the Midland Junction Workshops.

However, we have now reached the stage where the Government has halted the work that should naturally belong to the Midland Junction Workshops, and this has undoubtedly created an atmosphere of uncertainty amongst the men. As another speaker has said, it is quite true that we have had representatives of other railway systems, under the control of non-Labor Governments, who have visited this State seeking to recruit our railway engineers and workmen. In Kalgoorlie, a very attractive advertisement was displayed which stated, "Western Australians with railway knowledge, you are wanted." That advertisement offered better wages and salaries than the men are receiving here. Quite a number of men responded to

the advertisement and left for the Eastern States, but, fortunately, the majority have stayed. Nevertheless, we lost highly-skilled artisans from Kalgoorlie, and that is indeed a great pity. Instead of losing such men from the State we should be protecting them and not giving them any cause to migrate to other States.

The Immigration Department is not keen to issue any permits to people coming from, say, Yugoslavia or other overseas countries if they are not good artisans. That department is seeking highly-skilled tradesmen in order to attract them to Australia. If a well-qualified carpenter, boilermaker or builder lodges his application to migrate to Australia, he has a much greater chance of having his application approved by the Immigration Department than if he does not possess such qualifications. However, what is the use of the Immigration Department attracting such men to this State if the Government intends to continue the policy of taking action which will result in the loss of the best of them to other States?

It is because of such action that we find the tradesmen at the Midland Junction Workshops are to be given no opportunity to manufacture the two new Westland trains. In fact, the workshops are not even permitted to tender for the work. I am certain the men would be extremely pleased to perform that task because they take pride in whatever work they are engaged upon. I am certain that, in the future, they would be pleased to say, "That Westland train that you now see passing was constructed in our own workshops."

Those men have done similar work in the past and they are still quite capable of doing it. It may be said that the workshops are not properly equipped to cope with the construction of these trains, but that would be untrue because the Midland Junction Workshops are as well-equipped as any others in the Commonwealth. It is a great pity that the work is not to be performed at the workshops because there is a great deal of uncertainty among the men there and in other industries. They are saying: "How good is our security? Can we build a home anywhere and be sure that we can pay for it." That is the sort of security that we should offer to as many men as we can. We should be able to assure a man that one day he will own his own home. But action such as that taken by the Government will destroy the incentive for migrants to come to this State, and it will destroy the ambitions of our natural-born people.

I will now pass to the question of prices, which, unfortunately, are getting out of hand. The explanation I offer is that it is due to nothing else but avarice. Business interests seem to want more and more profit, and where they once said, "We have not had a rise in prices for five or six years," and then later, "The price of this produce must go up because it has

not risen for three years," they are now saying, "The price of this product has not risen for a year," and so prices must continue to rise more rapidly. It may be asked: Where does the Government enter into this question? In my opinion, it enters into this question very broadly because as a result of it discarding various pieces of legislation it has lost all control over prices. Take the price of bread, for instance. The little control the Government did have has been discarded.

Members have read Press reports announcing that the price of bread in the metropolitan area has risen by 1d.; and shortly it may rise again. Therefore, it must be expected that the price of bread will be increased on the Goldfields, even though no deliveries are made in that area. The master bakers on the Goldfields used to say that the cost of delivering bread to the householder amounted to 2d. or 3d. Eventually all deliveries were discontinued and one may have expected that the bakeries would have reduced the price of bread as a result of being relieved of that cost, but no such step has been taken.

The master bakers also claimed that they had a large number of bad debts which, they claimed, represented approximately 10 per cent. However, if a baker had bad debts in the past, he has none now.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: If he did have them then, it was his own fault.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: In these days bread is sold on a cash basis, in the main, because the master bakers deliver to depots and are paid cash on delivery. As a result, the master bakers are saved the cost of delivery, and they have also been relieved of any bad debts. Nevertheless, the consumer has not obtained any relief in the price of bread. I am sure it will only be a matter of weeks, or less, before the price of bread on the Goldfields will be increased.

I will now cite the rising costs of hospitalisation. Surely the cost was already great enough, but only recently another increase in hospitalisation charges took place. There are always excuses made for increases in the price of goods and essential services, and as a result prices continue to go up and up. Because of the increase in hospitalisation charges, the friendly societies had to increase the charges for hospital benefits; and it is moves such as this that help prices to get out of hand. There seems to be no end to it. The Government did have the power to control this trend by legislation which was on the statute book, but it saw fit to repeal the legislation and lose that control.

In the metropolitan area the water rates have been increased. When water rates go up, the owner sees good reason to increase his rents. Also, any increase in

water rates increases the valuation of the land and as a result the local authority follows suit by raising its rates, and the landlord is not slow to again increase the rentals of his properties. Where is it all going to end? It is for this reason that I voice the many protests that we hear today from all sections of the community; I do so in order that the Government will take some heed and review its present policy.

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (Suburban—Minister for Mines—on amendment) [8.15]: I suppose in a way it was not a surprise to me for Mr. Strickland to move some sort of amendment or addendum to the Address-in-Reply, although I did find it hard, when I listened to him as intently as I did, to discover any little connection between the speech he made and the subsequent amendment he moved and asked the House to accept.

Of course it is becoming a practice with the honourable member to do that, because he did the same thing last year. On that occasion it was a protest about the Government's policy in respect of day labour. On this occasion it concerns a different matter altogether. If we could hear the voices in another place, I have every reason to believe that at this very moment we would hear the Leader of the Opposition saying something which would amount to an amendment or an addendum to the Address-in-Reply which is being debated in that Chamber. It seems, in my view, to be a pattern on the part of the Opposition—perhaps the decision was made in the Caucus room—to find ways to discredit this Government; to decide that the first move they must make is to ask all the questions they can; to take the first chance they have to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply; to do a little here and a little there, and do as much as possible to discourage the Government. They believe that when they have thrown enough mud on the wall some of it will stick.

**The Hon. H. C. Strickland:** What is the Opposition for?

**The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH:** If people make sufficient allegations against others, surely some of them will be believed. If one tried to create fear in the hearts of people, some of those people would believe the stories that were told.

**The Hon. R. Thompson:** We did not try to create any fear.

**The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH:** I have not heard the honourable member speak except to castigate this Government; to try to create a sense of fear in the minds of people. It does not become the honourable member to do that. That is not the way to bring about progress in this State. Surely the Government is entitled to a bit of encouragement; surely the people are not expected to receive from the mouths of members of the Opposition all the time the

claim that every move and every step taken by the Government is wrong! I did not realise until tonight that so little time has passed during which we, as a Government, have progressed so much. Apparently we certainly have progressed.

The contribution by Mr. Davies was good and fair. His attitude to the Electoral Districts Act was not the attitude adopted by Mr. R. Thompson, who saw no merit in it whatever. I can deal with that aspect a little later.

It is interesting to recall the Address-in-Reply debates which have been made from year to year in this House, during the period that I have been a member. My recollection takes me back to 1953 when Mr. Loton moved an amendment to the Address-in-Reply. Why did he do that? He did so because he protested against the action of the Government of the day for increasing rail freights. On that occasion the boot was on the other foot. That particular amendment was carried, and the Government received back from His Excellency the Governor the Speech which His Excellency had been pleased to receive and which had been duly amended in this House. When we took it to him he said "Thank you very much."

**The Hon. H. C. Strickland:** The Government was in the minority in this House.

**The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH:** On that occasion the Government did not take it to be, as *The West Australian* reported this morning, a censure bid, nor did the Government on that occasion see fit to resign. If it is any comfort to my supporters, neither does the Government on this occasion take the amendment as a censure. It is a depressing thought to some that the Government does not intend to resign because of this amendment.

In speaking to the amendment it is appropriate that I should pass some remarks and give some explanations. When Mr. Strickland spoke he referred, among other things, to questions relating to the North-West which were close to him. He drew analogies between what the previous Government had done and what the present Government had failed to do. It is reasonable to expect the present Government to complete the projects which were started by the previous Government. There is nothing startling about that procedure, because in 1953 when the Government of which the honourable member was a Minister took office, it was placed in the same position and it took over works from the outgoing Government, some of which were half completed and others just started.

There are one or two matters on which I should make some comment. Perhaps I got a little excited when the honourable member mentioned the question of coal. My approach, as Minister for Mines, to coal is quite a sincere one. I am anxious to see the Government being able to obtain

cheaper coal. Dearer coal can only reflect in further increases in existing charges. Nobody knows better than Mr. Strickland or Mr. Wise, both of whom were members of the previous Government, what a difficult and complex question this is.

Whilst I am not in a position to make any explanations to the House at this point of time, because the coal contracts are being considered and it would be unfair to do so, I do deplore the action of the Colliery Miners' Union in placing the people of Colliery into the frenzied state in which they are in. The union did that purely on conjecture and on the arguments which have been put forward by Mr. R. Thompson who said that he heard about this matter but he was not sure of it; that he believed it was rumoured this or that was the case; and he asked the Minister to give him some assurances.

The Hon. R. Thompson: We cannot trust this Government; we have to have assurances.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He dragged furrphies out of the air and out of the figments of his imagination; he believes if he tells them to the people often enough they will believe them. It is not good tactics, because the average person does not listen to statements of that nature.

We are anxious to see the situation in Colliery resolve itself in a satisfactory manner. We have called tenders and we know what they contain. We have had discussions with the coalmining companies and tomorrow morning I shall talk to the unions when they see me in my office at 10.30. I am hoping that we will be able to put the position to the unions so that they will be aware of it. I shall ask for their co-operation; and I hope from that moment on they will stop this frenzied panic caused by pure conjecture about the intentions of the Government in respect to coal. I hope we will be able to conclude these negotiations quicker than they were concluded on the last occasion, when some eighteen months elapsed before some arrangement—whether or not satisfactory—was entered into between the company, the Government, and the union.

In moving this censure motion in the form of an amendment, Mr. Strickland referred to development in the North-West. It is very obvious that the development of this area is important to the State. The activities undertaken by various Ministers in the Government, the visits they have made to the North-West, and the attention they are paying to the problems up there are evidence of the fact that the Government has the North-West at heart and desires to do something about it.

In respect of iron ore I hope that we are able to get an export license from the Commonwealth Government. If an export license is granted, according to Mr. Strickland and his two colleagues representing

the North-West, Mt. Goldsworthy will be the centre to provide the ore. If we talked to Mr. Sewell, who represents the Geraldton district, and to members of the Legislative Council representing that area, they would say that Tallering Peak was the most suitable site. If we spoke to Mr. Burt, Mr. Teahan, Mr. Heenan, Mr. Garrigan, and other members from the Goldfields, they would say that Wilgie Mia was the most suitable. No doubt Mr. Kelly would say that Koolyanobbing was the most suitable site.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Would you name the members for the Geraldton district?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member knows them as well as I do. They are Mr. Simpson, Mr. Logan and Mr. Jones. No doubt they would want the ore to come from their district, and the members representing the Goldfields would stake their claims. From the rather extensive diamond drilling tests undertaken this year it seems to me that from the export point of view, if we got the license, Mt. Goldsworthy would be the location which would lend itself most readily to supply the ore for export. There are other features which may be considered if and when the export license is granted.

I wholeheartedly agree that nothing—I have said this in this House on a number of occasions—will bring development more quickly to the North than the development of our mineral resources in that area. With those sentiments expressed by Mr. Strickland I heartily agree.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Are you supporting his amendment?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This is not part of the amendment. The honourable member is well aware of that. I hope this amendment will not be agreed to, because I can answer the five points which *The West Australian* featured in big black print this morning. The honourable member should be gratified that his motion has been set in big black print.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is the duty of the Press to tell the people.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The first point raised by the honourable member was the redistribution of seats. On this subject I have gone to a little trouble to try and relate the facts to the House, and perhaps to go a little further than that and show what has happened in the matter of redistribution of seats generally rather than specifically, as was the case with the previous charge.

First of all, Mr. President, I want to say that no promise was made to issue a fresh proclamation under the Electoral Districts Act, 1947. The exact words

which were used by the Attorney-General in the Legislative Assembly, when he spoke on this matter, were these—

The onus would be placed upon the Government of issuing a fresh proclamation to ensure the law is carried into effect.

The Hon. R. Thompson: That is only part of it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member has made his speech, although it was a bad one.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: In your opinion.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: Not nearly as bad as the present one.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is necessary to establish what the law is in dealing with this matter. It is contained in section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act, to the effect that a proclamation may be issued when a resolution is passed by the Legislative Assembly, or when the Government so determines.

It is perfectly clear that the statement I have just read to the House was not a promise; it was not expressed as a promise. Nor was it treated, during the course of the debate, as a promise. I will elaborate on that as I continue.

The issue of *Hansard* of the 1st July, 1959, clearly shows that in dealing with the Bill to revoke the proclamation issued by the then Labor Government—I might say in the dying hours of its term of office; on the last day in question before it handed over to the present Government—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Tell us why any Government has to do that. Explain the whole process.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member knows the Electoral Districts Act as well as, if not better than, I do.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Other members may not.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I feel that they do. I will explain it a little more as I go on.

During the course of this debate, the Leader of the Opposition made no reference to any promise given as an undertaking by the Attorney-General at the time. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, in addressing himself to the Bill on the same day, said this—

The Government will immediately do precisely nothing about it.

And it was therefore perfectly clear that his opinion—the opinion he had then—was that the Government would decide not to issue a proclamation.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: He didn't believe the Attorney-General.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: And, on the 6th July, 1959, the Leader of the Opposition made a parliamentary broadcast.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Do you listen to them?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I get the notes of them.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: They help.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Sometimes I read them. They are helpful at times.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I bet you lose a lot of sleep over them!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, I do not; and I am not going to lose much sleep over the amendment which the honourable member has moved.

In this parliamentary broadcast, the Leader of the Opposition made no mention of any promise that had been made by the Attorney-General—none whatever—and the broadcast was made about four days after the debate in Parliament.

Another broadcast which Mr. Hawke made, dealing with "The Highlights of Parliament" on the 2nd July, 1959, was entirely devoted to the Bill to amend the Electoral Districts Act, which had been introduced by the Government the previous week. The Leader of the Opposition made no reference whatsoever to any promise that had been made, but merely attacked the Bill as a piece of legislation—which it was.

I mention this because of the attacks that were made at the time. Had any alleged promise been made, it would have been reasonable for the Leader of the Opposition to have advocated rejection of the Bill, not only on the ground that he did not agree with it, but on those grounds also. His line of attack was based on this text, and I quote him—

These proposals are an attempt by the Government to defeat the reasonable democratic rights of the people to elect their own Government and fairly to decide the personnel of the Legislative Assembly.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: How right he was!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The legislation we are now considering proposes to increase the number of parliamentary representatives in one part of the State and to peg the number in another part of the State—the metropolitan area. In other words, the number of members is to be raised in that portion of the State where the population has not increased, and it is to be pegged at its present number in that part of the State where the population has increased considerably. He went on to say—

What principle is it? What tradition is it? What argument is it, which would give to a man and his wife living at, say, Bulyee, out in the country, at least twice the voting strength and probably three times the voting power of a man and his wife living at Subiaco or any other part of the metropolitan area?

When we think of it, and when we realise what I am going to say in a few minutes, it is amazing that the Leader of the Opposition could make such a speech on that occasion and give utterance to those words. It might be as well if we had a look at the précis of the Bill that the then Premier—the present leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hawke—introduced into the Legislative Assembly. The Bill sought to bring about a redistribution of seats. We all know that the member for Mt. Marshall, Mr. Cornell, has an excellent sense of humour. He said these words to the Legislative Assembly—

The time has come the Walrus said  
to speak of many things,  
Of shoes and ships and sealing wax  
And cabbages and kings.

He then went on to give his interpretation of how it should perhaps read. His interpretation was as follows:

The time has come the Premier said  
For a redistribution that's not too smelly,  
With inner and outer mining seats  
And one for Lionel Kelly!

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: That was his opinion. Tell us why you are failing. Don't give us red herrings. Give us those smelly pieces.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will tell the honourable member now. I am going to remind him of the 1954 Bill introduced by the Government of which he was a member, if not at the time then subsequently.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Tell us something of the 1947 one.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is on the statute book. I am going to tell the honourable member about this Bill.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: The 1947 one is law; that is the one you are not obeying.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is the honourable member's opinion. I think it would be an excellent exercise to look at the 1954 Bill and go back over the words of the Leader of the Opposition: "What principle is it? What tradition is it? What argument is it?"

A précis of this Bill is found in a letter dated the 17th January, 1955, and it is in a letter written and signed by the then Premier to the Great Eastern Road Board Association at Naremburn, in which he stated, *inter alia*, these words—

I would like to point out that the Bill which the Government introduced in the Legislative Assembly towards the end of last session; 1954, did provide for a maximum number of seats to be fixed for the metropolitan area. However, that Bill did not pass the Legislative Assembly because the required constitutional majority was not available to support the Bill. All members of the Opposition voted

against the Bill and the Government, not having members of its own to provide the requisite majority, therefore the Act introduced by the McLarty-Watts Government in 1947 will continue to operate. Unfortunately, that Act does not limit the number of seats to be given to the metropolitan area.

The sentence obviously does not need repeating: "Unfortunately, that Act did not limit the number of seats to be given to the metropolitan area." And under that Bill, the boundaries of the metropolitan area would have been considerably widened and would have been pegged to a total of 23 members.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Armadale would have been in the metropolitan area.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The State would have been divided into three parts—metropolitan; agricultural and central mining; and pastoral and outer mining—and the Commission would not have had the power to change the number of seats allotted to each. Every three electors in the metropolitan area would have counted as one; every three in the agricultural and central mining areas would have counted as two; and each elector in the pastoral and mining areas would have counted as one. So we see the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Hawke) criticised the Government when he, himself, brought down a Bill to amend the Electoral Districts Act, after saying what a dreadful and disastrous thing it was. He himself, in 1954, introduced a Bill the principles of which were almost identically the same.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Now the Government does not want to put it into effect.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Certainly not that one; it did not pass through Parliament. As far as we know, the different areas concerned in the Bill are no different from those in the Bill that was attacked by the Leader of the Opposition in the broadcast I referred to; and I think it would be fairer to say that the Leader of the Opposition's approach to last year's Bill was a hypocritical one in view of the Bill he himself introduced in 1954. Furthermore, I think that is especially so, as in the outer mining areas a margin of 15 per cent. was given to the commissioners as against 5 per cent. and 2½ per cent. in the other areas referred to.

Dealing with the alleged promise, of which we have heard so much, no-one—either a member of Parliament or any other person—alleged the statement to be a promise until many months later. It was obviously not accepted at the time as a promise; and the Government is now urged to issue a proclamation under the Electoral Districts Act. This was merely a statement that the onus, or burden, would be on the Government, in accordance with the law, to decide whether and when such a proclamation should be issued.

I have already referred to the terms of the law itself. Incidentally, the last statement referred to any proposal which might be brought forward. As Mr. R. Thompson corrected himself, Parliament has never actually rejected the legislation. I think all members, particularly Labor members, are aware of the reason why it was not proceeded with. However, let us say that it was substantially the same reason why the 1954 Bill was not proceeded with—the Government did not have the necessary majority to see it passed.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I thought the speech of the Leader of the Opposition criticising it stopped it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think so. I think the almighty power of persuasion that somebody had in respect of one particular member of Parliament, whose name I could mention but will not, may have had a substantial effect on it. However, I will let that go because I do not think it is a subject which any member of the Labor Party would really like to mention, other than perhaps in the strictest confidence.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Your Government did not test the opinion of Parliament as the Hawke Government did.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We did not go on with it because we realised what the position was.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You did not have the statutory majority.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: One other question the honourable member raised was that of prices, and he suggested that the Government had not done anything to stem prices, but was continuing to lift them.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I said you helped them along.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We in this State, and those in the other States of Australia know that any attempt to control prices has proved futile. Today I think it is true to say that the only State which really retains any sort of price control is South Australia.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: The Premier of that State does very well with it, too.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He controls prices to some extent.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: My word!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But do they control prices in New South Wales?

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: He even indulges in socialism. He buys electricity undertakings and all sorts of things.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is in South Australia, and we do in Western Australia.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: He is a very good Liberal Premier.

The Hon. G. E. Jeffery: A very intelligent one, too.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: His ears will be burning shortly. However, that is the situation. Apparently price control was the only thing the honourable member had in mind when he said that the Government should control prices; but that has not proved successful. We all know that as the basic wage rises so the cost of living rises. I shall not argue the point as to whether one is behind the other, or which end of the dog runs first; the fact remains that every time the basic wage rises—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Somebody takes advantage of it.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No. Would the honourable member say that the Government takes advantage of it when each time the basic wage rises by a shilling—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: This Government does.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sure Mr. Wise could tell me the figure more accurately, but I think every time the basic wage rises by a shilling it costs the Government in the vicinity of £70,000 to £80,000 a year.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: But you take that away in taxes.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Regarding the question of taxes, I am sure Mr. Wise would not object if I asked him to help me on this point; because when the boot was on the other foot things were completely different. Members who now get up and castigate the Government for increasing taxes, and for making imposts upon the people, are different from those members who, perhaps 18 months ago, were making similar charges. Some of us said then, "When are these increases going to stop? How much longer can this Government go on?" Does Mr. Wise remember that story? Does Mr. Strickland remember that story? It was true.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Don't you remember that you tried to stop them?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, but Mr. Wise had a very effective reply.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: A few months afterwards you increased them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am going to tell members what approach Mr. Wise had to this question.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What is the sting in the tail?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There is no sting in the tail about this. I regard it as a commonsense approach to the question. Mr. Wise said—

Another member said that it is distressing to see Bills being introduced which impose taxes. Of course it is . . . no-one appreciates the requirements that are contained in taxing

measures; but, nevertheless, they are requirements. It is a condition and not a theory that taxing measures must be introduced irrespective of party flavour. However, it is not true to say that taxation has reached saturation point . . . .

I am sure the Government will be glad to know that.

. . . . or that this is a Government which has one idea only—as stated by one member—and that is, to impose more and more taxes.

I agree with that.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Upon what particular tax was that comment made?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I could not tell the honourable member, but it is reported at the top of p. 2152 of vol. 144 of *Hansard*. I think the taxes the honourable member's Government was imposing at the time were so numerous I could not say to which one the remarks applied.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I would say that the Minister did not prepare the note that he is reading, otherwise he would know the tax of which I was speaking.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Now the honourable member is only fishing.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: No, I am stating a fact.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am telling the honourable member what he said at the time. It is reported in *Hansard*.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That still appears to me to be sound, but it does not fit in with this form of taxation, and that is why I asked the question.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am saying what the honourable member's attitude was to taxation.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: And still is.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Thank you. Although I will never know as much about the State's finances as does the honourable member, in the last 15 to 18 months I have learned a little and, in regard to that point, perhaps I could turn to the subject about which we have heard so much this evening. I refer to the increase in water rates. We have heard a great deal about this subject from a few members who have spoken in this Chamber but, when I read Mr. Strickland's speech—and he moved the addendum—I could find scant mention of it, even though I went through it carefully.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is mentioned. My word it is!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But in such scant words.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: No. I told you it was 20 to 25 per cent.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is right.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Then why don't you say so?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: In comparison to what other members have had to say about it, it was scantily mentioned in the honourable member's speech.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I have other comrades in the House who can speak on that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Government—

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: I do not monopolise things like you do.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not hear what the honourable member said so I will not reply to it. The Government strongly denies that it has mis-handled the finances of the Metropolitan Water Supply Department. The department is obliged to raise revenue sufficient to meet its maintenance and operating expenses, and its interest and sinking funds on capital works. Existing rates and water charges were insufficient to meet rising costs whilst carrying out all the major works, such as the Serpentine project and the sewerage treatment amplification works which were commenced by the previous Government. The honourable member generously chided this Government for carrying on with those works, but they have added very substantially, as is only natural, to the interest and sinking fund charges this financial year.

We all know that the task of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Department is to make its budget balance, as I have mentioned previously, and when the income is not sufficient to cover the charges to which I have referred, there is nothing left for it to do but, in the words Mr. Wise used in 1956, to increase charges; because nobody knows better than does the honourable member what the attitude of the Grants Commission is on these matters.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You did not believe me when I told you that. I can remember Mr. Baxter making some comments about that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That may be so, but it does strike me—and I am prepared to make this admission—that it depends on which side of the fence one is sitting. As I said, I did not realise that in the 18 months this Government had been in office it could achieve so much and do so many wrong things as it has been charged with doing during that time. Opportunity was taken to rectify a definite anomaly in the rating assessment levels to provide for a more uniform assessment and, at the same time, assist in providing the additional revenue required as a result of these capital works. The balance of revenue was obtained from progressive reviews of district valuations, a process recognised as necessary by all



Governments from time to time, as a consequence of normal building development.

To those members who laid the charge, I say definitely that the attempt to gain greater income has no connection whatever with the restrictions that were imposed on the use of water last year. It is a fact, of course, that the Metropolitan Water Supply Department did not have any excess water to sell; and it was necessary for the Government, or the Minister for Works, in the very early stages of the season to say to the people, "The Government has to impose water restrictions upon you, for if we do not, dire consequences could be the result."

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I congratulated him for it in my speech.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As some members said, most of the people in the community were aware of the necessity to do it. But I am assured by the Minister, and by the department, that that has no connection with these charges, and there is no attempt to make up the leeway by imposing these additional charges for water rates.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What happened to the £280,000 surplus last year.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The view expressed by Mr. Thompson, from the West Province, I found difficult to understand, for the reason mentioned by, I think, Mr. MacKinnon, who interjected and said "You are not really sure of anything, are you?"

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: He wouldn't know.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It was based on a lot of conjecture. He said, "It has been said that the Pemberton mill will be reduced to one shift. I don't know whether it is true or not, but I hope it is not." I went down the other end of the building to see the Minister in charge of the State Building Supplies; I showed him what Mr. Thompson had said and he said, "This is news to me." I pointed out Mr. Thompson's remarks with respect to the Midland Junction Workshops, where he had said that he thought the workshops would be reduced to a service station, and the Minister said, "That is just plain nonsense." I will elaborate on that in a few minutes, and give the honourable member some more details.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Real information.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Thompson also said that he had heard that on the first KA wagons the doors would not close and the department would not take delivery. Mr. Court said, "In order to satisfy the honourable member I will make some detailed inquiries about it, and I will tell you so that you can tell him."

The Hon. R. Thompson: Thank you.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is why he asked.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Now we come to the remarks of Mr. Lavery, and I would say to him that the Government does not deny that the previous Government built up State engineering works and State trading concerns. We do not deny that at all. We know that the previous Government did build up these concerns to such a point that private enterprise was beginning to suffer as a result. I found on the files in the departments I administer, directions from the then Premier that under no circumstances was any Government work to be done anywhere but in a Government concern. It is natural, therefore, that the activities of these Government departments would rise over the years, as stated by the honourable member. That is to be expected. But it is well recognised that private industry was starving as a result.

We make no apology for the fact that we have removed the unfair trading legislation—no apology whatever—because as long as it was there it was a restriction on business coming to Western Australia.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Rubbish!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is now no longer a restriction, and more confidence has been built up in the country. I know that probably does not appeal to some members, but nevertheless it is true. I want to say something about the workshops themselves, and the charges that have been made.

In the first place there has been no undermining of the capacity of the Western Australian Government Railway Workshops at Midland Junction. The policy of the Government, and the Minister controlling the Railways Department, has been to constitute the workshops on a basis which will allow the workshops to be used to the best advantage, having regard for the proper role of those workshops in relation to the railway system itself. On the 30th June, 1960, the workshops employed 2,834 men out of a total of 12,821 railway employees.

I would say, with respect to members, that it must be appreciated that the workshops exist for the benefit of the railways, and not vice versa. We cannot have the tail wagging the dog in these matters. The workshops are there for the benefit of the railways. The Minister for Railways has told the unions, when they have come to him on deputations, that there will be no retrenchments in the Railways Department; and there have been no retrenchments in the department.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: How many apprentices were engaged this year?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: To an interjection I made regarding retrenchments the reply to me was, "I know there have been no retrenchments."

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: How many apprentices were engaged this year?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I cannot tell the honourable member offhand, but any adjustment to the work force will be through the normal process of wastage. I am prepared to stand corrected, and no doubt Mr. Strickland will correct me if I am wrong, but did not he, as Minister for Railways at the time, find himself in the position of allowing the normal process of wastage to take its toll, shall I say?

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Not in the workshops.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: But it was so in the Railways Department generally; and the work force went down because of that.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Not in the workshops.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am assured by the Minister for Railways that that is the only process that will take place here. This talk about the employment situation, and the fact that these men do not know whether they are going to be in employment tomorrow or not, is not fair to them at all.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You are doing it through the back door; you are taking work away from them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We are not doing anything of the kind.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You are doing it by back-door methods.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Again, the question whether the Midland Junction Workshops tender for work, does not really arise, because they have enough work—a full programme—to keep them going until June, 1961. They do not have to seek, or tender for work, because the programme they have at the moment is full.

Surely members can see that if the Midland Junction Workshops were to tender for the new Westland trains, and they were successful, then the work they are now doing as an integral part of the railway system would have to be sent out and done by somebody else. But they are playing the part they were originally set up to play.

If one stops to think, one will see it is quite obvious that the Government has done the sensible thing in maintaining for the workshops a programme which will make it unnecessary for them to go out and seek work; and of ensuring that work on a competitive basis shall be done by those people in the best position to compete. I repeat it is quite ridiculous to suggest that the work force at Midland Junction should be further increased. It is wrong to suggest that.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You think it should be further reduced.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have told the honourable member that the Minister for Railways has given an assurance to the

unions that no retrenchment will take place, and none has. I have also said that if there is any adjustment of the work force it will be done through the normal process of wastage taking place in the department.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Wasting for the want of work!

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Westland train sets are not built very often, but an assurance is given by the Minister that the Westland train sets will be manufactured in Western Australia. I believe a public assurance to this effect has been given. I say again that the present campaign that is going on, not only in the workshop, but in many other spheres at the present time, assisted in a number of cases by people who call themselves Communists, is not helping the progress of this State. It is simply putting into the minds of people a fear that should not be allowed to exist in their minds.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: There was a reduction of 137 there in the last few months.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It does not do the position any good to continue to adopt this policy.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Should we sit passively by?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The honourable member may criticise as much as he wishes; but he should not continue to create this fear in the minds of people.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: Have you seen that question and answer in the Assembly?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This fear should not continue to be produced in the minds of people when it does not exist.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: That is your own theory.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is so, and at some other stage the honourable member will have an opportunity to break it down. There are one or two other points about which I must say something. The first point to which I wish to refer deals with the State trading concerns generally.

The Government made no secret in its policy speech as to what its attitude would be in connection with State trading concerns. We enunciated it to the electors very plainly in March, 1959. We gave assurances to safeguard the carrying on of these concerns while being transferred to private ownership within the economy of the State. If it is possible to transfer these trading concerns within the economy of the State, that will be done. But the over-emphasis in this State on trading concerns has been a very serious deterrent to industry generally.

It stands to reason that industrialists who think of coming to Western Australia to establish themselves, are not

prone to come here when they realise that the State and its trading concerns are taking such an active part in the industrial pursuits of the State.

The Hon. R. Thompson: Who gave it all the publicity?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It is more likely that they would come here if they found there was an open field for private enterprise unimpeded by State trading concerns. Whilst it may be possible to select certain years in respect of which the different trading concerns have made a profit, on the whole it will be found, that with a few exceptions, State trading concerns generally are a burden on the taxpayer's pocket; because when they start to go down, all one has to do is to give the barrel another rattle and fill them up again.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: You have no intention of selling Rottneest Island.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think that is even worthy of an answer.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is a socialist island controlled by the Tourist Bureau.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Assurances have been given that, in the event of these State trading concerns being transferred, the Government will be mindful of the interests of the employees and the need to look after them; and this will be done.

In conclusion, I want to repeat that it is such an easy matter to get up in this House, and probably in another place, and say that all these dire things are going to happen.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: It is easy when we have facts.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the honourable member had any facts, he gave us very few in the speech he delivered.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: We produced them.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: What I propose to say may not be a happy thought for some. For instance, Mr. Ron Thompson from the West Province would be much happier if his Government was back in office. Maybe that will happen sooner or later. As I said last year, "Who knows? We may have to hand over in 18, 19 or 20 years' time." But until that day comes why not let us see what is happening? Everybody knows that Australia, generally is heading towards progress. These rises we talk about have not happened in Western Australia alone; they have happened in all the other States of the Commonwealth. Even in the days of the previous Government, when we were chiding it about the increases in costs and the imposition of taxes and so on, the basic wage was

continuing to rise. So we get this imposition of 28 per cent. increase in margins, and an increase in the basic wage; but we must try to absorb them. We still have a profitable State.

Mention has been made about the figures of unemployment. I would like to refer to the Government Statistician's figures on this point. It is estimated that the number of wage and salary earners employed, excepting in the rural areas, was 190,400 at the end of May last, as compared with 187,000 at the end of June, 1959. A still further indication of the State's progress, I might say, is to be found in the larger factory figures, which represent approximately one-third of the total number. Factory establishments' employees numbered 17,969 at the end of June, compared with 17,310 at the end of June, 1959. The employment figures are better in the State, as there were 2,293 people receiving unemployment benefit at the end of June, 1960, compared with 2,939—nearly 3,000—at the end of the corresponding month last year. No doubt these figures are a bit disturbing to those people who like to criticise; but nevertheless they are true.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: They are pleasing to me.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am glad to hear that. The unemployment figures are down; the employment figures are up, and the State is showing great progress. There is an obvious interest by overseas industrialists who wish to come to Western Australia.

Let us do what we can to encourage them to come here rather than throw cold water on our efforts, as has been done in this House tonight, so deterring those people who want to come to this State. Let us encourage them to come here and be a part of the State's progress, rather than discourage them as some members have done today. The addendum to the Address-in-Reply is a rather fruitless one, and I hope it will not be agreed to.

**THE HON. G. E. JEFFERY** (Suburban—on amendment) (9.16): I rise to support the addendum to the Address-in-Reply as moved by Mr. Strickland. I will address my remarks particularly to the Midland Junction Workshops. To my mind, there is no doubt as to why the present Government will not allow the railways to tender for the construction of the new Westlands, or any other work.

Looking back on the history of the Midland Junction Workshops, we find that during the war years of 1939-1945 the workshops were held in high esteem for the magnificent work they were able to do in their own sphere of activity, and for the Allied fighting services. We find that in 1947 the McLarty-Watts Government brought to Australia Mr. du Plessis, manager of the South African Railways,

and Mr. Gibson, a consulting engineer from Sydney. Those two gentlemen, while loud in their praise for the work performed there, made reference, in their report, to some parts of the shops as being humpies; and they also referred to obsolete equipment being used.

As recently as yesterday, questions were asked of the Minister for Railways, and from his answers we can see the figures for outside sources as compared with those of the workshops; and I feel that the Government should allow the workshops to tender for work which is rightfully theirs. I think anyone who has had the privilege—and I know members were given the privilege, but whether they took advantage of it is another matter—of going through the Midland Junction Workshops, despite the old skeleton about loafers and so on, would be agreeably surprised at the skill of the men and the work that is turned out in the shops.

I will quote some answers given by the Minister yesterday in another place; and the Minister here can scuttle down the corridor and talk to the Minister for Railways to see if they are correct. I took these answers from a question asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in another place.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I do not think that sort of talk is necessary.

The Hon. G. E. JEFFERY: The cost outside of a bearing sleeve is £11 3s. 1d., while the estimate for manufacture in the workshops is £1 16s. 1d. A shaft for driving pump X11148 outside is £30 16s. 3d. The estimate for manufacturing it in the workshops is approximately £17. That is the sort of thing in which the public of Western Australia would be interested.

I realise, as do all other members, whatever their political colour, that the railway system of Western Australia cannot possibly pay because of the concessions made to various sections of the community, but I do suggest that everyone has a responsibility, whether they be members of the Government or of the Opposition, to do what they can to make the annual deficit as small as possible.

The railway workshops should be given all the new work that is required. As a tradesman in industry before entering Parliament, I know that any man who is capable of doing maintenance work, whether in the engineering field, or in any other field of trade, would be capable of performing the more glamorous duty of constructing a new article. Any member who knows industry will agree—and if he does not know he can find out—that in most cases the men who know the maintenance sphere are capable of performing new work, whereas men engaged in employment on new work find maintenance and repair work not so easy. I suggest to the Minister that the Midland Junction Workshops should be given the extra staff necessary

to construct the two Westlands rather than give a carpet-bagging company from the Eastern States an opportunity to swoop on this State, perform the work, make high profits, and then leave us high and dry.

This work should be done in the workshops; and the workshops should be given the men and the equipment to do the job. Arising out of the report of du Plessis and Gibson in 1947, an extensive programme of retooling and new machines was engaged in for the workshops. Anyone who has been to the workshops will appreciate their new design and the skill of the staff; and that is one of the reasons why the railway workshops are able to do the work better than other organisations. They have the necessary equipment to perform these duties. To my mind, the reason why this Government does not want to allow the workshops to tender for their own work is clearly set out in the report of Mr. Smith, when he was engaged as a Royal Commissioner, to inquire into the various facets of railway work.

I am going to read from page 19 of his interim report, No. 6. It is an amazing thing that the McLarty-Watts Government took notice of the need to retool and modernise the Midland Junction Workshops; and a series of conservative Governments, including the present one, never seem to learn, because, in 1950, when wagons were required, Mr. Smith's report under the heading "The Wagon Timber Construction Company" reads as follows:—

I know this is a matter of past history and that it has already been discussed in Parliament and therefore I am not going to deal with it in any great detail. The whole affair, however, is very interesting from two points of view.

Firstly, it shows that on a previous occasion, allegations were made as to the existence of a timber combine and that it had tied up the supply of jarrah and karri timber. The allegations were denied and nothing short of a full scale inquiry would have revealed the true position.

Secondly, it shows the existence of a rise and fall scheme which instead of compensating for actual cost risks, gave the Wagon Timber Construction Company very considerable and additional profits.

The main contract was between the W.A.G.R. and the Commonwealth Engineering Co. Ltd. The Wagon Timber Construction Company was a sub-contractor to the former, to supply the necessary timber for the wagon construction.

The sub-contract price was £375 18s. a wagon and the sub-contract provided that any increase in the metropolitan basic wage above the then existing rate, namely £7 3s. 6d. per

week, between the date of the contract and the date when the wagons would be ready for inspection, would be applied to the whole of the contract price of £375 18s. per wagon, on the basis of one half of one per cent. for each complete shilling by which the basic wage rose over £7 3s. 6d.

It is alleged that under the formula the sub-contractor was actually paid basic wage increases for completed wagons although the increases did not occur until after completion.

Up to the end of June, 1953, the costs of the Wagon Timber Construction Company were £60,019 and the profit £54,221. The Auditor-General, who inspected the Company's books, reported that, if this rate of profit were sustained throughout the contract, the Company would make a profit of £271,000 on the thousand wagons.

The Auditor-General estimated that, despite increased costs between the signing of the sub-contract and 30/6/53, the company could have made a profit of £76 8s. 7d. per wagon if the original price quoted in the tender had been adhered to. His further comment was that the additional revenue provided under the formula for adjusting the costs, was all profit for the Wagon Company.

The whole arrangement was adversely criticised by the Hon. the Premier, the Under-Treasurer and the Auditor-General and in my opinion most justifiably.

I suggest there is enough in that tender alone for the present Government to have learned a lesson. The Minister, when speaking, made reference to the fact that someone had found a minute by the previous Premier of this State, Mr. Hawke, to the effect that Government work was to be done in Government instrumentalities. I suggest with that sort of business going on it was a very intelligent minute to write and one which the present Government might have taken cognisance of.

The work should be done in the workshops; and if it means engaging a larger staff at the workshops, the Government should engage it. It should not be given to a carpet-bagging company which would come to this State, perform the work, make a high profit, and then abandon the people of Western Australia. The Midland Junction Workshops are admirably situated; and any man who serves his trade in an establishment is entitled to partake in some of the good things associated with his industry as well as maintenance and repair work.

That is the fear of the present Government in its refusing the railway workshops to tender for the work. The workshops

should be allowed to tender; and if their prices are competitive, they should do the work. If their prices are not competitive there would be no complaining by the men concerned.

The attitude of fear in the workshops of which the Minister speaks, is not an attitude of fear, but one of dissatisfaction. The Minister says that the Government has not been in power for very long, so I take it the Minister for Railways has not had time to read any railway reports of Royal Commissions. Therefore, I suggest that he apply himself to the report of Mr. du Plessis and Mr. Gibson, written in 1947, in which they speak of human relationships. There he will find, in a small paragraph, what, to me, is the real basis of the dissatisfaction existing; because to achieve what should be achieved in the railway workshops, the men have to be given the work.

The assurance of the Minister meant nothing. I have lived in a railway town for 20 or more years and I know quite a number of the workers personally. I know their feelings and the atmosphere in which they work. As far as the men are concerned, I would say that the present Minister for Railways is the most unsatisfactory Minister they have ever had. I do not agree with Mr. Simpson's politics, but the men had an understanding with him; they were taken into his confidence, and they had respect for that Government.

The Government should not refuse Government instrumentalities the right to tender for work which can be performed by them; and the figures will tell their own story. I support the amendment.

**THE HON. F. J. S. WISE** (North—on amendment) [9.28]: I had intended to say something on the Address-in-Reply befitting to the occasion of your appointment, Sir, as President. I think it is quite right and proper that on the first occasion a member gets your eye, the appropriate word be said.

I do congratulate you, Sir, as President of this Council and I hope that during the whole of the term you are privileged to occupy that Chair you will be blessed with good health, which will enable you and assist you in the good judgments which, I am sure, you will give to all of us.

**The Hon. A. F. Griffith:** Hear, hear!

**The Hon. F. J. S. WISE:** This amendment gives expression to protests—protests to be conveyed to His Excellency the Governor—and it is quite proper that such protests should be conveyed to His Excellency. There is every reason for them to be expressed as the expression represents the views of almost the majority of people in this State; and in this manner they should be conveyed to him.

The Minister told us that he was not worried about the amendment as a censure motion. It is not framed as a normal censure motion would be framed. However, it is framed in a manner that would give His Excellency some idea of the validity of the protests that are made in that addendum.

I propose only to deal with two or three of the matters referred to; and it is no use bandying words in regard to whether a promise was made or not in regard to the proclamation, the substance of which was cancelled leaving only the proclamation. The Minister used words which made it very clear that the onus of responsibility was on the Government to deal with the matter which the law provided that it should deal with. The two Ministers—one by statement and the other by interjection—suggested that the onus of responsibility was on the Government to give effect to the provisions of this law. There is a statutory need to give effect to a statutory obligation and that is the situation which no bandying of words can deny.

The Electoral Districts Act of 1947 makes very clear the requirements of the Government because it provides for a sequence of actions which a Government must carry through, such actions having been referred to on several occasions as automatic. They are not automatic inasmuch as they happen of their own volition, but they are part of a sequence of actions which the law provides for and which the Government, giving effect to the law, must take.

When the Act of 1947, to which I will refer specifically in a moment, was introduced—I can recall it very clearly—*The West Australian* in a leading article applauded particularly two of its provisions and had this to say—

This is a good and necessary Bill, a fair and even generous Bill. It incorporates two desirable principles which are new to this State and it merits the widest public approval. These principles are automatic future redistributions when enrolments exceed a permissible margin of error, and the definition of new boundaries by a body outside of parliamentary control. It would be encouraging to think that those two principles at least will never be altered.

Those two principles, embodied in the Act introduced by the McLarty-Watts Government in its first session of 1947, were voiced as being the means, or providing the medium, which would give effect justly to a redistribution which would come about according to the provisions of that Act and without further reference to Parliament.

Indeed, within that law it is specifically stated that this matter, when reported upon by the commissioners and when the new districts have been prescribed by them, shall be enforced immediately. That

appeared in the *Government Gazette*, and it is provided for in the parent Act. It is very clear in the section referred to by the Minister that there is a distinct and definite obligation on any Government which receives either one of two forms of advice that the boundaries in five or more seats are out of quota. At present there are 10 seats out of quota; 10 seats, and yet a Government, because of certain circumstances, is unwilling to enforce the law.

Section 12 of the 1947 Act is as follows:—

(1) The State may from time to time be wholly or partially redivided into Electoral Districts and Electoral Provinces by Commissioners appointed under this section in manner hereinafter provided whenever directed by the Governor by Proclamation.

(2) Such Proclamation shall be issued—

(a) on resolution being passed by the Legislative Assembly in that behalf; or

(b) if in the report by the Chief Electoral Officer to the Minister to whom the administration of the Electoral Act, 1907-1940, is for the time being committed, as to the state of the rolls made up for any triennial election it appears that the enrolment in not less than five Electoral Districts falls short of or exceeds by twenty per centum the quota as ascertained for such districts under this Act.

The Chief Electoral Officer, acting under the second provision, advised the former Government of that situation and in accordance with the law—never mind what the Minister said in regard to its having been done in the dying hours or minutes of the Government—the Government of that day was obliged to act.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Was the information only received that day?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, it was received some time before that day. I am not too sure when.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: After the election?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, I think it was about the time of the election when the Chief Electoral Officer was very busy and had completed the rolls. It was round about that time. The Government then acted under the provisions of subsection (5) of section 12.

Clause 2 of last year's Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation) Bill, which subsequently became an Act, provided that the provisions of the proclamation made on the 1st day of April were thereby cancelled and were deemed not to have been in operation. Members will

note the wording. The proclamation itself, without any innards, still remains. The requirement of the law still remains unfulfilled; and no Government, even though it may delay the issuance of a proclamation, can evade its issue or evade giving effect to it. However, that is what this Government is doing, and the Minister said that if Parliament should reject the amended proposals, or any proposal which might be put forward, then it was quite clear that the present statute would remain and the onus would be placed upon the Government of issuing a fresh proclamation to ensure the law was carried into effect.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: I think you will find the law has been complied with.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: It has not been complied with, and I am afraid that as time goes on, although it heals many things, it will not heal the gap that exists in the law in this case. I make this forecast—and make it safely—that although this addendum to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply will, no doubt, be defeated because the lack of numbers of the Opposition will ensure its defeat, there will be a necessity before this year is passed for the Government to take a lot of notice of what it has failed to do, because of many circumstances which will arise unless the onus placed upon the Government to issue a fresh proclamation is put into effect.

Giving effect to the law by the issuance of a proclamation, the contents of which are annulled by Parliament, does not end the responsibility. One cannot issue a proclamation dealing with the contents of solids in cheese and say that they satisfy the need of a proclamation. The need of this proclamation is embodied in the sections of the parent Act, and although the title only of such proclamation remains, the law is still not satisfied.

The Minister stated a few moments ago that there was no mention of a promise in some comments made by the Leader of the Opposition in another place five days after the Bill was carried. There was no need to make any comment at that time. Even with a promissory note a person is given time to meet it. And subsequently, when many months had elapsed, it was still all right to assume that the moral obligation—if not the actual promise—of the Minister would be met and the onus of responsibility would be accepted. But this law is being flouted by the Government; it is not giving effect to the law. There may have been an oversight in the drafting of the Bill which became the law, but the fact remains that the proclamation, as such, has not been cancelled; and it is mere pretence and sham to say that the removal of the provisions within that proclamation—leaving the proclamation itself merely as a title—is giving effect to the law.

I can assure you, Mr. President, and the members of the Government, that we are not guessing in connection with this matter; and we are not necessarily drawing upon the long experience of some members in another place in the handling of legal matters and in connection with the involved nature of the Electoral Act. Although we have our own opinions, we have had those opinions properly tested. Therefore I repeat what I said earlier, that before very long it will be obvious to the Government that there is no way for it to escape its responsibility in conforming to this law. While there is a legal as well as a moral obligation, the Government is culpable in not giving effect to this important law from which the very basis of our Government, in both Chambers, stems.

I turn to another point mentioned in the addendum—the disposal of State trading concerns. During the course of the election, what might be termed a yellow paper—it was a yellow pamphlet—was issued by the Government, and this pamphlet contained many misleading statements; and in the pamphlet an insufficiency of figures was produced to show to the people the dire effects of the State trading concerns.

But I suggest that the policy of disposing of our State trading concerns is so circumscribed that it applies only to those concerns which are in the way of the private enterprises that support the Government. I think that so far there is no suggestion that the Wyndham Meatworks or the State Shipping Service will be disposed of. It could be that there is such a suggestion, because there was an initial move to do something about Robbs Jetty, but it was dropped like a hot potato.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Certainly not the railways.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Certainly not Robbs Jetty, because I can imagine the honourable member not being present on the occasion of a vote on it.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: I think I would be present.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: If the honourable member were present, he would not vote for its disposal because if he did the rift between the two parties would become, as I have said once before, a gaping chasm.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Many times before.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I am amazed, in regard to the State trading concerns, that the members of the Government should be so sectional or insular in the enterprises that they intend to dispose of and are, indeed, disposing of. A composite Government is an interesting one; and something must have been overlooked by someone because I can clearly recall that year after year, when we were the Government, moves were made by the Country

Party to have the yard fees or the slaughter fees reduced at the Midland Junction Abattoirs and at Robb's Jetty, because it was averred that they were being used as a taxing machine. But many primary producers—maybe including you, Sir; I say this with due respect and humility—would have been sorry indeed to see rigidly controlled charges made at the metropolitan slaughter yards, and to find the slaughter houses handed over to private enterprise.

The sequence of events is rather ludicrous; it is very serious and severe. I find in one of the papers tabled yesterday—Regulation 19, amended, of the Abattoirs Act Regulations—that the metropolitan abattoirs—a public utility or State trading concern—which it was alleged we, in our time, used as a taxing machine, has increased its charges in the region of 25 per cent. to 33 per cent. within the last four months. Today it costs 52s. 6d. to kill a bullock of 600 lb. weight and over; and that is an increase of between 25 per cent. and 33 per cent—nearer 33 per cent.

It is all most amusing, I repeat, to see the attitude towards the utilisation, by the present Government, of public utilities as taxing machines. No matter what the Government may wish to do in the carrying out of a policy, the policy in regard to the State trading concerns will be decided from outside the Government. I make the statement in an unqualified way that, at the end of the Government's term, be it 20 months or 20 years hence—and I am afraid the Government will not exceed the record of Sir John Forrest, or John Willcock—there will still exist as many State trading concerns as the Government may destroy in the interim.

So this policy of disposing of State trading concerns as a whole, for the reasons advanced by the Minister, is so much balderdash. In so far as using the State instrumentalities as taxing concerns is concerned, the Minister made the statement that it was necessary in connection with the water rates, which is the last subject of the addendum on which I intend to touch. He made the statement that it would be quite wrong and inconceivable—or words of that kind—for a Government not to have the right to impose taxation to provide revenue to meet the expenses it was called upon to meet. But the point the Minister entirely overlooked was that this was a form of taxation the limits of which are prescribed by the law. This is not a matter of raising a land tax to use in Consolidated Revenue as the Government may wish; this is not a tax which is intended or prescribed as a burden or charge on the people to be taken into Consolidated Revenue *ad lib*; this is a tax provided for under the Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act of 1909.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It is a service Act, is it not?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Of course it is. The measure sets out—and it has not been altered except in a very minor way to cope with the extensions of the service—how the tax shall be imposed and the purpose of the tax. Section 93 of the Act—the Act goes back over half a century—provides—

Separate rates shall be made for each District and for the following purposes:—

- (a) To provide funds to defray the expenses of the general administration of this Act apportioned to the District or metropolitan main drainage district, as the case may be;
- (b) To provide funds to defray the expenses incidental to each District or metropolitan main drainage district, as the case may be, incurred in the maintenance and management of the water works, sewerage works, and metropolitan main drainage works in the district, or metropolitan main drainage district, as the case may be;
- (c) To provide funds for paying the prescribed interest and sinking fund on the capital cost of such works allocated to each District or metropolitan main drainage district, as the case may be;
- (d) To provide funds for the construction, extension, and improvement of such works in the District, or metropolitan main drainage district, as the case may be, as may be provided, constructed, extended, or improved out of revenue.

There are very few laws on our statute book which place strictures on the manner of the expenditure of revenue, but this is one of them. A plea that there was an insufficiency of money to carry out the requirements of the Act will not suffice in this case, because the Water Supply Department, under the old rates that applied, showed, according to the 1957-58 report, a profit of £59,000; and in the current year it showed a profit of £31,800; and the accumulated profits are approaching £250,000. These figures are available to be seen by anyone. In addition, there is the fact that an amount of £30,000 was found from the revenue of the department last year to meet its consolidated debt. So no argument that the extra finance was necessary to meet certain charges is valid.

It was never intended that the department should be used as a taxing machine, and it has never been so used; but in spite of a profit through the years, it is now being used as a medium to provide a 25 per cent. increased tax on people



in two ways, because, in addition to the new valuations, the water rates and the sewerage charges are being raised in the same proportion; and the sewerage department has never needed additional revenue. That is the question the Minister must find time to examine; that is the charge we levelled, and he has made no pretence at answering it. There is no need for this burden to be added to the people if the law is honoured and the money provided as the law stipulates.

So I repeat that there are many other ways of dealing with these specific taxes. I will not withdraw one word of my remarks, quoted by the Minister, that I made somewhere about taxes and taxable capacity, because they are still true today.

There is no question in this instance, either, of any effect from the Grants Commission, for the reason that the department, by administering the law, gives the return which the Grants Commission would expect to be given. But this is all very unsatisfying and difficult from the point of view of the taxpayer.

About the time of the election—the Council election—there was quite a stir in some districts because of the shortening of the area over which assessments were made. After a close examination of the position, although it is difficult to follow the departmental explanation, I think there is little on that point to be cavilled at; and one must be fair when one is engaging in an analysis of the effect of taxation and the burden which certain figures place upon the people, because whether a person is absent from his house for a whole year, or for six months, or not at all, his water rate remains the same; but within that water rate he is entitled to a certain allowance. If he does not use the water, it is just too bad. He finishes the year with what appears to him to be a surplus of unused water. But that is not quite the situation, because he pays his rates in full and if he uses more than the water allowed, he pays for excess.

However, that is not the point at issue because there is a great deal of misunderstanding in the public mind. The point at issue is that valuations have increased side by side with an increase in the taxing rate. Everyone who is receiving his statement of water rates is not very pleased about this added burden. There is every reason why the rate should have been so limited and circumscribed as the provisions of the Act demand; to meet interest rates, administration costs, and sinking fund.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: This effect could have been achieved by increasing the rate in the pound in accordance with the Act.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is so; that has been done before.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is right, but this was—

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: But that was done initially only to meet the same amount of money; and at the time it was done—I think it was in 1946—the rate was reduced when the valuation went up. Therefore, there is nothing in that argument. One Government could find a way to reduce the rate when valuations went up to meet simply, the demands of the statute.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Of course we had the case of some country water rates being increased by a process of administration. Last year we tried to sort out that anomaly and the Bill was thrown out in this House.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: That is right. I can also remember many other Bills imposing charges on the people such as an increase in land tax, etc., and they, too, were thrown out in this House, and the Minister helped. However, he now has no fears on that score. The point I emphasise is that in the two instances I have elaborated, the Government, on the one hand, is not giving effect to the demands of the Act and, on the other hand, it is exceeding the requirements of the law and imposing further burdens on the people. I support the amendment.

**Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:**

**Ayes—11.**

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. R. Thompson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. J. S. Wise
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. H. C. Strickland	(Teller.)

**Noes—12.**

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. S. T. J. Thompson
Hon. A. B. Jones	Hon. J. M. Thomson
Hon. G. C. MacKinnon	Hon. F. D. Willmott
Hon. R. C. Mattiske	Hon. J. Cunningham
	(Teller.)

**Pairs.**

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. C. R. Abbey
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. L. A. Logan

**Majority against—1.**

**Amendment thus negatived.**

**On motion by the Hon. F. J. S. Wise, debate adjourned.**

**SUPPLY BILL, £23,500,000**

*First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly and read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH** (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [10.10]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This is the Supply Bill which is usually introduced at this stage of the proceedings. In each session there are usually two Supply Bills introduced. The Consolidated Revenue Fund which was expected to finish up with a deficit at the end of 1959-60 to the extent of £1,515,500, in fact balanced out with a deficit of only £1,405,814. This is certainly a great improvement as compared with the deficit of £1,684,000 at the end of the previous financial year, 1958-59.

The Government is seeking an allocation of an amount of £23,500,000. This exceeds last year's requirements by £2,500,000. The details are as follows:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund	17,000,000
General Loan Fund....	4,500,000
Advance to Treasurer	2,000,000
	<hr/>
	£23,500,000

It will be noticed that the requirements of the Consolidated Revenue Fund exceed last year's figures by £2,000,000, and that £500,000 more is sought for the General Loan Fund. There has been no increase in the requirements for the advance to the Treasurer.

I am aware that the debate on the Supply Bill usually enables members to avail themselves of an opportunity to address the House on various subjects pertaining substantially to their electorates; or, for that matter, to cover any ground. We are now in a position, at a very early stage of the session, of having had three such opportunities. There was the Address-in-Reply, the amendment to the Address-in-Reply, and now the Supply Bill.

The Hon. H. C. Strickland: History is repeating itself.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is right. I am sure members will not complain about the opportunities which have been given this session. If it is desired by the Leader of the Opposition to seek an adjournment of the debate until tomorrow, I will have no objection.

On motion by the Hon. W. F. Willesee, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, the 3rd August, 1960

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