

are not protected. As there is an accumulated balance of £308,542 2s. 6d. in the fund, it is sufficiently adequate to cover the men I have mentioned. We have felt, for some time, that these men should be protected and all mine workers, no matter in which section of the industry they are employed, should be protected in this way. The Bill is designed to cater for approximately 120 men in the industry. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Wild, debate adjourned.

BILL—KALGOORLIE AND BOULDER RACING CLUBS ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE).

Adoption of Report of Select Committee.

Order of the Day read for the consideration of the report of the select committee.

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. J. Hegney): I report that the Bill contains the several provisions required by the Standing Orders.

Hon. H. H. STYANTS (Kalgoorlie): I move—

That the report of the select committee be adopted.

Question put and passed; the report adopted.

BILL—COLLIE CLUB (PRIVATE).

Adoption of Report.

Order of the Day read for the consideration of the report of the select committee.

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. J. Hegney): I report that the Bill contains the several provisions required by the Standing Orders.

Mr. MAY (Collie): I move—

That the report of the select committee be adopted.

Question put and passed; the report adopted.

House adjourned at 8.38 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 9th September, 1953.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Questions : North-West, as to boring scheme, Kimberley stations	466
Unemployment, as to recipients of benefits	467
Forests, as to areas referred to Advisory Committee	467
Margarine, as to risk of bacterial contamination	467
Water supplies, as to Wellington Dam-Narrogin scheme	467
Address-in-reply, eighth day	468
Speakers on Address—	
Hon. A. F. Griffith	468
Hon. F. R. H. Lavery	481
Hon. C. H. Henning	490
Bills : Noxious Weeds Act Amendment, 1r.	495
Adoption of Children Act Amendment (No. 1), 1r.	495
Industries Assistance Act Amendment, (Continuance), 1r.	495
Adjournment, special	495

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

QUESTIONS.

NORTH-WEST.

As to Boring Scheme, Kimberley Stations.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) What is the total expenditure to date on the £ for £ water boring scheme in the Kimberleys?

(2) What is the total number of bores which have been sunk?

(3) Which are the stations that have benefited by the scheme, and what number of bores have been sunk on each?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied:

(1) The amount paid by the State on the fifty-fifty basis is £15,609. This is the State's liability for 24 watering points.

(2) Watering points completed to date total 28. These are mainly bores but two wells and one spring have been developed.

- (3) Bow River—2.
 Fossil Downs—4.
 Cherrabun—1.
 Christmas Creek—2.
 Louisa Downs—3.
 Argyle—4.
 Ivanhoe—1.
 Rosewood—1.
 Brooking—2.
 Yeeda—1.
 Mt. House—3.
 Lissadel—1.
 Texas Downs—1.
 Mabel Downs—1.
 Alice Downs—1.

Departmental payment has not yet been made on the last four mentioned.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

As to Recipients of Benefits.

Hon. C. W. D. BARKER asked the Chief Secretary:

How many persons male and female, are receiving unemployment benefits at the present time, under the following headings:—skilled trades, unskilled workers, clerical workers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

This information is not available from State sources, the payment of unemployment benefits being controlled by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. It is suggested that the hon. member contact that department.

FORESTS.

As to Areas Referred to Advisory Committee.

Hon. J. MURRAY asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Will he inform the House which sawmillers are operating in the areas referred to the Forestry Advisory Committee?

(2) Will he arrange to have a marked plan of these areas laid on the Table of the House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Tender No. 19/53—Millars' Timber & Trading Co., Jardee; Millars' Timber & Trading Co., Palgarup; Bunning Bros., Yornup; Bunning Bros., Donnelly River; State Saw Mills, Manjimup; Kauri Timber Co., Nannup; Malcolm Smith & Sons, Boyup Brook.

Tender No. 20/53—State Saw Mills, Shannon River; Millars' Timber & Trading Co., Jardee; Bunning Bros., Yornup.

Tender No. 21/53—Kauri Timber Co. (three mills), Nannup; Letchford, H. G., Jarrahwood; Millars' Timber & Trading Co., Jarrahwood.

Tender No. 23/53—Bunning Bros., Tone River; Millars' Timber & Trading Co., Quinninup; State Saw Mills, Shannon River; and a number of small mills at Manjimup.

Tender Nos. 22/53, 24/53, 25/53 and 26/53—G. Duckett, Mt. Barker; W. Drage, Rocky Gully; Whittaker Bros., Denmark; Millars' Timber & Trading Co., Mt. Barker; Smith Bros., Bow River; Casetimbers Pty. Ltd., Kent River; and a number of small mills in Manjimup.

Tender No. 27/53—Kauri Timber Co. (two mills), Northcliffe; State Saw Mills, Shannon River.

(2) A plan of the areas submitted to tender may be inspected at the Forests Department.

MARGARINE.

As to Risk of Bacterial Contamination.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Is the Minister for Health satisfied that every safeguard has been taken against typhus bacteria in imported coconut products?

(2) Can the Minister give a definite assurance that coconut oil used in the manufacture of margarine cannot possibly contain typhus bacteria?

(3) Has the Minister's attention been directed to the statement by the Deputy-Commissioner of Public Health on the 13th August, 1953, that "there was little chance of bacterial contamination in margarine"?

(4) Can the "little chance" be removed, or must the user of margarine continue to take the risk?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes, although it is assumed that the hon. member is referring to "typhoid" and not "typhus," which is a completely different disease.

(2) In the processing, all bacteria from any source will have been destroyed.

(3) Yes. The "little chance" mentioned by the Deputy Commissioner of Public Health refers to the possibility of contamination of any food after manufacture.

(4) From answers Nos. (1), (2) and (3) it will be seen that the risk is negligible and margarine can be considered one of the safest foods.

WATER SUPPLIES.

As to Wellington Dam—Narrogin Scheme.

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) Does the Government intend to implement the programme of work for Wellington Dam, as outlined in the report of the Department of Public Works and Water Supply for the financial year 1951-1952, page 32?

(2) How many chains of pipeline were laid from Wellington Dam to Narrogin during—

(a) the financial year ended the 30th June, 1953;

(b) the period from the 30th June, to the 30th August, 1953?

(3) How many chains is it proposed to lay during this financial year?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) Yes, when circumstances allow. Owing to extensive demands for more urgent works, it has not been possible to provide any funds for recommencing work on Wellington Dam this financial year.

(2) (a) 412 chains.

(b) 74 chains.

(3) Approximately 240 chains.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [4.40]: I wish to take this opportunity of conveying to members my sincere thanks and appreciation for the congratulatory remarks they have passed to me, in the course of this debate, on my election to the Legislative Council. I would like to congratulate the two members who have attained ministerial rank following the election of their party to the Treasury Bench; also to Mr. Hall on being elected Chairman of Committees.

I desire to be associated with the remarks of condolence that have been extended to the family of the late Mr. Hastings Carew-Reid. I knew Mr. Reid before coming into Parliament. As a matter of fact, I went to school with two or three of his sons. Mr. Reid, in the job he carried out, was always helpful to me as a member of Parliament who was young in experience. I am sure all members will agree that he carried out his duties in a most efficient and courteous manner. I extend my congratulations to Mr. Royce, who has succeeded him.

My parliamentary experience commenced in another place where for a period of three years I represented the electorate of Canning. During that time I endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to represent fairly and impartially the people there, and I propose to carry out the same practice in this House, whilst at the same time having regard for the platform of the Liberal and Country League in which I believe. I shall endeavour to pass judgment and vote in this House according to those principles.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: This is a non-party House.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was told that before I came here, and I am almost prepared to accept the hon. member's word that it is a non-party House, but at the same time I assure him that a leopard cannot change its spots, and by the same token I shall continue to be a Liberal. I spoke briefly on the Supply Bill when it was introduced by the Chief Secretary, and I thank him for the courtesy he extended by not interjecting on that occasion, although I admit I did try to bait him into interjecting and giving me an undertaking in connection with a certain matter. I do not expect the same courtesy on this occasion. I would like also to thank the Clerk of the Legislative Council for putting me on the right track and informing me that when asking questions the correct procedure is to ask one question and then sit down instead of asking two or three in a row as I did on one occasion.

Before getting on to the Governor's Speech there are one or two little matters I want to deal with. I wish to make an explanation in connection with a question I asked yesterday concerning margarine. It might appear to members from the way I framed the question that I was not altogether in favour of the butterfat industry and would act prejudicially to it. I assure the House that such was furthest from my mind when I asked the question. It had been reported to me that huge quantities of margarine were being imported into the State, and I wanted to know what the position was exactly, and what the Government's attitude was. I repeat, it was furthest from my mind that the question or the answer should have any detrimental effect on the butterfat industry.

I do not apologise for the speech I propose to make this afternoon because I understand that in this House, as in another place, a member is permitted to get on his feet, speak his mind and criticise the Government for any action it has taken which he thinks is prejudicial to his province or the State. Therefore I propose in connection with the Governor's Speech and a couple of other matters, to take a rather critical viewpoint, refraining at the same time completely from personalities, and endeavouring, as I shall continue to do whilst I am here, to convey to the House by constructive criticism my thoughts upon particular matters. I shall bear in mind that I am the youngest member of this Chamber and that there are others here who have had many more years of experience than I have had, and that from them I can, and will, readily learn.

The first matter I would like to have something to say about is that of Mr. Graham's folly. Of course, I refer to the flats that the Government proposes to build in the Subiaco district. The first that anyone knew about this project, I think, was from an article which appeared in the "Sunday Times" on the 30th August, last. The matter was later reported in "The West Australian" of the 31st August. The public was told, through the medium of the Press, that the State Housing Commission proposed to build 242 flats on a site in Subiaco. We were able to read a long report about the pros and cons of the project, telling us what the estimated capital expenditure was, and what it was estimated would be the charge for the rent of the flats. The report I have here, taken from "The West Australian", was allegedly subscribed to by the chairman of the Housing Commission, Mr. Brownlie, and it states that there is a plan to provide 242 flats in one 10-storey and two three-storey blocks. It gives the estimated construction cost to be £540,000, and the estimated rentals to be £2 7s. 6d. to £2 17s. 6d. per week. Then the article proceeds to set out the advantages of such an establishment. In the

following morning's edition of "The West Australian", dated the 1st September, under the heading "Explanation Given on Subiaco Flats", I read the following:—

"I was extremely surprised to read in "The West Australian" this morning a statement attributed to me on the Government's plans for building flats at Subiaco," said the chairman of the State Housing Commission (Mr. R. W. Brownlie) yesterday.

"It is true that one of your reporters rang me up on Sunday to check the authenticity of a report that had been published elsewhere, but I had no idea that I was engaging in other than a private conversation. I expected that your report would be attributed to the Minister.

"In point of fact this project did not emanate from the State Housing Commission but is the policy of the Minister and the Government and approved by the Commission. Your report made it appear that the proposal sprang from the State Housing Commission, which it did not. I would be glad if you could make this clear to your readers.

So it seems obvious to me that this is the brain child of the present Minister for Housing Mr. Graham.

Hon. E. M. Davies: A very good one, too.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is debatable.

Hon. E. M. Davies: It would be all right if private enterprise were building them.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If I am permitted to do so I will give my views on the matter and then perhaps, at a later date, the hon. member can take the opportunity to do the same.

Hon. E. M. Davies: This is not your maiden speech.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not ask for immunity from interjections so the hon. member need not worry about that. Later on Mr. Davies can give his views on the matter, but I believe that I am entitled to have some opinion in connection with this proposal. It is obvious that the idea did not emanate from the State Housing Commission or that it is part of the Commission's policy. The State Housing Commission is a representative body but I am sure that this proposal at Subiaco emanated from the Minister for Housing and the Government.

I have given some thought to this matter and, bearing in mind that the capital cost of £540,000 is to be borne by the Government, I have worked out the mean rental of £2 7s. 6d. and £2 17s. 6d. to be £2 12s. 6d. a week for each flat. In other words, the Government would receive a yearly income of £33,020 on a capital expenditure of £540,000 and on a percentage basis that is approximately

6 per cent. gross. I am sure that no business man or organisation would consider a proposition of that nature unless he were using the taxpayers' money.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Landlords have had to put up with that sort of thing for several years.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I should say that maintenance charges on such a project as the Subiaco flats would be about two per cent. and, in addition, we have been told that a manager is to be appointed to look after them. Rates have to be paid and some money will have to be spent for the collection of rents. As the building is to be ten storeys high, there will have to be one or more lifts, and the cost of operating even one lift would considerably reduce the gross figure of 6 per cent.

Hon. C. H. Henning: It would cost about £1,400 a year for each lift.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Obviously, the gross figure of 6 per cent. would be reduced to approximately 2½ to 3 per cent.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: How did you work out a rental of £2 12s. 6d. per week?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I thought I had explained it. The report in the paper says that the rentals are to be from £2 7s. 6d. to 2 17s. 6d. a week. I took the mean of that and obtained a figure of £2 12s. 6d. I think that is a fair assessment, although naturally some flats would be let at a lower figure and some at a higher figure. As an investment—and after all, the Government when spending the taxpayers' money in this way must consider the project from that angle—it is not a good one. An expenditure of £540,000 for 242 flats represents a capital construction cost of £2,281 for each flat.

The economic rent, as calculated by the formula laid down in the Commonwealth-State rental agreement, on £2,230 would be approximately £2 15s. per week. Rather than put 242 families on to 2½ acres of land in Subiaco, with little or no chance of providing proper recreational facilities, it would be better to use some of the land owned by the Housing Commission and build separate houses for all these families. The Minister has already told me, in answer to a question, that the Commission owns a good deal of land. I would say that the very foundation stone of British democracy is the fireside; the basis of our democracy is that each man should be able to live in his own home, surrounded by a picket fence or a hedge, and be able to do as he pleases. It would cost very little more to construct individual houses and we should do our best to persuade families to live in their own homes, where they can show some individuality, rather than case them up in flats.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: A lot of people like living in flats.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not deny that.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: But not people with families.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I believe a man and his wife, as a two-unit family, could occupy a flat.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Business people.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is so; they could be business people. But if the Government intends to build 242 flats for two-unit families, such a policy would be prejudicial to the interests of people who are more entitled to housing. I think Mr. Barker would agree with that.

Hon. Sir Frank Gibson: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As Mr. Barker and I both agree, it is quite suitable for some people to live in flats, but it is not right to rear families in them.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: It cannot be done.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It cannot be done satisfactorily. A young family cannot be brought up satisfactorily unless the children have good clean dirt in which to play. I think all members will agree that dirt is all right so long as it is clean, is on a child and can be washed off. There seems to be some hidden meaning behind the establishment of these flats on 2½ acres of land.

The Minister for the North-West: Rubbish!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Minister says "rubbish".

The Minister for the North-West: Of course it is!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Then may I read these extracts? The following is an extract from "The West Australian" of yesterday and it appeared in the tenders column—

State Housing Commission.

Tenders will be received up to 3.30 p.m. Monday, 14th September, 1953, for the following works:

State Housing Commission.

Tender No. 355/53, Queen's Park: Tenders are invited for the clearing of approximately 54 acres of land in Maniana, Wharf-st. area.

The Minister might say it is rubbish. He no doubt knows what is going to happen in the Wharf-st. area.

The Minister for the North-West: I do not.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will tell the Minister. In that area 331 flats are to be constructed on 54 acres of land. These flats are to be two-unit, three-unit and four-unit flats. In size they are to be five squares, approximately, and each flat will house up to seven people. That is the information given to me, and that is what the Minister for Housing will claim as the acme of perfection in regard to these

flats. Perhaps it is not significant to the Minister, but I believe there is some significance in it.

First of all we find there are 2½ acres of land in Subiaco on which are to be built 242 flats. Now we find that at Queen's Park 300 odd flats are to be erected on 54 acres of land. I opposed the erection of flats at East Belmont which the Government I supported was proposing to erect. If any member likes to go out there with me and see the disabilities under which those people in East Belmont are living, then I am quite sure the Government would not contemplate duplicating those disabilities again. Mr. Barker knows the position. I know he does because in the State elections he went out there to assist me in my campaign.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: And brought you into this House.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. As a matter of fact, he came back and told me he had been there. The hon. member was very honest.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I am always honest.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sure of that. The hon. member knows, however, what those places are like, and I feel sure he will be able to tell the House that the situation and the set of circumstances are not very good.

The Minister for the North-West: Who built them?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Government I supported built them with the help of the State Housing Commission.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It was an Air Force camp.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, it was not. It was virgin land when the Housing Commission took it over and built these flats to hold three-unit or four-unit families. They contain communal wash-houses; there are no playgrounds or recreational hall. In fact, there was nothing at all; and I hope nothing of the sort will be done again.

Hon. G. Bennetts: These communal wash-houses are not good.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I take it from the hon. member's remark that he is not in favour of this.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: I have seen flats built in various parts of the world. I have seen them built in Vienna, in Leeds in England, and if the right type of people are housed in them they are all right.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That might be the hon. member's experience and his opinion.

Hon. G. Bennetts: You do not know who they are until you get them into the flats.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is right. From all over the State complaints are coming in, and there are many Press reports in opposition to the project that the Minister for Housing envisages at Subiaco. In today's paper mention is made of the fact that the Claremont council opposes the flats. Mr. Brownlie himself in his report endeavours to hurriedly dissociate himself and to say it was not the Housing Commission's idea. Money will be provided by the State—it will be the taxpayer's money—and if the rents are placed as low as £2 7s 6d. a week, it simply means that a portion of the taxpayers' money is to be used to provide cheaper rents for a particular section of the community that will be lodged out there.

Personally, I hope it is not too late and that the Government will change its mind on this point. I hope that instead of building these flats it will go out where there is plenty of land and build them there. However, I doubt very much whether the Government will change its mind no matter what I might say on the point. But I do sincerely believe there is some sinister application because of the fact that these flats are to be built. I would like the House to mark my words because I think we might see similar blocks of flats springing up in Maylands. The Minister for the North-West may smile, but if we did see those flats springing up, we would then be able to say that there was something in it after all.

So much for that matter except to draw attention to the fact that the Chief Secretary disclosed to me that the Housing Commission holds 12,400 acres of land at present. The Minister was unable to tell me how many building blocks there were in those 12,400 acres. I appreciate this, however, because roads, recreational grounds, shopping sites, etc. will have to be provided. But there are about 49,600 building blocks, and if we take enough for roads and parks and shopping sites, there would still be adequate space for the Housing Commission to build a block of flats on.

I would like to refer to a question which was asked by a member in another place. It was directed at the Premier and was as follows:—

- (1) Has the Chief Electoral Officer reported to the Minister concerned that from the state of the rolls made up for the triennial election held on the 14th February, 1953, not less than five electoral districts fall short of, or exceed by 20 per cent., the quota as ascertained for such districts, provided for in the Electoral Districts Act of 1947?
- (2) If so, what action has been taken by the Government to comply with the provisions of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947?

The answer the Premier gave to the first question was, "Yes," and to the second question he replied, "The matter is receiving consideration." The following State Assembly electorates are over quota by 20 per cent. or more:—

Canning, Melville, Middle Swan, Wembley Beaches, Albany and Dale.

Those under quota are—

Eyre, Kalgoorlie and Murchison.

That makes nine electorates altogether that are either under or over quota. I would like to refer members to Section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act, 1947, which reads 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 a 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.

That state of affairs has been created. There are now nine electoral districts either under or over the quota. The Chief Electoral Officer has performed his task under the Act by making the necessary report to the Minister concerned. Yet no action has been taken. This is the month of September; the election took place in February. Seven months have gone by with no action having been taken. I think it is about time that the intention of this Act was fulfilled.

Members may recall that this Act was introduced in 1947 by the McLarty-Watts Government and provision was made for administering the measure in what I think was a very fair and equitable manner. That opinion is shared by many people. The whole matter was placed beyond parliamentary or political intrigue and was left in the hands of three independent commissioners, comprising the Chief Electoral Officer, the Chief Justice and the Under Secretary for Lands. Here were three people at whom no one could point a finger. These three commissioners divided the State into electoral districts and provinces which we now have, with

the intention that in the event of a state of unbalance occurring throughout the land in not less than five districts, something should be done to equalise the quota of the people's representation.

I cannot understand the Premier having said that this matter is receiving consideration. It should not be necessary to consider the matter at all. It is laid down in the Act that these things shall be done. The first portion has been carried out by the Chief Electoral Officer and it remains now for the Government to carry out its part. It is unfortunate perhaps that the three seats of Eyre, Kalgoorlie and Murchison happen to be under quota and, upon the surface, it looks as though at least one of these seats must go because there are insufficient electors in those three districts to allow representation of three members in the Legislative Assembly.

In the meantime I suggest that although the people are not being disfranchised, their representation is being affected by reason of the fact that a member in the Lower House has more people and more territory than he can safely look after. The district I represented before I was asked to leave was 9,000 strong in 1950. When we went to the polls in 1953, just three years later, it numbered 15,000 strong. This is a tremendous increase on the original number of electors that were in that district.

Now we have an intention, and I am sure it is there, to provide 300-odd flats on 54 acres of land in Welshpool. If, as is reported to me, it is proposed to fit seven people into each flat, there will be about another 2,000-odd people in the Canning district alone. I suggest that the Government should put into effect what was intended when the Act was brought down.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: That is only your guess. You are assuming that is correct; in all probability, it is quite incorrect.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: On the contrary, it is not my guess. I can read, as I am sure the hon. member can.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: You are reading something into it that does not exist.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: May I point out that Mr. Needham, who was the member for North Perth in the Parliament that passed this Act, thought something of it, because he voted for it.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: He may have done so, but that does not make it right.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There was no need for him to do so. He voted of his own free will and accord. If the hon. member will look at the voting on that measure, he will find the Bill was passed by 27 votes to 23. The Government did not require any vote from Mr. Needham to obtain a constitutional majority.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: That still does not make it right.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am only telling the hon. member that Mr. Needham voted for it and he must have known what he was voting for at the time. I think the hon. member will agree that of all the honest men in Parliament, Mr. Needham was amongst the most honest.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: I agree with that, but I do not agree that your suggestion is correct.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think there is any question about what Parliament intended when this Act was passed; and if the Government does not give effect to what was intended, it should receive the criticism it deserves.

The Minister for the North-West: Who said the Government is not putting it into operation?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not say the Government was not doing so. I am drawing the attention of the House to the fact that seven months have elapsed and we should hear something about the matter.

The Minister for the North-West: It is a long time before the next election.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I know. I am glad the Minister mentioned that point. It is a long time before the next election; but if we wait just before the next election to have a redistribution of seats, we will disfranchise quite a large section of the people. Let us take any electorate: If it is over quota some of its boundary is cut off. Let it be borne in mind that it was intended that this should be done just after an election. If we wait until just before an election the people who are chopped off are disfranchised, because where there is an electorate of 16,000 people and it drops to the original 10,000 or 11,000, the candidate who is endorsed for the seat will naturally centre all his interest and activity on the 10,000 or 11,000 people. That is as much as he could do if he did the job properly. The result would be that he would not worry so much about the other 5,000 or 6,000 people.

The Minister for the North-West: They would not be disfranchised.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I did not mean to say that they would be disfranchised from the point of view of being deprived of a vote.

Hon. H. Hearn: They would not be represented.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is a better expression. I spent a little more time on that matter than I had intended. I would now like to say that I listened with interest to His Excellency's Speech and I am sure members will agree that a most momentous announcement in that Speech concerned the intended visit to Australia next year of Her Majesty the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. I feel certain that every man, woman and child in this country is looking forward with great enthusiasm to the arrival of our Queen and the Duke.

Since listening to the Governor deliver his Speech, I have had an opportunity of studying it further. The Speech was prepared by the Government of the day prior to the opening of Parliament and was given to the Governor to deliver. This year the Speech was very well prepared and I am quite sure that it was an excellent commendation of the previous administration. I think Mr. Lavery confirmed that last night by saying it was a very good Governor's Speech for our party, or words to that effect.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I said it was the best Speech prepared for your party.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Thank you! There is, however, a peculiar characteristic about the Speech this year. From what I am told, it appears that for the first time on record the Government of the day has returned in an amended form the Address-in-reply which it had prepared. I do not quite know the purport of that, but undoubtedly it was done because of an amendment moved in another place by the Leader of the Opposition. An amendment to that amendment was moved by the Premier and carried and now the Address-in-reply has gone to the Governor as amended by the Government of the day. In his Speech, the Governor said—

Business confidence is strong. Employment is high and rapid population growth has continued.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is why we have to have flats.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is why the Government should build houses instead of flats. The Speech refers to such things as the industrial development that has taken place, the expansion of land settlement, agricultural development, the development of war service land settlement and the improvement in the supply of building materials. It mentions that the number of homes built throughout the State last year was 7,730, and that the large production of sawn timber in 1952 made possible a substantial increase in the export of timber. It refers to the progress of the State Brick Works and to the development of water supplies and electricity. All this, I suggest, re-establishes the already known fact that the previous Government did a good job when it was in office.

Not so long ago, when I sat in another place, I used to listen to members who were then in Opposition telling of unemployment, and lack of confidence and of anything that would make good propaganda in connection with the elections that were imminent and that took place in February of this year.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You will hear the same in 50 years' time.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Possibly so; but that does not make it good.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I agree.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As I proceed, perhaps the hon. member will allow me to point out one or two things that have occurred in recent months which bear out my statement that the circumstance is not good. First of all, I would like to have a brief look at the policy speech delivered to the people by the present Premier.

The Minister for the North-West: Did you ever see the reference to cobwebs in one delivered six years ago?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes; we brushed them away during the years we were in power.

The Minister for the North-West: I noticed that in connection with the railways!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Now that the Premier's party is in power, we see an entirely different picture. We see created an era of confidence and prosperity.

Hon. H. Hearn: That is only since February, though.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes! We have seen the New South Wales Minister for Housing, Mr. Evatt—not to be confused with the little doctor—come here recently and contribute an article to the "Sunday Times", after he had paid a visit to Kwinana with our present Minister for Housing, Mr. Graham. He said that the progress which had taken place in that area in such a short time was astounding. I cannot remember his exact words, but he paid a great tribute to members of the Housing Commission, and to its chairman, Mr. Brownlie. He said our houses in Western Australia were well constructed and were of an excellent type, and said other things in commendation of the Commission and the Minister.

The Minister for the North-West: He is not small-minded.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I suggest that he was small-minded. He was small-minded enough to believe that people would be hoodwinked into thinking that the expansion had taken place in the last six months. He said the expansion at Kwinana in the last six months was astounding.

Hon. E. M. Davies: So it has been.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, but the foundation was laid by the previous Administration.

Hon. G. Bennetts: And by assistance from the Labour Government, too.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Nobody can deny the fact that the foundation was laid by the previous Government.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: So were the foundations of the South Fremantle power station laid by a previous Labour Government.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The hon. member can draw red herrings across the trail, but he will not distract me from what I want to say.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: It is not a red herring; it is an actual fact.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: We know that the Housing Commission is efficient, that Mr. Brownlie and his staff are an efficient band of officers. But we must not forget that the present Minister for Housing did not think so some years ago when he moved for the appointment of a Royal Commission into the activities of the very same people of whom he is now the ministerial head. Because he is now administering the department, we have a different picture.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Because "The West Australian" tried to bluff him out of the Ministry, you mean.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think "The West Australian" would have any more chance, if it tried, of bluffing him out of his post than we have of getting him to alter his opinion about the Subiaco flats, and I do not think we have much chance of that.

The Minister for the North-West: What is the difference between the flats here and those in East Perth?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: There is none at all.

The Minister for the North-West: Only the rent. Is that all that is worrying you—the low rentals?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: As I have tried to point out, I do not hold a singular view on these flats. I agree with Mr. Barker that there is no reason why suitable families cannot live in flats; but for Heaven's sake do not let us try to bring children up in flats! If the flats are to be given to the people who deserve them most, they will be given to men with families. Will members agree with that?

Hon. G. Bennetts: Housing Commissions have built flats in all States.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That does not make it right.

Hon. G. Bennetts: I have seen them.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will come shortly to the Commonwealth-State rental agreement and will have one or two very interesting things to say about that. I now want to refer to something that appeared in "The West Australian" on the 23rd January, 1953. It occurred in the policy speech of the then Leader of the Opposition, and is as follows:—

W.A. Cannot Live By Oil.

Mr. Hawke said that publicity now being put forward by the Liberal Party sought to glamourise developments regarding a proposed oil refin-

ery and a proposed steel rolling-mill, both of which were to be established at Kwinana . . .

Mr. Hawke said that there would be a linking up with town planning experts in other States to obtain continually the best advice and assistance relating to town planning activities, and strong efforts would be made to further the cause of town planning throughout Western Australia.

As proof that there was no animosity or hostility between Labour and the B.H.P., arrangements were now being made for him to meet the company's manager in Perth in the near future to discuss the charcoal iron and steel industry suggestion.

We know full well how tenaciously the Labour Party fought this measure in another place, and how Mr. Hawke called on the Premier of the day to make it an election issue. He pointed the bone at me, across the floor of the House, and said, "If you vote for this Bill, you are a gonner." I was a "gonner," but I do not think that it was as a result of that Bill, because the only consideration that defeated me in my Assembly electorate was—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: My going out to Belmont!

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That was a contributing factor, but I received more votes than I expected in that area, perhaps because of the hon. member's visit. What beat me in the Canning electorate was the fact that the Government I supported gave more homes to supporters of the Labour Party than to its own followers. The people who supported the Labour Party got the best end of the stick, and more of the 6,000 people who moved into that area voted against me than for me. I make no complaint about that, or about having been beaten in the Canning electorate. I wish now to draw attention to the question of rail and tram fares, on which subject "The West Australian" said—

The Labour Government would immediately abolish the week-end surcharge on fares now charged by the tramway service, said Mr. Hawke in his policy speech last night.

I would here draw Mr. Barker's attention to the fact that last night he apparently did not know what the policy of his party was when it went to the polls on the 14th February.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Why do you say that?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: When I interjected during Mr. Thomson's speech, and said I understood that the Labour Government was going progressively to reduce rail and tram fares, the hon. member replied, "We did not say that."

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Did we?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. To continue—

Mr. Hawke said that rail and tram fares would be progressively reduced to encourage more patronage in the idea that the more passengers carried per mile travelled the better the financial result, even though the fare for each passenger be lower than previously.

In yesterday's issue of "The West Australian," in spite of the promise that rail and tram fares would be reduced progressively, there appeared the following:—

It was expected that a decision on when there should be an increase in railway fares and freights would be made by the State Cabinet at its meeting next Monday, the Premier (Mr. Hawke), said yesterday. . . .

Further, from the same source we read that no railway lines would be closed or pulled up without the approval of Cabinet and Parliament.

The Minister for the North-West: They cannot be pulled up without such approval.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The report continued—

—following on-the-spot discussions in the district between the Minister for Railways, at least one of the Commissioners, and the local people.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Is "The West Australian" your Bible?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, but it is a reliable paper, and the only daily paper we have which reports such matters. Surely one can rely on it and quote from it!

Hon. G. Bennetts: "The West Australian" has a monopoly and can do as it likes.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: In today's issue of "The West Australian," we read—

The possible discontinuance of three unpayable railway lines was being considered by the Cabinet subcommittee on railways, the Minister for Railways (Mr. Styants) said yesterday.

So far as I can see, there is no reference there to Parliament. To continue—

It was expected that a decision would be reached in about a month, he continued.

We will see whether the Minister brings down a Bill for that purpose. I understand that no railway can be closed down unless a Bill is passed authorising such action.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Would you support a Bill of that kind?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: It would be time to discuss that question when such a measure came before the House. On the following subject I have a great deal to say. Members will recall reading this—

Labour pledges itself to overcome the housing shortage completely in the next three years, Mr. Hawke said.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: There is plenty of the three-year period left.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not say that the Labour Government will not solve the housing problem, but am simply quoting what has been said. I repeat that the hon. member yesterday did not know what his party's policy was.

Hon. G. Bennetts: You do not know what funds are available.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Labour Government has £800,000 more this year to the credit of the State Housing Commission than the Government I supported had in 1951-52. I am pointing out to members that there is more money available for housing now. Mr. Hawke further said—

An expert committee would be appointed to investigate the average rent figures now contained in the basic wages and as related to four and five-roomed houses.

He continued—

Labour was very concerned at the existing high rentals, in many instances more than £3 a week, being charged by the Government for Commonwealth-State rental homes and would seek the immediate co-operation of all other State Governments in a joint approach to the Commonwealth Government to have the amortisation period extended where the weekly rent figure was above £2.

In the meantime Labour would provide some relief to those families not able to pay the highest rentals now being demanded from them by the Government.

I asked the Chief Secretary a number of questions in regard to this matter in order to find out what increases had been made in recent months in Commonwealth rentals. The Chief Secretary gave the answers that had been supplied to him and at the same time rebuked me for asking, during the debate on the Supply Bill, for more information and said that the questions were asked by a member who already knew the answers. It is true that I did know the answer in this case, but I thought it desirable, in order to be able to discuss the matter on the floor of the House, to have the position established. The only way to do that was to ask questions of the Minister so that the information might be forthcoming.

The Housing Commission is and has been operating for some time, to very good effect, in the Manning Park district which is south of Como and has in that area built houses of a type, as Mr. Clive Evatt said, which is extremely good. It was brought to my notice by residents of that area that some of the occupants of State rental homes there were concerned about the purchase of their dwellings. In such cases, where the Housing Commission allots a

home to an applicant, he may make application to purchase the home under either the State Housing Act or the War Service Homes Act or through private finance, within six months from the date of his occupancy and in that case he can purchase the dwelling at cost. However, finance became restricted late last year and early this year, and some of the residents of Manning Park had been waiting for months to be told the purchase price of their houses and to be given the titles to them. At that stage they were receiving those notifications.

There was good reason why they could not be given their titles or the prices of their houses before that, as under the Commonwealth-State rental agreement the prices have to be averaged, and in many cases the Housing Commission could not give occupiers the titles as it did not possess them. When the purchase prices started to come through, those concerned were told by the Housing Commission what their individual figures were and were informed that, provided they took up their options to purchase by a certain date—having indicated that they desired to purchase—everything would be all right.

In view of the restrictions of finance, many of them came to me with their difficulties. I interviewed Mr. Brownlie of the State Housing Commission and put the position to him. He asked me to write to the Minister, which I did. I hope members will bear with me as this matter is important to me and to the people of the State, because it was on questions such as I am about to deal with that the election was decided on the 14th February. Under date the 18th November, 1952, I wrote to the Minister—

This morning I had a discussion with the chairman of the State Housing Commission (Mr. Brownlie) on the question of finance for the purchase of Commonwealth-State rental homes.

I pointed out to him that, originally, the Commonwealth-State Rental Act intended to make available to tenants, who intimated their intention within six months of the date of occupation to purchase the house occupied by them, finance under that section of the Act which provides that a purchase can be made over a period of 53 years upon payment of a deposit of £25.

In the Manning Park section of my electorate, there are quite a number of people who intimated their intention to purchase, within the prescribed period of six months, who have now been waiting any time up to three years for the final contract price to be submitted to them. They are now beginning to receive their final prices which, in the main, they

inform me, are quite satisfactory, but they now reach a stage where they are unable to proceed further due to the financial situation.

As you know, the State has not, at the moment, any money available to finance Commonwealth-State rental homes. The provisions of War Service finance debar these same people from financial assistance due to the provision under War Service Regulations that a house previously occupied cannot be taken as security under the War Service Homes Act, and lastly, private finance—including the Commonwealth Bank—is now very restricted. Where an intending purchaser has been given a price of £2,500 for a house private finance through the Commonwealth Bank is limited to £1,750 which, as you see, makes it necessary for the intending purchaser to provide £750 by way of deposit. This, of course, is completely impracticable from the point of view of the average working man, and the people in my district are now in a most concerned state of mind because, in many cases, notice has been given to them advising them of the purchase price of the house but at the same time, giving these same people a specific date by which completion of the purchase must be made.

Under the provisions contained in a circular sent to tenants some time ago providing for the payment of £25 by way of deposit, and the payment of the balance of principal, interest and disbursements over a period of 53 years,—

That is the amortisation period provided under the Commonwealth-State housing agreement. Continuing—

—it now appears that this provision no longer stands, due as has been said to lack of finance.

I believe that the only possible way in which the difficulties of the people can be resolved is by giving an extension of time purchase to some date in the future, when the State will have money available with which, on behalf of tenants, to re-pay the Commonwealth Government the amount of money involved in the purchase of a home.

I think this matter must be viewed very seriously, and earnest consideration given to the proposition of extending time of purchase; otherwise, the State will be in a position to repudiate its offer to the tenant, and the tenant will have no come-back, nor will he have a home.

I suggest that if the tenant is allowed to continue in occupation, having had his time to purchase extended, and that the economic rent that he is

now paying is calculated in the same way as it is at the moment, then after deducting disbursements for interest, rates, insurance, etc. any balance from the economic rent would be deducted from the principal sum outstanding.

That would simply mean adhering to the terms of a reducible mortgage which any person might arrange with any financial institution in the State. Continuing the letter—

In the meantime, then, if any individual tenant is able to raise the necessary deposit to complete the difference of payment between the amount which the bank will advance and the purchase price of the property, the matter can be satisfactorily completed. On the other hand, when the State comes into possession of further funds then payment could be completed under the Commonwealth-State agreement of purchase over 53 years.

I shall be pleased if you will look into this matter as soon as possible, and let me have a reply.

There is need for quick action in this matter due to the fact that the completion date given to many tenants is drawing near.

The reply I received from the Minister is not as long as my letter. It is dated the 1st December, 1952, and reads—

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 18th November with reference to the purchase of Commonwealth-State rental homes by occupiers, or tenants, in the Manning Park district.

In the early negotiations regarding the sale of these houses to tenants it was envisaged that some finance would be provided under the State Housing Act for occupiers, and the occupiers at that time were informed that finance could be arranged in various ways and finance under the State Housing Act was mentioned.

As you are aware, however, since that date Government finance and provision of Commonwealth Government loan moneys have not been as readily available as when the original advices were sent to the tenants.

The tenant's application, however, firstly for authority to purchase and secondly for provision of State Housing Act finance, will be allowed to continue. In the meantime he will pay the rent as required by the Commission, in which provision is made for progressive repayments of the principal sums involved, and any accumulation of such repayments of principal will be deducted from the capital cost of the building in the event of the tenant desiring to exercise his right to purchase: it must be understood, however, that the period

of amortisation under the State Housing Act is Forty (40) years—whereas loan conditions under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement Act as between the Commonwealth and State Government is Fifty-three (53) years.

The tenants or occupiers of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement Act houses are still competent to raise the necessary finance covering the purchase of these properties from financial institutions, and I am assured that the Commission is now in the position to arrange for the issue of a title in such cases.

If and when the State Government obtains loan funds for lending purposes under the State Housing Act, then those applicants for financial assistance from such source will be notified and every assistance granted to enable them to purchase homes under that Act.

The outcome of those two letters meant that the occupiers of Commonwealth-State rental homes throughout the State who previously had been running the risk of not being able to purchase their homes within the time prescribed, due to lack of finance, were now given an opportunity to do so because the time in which the purchase had to be made was extended. It can be easily realised that if the time for purchase had not been extended, the occupier who desired to purchase his home at a later date would not be able to buy it at cost but at the valuation placed on the home at that time.

Many people came to me and said, "We have advised the State Housing Commission of our intention to purchase the houses we are now occupying but because we are the second or the third occupants we have been informed that we cannot purchase our homes at cost. We must purchase them at valuation." As I have said, there is no doubt that if the occupiers of Commonwealth-State rental homes were given extended time to purchase, it would mean a tremendous saving to them because they would be able to continue with the economic rent they were paying previously. Later, if by chance they were fortunate enough to win a prize in the lotteries or were left a gift by legacy or otherwise or, further, if the State Housing Commission were granted more money, they would be able to purchase their houses at cost. The occupiers of these homes all agreed that this was a fair thing.

The Minister for the North-West: In effect, that meant waiving the six months period altogether.

Hon. L. Craig: Did that extension of time apply to second and third tenants?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: No, it applied only to the original occupant who had signified his intention to purchase his house within six months.

Hon. H. Hearn: But who was not able to finance it.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, because of the lack of finance on the part of occupiers of Commonwealth-State rental homes throughout the State.

The Minister for the North-West: But first the tenant must have signified his intention to purchase.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes, he had to advise the State Housing Commission of his intention to purchase and apply to have the period extended because he could not complete the transaction at that time. That was considered to be reasonable. I was very pleased with the attitude adopted by the Government on this matter and, following the letters that I have read to the House, I prepared a statement and submitted it to the Press because I wanted to assist not only those people in my own electorate but also the occupiers of Commonwealth-State rental homes throughout the State. Further, I considered I had done something worth-while for those people.

Perhaps Mr. Strickland will agree that a worth-while job had been done. The statement I submitted to the Press appeared in the form of an article which I now have in my hand. Mr. Bennetts perhaps might like me to say that it appeared in the "Sunday Times," but that is not so; it appeared in "The West Australian." The article reads as follows:—

Time for Buying Homes Extended.

Because of the inability of prospective purchasers of Commonwealth-State rented homes to receive loans under the State Housing Act, the Government has agreed to extend, where necessary, the time limit for purchase.

This was stated by the Minister for Housing (Mr. Wild) in reply to representations on the subject by Mr. A. F. Griffith, M.L.A.

The Minister for the North-West: On what date did that article appear?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am sorry I cannot give the date. Usually I write the date on the extract I intend to quote, but I have omitted to do so on this occasion.

The Minister for the North-West: It would be just before the election, would it not?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. As soon as I received the letter from the Minister for Housing at the beginning of December, I handed the statement to the Press.

Hon. H. Hearn: It would be the first or second week in December.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. If Mr. Strickland desires it, I can find out on what date it did appear. However, everything went along smoothly. Many people in the Manning Park district particularly made representation to the Government for an extension of the time in which

they could purchase their houses. I was asked by the Manning Park Progress Association to attend a large meeting of residents in order that the matter might be discussed. I went through the pros and cons of the whole subject and read the letter I had written to the Minister and the reply I received from him. Everybody was quite satisfied and grateful for the attitude adopted by the Government.

Following this meeting the State election campaign went into full swing. The usual type of election pamphlets were distributed among the electors in the Canning electorate and on the Wednesday or Thursday night prior to the election, which took place on the 14th February, copies of the pamphlet which I now hold were delivered to occupiers of State rental homes in the Canning district. A large reproduction of a Press article appears on the front of the pamphlet, headed, "Time for Buying Homes Extended." A drawing of a large-sized flatheaded nail appears to be driven through the newspaper extract which, apparently, or supposedly, was to be pinned to my front door. On a red background the words, "Labour nails shameful deception!" appear in block letters and when I read this I thought I had committed murder. Underneath these words the following, in black capitals, appears: "Read the full unchallengeable story of what the Liberals have done to you!"

When I read this I thought, "What on earth is this?" On opening the pamphlet these words appear on the inside—

Don't be deceived by specious statements made by Messrs. Griffith and Wild.

Even then I did not realise the full implication of what Mr. Chamberlain, who had authorised the pamphlet, was getting at, although I had some idea because these words appeared on the front page:—

In the past four years constant attacks have been made by Labour upon the policies followed by the Liberal Government in respect to Commonwealth-State homes. . . . The statement made by Mr. Wild, supported by Mr. Griffith, in "The West Australian" on February 5, 1953, is political dishonesty of the lowest type.

Mr. Griffith naively pointed out that a person would be at a loss to know how to raise the difference between the amount of £1,750, which the Commonwealth Bank would lend, and a final price of, say, £2,500. Mr. Wild, Liberal Minister for Housing, then tries to deceive people into believing that if their application for an extension of time to buy is granted (and there is no guarantee that it will be; the decision will be in the hands of the Housing Commission) a big concession will be granted in that some

portion of the economic rent will be taken off the repayment of principal. This is deception of the most shameful kind.

You are asked to note the only part of your rent that becomes a credit to you in the event of your purchasing one of those homes is that which is referred to as the amortisation content. . .

No special concession can be given to those people who may seek and obtain an extension of time to purchase. You will simply get the same as any other person who has purchased at any other time. The actual benefit accruing to you in respect to the amount you will receive from your rent on purchase of the house is illustrated as follows:— If the capital cost of the house is £2,000, you would be paying a weekly rent of £2 8s. 6d., of which 6s 2d. would represent the amortisation.

How well that ties up with the information that a house that costs £2,250 is let for approximately £2 15s. a week! Not very well, I should say.

In other words, if you had been renting a house of this cost for two years, and then made arrangements for purchase, you would have paid £252 4s. in rent and you would receive a credit of £32 as repayment of principal.

Is there any difference between that and any other type of home-purchase? If a person entered into an arrangement with an insurance company, a building society, a bank or a private financier, or the State Housing Commission on a reducible mortgage say, for £2,000 at 5 per cent. the interest would be £100 for the first year. It would be a little less because most mortgages provide for quarterly rests. If the occupier were paying £2 10s. a week, he would pay approximately £130 a year and, in the first year, after paying £100 in interest, he would have paid off principal to the extent of £30. Nobody can deny the accuracy of those figures. Owing to the way in which the pamphlet represented the position, it seemed as though the action I had taken on behalf of Commonwealth-State rental holders and the fact that I was joined by Mr. Wild, had been a dreadful thing for those people.

Members will appreciate that, on a reducible mortgage, it is only in the later years of the contract that the mortgagor makes much of a hole in the amount of the principal. In the first couple of years, admittedly, the amount is small, but the fact remains that if these people had been given an extension of time to purchase, they would not have had any credit at all. Their rent would have gone down the drain week by week.

Hon. L. Craig: The same applies to conditional purchase land.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is so. Let me quote further from the pamphlet—

Despite what Government candidates tell you, the hard fact remains that the Liberals arbitrarily increased rents and restricted finance for home purchase. They have also refused to take action on the fact that you pay £2 to £3 per week for Commonwealth-State rental homes; yet your basic wage is computed at only £1 6s. per week.

I know that is supposed to be the case, but I suggest that following the distribution of this pamphlet, there was an undertaking on the part of Labour candidates to reduce rents if Labour were returned to power. As was pointed out by the present Premier in his policy speech, that was the intention, but if the present Government knew anything about the Commonwealth-State housing agreement, it must have known that it could not reduce the rents. Consequently, if there was any speciousness on the part of anybody, it was on the part of the person responsible for the compilation of this pamphlet.

In a few moments I propose to deal with the agreement and members will then realise the truth of what I have stated. Another statement in the pamphlet is—

The Liberal Government, supported by Mr. Arthur Griffith, the member for Canning, refused to take any action to adjust this injustice. Without any reference to Parliament, the Liberal Government altered the formula relating to the fixation of the economic rent and, as a consequence, the rent of every house was automatically increased.

That is definitely not true. The previous Government did not alter the formula for fixation of rents for reasons that I shall give. Before doing so, I wish to point out that the arrangement made by the then Minister for Housing was made with the people who did not have the requisite finance to complete the purchase of their homes, and that arrangement is being given effect to by the present Government. Of this I am quite sure. Certain people have made application to the present Government, which has honoured the arrangement that was made. This is quite contrary to the suggestion in the pamphlet to the effect that there was no guarantee that the time would be extended.

Furthermore, the present member for Canning—I have no intention of indulging in personalities because he was doing the job as he thought it should be done—headed a deputation to the Minister for Housing on the question of the rentals of Commonwealth-State rental homes, and I have been informed by one who was in attendance that the present Minister for Housing received the deputa-

tionists courteously but stated he was sorry to say no reduction in the rent could be made. From the answers given to questions asked of the Chief Secretary, we can see that, instead of there being a reduction in rents, there have been increases, and the reason for the increase is that this State, in common with other States, had entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth Government. The agreement was the subject of a Bill that was introduced into the Legislative Assembly in 1945 by the then Premier, Mr. Wise. The agreement was made with and signed by the then Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, Mr. Chifley, and was entered into by the States of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania.

Reverting to this malicious pamphlet, the statement to the effect that the Liberal Government arbitrarily increased the rent is shameful and deceitful. If there was any increase, the same action has been taken by the present Government, and it has been done because of the agreement, and nobody can quarrel about it. Clause 10 of the schedule to the Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement provides—

The weekly rent of dwellings shall be calculated in a manner provided in the First Schedule to this agreement. The amount so calculated is in this agreement referred to as the "economic rent."

The schedule lays down in detail how the rent shall be calculated. Clause 5 of the First Schedule states—

Subject to compliance with the other provisions of this schedule, the housing authority may from time to time vary the economic rent payable in respect of any dwelling.

It was under this provision that the McLarty-Watts Government increased the rents and it is under the same provision that the present Government has increased rents because it was powerless to do anything else. This agreement was entered into by a Labour Premier of this State with the Labour Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, and the terms of the agreement cannot be altered without the approval of all the States. Obviously, neither the State of Western Australia nor any other State has any control whatever over the policy of the Commonwealth Bank.

It is a pity that this pamphlet was distributed amongst the electors because some of them believed its contents. They thought that, if they voted Labour and a Labour Government were returned to office, they would receive a reduction in their rent. Such has not been the case. I know it is a time-honoured custom for a member to say, "I support the motion."

I wish it to be clearly understood that I have no complaint whatever against the electors of Canning for not having returned me for that district. Every member runs the risk of being defeated at some time or other, but I do complain about the manner in which I was beaten, and about the misrepresentation that was indulged in.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Had I been able to time my speech a little better I would have finished before the tea suspension. However, that was not to be. When you left the Chair, Sir, I had almost concluded my remarks. I now say, "Thank you," to members for listening so patiently to me and for allowing me to impart what I felt it was my duty to put before the House, because I do feel that if there was speciousness on behalf of anyone, it was on behalf of the person responsible for authorising this pamphlet. I repeat that on my own account, and on account of the then Minister for Housing, Mr. Wild, there was a conscientious effort to assist the people who were desiring to purchase Commonwealth-State rental homes and who, because of the circumstances which existed at the time, were unable to purchase them.

It was the desire of myself and the Minister to create a set of circumstances by which an extension of time would be allowed whereby the saving to the occupier would be the difference between the cost price and the valuation of the properties which, as members know, would be considerable. The cost of a house sold at valuation is far higher than that of one sold at the cost of erection to the Housing Commission. I made a conscientious effort to save money for the occupants of Commonwealth rental homes, not only in the electorate I represented at the time, but all over the State.

I deplore the fact that the Opposition then saw fit to misrepresent the facts completely and put them before the public in such a way as to allow the people to believe that the action of the Government and myself, as a supporter of it, was to their disadvantage, when the reverse was intended; and this has subsequently been proved by the fact that the present Government is carrying on the undertaking to extend the time for purchase. Therefore I deplore the fact that in election campaigns this type of propaganda should be used.

For my part, I do not complain at all about the fact that a candidate should find a method, through his organisation, of preparing and delivering a pamphlet to electors on the eve of an election so there could be no answer made to it. That was obviously the intent. If a candidate has an organisation good enough to do

that, I say "Good luck to him." Nor do I complain if the facts contained in the pamphlet are true.

The Minister for the North-West: Is that one untrue?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: For two hours I have been pouring out my heart to the Minister.

The Minister for the North-West: You have been weeping, but is that untrue?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I beg the Minister's pardon. There has been no weeping. I should almost ask the Minister to withdraw the remark.

The Minister for the North-West: I withdraw. I have not noticed the hon. member wiping his eyes.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Let us be quite plain on this. There has been no weeping on my account, and members will not find me weeping in regard to any political activity. I do not mind being beaten or advantage taken of me as long as it is done in a truthful manner, but I do take exception when it is done in a malicious and untruthful manner so as to deceive the public. In answer to the Minister, I say that the pamphlet is decidedly untrue.

It is a time-honoured custom for a member speaking on the Address-in-reply to use the words "I support the motion." On this occasion, I have told the House what I feel, and I definitely and emphatically deplore the action of Mr. Chamberlain, the person responsible for authorising the pamphlet. During the campaign the statements made were used with the intent that I have mentioned. I say the Government has not adhered to its election promises, and I say that only time will show that some of the other promises made will not be kept. I thank members for their tolerant hearing.

HON. F. R. H. LAVERY (West) [7.39]: With other members I congratulate the Government on winning the elections and taking over the handling of the State's finances and the carrying on of the Government of the State on behalf of the people, in the name of Labour. I also congratulate Mr. Fraser on holding the office he has risen to. I am sorry that he, with such ability, and so many years in the House to his credit, had not been elevated to it before.

I know that the people in the area Mr. Strickland represents are looking to him in his new office of Minister for the North-West to uphold their wishes and to carry out the pledges made at election time for them by members on this side of the House. I previously met Mr. Griffith in the office of the Secretary for Railways soon after the elections, and I congratulated him on winning. I then wished him well in his future in the House, at the same time telling him

that, personally, I was not happy about his success because I wanted a Labour man to win.

Hon. H. Hearn: You did your best.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Yes. Mr. Griffith will know that although I represent a district in the name of Labour I, like him, represent each and every person in it fearlessly and without favour. I was pleased to hear the hon. gentleman tell us that in the future he will represent the people in the same manner as he did when he was in another House. I consider that anyone elected to this Chamber has a more onerous job than if he were elected to the other place because of the larger area that has to be represented.

This is my second session, and I feel that I have learnt a lot in the 12 months I have been here and have improved considerably. I shall be just as courteous to the members of the Opposition in this Chamber now as they were to me when the position was reversed. I also congratulate Mr. Hall on being the first Labour representative to hold the high office of Chairman of Committees here. The House has been in existence for 60 years, and we must win out sometimes, and at last we have done it. In Mr. Hall the House will have a worthy successor to Mr. Dimmitt.

I also congratulate Mr. Royce on being elevated to the position of Chief Hansard Reporter. At the same time I regret the passing of a dear old gentleman in Mr. Carew-Reid, who was most kind to me in my early months here. Soon after February last I was lucky enough to be invited to go into the country with the Minister for Local Government, and again with the Acting Premier, Hon. J. T. Tonkin, to both Merredin and Albany. I feel that the country members should be taken amongst the secondary industries of the State and that we city members should be taken out into the country areas.

I agree with Mr. Thomson when he says that travel broadens one's mind. The Director of Education accompanied us on the trip to Albany and we visited the Many Peaks area. I agree with Mr. Diver's remarks that the scheme in that area is a national calamity and the sucker growth is hindering development of the properties. The only way to overcome this problem is by hard work, but the settlers are worried about the financial aspect. No-one seemed to have any control over the properties from the time the ground was ploughed and the feed planted until the farmers took over. Consequently the sucker growth was enormous. I am 6ft. 2½in. tall, and some of the growth was taller than that.

One of the members of the party was paying a compliment to the ladies who had provided us with a beautiful afternoon tea. During the course of the remarks one of the settlers said, "You do

not know how lucky you are to get it. All we get is 10s. an acre to clear the suckers." So I hope that the Government will do something to help the farmers in this area because it will cost a good deal of money and a lot of hard work to get rid of this sucker growth and who is going to pay? While in Albany we inspected the new harbour works and the new super works. These projects must be a great incentive to the people of Albany and those who live in the hinterland.

I wish to discuss briefly a number of subjects but I intend to speak at length on railway matters. I was not lucky enough to be able to visit any of the other States during the recess, but I was fortunate in being a member of a party that accompanied the Minister for Railways and Mr. Hall, one of the Commissioners, on a tour of inspection of the Midland Junction Workshops. For 14 years I was employed with the Commonwealth Oil Refineries and during that period I visited the workshops weekly. But during this visit in April or May of this year I was amazed at the alterations that had taken place over the last two and a half years. We were conducted through the workshops by a Mr. Brown who, I understand, is the workshops manager, and it was a lesson to me to see what has been done.

We were shown both the good parts and the bad, and one member of the party raised the question of derailments. Mr. Brown and Mr. Hall had a set of approximately 20 pieces of rails, ranging in length from three to eight feet, laid out for us to see; they were pieces of rails that had broken away from the main lines while trains were travelling over them. Even a schoolboy would be disgusted to think that rails of this type were still being used. On some of them the web part that fits flat on the sleepers was worn away to a thin tissue and with others this section had broken away to such an extent that the dogs would not hold. One section, about 2ft. 4in. long, taken out of the Mundijong line, showed where a complete piece of the rail had broken away and the broken piece was about two inches thick at one end and as sharp as a razor-blade at the other.

I mention these facts because in the report to the Minister for Railways the Commission has gone to a good deal of trouble to point out the bad state of the road-bed. There are one or two small extracts that I would like to quote because they add weight to my remarks. We often hear members saying that while the State's loss was only £500,000 for all other sections of its activity, the railway losses alone were £5,000,000. Those figures alone show the serious position of the department. I quote from page 10 of the railway report for the year ended the 30th June, 1952. It says—

In last year's report the Commission drew attention to the inevitability of further increases in freights and fares despite the additions effected in May, 1951, if the spiral of rising costs continued unchecked. In September, 1951, and again in May, 1952, a statement of Government policy was sought as the position was, and is, one of utmost gravity; the obvious, even if unpalatable solution, to mounting deficits is the raising of charges to bring earnings and operating costs more into line with each other.

In the rehabilitation proposals the aim of the Commission has been firstly to restore the existing system to a state of working efficiency and, secondly, to increase its capacity for handling traffic.

It was evident to me that the senior officers of the department are doing everything possible to rehabilitate the railways and bring them up to a high standard. I would now like to quote a small paragraph on page 11. It reads—

Railway route mileage in Western Australia is high in proportion to its population and some sections must, of necessity, still be considered as developmental. It is perhaps true to say that in the earlier days all lines were developmental and that many have justified their purpose in making the country what it is now, and have added enormously to the wealth of the community. If only a small proportion of improved land values resulting from railway construction were credited to railway accounts, the financial results would be very different.

Other members who have spoken have been critical of the Railway Department and, in some cases, of the administration. Instead of worrying about the past, let us look to the future. I was most impressed with the attempt made by these senior officers of the department to ensure that the administration was brought up to a high standard. In Mr. Brown's office he has a miniature layout of the whole workshops. This is all set out on a table something similar to the Table of the House. I may be wrong as to the figure, but he told me that this model cost a considerable sum of money, approximately £3,000, and from it he can tell what is supposed to be going on in each section of the workshops.

Behind him, on the wall, there is a chart from which he can tell how many painters, plumbers, carpenters, welders and so on are employed in each section, and by 8.15 a.m. each morning he can tell how many men are absent that day. I saw something similar illustrated in an American magazine. Unfortunately, I must admit that absenteeism at the workshops is very

high, and Mr. Brown told me that the information he could obtain from this chart could save the department up to approximately £500 per day. From it he can tell the weaknesses and strength of each section.

Hon. H. L. Roche: There must be plenty of weaknesses if they have so much absenteeism.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I cannot remember the exact number of workers who are absent each day, but I think the figure is about 70 or 80. These men are away for various reasons; some of them are on long service leave, some on annual leave, some on one or two days' sick leave, and some are merely taking the day off to go shopping. I think it would be most interesting for any member to take a trip to the Midland Junction workshops. He would be amazed to see the improvements that have been made. The railway report has a good deal to say about the machine shop and one or two modern wheel lathes have been installed at a cost of £32,000 each. On a panel of about 7 or 8 inches square there is a series of small buttons, and one man, by means of these buttons, can operate each machine.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Who was responsible for all these improvements?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I presume that Mr. Hall and the other Commissioners, including Mr. Brown, would be the brains behind the improvements. They are the people whom I am trying to support tonight. I have been critical about Government departments on many occasions, and thought I knew everything, but actually I knew nothing at all. I am afraid that some of the criticism I have heard during this session in regard to the administrative side of the railways and workshops has been most unwarranted, and that is why I thought I would use this evening to throw a little light on the matter.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You only see the bright side; you want to go out and see the other.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have seen the other side as well. I have been on the road and have not just stayed in Fremantle.

Hon. G. Bennetts: There must have been lack of supervision somewhere for the condition of the rails not to have been noticed.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Again I throw down a challenge in this House. I am afraid that a great majority of the reports that are put in front of us are not read and studied as they should be by members in this Chamber.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: We do not criticise merely on what we get in reports.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have studied this particular report on the Government railways after going into the workshops.

If members also study the report, they will find that the rails in service in this State are well past the years of usefulness. I am sure that Mr. Simpson must have been appalled at times when he was Minister for Railways to see the condition of the road-beds and the rails. I am confident he must have been because I have the highest regard for that hon. gentleman and would say that no Minister had tried to do a better job than the hon. member did when he was in charge of the department. I am not handing out any bouquets either.

Hon. H. L. Roche: If that is not a bouquet, what do you call a half-brick?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: If members who criticise the railways were a little more constructive in their criticism, they would find that the condition of the railways in the last five or six years and up to the present time is due mainly to the fact that they have always had to bear the burden of the carriage of goods to and from the country with the minimum maintenance, because of lack of finance. In fact, this is the view of the Royal Commission. I would like every member to read page 19 of this report. If they did, perhaps my words tonight would not be in vain. On that page is given a very good picture of what is attempted in the very valuable Midland Junction Workshops. Item 23 relates to production control; item 24 to salvage; item 25 to laboratory, and item 26 to metallurgical. I wish to refer to item 24—salvage. I have always been amazed at the enormous amount of what I consider very good secondhand material that lies around in the Public Works Department and elsewhere. It is allowed to rot and waste and is then carted to the dumps. I know a number of men who wanted to buy the secondhand iron from the roof of Parliament House when it was being re-roofed, but the Public Works Department was not in a position to sell that material. I daresay it will be allowed to lie around and rot, and then be carted to dumps. The Railway Commissioners and also Mr. Brown—

Hon. H. L. Roche: Who is Mr. Brown?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I think he is the works manager. He was very concerned about the amount of waste going on in the yards.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: At the Midland Junction workshops?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Yes. He has established a salvage yard and the widening of the activities in this section is sufficient testimony of its usefulness. Section 24 of the report states that the yard gang section was incorporated under the control of the salvage officer, ensuring better co-ordination in material movements and yard cleanliness. In the 12

months under review, nearly eight tons of white lead, 15½ cwt. of zinc, 6 cwt. of lead and 4½ cwt. of piston packings were recovered. Mr. Brown told me that was the first of that type of material recovered over a great number of years. The report continues—

The collection of scrap for foundry use included 153 tons of non-ferrous metals, 1,550 tons of cast-iron and 175 tons of selected steel. At the end of June, 150 tons of cast-iron scrap were broken ready for use, and 450 tons were ready for breaking up. Receipts from the sale of scrap to firms amounted to £21,500, while serviceable and repairable items salvaged for use in workshops and running sheds were valued at £3,750.

Hon. H. L. Roche: If all that had been thrown into the junk-heap, someone should have been sacked.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Since the Commission has had charge of that yard, it has tried to make up for past omissions. I have used that section of the report to show what the position is in regard to the administrative side of the workshops. I cannot speak of the position outside on the road. The value of the work that has gone on in the workshops, however, will not be shown for another five or six years. But the new system that has been instituted of breaking down an engine and repairing and rebuilding it is something which members ought to see. Where it used to take three to five months to take the engine through one end and build it and bring it out at the other, this is now being done in approximately 21 days. I hope that will impress members and convince them that at least in that section of the railways an attempt is being made at rehabilitation and at lowering the cost as much as possible.

I would now like to turn to a reference made by Mr. Baxter concerning sleepers. According to the report of the Railways Commission, it has at present 2,400,000 unserviceable sleepers. In the previous 12 months, 368,937 sleepers were produced in this State, and all except 433 went into the road-bed. That is a long way from 2,400,000. From this report it would appear that the Commissioners seemed to have been more worried about sleepers and the condition of the rails than about rollingstock. We have heard a lot about the proposed increase in railway freights and I would now like to make some reference to it. Speaking for myself, I know that nobody on the Government side is very happy about it. The Government and its supporters are no happier than the people in the country at the prospect of railway freights having to be increased.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The electors will not be happy about it either.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The fact is that the railway system in this State is £5,000,000 down in round figures for the previous 12 months.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: That is due greatly to the impact of the strikes.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: But there is that shortage of £5,000,000. There is no doubt about that, and I do not think there is any member on either side of the House who will not feel that the Grants Commission will want to know the whys and wherefores, and before it makes its grant to this State I feel certain it will put the screws on the Government to do something about a reduction of that £5,000,000. I will be quite candid and say that I have not the slightest idea what the future holds in regard to the increase of freights. But I do know the percentage of freights in this State as compared with those in other parts of the Commonwealth. I ask for your forbearance, Mr. President, and the only reason I mention it is that the statement was made by a member in another place that the railway freights in this State were higher than in any other part of the Commonwealth.

I have before me the comparative freights to August 1953 supplied by the Commissioner of Railways. In this State there is a telescopic freight system up to 150 miles. Over 200 miles the rate decreases. I will quote the figures for the 150 miles first and those for the 300 miles later. The Commonwealth Railways are not included in this table because they have a setup of their own. The States of New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland are known as the standard States so far as railways are concerned. Here are the freight rates. In Western Australia, for manure—that means super—up to 150 miles the rate is 28s. 11d. per ton; in South Australia it is 20s. 6d.; in Victoria 26s.; New South Wales 25s. and Queensland 29s. 6d. The freight over 300 miles would be—Western Australia 40s. 5d.; South Australia 28s. 3d.; Victoria 40s. 10d.; New South Wales 33s.; Queensland 44s. 6d.

Hon. H. L. Roche: You have not got much to boast about there.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: That is so, but they average out well over all the States. Miscellaneous goods include things like bricks, iron and so on.

Hon. A. L. Loton: And bulldust!

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Over 150 miles in Western Australia the freight is 28s. 11d.; South Australia 51s. 3d.; Victoria 61s. 2d.; New South Wales 60s. and Queensland 48s. 9d. I will now give the cost for 300 miles in the miscellaneous group. In Western Australia it is 40s. 5d.; South Australia 72s.; Victoria 92s. 10d.; New South Wales 87s. and Queensland

70s. 8d. I presume I have something to skite about there! Other figures are as follows:—

State.	Grain.	"A."	"B."	"C."	"I."
150 Miles.					
W.A.	s. d. 28 11	s. d. 47 11	s. d. 63 9	s. d. 85 2	s. d. 109 11
S.A.	34 9	59 6	78 6	118 0	131 3
Vic.	45 2	73 5	98 0	132 9	151 4
N.S.W.	74 0	70 0	100 0	140 0	169 0
Qld.	48 9	63 5	107 0	....	143 10
300 Miles.					
W.A.	s. d. 40 5	s. d. 60 6	s. d. 83 1	s. d. 114 4	s. d. 161 6
S.A.	42 3	90 0	120 5	191 9	220 6
Vic.	58 0	116 2	149 11	211 2	249 6
N.S.W.	88 0	102 0	145 0	203 0	264 0
Qld.	70 9	93 8	167 1	....	235 7

Hon. A. L. Loton: Do the same class of goods come under the same classification in each State exactly?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Yes.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Are the same goods enumerated in those classifications?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have these figures from the Commissioner and I presume he would not give wrong classifications. I have to accept his word. Figures for Class 2 goods are as follows:—

State.	160 Miles.	300 Miles.
Western Australia	s. d. 149 11	s. d. 210 9
South Australia	185 3	320 0
Victoria	187 7	323 5
New South Wales	205 0	316 0
Queensland	270 8	476 4

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you say that the figures you are giving us justify an increase in freights in Western Australia?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I do not say that an increase is justified in anything, but I am giving figures to refute a statement by a member in another place who

declared that freights in Western Australia were higher than those anywhere else in Australia. I am proving that he was entirely incorrect. Here are freights for the transport of cattle and sheep—

State.	150 Miles.		Per 4-wheeled wagon.	
	Cattle.	Sheep.	Cattle.	Sheep.
Western Australia	£ s. d. 8 11 8	£ s. d. 9 13 2	£ s. d. 16 0 0	£ s. d. 16 0 0
South Australia	16 0 0	16 0 0	14 19 2	14 19 2
Victoria	14 19 2	14 19 2	20 16 0	20 16 0
New South Wales	20 16 0	20 16 0	13 7 5	13 7 5
Queensland	13 7 5	13 7 5	....	....
300 Miles.				
State.	Per 4-wheeled wagon.		Cattle.	
	Cattle.	Sheep.	Cattle.	Sheep.
Western Australia	£ s. d. 13 15 0	£ s. d. 15 10 4	£ s. d. 26 5 0	£ s. d. 26 5 0
South Australia	26 5 0	26 5 0	27 8 10	27 8 10
Victoria	27 8 10	27 8 10	31 3 0	31 3 0
New South Wales	31 3 0	31 3 0	22 7 5	22 7 5
Queensland	22 7 5	22 7 5	....	....

Those were ton rates. I would draw attention to figures relating to groceries, which are vital to any person, be he in Darwin or in Mr. Bennetts' glorious town of Esperance. These figures are taken from a comparative schedule of commodity rates per ton as at August, 1953, and are as follows:—

State.	160 Miles.		300 Miles.	
	Groceries.	(small quantities.)	Groceries.	(small quantities.)
Western Australia	s. d. 109 11	s. d. 131 3	s. d. 187 7	s. d. 205 0
South Australia	131 3	187 7	205 0	270 8
Victoria	187 7	205 0	270 8	....
New South Wales	205 0	270 8	....	....
Queensland	270 8	....	....	....
300 Miles.				
Western Australia	s. d. 161 6	s. d. 220 6	s. d. 323 5	s. d. 316 0
South Australia	220 6	323 5	316 0	476 4
Victoria	323 5	316 0	476 4	....
New South Wales	316 0	476 4	....	....
Queensland	476 4	....	....	....

Other figures in the schedule are as follows:—

Miles.		Super-phosphate.	Bricks.	Wheat.	Timber.	Building Board (Fibro Plaster, Asbestos, etc.)	Bar Rod and Plate Steel.	Machinery (unpacked).	Wool.*	Drapery.
		(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Truck-load).	(Small quantities).
150	Western Australia	s. d. 28 11	s. d. 28 11	s. d. 28 11	s. d. 47 11	s. d. 47 11	s. d. 63 9	s. d. 85 2	s. d. per ton, 85 2	s. d. 187 5
	South Australia	20 6	51 3	34 9	59 6	59 6	59 6	155 3	13 8	185 3
	Victoria	26 0	61 2	47 1	48 7	73 5	93 0	132 9	20 4	187 7
	New South Wales	28 0	69 0	48 0	60 0	60 0	100 0	100 0	23 0	205 0
	Queensland	29 6	48 9	48 9	63 5	107 0	107 0	143 10	†	270 8
300	Western Australia	40 5	40 5	38 0	80 6	80 6	83 1	114 4	s. d. per ton, 114 4	s. d. 263 5
	South Australia	28 3	72 0	42 3	90 0	90 0	90 0	320 0	23 8	320 0
	Victoria	40 10	92 10	60 5	73 9	118 2	149 11	211 2	27 1	323 5
	New South Wales	34 0	87 0	68 0	87 0	87 0	145 0	145 0	41 0	316 0
	Queensland	44 6	70 9	70 9	93 8	167 1	167 1	235 7	†	476 4

† Special rates point to point only.

* Wool—approximately 7 bales to the ton.

Yet we have a member say that freights are dearer here than in the Eastern States! Those are the figures produced by Mr. Hall and signed by him as Commissioner of Railways, and I have no doubt that he would produce only figures that could not be disputed.

I believe that the present Commission is doing a good service to this State, inasmuch as it is starting its rehabilitation work at the right end—the workshop end. Up to the present, rails have been laid in lengths of 50 ft. and 60 ft. The department now has a new end-welding plant and is able to lay rails in lengths of 220ft. Special trucks are being built to take out these rails for laying. Members can imagine what a saving that is to the department and to the State.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Would you say the railways were over-administered?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I would not be in a position to say that; but having seen what is taking place at the workshops, I would say that the staff is working as efficiently as any railway workshops staff in the world. It is really wonderful what is being done; and I suggest to members that if they have three or four hours to spare and would visit the workshops, the time would be well spent and they would perceive that a definite attempt is being made by the Commission to reduce expenses and running costs. Of course, it has to be remembered that since the last increase in freights there has been an increase of over £3 in the basic wage. What members may not have realised is that each one-shilling rise in the basic wage adds £30,000 per annum to the wages bill; and since May, 1951, when the last increase in freights was made, by a previous administration, the basic wage has gone up approximately £3.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Do you think that people who are compelled to use the railways should carry that additional expense?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have my personal opinion about—

Hon. A. L. Loton: I am asking for your personal opinion.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I have my opinion regarding transport. I believe that there is room in this State and in Australia for every type of transport whether it be sea, road, air or rail transport. What is required is co-ordination of transport. We must see that we do not have a transport board just to prevent the railways from going out of business, but one that will provide for transport services of all descriptions, capable of adequately serving the needs of this wide and scattered State. Whether we like it or not, road transport has its place as much as any other form of transport.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Any increase in freights would have a bad effect in country areas.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Before any line is pulled up road transport should be tested in the area for a 12 months' period so that the figures supplied by the Auditor General could show us which form of transport was better suited to the area concerned and the industries established there, whether secondary or primary. Mr. Griffith tonight told the House what democracy is and I say that democracy cannot function without transport, which is the lifeblood of any nation. Even our aborigines had a system of transport before the white man came to this country.

I think Mr. Craig would agree that road transport would not be as economical a means of moving a large body of cattle from one part of the State to another as would the railways. However, the road transport which did so much for the country in the handling of wheat and other freight during the war period should not be now simply cast aside. The men engaged in that industry did good service to the State and the Commonwealth and they should not now, with their vehicles, be thrown on the scrap heap. I think it is the duty of the Transport Board to see they are given work for their heavy trucks. Many of these men bought vehicles costing £6,000 or £7,000 and by the time they had finished the great work they did for the State during the critical period to which I have referred, many of them had to renew their machines, the result being that they are now left with a great load of debt and no means of livelihood.

Even those who financed the purchase of these heavy road transports will not foreclose on them as they could not realise the amount owing if they did so. I appeal again to the Government or the Transport Board to provide work for these hauliers—there are over 1,000 of them—as there must be plenty of suitable jobs for them in this State. One report that I have before me shows that the tonnage of wheat carried by road last year was 94,000 tons less than in the previous year, yet it cost £98,000 more to transport. A comparative figure alongside shows that if the wheat had been carried by rail instead of road, the freight would have been £167,000 less, as against the increase of £98,000 due to road transport. These figures are the reason I contend road transport should be tried for 12 months before railways are pulled up. In the report on the Government tramways and ferries it is shown that the working expenses as a percentage of earnings in the case of the trams in 1952 were 97.12, for trolleybuses 112.59; and for motorbuses, 88.68. That indicates that in the metropolitan area the Government-operated motorbuses were the cheapest form of public passenger transport.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: That is because of the operation of one-man buses. Apart from that, the trolley and diesel buses are almost identical as regards cost of operation.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Nothing is shown in this report in that regard.

Hon. G. Bennetts: There is only one man on a diesel bus as against two on a tram.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: In the report of the Department of Native Affairs it is apparent that the responsible people in all parts of the State are asking for houses to be provided for natives as that would go a long way to alleviating much of their distress. In his report for the year 1951, at page 6, the Commissioner of Public Health, Dr. Henzell, under the heading, "Health of Native Population" says—

The health of the native population is inevitably bound up with the conditions under which they are housed. Since the war ended in 1945 20,190 houses have been constructed in this State, almost all of these in the southern part of the State. It is estimated that the native population of the South-West part of the State is about 4,000 which is approximately 0.7 per cent. of the total population. It is a fact that no native has been provided with a house since 1945. If natives were to have their share of housing accommodation in proportion to their population, they would have received 0.7 of the houses which have been erected in the State or 141 houses. It may be considered a national reproach that their housing needs have not been met in any way whatsoever.

The present approach to our native question is a step in the right direction and the Commissioner of Public Health has hit the nail on the head just as he did in a previous year's report, by saying that housing is the thing most required to help our natives achieve a better standard of living. In this report, at page 55, appendix 9, under the heading, "Accidents" appears the following:—

In the year ended June, 1951, 12,022 bed-days were occupied by traffic accident cases in the Royal Perth Hospital. With a 10 per cent. wastage of beds in turnover cases this represents 37 beds of the hospital's total of 514 beds permanently occupied by traffic accident patients. At 72s. per bed-day the annual cost of their hospital care is over £43,000.

I agree with one of our magistrates who said recently that two-thirds of the traffic accidents are caused by selfishness. I compiled some figures which showed that in the last year there were 11,633 prosecutions in our courts for traffic accidents or an average of 72 per court sitting day in this State. Notwithstanding drink or any other excuse that can be made, two-

thirds of those accidents were caused by people not keeping their minds on what they were doing. A bus driver must watch for the stops to set down or pick up passengers and for the traffic both ahead of and behind him and his mind is trained in that way, while the motorist who does not drive except perhaps to take his wife or someone else out in the evening, does not keep his attention focussed solely on his driving.

I commend the Fremantle City Council and the National Safety Council on the installation of the four lights that have been erected at the dangerous intersection at the corner of Carrington and South-sts., Fremantle, where all the heavy transport at present goes through to Kwinana. Those lights are now working day and night and all the bus and transport drivers who pass that intersection say that if there were much more of such lights they would awaken the people to the danger of intersections such as that.

On behalf of the members of the Transport Workers' Union in this State I wish to convey their appreciation of the work of the Police Traffic Branch. Many of the members of that union have to negotiate vehicles in and out of the narrow lane-ways about the city where the traffic is congested all day long. Those transport workers have asked me to request the Commissioner of Police to compliment his men on the assistance that they have given to the drivers of heavy transport in this State.

In the Governor's Speech there are many matters with which the Government has shown that it intends to deal in a realistic manner. This applies especially to agriculture. I commend the Government on adopting such an attitude because I consider that, despite the publicity that has been given to the activities that are now taking place at Kwinana, and the proposed erection of a steel rolling mill for the B.H.P. company, primary industries should still take pride of place in this State.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The previous Administration set a good example to the Government.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The work that the Labour Government has done in previous years to promote agriculture in this State has never been questioned and the benefits obtained cannot be fully measured. No one can deny that fact.

On Wednesday, the 12th August, in company with other members of this Parliament, I attended a children's orchestral concert in the Capitol Theatre. Like other members, I was the guest of Mr. Basil Kirk of the A.B.C. He pointed out to me that the cost of conducting State orchestral concerts in this State was £21,000 when the State Orchestra was formed, but that this year it will increase

to £51,000. That cost is subsidised by the Government contributing £5,000, the Perth City Council £500 and the various road boards £500 between them, making a total subsidy of £6,000.

At the children's concert I attended 1,800 girls and boys participated and I remarked on their exemplary behaviour. On hearing this, Mr. Basil Kirk said, "I have travelled the Commonwealth many times and attended numerous children's concerts, and there is no doubt that these children are a credit to their parents and teachers. Their behaviour is outstanding." The total number of children who attend the concerts annually is 20,000 or 22,000, and Mr. Kirk informed me that within the next three years 40,000 children will be participating. I would also point out that 67,000 adults have attended concerts that have been held at intervals in this State. It is pleasing to know, with all our worries and troubles, that the children of this State are setting a good example and I consider that the work of the State orchestra is proving of great benefit to them.

I will now refer to a few matters that affect my own Province. It must have been gratifying to those members who visited Kwinana recently to be able to inspect and appreciate the wonderful progress that has been made in that area following the initial establishment of this enormous project by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Coy. There is no doubt that it will eventually prove to be one of the most promising enterprises this State has ever seen. The people in the Medina area have very few troubles except in regard to resumption of land. The Lands Resumptions Office has made certain offers to the owners of land in that area, but they are not comparable to present-day prices.

As a result, those affected consider that a legal tribunal should be constituted to which they could make appeals. They do not desire a tribunal with a departmental head as chairman. They consider that the chairman of such a tribunal should be a member of the judiciary. With that object in view, a deputation waited upon the Minister for Works requesting him to have such a tribunal appointed. There are many people at Kwinana who have small and modest houses on their own holdings and although members may be of the opinion that they are not very elaborate, the owners have their hearts and souls in their homes. They realise that they will have to be evicted from their present holdings, but they consider that the compensation that is being offered to them is out of all proportion to the value of their premises. Also, they believe that they have no alternative but to appeal from Caesar unto Caesar.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Compensation granted as a result of resumption has always proved to be harsh.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: The Jandakot district is developing extremely rapidly since the Kwinana activities commenced and the same applies to all the districts right through to Armadale. Because of this development, the Jandakot people are endeavouring to have electricity provided in their area. The electricity mains run right through to Armadale and Mr. Edmondson, the General Manager of the State Electricity Commission, has advised that to extend the electricity mains to Jandakot would cost £5,000. Members may have noticed that the State Electricity Commission made a profit of £46,640 last year. The sum of £5,000 to provide electricity to the Jandakot district to serve at least 20 to 30 homes would be well spent. These people have been denied this amenity for many years, but now that the district is developing I consider that the S.E.C. could well give the matter some attention. I realise that that Commission is performing excellent service in the country areas, but I make that appeal on behalf of the Jandakot residents, although I know that Mr. Davies has already made a similar appeal.

There is another matter, which may concern the Town Planning Commissioner. In the Fremantle Road Board area there is some University land which is known as Cockburn Location No. 550. The University is anxious to sell it and the Fremantle Road Board desires to acquire it, but apparently there is some hold-up on the part of either the Town Planning Commissioner or the Lands Department. I suggest to the Minister for Town Planning that he take steps to overcome this impasse in order that further production may be fostered in that area, because the Fremantle Road Board desires the land for that purpose.

There is a serious problem developing in the Kwinana area at the moment. The residents of that district have enjoyed the privilege of owning firearms in order that they may engage in duck-shooting or other forms of hunting, but since the activities at Kwinana have become so pronounced the people in the districts right through to Mundijong and Armadale have been restricted in their hunting expeditions because most of the land has been fenced off. It is now very disheartening to witness motorists driving along that road with rifles hanging out the sides of their cars; also, one often sees a motor cyclist with a pillion passenger holding a rifle at the ready to fire at anything that may come in sight. I therefore wish to draw the attention of the Commissioner of Police to this alarming situation. Whereas 12 months ago that area was a huntsman's paradise, it has now become a thickly populated settlement and the actions of such irresponsible people constitute a great danger.

There is another item to which I wish to refer. At the proposed site of the wharf that is to be built for the Broken Hill Pty. Coy. there is a rocky bank that will have to be dredged in order to provide an entrance to the wharf. The cost of this dredging will be considerable. In the opinion of the Fremantle harbour pilots it is not necessary to spend a large sum of money on the work. They believe that it is possible to pilot the ships around Jervis Point into a clearly-defined five-fathom channel. The week before last they pointed out to me that if the Government intended to spend any money on the dredging of that rocky bank to provide an entrance to the B.H.P. wharf, it would be money wasted because there is already an excellent channel between the coastline and the site for the proposed wharf. I have inspected maps of the area and have discovered that there is a distinct channel shelving away to 11 fathoms. Therefore, I suggest to the Minister that before approval is granted for the expenditure of that money to dredge the bank he should seek further information from the pilots I have mentioned, because they consider that such expenditure is not warranted.

Another matter I wish to mention is one that ought to give opponents of price-fixing sound reason for giving second thought to their attitude. A few weeks ago a serious accident occurred at Three Springs and a young man and a young woman were taken to Geraldton hospital. Unfortunately, both of them died of their injuries. The bodies were brought back to the city for interment. Now if this is not a case of extortion, I have never known of one. The undertaker at Geraldton, named A. Pindar, brought the two bodies in one utility to Perth, and I am sure members will be astounded when I quote his charges.

For supplying the casket for the late John R. Clyne and transporting the body to Perth, he charged £73. For a similar service for the deceased young lady, whose name I have not permission to mention, he charged £85 17s. 6d. The funeral charges by the local undertakers for the burial of Mr. Clyne amounted to £25 18s. 6d., bringing the total to £98 18s. 6d., while for the young lady's funeral the local undertakers charged £28 19s. 8d., bringing the total for her funeral to £114 17s. 2d. Thus the total cost of bringing those two bodies to Perth for interment was over £210. The local undertakers' charges were as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Funeral notice, 10 lines	1	10	0
Death notice, 7 lines	1	1	0
Conducting funeral, supply hearse and coach	15	0	0
Cemetery fees and purchase of grave	8	7	6
	<u>25</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>6</u>

The Geraldton undertaker's account for the lady was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Casket	35	0	0
Telephone		17	6
Road Cartage	50	0	0
	<u>85</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>6</u>

The Perth undertakers' charges amounted to £28 19s. 8d.

Hon. H. Hearn: Where did the accident occur?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: At Three Springs.

Hon. H. Hearn: Then the injured persons had to be taken to Geraldton.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Yes, but both were alive when they reached the Geraldton hospital. The position is that £50 was charged for one and £47 for the other victim, a total of £97, simply for the conveyance of the bodies to Perth, exclusive of the charge for the caskets. Mrs. Clyne is a widow receiving assistance from the Child Welfare Department, and I spent two hours on the telephone in an endeavour to get the body of Mr. Clyne brought to Perth at the cheapest rate. The Midland Railway Coy. quoted £23 each, and the airways people £10 each for transporting the bodies to Perth. The local undertakers did their best to get the Geraldton man to reduce his charges to a reasonable figure, but he refused. I think his charges were scandalous, but what can be done, I do not know.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Have the accounts been paid?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: Neither account has yet been paid in full. Before Pindar would leave the bodies in Perth, he insisted on receiving cash from the Perth undertakers, Prosser, Scott and Coy. They argued for nearly two hours in the hope of getting the Geraldton man to reduce his charges, but he would not knock off a shilling. This is a case in which some authority should intervene because it is an instance of extortion in its worst form.

Reference is made in the report of the Commissioner of Police to juvenile delinquency. He reported that about 2,500 cases were dealt with last year, involving children who had been guilty of all sorts of mischief, and expressed the opinion that much of the trouble was due to drink. I agree that drink has a lot to do with it, but I also believe that some of the pictures that kiddies witness in the theatres, supposed to be suitable for children, are of such a nature that some investigation should be made.

Last night the "Daily News" reported that a play in New Zealand had been taken off the air, the reason being that the story ended by representing a person entering a place and smashing all the

pictures of coloured people. On the following day, children went to the art galleries and poked the eyes out of the paintings of figures of Maoris hung there. Something along the same lines is happening here.

In an American comic paper there was published a story in the form of a series of pictures the last one of which depicted the limb of a tree so shaped as to outline a word as low as any one could use. That is the type of literature being provided for children in this State. Mr. Sleeman and I waited on the Minister for Education in regard to this matter, and I believe he intends to approach the authorities in the Eastern States with a view to getting the importation of such publications prohibited. Our children are not being given a fair chance, owing to some of the pictures that are being screened and are being taught ways and means of committing small offences. I thank members for their patient hearing and support the motion as amended in another place.

HON. C. H. HENNING (South-West) [9.10]: With other members, I should like to join in congratulating Mr. Fraser and Mr. Strickland upon their appointment as Ministers. Their tasks are extremely responsible, and by their actions and remarks, they can exert a decided influence upon the future of the State. I hope that when the time comes for them to hand over their duties to their successors, they and all of us will be able to say that Western Australia has enjoyed a continuation of the prosperity that has been experienced in the last few years.

I congratulate Mr. Hall upon his appointment as Chairman of Committees. We have not yet seen him well and truly in action, but I feel sure that before the session is over, he will have suffered many headaches. I congratulate Mr. Griffith upon his return, and, after hearing his speech this afternoon, I am satisfied that he will prove to be a decided acquisition to this House.

As regards the Royal Visit, to which everyone is looking forward, I have one regret, namely, that so little time can be spent by the visitors in the country. Nevertheless, several country centres are to be visited, and I hope that the Government will make every endeavour, not only in Perth but also in the country, to ensure that as many schoolchildren as possible are given an opportunity to see Her Majesty.

I was pleased to read in the Speech that the technical staff of the Department of Agriculture has been doubled in the last few years, and I think credit is due to the late Hon. Garnet Wood for the excellent work he did during his term of office. Not only has the technical and professional staff been increased, but additional research stations have been opened. Not a great deal of money has

been forthcoming for those stations, but even with the limited amount of funds available, excellent work is being done. No matter how short loan funds may be, I hope that those stations will not be starved financially, because they are doing exceptionally good work.

One thing I may mention which is saving the farmers and the State many thousands of pounds. I refer to the difficulties experienced in getting cows in calf at the desired time. It has been discovered that a solution of superphosphate mixed with the feed can be used with the greatest success to ensure that the cows conceive at the time desired.

Reference was made by Sir Charles Latham to the fact that over one-half of the population of the State is concentrated in the metropolitan area. While we all deplore the drift to the city, the difficulty is to know how to overcome it. Some method may eventually be evolved, but the problem seems to be extremely difficult of solution. We should recognise that the drift to the city can occur only when the primary industries are functioning properly, because upon their shoulders devolves the duty of feeding and maintaining the city and producing wool and the necessary foodstuffs, including cereals, for export overseas so that their value may be returned to us in materials that we require.

In previous speeches on the Address-in-reply I have referred to the necessity for extending the dairying industry in this State. I notice in His Excellency's Speech that portion dealing with the proposed opening up of 1,000 new dairy farms. In view of the position of the dairying industry today, I sincerely hope that this scheme will not be proceeded with. Rather than the opening up of new country for dairying, I would like to see the consolidation of the farms that are already in existence. When I say I do not want to see the 1,000 farms proceeded with, I am speaking from the point of view of Government assistance. I would not like to see those who are desirous of starting off on their own deprived of the opportunity of doing so. Here I refer particularly to the sons of farmers in dairying areas. It is frequently said that if we do not give these boys a chance, we are accentuating the drift to the city which we all deplore.

We in Western Australia are far from self-supporting as far as dairying is concerned. Apart from processed milk and processed or dried dairy-based foods, we are importing considerable quantities of other commodities, such as 300 tons of Cheddar cheese and 600 tons of processed cheese, none of which is made in Western Australia, and 60,000 cases, or 1,500 tons of butter. I think there is still room for increased production and consolidation of existing dairy farms. I have noticed in the Press quite a number of references to what are considered the rather high un-

improved capital values that have been placed on certain dairy properties after lapses, in some cases, of 20 years. I have heard of their being doubled, and of one or two being trebled.

Hon. L. Craig: Mine has been increased four times.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: That is very light indeed: it is nothing in 20 years. If anyone likes to go to the Harvey Road Board office, he will see that since 1948 the capital value of land there has risen tenfold. The taxation value of a small block of 10 acres of land has risen from £70, unimproved value, to £700 last year. That, of course is caused by the sales of adjoining properties. I think the Taxation Department should take into consideration the types of sales that have caused these high prices. In certain instances, a man might want to square off his place and so would not object to paying an extremely high price because of the definite purpose he had in view.

Then we have the case of the new Australians. Many of these people have one view in life—a laudable one—and that is to own some land, which they love, and they will do anything to get the country they consider suitable. That is one of the big reasons why land has gone up tenfold in the Harvey district in the last 4½ years. We can go 20 miles away and find land equally productive, but it has not been sought after by the new Australians because it was mostly taken up in small blocks years ago. The valuation of that land has not gone beyond £23, whereas the values in Harvey have jumped to £70 per acre. It may be said that these values are not used to any great extent, but they can be used and have been used in the past by road boards and the Government for the purpose of vermin tax.

All the land I have mentioned is in the irrigation area and, while there may be rabbits on the fringe of the irrigation area, they will not live within the area where water is used. These people are paying easily the highest vermin tax of anyone in the State. In conjunction with the whole of the South-West, we have a decided problem in connection with rabbits. The irrigation area is small and the few hundred in it are an infinitesimal portion of all those in the South-West. I believe the rabbit problem in the South-West is different from what it is along the Great Southern and in the wheat-belt and through the northern areas, owing to the large extent of the forestry district, the numerous permanent creeks running through the area, and the longer rainfall season. It is the timber in particular which makes the rabbit so difficult to control.

While I admire the work of the Agriculture Protection Board, I would like to see consideration given to the inclusion on it of a representative of the South-West Province. Some two years ago, when

the late Mr. Garnet Wood was Minister for Agriculture, I said to him that a representative of the Department of Agriculture who was concerned with production should be on the irrigation commission to bring the personnel into line with what it was when the commission was formed by the late Mr. McCallum 18 or 19 years ago. Mr. Wood said he would give the matter consideration. Unfortunate circumstances have meant that up to date nothing has been done. Shortly—this year, in fact—one of the Public Works members on the commission will retire owing to age. I hope that when the question of a successor comes before the Minister, he will consider appointing someone from the production side of the Department of Agriculture. I am not saying that the present member from there is not a good member, but his main concern is the distribution of water on the property. The function of the Public Works representative is to ensure that the water gets to the property itself. The production side, as far as the Government is concerned, is not represented at the present time.

I would be remiss if I did not mention dairying generally, particularly as there was quite recently—and there still is—a tremendous amount of dissension in the dairying country owing to the fact that the price of butter was not increased for the period which commenced on the 1st July last. Members know that the Federal Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, Mr. McEwen, announced that no increase would be made in the price of butter and cheese, and that he had accepted a recommendation to that effect approved by the advisory board because it was considered that was in the best interests of the dairying industry.

It is only a little over a year since Mr. McEwen addressed a meeting at Busselton of those concerned with dairying. It was on the 20th July last year. Some 400 people were present at the meeting, and they all went away, after hearing the Minister speak, honestly convinced that for the next five years at least they were going to get the cost of production. They have not got it, and we have read that the president of the Australian Dairy Farmers' Federation, Mr. Norton, has accused the Minister of violating the promise he gave to the dairying industry last year. How have they got the idea that a promise has been broken? In the first place, I would like to quote from the remarks made by Mr. McEwen at the meeting at Busselton. He said—

What I want to make clear is that the subsidising of the Australian consumer has nothing to do with stabilisation of the dairying industry and should not be mixed up with it. It is a completely separate business, and it is not the Government's business to tell dairy farmers, or any other

producers to sell their commodity in Australia at less than the cost of production. If there is anything in the country which prevents him from getting it, so far as I am concerned, he can export his product and benefit from the stabilisation which he has built up to assist him in getting this production cost.

The stabilisation fund is being called on today. Following that meeting, a Bill was introduced and an Act finally passed which guaranteed a price based on the cost of production for all butter and cheese consumed in Australia, plus 20 per cent. of what was sold overseas. What the farmer did not realise at the time was that the section of the Act dealing with the price used the word "based." I presume that if the cost of production was, say, 5s., and the farmer got 4s., he was still getting a price based on the cost of production. But when we read the remarks of the Minister in dealing with the Bill, we find it is no wonder that the average producer considered he was going to get his full costs. When the Minister spoke to the Bill in the Commonwealth Parliament he said—

Briefly stated, these proposals are that for the period ending the 30th June, 1957, dairy farmers will be assured in respect of butter and cheese sold in Australia a return based on the cost of efficient production. For butter and cheese exported they will be guaranteed by the Commonwealth that cost of production figure for an annual tonnage being an amount equal to 20 per cent. of the tonnage locally consumed.

He also stated that the policy was to ensure that the producers in an industry which came within the jurisdiction of the Act should have the same standard of living as that enjoyed by the rest of the community. It is difficult for any producer to realise that if, at the beginning of July last year, his costs of production were 4s. 7½d. they should not be greater on the 1st July this year because in that period the basic wage has risen from £11 3s. 10d. to £12 6s. I agree that legally the Minister is perfectly right but it will take a good deal to convince me that the Minister is morally right. I am certain that every dairyfarmer in this State would say that the Minister is morally wrong and if something is morally wrong it cannot ever be politically right.

Hon. R. J. Boylen: Unfortunately it would be right legally.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am not talking about the legal implications. A little later I intend to suggest one or two things which may enable us to help. While dealing with this aspect, I would like to mention that recently I read a short article in which the General President of the A.W.U., Mr. H. O. Davis called on farmers

to provide cheap food for Asiatics. He asked primary producers to avoid restricting food production and said that Australia should supply Asiatic countries with food at prices they could afford, even though it meant selling below production costs. Unfortunately that article was a short one. Mr. Davis did not say how it could be done and he did not tell us the manner in which his unions were prepared to help. I have given the article a good deal of thought and have prepared a few notes in connection with it.

However, today I opened a copy of the "News Review," dated the 7th September, and under the heading of "Help the Nation," I read this—

Unless we can produce more goods more cheaply we can say goodbye to full employment, social security and the living standards that we have.

That was not said in Australia; it was said by Mr. Tom O'Brien, the Chairman of the British Trade Union Congress, and I think that when I have finished reading a few more of his remarks all members will agree that those remarks could apply to Australia as well as to England. He said—

There are too many people in industry today living in the shell of their own cosy illusions.

There are employers who will not be enterprising, and who are content to stay in the same old ruts. There are workers who think of efficiency as having something to do with the boss but nothing to do with themselves.

I say to all of them that if they persist in such attitude for long, then all they will have to live on will be their own illusions.

Whether industry is publicly or privately controlled or owned, it is everybody's job to help the nation to earn its living.

We are the nation—all of us. Earning a living for the nation and higher efficiency go together. These are not class issues, Mr. O'Brien commented, they are plain, unvarnished economic facts.

We live in a tough, a competitive world, whether we like it or not. We cannot expect others to leave to us our traditional markets just because we have had them for a long time.

Today, continued Mr. O'Brien, it is reactionary to talk of working oneself out of a job. If people talk like that and act on that basis, they will be out of a job all right, because Britain will be out of the market.

We could substitute Australia for Britain.

Unless we can produce more goods, more cheaply, we can say good-bye to full employment, social security,

and the living standards that we have, it is as simple and dangerous as that. A standard of living has got to be earned.

Anything I could say on that point would not carry as much weight and would not be as lucid as the remarks of Mr. O'Brien. We all know that the Australian primary producers are carrying an extremely heavy burden. I think every member will agree that they are doing a good job in helping to maintain the national economy. The standard of living enjoyed by Australian consumers is at least equal to that enjoyed in any other part of the world. The consumers in this country enjoy good working hours but they all insist on getting cheap food. In order to produce cheap food a farmer must be able to obtain cheaper implements. There are many implements essential to the primary producer and how can he compete, for example, with a farmer in England who can buy a tractor for half the price that one can be bought in Australia? The same thing applies to other implements. The wage of a rural worker in the South-West Land Division is £12 16s. a week—if one can get men—and a farmer is entitled to deduct 25s. for board and lodgings. But he cannot provide board for that. Costs to the Australian primary producer are far too high.

The words used by Mr. O'Brien could be a lesson for us. We should not hide behind a high tariff wall because that, to a large extent, breeds inefficiency. If we could rely on and use to the full the capabilities possessed by the average Australian employer and employee we would be able to do a good deal better. In the production of wire and steel we can compete with any other nation in the world but the same does not apply to various other commodities. If we cannot compete there must be something wrong, not only with the worker but also with the management.

Now I wish to revert to the dairying industry. It is pleasing to note in this morning's paper that a deputation led by the member for Forrest, Mr. Gordon Freeth, to the Minister for Commerce and Agriculture, has received an answer from the Minister to the effect that the costs of production in Western Australia would be thoroughly investigated. I am sure that producers throughout Western Australia will welcome that news. Whatever is done we will have to consider as quickly as possible greater production on those farms. Previously I dealt with the necessity for additional clearing and I do not intend to discuss that aspect in detail this evening. I was pleased to note, in the Minister's answer to a question I asked the other day, that approaches had been made to the Federal Government in this matter. I think the approaches are at least a year old but as yet no decision

has been made and I do not know whether the fault lies with the Federal or the State Government; but it is time something was done.

Early this year the present Minister for Agriculture told the dairy conference at Manjimup that it was the Government's policy to assist farmers who were in a low economic position. Unfortunately he now says that there is no money for the purpose. Reverting to the question I asked the other day, broadly speaking the sum asked for and the area mentioned by the Government were correct. The scheme will require an expenditure, other than capital, of approximately £650,000 in five years.

Hon. A. L. Loton: How much was it?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: A total cost of £725,000; and the Commonwealth offered to purchase tractors owned by the State and operating under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme, in order to provide funds whereby the State could complete the purchase of heavy machinery already on order for general clearing. Apart from the capital cost, the sum necessary to do the work would be £650,000. The work may be done in five years but I am doubtful. Even in times of financial stringency, such as these, the provision of £100,000 per annum is not very great considering the amount of revenue that could be produced for the State. However, I do not want to pursue that aspect any longer because I have spoken about it on previous occasions.

Let me talk about the holdings as they exist at present. We could do a good deal to increase the production on our cleared and pasture areas. Our present pastures could be better utilised; we could sow more pastures and conserve our fodder. In passing, I would like to congratulate the Government on the scheme it has for the purchase of mowing machines. A number of people can get together, and so long as they provide half the money required, the Government will provide the balance. There is one part of this on which I am not too keen and that is the portion requiring a joint and several guarantee. I have been caught on a joint and several guarantee myself and I would never, under any circumstances, sign one.

The Minister for the North-West: You refer to the hay bailers.

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Yes. It has been fixed for three of them to be purchased, so it will be seen that during the short time this scheme has been in existence it has been greatly appreciated. In reference to pasture, I would like to say that it is not so much what a man is told to do to produce pasture that counts, as what he can see done elsewhere. This is where the research station comes in. That is why I said a short while ago that I hoped money would not be stinted

so that the research workers can function as they should. It is not hard or costly for it to be done.

Two months ago I went to a field day at Bramley. It was not dealing with pasture but with a home orchard, one of those small things that can be of great assistance to any farm and can help considerably to reduce the cost of living on those properties. I was very pleased to see the number of people that turned up and the interest they took in pruning, administration and things like that.

The utilisation of pasture is a different feature again. Recently I read about what is supposed to be the show farm of New Zealand. It consists of 169 acres and carries 150 milking cows. It is not under irrigation, and the turnover on the property is £11,000 gross a year. The cow production is 391 lb. of butterfat. What I want to say, however, is that those cows were fed daily on 2½ acres. It was strip grazing by a movable electric fence. The average herd in Western Australia is 16 to 18 head of cows on say 15 acres. The result is that a few cows wander over a relatively large area. They are selective grazers and they pick the eyes out of the feed. When the season gets late there is nothing left but the poor feed.

I am quite certain that a large number of farmers would like to carry out strip grazing. Their finances at present do not permit them to spend the few pounds necessary for an electric fence. But a water system is, of course, necessary because one of the essentials for better production in cattle is a regular supply of water at all times, and not only good feed. I suggest the Government considers having what may be called a revolving fund or guarantee in which so much money can be made available or guaranteed and on which the farmer can draw in order to buy some of these smaller implements, or, shall I say, necessities to improve his grazing facilities. Instead of taking a mortgage or increasing the mortgage on his farm, which is one of the dreads of most of the under-developed farms, let him give a monthly order on the factory which he supplies with his products for a year, or whatever period may be considered appropriate. When that money is paid back, it can be available to somebody else. Let a man pay for this sort of thing out of his increased production and let him endeavour to further increase his production. I have known what it is to be in the red and what a relief it was to get out of it. My earnest hope is that all these farmers will soon find themselves in the black and that they will soon be able to see daylight.

I suppose the quickest way to increase production, provided always that there is the feed and the water, is to improve

the producing quality of the herd. But no matter how good the feed is that goes into an animal, it will not produce over and above its inbred quality. Poor feed will bring a good cow down, but good feed will never bring a poor cow up. For that reason I would like to deal with artificial insemination.

I do not profess to know at first hand anything about artificial insemination. I have read about it and I have spoken with three people who have used it. The start of artificial insemination is not a very bright one because it was begun in Russia, mainly after the first world war, and because of the ravages on the stock and the difficulty of getting good sires and other male stock. But let us leave Russia alone. Artificial insemination is part and parcel of the practice in almost all leading dairy countries in the world.

The first essential in artificial insemination is to believe, as every breeder does, that the most potent factor in cattle breeding is the bull. It is most difficult to get a great number of good bulls and when they are available the price is far beyond the range of the average dairyman. I believe in this case the only answer to producing or increasing the herd by breeding is artificial insemination. I would like to quote a few figures for America. In 1952 there were 1,648 A.I. centres and they embraced 543,000 herds and over 4,000,000 cows. It is increasing at the rate of over 50,000 cows a year. They had 2,300 odd bulls in use of which 668 have a proved sire record. Some members may wonder what a proved sire record is. I will quote some figures in connection with a bull landed recently for the Berry insemination centre near Sydney. This bull's dam had a test of 893 lb. of butterfat.

Hon. L. Craig: What breed was it?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: The bull had eight daughters, probably more, but eight of them were tested.

Hon. L. Craig: What breed was it?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: I am not concerned with the breed of the bull but merely with the dairying industry and the type of bull that any man will want. Eight of that bull's daughters were tested and they averaged 493 lb. of butterfat. The dam of those tested daughters averaged 380 lb. That means that by the use of a bull of high quality, those heifers improved on the dam by 113 lb. of butterfat. When we consider that butterfat production in Western Australia is about 180 lb. a cow, and this is 113 lb. more, at 4s. 6d. as a rough figure per lb., it would be a great consideration for the producer who has to milk those cows.

In England there are 32 main artificial insemination centres. Over a million, or one-third of all the cows in England, are

treated at those centres, and 900 bulls are used. On the whole those bulls are sufficient to serve 1,100 or 1,200 cows a year. When one considers that the average bull, unless it is particularly handled the whole time, serves 23 to 25 cows, one has some idea what use can be made of this method of improving herds. No matter where it is carried out, the best bulls possible are selected. They have to stand up in performance and conformation. They have to be completely free of disease—and this is essential because numerous people I know imported stock from the Eastern States recently and have found they are in trouble.

How would such a scheme work? As far as I know, in this State we have three dairy research stations, namely Wokalup, Bramley and Denmark. Any one of these could become the main centre. Collections could be made from a well-bred bull and the general treatment necessary to place the semen in ampoules could be carried out. It is not a very difficult process. The collection is diluted and is brought down to five deg. centigrade; it is mixed with glycerol and sodium citrate and kept at that temperature for up to a day. It is then put in an ampoule of one cubic centimetre and snap-frozen in alcohol at minus 75 degrees centigrade. At that temperature it keeps indefinitely.

Let us say that any one of these three centres was in use over here. I have no doubt that at every one of the butterfat processing factories and dairy depots of this State arrangements could be made for storing these ampoules at the correct temperature. The procedure is that when a cow bulls and one rings or advises a distributing centre, provided a ring goes through before one o'clock in the day, the inseminator will come out that afternoon and deal with the cow. If he is rung after one o'clock then he will come the next day. It may seem at times that he will arrive a little too late, but it has been proved that whereas a cow will not take a bull after a certain period, she can conceive by means of artificial insemination up to a period of 8 to 10 hours after she has gone off bulling.

It is not a difficult job when it comes to the farmer. He has to provide a bucket of water, preferably warm. The only other equipment needed is the inseminator to warm up the ampoule and use it in the prescribed manner. The cost in England is 25s., and I believe that in Western Australia it would be somewhere in the vicinity of £2. The average price for a 20-cow herd would be £40. At that price a farmer would have an opportunity of getting his cows in calf to the best bulls procurable. The chance of a cow's not conceiving by this method is less than through the use of natural means; it is somewhere about 75 per cent.

The cost of keeping a bull is fairly great. To adopt this other method would mean that in place of that bull another productive animal could be kept. Furthermore it means that the farmer would not have the capital cost of the bull; that he would not have the worry and trouble of keeping the bull; or the danger of disease, or of the animal's becoming impotent, or of death intervening. The main consideration in the establishment of the method here is whether the farmers will support the scheme. I have spoken to quite a number. They know very little about it and I, myself, do not know a great deal; I know only what I have read. However, I believe that the farmers would support this scheme.

I honestly believe it is the answer to increased bred-in production of our dairy herds and that if started in Western Australia it would be of the greatest value to the State as a whole. I do hope that the Government will give the most serious consideration to establishing it. It is being done in other States and I believe it will overcome a great disability in this State.

The Minister for the North-West: Did I understand you to say that some dairy farmers are using that method here?

Hon. C. H. HENNING: Not here. I have spoken to farmers, but as far as I know nobody is using the method here. I have read quite a lot recently of endurance trials in the Eastern States and I have listened to more than one endurance trial here during this session. I can assure members that I do not intend to prolong this debate and will conclude by saying that I support the motion.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Noxious Weeds Act Amendment.
- 2, Adoption of Children Act Amendment (No. 1).
- 3, Industries Assistance Act Amendment (Continuance).

Received from the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 15th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.7 p.m.