

are being broken in every direction. Tremendous development is taking place, particularly in Esperance, because so many young people are coming here from the Eastern States with capital and the know-how for farming. They may not know the district concerned, but they do have the background; and they are coming here anxious to buy and settle in this State.

This is really a wonderful thing for Western Australia. This industrial development and industrial movement permeates the State right through to the North where an irrigation project is now beginning to get under way; and where, in the very near future, 30,000 acres of irrigated land will be developed. We have all heard of the acreage of cotton which has been sown and gathered, and also of the rice which has been sown at Camballin; and when we consider the other agricultural pursuits which combine and tie in with our mineral resources we realise that the progress is really quite fantastic.

Quite apart from all this we know that harbours are being built up and down our coastline; we know, too, that a standard gauge railway is to be built from Kalgoorlie through to Kwinana.

It is possible that we may not think very much of all this progress at the moment; we may not talk very much about it now, but it is a wonderful thing for the future development of this State. As I have said, a great deal has happened in Western Australia in the last couple of years.

Mr. Graham: I think you had better break down your party politics.

The SPEAKER (Mr. Hearman): Order!

Mr. RUNCIMAN: It is in this atmosphere of progress and prosperity that we will, in a few weeks' time, welcome to our shores representatives of 30 countries of the British Commonwealth of Nations. I am sure we all look forward to seeing them. The Empire Games will be a tremendous success. We are naturally a hospitable people, and it will give us the greatest pleasure to welcome these visitors, and to let them see the development and progress that has taken place in this State over the years.

After having visited us they will return to their own countries as ambassadors for this great State of Western Australia. It is great not only in size but also in achievement, in resources, and in potential; and with a positive Government in office I feel certain that Western Australia will go on to greater and better things.

MR. MITCHELL (Stirling) [4.7 p.m.]: I formally second the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr. Hawke (Leader of the Opposition).

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE: SPECIAL

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier)  
[4.7 p.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 31st July.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.8 p.m.

## Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 31st July, 1962

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The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

#### MEMBERS' SPEECHES

##### Where Made

The Hon. E. M. DAVIES asked the President:

I direct this question to you, Sir, for your ruling. Is a member entitled to move a motion and speak or interject from any seat other than the seat normally occupied by him?

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver) replied:

I wish to give the following ruling:—

Normally a member speaks from the seat allotted to him. If Mr. Davies is referring to the honourable member who moved the motion for the

adoption of the Address-in-Reply, I would say that due to the location of the seats occupied by the Supreme Court judges, and the fact that the ceremony was being televised, it was felt that some special arrangement should be made; and the seat occupied by The Hon. H. R. Robinson was so allocated for that day. I would refer the honourable member to Standing Orders No. 41 and No. 378.

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### RICE: CAMBALLIN AREA

#### *Acreage, Yield, and Quantity Exported*

1. The Hon. F. J. S. WISE asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister make available to the House information regarding the production of rice at the Camballin area near the Fitzroy River as follows:—

- (a) what has been the acreage sown to rice in each of the last five years;
- (b) what has been the total yield of rice as harvested in each year; and
- (c) what quantities of rice have been marketed and shipped from Derby from each crop?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

In view of current negotiations being conducted by the company producing rice at Camballin, it is not considered advisable to release the information at the present time. The company has no objection to the information being made available at a later date, and would be prepared to give the information to the honourable member privately if he so desires.

### QUAIRADING WATER SUPPLY

#### *Capital and Annual Operating Costs*

2. The Hon. C. R. ABBEY asked the Minister for Mines:
  - (1) What is the total capital cost of the Quairading Water Supply scheme from the 1st July, 1957, to the 30th June, 1962?
  - (2) What is the annual operating cost of the above scheme for the same period?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) £28,889.
- (2) 1957-58 .... £5,363  
 1958-59 .... £5,794  
 1959-60 .... £6,298  
 1960-61 .... £4,457  
 1961-62 .... £4,805 (estimated).

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

On motion by The Hon. F. J. S. Wise, leave of absence for 12 consecutive sittings granted to The Hon. H. C. Strickland (North) on the ground of private business.

## PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND

### *Appointment of Trustees*

On motion by The Hon. A. F. Griffith (Suburban—Minister for Mines), resolved:

That pursuant to the provisions of the Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1948-1960, the Legislative Council hereby appoints the President (The Hon. L. C. Diver) and The Hon. A. L. Loton to be Trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SECOND DAY

### *Motion*

Debate resumed, from the 26th July, on the following motion by The Hon. H. R. Robinson:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver:—

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

**THE HON. F. J. S. WISE** (North—Leader of the Opposition) [4.55 p.m.]: My first responsibility in this Chamber for this session was the very pleasing one of congratulating you, Sir, on having been re-appointed to your high office for the ensuing period in front of you.

I think my next responsibility is to my own colleagues of the Australian Labor Party in this Chamber and in another place who have expressed their confidence in me by electing me to be the Leader of the Opposition in this House. To them I express my sincere thanks and gratitude. It is a most unusual experience for one such as myself, on looking back, and, indeed, on looking around, to have this responsibility at this stage. I understand from a friend—a prominent Opposition member of the Legislative Assembly—that in this appointment history has been made. I do not know whether he is correct or not, but I understand that never before has anyone led a Government in the Legislative Assembly, led the Opposition there, led the Opposition

in this Chamber, and been a Minister in this Chamber. If that is so, all I can say is that, in all humility, I will endeavour to justify the confidence of my colleagues; and I hope that within a year or two some of those who have been so kind as to place me in this position of responsibility will be willing and anxious to accept the position I now hold, and will be the leader of our party in this House.

I would like to pay a tribute to the honourable gentleman I am succeeding in this position. I think all of us will agree that The Hon. Harry Strickland, in the offices filled by him in this Chamber, earned for himself the greatest respect and credit. To me he is a life-long friend, of course, and I expected of him what he achieved; and it was no mean achievement, and I only hope that I can emulate him in the carrying out of my responsibilities from this seat.

Since we last met, general elections and Legislative Council elections have taken place, and there have been some changes in both Houses. To this House have been added two new faces. I would imagine—I think without much presumption—that Mr. Robinson is welcomed and his advent here is applauded by his colleagues, and therefore the defeat of Mr. Jeffery pleases them very much. For our part, I would say that we are very enthusiastic in our welcome of Mr. Stubbs, and deeply regret the absence of Mr. Jeffery.

Mr. Jeffery was paving the way in this Chamber for a future in politics; but it is one of those things in a political life that takes place, and is likely to take place, to anyone who is a candidate—Mr. Jeffery has been succeeded by another gentleman in the Suburban Province.

The percentages of votes are always interesting after an election. There are many things that could be dealt with in a *post-mortem* sense; but I think *post-mortems*, generally, are very unpleasant things, although sometimes necessary.

However, an analysis of the voting percentages of the Legislative Council elections shows clearly the disinterestedness of the public in the elections for this House of Parliament. For example, in the Suburban Province only 42.16 per cent. of the electors cast their votes. The campaign was extremely well organised by our opponents. The opportunity was taken to ensure that their supporters attended the poll; and I would venture the opinion that, while only 42 per cent. voted, it is possible that nearly 70 per cent. of the Liberal voters in that province voted. But the smallness of the vote in distinctly Labor seats among the Legislative Council provinces shows how disinterested were the people in those provinces who might have created a very different result.

On this occasion in elections for other Legislative Council seats the voting figures show that very little above 30 per cent. of the electors voted. The

figures for the South-East Province show one of the highest percentages; namely, 60 per cent. However, on all occasions members of the Legislative Council can, when elected, have some reason to be pleased with themselves inasmuch as the other side was not as active as it might have been, or because there was some flaw in the arrangements that they could have made for better voting; because where the voting was well organised, and where the percentage of votes cast was high, the trend most certainly followed that of the Legislative Assembly voting.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Not always.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Not always? I said almost invariably. Whether the result of the Suburban Province election gives the Minister much satisfaction, I am not at liberty to imagine because that is his business; but I am sure he agrees with much of the point of view I am expressing; namely, that in Legislative Council elections the results can be entirely opposite, according to the interest shown by the participants—not necessarily by the parties—belonging to parties but who do not vote. I repeat that the Suburban Province is one which shows that only 42 per cent. of the electors voted.

Be that as it may, I would say to the two new members—quite apart from any political view in regard to mates who have been defeated or mates who have arrived—that we welcome them and hope that they will give of their talents for the benefit of the State and the nation for however long they may be privileged to serve in Parliament. There is tremendous scope for enthusiastic work to be done in this so-called House of review. I would like to take away from them, however, any illusions they may have that this is a non-party House.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Hear, hear!

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The very fact that there is a Leader of the Opposition in it answers that question; and the very fact that the members in it all belong to some political party makes it very different from other days when at least some members of this House did not attend party meetings and some members of it did not belong to any party. However, those days are gone. This is a party House, practising as such, and just as essential as is the Legislative Assembly.

New members will find that the older members of this Chamber will be anxious to help and to guide them in any matter in which they have some doubt and in the resolving of which older members of experience may be able to help. They will find that, although differences of opinion are vigorously expressed in this Chamber—the Minister, in fact, both Ministers, will, at times, be glaring at people over here, including myself, railing at us and endeavouring to show us how wrong we are

or how remiss we are—those who are most vigorous in their opposition and in their political point of view will have the greatest admiration and respect for each other as between men and men. That is the situation. Therefore, we can have a healthy respect for our opponents. Indeed, it may be that later this afternoon I will say something to provoke the Minister.

The Hon. A. L. Loton: That is not a threat?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: No, I said, "I may."

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: If you do, it will not be the first time.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Diver): Order!

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I recall very clearly the coming to Parliament of the Minister in charge of this House, in the days when I was a very aggressive person in politics compared with the very placid person I am nowadays.

In addition to bringing new members to Parliament, the recent Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council elections and subsequent by-elections brought about some strange happenings within the framework of a coalition Government. During the general elections, the coalition Government, consisting of two parties, went to the country opposed by the Labor Party, but it was most noticeable how one of the members of the coalition was overlooked in most of the campaign advertising. Indeed, in very many instances, in full-page advertisements, one member of the coalition had no mention whatsoever. It was clearly stated that electors must return the Liberal Government; return the Brand Government; not the Brand-Nalder Government; not the L.C.L.-Country Party Coalition Government, but the Liberal Government.

So we find that one Minister, although he likes publicity was, for the time being, put into cold storage; that the name Brand alone was used to promote interest in the Liberal Party; and that the Country Party section of the coalition almost invariably was overlooked.

I have noticed, from the signs nailed to trees during the two by-elections, the words, "Vote For the Brand Man." But there were members of both parties of the coalition standing in both by-elections; both of them units of parties making up the coalition. We found some most interesting sidelights, with Cabinet Ministers supporting different candidates for one seat, advocating with force and vigour the merits of their man as against the other man; but both men were standing for the coalition Government.

Most interesting comments were made out loud, and more interesting ones were made under the breath; and, indeed, some very colourful statements were made between the candidates and the electors

themselves. Of course, the ultimate objective of the Liberal Party is perfectly clear.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: They are the boss roosters.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Country Party is there only on sufferance. The Premier himself, in the *Great Southern Herald* of the 8th April, 1960, was reported as having made the following statement:—

His Government was getting along smoothly during its 12 months in office, but it was a coalition Government. It was getting along as two parties but how much better it would be as one party. If not that, then one must expand until one party is stronger and can govern by itself.

Let us follow the matter along and see what happened subsequently. There is no doubt about the objective. That statement was made and printed in the *Great Southern Herald*, and, in almost identical wording, in *The Albany Advertiser*. Further, in a recent by-election it was repeated in almost identical terms. However, it is a clear advocacy of two candidates for the one Government being sponsored by Ministers of different parties for the one seat. I can only say that in this peculiar advocacy the Country Party candidate seemed to desire to keep the coalition Government in office, whereas the attitude of the Liberal candidate was always to keep the Liberal Party in power.

I have here some how-to-vote cards. The card of one Country Party candidate showed how to vote for him as a Country Party member and keep the Government in power. However, throughout that election the Liberal Party candidate endeavoured to have it shrieked from the housetops that he was the "Brand" man, and his card made it quite clear that all the electors should vote L.C.L.

That, of course, brought about no confusion in the anti-Government forces, but it brought about more than confusion; namely, harsh feeling—which at times is able to subside—among the Government parties themselves. But effervescence always creates gaseous air which floats away, and there are all sorts of reactions from the bubbling over that takes place. We find that the Premier himself, in *The West Australian*, dated the 18th July, 1962, was reported to have said—

A merger between the Liberal and Country Parties in W.A. was urged by Premier Brand last night.

Later, in the same article, the following appeared:—

He said he refuted the claim by Opposition Leader Hawke that the Liberal Party had committed a treacherous act in endorsing a candidate in the Darling Range electorate.

There was no arrangement between the Parties that they would not oppose each other in State elections.

A day or two later, Mr. Nalder, the other part of the coalition—a member not mentioned in the advertisements of the Liberal Party and never displayed unless the Country Party displayed him—was reported to have said—

It was regrettable that the Liberal Party should have opposed Country Party candidate Ray Owen in Darling Range. Mr. Owen was the only sitting Government member opposed by a member of the coalition parties at the March general election.

At that time the Country Party had undertaken not to oppose sitting members of the Liberal Party.

That is in direct contradistinction to the statement of the Premier that there was no arrangement at all. The report of Mr. Nalder's remarks continues—

Premier Brand's introduction of the possibility of a merger between the Liberal and Country Parties during the Darling Range campaign was unnecessary and uncalled for.

The subject of a merger was as dead as the dodo.

The report continues—

The Country Party was not a splinter group and was here to stay in State politics.

I said to one of the members of the Country Party I met quite by accident in the Darling Range electorate, "I hope they see that brotherly love prevails." And I said that I hoped they would do nothing to upset the splendid relationship between the parties which obviously existed because of how easy it would be to create a merger. But, of course, the position now is as it ever was, that the cleavage must continue, in my view—and I have watched this matter for a long time—because on some points it is not a question of a difference of opinion or a slight cleavage between them; it is and will remain, in my view, a gaping chasm.

It is not a healthy matter in the politics of a State to have the pretence of a coalition—pretending to the public that happy associations within the parties continue to exist but which we know, and only a section of the public know, do not.

Mr. President, I wish to touch on a very interesting reference in the Speech by His Excellency with regard to the subject of water—the reference to the Mines Department and the search for water. I was very pleased to read of the undertaking within the Mines Department of certain geological surveys, and of the work being done by the hydrographic section in connection with surveys and water use. This is a matter which is so very important—a

field open to research, and open for work—that we can say without fear of contradiction that the greatest limiting factor in the matter of the future population of Australia will be the availability of water.

An enormous amount of work has been done by that department and other State departments. Much of the work of the State departments—its water authorities—is up to date. There are some very prominent men in all States with interstate relations in the use of water. I believe those associated with the Murray River Authority—Mr. Aird is one in particular—the men attached to the Water Resources Board of Queensland, the Water Use Authority of the Northern Territory, the geological section of the Bureau of Mineral Resources, and the National Mapping Council of the Commonwealth all have enormous amounts of information available.

I was pleased indeed to read that the Commonwealth has at last invited and prompted collaboration between the States at ministerial level in order to bring about some thorough examination of Australia's water potential, water supply, and its use. The need for interstate agreement has been drawn to the attention of the Government for very many years. I have in my hand a report of one authority which examined water supply officers of all States, and which made a recommendation to the Commonwealth in 1944 that an all-Australia co-ordinated plan be drawn up in which the long-term needs should be carefully examined.

The hydraulic engineers in this State and in all States, in my view, have done a grand job for this nation, not merely in collating all the things they know of, but in promoting new works everywhere; and we will reach some very important decisions in water supply, its conservation, development, and use. As a national policy at all stages it is one of the most important things, in my view, that the Commonwealth could undertake.

I have no doubt there are many members of this Chamber who have considerable knowledge of the report and the work done by that remarkable and successful engineer Dr. J. J. Bradfield, the man who built the Sydney Harbour bridge; the man who propounded the scheme to turn all of Queensland's rivers which flow eastwards, back over the Dividing Range into the rivers flowing ultimately into Lake Eyre. His report and the review of it will be found in detail in the eighth report of the Rural Reconstruction Commission, which is filed in this House. Dr. Bradfield's scheme is still, perhaps, one of the greatest possibilities for water use. Instead of thousands of millions of gallons of water flowing into the sea, it will be diverted for use over thousands of miles of territory which is now an arid part of this country.

It takes a long time to get these things moving. I can present to this House documents which were recommended to the Commonwealth Government over the last 20 years, endeavouring to insist on something like this happening. It took from 1902 to 1936 to get some effective use of the water of the Murray River. The first recommendation was made in 1902! The year 1915 saw the ratification of the agreement between the States, but from that point it took until 1936 to open the Hume Reservoir.

So, not merely for those districts I represent with my two colleagues—including the Gascoyne district, which has performed a miracle in production from the dry bed of a periodically flowing river—but for the area right through the north to Cambridge Gulf itself and past there into the Northern Territory to the Victoria River, and for all the north-west, I welcome the fact that it appears that something is about to be dealt with at Commonwealth level.

The next matters in His Excellency's Speech to which I wish to refer are the passing references made to the Rural & Industries Bank, which gave an indication of how wide is the service being given by this institution. I do not know whether, since the Minister made available last week the sixteenth annual report of this institution, members have taken the opportunity of procuring the document and examining it. I suggest it should be studied by every member of Parliament in this State to give him an opportunity of seeing, in the highest of terms, how important has this institution become, and what an important service it is rendering to the community as a whole.

There are very few members left in our Parliament, Mr. President, who were members at the time of the passing of the Rural and Industries Bank Act. Maybe there are ten—

The Hon. L. A. Logan: There are less than that here.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: —out of 80 in the two Houses. I know of only three members of the original Cabinet which had the responsibility for that important piece of legislation who are still in Parliament. I know, but for different reasons, of the enormity of the task in Cabinet and in Parliament of bringing about the prospect of having Parliament consider such a Bill, as I had to sponsor the Bill in the Legislative Assembly. I know this, as sponsor of the Bill, that it was forecast that a beneficial effect would take place in this State if Parliament would accept it, and it would be a milestone in the State's history.

It is a wonderful thing to have seen, in one's lifetime, that change take place. There were several old Acts which contributed much to the development of this

State. Under the old Agricultural Bank Act and the Acts associated with it—Acts administered at very great risk and at very great cost—enormous areas of this State were developed.

In connection with abandoned holdings, the sum of £7,659,000 was written off as bad debts between 1935 and 1944. The Agricultural Bank lost approximately 2,000 accounts, and its best clients, after reconstruction took place from 1935 onwards—2,000 accounts put in order by reconditioning of its affairs and readjustment of its finances. No trading bank arrangements could be made in respect of them. When they became solvent, they were gladly taken over by the various trading banks of this State. In the last year of the Agricultural Bank, 300 of its clients, involving tens of thousands of pounds—indeed, hundreds of thousands of pounds—went from the Agricultural Bank to the trading banks because there were no State bank facilities available.

Something drastic had to be done. When the Rural and Industries Bank Bill was introduced in 1944, approximately £9,000,000 was owing on mortgages—in some cases on very questionable accounts. That figure of £9,000,000 was an asset of the bank, but it was diminishing week by week because the gilt-edged ones were passing away.

After attempts by one Minister, over a period of two years, to get the Government to avoid the bank becoming simply a salvage institution, the Bill came before Parliament. On the Bill being passed, the £9,000,000 out on mortgage, plus £300,000 from the Agricultural Bank's trust account, launched the Rural & Industries Bank. Those were assets with which the Rural & Industries Bank was started.

I recall very clearly an attempt to impress Parliament with the importance to the State of the non-winding up of that institution, and the importance of creating something. I recall having to bear the burden of a conference of managers from both Houses, the conference commencing at 5.30 on the afternoon of, I think, the 14th December, 1944, and continuing throughout the night until sunrise.

*Hansard* for 1944 shows how seriously this matter was contested; how vigorously it was fought; and we now know how worth while that fight was. The staff was hand picked, the key man being Mr. Bosisto. Personnel recommended by him were released from the army, and some of them today occupy high positions in the bank.

Parliament roundly condemned the old Section 51—the Minister for Local Government will know all about that. The new Parliament overcame the odium of that section and other criticism at that time. It was trenchant criticism, a lot of it based on fact and reality.

Public confidence in Western Australia has been restored, firstly, by the fact that the institution is wholly Western Australian; secondly, in its staff; and, thirdly, in its control. This is due largely to the fact that the new Act brooks no Government interference: the bank is a free trading enterprise.

Public confidence has been sustained through the years. Today the bank's balance sheet shows that during the 12 months under review its assets increased by £6,000,000 last year to £32,700,000 at the 31st March last. The increase of £2,000,000 in savings deposits has enabled the Government to channel this sum into housing and into semi-governmental projects. The bank's profits have increased considerably.

The balance sheet is a record of achievement of the commissioners and their staff. It shows that housing loans over the twelve months ended the 31st March last exceeded £1,790,000. There were 5,281 personal loans negotiated, totalling £1,717,000. Since 1952, when the Personal Loan Department was established, 27,397 persons have received loans at reasonable rates of interest, involving a total amount of nearly £8,500,000. With the continued support of the public of Western Australia, the value of a strong savings bank, with funds ready to be channelled into sound enterprises, is readily apparent.

Figures taken from the Commonwealth Government Statistician's report show an increase in loans to local and semi-governmental bodies over the past year amounting to £868,000. Deposits in the trading section increased by £3,000,000. Therefore, I think it is important that we should not only feel proud of this institution, but that we should continue to place before the public the importance of a strong institution, particularly one associated with the savings of the public and the profitable investment of those savings. There are four members of this Chamber who supported the establishment of the Rural & Industries Bank during the difficult period.

An important matter referred to by His Excellency concerns applications for the first five irrigable farms on the Ord River, which are to be allocated shortly; and another is his reference to the work undertaken on the Ord River diversion dam.

The development of the Ord River project covers a long period. The Kimberley Research Station was commenced around 1945, and since that time the growing of sugar and rice has progressed steadily. Today the work has widened to embrace crops which, by means of irrigation, can be suitably grown in the tropics. Splendid results have been achieved; they compare more than favourably with similar efforts anywhere else in the world.

The Ord River project was forecast many years ago. The site was mentioned by engineers two or three decades past. The matter was enthusiastically discussed and reported upon, and the project was advocated by the then Commissioner for the North-West, Mr. Geoffrey Drake-Brockman.

Mr. Drake-Brockman said that the Gorge site constituted an engineer's dream; that it easily presented to the engineer a gigantic and favourable construction. Some years ago members of the Grants Commission flew over the Gorge and over the surrounding areas. Gradually, the plans of several successive Governments began to unfold. There were many vital questions at all stages. There was the question of population and of national defence, and that of the proximity of the area to densely populated regions. There was the question of whether the area could be settled for agricultural purposes. The area is identical with one sought by Dr. Steinberg in the late 1930's as a Jewish settlement. Not only was the present dam envisaged, but many ancillary industries were envisaged if a Jewish settlement were to be permitted. Development of areas for settlement by white people has always been an important factor. According to geographer Griffith Taylor, Wyndham has one of the four highest mean temperatures known in the world.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is 93 or 94 degrees, is it not?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Yes. Looking back just a few years I wish to pay a tribute to the great work of civil servants at all levels, and officers of all kinds who have been associated with the developmental work. I include in this tribute workmen in the field and those directly associated with the development of the undertaking. They are the ones who, under very serious conditions at times, have persisted to bring about something which very recently has been somewhat glamorised. I do not hold with the glamorising of it.

By some world standards, and judged by our own capacity to develop the resources of the more densely settled parts, our peopled areas are considerably underpopulated; and I think it can be realistically and safely said that we can more readily, more quickly, and more easily add 10,000,000 to the peopled areas of Australia than we can add 1,000,000 to the sparsely populated parts of this continent; because we have one of the greatest assets of all in the peopled areas—one of the most attractive climates known to man. But that is not so in the case of the area under review.

I commend those who were responsible for the brochure, which was distributed by the hundred, and probably by the thousand, in connection with the calling of applications for the first five farms. I

do not know how many members took the opportunity of procuring them, but naturally it was part of north-west members' responsibility. It is a brochure which in some respects shows signs of having been put together at short notice—rather quickly—but in spite of that there appears within it an earnest endeavour to give the right background and to state the facts, as far as the facts are stated in the brochure. There is an endeavour to give an idea of the cost of development of the land, which I think even at this stage needs considerable review. For example, although 45 applicants have submitted forms of application—I understand that is the published figure—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I think that number is correct.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I know several of these people and I am a little concerned about what appears in the text of this brochure. It states that the financial resources of the applicant will be considered when determining eligibility for selection. That is one of the most important provisions in the section dealing with finance; and with regard to the matter being referred to a land board, and in respect of section 47 of the Land Act prevailing in regard to the allocations, my firm view is that there should be directives given to that board by the Government if the board is itself to make the decisions and select the applicants.

I say that because it is important that those selected be given, as near as can be gauged, the best possible prospect of ensuring success; and money, and money alone, no matter in what volume, will give no such guarantee. The greatest care should be taken to select men who are used to the cultivation of row crops and to inter-row cultivation, whether those men have lived in the tropics or not; and I know of applicants—men who have given a lifetime with their sons in the development of assets—who should not be expected to throw all they have earned in their lifetime into such a venture, which they may have to do unless some special provision is made.

My point is this: I have had taken out by experts in this matter—men skilled in tropical agriculture on the spot—the costs of establishment, the costs of development, and the likely return. Those figures show very clearly that the progressive financial responsibility will at its peak on one of these 600-acre farms reach as high as £35,000—that is the capital expenditure required before the costs begin to taper off because of earnings from crops.

The short history of the remarkable success of cotton in the Kimberleys, and the knowledge we have of such crops as safflower and linseed, with their prospects of a high return, still leaves us with several imponderables; and I believe there is a great responsibility on the Government,

and one which I am sure it will accept, to ensure that the best human units will be available with some cash and some stake.

They must have some stake in the venture because, after all, it is a very sound old banking axiom that the proprietor must have some stake in the venture. But we should not expect a person to mortgage all his assets, built up through a lifetime, to allow his sons to venture out into some development of this kind.

I suggest that £100,000 should be made available by the Government, through the agency section of the Rural & Industries Bank, and that that sum be part of the anticipated initial capital cost of this venture. What is that! It is a fleabite compared with the overall total of £20,000,000 that this venture is estimated to cost.

The Hon. A. L. Loton: And it will make it a success.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: Why should these people, who will make a success of it, be eliminated because they are not the most moneyed people among the applicants? They are the ones who will most assuredly make a success of it; and why should they be eliminated because they cannot risk more than £4,000 or £5,000 of their own capital?

I would like to be as helpful as possible to the Government in this matter, and I am not carping or criticising in any way. I am trying to impress upon the Government how important it is to compare the practical man, backed by the Government and with some money of his own in the venture, with the man who, perhaps, is the nephew of some very wealthy person, with limitless funds to expend, but who will ultimately fail because he does not have the know-how.

These five farmers must be hand-picked and backed to the limit on the personal equation if they have no money at all and if they are to make a success of this venture. After all, the circumstances are severe enough. I have no quarrel at all with the conditions which some people might consider harsh and which are being imposed—controls by the Government through its officers of certain routine and certain practices. I think that is proper; and the Government could go further and insist that spraying and that sort of thing should take place whenever the officers consider it necessary; and no one man out should stop it.

But when we think, as the Minister for Local Government said just now, that the mean maximum temperature is 97 degrees in January, 95 degrees in February, 97 degrees in March, 95 degrees in April, and so on, and that this is the place to where these people will take their womenfolk—they will be living at Kununurra, several miles away from their farms—we can realise what the position is. Playing around with a property would be easy for



the moneyed man, if money alone were to be the determinant, and that is why I am raising a plea for many people who, I know, have applied for these farms—I will correct that an say, "several people"—and who have every qualification except the £35,000 which will be the peak of their need two or three years from now.

There is one very important point before I pass from this subject. I recommend to the Government that if ever a case could be made out by the State to the Commonwealth, at top level, for the easement of tax for a certain project, it is this one. Here we have an anticipation of 1,750 lb. of seed cotton per acre. Why, the total American average—and I am quoting from information received from the Australian Embassy in Washington under date the 25th July this year, a week ago—last year was a bale to the acre—a 500 lb. bale. I am advised by the officers in charge of the project in the Kimberleys that they will be disappointed if they do not get nearer 2,250 lb., although most of the estimates are based on a figure lower than that. That is a fantastic yield—

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Nearly a ton to the acre.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: —unheard of anywhere in the world under field conditions, whether it is in the high plains of Lubbock in Texas, or whether it is in Bakersfield in California. In America they grow the Acala variety because of its high yield; but they cannot get anywhere near our figure, even though the cotton is grown under irrigation.

Having got to that point—to the point where the oil crops give such high yields—let us go to the next stage. Let the Government, and not the individual, take the risk of this vital stage which will mean so much to the success of this project. I hope that consideration will be given to those points of view.

We are dealing with crops that in America have price supports from start to finish. In the case of cotton, we are dealing with a crop that last year in America had 162,000,000 dollars in price guarantees and supports. We are dealing with a crop which has a guaranteed price in Australia of 14d. per lb. So we have to be careful at this stage that the very next step that is taken is based on the surest of foundations.

I have at my disposal considerable material on this subject. I would point out that there is no ego in what I am about to say, but, after all, I am a member of the Humid Tropics Committee of S.E.A.T.O., and have been for years. I have studied tropical agriculture since the days I was an officer in two States. I have been privileged to visit the cotton-growing districts of three other countries of the world. While I do not particularly

wish to be consulted or drawn into any discussion on this matter, I am quite prepared to make available to anybody the records I have assembled.

I might say at this stage that I have never been invited to accompany the Minister on any of his trips to the Kimberleys; but that is beside the point. If, however, I can be of any help in promoting the success of this venture it will give me very great satisfaction to make such help available.

There were two other subjects to which I wished to refer, but I fear that time will not permit of my referring to both of them. One of the subjects on which I wish to touch may very well cause me to bury my head or to lose it. I refer, of course, to the question of the European Common Market. The other subject I wish to mention is that of iron ore. Although I made my previous comment facetiously, I hasten to add that it was not in any way meant to be disparaging of the action taken. I want to make that quite clear.

In referring to iron ore, I would stress the question of the release of the ban on the export of iron ore which has led to world-wide interest in Western Australian iron ore deposits. Before the ban was lifted, requests were made by both Labor and coalition Governments and those requests were refused. In 1956 a permit was sought to export 50,000 tons of iron ore from Koolyanobbing; in 1957 a permit was sought for 1,000,000 tons over two and a half years, the main purpose being the establishment of an integrated iron and steel industry at Bunbury.

That matter was brought before both Houses of Parliament where the motion was keenly debated, amended in several ways, and eventually defeated. In any case, the Commonwealth refused permission for the export of this iron ore. The Commonwealth had the right to refuse. Under section 51 of the Constitution Act the Commonwealth has the authority to make overseas agreements which bind the States; and there is no qualification at all to the right of the Commonwealth in the creation of embargoes.

That section of the Constitution Act is buttressed by part III of the Customs Act which provides that prohibited exports cannot be exported. So, through the customs prohibitive export regulations it was specified that ores containing iron of both hematite and magnetite, or either, were absolutely prohibited from export.

In our case—and I refer to the second application of the Labor Government—I consider the refusal was based on petty and political ground. However, we had planned to use the proceeds of those sales for particular purposes. A little later on—and there is enormous matter in vol.

2 of the 1957 *Hansard* on this subject—a letter was sent to the then Premier by the then Acting Prime Minister, which made it clear that we were not to be permitted—nor was any State of Australia—to sell iron ore overseas; most certainly not to Japan if the ore to be processed in Australia was sponsored or financed by Japan before export. That was made quite clear.

The Government has enjoyed considerable advantage in this matter in spite of one or two refusals, one of those refusals being made because of the ghosts of certain people that were still hanging around the buildings at Canberra. It would have embarrassed the Commonwealth Government had it granted an export permit at that time. I can see the Minister for Mines knows to what I am referring.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I haven't a clue.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The Minister looks that way. That would have been very embarrassing for the Commonwealth Government. In any case, there was no necessity for the Government to be worried about it. However, that was the reason for the refusal—it was suggested that there was something invalid or improper in what was being done, which I do not concede at all. But here we have it in black and white from the Commonwealth; and that unless it has been altered, will cause our present Minister for Mines a lot of trouble, not merely in his endeavours to negotiate agreements—one of which has already been signed—but in other directions, particularly in later agreements, if we cannot have any sponsoring or financing by Japan before export.

We now find, however, that a remarkable change has come about. An enormous deposit has been found in the Pilbara district. It has been referred to as a massive deposit and is said to contain untold millions of tons of iron ore. It is spoken of as one of the biggest deposits in the world—at least that is what the President of the Kaiser Steel Corporation called it. We have that opinion expressed in 1962, a few short years after the Commonwealth refused all export on the ground that there was not more than a 35-year capacity of iron ore in Australia.

I could read extracts both short and long to show how disproportionate to today's attitude was the attitude of the Commonwealth in 1957. I could read the criticism of one member of the Liberal Party and the seriousness of the Commonwealth thinking in this matter. Be that as it may, today we have arrived at the situation where hundreds of millions of tons are said to be available in the Pilbara district, even though they are not in one

concentrated deposit; whereas two years ago at the peak of the Scott River discovery a hundred million tons was thought to be gigantic.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Men must have walked and travelled over this area in a hundred different ways.

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: The 21-year old embargo which was initially placed on iron ore exports by the Lyons Government, has since been removed, and, as I understand the position, exports from proven old deposits will be approved; and as an incentive 50 per cent. of newly discovered ore bodies will be free from export control. That in essence is part of the public release from the embargo placed on iron ore exports from this State.

I hope that not only will the Mt. Goldsworthy agreement bring about the development envisaged in towns, in transport, in ports, and in harbours, but also that there will be no prospect of interfering with the gigantic capital necessary to work these ores for the betterment of Australia.

There is little time to lose in acquiring markets, because of the highly competitive nature of iron ore throughout the world, as has been pointed out by the Premier himself. So far as Western Australia is concerned, and particularly so far as the north-west is concerned, the mineral deposits in the Pilbara district—these fortuitous gifts of nature—could, perhaps, provide the greatest fillip towards progress, and towards soundly based towns and industry, that it has been our good fortune to experience. That is the position as I see it. I support the motion.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery.

House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 31st July, 1962

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