

Legislative Council

Tuesday, the 22nd August, 1961

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

SUPPLY BILL, £25,000,000

Assent

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor and Administrator received and read notifying assent to the Bill.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

ORD RIVER AND TURNER RIVER STATIONS

Total Areas, and Rates and Rentals

1. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

The Minister is asked to supply the following information regarding Ord River Station and Turner River Station—

- Total areas of pastoral leases contained in each station.
- Rate of annual rental per 1,000 acres of each station.
- All variations of rates which have taken place since leases first issued.
- Annual rental payable on each station.
- Total amounts received in rentals from each station since leases issued.

Cattle Treated and Average Price

- The numbers of cattle from each station treated at Wyndham Meat Works during each of years 1951 to 1960 inclusive.
- The average price per head paid by Wyndham Meat Works to each station during these years.
- Total number of cattle treated at Wyndham Meat Works for Australian Investments Agency Ltd. during each of the years 1951 to 1960 inclusive.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- Ord River Station—913,507 acres. Turner Station—704,095 acres.
- Ord River Station—9s. per 1,000 acres. Turner Station—7s. 7d. per 1,000 acres.
- Ord River Station—Rental 6s. per 1,000 acres fixed at commencement of lease on the 1st January, 1934; reappraised to 9s. per 1,000 acres on the 1st April, 1948. Turner Station—Rental 5s. 1d. per 1,000 acres fixed at commencement of lease on the 1st January, 1934; reappraised to 7s. 7d. per 1,000 acres on the 1st April, 1948.
- Ord River Station—£411 6s. Turner Station—£267 6s. 2d.
- Ord River Station—£9,484 1s. 6d. Turner Station—£6,166 15s. 7d.
- to (h) It is not customary to make public information of this nature in respect of individual stations as it is confidential trading information of the business concerned.

BLACK ROCKS, DERBY

Construction of Deep-Water Jetty

- 2A. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

Arising from the advice surrounding my question on the 16th August, 1961, concerning Black Rocks jetty, the following information is necessary to apprise Parliament of the true sequel of Commonwealth financial arrangements regarding the £5,000,000 grant:—

- On what date did Prime Minister Menzies first advise Premier Hawke that a grant of £2,500,000 would be made available for approved works north of the 20th parallel of latitude?
- On what date did Mr. Hawke advise Mr. Menzies that the amount could possibly be insufficient to construct Black

Rocks jetty; investigate Napier Broome Bay; and also meet the full cost of Wyndham jetty extensions?

- (3) On what date did Mr. Menzies advise Mr. Hawke that a further £2,500,000 would be granted?
- (4) On what date were Maunsell and Partners engaged by the present Government to re-examine Black Rocks site?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) The 28th November, 1957.
- (2) On the 31st March, 1958, in submitting to the Prime Minister this State's application to have the following proposals—
 - (a) Deep-water port at Black Rocks;
 - (b) Construction of a new wharf at Wyndham;
 - (c) Investigations at Napier Broome Bay

considered as projects under the West Australian Grant (Northern Development) Act, 1958, Mr. Hawke stated—

It is quite possible the construction of the deep-water port at Black Rocks and the Napier Broome Bay investigations would not leave a sufficient balance from the £2,500,000 grant to meet the full cost of the Wyndham jetty project. Should this situation develop, the State would desire to make a further approach to your Government and would itself be prepared to make available at that time a reasonable amount of loan moneys from the General Loan Funds then available to the State Government.

- (3) The Prime Minister, by letter on the 19th December, 1958, confirmed a previous telegram, and a statement in his policy speech of the 29th October, 1958, that the Commonwealth Government would increase the grant of £2,500,000 under the West Australian Grant (Northern Development) Act, 1958, to £5,000,000.
- (4) On the 17th August, 1959, Maunsell and Partners were asked to report on a suitable site and type of port for the West Kimberley region.

ORD RIVER DIVERSION DAM

Date of Submission of Scheme to Commonwealth Government

- 2B. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

On what date did the Hawke Government decide that the Ord River diversion dam be submitted to

the Prime Minister as a project for the expenditure of the additional Commonwealth grant of £2,500,000 for northern development?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Cabinet on the 17th February, 1959, decided that the Ord River diversion works, which form part of the ultimate Ord River scheme, should be submitted to the Prime Minister as a project for expenditure under the additional £2,500,000 scheme.

HIGH SCHOOLS

Conditions Governing Grading

3. The Hon. J. M. THOMSON asked the Minister for Local Government:
 - (1) What percentage of students are required to be prospective 4th-year students at a junior high school before its grading can be raised to 4th-year status?
 - (2) What number of prospective 5th-year students is necessary at a 4th-year high school before its grading can be raised to senior status?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Junior high schools do not as a rule become senior high schools but become high schools first and later become senior high schools. No percentage is fixed.
- (2) The matter is not handled in this way. Once a school has been given a fourth year the following year that group is automatically carried on into the fifth year.

BLACK ROCKS, DERBY

Construction of Deep-Water Jetty

4. The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Mines:

As I consider the reply to my question asked on Wednesday, the 16th August, 1961, regarding Black Rocks jetty to be unsatisfactory, the Minister is respectfully asked to reply to the following unanswered portion of the question:—

... is it a fact that as Minister for Works in the McLarty-Watts Government, Mr. Brand sought Federal financial assistance to construct the jetty?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Yes. This request, in conjunction with Napier Broome Bay and the extension to the Wyndham jetty and as recommended by the Commonwealth-State Committee, was rejected by the Commonwealth Government in February, 1952.

TEACHERS*Extension of Training Period*

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

- (1) Does the Education Department contemplate increasing the two-year training period for teachers to three and progressively to four years' duration?
- (2) If so, can any indication be given as to when the—
 - (a) three-year period; and the
 - (b) four-year period; will commence?

The Hon. L. A. LOGAN replied:

- (1) Some thought has been given to the matter of an extension to three years, but it is impracticable at the present time.
- (2) Answered by No. (1).

ELECTRICITY FOR ALBANY*Extension of Commission's Power Lines*

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

- (1) What progress to date has been made on the construction of State Electricity Commission power mains to Albany.
- (2) What is required to be done to complete this extension?
- (3) When is it contemplated that these mains will reach Albany?
- (4) What requirements are envisaged regarding,—
 - (a) new buildings;
 - (b) new plant; and
 - (c) other alterations?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) 70 per cent. of the poles are erected.
- (2) Erection of 30 per cent. of the poles and the conductors.
- (3) June, 1962.
- (4) None.
 - (b) Necessary transformers and switchgear.
 - (c) Two additional lines approximately two miles between the main substation and Albany.

WATER FOR ALBANY*Supply from Denmark River Scheme*

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

- (1) What preparatory work has been carried out to date for supplying water from the Denmark River scheme to Albany?
- (2) When is it contemplated that work will commence on laying the water main?

- (3) Has a tentative date been considered as to when water will be available in Albany from this source?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

- (1) (a) Preparatory surveys of potential dam sites are complete and the Lands Department is preparing contoured plans.
- (b) A pipe route from the existing dam on the Denmark River to Albany has been surveyed.
- (2) No date has been fixed as the more economical Limeburner's Creek has yet to be harnessed.
- (3) No. It will depend on how long Limeburner's Creek augmentation satisfies demand.

GOVERNMENT BOARDS AND TRUSTS*Details Concerning Staff*

8. The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Mr. Cunningham sought some information recently by way of parliamentary questions regarding the three principal executive or administrative officers of each of several boards, trusts, and similar statutory bodies. I replied at the time that the information was being obtained, and that I would make it available as soon as possible. I have the particulars requested by the honourable member and will table the information.

The information was tabled.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SEVENTH DAY*Motion*

Debate resumed from the 17th August, on the following motion by The Hon. H. K. Watson:—

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

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

THE HON. A. L. LOTON (South) [4.44 p.m.]: There are two matters with which I wish to deal. The first concerns road hauliers who, in their long semi-trailers, are conveying three kinds of timber. It is a practice that I consider most dangerous to the other users of the road.

The first to which I wish to refer is the man who is hauling unconditioned timber to Perth for treatment at the mills; the second is the man who carts State Electricity Commission poles; and the third is the haulier who conveys poles and cross-sections of bridges. These people seem to have a habit of being on the road at all hours of the night, and more often than not they are driving vehicles that are badly lighted. In most cases the lights are not discernible at all from the rear. Any rear lights that there might be are obscured by the canopy; and sometimes it is not possible to see them owing to the unevenness of the load.

The only sign that is visible to the motorist—if he is lucky enough to see any sign—is a piece of rag that is attached to the load; and this might be any colour at all. I have mentioned this matter in the House before. As Dr. Hislop and Mr. Jones pointed out, however, I have mentioned it only two or three times. Apparently this is not enough; I shall have to continue to mention it.

In New South Wales the position has become so bad in this respect that at certain periods of the day these drivers are banned from the road.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Banned during the day or during the night?

The Hon. A. L. LOTON: There are twenty-four hours of the day. I am suggesting that these road hauliers be banned from the road for a period of within half an hour of sunset to within half an hour of sunrise.

During the last six months there have been two fatal accidents between Armadale and Kelmscott caused by cars being driven under the protuberances which appear to overhang the back of these semi-trailers. I appreciate that the drivers of these semi-trailers wish to take on the maximum number of loads, but at the same time I do feel that the other users of the road are entitled to some consideration. If decent lights could be attached to the rear of these loads it would be safer for other vehicles on the road.

The practice adopted by these road hauliers has been particularly dangerous during the foggy nights that we have had the whole of this winter. It is almost impossible to discern these vehicles; and if one has to dip one's lights one cannot see what is in front. I am sure that those members who traverse these roads in the country will agree that the point I have raised is worthy of serious consideration by the Government.

The second matter to which I wish to refer is that which was touched on by Dr. Hislop the other evening; and it concerns every one of us, because its implications are fully borne out in this statement which I propose to read to the House. It concerns the lack of provisions in the Fatal Accidents Act to protect persons who could

be left very seriously embarrassed, financially, as a result of the breadwinner of the family being killed in an accident.

I propose to make no comment at all about the finding given by the judge; I will merely refer to what Mr. Watts had to say in 1959 when he introduced some amendments to the fatal accidents legislation. He concluded by saying—

So the situation is quite clear, as I have said, in that Western Australia has lagged behind considerably in seeking to amend this law. I think the House will agree, in principle at any rate, that it is high time that some step should be taken in this State to bring the law more into line with modern conceptions of what is just and reasonable. It is for that purpose that the Bill is introduced.

After I have read the judgment of the court—it is only a short one—I think members will agree that, from a statutory angle, something is lacking, in the Fatal Accidents Act, and it should be made to conform to our modern standards and conceptions. This was the case referred to by Dr. Hislop the other evening—*Gillett v. Callagher*, G. No. 32 of 1960; hearing 31st May, 1961; judgment 27th June, 1961. The judgment reads as follows:—

The plaintiff is the widow and executrix of Robert Vincent Gillett who was killed on 9th September, 1959 in a road accident between two motor cars, one driven by him and the other by the defendant. She sues the defendant under the Fatal Accidents Act 1959 for damages for negligence, and brings this action for the benefit of herself and the two children of her marriage to the deceased, a son aged 14 and a daughter aged 13. Negligence is not denied and damages is the only matter in issue.

At the time of his death, Gillett was aged 49 years and the plaintiff 45. He was a farmer at York, where he owned 2,300 acres of cleared land, on which he ran about 800 sheep, and cropped about 500 acres of wheat and oats. He had also taken up about 2,200 acres of leasehold land at Esperance which he was planning to develop and on which he had done some part clearing. According to some figures from his accountant, the deceased's net income from farming had averaged about £2,400 over the past 10 years. Most of this went back into the land and the family appear to have lived adequately but somewhat frugally in the manner of many farming people of like means.

The children were attending school at York. The boy has now left school and is in the process of becoming a farmer himself, partly by working at wages, and partly by developing the

Esperance land. The plaintiff is carrying on the York farm primarily with the assistance of a share-farmer, who was previously employed on the property. Some additional expenses will be incurred in wages during busy times, and the death of her husband may mean less experienced farming, particularly in buying and selling stock, but the plaintiff herself obviously has some knowledge in this direction and is acquiring more, and as she seems a sensible and capable woman, there is little doubt that the income from the farm (subject of course to seasonable variations) will continue with but little diminution resulting from her husband's death.

The deceased left an estate of a gross value of approximately £44,800, with liabilities of about £6,200 and hence a net estate of approximately £38,600, from which must be paid probate and estate duty and testamentary expenses of about £8,500. The bulk of his estate consisted of his farming properties, together with plant, machinery, farming implements, motor vehicles, livestock and growing crops. His life insurance policies produced about £4,000. By his will he devised his real estate to his wife and two children as tenants in common with shares of one-half, one-quarter and one-quarter respectively. He also bequeathed his personal estate, subject to payment of his debts and funeral and testamentary expenses, to his family in the same shares, but the children are to receive their shares on attaining 21 years. In the meantime, the plaintiff is empowered to postpone the sale of the personal estate and to use it in carrying on the farming business. She is also empowered to apply the capital or income of the children's expectant shares towards their maintenance, education and benefit.

In a claim of this nature, it is usual to consider the extent of the pecuniary dependency of the widow and children upon the income of the deceased and then to estimate their probably pecuniary loss, on a weekly or other periodic basis resulting from his death. In this case, it will readily be seen that there is here no such probable loss at all. Making liberal allowance for the absence of the deceased's own labour and farming knowledge it is unlikely that the farm income will average less than £1,600 per annum and when the Esperance land comes into production in perhaps 1963 there may be a substantial increase in that figure. If the income were £1,600, the widow's share would be £800 and each of the children £400. I realise of course that these are only figures, and somewhat unreal to a

farmer who is building up his property. But they serve to show that the widow and children should be able to continue to live in at least the same style as hitherto. The boy, if not already independent, will soon become so, and there is no reason to think that the girl will suffer any pecuniary loss resulting from her father's death in respect of her maintenance and education during minority. The plaintiff herself should be able to live in a material sense in much the same way as when her husband was alive with the added benefit of herself having control of her share of the estate's income.

But it was argued, for the plaintiff, that she and the children have lost the reasonable expectation of sharing in a greatly augmented estate if the deceased had continued as a successful farmer for the next 12 to 15 years. It was said that as he had built up from practically nothing in 1945, an estate of £38,000 in the years between then and 1959, it could be expected that he would continue to increase his assets until he was between 60 and 65 years of age, when he might be expected to retire. Then, on his death, his widow and children could expect to benefit to a larger extent than they now have.

I find this line of argument far too hypothetical and speculative to justify any award of damages. On the tables the deceased had an expectation of life of 23 years. It is entirely guesswork to say what his estate would then have been worth, or to whom he would have left it. If one were to guess, it might be that the daughter, herself then a married woman with a family, would receive something according to her needs; the widow might receive some capital plus an annuity; the son might get his father's farm (if he owned one then) subject to a charge in favour of other beneficiaries. It is quite impossible to make any reliable assumption as to what would then happen, or to compare hypothetical benefits then with actual and tangible benefits now. I also regard it as an equally speculative suggestion that the deceased might in the normal course have re-arranged his affairs so as to attract less death duties, and that on this account his family have now suffered a pecuniary loss.

Accordingly on the facts before me, I am bound to hold that because of the financial benefits which accrue to them under the deceased's will, there has not been established any probable pecuniary loss suffered by the plaintiff or her children as a result of his death which would justify an award of damages. Hence the plaintiff's claim must be dismissed.

I certify the above and foregoing three pages to be a true and correct copy of the Reasons for Judgment given by The Honourable Mr. Justice Jackson in the above action on the 27th day of June, 1961.

Dated this 3rd day of July, 1961.

(Sgd.) P. K. HAZLIT,
Associate.

I bring that judgment forward so that when steps are taken to have the legislation amended, members will be able to refresh their memories. That was a very simple case in which it can be seen how a serious injustice can befall a widow and her family. After years of pioneering and devoting the whole of their savings, time, and labour to develop a property, because of the misfortune of an accident in which her husband had no share in the negligence, this widow and her family have to suffer. I hope that as a result of what I have placed before members some action may be taken. I support the Address-in-Reply.

THE HON. J. D. TEAHAN (North-East) [4.58 p.m.]: It has been stated in this House, and there is an impression abroad, especially in the metropolitan area, that the goldfields are not as prosperous as they were or might be. That they are not as prosperous as they were is something with which we might agree; but there is prosperity there as well as an air of prosperity. Perhaps that prosperity would be greater if the help we expect from the Federal Government were given. I feel certain that the Federal Government could stretch its subsidies in order to assist the industry to a greater degree than it has. This would enable the mining industry to absorb unemployment as it has done in the past and, no doubt, could do in the future. In order to meet the present situation, the mines have had to become more mechanised; and because of that mechanisation fewer miners are required. However, apart from that there is an air of prosperity.

I am pleased and proud to live on the goldfields; and they have advanced and kept up with the times. As I have said before, that is probably the result of good management and the co-operation that exists between management and labour. I am certain that both management and labour know what they are doing. They are fortunate in having good miners, and in having to deal with men who know what is correct in the industrial field. That fact helps us to enjoy the amenities we have today; and it adds to the general appearance of prosperity.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I am very pleased to hear you say that.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I am speaking of my own district, and I believe in speaking optimistically.

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

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I have a great respect for a man now deceased. I refer to the President of the Chamber of Mines, Mr. Dolph Agnew. Mr. Agnew was never capable of speaking pessimistically. He always spoke in an optimistic manner, and I am certain that in adopting that attitude he did more for the goldmining industry than did many others. He always had a bright outlook.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do you think the subsidy concessions granted by the Commonwealth Government will help?

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: The Commonwealth Government recently gave some assistance for small prospectors; but the amount involved is only small and I feel the assistance could have been greater. People on the goldfields have assisted themselves. We have a prospectors' association that is doing excellent work. In its own way it is encouraging prospecting.

While the number of permanent prospectors has not increased a great deal, the number of week end prospectors has grown, and who knows but that one day the results could be encouraging to a noticeable degree. We have already had small finds that are very worthwhile.

There are some bright spots away from the Golden Mile. Mt. Magnet shows signs of vigorous production and gives every indication of a long life. At Mt. Ida, 80 miles from Menzies—which was considered a dying mine and in its last stages—there are now signs of many years of activity.

Western Australia is blessed geologically, and I feel that much will come from the development of our minerals which have so far remained a secret in the ground. It is refreshing to learn of the number of individuals anxious to prospect for iron ore. It is also pleasing to know there are 87 successful applicants, including a number from overseas, who wish to undertake exploration for ore in a workmanlike manner. We are told that it is hoped soon to bring Talling Peak, near, Mullewa, into production. I hope and trust that in my own particular province, the known deposits near Cue will when properly explored, be of a quality suitable for mining on a large scale.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: We are drilling them now.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: I refer now to the question of traffic. Traffic plays a big part in all our lives—perhaps too big a part. It plays a part in our deaths also. I would like to express my approval of what has been happening lately in the courts; namely, the cancellation of driving licenses for speeding. I am certain this is producing good results. Magistrates can only tell from others whether their actions are producing the desired results; and I am

certain those results are successful and that people who drive on the roads, whether in the metropolitan area or in the country, can already see good results. It appears that offenders are not very disturbed by the fines imposed upon them; but they are disturbed when their right to drive is taken away for a while.

Mention has been made of the old traffic rule of giving way to the right. Each day I am hoping to learn that the old rule has been restored. The fact that so far it has not surprises me. The original rule was that all traffic should give way to traffic approaching on the right. There was a traffic sign on the Beaufort Street Bridge which read, "Motorists, give way to all traffic on your right on all roads at all times." I considered that a very good sign. It could be easily observed and easily read, and I feel certain it was a rule that motorists, on seeing it, would not fail to adhere to. The rule of giving way to traffic on the right was, in my opinion, a factor in eliminating deaths on the road. I regard it as a matter of courtesy, and a way of saying, "Thank you." At the present time, there is a question of doubt; it is a question of who gets there first. That is the rule today.

An accident, with fatal results, happened recently not far from my home. I am certain that accident was the result of indecision. Each party was in doubt as to who was there first, and no blame could be attached to either. Had the rule of giving way to the right been observed, a young life would not have been lost. I think there are many people who will not be satisfied until we have returned to that old rule. Why it was departed from, I do not know. At a guess, I think the authorities felt they would speed up the traffic on the roads if they made the rule more elastic. I think speeding contributed to our recent heart appeal. Speed is always in our minds and in all our actions. I hope we will soon learn that the old rule has returned.

The Hon. G. Bennetts: They do that in Canberra, of course.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: Another rule on which I would like to touch concerns parking at intersections. I have twice recently seen accidents occur and injuries caused to one of the parties because a thoughtless person parked on an intersection, allowing no clear vision for those proceeding along the roads. The traffic authorities are able to learn of the difficulties only by what people say. We who represent large areas hear the views of people in our provinces, and we are here to express those views in the hope that by so doing we will help those who frame our laws.

I do not ask that rules be changed, because I feel that much of our problem is due to the ever-changing rule of the

road. It has almost got to the stage where we have to read the morning paper before we proceed to town; we have to check the latest alteration.

I turn now to local government. I feel that the time has arrived—that it arrived, in fact, many years ago—when there should be more emphasis on amalgamation, especially where there are a number of local authorities within a small area. As the Minister knows, there are three within a short distance in the area in which I reside. These local authorities have done an excellent job in their own way. But as the years have gone on, more duties have been thrust upon local authorities; and they are finding that more costs are necessary and they require more revenue. To this end they are increasing their rates and their valuations. One local authority had its valuations increased quite steeply recently, when they should have come down. I don't know how the local authority arrived at the valuation. Knowledge of local property sales should be a guide in the district. If a building could have been sold ten years ago for £1,000, and today will sell for only £700, then valuations do not appear to be increasing. Taking that as a guide, the valuation should have gone down. The fact that the valuation in this case went up was possibly due to the need for increased local government revenue.

The Minister will know of some areas where revenues are not high, but where the local authority does a very important job. I would not like to see such bodies amalgamated with others. No doubt Mr. Wise knows of a few in his area. They are almost a liaison medium between pastoralists and the Government, prospectors and the Government, and people generally and the Government; and they are the focal point—a centre—where local people may go for information. The small shire councils are doing a good job in this way; and in grading the roads they are fulfilling a very necessary service.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You do not help them by making the distance hundreds of miles more apart.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: These local governing bodies perform their duties well, and I would not like to see them disappear. They also give happiness to people, and they disseminate information in their areas.

I turn now to the subject of water rates, and the recent increases. A few months ago I heard over the radio that people in the goldfields area would notice an increase in their water charges but that those increases would be a matter of only shillings. I have not got the correct wording, but I know it was a matter of shillings. When listening to the news session I formed the impression it would be a matter of only pence.

I have had quite a few water rate assessments shown to me. I have taken a few at random and will read some to the House. There are four of these that would not have had excess water within the year. Those I propose to read concern only small consumers. The assessment for the first one was £3 16s. in 1960. In 1961 it was £4 15s. The next applies to a small dwelling. Last year the assessment was £2 12s. This year it was £3 5s. The next one was £3 16s. in 1960, and £4 15s. this year. The next one was £5 in 1960, and £6 10s. this year. The assessment for the fifth one—which may be liable for excess—was £7 in 1960, and this year it was £8 15s. I do not know whether this ties up with the news item which said the increases would be a matter of a few shillings.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: Which towns are they?

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: They are towns such as Boulder, in the province which I represent, and in which I live.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: It is cheap water.

The Hon. J. D. TEAHAN: Yes, but they are only cheap houses. The honourable member is thinking of the £4,000 to £5,000 homes in the metropolitan area.

Also I take this opportunity to voice my protest against the sale of the State Building Supplies by the Government to the Hawker Siddeley Group Ltd. I did not speak on this particular subject when it was being discussed previously but I am availing myself of the opportunity now. The more one thinks of this sale and studies the terms of the agreement, the more one comes to the conclusion that the sale price of £2,000,000 was certainly not high. However, even if one overlooks that fact, one can go on to say that the arrangements over the instalments to be paid by the company for the balance of the purchase price were certainly generous. It will be noticed from the agreement that the balance is to be paid over 20 years. Those amounts could be met without any trouble, if not from the stocks on hand, from the profits that will be made by this company. Therefore, the only amount the company needed to find was the deposit; and it will not be long before it recovers that, either.

I repeat that the sale of the State Building Supplies was transacted at an extremely generous price as far as the Hawker Siddeley Group was concerned. For instance, according to the Premier's statement the book values were written down by £1,500,000. That was another generous gesture on the part of the Government. The book values, of course, are not true when one considers the inflation that has taken place, and that the pound today is not worth what it was a few years ago.

It has been said by the Government that prices would not necessarily rise. Those who have criticised the deal have rightly said that increases in the prices of the various materials handled by the company could be expected; but the Government, in its reply to such criticism, said that that would not be the case. However, in regard to State enterprises sold by the Government to private concerns, I can refer to one State hotel that I know of that was disposed of by the Government and within 48 hours of the sale the purchaser had raised the price of beer.

As was the case with the State Building Supplies, that hotel was showing reasonable profits whilst under State control; and, in addition to the profits that were made, it could rightly be said that the consumers—and there were many who patronised this hotel—were, in effect, shareholders, and that they obtained the benefit of a cheap price for their beer over the years. The benefit of obtaining a glass of beer, or whatever they drank, at one penny less than the usual price would have amounted to a considerable sum; and, to those who lived in the district, this represented dividends which were well worthwhile.

We have also been reading in the Press lately that the Commonwealth Government intends to give some consideration towards making an investigation into restrictive trade practices. If the Commonwealth Government intends to do that it is obvious that something needs to be done; or, at least, there must be some very sound reason for the necessity for such a move. Only recently, too, it was announced in the Press that as a result of the latest Commonwealth Budget, sales tax on many goods is to be reduced; and, in some instances, the percentage reduction is quite high. However, the following morning whilst listening to a radio broadcast I heard something like this: Certain provisions of the Budget in regard to sales tax have already been acted on.

That was how the Commonwealth Government expected something additional in the way of sales tax. On the other hand, we realise only too well how slowly other announcements in regard to pension rises or other benefits that may accrue to the people are acted upon. For example, whenever there is a rise in pensions—whether it be old age or invalid pensions—following upon the Budget details being announced in August, it is often the first pay in October before the pensioners obtain their small rise of 5s. or so.

In regard to petrol, an announcement was made in the Press that the oil distributing companies were reducing the price to the retailer. However, a newspaper article appearing alongside this statement—or at least in a newspaper published within a short time of that announcement—read something like this:

The price of petrol will be reduced by $\frac{1}{2}$ d., but not until existing supplies are exhausted. Who would be the one to decide, however, when the existing supplies were exhausted? It will be about a week at least before they are exhausted, and no decrease in the price of petrol is expected during that time. Therefore, it is obvious that it is a question of one-way traffic in regard to the price of petrol.

The Press announcement on the Budget details also stated that household goods would be subject to a decrease of 8 per cent. in sales tax. That represents £8 in every £100, so a householder requiring goods worth £100 would pay only £92 for them. But such was not to be the case. A note covering household goods read something like this: The electrical retailers do not expect to make any reduction in the price of these items because they were on the point of increasing the price before the Budget details were disclosed. Therefore, it was rather coincidental that the reduction in sales tax came about at the time the retailers intended to increase the prices of these goods and that, as a result, the price would remain the same. If the Commonwealth Government now in office considers that something should be done to curb restrictive trade practices, and if it decides to take some action, I am quite certain that the action it takes will be well warranted. I thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me the opportunity to speak on the Address-in-Reply debate.

THE HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [5.22 p.m.]: I wish to speak on a few matters contained in the Speech made by the Lieutenant-Governor. My initial remarks are directed towards the goldmining industry regarding which the members for the North-East and South-East provinces are greatly concerned. Whilst it is enlightening to know that the value in Australian currency of the gold yield from those mines is increasing over the years, it is sad to realise that the number of men employed in the industry is decreasing.

In the last eight years, with the exception of two, there has been a return for the gold produced of over £13,000,000 per annum, in Australian currency, from all those mines which are more or less affiliated with the Chamber of Mines in Kalgoorlie. The Mines Department records support that statement. In the two years I have excepted, the return from the gold yield was over £12,000,000 per annum. The figure of £13,000,000 is the highest return for gold produced ever since there were goldfields in Western Australia.

Nevertheless, strange as it may seem, in 1903 there were 20,716 men employed in the industry, but today there are only 4,992, and of that number there are only about 3,200 working on the mines within the Golden Mile belt. The remainder are

scattered in and around places such as Gwalia, Mt. Ida, and Leonora. As a result of this reduction in the number of men employed in goldmining, I sometimes wonder whether, even if the price of gold were increased, these big mines would employ any more men. Undoubtedly—the figures support this statement—increasing values are being obtained from gold production and, as Mr. Teahan has said, tungsten drill and air legs, and the low cost of extraction today represent only a few of the modern methods which have made it possible to mine such a low grade of ore. Modern methods and new techniques are also employed in the treatment of this low grade ore and it is these that are responsible for such an excellent return being obtained.

I am disappointed, however, when I look back over the years to think that Kalgoorlie has a present population of 22,000 or 23,000 at the most, whereas it used to boast a population numbering between 40,000 and 50,000; and I am also disappointed to think that the number of men employed on the gold mines has been decreasing every year. It makes me wonder what is going to happen in the near future. There is no doubt in my mind that some of the big mines in Kalgoorlie will continue in production for many years yet, but something will have to be done to foster this industry with a view to increasing the number of workers employed in it.

Unless something is done along these lines, I am certain that the population of the goldfields will continue to decline, because there is nothing else but the mines in Kalgoorlie or Boulder from which production can be obtained and revenue earned. There is no other industry which could employ more workers or increase the present population.

The Sons of Gwalia G.M., for example, would not be in a very healthy state were it not for the Commonwealth subsidy received by it; although the Hill 50 G.M. at Mount Magnet is, I think, a good producer and will continue to be so for some time. Apart from these few isolated centres and the producers on the Golden Mile, goldmining is on the wane; and it gives one food for thought when one realises from the records that, year after year, the number of men employed in the industry continues to fall.

To my way of thinking there is only one answer to the problem, and that is to encourage more prospectors to commence operations in the various goldfields. One of the greatest sponsors of such a move is Mr. Heenan, together with the other members who represent goldfields provinces. At every opportunity we have always stressed the need for more prospectors. Without these men, there is very little chance of discovering new finds which may become payable goldmines and which may prove to be a venture of sufficient

size to attract the interest of a large company. The gold belt appears to extend from Laverton in the north to Esperance in the south, and in that large tract of country there must be a great deal of ground which can yet be upturned and which, I have no doubt, will produce a great deal more gold.

Although the privations of prospectors are not as bad as they used to be, great difficulty is experienced in finding men who are prepared to put up with the adverse conditions that are met whilst prospecting. Prospecting for gold still requires a great deal of patience, time, and trouble on the part of the men engaged in this work. I realise that the Minister for Mines has taken some steps to attract prospectors to the goldfields, but I still think that he could perhaps give thought to making some further effort to keep this industry in existence and to maintain it in the years to come. We will have to do something more than we are doing now to encourage men to go prospecting with a view to finding fresh fields.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What would you suggest?

The Hon. W. R. HALL: That question is very difficult to answer. I can only state that it requires a fair amount of pounds, shillings and pence to engage in prospecting. Prospectors have to face the cost of materials—in the main explosives—and light equipment or machinery, and they should be assured of a reasonable and fair return.

There are two or three drills which are operated by the Mines Department in this State. When a prospector succeeds in finding worthwhile ore by way of loaming, some steps should be taken to supply him with light machinery, such as a pneumatic drill like those used in the metropolitan area for the removal of tram-lines and an air compressor driven by a petrol or diesel motor. The supply of such equipment would prove to be a great encouragement to prospectors who were seeking new finds.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You were with me at Meekatharra when I offered to buy air compressors for this purpose.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I am aware of that. I realise the Minister has to cut his cloth according to its length. The Minister has travelled extensively in my constituency, and in the goldmining districts in the north and south of this State. Goldmining centres which have become ghost towns number many. It is obvious that these centres have not been worked out, for gold is still being found in some of them.

The discovery of new gold finds requires great efforts of men; but the old-time prospector is extinct, and not very many young men take on the job of gold prospecting today, because it is a precarious

occupation. The wages which a young or middle-aged person can earn in other occupations are greater by far than the return he may derive from gold prospecting. The prospector cannot be expected to exist on £5 or £6 a week. However, there are still some people—mainly old-age pensioners with a bit of outside support—who do their best to find gold; but we all know how many of these prospectors are successful. Mr. Tom Walls of Kalgoorlie—I went to school with him—is a first-class prospector, and he has written several articles on methods of gold prospecting. These articles give a lead to those who are desirous of going prospecting.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I had to pay £125 as an award to one prospector recently.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: It is a great pity there are not 20 or 30 awards of £125. The provision by the Government of one award to small gold producers is a mere bagatelle in bringing the goldmining industry up to its pre-war standard. Goldfield members in this Parliament and people who have been engaged in the goldmining industry will be aware that in former times, on a Saturday morning in Kalgoorlie truck-loads of men and women would arrive to do their shopping. These people were running small goldmining shows in the outback between Kalgoorlie and Laverton, but today we do not see many such people on a Saturday morning in Kalgoorlie.

I have read that the Federal Government has decided to assist the small gold producer financially, but the amount of assistance contemplated is not sufficient. The goldmining industry has pulled Western Australia out of the mire on one or two occasions, and it is a great shame to see the industry slipping today. Who knows but that the time will come again when the assistance of this industry will be required very badly by the State? Although the number of operators in the outback is infinitesimal compared with the number of unemployed found in this State at present, if we do not encourage the existing prospectors to remain in their occupation, the number of unemployed will be increased.

The other day I met some of the unemployed people in the grounds of Parliament House. I knew some of them as tradesmen on the goldfields. Among them I met a first-class carpenter, and I was amazed to find him unemployed. Some of these tradesmen had worked in the Kalgoorlie Road Board area years ago. They came down to the metropolitan area to seek employment, but today they are out of work. It is alarming to find good tradesmen out of work.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What is the percentage of unemployed on the goldfields?

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I would not know exactly. Many of the young people reared on the goldfields have come down to the metropolitan area to find work, because there is not much avenue for employment on the fields after they leave school. This also applies to young girls on the goldfields. A great percentage of the boys, after they had left school, used to enter the Midland Junction Workshops as apprentices. In the last eight or nine years there has not, on the goldfields, been much scope for the employment of these young people.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You must not regard gold as the be-all and end-all of the mineral wealth of this State.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I realise that. I am happy to notice that the production from minerals, other than gold, was about £6,000,000 last year. That is very nearly half of the value of the gold produced in this State each year. The Minister should not forget that gold is the foremost revenue producer of Western Australia.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I never forget gold—not even for a moment.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: I would not expect the Minister to do that. I realise that the return from the production of minerals, other than gold, is increasing; at the same time it is discouraging to people who were born and bred on the goldfields to see the goldmining industry declining, and the number of people engaged therein dwindling.

The big goldmining companies are being operated satisfactorily, and by treating ore yielding 5.69 dwt. of gold to the ton they are able to produce £13,000,000 worth of gold a year. That is not a bad output. In only one year was the yield greater than the yield of over £13,000,000 this year. I am concerned with the small number of workers who are engaged in the goldmining industry today, having regard to the amount of gold produced. The problem arises from the use of modern goldmining machinery.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is just as well, because without modern machinery the treatment of ore yielding 5.69 dwt to the ton would not be worthwhile.

The Hon. W. R. HALL: That is true. The Minister was pretty raw when he first took over the portfolio of mines, but he has endeavoured to learn at every opportunity. I hope that in the near future some action will be taken by the Government to absorb into the goldmining industry some of the unemployed in this State.

Referring to the Railways Department, the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech states—

The Railway Department for the second year in succession has improved its financial results.

That is very encouraging. From my observations I found the Kalgoorlie express to be the best train I have travelled on since I have been in Parliament. In those 23 years I have travelled on it fairly frequently. This train arrives from Kalgoorlie pretty well on time each morning; and it appears that every employee connected with the working of our railways is pulling his weight. I ask the Minister to take into consideration the condition of the coaches or carriages on the Kalgoorlie express.

Today this State is turning out railway carriages which are far superior to those produced in years gone by, but there has not been any improvement in the coaches on the Kalgoorlie express which is used by the people from Kalgoorlie, as well as by those from the intermediate stations. The compartments are very small. I must point out, however, that the *Westland* is a better train to travel on than the Kalgoorlie express. In view of the revenue derived by the department from the Kalgoorlie express—which is now comparable with the revenue derived by it from the *Westland*—there should be no reason why the carriages of the Kalgoorlie express should not be in keeping with the carriages of the *Westland*. I hope that in the near future the Railways Department will brighten the carriages on the trains which serve the people living between Perth and Kalgoorlie.

I must raise my protest against the sale of the State Building Supplies. A lot has been said on this subject by members of this Parliament and by people outside. Many people are perturbed at the price at which this undertaking has been sold by the Government. I know some of the men who work in this organisation, and they have expressed fears of insecurity for the future. Evidently this undertaking has been of very great use to Western Australia in keeping the price of timber at a fair level. Before any of the State trading concerns is sold—irrespective of the Government in office—members here and in another place should have the right to say "Yes" or "No" to the proposition; the deal should not be clinched and then be brought along here for ratification. The deal should be decided here before anything is finalised. If this were done the Government would avoid a great deal of criticism; and had it been done with regard to the State Building Supplies, the Government would have avoided much of the criticism it has received over the transaction, and things would have run far more smoothly. The people of Western Australia are certainly perturbed about the sale of the State Building Supplies.

I do not think there is anything else I desire to say during this debate. The time will be opportune in the very near future to speak on other matters, but as the mining industry has No. 1 priority with me I desired to take the opportunity of bringing it before the Minister. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

THE HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [5.47 p.m.]: I was very interested in the wonderful Speech which was delivered on opening day by the Government through the Lieutenant-Governor. It put me in mind of a Christmas cake, with plenty of everything in it. Mr. Watson said it was a beautiful Speech; and no doubt His Excellency could make a good speech, but I would like to hear one which he himself had written.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It would have been better still.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: If he had written it himself perhaps it would have been a different one. On many occasions while he was reading the Speech I noticed His Excellency had a smile on his face. It appeared to me that perhaps he was thinking, "What a lot of tripe is being put over the people in the gallery!"

The Government made a very shrewd move when it chose one of the brilliant men in its party to paint such an attractive picture of the situation in Western Australia. Mr. Watson made a wonderful speech. Despite this, however, those in the gallery and in the Chamber were not particularly interested, because they were principally looking forward to the afternoon tea that was waiting for them.

I was amazed that this Government should sell out or give away the railway mill which, by supplying sleepers and other necessities for the railways, was instrumental in keeping prices down. If it had not been for this mill, the big combine would have taken over completely. That is what is going to take place now, and there is nothing we can do about it. The prices will be set and the other mills will have to follow suit. As soon as the agreement was signed the price of timber was raised by 3s. Because of this factor the people of Western Australia will be paying the price asked for this undertaking. This is one of the reasons why I believe a Royal Commission should be appointed to investigate the circumstances and conditions of the sale. In *The West Australian* of the 16th August there appeared an item written by a Mr. Rae of Peppermint Grove. He has only been in the country a few months but he is quite sure that he knows the faults contained in the contract and that the Government is giving an asset to a big combine.

Members of this Government are spending too much time running around. Only a few weeks ago a pensioner in Kalgoorlie said to me—and I will use his words, "Bennetts, what are we, the pensioners, going to get out of all this? The members down there are flying all over the world like bats let loose out of hell. Not only are they going themselves but they are taking their womenfolk with them. In addition to that, they have an industrial commission flying around the world."

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There are bats there, are there?

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: If members want to know the facts I will tell them after the House adjourns. This gentleman in Kalgoorlie also made mention of the Prime Minister, who is flying around everywhere with his good wife, Dame Pattie. I would say that at a very early date he will probably be flying over again to see Royalty, and he might even be the godfather to Princess Margaret's infant. That would be an excuse for him to make another trip.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: That would be a reason, not an excuse.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: Several Federal members have been visiting Kalgoorlie, and they say they are on a fact-finding mission. They have not promised anything; they are only finding out what is being done. It is the biggest propaganda campaign I have ever seen, and it is a pity there are not a few more Federal elections. If there were we would probably have a lot more visits from them. But they do not do anything.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: They gave us an export license for some of our iron ore, didn't they?

The Hon. L. A. Logan: They boomed up Esperance.

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. L. C. Di-ver): Order! A moment ago the honourable member mentioned a member of the Royal Family. No member of the Royal Family can be spoken of during a debate.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I am sorry. Perhaps we are giving too much of our iron ore away to these countries. I hope the Minister and the Government will see that we are protected for many years.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: It will be watched very closely.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: Members will recall that some years ago the Prime Minister was accused of giving too much of our iron ore away to certain foreign countries; and, of course, we saw the results of that action during the war. Therefore I hope that the same thing does not occur again.

I was very pleased to see that the Government did consider the Western Mining Corporation, because it has done so much in this State to revive the goldmining industry. In fact, had it not been for this company the goldmining industry would not be what it is today.

The first gold was found in Kalgoorlie on the 16th June, 1893. From that day on the industry has been assisting the country. In 1900, when things were very bad in Victoria, the people drifted over to Western Australia and worked in the goldmining industry. The wages

they received here were sent home to their families in Victoria and kept them going until the situation over there eased. Many times has the gold-mining industry pulled not only the State but the Commonwealth out of difficulty; and it is going to do so again. If synthetic fabrics are used more extensively, there will be a drop in the wool market and again the goldmining industry will have to come to the rescue.

It is said that the industry in Kalgoorlie is right on top again, and there is no doubt about that. There are three mines there at the moment which are in a very good position. However, we must not forget that a lot of the big profits being made at the moment are put back into developmental work in order to replace areas which will prove unsatisfactory later.

Even as far back as 1912, when I was working underground, certain levels were by-passed because the grade at those levels was unsuitable for production. Therefore, what must it be like today? Because of mechanisation and the improvement in machinery, some of those lower grades have been valuable; but the stage has been reached where all grades of ore are being used. I have a neighbour who is what they call a "louser." He goes into the rich stopes which they call the jeweller's shop, and takes out the gold. This is used to sweeten up the poorer class of ore to maintain the average standard. When those rich stopes cut out, the ones in charge of the mines are going to have a headache.

During a recent reception held for the Federal Treasurer (Mr. Holt), and Senator Spooner, the President of the Chamber of Mines made certain suggestions for assistance in the goldmining areas. The Federal members would make no promises but said they would keep in mind what had been put before them and would give consideration to the matter at a later date. Whether after the elections we will get that consideration, I do not know. Certainly the little given the other day assisted the small mining companies and prospectors, and they are quite satisfied about it.

During the last show, our Minister for Mines, and the Premier visited Kalgoorlie, and attended a reception in the town hall; but the Premier's remarks about the gold-mining and pastoral industries at Kalgoorlie were not interesting to the people who attended the reception. The remarks of the Minister for Mines were a bit different; but, by and large, I gathered that the people were not pleased with what was said about the pastoral industry. It was surprising and pleasing to me, having been a resident of Kalgoorlie for 65 years, to learn that wool from the goldfields was classed "tops" in the recent show in the Eastern States. I think the wool was awarded first prize.

Mr. Cunningham mentioned that the goldmines were installing certain plant. Well, they have to put in this plant because costs keep rising so much. They have to put in their own plant in order to have a guaranteed power supply at a cheaper rate.

The honourable member also mentioned the hospitals on the goldfields. I think the Government knows that it was the Hawke Government that set in motion the preparations for the extensions to the maternity ward and the nurses' quarters. The present Government has carried on what was planned; and I feel that it is high time something was done, because the maternity ward—especially the single rooms—was a disgrace. It used to be called the barn, and it was used for native people who were taken sick; and when private rooms were wanted for maternity cases, the natives would be removed from the wards and the white patients would be admitted to them and would have to pay the top rate. What was done was necessary; and we on the goldfields appreciate the good job that has been done.

The St. John of God Hospital was in such a state that it would have collapsed at an early date. The building was out of date and unhygienic, and it had to be rebuilt in order to conform to the standard of the other hospitals in the district. These hospitals on the goldfields are doing a good job and we appreciate it.

Mr. Hall spoke about the unemployment of the young people. There is now, and there always has been, a great deal of unemployment on the goldfields, but there has been more of it amongst the young people than previously, because of the chain stores. John Wills was one of the first grocery stores on the goldfields—it was established in 1894—and until the chain store came to this district, it employed at least 30 young shop assistants. Today, the chain store employs about 10, and they would all be real juniors, with the exception of one or two. And that is not all. The chain store has put a lot of small stores out of business, and several others have had to become self-service shops. As a result, they have dismissed the boys and girls around 18 years of age and have employed assistants who are about 16 years old. This has caused a lot of young people to become unemployed.

Another feature is this: In my opinion, and in the opinion of many others, there are too many married women occupying jobs that the young women could do; and that is having an ill effect. I have no grouse against a married woman working if her husband is suffering from the ill effects of some disease or is crippled. In such a case, I have every respect for her for going out to work. But I do not believe in both units working and leaving the children to run around and become delinquents. Half of the trouble in regard to delinquency is caused by that. Today

many husbands and wives are either working or are in hotel lounges, and the kiddies are allowed to run around and do as they like. I know of dozens of such instances.

These people are getting good money, but they cannot carry on. Why? Because they pay cash for drink and tick up their bread and meat! In the newspaper today one can read where a minister points out the same thing. The trouble is that half the hotels are having a rough spin on account of the "squeeze": money is not available. The hotels in Perth are in the same position as those in Kalgoorlie. A restriction should be applied so that all pleasures at hotels are cut out—at the bars, dancing, other entertainment, and so on; and the hotels should do what they did many years ago when they were established for the purpose of supplying liquor to the public. In those days the people went to hotels and appreciated their drinks; and they went along respectably and knew that their children had every comfort.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: What particular sport would you strongly advocate?

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I would not like to express my opinion on that. I heard one honourable member mention our railways. Well, I hope that standardisation will take place. Ever since I have been in this House—and if members turn up *Hansards* for previous years they will see that what I am saying is true—I have mentioned Esperance and the standardisation of railways.

Standardisation has to come, and I am pleased to say that the pattern set by the Commonwealth Railways has been the means of the State railways being in the position they are in today. We have received a certain amount of freight because of the improvement in our trains. Last night I travelled on the ordinary express from Kalgoorlie to Perth, and on that train there were vans in the lead with 75 tons of freight, and there was a cool storage van on the back with, perhaps, 10 tons of freight in it. Previously that train would run with about 20 passengers; and it would run at a big cost to the State. Today we are getting some revenue from the freight that is hauled.

In addition, with freight cars being in the lead, there is an improvement for the second-class passengers who sleep in the leading passenger coach, because previously the noise and the oil fumes of the diesel engines kept them awake; especially in the summer time.

There has been dieselisation in the railways. The road is the foundation of a railway—the track on which the trains run; and it is like the foundation of a building. If there is not a good foundation, it is no good erecting a building, because it will not stay there. So the foundation is everything.

The Commonwealth train which arrived at Kalgoorlie yesterday was an excursion train so that tourists could see Western Australian wildflowers—a good advertisement for Western Australia—and the passengers received a special concession; they could bring their motorcars from Port Pirie to Kalgoorlie at a special rate. Kalgoorlie is the terminus for the Commonwealth Railways; and at that point the passengers make their own arrangements to travel to other parts of Western Australia. Yesterday the Commonwealth train hauled 1,540 tons. It runs with about 100 tons over its load. It should have arrived at 7 o'clock, but it picked up two hours on the trip. That is an instance of the payable load that can be brought by a train. A steam train would have to carry a certain amount of coal and water, which is non-payable freight. So members can appreciate that the improvements which have taken place are due to good roads, good rolling-stock, and dieselisation.

I have a little grouse about our railways—especially the goldfields express. It makes tears come to my eyes—and this is hard for me to say—to see the Albany express being built like it is, and then a first-class bus service being run parallel to it. Then again we have the *Australind* which travels to Bunbury.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There are hostesses on that one.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: Yet the goldfields express—the oldest train in the State—has had nothing done to it for some time. The trains to which I have referred have been built to perfection; and I say that in the workshops at Midland Junction we have some wonderful tradesmen who have done the work on those trains.

I understand that within the next week or two the Premier's district will have a newly-renovated train—and it will be something out of the box, too. So on every occasion the goldfields is left out.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: Before tea I was talking about the position in the Railways Department, and I had mentioned that a newly-renovated train is to be used on the Mullewa line. It should be ready any day now. In my view the Kalgoorlie express, too, is long overdue for some attention. I have written to the Minister to see what action is being taken, and he informs me that certain steps will be taken to improve the service, and he will advise me on what renovations are to be made. One or two carriages have been renovated and they are a great improvement. As they are renovated they are used on the *Westland*; but, unfortunately, the Kalgoorlie express has all the old carriages and is still in the same condition as it has been for many years past.

There are not even any power points on the Kalgoorlie express where anybody can use an electric razor. This facility is available on the *Westland*, and even if a few points could be installed in the corridors of the coaches used on the Kalgoorlie express, it would be a great help to the travelling public. The train is giving a wonderful service, and it always leaves Kalgoorlie and Perth on time and arrives on time. Not one train has been late in recent times. It is providing such a good service that the business people of Kalgoorlie are starting to wake up to the fact that they can leave Kalgoorlie after they have closed their businesses, can arrive in Perth next morning, attend to their affairs and return to Kalgoorlie on the train that night. If electric points were provided the people travelling to and from Kalgoorlie could use their electric razors and have a shave on the train. By doing that they would arrive clean and fresh and would be able to show that the goldfields people are always neat and tidy.

There is one other matter which requires attention. The menu in the dining car on the express has been the same for about 10 years; there has never been an alteration in that time. There is the same variety of soup, with the usual roast beef, roast lamb, steak and kidney, steam pudding, jelly and custard, and apple pie. As I have said, the menu has been the same for the last 10 years. During the time of the previous Government, which I supported, I wrote to the Minister complaining that no cold meat and salad was served during the summer months. On a train like that a traveller does not want a hot meal during the summer. I suggested a grill and the serving of cold meals in the summer time.

I received a letter in reply, telling me that it was not possible to accede to my request—this was after I had already seen what could be done on other dining cars, although admittedly on different trains. The then Minister told me that there were no facilities on the train for the serving of grills. Yet a cooked breakfast was provided on the train, and this included grills. When I wanted the same sort of service to be provided at night I was told that it could not be done because the facilities for cooking a grill were not available. What is better than a nice serve of cold meat and salad on a summer's night? It should be easier to serve that than a roast dinner. I ask the Minister to bring this matter under the notice of the Railways Department, when he mentions what members have said in this House, to see whether something can be done to improve the position.

When the party of which I am a member was the Government, the Minister told me that it was not possible to do what I wanted. But sometimes I wonder whether Ministers ever use their own initiative and the authority they have to say that

certain things shall be done. What I have suggested can and should be done; never mind about the people who are running these departments and getting away with everything and telling their Ministers what can and cannot be done!

Our railway services are improving and the present commissioner is a good administrator. I think he is doing a good job, and I think we will see still further improvement when the latest diesel locomotives are in use hauling the heavy loads from Perth over the hills. They will be an asset and should go a long way towards further improving the system.

I was wondering whether the Minister in charge of the House could tell me anything about the new electoral boundaries.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: He has not got a crystal ball, surely.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I think there has been a lot of misrepresentation, or there has been a lot of misreporting to the Government on this matter; at least the Government has been badly advised—I should say ill-advised would be the word. The Government got some poor information on this matter, because the court case, which went against the Government, will cost a few bob; but I suppose the taxpayers will have to pay for it. I hope we will know at an early date just how the boundaries are to be altered, because I am a bit scared of the position.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: What have you got to worry about?

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: During his speech, Mr. Teahan spoke about the increased cost of water in Kalgoorlie. What the honourable member had to say was quite true. I was in the office paying my rates—they were increased by about £2 10s., with no excess charge—and there was a queue of at least 12 people waiting to pay their rates. I was glad that none of them knew me because they were all complaining about the increased charges; they wanted to know whether their meters were in order and what the extra charges were for. I could not tell them that the present Government was responsible, because I did not like to let the Government down.

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

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I thought the best thing to do was to pay my bill and get out, which I did.

The Hon. J. J. Garrigan: Why didn't you tell the general public why their rates had been increased?

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: There have been many complaints about those increased rates—and the rates were increased because of what the Government did last year. The Government has increased many charges, and that is one of them.

There is one other matter about which I am a little perturbed and that is the announcement made in the Press the other day that the Lord Mayor of Perth is coming to Kalgoorlie to try to get the people there to subscribe £6,000 odd towards the Empire Games fund. If ever there was an imposition being placed upon the people that is one. What benefit will the people on the goldfields get out of it? We on the goldfields do not appeal to the people in the metropolitan area to help us; but because of the good nature of the people who live in the remote areas we are always being asked to assist those who live in the metropolitan area. Many calls are made on the people who live in the far distant parts of the State, and they are just about fed up with it.

I understand that only five people turned up at the meeting which was held last night to raise money for the Empire Games, so it does not look as though much money will be coming from that source. I think that in the vicinity of £1,000 to £2,000 was raised during the Heart Foundation appeal, which was more than the quota laid down for the district. But that was a genuine appeal. I cannot see how the Empire Games committee expects the people on the goldfields to support it to the extent that it does.

Although I may be looking a long way ahead, I intend to make a suggestion about the iron ore deposits at Koolyanobbing. If the proposal for a broad gauge railway line from Kalgoorlie to Kwinana is agreed to, and the iron ore from Koolyanobbing is to be transported by the broad gauge railway, I would like to see Bullfinch given a new lease of life. At present the mine at Bullfinch is mining a low grade of ore; and despite the assistance received from the Government, the mine could cease production at any time. If it did, I would like to see B.H.P., which is to mine the iron ore at Koolyanobbing, take over Bullfinch, which would be a ready-made town with a school, theatre, hotels, clubs, about 250 homes, and plenty of electric power and water and essential services such as a fire brigade available. A good road could be put through to Koolyanobbing—about 20 miles away—and if this town were used, it would mean that the Government and the company could get some return for the money expended. It is a thought that the Minister could keep in his mind.

I suppose members have been waiting for me to get around to talking about Esperance. I am very pleased with the development that has taken place in that area. I told members in this House, 16 years ago, what would happen at Esperance; and I am happy to say that my predictions have come true, even though I was howled down at the time. There has been a tremendous increase in the amount of cereals and grain produced in that district, and over the next five years the stock

numbers will increase to a figure which will surprise those members who have not seen the district in recent times.

There is one big problem at Esperance and that is how the people there are going to ship their surplus grain during the coming year, and what will happen over the next two or three years. As members know, a survey has been made of the area to see whether it is possible to have a land-backed harbour, and we hope the Government can see its way clear to build this harbour at an early date. If the State has not sufficient money available, I think it should be obtained from the Commonwealth Government, because that Government has spent about 80 per cent. of the taxpayers' money on the Snowy River project, and that is now such a great asset to the Commonwealth that the principal as well as the interest is being paid off each year. That project has opened up new country and has been the means of increased production. A land-backed harbour in Esperance could be an asset to the State because the land there has a great potential and the project could be built under the same conditions as the Snowy River project. So I would like to see the Government give the matter urgent attention.

In answer to a question I asked the other night, I was told that the Government is aware of the potential of the district. I think the amount of super that is being used there at the moment will be sufficient to warrant the establishment of a super works in the area. If that is done, then the stock that will be raised in that district—which is a grazing district—could be exported both overseas and interstate. Accordingly I hope the Government will give that area special attention.

Another aspect which needs consideration is that in view of the amount of minerals, such as copper ore and bauxite, which are being transported from Ravens-thorpe, a good road is a necessity. I trust, therefore, that the work will be speeded up in order to have the road completed at an early date.

While I am on the question of land I would like to refer to the fact that more and more people from all parts of Australia come to this State seeking land. There is no doubt that we have land available in Western Australia. An industrial committee has been set up in Southern Cross for some time, and it has been inspecting land between Marvel Loch, Narembreen, and Norseman. It has reported that there is a section of country in that area which is said to have a rainfall of 30 inches, together with good soil which could be developed for agricultural purposes. When I heard Mr. Jones talk about water, however, I wondered

whether it would be possible to install sufficient extensions to supply water to the areas further inland.

We all know that next to air, water is a most necessary commodity. We must have water to develop land. If we had the necessary water we could supply food and provide work for those people who are at present unemployed. There is no doubt that the unemployment position is a serious one at the moment.

I would now like to touch on the difficulties and restrictions placed on young men who wish to qualify as dentists. I think I have already mentioned that the same difficulties arise in the case of opticians. I cannot understand why these restrictions are necessary. In the long run the public has to pay for them. We all know that there is a shortage of dentists, and yet we find they must all go through a whole rigmarole of qualifications before they are able to practise. Conditions are becoming so rigid that there are not too many young men taking the course.

At the moment on the goldfields it costs a child 21s. to have a tooth extracted. That is a pretty high price. I can recall a time, many years ago, when a person on the goldfields could get a tooth drawn for 1s. There were other occasions when the dentist would go to Kalgoorlie and draw a tooth for nothing. A new set of teeth costs about £32 10s.

The Hon. R. F. HUTCHISON: A set costs £42 10.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: The honourable member has been exploited; she has been charged £10 extra for good looks! The position is getting quite out of hand, and I wonder whether we could not find some way out of the difficulty.

There is one matter which I wish to refer to the Minister for Child Welfare: the billeting of young boys and girls with people who require servants. Cases have been known of people making slaves out of these boys and girls who happen to be working for them. Could the Minister tell me whether there is an officer of the department who goes around and checks the position to see that these children from Government homes are being well treated? People have been known to be pretty hard on boys and girls whom they employ as domestics. They are expected to work a seven-day week from 6 o'clock in the morning till sometimes quite late in the evening. At times they do not finish work until after their employers return from the cinema or dances.

I had a report from a certain quarter, and I thought the best thing to do would be to get a minister of religion to inquire into it. Fortunately everything was all right in that case. But I do know of cases—not in this State—where boys and girls have been very badly treated. Indeed, I heard of one case of three girls who were

practically tortured by their employers. I mention this so that we can check any possible exploitation of these young people.

I am pleased to see that the Government has done something which meets with my approval. For a long time I have been battling to get a reservoir at Norseman, and this has at last materialised.

There is, however, one matter which worries me a little: the supply of pasteurised milk at Norseman. We have there a party who has put in a large plant, including storage, for pasteurised milk. He applied for a vendor's license for the supply of milk, and he had to go to a lot of expense to set up the necessary premises. Having done this, he naturally thought he would be in line to supply milk to the schools.

When the question of supplying milk to the schools came up, however, he found that he was not to be given the contract; that it was to be let to a person living about one and a half miles out of town. The result is that people who now want pasteurised milk must go one and a half miles out of town to get it. It makes me wonder whether there is a close tie between the Milk Board and certain milk vendors. I do feel that instead of the contract being given to only one person, it should be shared amongst others who are able to supply milk. Perhaps they could take it in turn to supply milk to the schools.

Some time ago a board was set up to deal with hostels for children. Recently we had members of the board in Kalgoorlie, and Mr. Cunningham and I went around and inspected two premises that were thought to be suitable as hostels. Unfortunately, after the board had seen those premises it felt they were not suitable for the purpose.

With the building of the new Eastern Goldfields High School, the Boulder High School building will become vacant; and the board thinks that this might be suitable for a hostel. With £2,000 or £3,000 spent on this building for alterations to the sanitary blocks, etc., it would certainly provide a suitable building for a hostel. So I hope the Government will consider the request from the members of the goldfields for the establishment of this hostel.

It is some years since I wrote to the Government—I think it was a Labor Government—concerning a delicensed hotel which I thought would be suitable as a hostel. I had many people coming to me asking me whether I could find suitable accommodation for their sons and daughters who were attending school in that area. Having written to the Government, I received a reply asking me to obtain certain information from the parents in question. The Government wanted to know such details as: how many children were involved; how many of them were boys; how many were girls. This, of

course, was quite understandable. I wrote to all the people concerned but to my surprise I received only one reply. It is a remarkable thing, but unless facilities are provided in these areas, people just will not live there. I trust, therefore, that the Government will do all it can to assist the children in these remote areas.

I listened to Dr. Hislop speak the other night, and I was pleased with the remarks he made regarding compensation for some of the turned-down miners on the gold-fields—compensation in connection with silicosis. Something should be done to overcome the small difficulties these people are putting up with at the present time; and I hope the Government will take steps in this direction. I do not think many men are affected. Perhaps Mr. Heenan would have some idea, as I think several of these men have gone to him.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Have you any idea of the number?

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: I do not know what the number is. I have heard this matter mentioned by only a few people. Most have gone to Mr. Heenan; and I think Mr. Heenan and Dr. Hislop, together with, perhaps, the secretary of the Australian Workers' Union in Kalgoorlie, would be able to advise the Minister better on that point.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I wish I could find out.

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: At present these men have to go to the doctor in charge of the Kalgoorlie laboratory, and the onus is placed on one man. That man has either to refuse or grant the application, and it is a pretty big decision for one man to have to make. I am of the opinion that there should be a board of three to consider these cases. If this were done I am sure it would be appreciated by the doctor in charge at Kalgoorlie. One person can always make a mistake: we are not always right—no-one is. There is always the chance of our being misled. Therefore, it would be better to have a board of three. Perhaps this board could comprise a doctor, a representative of the Chamber of Mines, and the secretary of the mining division of the Australian Workers' Union. Perhaps Dr. Hislop, together with some of our members who are qualified to do so, could work out something and pass their opinions on to the Government.

I would like to thank Dr. Hislop for the help he has given members at various times when they have taken sick. During the last session of Parliament I was in a very bad state of health and Dr. Hislop was most helpful. He assisted Mr. Davies the other night; and he has been doing this for other members over a period of years. We owe a lot to Dr. Hislop for the assistance he has given in the House and his willingness to advise on health matters.

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

The Hon. G. BENNETTS: We expect a lot from people, and sometimes give them no thanks. However, that is something I like to do. Last year quite a discussion took place concerning taxis; and the sooner the control of taxis is taken away from the Police Department and placed under a board, the better. I do not think this would be expensive. The present system under which taxis pick up and set down is very inconvenient. About three weeks ago a person in Perth who had broken two legs at the one time was not feeling well and hailed a taxi. This taxi did not stop, but another did. The driver said he was not allowed to pick up anybody away from a taxi stand in the main street unless that person had telephoned for him.

The other day I desired to go to a few departments and it was necessary for me to find a taxi rank in order to hire a taxi. In my opinion, taxis are for the convenience of the public of this State, and they should be able to pick up a person when necessary. We made a big mistake when we prevented taxis from picking up and setting down as required; and the sooner we get back to that system the better.

A hostel is being erected at Merredin and this will be a great help to the district. I hope it will be possible for similar hostels to be established throughout my province. I support the Address-in-Reply.

Debate adjourned, on motion by The Hon. J. M. Thomson.

House adjourned at 8.6 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, the 22nd August, 1961

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