

consequently the firms have been able to recover easily their high advertising costs by selling their products at higher prices than are justified. We know that directors and shareholders of these firms are also directors and shareholders of newspapers and of radio stations and, consequently, they are all the time working a racket upon the public, forcing the cost of living up, forcing wages and the cost of production up, and making the problem of inflation all the more menacing from day to day.

The selling margins of wholesalers and big stores, especially on essential items of clothing and also footwear, should be drastically curtailed. The Government should reduce taxation on the production of all commodities covered by the basic wage system and should subsidise the production of those commodities, making sure that every penny of subsidy granted gives a real reduction in price when commodities are finally sold over the retailers' counters.

Interest on war loans and taxation to pay for it should be closely looked at. I would be in favour myself of compulsory conversion of such loans at half current interest rates. Why should people pay interest on loans which they made available to the nation to save it from being conquered by some enemy power? I admit there would be some hardship, but the Government could look after those cases of hardship and where any adverse condition could be demonstrated, could give people concerned a higher rate of interest to ensure that they would not come back on the State for support in some other direction. Interest rates on overdrafts or loans to those producing or manufacturing commodities covered by the basic wage system should not be more than two per cent. Such overdrafts or loans should be financed through the Commonwealth Bank direct or through private banks where necessary. Private banks should be paid nothing more than a small agency fee for handling such overdrafts or loan business.

The same system should be made to operate, in my opinion, regarding the production and manufacture of essential goods which are not covered by the basic wage system. There should be closer co-operation between employers and employees and efficient, sensible management in industry. My experience over the years is that good employers get good results from employees, and ever so much depends on the personality of the employer or manager. If the personality of the employer and his manager is right, human and understanding, then that particular firm will get 100 per cent. good results from its workers. There is much more I could say in connection with this problem, but as most members desire that the House should adjourn at 6.15 or sooner until next Tuesday—

Mr. Marshall: Next Tuesday 12 months!

Hon. A. R. G. HAWKE: —I will bring my remarks to a close. Before doing so, however, I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the Address-in-reply:—"But we regret the failure of the Government to operate an effective system of price control and deplore the Government's long continued failure to recognise the serious nature of the inflation problem."

On motion by the Acting Premier, debate adjourned.

#### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £9,000,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.

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## Legislative Council

Tuesday, 14th August, 1951.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### AUSTRALIAN POUND REVALUATION.

(a) *As to Effect on Government Finance and Living Costs.*

Hon. A. R. JONES asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) In the event of revaluation of the Australian £ to parity with sterling does the Government consider that the general financial position of the Government would be improved?

(2) Has there been any marked reduction in the cost of living in New Zealand since that country adopted parity of exchange with sterling?

(3) Who, in the opinion of the Government, would be the chief immediate beneficiaries in Western Australia on revaluation?

(4) Would there be, in the opinion of the Government, any considerable early reduction in the cost of—

- (a) clothing;
- (b) food;
- (c) rents;
- (d) fares and freights?

(5) If there were to be a reduction of 25 per cent. in the exchange rate, can the Government ensure that such 25 per cent. reduction will be passed on to the public on all imported goods?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) A definite reply cannot be given to this question as there are too many factors that affect the economy of the State; but, on the broad issue, it is considered that the general financial position of the State would not be improved.

(2) Sufficient data is not available here to enable a fair comparison to be made.

(3) The chief beneficiaries on revaluation would be:

(a) The persons or bodies having occasion to use quantities of goods and materials imported from outside Australia.

(b) The Government, which would benefit by approximately £1,000,000 on the overseas debts and imports.

(4) It is not considered there would be any early material reduction in the cost of clothing, food, rents, fares and freights.

(5) No.

(b) *As to Approximate Loss to Industries, Government, etc.*

Hon. A. L. LOTON asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) If the Australian £ were now revalued and brought to sterling parity, what would be the approximate losses suffered, in Western Australia only, by—

- (a) the goldmining industry;
- (b) exporters of manufactured goods;
- (c) the principal primary industries, including wool, wheat, fruit (fresh and dried), meat, dairying?

(2) What would be the likely effect on the goldmining industry? Would any—and if so, how many—mines, be able to carry on successfully? If not, how many

persons would be affected, and what would be the approximate overall effect on the State, its railways, water supplies, finances, housing problems, etc.?

(3) What would be the estimated saving to the importers of newsprint in Western Australia if revaluation of the Australian £ to sterling were implemented?

(4) Did not the Prime Minister say at the recent conference in Sydney that all economic advice was against the proposal?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) £1,950,000.

(b) Figures for exported manufactured goods not readily available.

(c) Loss on principal primary products would be:

	£
Wool	10,886,000
Wheat	5,167,000
Flour	1,176,000
Fruit—Fresh	212,000
Fruit—Dried	17,000
Meat	152,000
Butter	24,000
Timber	75,000

(2) The revaluation of the Australian £ to parity with sterling would seriously affect the goldmining industry.

Unable to advise how many mines could carry on, but the effect on the State would be very considerable, as it is believed that approximately 60,000 persons are directly or indirectly dependent on the industry in this State.

(3) Approximate saving on newsprint would be £45,000.

(4) Part of the speech in regard to revaluation was:

The best and most responsible economic advice available to the Commonwealth Government, given by people whose official responsibility is to offer us disinterested economic advice, is against an alteration of the exchange rate, and is against it on purely economic grounds.

#### CARNARVON FLOODS.

*As to Government Assistance to Residents and Planters.*

Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Agriculture:

(1) What was the total amount of Government assistance extended to—

- (a) residents as distinct from planters; and
- (b) planters

for damage caused by the recent floods in the Carnarvon district?

- (2) Are the amounts grant or loan?
- (3) If loan, what are the terms?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) (a) No assistance has been granted by the Government for residents at Carnarvon.

(b) Eleven planters have made applications for assistance involving a total sum of £1,000, two of whom have already received moiety advances. Balance of applications are now being dealt with by the Commissioners of the Rural Bank.

(2) Amounts advanced will be in the nature of free-of-interest loans over a period of three years.

- (3) See answer to No. (2).

#### WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) *As to Use of Imported Steel Plate.*

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Minister for Transport:

Is it a fact that imported steel plate supplied to Hume Steel Co. over the past two years for piping purposes has been used solely for the Great Southern water scheme, and the imported steel plate supplied to Electweld Steel Co. has been used solely on the Goldfields scheme?

The MINISTER replied:

Hume Steel are manufacturing pipes from imported plates for both the northern and Great Southern areas of the comprehensive wheat belt water supply scheme. The Electweld Steel Co., Kellerberrin, has manufactured pipes from imported plates solely for use in the northern area served from the Goldfields water supply scheme.

(b) *As to Scheme for Linking Rock Catchments.*

Hon. N. E. BAXTER asked the Minister for Transport:

In view of the fact that some of the rock catchment areas in the chain extending from Kulja to Nungarin in a semicircle and rock catchments extending further south through the State have been harnessed in the past, does the Government consider that it would be an economical proposition to harness and link a large number of these rock areas into a scheme to be reticulated westwards to meet any schemes reticulated from the ranges?

The MINISTER replied:

The Government is about to commence a comprehensive survey of all major rock catchments not yet utilised for water sup-

ply and situated beyond the limits of the comprehensive scheme. Until this survey is complete, it is not possible to state whether the catchments can be used to supply extensive reticulation systems.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Third Day.*

Debate resumed from the 8th August.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Suburban) [4.42]: I would like to take this opportunity of offering my congratulations to you, Sir, on your recent distinction, an honour which has been so well and richly deserved. I feel sure I am speaking on behalf not only of my personal friends, but of all who are acquainted with you, when I say that. I would also like to congratulate our new Clerk of Parliaments. He well deserves the position he now holds, and I know he will ably carry out his duties. I wish him many years of happiness in his new office. We also have a new Usher of the Black Rod, and I think he also merits our congratulations. He has, for many years, been connected with the Houses of Parliament, and I feel sure he will fulfil his office with dignity, and will do justice to it. This session, we have two new members, both, strangely enough, from the South-West. I wish them many years of useful work in this House on behalf of the community they represent and, more broadly, Western Australia. I feel sure the people of the South-West have made an excellent choice in each instance.

A matter that has been exercising my mind for some time concerns the New Australians. They come here without a knowledge, very often, of our language. It is essential that they should learn it as soon as possible, not only for their own benefit, but that of the community at large. Quite obviously we do not want to have little cliques of various nationalities in this State. We desire a general intermixing of the New Australians with Australians so that in a little while we will have difficulty in distinguishing one from the other. To my mind, a matter of the gravest importance, so far as the New Australians are concerned, is that they should learn what democracy is from our point of view. Many of them know nothing at all about democracy or the working of democracy. The only way they can acquire the necessary understanding is by gaining a knowledge of the Constitution. America leads the way in this matter. I understand that in the United States no person can be naturalised until he passes an examination on the Constitution of America.

Hon. G. Fraser: Not many Australians could pass such a test on our Constitution.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It was interesting, when the Americans were here, to speak to them. Any member of the American forces could explain quite clearly the Constitution of America—that it, as much of it as we could absorb.

Hon. L. Craig: The American Constitution is only about a page.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: That may be so; but those men knew all about it and could explain how the President was elected, and all the rest of it. We should start off by seeing that all our New Australians are taught the Constitution.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: We had better start with our own people, I think.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I would be glad if the hon. member would allow me to speak. I can only get out a few words at a time. I suggest that we teach the essentials or main principles of the Constitution to our own children. Let them know how they are governed, and why, and let them know what democracy is. We cannot complain if pensions like the communists get hold of the young people and teach them what communism is, if we do not counteract them by teaching the young people what democracy is. Democracy is fully set out in our Constitution. Every schoolteacher should know the Constitution—not the technical details, but the general broad principles. That applies to both the State and the Commonwealth Constitutions.

Every person on attaining 21 years of age has the right to vote; and he should know what the Constitution is, and why he is voting. But there is a great difficulty in requiring the teachers to know the Constitution and to teach it; because, unfortunately, this State has a number of Constitution Acts, and it is very hard to put in so many words what the Constitution is. The Government should, at the earliest opportunity, have those Acts consolidated. It is important that that should be done. In our Standing Orders book we have the Constitution, or part of it, reprinted; but I venture to say that there are a number of members who would have difficulty in finding out exactly what the Constitution contains, because we cannot get the various Acts. It is necessary that we should have the Constitution brought up to date. I do not mean by vital amendments, though some amendments are obviously necessary. I think the Government would be well advised to present to Parliament a consolidated Constitution Act and bring it up to date with the various necessary minor amendments. We could then pass it on to all the schoolteachers.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: We would have to pass on a condensed issue.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: No. I venture to say that the schoolteachers, after reading it, would be able to condense the main principles quite easily. The local governing authorities should have it, too. I daresay there are a great many members of local governing authorities who have no knowledge of the Constitution. The members of those bodies do not know, in some cases, how many members of Parliament represent their particular district.

Hon. G. Fraser: I thought you might be going to suggest that people should know the local governing constitution.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: No; we will take one thing at a time. Again, I am not suggesting that it is necessary for every child, or even every teacher, to be able to pass an examination in the subject. They should have a general knowledge of it, and that is all.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Would it not be wise to pick out what portions of it should be taught?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: No. The Constitution Act is very simple. Members have only to read it to see how simple it is. I will now pass on to another matter.

Hon. G. Fraser: Would it not be wise to suggest certain amendments so that they could be introduced in a consolidating measure?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I have no desire or intention to do so. I shall now pass on to another subject, if I am permitted; namely, the question of native affairs. This is a matter which has caused considerable discussion in various places; though, unfortunately, most people are not aware of what is happening, as regards native affairs in Western Australia. Apparently, because of the shortage of newsprint, the newspapers are not able to publish as much as they would perhaps like to.

Hon. A. L. Loton: They can publish plenty of racing information.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Again, if I am permitted to go on, I would add that "The West Australian" publishes about four pages of sporting information—I think almost every day of the week—but very little information is given about local matters, such as the most important question of natives. I think all members who know anything about the position of the Native Affairs Department realise that there has been a vast improvement in the department in recent times. At this juncture, I wish to offer congratulations to the present Commissioner and the Government for the work that is being carried out. I also wish to congratulate the excellent and capable staff in the em-

ploy of the department. Recently I took the opportunity to visit various portions of the State with the Commissioner, and for a while I was somewhat closely interested in the matter. The Native Affairs Department used to be very adversely criticised.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Has it improved the living conditions at Bassendean yet?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The hon. member will hear what I have to say if he will have a little patience. Formerly the department was severely and adversely criticised; sometimes rightly and sometimes wrongly. I am sure the gentlemen who are interrupting will be somewhat surprised at some of the remarks I shall make later on which will concern the provinces of both of them. Now, instead of being criticised, the department is being commended, but the jurisdiction of the department is not widely known. It controls only white children with coloured blood; and members must realise that I am speaking of white children with coloured blood in them.

The department controls up to but not including quarter-caste children; that is to say, up to but not including those who are three parts white and one part coloured, so that the majority of them are almost white. I think all members will agree that, in the animal world, it is the sire that counts; and here the department is dealing with children sired, generally speaking, by white men. Frequent complaints are made about the actions of coloured people; but in a great many instances complaints are levelled at coloured people over whom the Native Affairs Department has no control, because they do not come within the definition of "native" under the Act, being quarter-caste, or perhaps less. Unfortunately, they are very often the people who cause a lot of trouble; and on many occasions the residents of towns complain that the department is not doing its duty, when really it is the responsibility of the police. The Police Department has complete and absolute control over every resident in Australia, whether he be coloured or not. The Native Affairs Department is a welfare department and a welfare department only.

I want members to understand that, because when I had something to do with the department complaints were received that coloured people were creating disturbances. I told the people making those complaints that it was the job of the Police Department to deal with such disturbances; but they said, "No, it is the responsibility of the Native Affairs Department." It has nothing to do with that department at all. So members will appreciate that only those under quarter-caste, and those under 21 living in native camps are classed as natives; but frequently children living in native camps cannot be

distinguished from white children. Only the other day I saw a child—a very pretty little girl of about 18 months or two years—and there was no sign of colouring in her. But that child was a native under the Act because she was living with her mother in a native camp, and the department has control over them.

Members will recollect the tremendous outcry, a little while ago, over the purchase of a home in Mt. Lawley, which was to be used for coloured girls. I attended a meeting of protest, and I said at that meeting that the residents of the district would have no cause for complaint. I am pleased to say that that statement has proved correct, for there has not been one solitary complaint of any sort, size or description from anyone about the conduct of the girls.

Hon. H. L. Roche: Just how many are resident there now?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: There are eight of them. The other day I had the privilege of attending a small ceremony at which all eight girls were sworn in as girl guides, under a most solemn oath, by Lady Lee Steere, who is the Chief Commissioner of Girl Guides in this State. They are all happy and cheerful, and one of them came down from Wyndham. She had attended the State school in that town but was living in a native camp there. She was brought down here and sent to the Perth Girls' High School at East Perth. Shortly afterwards she was elected by all the girls in the class as their prefect, receiving 21 votes, while the next girl to her received five. This girl is very capable and proposes to continue her education.

Another girl—I think she is from Carnarvon—attends the Perth Technical College. She is a dressmaker, 18 years of age and the report from the school is that she would be snapped up by any dressmaker in Australia. As well as being a craftswoman, she is also a designer. It is the intention of the department to have a similar type of home as Alvan House to be used for coloured boys, and I sincerely trust that it will soon be functioning.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Are they going to bring the boys to the city?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Most decidedly. It is extraordinary how some people do not like the idea of white children, whose mothers happen to be coloured, coming into the city. Why not? They are white children; they are more white than black.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Better out in the country!

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You are perfectly right.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: At the request of the Kimberley Advisory Committee, the Education Department and the

Department of Native Affairs are collaborating for the purpose of providing a school at Derby for half-caste boys, with a view to giving them an ordinary as well as a technical education. That is in hand now. Arrangements have been made for area schools on the various pastoral properties in the Kimberleys.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: A very good idea.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: At Moola Bulla there are 60 children attending the school on the pastoral station there. It is necessary to have these schools on pastoral properties; because if these children are collected on to one station, labour will naturally be available to the station as parents will, of course, follow their children around. There is a school for full-bloods at Fitzroy Crossing. The relationship between the pastoralists up north and the department is excellent. It has never been so good. They are all extremely satisfied with the way the Native Affairs Department is being administered.

I am afraid I am about to anticipate a reply to a question which was asked this evening by Mr. Forrest. The Moore River Settlement has been handed over to a mission society which has vast experience of missionary work, especially in New Guinea. Moore River will now be used to give native children primary education and to enable them to attend secondary schools in the metropolitan area, and not State schools only. This plan has also been adopted by New Norcia, one of the oldest missions in the State, whose intention it is to educate children with a view to sending them elsewhere for higher education and, if necessary, on to the University. I think members will agree that this is a very great advance in the uplift of the children under the care of the Native Affairs Department. Those children are the offspring of white fathers and, in most cases, have been deserted both by the mothers and the fathers. It is not a very creditable thing for these children to have such ancestors. So let us do what we can for them.

There is a settlement down south run by the department which was known as Marriebank. The department did not consider it was being properly conducted or that it was a credit to the country, and it had rather a bad name around the district. A native who had been there with Carrolup was afraid to say he had been there. A new scheme was therefore evolved. It is an excellent scheme controlled by a capable ex-army man. The place is spotlessly clean; it has a first class catering officer; the food is excellent, and the table manners of the boys are very good. The place is now known as "Marriebank." The name was changed because of the bad name

Carrolup had, and also because it was likely to be confused with another place in the same district.

Hon. R. M. Forrest: Who was responsible for its being so bad?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Past administrations. Now it is being conducted as Marriebank. It is a farm school for boys, and has an advisory committee of local farmers. I was privileged to be there when the local farmers met and made various suggestions. They welcome it because they will get the labour which will be available as a result of that school. As we all know, these coloured boys prefer to stay in their own districts. I think we will all agree, especially those members from the South-West, that the camps in which natives live are in a disgusting, shocking state. I went round two of them.

I will say this for the residents of those camps; they did their utmost to keep them clean. In some places, however, they had to go half a mile to get their water. We are told we are doing nothing, but we are trying to do something. Strangely enough, the people living in those camps are respectably dressed when they are in the streets. I am speaking of the young women and children. The children I saw at the school were remarkably well turned out. That was, of course, while they were at school. I cannot say what they were like after school; but I suppose they were like any white child. I want to emphasise that this is an excellent example of how the local people are anxious to help the department in the uplifting of the native children.

We met the local parents & citizens' association, and at the school we saw about 50 children, the percentage of white and coloured being about 50-50. They were all doing the same work; there was no difference whatever. At a desk for two a coloured child and a white child would be found sitting together, perfectly happy, very friendly and great pals. It rather surprised me to see how friendly they were. There were little jokes at the table and they mixed well when they went out to play. The Ongerup people said, "We could pick out seven families here which we would be prepared and anxious to have living in the township, provided some sort of proper habitation could be provided for them. We do not want them all placed together as we want to break up any coterie." They wanted them spread around the township, and it was suggested that Nissen huts be put up, which the Ongerup people said would be an excellent idea.

I do not know whether members have seen Nissen huts, but at Midland Junction there are numbers of them. They

are excellent places. I asked one woman whether her Nissen hut was not hot in the summer, and she assured me that the sitting room was a very cool place in the warm weather. These huts are, of course, lined. They may not look very nice outside, but they are a habitation and are healthy. There is not the slightest question at all that wherever human beings live, health laws must be obeyed and arrangements must be made for bathing, washing of clothes and water supply.

I went to Katanning and Ongerup and found that bathing and washing facilities there are nil. The water has to be carried a long way by kerosene tin. The local boards usually make some arrangements for sanitation but, apart from that, there is nothing. The camps constitute little bits of tin stuck together and the rain comes through easily. There is no flooring. The position is astounding for these children who go to school with the white children. The Gnowangerup Road Board has said that it could not have substandard houses near the road board district. These Nissen huts are permitted at Midland Junction, or just outside the municipality at Red Hill, but we cannot have them at Gnowangerup.

Hon. H. L. Roche: The Gnowangerup Road Board knows its ratepayers.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am afraid that some of the people at Gnowangerup should realise that those youngsters are children of white fathers. Besides, it is the residents of the Gnowangerup Road Board that have sired them! They refuse these native sub-standard houses. Is it not time that the Government took a hand and laid down hard and fast minimum requirements? We are extremely short of houses; we are building houses of a standard we cannot afford, and we cannot build them quickly enough. If the Government would lay down a minimum standard for all road boards and municipalities we would then have matters rectified, I think.

There is no suggestion that the Native Affairs Department should give free houses to the native people. On the contrary, they could pay rent or get them on time payment. Some of those natives have their own land; but how can they obtain priority? We can all imagine the row there would be if a native got a priority to build before somebody else in Gnowangerup! Besides this, they have no money. The department has tried to do its duty by offering Nissen huts, to be promptly erected, to house these people. The Gnowangerup Road Board, however, says that it cannot have substandard houses near its district, although within half a mile it has hovels made of tin. But Nissen huts it will not have! I think it is in the Bible that reference is made to stiff-necked people.

Hon. G. Fraser: If prices are not brought down, there will be shanties everywhere.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I agree.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Why not tell us something about Maylands?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The same applies to Maylands. The standard of houses must be reduced. We cannot expect poor people to put up houses they cannot afford. The cost must be reduced but we cannot reduce the cost and maintain the standard. Yet we have to house the people. It is essential, of course, that all health laws be rigidly maintained, but it is absurd to say that in a country town, or even at Bassendean, we cannot erect a Nissen hut because it is substandard; and yet, within half a mile of the town, dreadful, horrible hovels are allowed to exist in which human beings have to live.

I think members will agree that there are houses that were built in 1900 which are still standing, which are being used and which are healthy, but the erection of which would not be permitted today. Because of the existence of brick areas in very few suburbs are people permitted to erect wooden houses. I think conditions are such that the erection of wooden houses will not lead to the creation of slums, which are usually caused through large tenement buildings. I do not think we are likely to see the development of slums where houses are built on quarter-acre blocks. It is only where there are closely built-up areas that slums are likely to arise.

Another matter upon which I would like to touch is the Increase of Rent (War Restrictions) Act. This is a subject which has been causing—I was going to say a lot of wind. I think that would be the correct word to use. Members will recall that about this time last year, or perhaps earlier, various comments were made on the question whether a person should be entitled to gain possession of his house; who should bear the hardship, and who should not. In the court it was mentioned that Parliament had never given a lead in this matter. My recollection of what happened during last session is that we very definitely laid down that no discretion should be given the magistrate at all that if the owner of the house required that house, he should obtain possession of it. We said that we would not have this law brought into effect on the 1st January, but would give everybody concerned six months' grace; that the provision would not become operative until the 30th June of this year. We considered that it would not be fair to have the amended law given effect straight away. I think there was a discussion

in Committee on that point, and we decided that we would give people six months in which to look around for other accommodation.

Hon. G. Fraser: What is the good of looking around? There is no place to get.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am coming to that. Some people thought they could make political capital out of this matter. I regret to say that some people were bluffed by statements which appeared in the Press from men who said, "Hang on! We will get a special sitting of Parliament so as to have the Act amended." I would ask members: Who, in this House, would venture to say what the House is likely to do in connection with any amending Bill on any matter whatsoever? Yet supposedly responsible men told people that we would have an early session and amend the measure. People believed that that could be done, but it was not done. Because of what they believed, tenants hung on to their houses.

We were told that hundreds of people would be thrown out on the streets, and the question was asked: What is the Government going to do about it? A certain number of cases have come before the court. Let me point out what happens. If a tenant goes to a lawyer, the latter asks to see his notice to quit. If that notice and everything else is all right, the lawyer will say, "You have no chance; you must go out." The tenant asks whether there is any possibility of obtaining an extension of time. The lawyer replies, "None whatever," and the tenant says, "Surely we can do it in some way!" Then the lawyer says, "Yes, I will tell you a simple way. Wait till a summons is issued and then defend the case. Wait for it to come before the court and in that way you will delay the eviction." One lawyer went further and appealed. The case was taken to court in the first instance and the magistrate said, "I have no discretion at all. Here the man concerned says he wants the house for himself; therefore the tenant must go out." Presumably the client then said to the solicitor, "What can I do now?" And the solicitor replied, "Do not worry. We will appeal and that will give you another month."

We saw in the paper the reference by the magistrate to the fact that there is no question as to what the word "require" means. I would have thought that no one else would have been in any doubt. I do not assert that we inserted that provision here, though I think we did. However, it was in the measure; and there is no question about its having been passed or about this House having agreed to it. We agreed that if a person requires his home he should be allowed to have posses-

sion of it. There has been only one eviction order; and before that could be put into execution, the person had obtained a house.

Not one person has been put out in the street. Somebody asked what the Housing Commission has done. The Housing Commission has seen that there is not one person without a roof over his head. Do not let us forget that certain people were told, "Do not be a fool. Do not go to the Housing Commission. You leave it to us. We are going to have a special session of Parliament and we will have this all fixed up. You stick to your house." Consequently, some of those folk did not go to the Housing Commission until the last moment.

Hon. G. Fraser: The Housing Commission will not take any notice of them until there is an actual eviction.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, and when there is an actual eviction they have only to show their notice to quit on a certain date in order to receive assistance.

Hon. G. Fraser: There is not an arrangement with the bailiff to hold up the eviction.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: There cannot be. We distinctly said that tenants could be evicted as from the 30th June if people wanted their houses.

Hon. G. Fraser: Make inquiries and see what has happened.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I have made inquiries, and there is not one person without a roof over his head. Members should appreciate that there are bad tenants just as there are bad landlords. The bad tenant says, "I will not accept alternative accommodation, because I will have to pay more rent. This place suits me admirably. I am getting it very cheap and I am not going out of it until I am put out; and I will put the landlord to all the trouble and expense I can." That is what the bad tenant says, and that is what is happening.

Hon. E. M. Davies: There are bad landlords who want to get higher rents.

Hon. H. Hearn: If they are lucky!

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Let me point out the position of some men who are on the basic wage. Such a man owns a house and wants to obtain possession of it. He is receiving from £2 to £3 a week in rent for it, but he himself has to pay a similar amount for a house he is renting. Further, he is required to pay income tax on the rent he receives for his house, but secures no rebate for the rent which he has to pay. That man is in a very bad way. Generally, a man does not buy a house except with a view to living in it himself some day. We thought and said very distinctly that it was only right that a man who owned a house and wanted to occupy it should be able to do so. That



is still the opinion of members of this House, so far as I can gather. Whether anything further will be done, remains to be seen.

Hon. G. Fraser: You suggest that that is the only interpretation to be put on the Act?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: It is clear, concise and distinct. If a landlord requires his house for himself—or for his wife or his children, I think—he is entitled to it. There is no question about that. That was my idea of the measure when it was passed, and I feel sure it was the idea of a great many members.

Hon. A. R. Jones: What about the landlord who takes the place back for himself, keeps it only a week and then leases it? I refer to business premises.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I understand that there is a penalty for that. If not, if any amendment is suggested to provide for such a penalty I will be delighted to support it. I would support not merely a maximum penalty but a minimum penalty.

Hon. G. Fraser: Have you heard of the jokes that are going around about it?

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I am not in the know about those things. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. K. Watson, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.26 p.m.*

# Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 14th August, 1951.

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

## QUESTIONS.

### STATE BRICK WORKS.

(a) *As to Allocation of Output and Priorities.*

Hon. J. T. TONKIN asked the Minister for Housing:

(1) What are the names of the persons or firms which receive regular allocations of bricks from the State brickyards, regardless of priorities established by other builders through earlier lodgment of orders and corresponding releases?

(2) What were the quantities of bricks in these allocations, respectively, for each week during the past three months?

(3) Does the State Brick Works give regular allocations of bricks, irrespective of date of lodgment of orders, to carters or builders who obtain regular allocations from other brickyards?

(4) Are the quantities of bricks which are allocated by the State Brick Works to the privileged buyers related in any way