

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: Were they satisfied with the result of the deputation?

Mr. J. Hegney: No, they were not.

Mr. GRIFFITH: They were not satisfied with the result of the deputation and they asked that the matter be taken further. Ultimately, as everybody knows, the Government appointed an independent engineer to inquire into this matter. It is true, in answering the member for Guildford-Midland, that there are certain people in the Bassendean area who, since the passage of the marshalling yards legislation, have actually received satisfactory compensation from the Government and they have agreed to the basis of that compensation.

Since I did not vote for the appointment of a Select Committee the member for Middle Swan has accused me and said I was anxious to assist the Belmont Park Road Board in its claims. Of course I was. I was anxious to assist that board long before I voted against the appointment of a Select Committee, and the hon. member knows it. It is recorded in "Hansard." The only reason I voted against the appointment of a Select Committee was because of the assurance I had been given. Of course I was anxious to help the Belmont Park Road Board. I told the members of the board that I would take their representations to the Minister for Transport.

Hon. A. R. G. Hawke: After the Bill was passed.

Mr. GRIFFITH: Yes, and the Belmont Park Road Board has written a letter to the Government expressing its satisfaction at the appointment of an engineer and giving an assurance that the board would accept the deliberations of that independent engineer.

Mr. J. Hegney: They will not have much option.

Mr. GRIFFITH: The other night the member for Middle Swan asked a question in this House.

The Minister for Works: The Bill permits a deviation of a mile on either side.

Mr. GRIFFITH: That is quite true, under Section 96 of the Public Works Act. Just to show how much the member for Middle Swan knew about the progress made, he asked a question in the House the other night. He wanted to know what had transpired so far as the independent engineer was concerned. The hon. member wanted to know whether that man had started his work and if he had, what progress had he made.

Mr. Brady: And I have another question on the notice paper for tomorrow.

Mr. J. Hegney: Are you aware that the chairmen of the Belmont Park and Bayswater Road Boards asked me whether there was any truth in the current rumours that the Government did not intend to go on with this scheme?

Mr. GRIFFITH: I do not know anything about that.

Mr. J. Hegney: That is the truth.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I will tell the hon. member what I do know. The hon. member introduced a deputation to the Minister for Works one day last week and I attended that deputation with him because the Belmont Park Road Board had advised me that it was seeking the interview. Mark that! Also, the chairman and secretary of the road board told me on that occasion that the engineer had started his work the day before and that Mr. Paulett, who was due to attend the deputation, could not do so because at that very moment he was out with the engineer deliberating on the proposed chord line between Welshpool and Bassendean. So that shows just how much the member for Middle Swan knows about it.

Mr. J. Hegney: However, the chairman of the road board at the time has since lost his position over this. He has been demoted.

Mr. GRIFFITH: I feel that so far as I am concerned personally, I have justified, by way of explanation, my attitude in this matter, and I have also thrown to the ground any assertions that the member for Middle Swan may have made. He, as I remarked previously, spent two hours talking about this matter and I am confident that members on this side and those on the other side of the House do not know very much of what he was trying to achieve by way of argument, but the fact remains that what the Belmont Park Road Board desired has been achieved.

On motion by Mr. Brady, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 11.22 p.m.*

## Legislative Council

Thursday, 30th August, 1951.

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

## QUESTIONS.

### WATER SUPPLIES.

#### *As to Collie-Narrogin Section, Steel Supplies.*

Hon. L. A. LOGAN (for Hon. A. L. Loton) asked the Minister for Transport:

(1) Can the Minister advise whether supplies of steel are coming to hand for the completion of the Collie-Narrogin section of the Great Southern town water supply scheme?

(2) Has any steel plating for use on this scheme been received since the 8th August, 1951, from—

- (a) Great Britain;
- (b) Japan;
- (c) Eastern States?

(3) If the answer is in the affirmative—

- (a) what mileage of pipeline would this complete?
- (b) Can it be assumed that a continuity of supply from this source or sources will continue provided international affairs do not deteriorate?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) Yes. There are 1,500 tons on the "Trevelyan" now in Fremantle. This should supply sufficient steel for 7.5 miles of piping. In addition 16 tons are also arriving from the Eastern States ex "Mundalla," which will supply 240ft. of piping.

(2) Answered by (1).

(3) (a) Answered by (1). (b) No.

### ROADS.

#### *As to Reconstruction, Carnarvon Plantation Areas.*

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

Is it the intention of the Main Roads Department to reconstruct roads serving plantation areas at Carnarvon with stone and bitumen, so that traffic may move to and from the town in all weathers?

The MINISTER replied:

All surfaced roads damaged during the floods will be reconstructed with stone and surfaced with bitumen. The department's policy of extending surfacing work will continue.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Tenth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. R. JONES (Midland) [4.34]: May I join with other members in offering my congratulations to you, Sir, on the honour that has been conferred upon you. I trust that you will live many years to enjoy that honour together with your good lady. I would also like to congratulate the two officers we have at the Clerks'

table on their appointments to their respective positions. I trust they will serve long and well in this Chamber. Finally, I would like to welcome the two new members we have in this House. While I had not met either of them before the elections, for a short period I did do some work towards defeating them.

Hon. G. Fraser: Trying to.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Yes. I offer them my congratulations and a welcome to the House.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: It might be some compensation.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I do extend them my welcome, and I trust while they are in this House they will enjoy good fellowship and the many little advantages we all do. I feel sure they will be an acquisition to this Chamber, inasmuch as they come from new phases and walks of life.

Everywhere around us today we see evidence of a general laxity amongst the people of this State. When I say a general laxity, I mean that one finds it no matter where one goes—whether it be to the farming districts or the fruit-growing areas in the country; or to the city, where business is carried on; or to the ports amongst the workers there. I believe that to some extent it exists in this Parliament inasmuch as some members absent themselves from the Chamber. Last year, I was one member who went quite often to the country and I was reprimanded for doing so. I believe now that, while it is my duty to go to the country and be as often as I can in the province I represent, so that I may know the needs of the people, at the same time a member should be in this House and pay as much attention as possible to the working of Parliament and to the various Bills that are introduced.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: It is a pity we cannot be in two places at one time.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I agree with that; but I feel sometimes that some of us absent ourselves without valid excuse, and it is a laxity which ought to be brought to an end. If we do not set an example from this Chamber, or through the Government, I do not see how we can expect our people to do the right thing. I feel we should set an example here which will be emulated through the length and breadth of the country; and stimulate an interest which is lacking at the present time.

Hon. G. Fraser: Why don't you get on with the job instead of talking so much?

Hon. A. R. JONES: I would suggest to the hon. member that there is some need for us to talk a little, and reason a little, and set forth the existing circumstances. By that means there is a possibility of bringing about a better understanding which will lead to our doing a better job than we are doing at present. There is also laxity in the Government

departments. Those in control do not seem to hold the reins of leadership as well as they ought. Costs are mounting increasingly, and I feel we must tighten up. I read Mr. Hearn's speech the other night in which he said the cost-plus system operating in industry was not a good thing. I agree with that.

Some time ago the Minister for Railways made a report in which he dealt with the reorganisation of the railways and how the whole service was becoming revitalised. I propose to read part of his statement, which appeared in "The West Australian" of the 17th March. Near the end of his remarks he said—

Railway employees were loyal and competent officers. They were keenly interested in doing their jobs efficiently, anxious to give courtesy and service to the public and, on the whole, keenly resentful of uninformed public criticism which demanded a first-class job with second-class tools. Railwaymen claimed that the public regarded the railways as "a big goat which everybody wanted to milk and nobody wanted to feed."

I do not know why the Minister made those remarks—whether it was to encourage the men of his department, or whether he thought it the right thing to say. But I do suggest that the remarks were not very well founded; because I believe that, of all the Government departments, the Railway Department is one of the worst in general laxity. Never in the history of this State have there been so many railway accidents as have occurred over the last two years. There does not seem to be any redress, as far as I can see, against men found guilty of incompetence and neglect of duty. Increasingly we have complaints from people throughout the length and breadth of the State concerning losses and damage incurred in the carriage of goods on the railways.

The Minister for Transport: Accidents are mainly due to the degeneration in the system that has occurred over the years and which takes time to remedy.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I do not doubt that to some extent that is correct; but it has been shown on occasions that the fault is not always the run-down condition of railway rollingstock. It has frequently been demonstrated that the employees are to blame. I cannot recall anyone having been dismissed, and when a man is taken to task, only a small fine is imposed. If men are sacked, the union is so strong that the other employees can threaten to go out on strike.

Hon. E. M. Davies: The union is the appeal board.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I am not saying men should not have the right of appeal; everybody should have that right. But

as long as the general feeling is that people can do wrong without being punished, we will get nowhere.

Hon. H. C. Strickland: That applies from the Commissioner down.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I intend to read some letters which have been brought to my notice and which indicate what is happening on the railways. Here are some that I have from a businessman in Perenjori. They are dated the 13th December, 1950, and the 8th, 22nd and the 29th January, 1951, respectively. In the first instance this man had a case of apricots—I take it they were tinned apricots—railed by a Perth firm. In connection with that consignment he wrote the following letter to the department:—

I wish to claim full payment for 1½ cases of apricots which my carting contractor refused to take delivery of on Monday, the 11th December.

As the damaged goods were sold on behalf of the W.A.G.R. to a private person, with the approval of the traffic inspector, I wish to claim the following amount:—

1½ cases of apricots at 24s. per case—  
£1 16s.

Trusting this matter will receive your due consideration.

On the 8th January, a fortnight later, he wrote—

I wish to make a claim on your department for the following:—2 1/12th doz. bottles of cool drinks, broken in transit, 3 7/12th doz. of cool drink pilfered. The amount involved being £2 4s. 9d.

It appears that the man discussed the matter with the station-master when delivery was taken of the consignment and the latter had a full realisation of the condition in which the goods arrived at Perenjori, because reference is made to the fact in the letter. On the 22nd January, this man wrote—

I wish to claim full payment for the following non-delivery on the 11th January:—

1 case of apricots at 34s. a case—  
£1 14s.

On the 29th January, he wrote in respect of some water-melons which arrived so badly damaged that they could not be used. I will read portion of that letter, as follows:—

When I inspected the consignment of goods on the station, they had not long been taken from the train. The melons were then only freshly broken, and think you realise as well as I that the guard on the train must have just dumped them from the truck to the ground.

On the 27th February, this person received from the department the following letter:—

I have to inform you that payment, amounting to 2s., has been approved in full settlement of your claim for one case of apricots delayed in transit ex Tropical Traders and Patersons Ltd., Perth, on 7/12/50, salvage realised—2s.

An acknowledgment of the enclosed cheque is not required, but it is requested that it be endorsed in the space provided and paid to the credit of your bank account as early as possible.

It seems that when all those claims can come from one man within six weeks, there is something very wrong with the department. He is not the only person with cause for complaint. A man in the same town made a claim for eight gallons of Castrol oil, and he received no compensation. I do not know the exact wording of his claim, but the reply he received is as follows:—

With reference to your letter of the 2nd instant addressed to the Station Master, Perenjori, claiming £5 1s. 4d. for the loss of eight gallons of Castrol oil, due to damage sustained to the consignment while in transit from Perth on the 2nd idem; I wish to advise my inquiries have disclosed that the damage was caused by the load in the rail vehicle shifting during transport and coming into contact with the case of oil.

The consignment was tendered for despatch and accepted at the risk of the owner which specifically absolves the Commission from loss of and/or damage unless solely occasioned by the wilful misconduct of its servants and, in the circumstances, whilst sincerely regretting the damage, not any liability is admitted and your claim must be respectfully declined.

In conversation with the station-master, I found that he agreed with the man to whom the oil was consigned that the goods had been placed in the truck slovenly, and heavy ploughshares put above them. When the train was shunted, some of the goods shifted and the ploughshares fell off the top, and went clean through the tins, with the result that the contents were emptied. Consequently, that man is £5 1s. 4d. out of pocket; and that was cost price.

To go a little further, I will quote a case of the newsagent at Miling. It seems that when the bus service was put through to that centre, via Toodyay, the newspapers were to be carried by the bus; but, on its first trip through, the papers failed to arrive. The newsagent rang the station-master at Toodyay and discovered that the papers had been left behind. He excused the department the first time, as

the service was a new one. But when the same thing occurred again, he thought it was time something was done about it. The following letter was written by the agent to "The West Australian" on the occasion of the first non-arrival of the papers:—

Miling, 5/2/51.

As requested, I contacted Toodyay railways re non-arrival of "West's" last week. Railways apparently were at fault, being all excuses and assuring me that they would do their best in future. They also said that as it was the first day the bus was running they had no idea papers were to be sent in same.

I feel that there must be something lacking in the railway administration when employees of the department will not bother to do what they are supposed to do. The letter continues—

I trust that credit for the 'phone call in connection with the trouble (3s. 6d.) will be passed on as you advised me on 'phone.

He never received his 3s. 6d. The second occasion when the papers were left behind at Toodyay was on the 26th April, three months after the service commenced, which does not say much for the efficiency of those concerned. The same gentleman had a table railed from Perth. When he went to load it on to his truck, a leg fell off it, and he found also that the corner of the table was so badly damaged that he could not use it at all. In this connection I will read the following communication:—

Table arrived here Wednesday, 18th, in truck loaded with steel pipes, etc. When being loaded into motor truck leg came off, the whole corner being badly damaged, despite being well packed. Sender refuses to recognise claim. No knowledge of parcel of shirts reached Miling although we met all trains to pick up mails.

He had immediately to consign that table back to Perth, which he did the same night. But it was left on the station for a week before being taken from Miling, and he had to pay freight on it both ways, in addition to having the table repaired at his own cost. A further complaint from the same person concerns a parcel of shirts railed to him from Perth but which he never received at Miling. The firm that consigned the shirts to him communicated with the Railway Department and in due course received the following reply:—

Reference is made to your letter of the 5th February relative to a parcel said not received by Mr. L. Cohan of Miling. It is desired to advise the matter has received investigation and it was found the parcel was delivered to its destination on the 25th December last. Delivery to the siding com-

pleted the Commission's contract and in the circumstances your claim respectfully must be declined. The delay in finalisation of this matter is regretted but was due to the protracted nature of the inquiries necessary to reach a decision.

In a few short weeks we find all those complaints from three people only. I felt that it was my duty to bring this sort of thing to the notice of the House, in the hope that the Minister would realise that not all he has said about the railways, over which he holds jurisdiction, is correct. I am not wishing to belittle anybody but am rather endeavouring to indulge in constructive criticism in the hope that we may be able to rehabilitate ourselves and get back, throughout our community, to the good old principle of an honest day's work for a good day's pay.

It is my intention to go further and not only fight such cases when I find them but also deal with laxity in agriculture, in which industry I am vitally interested, and with which I have been connected all my life. For in this sphere, too, I find that same spirit of laxity which prevails elsewhere. While agricultural production has risen to a great extent, there are fewer men now working in the industry, and the increase in production has been due in the main to better and faster-working machinery.

Throughout the whole of the wheat and sheep areas and those devoted to the raising of fat lambs, I have found apathy not only on the part of the workers but also on the part of the farmers. It may in some measure be due to the prosperous times they are experiencing and the high taxation of the present day. It may be due also, in part, to the fact that there is not sufficient manpower available for the work that needs to be done. But I believe that our people are becoming defeatist and are not making a full effort to get the maximum production from their farms. While that attitude on the part of the farmers persists, I feel that, in common with workers in almost every other sphere of endeavour, they are failing to do their jobs properly.

When anyone from the country comes to the metropolitan area to buy some article, he finds that it costs today two or three times as much as formerly, and that the material and workmanship in it are shoddy. No one seems at all interested in accepting responsibility for the poor quality of such goods. If what has been purchased falls to pieces before it reaches its destination, the manager of the firm that sold it does not worry at all. The administration of most metropolitan business houses is not what it used to be, and that may be due to the prevalence of what I might call the present cost-plus system.

I agree with Mr. Hearn that while that state of affairs persists we will not get anywhere. People feel that they can charge what they like for articles, as the demand is so keen, though the materials and workmanship are of poorer quality than ever before. To overcome the difficulty, there must be a general tightening up, and I believe that the place in which to make a start is this Parliament. The example must come from here.

I do not know why the present-day wage-earner feels as he does about his job, though possibly it is because he sees around him so many people making large sums of money. Wherever one observes our workers, whether on the wharves; on Main Roads Department jobs; on P.M.G. Department telephone line work, or anywhere else, the same thing seems to apply. No-one appears to have any enthusiasm for his job or to want to work the full number of hours during the day. I have wondered whether this is because the unions have become so strong that the workers feel they have complete security, or whether it is just a general apathy. Members who represent the workers, in the main, may be able to give some indication of what is wrong.

I feel that every member here, no matter what section of the community he represents, should go out among our people and at meetings or anywhere else point out the bad state of affairs which prevails and try to induce the people to get back to a decent way of working. If we do that, I am sure we will find a response from the people, as I do not think they are deliberately trying to do the wrong thing. It is just that we have grown gradually into the present state of affairs—probably because times have been so prosperous. I leave that thought with members, and hope they will in future endeavour to arrive at a better understanding between themselves and those whom they represent, in order to get people to realise their duty to this country.

I will refer now to agriculture, and particularly soil conservation, on which I spoke last year. The Agricultural Department is doing an excellent job, and I am pleased to see an increase in its staff and in the facilities available to its workers. Those men are closely watching soil conservation problems and many other matters which they are called upon to deal with. However, we are not progressing fast enough. In this huge State of ours we are dependent on agriculture and agricultural pursuits for about 90 per cent. of our revenue from the whole of the State, and because of that we must spend more money on soil conservation and in experimental work. Last year the department spent somewhere in the vicinity of £440,000. That is a fair amount of money because the general revenue is £225,000 and approximately £220,000 was obtained for the department from revenue last year.

As we are receiving so much revenue from the products of the soil, we should be prepared to spend more money to encourage greater production and also to conserve the soil. Except in a few isolated places, soil erosion is continuing unchecked. This year, in the Upper Chapman and in the Geraldton area, there were four inches of rain on one occasion, and for the last four or five months the Upper Chapman River has been flowing to a width of 11 feet and a depth of 12 inches. The water has been so discoloured that one could not see the bottom of the stream.

I do not know whether an assessment could be made of the amount of topsoil that is being carried to the sea from the Upper Chapman area, but, with the stream flowing for a period of four or five months, it must amount to many thousands of tons. Very few farmers are doing anything to arrest this soil erosion. That is another reason why I believe the farming community should be encouraged to do more than it is doing to help overcome these problems.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: There are washaways in the paddocks.

Hon. A. R. JONES: That is quite true; and, with the exception of a family named Teakle, very few people are doing anything in the matter. Of course, we all know the name Teakle very well, because one of the family was the Soil Conservation Officer in the Department of Agriculture. On the opposite side of the road from the Teakle property one can see gullies of a width of five or six feet converging into one huge creek. In one paddock of 100 acres one could not work unless it was broken into 10 pieces; and I think anyone who saw it would agree that that 100-acre paddock will be lost to production in a very short time, because machinery cannot be taken through it. When machinery cannot proceed through a paddock because of washaways, the loss of production must be great. Also, no fertiliser can be applied to it for proper tilling. The Government is pursuing the right policy, but we still must do something to increase the number of men employed in the Department of Agriculture and also to step up the number of experiments being carried out by them. The officers of that department are loyal and hard-working. Unlike employees in many other departments, officers in the Department of Agriculture have the soil at heart and are great workers in their sphere.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: They do not work the 40-hour week.

Hon. A. R. JONES: That is true. I can name one man who is posted at Geraldton, and who has been working 60 or 70 hours a week. One way we could accomplish something would be to bring men from other parts of Australia, or from other countries, to this State. The department has gone a long way towards encouraging

young university men to join the department, because it is now offering a salary of £803 per annum on commencement of duties. That is a very good remuneration for a young man starting on his career; but it is rather surprising that, after he has been working 11 years, he can reach a maximum salary of only £1013, which represents an increase of no more than £210 on the salary which he first received. To my mind it seems wrong and unbalanced to ask a man to work in the department for 11 years and then, at the end of that period, increase his remuneration by only £210. So I recommend that the Government give consideration to this matter. Then in a few years we will, perhaps, have induced qualified men to enter the service of the department.

In the last 12 months, the intake of employees to the wheat section of the department was four men and there was a loss of three. One of these went to the International Harvester Company, another to the C.S. & I.R.O., and the third to the Victorian Department of Agriculture. So in the wheat section we have had a gain of only one man in 12 months and a loss of three particularly brilliant men. Mr. Watson, one of those men, will, of course, continue to do valuable work in the Eastern States. In the dairying section there was a gain of two men; in the fruit section, one; in the plant research section, two; in the North-West section, three; and in the entomology section, two. In the veterinary section there was a gain of two and a loss of one; and in the tobacco section there were no gains but there is a loss of one pending. So over the year we had an increase of staff in the Department of Agriculture of 16 and a loss of six, which represents a net increase of 10. That is an improvement on the previous year, when we lost quite a number of men who had served some years in the department and had an intake of one less on the junior side.

Whilst on the subject of soil conservation, I believe more men and machinery are required here in order that this State may be covered very thoroughly in the next 10 years, and a terrific expenditure in the distant future obviated. If we spend two or three million pounds in the next 10 years, we may save ourselves from the position that America is now facing with its dust-bowl areas. In that country they are spending hundreds of millions of pounds per annum to bring waste lands back into production. Every member here, and also in another place, should back the department and the Minister in his plea to the Treasurer for all the money it is possible to obtain in order that a more efficient service can be rendered to agriculture and also that greater efforts can be made for the conservation of the soil.

There seemed to be a dearth of agricultural workers in 1950 as compared with 1949 and 1948. In 1948 there were 27,041 males employed in agriculture and nearly 7,000 females. In 1949 there were 30,329 males and 6,791 females. In 1950 the numbers dropped in both instances by a further 300. Therefore, 600 workers have gone out of agriculture in the last 12 months. I wonder why that drift should have occurred, because the wages at present are very good in the country. Conditions are better now than they have been at any time, because the farmers have the money to spend on improved conditions for their workers and realise that if they do not give them better conditions and more amenities they will not stay in the industry. However, there has been a drift of workers from the country to the city.

I have here the State's population figures as at the end of March, 1951. The total population at the end of that period was 577,000, of which number 300,000 were living in Perth and the metropolitan area, leaving only approximately 260,000 in the country areas, which is a difference of approximately 60,000 more in the city than in the country. It seems totally wrong that that state of affairs should exist when there is work available from one end of the State to the other and opportunities galore for people to make good. I believe the reason is that we have not followed the policy of decentralisation closely enough and have not given the country people those things that are needed to keep them in the outback areas.

Everyone refers to the decentralisation policy and to giving greater benefits to country people, but to date very little has been done. I believe the Government is faced with difficulties in regard to equipment; but it seems that whenever anything is wanted in the city, there is money and material available for it. We have an instance on the outskirts of the city in the new Causeway, which is still under construction. That work has been proceeding for a number of years, and I believe the initial cost was to be £500,000. Already more than that has been expended, and I believe there is still another £1,000,000 to be spent on the work before it is completed. It seems to me to be very long before its time because, with the reorganisation that has been carried out in the handling of the traffic, the old Causeway, with some repairs, could have coped with the volume of traffic for the next 10 years at least. This money could well have been spent in the country to provide water schemes, hospitals and schools so that people would feel that, if they went to the country to live, they would enjoy at least some of the amenities that are available to their cousins in the city.

The Minister for Agriculture: What about railway expenditure? About £30,000,000 will be spent on rehabilitation.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I know that a tremendous amount of money is being spent on the railways, but it is not being provided to give the people additional service. This expenditure is occasioned by the fact that the service has been permitted to become so run down. No doubt some expenditure is required, but I do not think it is necessary to carry rehabilitation to the extent to which it is being carried. Quite a lot of the transport work could be done by motors and done more cheaply than by the railways. I believe that we should carry only heavy goods on the railways and leave the light goods to be carried by motors. In that way the people would be given a better service.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: You must have the railways to carry the heavy stuff.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Certainly. Very little money seems to be available for expenditure in the country; but, if anything is required in the city, money can be found for it. Hospitals are necessary, but we should have them in the country as well as in the city. If there were more hospitals in the country, we would not have the spectacle of city hospitals being full to overflowing as they are at present. The Government has promised to provide regional hospitals. I understand that one will be started at Bunbury before long.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: One is being built at Pinjarra.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I am aware of that. I hope that the Minister will urge Cabinet to give greater consideration to the country. Those members who represent country districts know the great needs of the people living in the country. Water supplies represent one great need. There should be no necessity to impress this upon either of the Ministers, because they live in dry areas. People are leaving the country because, in existing circumstances, reasonable living conditions are not available to them.

For health reasons, sanitation needs should be met by the provision of sewerage schemes. The sanitation position will become more acute in country towns, because people are doing so well on the wages being paid that it is very difficult to get a contractor to attend to public requirements in the matter of the sanitation of towns. For this reason, we should do everything possible to ensure that all towns have an adequate supply of water for this and other needs.

It is rather alarming to find in the country how many schools there are, the pupils of which are overtaking the present accommodation. Except in a few in-

stances, that is happening wherever one may go. Schools are urgently required in various parts of the country; and while the Government is trying to improve conditions in this direction, it seems unable to do so because contractors are not prepared to go into the country to do the work.

Hon. J. McL. Thomson: It is the dearth of men that the contractors desire to employ.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I think it is the fault of the contractors; because, as has been mentioned in this House, they are today engaged in building houses in Perth and making good profits. While they are permitted to get material to do this, they will not go into the country; and I consider it is the job of the Government to ensure that a reasonable quota of material and manpower is provided, so that the necessary facilities may be made available in the country.

Hon. J. McL. Thomson: The contractors cannot keep the men in the country.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I do not doubt that. My remedy would be not to make materials available in the city to the present extent, and then builders would have to go to the country in order to carry on their jobs in life. The sooner the Government finds a way of bringing this about, the sooner we shall have builders and material available to provide for some of the needs of the country.

I had rather an unpleasant experience recently when I wanted a house built in the country. One contractor looked at the job, but would not go any further. I approached another man who said he would do the job, but I woke up in time to find that he was going to employ carters at £6 per day. This is the sort of thing that is going on; and unless we can make an allocation of material for people in the country, the difficulty will continue. I urge the Government to do all within its power to alter the present state of affairs; otherwise we shall have more people drifting to the city.

This morning, in conversation with a member of this Chamber, I was told of an area of 1,000 square miles that has to be covered by one doctor. Can we expect women to go to live in an area like that, where they may not be able to get medical attention within 24 or 48 hours? I should like to refer to the social services operating in this country. Today we have old-age pensions, widows' pensions, pensions for the maimed and limbless, Servicemen's pensions, and so forth; but we also find that a person who is out of work is able to obtain unemployment relief.

Hon. G. Fraser: State the facts.

Hon. A. R. JONES: I do not know for how long a man has to be unemployed.

Hon. G. Fraser: Then do not make a statement of which you are not sure.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Assistance is made available to a man who is out of work. I know of a man who went to the National Service Bureau and arranged to take a plumbing job. He got to the place and then did not accept the job. Presumably he would go back and state that the job was not available to him. In these days when work is plentiful, there should not be any need to pay a benefit of that sort. We must look after the old people, the widows, and the maimed and limbless; and, of course, we have an obligation to look after the disabled servicemen. But other social service benefits being meted out today are only encouraging people to take less and less initiative.

Hon. E. M. Davies: A man receives 25s. for himself, 20s. for his wife and 5s. for the first child. He would not want to live on that amount for very long.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: He could not.

Hon. A. R. JONES: Child endowment seems to have been made a sort of political football, one party bidding against the other with promises to increase the endowment. In some cases this is merely giving people money to waste on all sorts of things that they do not require.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Would you advocate taking it away from them?

Hon. A. R. JONES: I would not advocate taking it away from them, but we should control what they buy with it. It would be better to give them an order to go to a store to obtain certain goods. If control could be exercised over the expenditure of such money, we would not find it being frittered away on ice-cream, lollies and so forth. In one instance that came under my notice, a party of young girls went into a shop and I should say that the week's endowment went up in about 10 minutes. Something better could be done with that money.

Much greater benefit would result to the community if we improved the facilities for young people to get homes and marry and so maintain the population. Child endowment was originally introduced with the object of encouraging the increase of population. Young people who wish to marry are not able to do so, in many instances, because they cannot afford to pay £3,000 or £4,000 for a house; and even if they could find the money to buy the house, they would need more money to furnish it.

If the child endowment money were directed to a scheme by which houses could be provided for young people, they would have a chance to marry, and that would be the right way to bring about an increase in the population. It would encourage our young people to marry earlier than they do, and I think it would build up the morale of the whole nation. At present we have young people who have been waiting for years to obtain the re-



quisites of life which are necessary before they can even contemplate getting married.

While I believe that a person who has the misfortune to be sick for a long time should receive some sympathy, I think the financial side should be taken care of by a national insurance scheme to which everyone would contribute as he earned, and no one would be a drone, or drain on the community. We know that many people work a certain period of the year and do nothing for the rest of the time because they feel they have earned sufficient for the 12 months. The following year, at the appropriate time, according to whether they are shearers, potato-diggers, or follow some other seasonal occupation, they work again, but only for portion of the year.

To my mind these people are not doing their job for the country, and should not be entitled to sickness benefits if they become ill when unemployed. If we had a national insurance scheme which provided for unemployment relief and so on, we would have a more just arrangement than exists at present. A person who went to hospital and could afford to pay the cost involved, would be expected to do so, but another person who had to remain in hospital for a few months, but who did not earn sufficient to pay, would, if there were a proper scheme, receive all the benefits available to the more fortunate people.

The Licensing Act has been mentioned in this House. I feel, with other members, that something should be done about it. We had a poll last year, and about 30 per cent. of the people who voted, favoured the abolition of liquor. That is a good indication that the people are not satisfied with the present setup. People in both the country and the city break the laws of the land in order to obtain an alcoholic drink. It seems rather strange that we should have two sets of conditions operating, one for the Goldfields and one for the rest of Western Australia. I believe that the hours could be extended throughout the whole State.

It is not only on the Goldfields that people need a drink when they knock off work late at night, or meet late at night. In the rural areas, farmers at harvest time do not get to town much before half-past eight or nine o'clock, and sometimes later. If they live a long way out, they are entitled to a drink, but not if they live within 10 miles. Something should be done about it. Someone said yesterday that our licensed premises were becoming beer-houses instead of hotels. That is illustrated through out the country. For every good hotel, there are five which are not conducted as they should be. I believe, too, that the monopoly created by the brewery company in this State should be broken down. The brewery should not be allowed to take over hotels and tie them to the present extent.

I learned of a man who is supposed to have a free house. Because the Swan Brewery is licensed to sell certain brands of whisky and wine, its travellers come to him and say, "We want an order for these spirits and wines or you cannot get any beer." Or, they say, "With your order, we want an order for so much of our lines of whisky and wine." So, it appears that today there are no free houses in Western Australia. The position wants tidying up. I do not know whether any Government or committee would be rash enough to socialise the liquor industry, but I believe it should be done.

Of all industries, this one should be socialised and taken out of the hands of the monopoly which controls it. Which-ever way we look at the position, it is apparent that the Government must do something. I ask the Ministers in this House to press increasingly at Cabinet meetings for the Government to take action this year. Because 30 per cent. of the people who exercise their franchise voted for prohibition, we must realise that not everyone is happy about the prevailing conditions.

Before resuming my seat, I would like to mention a letter I received today—I believe other members have received a copy of it, too—from the Municipality of Geraldton, which appears to be concerned because the port of Geraldton is allowed to load only boats drawing 27 feet of water, or less. The figure used to be 30 feet. The reason is given in the letter, as follows:—

I am informed that the cause of the restrictions is not the want of depth in the harbour itself and that the channels leading out of the harbour can take vessels up to 30 feet, and that the trouble arises in the main passage out near or beyond the three mile buoy. This is in the nature of a rock or coral outcrop in the passage which will have to be blasted out in order that the passage may be made safe for vessels drawing up to 30 feet or more.

I draw the attention of both Ministers in this House to the matter, although no doubt the Minister for Transport has received a copy of this letter. He must realise it is important that the port of Geraldton should be kept open to take vessels of at least the size for which it was constructed, namely, those with a draft of up to 30 feet. We can see what will happen if this matter is left for any length of time. The figure will be reduced, perhaps, so that only vessels drawing up to 24 feet will be allowed to load at Geraldton, and then a general closing of the harbour will follow. This is important, not only because of its effect on Geraldton, which is within the province which I have the honour to represent, but because the less cargo that is handled at Geraldton,

the more that will have to be handled at Fremantle; and we all know of the overcrowding which exists at Fremantle today. I support the motion.

**HON. J. A. DIMMITT** (Suburban) [5.37]: Earlier, I had no thought of speaking to this motion, but in the last couple of days I have become acquainted with a matter which has become of considerable interest to both parliamentary and municipal circles. Before dealing with this question, however, I wish to extend my congratulations to you, Sir, on your elevation to the knighthood. It is a well deserved tribute to you for your many years of public service, not only to your own province, but to the whole State of Western Australia. It is also a rightful recognition of the high office which you hold as President of the Legislative Council. To our two clerks, I extend my congratulations. I feel sure they will both fulfil their offices with credit to themselves and satisfaction to the members of the House.

I welcome our two new members. It is pleasing to see Mr. Murray with us after three years' experience in another place, and it is nice to see Mr. Henning following in his father's footsteps. I think this House is unique amongst Australian Houses of Parliament, inasmuch as it has five members whose fathers also served as members here. The father of the Minister for Agriculture was here in 1902; Mr. Parker's father was in the House back in 1878; Mr. Baxter's father served in 1914 and onwards; Mr. Thomson's father in 1931; and Mr. Henning's father was a member away back in 1897. So this House has, to some extent, become almost an hereditary House. I welcome the two new members, and trust they will serve for many years in their present capacity.

The matter in which I am interested is the position in which 25 residents of Carlisle now find themselves. Last Tuesday, in company with the member for Canning, Mr. Griffith, I visited 10 or 12 of those settlers. These worthy people have bought blocks of land in Carlisle, which is within the municipal boundary of Perth, and have built temporary homes—inferior, substandard accommodation, admittedly—in which they are living; and they are proceeding, with all possible speed in the difficult circumstances in which they find themselves, to build their own homes under the self-help plan. A few weeks ago they were all served with notices of eviction by the Municipality of Perth.

It was interesting to visit the 10 or 12 people that we saw out of the 25 settlers because, among them, they had the best and the worst of the temporary accommodation. They had built hutments of galvanised iron, canvas and hessian, which are habitable, and shelter these 25 families from the sun and rain. If I

may use the words of a poem we all learned as children, I would say that the inside of these places was "wondrous neat and clean." You, Sir, would have been pleased if you had had the opportunity of going into the hutments. They reflected great credit on the housewives concerned, because they were neat, clean and tidy. These 25 settlers are making a genuine effort to look after themselves without appealing to any Government for assistance. For that reason, I believe they deserve a great deal of encouragement. If the Municipality of Perth persists in its attitude, we will find them evicted from their blocks, and they will become 25 people for whom someone will have to care—probably the State Housing Commission—and will add to the already difficult problem of housing.

It is true that the Perth City Council is acting within its rights because these substandard houses are a breach of the health regulations. They have neither bathrooms nor laundries; but we find, on investigation, that in two cases troughs have been erected in the yards and the washing is done on fine days. In other instances, and in every case so far as bathroom accommodation was concerned, kindly neighbours made available both bathroom and laundry accommodation. It seems to me that a display of the spirit of charity, a broader outlook, and a more humanitarian action are desirable on the part of the City Council.

I was interested to note that the member for West Perth, in his Address-in-reply speech about a week ago, was inclined to berate the Government for its socialistic attitude on building houses and becoming the biggest landlord in Western Australia. He suggested that the builder who knew the job—in other words private enterprise—could adequately house the people. Like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, we find that the Lord Mayor of our city is the same person as the member for West Perth. I have a cutting from this morning's copy of "The West Australian" which reads as follows:—

The Lord Mayor expressed the view that the housing of the people, whether permanent or temporary, was a State Government responsibility.

As member for West Perth he advocates private enterprise to meet the housing needs, but as Lord Mayor of Perth he throws the responsibility of housing on to the Government.

What I would like to see is the member for West Perth maintain his attitude and the Lord Mayor of Perth change his attitude.

Hon. L. Craig: They should call on one another.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: They should. I consider that these people in Carlisle are giving the best evidence of private enter-

prise by depending upon their own resources for housing themselves. Instead of the Perth City Council evicting these people from their substandard houses, it should let them stay there until the permanent homes have been completed. Some of the dwellings under construction there are stump-high and some are plate-high, with the roof timbers now being put up. But these people have a genuine and earnest desire to house themselves in permanent structures and have no desire to continue to live in these substandard houses. If a spirit of Christian charity and a broader outlook were displayed by the Perth City Council, these people would turn out to be, as they are now, excellent citizens and have houses that are worthy of the district in which they are now living. I support the motion.

On motion by the Minister for Agriculture, debate adjourned.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.**

*As to Concluding Address-in-reply Debate.*

**THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT:** Before moving the adjournment of the House, I wish to ask members to get their contributions to this debate ready so that we can finish the debate on the Address-in-reply, if possible, some time next week. I realise there are a number of speakers who desire to address the House, and as the debate in another place will finish very soon, and we have some legislative matter to introduce here, it would expedite the business of this House if members would be prepared to speak during next week.

*House adjourned at 5.50 p.m.*

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

**QUESTIONS.**

**EDUCATION.**

*(a) As to School Accommodation, Bayswater.*

Mr. J. HEGNEY asked the Minister for Education:

(1) Is he aware—

(a) of the very serious overcrowded conditions existing at the Bayswater State School;