

I would like to make a remark which I think is true and in which I think the member for Fremantle will bear me out. When we first came into this House members were supposed to be much more responsible to the people than they are today. They were sort of Pooh-Bahs who had to know everything about everything and everybody. But we have lived to see the day when that situation has changed. Not long ago the Prime Minister of Australia made a speech in which he said that he had noted that Professor Copland had said the exchange rate against England should continue, and the late Professor Wood had said from the Melbourne University that it should be wiped out and we should go back to sterling. The Prime Minister was able to say how interested he was in those two views.

That shows a completely different outlook from that which prevailed when the member for Fremantle and I first came to this House. In those days members of Parliament would stake their whole lives and careers upon a certain line of argument. They would go out to the people and say, "We are going to have the exchange rate wiped out"; or, "We are going to have the exchange rate continued." They would make an issue of it; but we have reached the stage where Ministers can stand up and say, "I will refer that to the experts." I am wondering where it is getting us, and whether we are as well off now, with all our modern improvements as we were when members of Parliament had to thrash these things out themselves and make decisions. Things are certainly more complicated.

For six years I have been listening to the speeches of other members and I have been humbled to find how well Parliament was able to continue without the member for Claremont. It went on very well indeed. I had to tell the Claremont electors that for six years I had been gagged; not even a question did I ask! However, they sent me back with a bigger majority than before! Maybe I am making rash statements this afternoon, but I wanted to take advantage of the Address-in-reply to say things that I have often said before. I think there are those who agree—though many do not—with my opinion that more valuable contributions can come from the Address-in-reply than from any other phase of our work here. Why is that? It is because the Address-in-reply gives private members an opportunity to air their views.

When one is elevated to the Ministry he is in a responsible position. He is helping to run the country. However, he can only make decisions, though they are very important decisions; whereas all the rest of us can make suggestions. On the floor of the House private members, both on the Government and on the Opposition side, have often made very valuable

contributions to debates which have been adopted at a later date by the Ministry. There is no reason why private members should be depressed or feel that they are not quite in the front of the picture. I have heard a great many useful proposals submitted by private members over the years. There are many that I would have liked to bring forward this afternoon that have been made by others apart from the four stars I have referred to. But the point of all my remarks is that I do not think outsiders realise how much the progress of this country has been due to the contributions of individual members of Parliament.

I think I would have to be here in 1983 to see things come to pass which I would advocate now, assuming that the same length of time were required to have those ideas put into effect as has been needed for ideas to bear fruit which were first suggested in 1924. However, that is something in the future, and I do not think I will waste any time looking ahead. Reading through "Hansard," I find that quite enough things have been said by the member for Claremont to last anybody for a lifetime! I conclude by saying that I shall continue to support the Opposition to whose ranks I have been elected.

On motion by Mr. Johnson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.21 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 18th August, 1953.

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

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the 11th August.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [4.38]: In speaking to the Address-in-reply, I wish to congratulate the Government on assuming office and, just briefly, to express the hope that during its term at the Treasury Bench it will prove as efficient in safeguarding the interests of the people of the State as was the Government which it followed.

During the period since we last met, the utterances of two men have impressed me considerably. I had the opportunity, whilst in South Australia, of listening to an address by Dr. Rohan Rivett, the man who wrote "Behind Bamboos," and I was very impressed with his statement, which was made after considerable thought and experience of the country, that China was not communist, as we know communists, but a people which had grown tired of a form of government that had given them nothing, and they had accepted what was at hand as being something in the form of a government which must inevitably give them better service than they had received in the past. But he almost inferred that had democracy been at their doorstep, they might have clutched at it rather than at their present form of government.

The other statement which impressed me considerably was one by Dr. Van Abbe who was in charge of one of our summer schools some years ago. He spoke in relation to Australia and the countries to the north of us, and, if I judge him aright, he accused us of simply hoping that our future was assured by the fact that our technology was so far in advance of that used by people in those other countries and we had to trust that such differences in technology would remain. Both speakers seemed to me to insinuate that these people were not aggressive by nature but that they could become aggressive if they were hungry.

Since listening to those two men I have paid careful attention to the statements of all those who have been abroad and who have been associated with such matters as the Colombo Plan, and I have come to realise the immense amount of good that is being done by such a plan. Only yesterday we read in the newspaper that our own professor, Dr. Underwood, had returned from Bangalore where he had attended a conference associated with food and agriculture under the Colombo Plan. I would advise those who are interested in this matter to read what Professor Underwood said. I wish to quote only one brief statement which reads—

The standard of Australia's contributions to this region had given her a very high standing in most Asian eyes. This was due partly to a recognition of Australia's high technical standards, and partly to assistance in the form of food production equipment.

An equally interesting statement, however, appears in the same issue of the paper. It is a statement by Miss Amy Kane, of New Zealand, at the Associated Country Women of the World's convention in Toronto. She says that it is of little use sending equipment to these under-developed countries because the

farmers preferred to use primitive implements. Her statement was supported by Dr. J. F. Booth, an economist from the Canadian Department of Agriculture.

The other side of the story might also be looked at, and I believe I am correct in stating that, in answer to a question asked by a Western Australian member in the Federal Parliament, a reply was received to the effect that a considerable sum of money, something over £100,000,000, had been allocated for defence purposes but had not been spent. If that be true, would it not be wise to develop in the minds of citizens of Australia the idea of defending their future through friendship rather than the use of armaments as a defence?

Looking at all sides of these four statements which I have quoted, we could well afford to send not only the technical instruments and the equipment for the improvement of agricultural standards but also the technologists who would show these people how to use this advanced technology. If the statements of these people are correct, I do not think there is any shadow of doubt that our future as an Australian nation would be safer through having built friendship and security by raising the standard of living of these people than it would be by spending a large sum of money upon the manufacture of armaments.

I am not, for one moment, playing with this much maligned word "peace," nor am I suggesting that we should not arm ourselves to the fullest extent possible in order to ensure our safety. But I feel that while there is a large sum of money which we cannot spend and while we have a people who might be forced to take action were hunger their lot, it might be an experiment well worth trying. I realise that as a people we are doing a considerable amount under the Colombo Plan, but I consider that if we, as a race, regarded those to the north of us as a people whose standard of living we could raise, we would be more certain of a peaceful future than we are today.

Coming back to our own State, may I be permitted to repeat the request I made last year, that consideration be given to the appointment, in this Parliament, of joint committees to investigate such matters as subordinate legislation, standard works and various other matters—it might even be land settlement—such as they have in South Australia? Those members who are still interested in the suggestion, which I continue to make, will find all the details of the South Australian Committee for Subordinate Legislation on pages 311 and 312 of the No. 1 Volume of last year's Parliamentary Debates. There I have given all the details of the necessary Standing Orders that would have to be introduced in order that these committees might be made effective.

As I was last year, I have been impressed by the number of papers that have already been laid upon the Table of the House, and in the months since Parliament last sat something like 75 new sets of regulations have been issued and have been laid upon the Table of the House. I do not think that any one member can possibly go through those 75 papers to see what they mean, and it is difficult to go through even one particular set of regulations as they affect our own particular interests. But I took one set of regulations in order that I might emphasise to members the point that I am making on the need for Parliament to have some actual say in subordinate legislation. Let me refer to the regulations which appear in the "Government Gazette" of Tuesday, the 5th August, 1952, with regard to the Lunacy Act. Of course, I am not using these regulations to infer in any way that the conduct of the mental institutions is not as I would wish it to be; I am attacking the regulations purely as regulations to see whether they are sound and whether they are the type that a committee of both sides of the House and both Houses of Parliament would agree as being essential.

I recall that only last year one of the legal members of this House stated that once one began to define something, one began with the stage where one failed to define something else. So that when we lay down regulations for the conduct of certain people, we then begin to open the door so that the conduct of a different thing altogether may occur or even fail to occur. It seems to me odd when I see a regulation covering the administration of the most senior servant of the Mental Hospitals Department and stating that he shall thoroughly inspect that institution once a year and see the patients therein and fully report to the Minister on the institution.

Looking at that one begins to think that the work of that individual does not carry those duties inherently. I wonder whether it is necessary to lay them down in black and white in regulations, particularly when we look at the next regulation and see that—

For the purpose of an inquiry the Inspector General may ask questions of the Superintendent of an institution or of any other officer or person employed in an institution.

It seems extraordinary that an Inspector General must have a regulation setting out that he may go and ask any officer a question, but only when he is holding an inquiry. Later we find that the superintendent and the managing secretary of the institution shall co-operate with each other. This is provided by regulation!

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: How you are going to make them do it, I do not know.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: What an extraordinary set of circumstances if they do not co-operate! I am not criticising this in-

stitution, but the regulations as they appear; I am wondering whether they are useful or useless. I cannot see that it is necessary to lay down by regulation that two people in charge of two sides of an institution should co-operate because if they do not, goodness knows what would happen to the institution.

Hon. A. L. Loton: What happens to the regulation if they do not?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Even more interesting is Regulation 18, which lays down instructions as to how a staff must behave in the event of fire. It is as follows:—

18. When a fire breaks out in a ward of an institution the person in charge of the ward shall—

- (a) First take all steps necessary to preserve the safety of the patients;
- (b) remove, under the directions of the senior officer present, the patients to a place of safety;
- (c) attempt to localise and extinguish the fire by chemical or other available means;
- (d) where the fire is likely to spread, immediately ring the fire alarm and put the fire hoses into use pending the arrival of the fire brigade;
- (e) summon all available assistants, and
- (f) advise the senior medical officer and the senior nurse on duty.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That officer has a lot of spare time on his hands!

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I feel quite certain that if some standing committee on regulations had had this put before it at the time, we would not have seen it in print. I am quite sympathetic towards the institution because I think this followed a recent inquiry and it was felt that something had to be done to give an assurance that these steps would be carried out. But when it is necessary to put these particulars in a regulation one can only suspect that the morale of that institution is not high, and if these regulations go out, it leaves them open to suspicion. There is another interesting portion of these regulations which reads as follows:—

The superintendent of an institution shall cause to be displayed in each ward of the institution, a plan of the fire hose boxes and chemical appliances attached to the institution and the charge or senior nurse in each ward shall be responsible for ensuring that all members of the staff on duty in the ward are acquainted with the location and method of using the fire hose boxes and chemical appliances.

Later on, that senior nurse has to report the defects in these appliances. I made inquiries and find that in a similar institution in the East the fire brigade takes over this duty and instructs the staff in how to handle the appliances.

Hon. H. Hearn: So it does in private industry.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: They do here in Parliament House.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I therefore cannot see why a nurse should have that responsibility thrust on her. I would like to turn to this question of nursing staff as it comes very close to me. Once a girl puts on a nurse's uniform she is absorbed in part, if not in whole, into the spirit of that particular institution. But by regulation it is laid down that nurses shall carry out faithfully, to the best of their ability, all instructions, verbal or written, given to them by a matron or senior officer. This is surely something that is normally inherent in the work they do. Later we find—

Nurses and orderlies shall exercise the greatest care in the handling of patients and in the case of senile, infirm or troublesome patients, every endeavour shall be made by them to prevent injuries being caused to the patients.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Are the nurses private nurses?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is simply headed "nursing staff".

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: When was that regulation made?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It is the most recent regulation; made in August, 1952.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: A change of Government.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: Done by the previous Government.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I have only used this to enforce my point and to make it clear that there is need for Parliament to take charge of these regulations in supporting legislation. I trust that this time my plea will fall on more receptive ears and that something may be done in this matter. With regard to one other of the standing committees, I would refer to the fact that the Commonwealth Government itself has a standing committee on public works, and though I have emphasised this matter in the House before, and although Mr. Thomson's father pleaded for this committee year in and year out, nothing has been done. Yet in South Australia this has been a functioning committee for 15 or more years, and it is not in any way proposed to abolish that committee from the South Australian parliamentary system.

The Minister for the North-West: Are the members honorary?

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: No, in my previous speech references to the amounts paid to members will be found. I think the salaries of the members of the subordinate committee are about £100 a year for the chairman, and possibly less for the other members. But they do go up according to the amount of work to be carried out, such as that required of members of the Commonwealth Standing works committee where they have to travel around the States. The last amounts I heard they were paid were £400 for the chairman and £350 for the members; this, in addition to travelling expenses. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the work that was done by this standing committee of the Commonwealth Parliament when it went to Queensland to investigate the proposed building for the Taxation Department in Brisbane. The cost estimated by the Department of Works was £1,687,500. The report of the committee showed that there was ample room for saving.

For example, the amount of £1,687,500 included £93,800 for a cafeteria on the eleventh floor, and £155,000 for air-conditioning. Further, the estimated cost of the building was 11s. 3d. a cubic foot against a calculated 9s. 2d. a cubic foot for a similar building in Sydney. This discrepancy represented a cool £500,000. Very properly the committee recommended that the building should not be proceeded with until an open competition had been held. One witness stated that he could reduce this estimate by nearly £1,000,000, so there is a considerable saving to the taxpayers that has been achieved by one single action on the part of that committee.

A suggestion made by Sir Charles Latham in the course of his speech was that I might deal with the problem of the sex offender. I wish to make it plain that I am not a psychiatrist; nor have I ever made a deep study of this subject, although I am naturally interested in it as a citizen and more so as a physician, and therefore have devoted considerable time to thinking what could be done in regard to this matter. First of all, we have to consider it from the point of view of whether it is a serious problem. If one takes the number of people in this community charged with this offence, it is small, but it is nevertheless an offence that is creating much concern, particularly amongst our womenfolk. Because of the very nature of the offence, some people consider that the sex offender should be apprehended for treatment, whereas if we try to define the term "sex offence," we shall find that both sexes are to blame, probably the male more than the female.

A study of the habits of these people has been made by a team of workers in the United States of America under Dr. Kinsey. Some of his work is already known and the findings are expected to reach us very soon. Much has been written as to what should be done with sex

offenders, but nothing very concrete has emerged from it. One suggestion that has frequently been made is that these people should be put into colonies. The system of colonies has been tried and has failed, primarily because the sex offender, in the main, is an unsocial individual, one that cannot live in harmony with his fellows, and to put such people into a colony might create considerably more problems than already exist because there would be a collection of sociological and pathological cases that might well prove to be a worse problem.

I believe that one must view this question from the well-known and obvious fact that we are bi-sexual and that we have both male and female hormones in our composition, and to me the wonder is that there are so many normal people in the world and so few abnormal. The balance between those two hormones determines whether we are normal, providing there is also present normal brain structure. One must also realise that there are so many various and individual problems associated with this matter that it cannot be regarded as something that can be dealt with en masse, and professional opinion is that the treatment of each individual will produce better results than trying to treat such people in a group.

Quite a number of sex offenders are now in gaol, some of them on the indeterminate list. Some have been certified and sent to Claremont or Heathcote, and later were released and allowed to mingle with the community again. It would appear, therefore, that the actual tackling of this problem on some narrow basis would not produce results. It must be brought within the wider field of mental health. One pressing matter with regard to mental health practically throughout the world is that wherever such a plan has been envisaged, it has never been implemented because of varying difficulties, including dearth of finance.

There are certain suggestions one could make that I think might help. Firstly, I do not believe that the mere putting of a sex offender in gaol, unless the individual has shown criminal intent, is of any value whatever. I recall the case of an individual who was charged with indecent exposure and was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment. On the afternoon of the day he was liberated, he committed a similar offence in the same place, and was charged once more with the offence. I believe that the correct approach to the problem is to regard it as a medical or sociological one rather than as a purely criminal one; but I say quite frankly that if an individual shows criminal tendencies associated with his act, his treatment should be that of a criminal. Such people should be in gaol.

It would probably be helpful to provide better facilities than the gaols for the treatment of such people, but the mere fact

of imposing incarceration does not help. The mental hospitals have done all they can. They use the services of a psychologist. At the moment we have only one available and that one has a lot to do, but I believe that the appointment of another to assist in this work and a system of segregated treatment in the gaol might have considerable effect. It must be realised that no man or woman can be treated as a sexual offender until a sexual act has been committed. Not until after an individual has been guilty of an offence, can any such step be taken.

If it be felt that the problem is such that active steps should be taken to deal with the matter, I suggest the appointment of a committee consisting of the Inspector General of the Insane (Dr. Thompson), the Superintendent of Heathcote (Dr. Gray), the gaol doctor (Dr. Bean), a practising psychiatrist in the city, a practising physician with some knowledge of sociological problems, a legal officer of the Crown Law Department and a practising solicitor. Such a committee could investigate the question and advise whether there should be any alteration either in the law or in the medical sphere. I believe that such a committee would recommend improved facilities for the treatment of those who were committed to gaol equivalent to the facilities already available in the mental hospitals for the treatment of cases referred to them.

Beyond that I do not think we can go at the present time. I think we might regret our action if any steps were taken to form a colony for the incarceration of such individuals or to suggest that a surgical operation be performed on such people. I do not believe that either of those steps would have any effect at all because, if one form of sexual aberration is controlled, it is quite likely that another form will take its place, and it is sometimes better that one should know the form of aberration rather than risk the occurrence of another. I can sympathise with those people who deem this problem to be urgent, but I have only the suggestion that those closely associated with it should form an advisory committee to ascertain what may best be done.

A point also made by Sir Charles Latham was that he considered there were too many people wandering around on trips of one sort and another. While I agree that this is so, I stress the point that the sending abroad of senior officers of departments or the travelling by our Ministers in Australia or abroad can do nothing but good. I believe that the education to be received by those who do travel will bring back untold benefits to the people of the State. I was greatly impressed with the address of the Premier when he returned from his visit abroad,

and I realised that there had been a gain of something much more than was revealed by the Coronation pageantry.

The same would occur to those who travelled abroad for the purpose of bringing back ideas that would be of real value to the State. I know what great value I have derived from my journeys abroad. Only yesterday I was able to receive medical help after having written to a man I had met in the United States of America some years ago. I wish to emphasise the value of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and I trust that we shall be represented at the next conference at Nairobi, but I also hope that the meetings of the Australian branches of the association will continue to be held regularly. I understand that one was held this year in New South Wales but I have not yet seen any report of it. However, if that meeting was the same success as that held in Tasmania, everyone who attended it must have received considerable benefit. I trust that the Premier, impressed as he was by the meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in London, at its Coronation dinner, will give thought to the suggestion which was made at the Tasmanian conference—that the States should each give a small sum of money to the State branches of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in order that visits by members to other States in conference may continue annually.

I make again a plea that I have previously made, in the hope that it will now fall on other ears. It is that thought be given to the planning of the Royal Perth Hospital, though other than what has already been given. I realise that a tremendous amount of planning has gone into that institution and only today, as I visited that hospital, I realised what a tremendous asset it is to the State and what a modern institution it is; but when I speak of giving thought to the planning, I mean with relation to the use of the land adjacent to the hospital.

It seems to me a wicked thing that the Commonwealth Government can take over Macfarlane's property and Vetter's Garage and erect these buildings that will not be in keeping with the use to which the land should be put. I understand that Vetter's Garage is being taken over by the Commonwealth purely to house Commonwealth vehicles, and for no other purpose, and that Macfarlane's property is to be used as the site for a telephone exchange. I have said, time and time again, that the fire station has outworn its usefulness in the area in which it is situated and could easily be moved to another site. The Commonwealth could then be given land on that side of the street and the State could resume Macfarlane's and Vetter's properties.

If something of this sort is not done quickly and such requirements as extra boiler-houses erected, it will not be possible to continue the nurses' quarters along Murray-st. and we shall eventually have one nurses' home facing Murray-st. and one in Wellington-st. on the opposite side, on the land which has been made available by arrangement with the Perth City Council. If the nurses' home is built on that other side of Wellington-st., it will mean that every nurse on duty will have to cross that busy thoroughfare which, I understand, under Professor Stephenson's scheme, will be greatly widened. The risk to the nursing staff when crossing that highway to work will be considerable.

Hon. G. Bennetts: We would have to build a tunnel.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: That has already been done in some places where it was found necessary, an instance being the Brompton Hospital in London. Such a tunnel will be an expensive item, and so thought should be given to the continuation of the nurses' home on the land now occupied by the properties I have mentioned. We shall have to resume a considerable portion of land around the hospital if it is to fulfil its proper function. I cannot see a hospital being built—for many years to come—in close association with the medical school at the University, owing to the enormous cost.

For a long time the Royal Perth Hospital will be forced to act as the medical unit of the medical school and various buildings, such as pathological and preventive institutions, will require to be built on that land. Close by, the Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service has its building, and active steps should be taken to see that this hospital, which will cost £4,000,000 when completed, will be an asset to the public in keeping with that colossal expenditure.

I trust that the present Minister for Health will give thought to the resumption of Vetter's and Macfarlane's properties from the Commonwealth—it would now have to be done with Commonwealth consent—so that the whole area may be planned on a proper basis. I would like to see laid on the Table of this House the master plan of the Royal Perth Hospital. I would then feel satisfied that we had done everything possible to ensure that that institution would take its proper place in the social services of this community.

On motion by Hon. C. W. D. Barker, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.20 p.m.