

except in winter time. The broadcast band from Geraldton can be heard in Carnarvon during daylight hours in winter time, but the receiver requires so much power for his set that it results in all the statics and interferences being brought in, so as to practically make the service inaudible.

The shortwave station which operates on 2 kws on the 32 metre band is the one tuned into by most people. If the power were raised to 10 kws, like the station operating on the 60 metre band, a great deal of the trouble of the outback stations would be overcome. If the Geraldton station were raised from 2 to 10 kws, as in the case of Wagin, far more people could be served by Geraldton than at present. I tested out the two stations on a car radio. I did this in the vicinity of Nookawarra station, out from Cue. At 4 p.m. I could pick up Wagin clearly which was 450 miles away, but I could not hear Geraldton which was 180 miles away. From that it will be seen that an increase in the kilowatts of these stations would enable them to service many more listeners.

Hon. D. Brand: Is that matter not under consideration by the Commonwealth at present?

Mr. NORTON: I have seen nothing about that in the report of the A.B.C. which I have here. I would point out that the Commonwealth is rapidly going ahead with the installation of television. When such a service is installed it will be in the Perth, Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, Albany and Geraldton areas. I understand each of these stations will radiate between 35 and 40 miles. Admittedly, that would give a service to 495,000 of the 639,771 head of population in Western Australia. Those figures were taken from the last census, and in both cases they could be greater at present. I would urge the A.B.C. to give serious consideration to increasing the power of the stations which will serve the North-West and the outback. By installing television, with its restricted radius, we are moving towards centralisation, something which we are so urgently trying to avoid.

Mr. Rhatigan: Once again it is a case of the forgotten North.

Mr. NORTON: It is. The people of the North-West have very little entertainment, and the only thing they can rely on for entertainment is the wireless set, whereas people living in towns and districts to be served by television will have not only wireless entertainment but also television and other amenities which most people in the North are deprived of at present.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: What is the maximum range of television?

Mr. NORTON: According to this 7th annual report of the A.B.C. it is between 35 and 40 miles.

Mr. Ross Hutchinson: How could that be pushed any further?

Mr. NORTON: I was not suggesting that the radius be pushed further. I suggested that programmes could be better distributed by more powerful stations, and, if necessary, more stations. I am not advocating television for the North-West; I am only asking for the ordinary broadcast or shortwave service to be audible.

There is one thing which not only the people in Western Australia but in all Australia should do, and that is to press the Federal Government not to carry out any more atomic bomb tests on any sea routes. Over the last two years we experienced a number of such tests at Onslow. In every instance they not only disrupted the State shipping arrangements but also the air services, and, in fact, every service which is supplied to the North. During the last tests, four of the State ships were held up for over two days waiting for the all-clear to be given. There is any amount of space in the world for the holding of these tests without picking on a shipping lane which is the life-blood of any country.

In conclusion, I would ask the Premier, when he goes to Canberra, to again bring before the appropriate authorities the matter of taxation relief for the North-West. The Premier has now seen a lot of that part of the State for himself and I know he will appreciate the difficulties experienced there. Not only will he appreciate the difficulties, but also the potentialities, and I am sure he can readily see the urgent necessity to encourage, by some means, capital to that area.

On motion by Mr. Crommelin, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.22 p.m.

Legislative Council

Tuesday, 14th August, 1956.

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

QUESTION.

WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT.

Vacation and Reallocation of Tobacco Farms.

Hon. F. D. WILLMOTT asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many war service tobacco farmers have left their properties?

(2) In what districts are these farms situated?

(3) How many of these farms have been reallocated?

(4) What does the Government intend to do with unoccupied tobacco farms in the Northcliffe area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1) and (2) Twenty-nine tobacco growers relinquished their leases: six at Manjimup, 20 at Northcliffe and three at Karridale. One lease was cancelled by the department. Twenty-two growers have been transferred to other types of farming. Eight lessees are on tobacco farms.

(3) None.

(4) Properties will be sold by tender on terms determined by the Commonwealth.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 2nd August.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [4.36]: At the outset I wish to apologise for taking the place of Mr. Simpson, who is sick, and I ask the Chamber to bear with me for a little while. My first duty is to congratulate the new members of this House, and I would like to point out to them that they have entered upon a very important duty. I know there are many among the outside public—and some of our political friends also—who regard this as a not very important place, and practically useless; but I would impress upon members that they have a great responsibility in this House, equally as great as that of another place, and probably a little more so, inasmuch as this Chamber represents a section of the community that has a considerable stake in the State and which consequently provides the wherewithal, in many instances, whence come the necessary funds for those engaged in other avocations and represented by another place.

I wish to congratulate the hon. member who moved the Address-in-reply, and I assure him that his speech was quite up to standard. I believe that before he finishes his six years' term here he will be one of the leading speakers of this House. I do not say that simply because I wish to placate him, but because I believe that older members here should give encouragement to some of the younger members. After all

this is really a very important House. We have to pass all the State's legislation. We do not have control of finance, as that control has been limited to another place; but we have the right to overlook all expenditure, and we have power to reject any money Bill, a power which, of course, is very seldom exercised. During my many years in this Parliament I do not remember its ever being exercised. Nevertheless, frequently the Appropriation Bill has been delayed, not because of the Labour Party being in power, but because of other parties who held office and who thought that further consideration should be given to some of the items of expenditure mentioned in that legislation.

Many people talk about the abolition of this House. In reply to that, I want to point out, especially to new members, that there is on the wall of this House a picture depicting the first five members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia. That initial Council was appointed in 1832 and ever since that year we have had a Legislative Council in this State. In fact, until 1899 it was the only House of Parliament. In those days this State was very isolated because there was no rail communication with other States, and there was very little population until gold was discovered.

However, the finding of the yellow speck attracted to Western Australia a considerable number of people, who were of a good type. From that year onwards we have made steady progress, and I hope that for many centuries ahead we will still have a House of review to carry on the traditions of the past. Members should realise that whilst there are three parties in this House, most legislation is considered from a non-party point of view. I know there have been times when I have voted against my own party because I believed that, by so doing, I was acting in the interests of the people of the State; but I have never seen any members of the Labour Party doing that.

The Chief Secretary: They are the greatest supporters you have had.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would not say that. However, I remember, that on one occasion, I introduced a Bill and had great difficulty in getting it passed because my own friends, members of the Liberal Party, opposed it. But I did receive support from the members of the Labour Party. Admittedly, it was fairly difficult, and I even had to smodge to the Chief Secretary.

The Chief Secretary: That will be the day!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes, I even had to persuade him with a few well-placed remarks I put to him. As a result I was successful in having that Bill passed. We can be big enough, I hope, to set aside our party views, if such action is in the interests of the people of this

State. In another place, the Labour Party has been in power for quite a long while, for varying periods from 1921 to date.

The Chief Secretary: You did not congratulate them on getting back.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Government might have had only three years in office up till the last election instead of six because of events that took place prior to the election.

Looking back to the years between 1924 and 1927, I remember that some important pieces of legislation were placed on the statute book by the late Hon. A. McCallum. I refer to the Workers' Compensation Act and the Industrial Arbitration Act. At the time we did not satisfy the outside organisations, but there is no doubt that those two Acts were very excellent pieces of legislation. In fact, they were the best of their type in Australia. Since that time, there have been some amendments made to them—I will not say improvements. There is no doubt, however, that those Acts have done a great deal for the working people in this State and they were passed by members of this House. So it cannot be said that we are the disruptionists we are reputed to be by people outside the House.

It is the consensus of opinion of many people outside this House that there should be only one Chamber in this State—namely, the Legislative Assembly. In Queensland there is only one House of Parliament and it appears that there is going to be only one House for the rest of Queensland's history.

The Chief Secretary: Yes; they did a good thing over there.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am not too sure about that. In fact, the electors originally voted against the abolition of the Legislative Council in that State; but the Government of the day, having the numbers, passed the necessary legislation, and the Legislative Council ceased to exist. In New South Wales the opportunity exists to hold a referendum on whether the Legislative Council should be abolished, but to date no advantage has been taken of it. I do not know whether the legislation passed in that State is equal to that passed here. However, it is not better.

Whenever the Labour Party gets into power it seems to want to build up a system that would enable it, at all times, to control the destiny of Australia. I do not think that is very wise. After all is said and done, we have to remember where the money comes from to provide for the welfare of this State. We must also remember that the success or failure of the State depends on it.

The people of this State have a fairly wide franchise in regard to this House, because a person has only to rent or own a house or possess property to the value

of £50, and he is entitled to representation in the Legislative Council. That is almost equal to a person having no property whatsoever. Let us examine that point for a moment.

It is the financial geniuses—the men and the companies—that have the money behind them that make the wheels of industry go around. There is no gainsaying that they provide the work. I am a little concerned for the future of Australia for some little while. I was fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to be a Minister of the Crown during the depression period. I would point out that just before the first World War this State was progressing reasonably well; and in those days we knew that £1 was worth £1. In fact, £1 was worth a golden sovereign. The initial depreciation of the £ commenced when the powers that be said, "Let us print paper which will be equal to £1." There was no backing for that paper money apart from the work performed by the people of the country.

Subsequently the war intervened, and we found that we did not have enough money to provide for the defence requirements of Australia. As a result, inflation occurred to a certain degree. During the 1914-18 war most of our industries deteriorated because we did not have sufficient labour and capital.

When the men returned from overseas a similar state of affairs existed to that which applied after the cessation of the last war. Most countries were short of food, and Australia was in the happy position of being able to supply quite a few of their wants shortly after the war finished; and, of course, we were able to produce at a good profit. The price of wheat rose to £1 a bag, which was unheard of up to that time. The average price of wheat per bushel was 10s. or 11s. This enabled the man on the land to carry out developmental work which had been held up during the war through lack of funds. That materially helped.

After the war, when the world was supplied with all the requirements needed, and countries like Russia—with cheaper labour at their disposal—were able to compete with us to our disadvantage, I wondered how the people on the land ever succeeded, or even managed to remain on it. The price of wheat got to as low as 1s. a bushel, and the depression really set in in Australia.

I am saying these things because I want Western Australians to know that if this State has no successful pastoral or farming industries, it cannot succeed and must regress. I want to hammer this point: One cannot obtain money from any source without the necessary backing. If a country can back £1 of money with £1 of labour or goods, or anything else that is tangible, then it is successful.

About 1928 a very severe depression set in, and Australia received its full effects from 1930 to 1936, after which conditions began to improve. Soon after that, World War II broke out. I am aware that many people have criticised the action taken by the Federal Government, on the advice of financial experts, under the late Hon. J. H. Scullin, who was a good Labour leader and a statesman. The Government provided a medicine which was not palatable, but nevertheless did cure some of the ills.

Unfortunately, people with no savings, and those living from hand to mouth and day to day were unable to look after themselves; and in every State of the Commonwealth the Government had to do its best to supply them with requirements for living. I do not ever want to see a return to those conditions, but they can well return unless we look after ourselves in the prosperous times. We experienced very good years, from about 1943 to 1956, but I am afraid that the people have not profited by those conditions.

I do not intend to lecture to hon. members, and I have no desire to do so. I know that I shall get no publicity for anything I say, because the Press does not give publicity to members of this House, except a chosen few.

Hon. L. A. Logan: There is not a Press representative in the gallery.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is typical. I shall have something to say about "The West Australian" later on. There is no means of educating the people because they will not pick up Hansard and read the speeches. If a genius were to enter this House and he was favourably looked upon by the newspaper mentioned, he might get some publicity. In the old days members here got a great deal of publicity. Those were the days when we had some good stalwarts, but I shall not mention names.

I do not intend to belittle the present members. Whilst on the average they are younger, they are yet capable of learning and are equally as intelligent. It is not very heartening for members to know that contributions in this House, well worth publicity for the enlightenment of the people, cannot be publicised except by extracting the relevant portions from Hansard, and distributing them to a handful of people.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: "The West Australian" published only three and a half inches on the opening of Parliament.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I have been in this House for 10 years. I would say that two full columns in "The West Australian" would contain all the publicity that has been given to the speeches made in this House in that time. It is not very healthy when the leading newspaper does nothing to educate the people.

I do not want to see a depression occur in this country. I know the suffering that took place in the last one; so I am asking the Government and those supporting the Government, irrespective of its politics, to do all they can to assist any steps contemplated, if it is found necessary to tighten the purse-strings and legislate along those lines to maintain the present-day security.

Let us not forget that the prosperity we experienced from 1943 to 1956 was due almost entirely to the price received for our wool, wheat and coarse grains. Very little else contributed to that prosperity. In Australia the standard of living makes it very difficult for us to compete with other countries because of the high freights and the high cost of manufacturing goods. I daresay that we could export the products from the 10,000,000 acres of forests, and we would get a ready sale for the timber at any price we liked to charge, but we cannot deplete the forests which, in this State, are in a limited area, just because of a desire to prolong our prosperity. We have to bear in mind the people coming after us, and we have to look after their needs.

I have seen many boys and girls grow up into men and women, and I have seen how the value of money has been lost in this period. What was a full week's wages for a man is now spent by his child on a day's outing to the Royal Show. I see youngsters going to the Show these days with £3 to spend, but that is not considered to be very much today. These youngsters have no idea of the value of money. Instead of putting £2 of that money away, the parents give them the £3 and let them spend it. They could have saved some of it for the children so that when they grew up they would have something behind them. There seems to be a lack of education in this regard.

Irrespective of his politics, no member of Parliament should hesitate to impress on the people that the security which we have experienced in the last few years may not continue in the near future. I am concerned about the falling values of exports. Governments are keeping the price of wheat up artificially, although wool is maintaining its price on the world's market. Debased as it is, money is really short in Australia.

I read the other day that the Prime Minister had gone to the U.S.A. to negotiate a loan, somewhere around 120,000,000 dollars. In what way will we get this loan? If we got the dollars, what would we do with them here? We would have to repay the loan with commodities produced in this country. We could not just take the dollars; we would have to take the value in machinery or suchlike. Let us examine the result of that arrangement. It will mean less employment in this State. Today the Government is attempting to build up industries in this

country. If that loan is successfully negotiated we will have to repay it. But what can we give in exchange other than wool?

Australia today is manufacturing motor cars, as a result of building up secondary industries, but in this regard our responsibility to our Motherland, which has always been such a good market for our products, must be borne in mind. When Australia is getting so short of money that it has to borrow it from the U.S.A., an old man like myself begins to worry.

The Minister for Railways: This is not the first time we have borrowed money from the U.S.A.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No, we have borrowed money from that country in the past. We will probably have some difficulty in repaying the loan. I do not know how the money is proposed to be spent or what Australia will send in exchange, unless it is spent on the purchase of goods required by us from countries that are in need of American dollars. That might help in some respect.

The Minister for Railways: Films and records take some payment, I should think.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes. Are we not living with too much frivolity? Are we not catering too much for that sort of thing? Are we not catering for gambling, and doing all sorts of things that we should not do? Australia's prosperity has been brought about by a demand for goods that we have been able to export, but we do not have very much chance of marketing manufactured articles. I have spoken of the inflation that began in 1914, and the position was aggravated a great deal by the last war.

Some figures which I have looked up indicate that in July, 1933, the basic wage—after the adjustment of which I spoke, and which was made by a Commonwealth Labour Government and, in turn, by all the State Governments irrespective of policy—was £3 8s. Today it is £13 1s. 6d. I am not criticising that, but I want to point out the value of the currency at that time as compared with today. The value of £1 in those days was 20s.; now, it is 5s.

People talk about the amount of money we have. There is, in fact, a lot of money; but the question is: What will it buy? I remember the time when, in Germany, 2,000,000 marks—a mark previously being worth 1s. 0½d. in English currency—was sufficient to buy only a postage stamp. That was during the war period, and members who are able to look back to those days will know that that was the position. It is marvellous how Germany undertook reconstruction. It occurred because the German people were loyal to their country. There was no question about whether they should work 34 hours a week or 40 hours.

They simply realised that it was only by working long hours that reconstruction could be achieved, and that is what must be realised in Australia. The Germans did not mind working long hours, because it was for their country.

We are not educating our people along those lines, but I would like to see it done by all parties and by the monopoly Press in this State. The people should be educated to realise that their success will be measured by what they give to the country either by physical or mental effort. They must be made to see that their contribution is worth more than pounds, shillings and pence, because it will keep this country solid.

It must be pointed out, of course, that the population is different now from what it was in the early days of which I have been speaking. Then, it totalled about 439,000; now, we have nearly 700,000 people. That enables us to be a little better off than was the case during that period. I do not think that there is any prospect of things being as bad as they were during the depression if we can get people to accept their responsibilities. I would hate to see another depression similar to the one we had, but I am a bit fearful of what is ahead of us.

All overseas countries are undertaking the production of the very goods that we can produce. By an inflationary method they are providing bonuses for the growing of primary products which are necessary to feed the people. But the people pay. They do not know that they pay. They do not realise that when the Government gives them a bonus for the production of milk or butter, it must come out of the pockets of the people; and nobody seems to set himself out to educate them.

The people who are hit hardest by inflation are not those who can go to the Arbitration Court or to the Public Service Board and ask for wage or salary increases. The people who are affected are those who through the years saved up to provide for themselves in their old age. Those people have provided for themselves a fixed income, and it has not been so easy to keep their income abreast of rising prices as has been the case with those able to appear before tribunals and seek additional remuneration.

I am very concerned about such people. If they have an income of £3 or £4 per week, they have no hope of obtaining any other assistance. I can appreciate the feelings of those who have to struggle along on £4 per week and who, in their younger days, set aside something for their old age, because they did not want charity; and I hope that an effort will be made in Australia—and particularly in this State—to do something for them. It is not easy while things are as they are

at present. I would hate to think that I had to live on charity, though I do not think the word "charity" has the same meaning as in the old days.

When old-age pensions were first introduced, people were very diffident about accepting them. We had great difficulty in persuading some folk to apply for a pension, small as it was. They felt that they did not want charity. Now, people have been educated in such a way that some of them who could well afford to do without the pension find means of getting it. I have no objection to people obtaining pensions if they can secure them and are entitled to them.

Our States have not the problem which faced them in earlier days when they had to find their own loan money. It is a very poor sort of arrangement when a father has to provide the money for his family to spend; but that is what is taking place. The Commonwealth Government has to find the money, and the States go along to their fairy godfather and say, "We want millions of pounds." And the Commonwealth is expected to find them. I hunted up some figures applying to the early period of my political life for comparison with those of today and will give them to members a little later.

The problem is not one that is easy to overcome. It is easy to talk about, but not so easy to solve. If we cannot persuade the members of the Legislative Assembly to appreciate our point of view, it may be necessary for this Chamber to assert itself in some of these matters and convince those in another place that it is not good government to get all the money it is possible to get and to spend it as fast as possible. I am concerned about the increased charges that the Government is forced to make—increased railway charges and suchlike.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: And the ones they did not mention at election time.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is a different matter. There are two voices. One is exercised immediately after an election when the Government is pretty safe. The other is the nice, soothing voice which is used just prior to an election; and that sort of thing is done very well by the Labour Government.

The Minister for Railways: And by the previous Government. As in 1952, for instance.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: In 1952 this State was prosperous. What will happen in the future is this: If there is a depression, the other party will be brought into power in order to try to solve the difficulty. That is what will be done, mark my words!

The Minister for Railways: It tried previously, and failed.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: It did not fail the last time. It succeeded. As I pointed out previously, the medicine was nasty; but we did do something. We did what will have to be done again shortly: we controlled interest rates. We controlled everything. We even had to reduce wages. Members at that time were in the grown-up stage and appreciated what had to be done. It is a far cry back to 1932. During the first war and the depression period fewer people married, and consequently there were fewer children to grow up and help carry the burdens of the State. As a result, the percentage of older people in the community is greater than would otherwise have been the case. I hope that position will be improved in the future.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: There are too many young people being killed on the roads.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not know how that can be overcome.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: More people are killed in road accidents than by war.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not know whether anything can be done in that connection by just talking about it, especially when one sees judges merely putting offenders on a bond. I am afraid there is a good deal of carelessness. I do not know why people have to speed. The world got along all right when we used the horse and cart and the buggy and pair. We seemed to get to our destination all right under those conditions. There were not any accidents in those days. If people would travel at 30 miles an hour they would reach their journey's end safely, and they would be able to control machines that are capable of 78 miles an hour. But young bloods must test themselves out! I agree that one becomes used to speed; and unless he looks at his speedometer, a man does not appreciate the rate at which he is travelling.

There are not many members here who were here at the time of the Collier Government. I always regarded Mr. Collier as a great Labour statesman, a man who was quite capable of taking over the Prime Ministership of Australia. I worked with him from 1921 until I left the Legislative Assembly to take up what I thought would be a much easier job. I was closely associated with him, and I want to read to the House a few passages from a speech he made in 1933. I would ask the younger members of this Chamber to read that speech right through. It is to be found in Hansard No. 1 of 1933, at page 241.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Was that the one in which he said, "Thank God for the Legislative Council!"?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is not recorded; but he said it. Members have an opportunity to take words from their speeches that do not seem quite right!

Hon. G. Bennetts: You would not say the Hansard writers could not pick it up?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The speech to which I refer was made in 1933 and it contained the following:—

The position we are faced with in this State today, as in every other part of the world, is not the result of government either by young men or by old men, but is the result of government on entirely wrong lines, and in that respect men and women of all ages have participated. As an Australian, I may be permitted to offer a few remarks with regard to ourselves. Whilst I would yield to no one in my admiration of the splendid qualities possessed by the Australian, qualities which I scarcely need indicate, for they are well known to all of us—initiative, enterprise, daring, courage, dash, imagination—all these fortunately belong to our people as Australians. Let us not close our eyes to the fact that there is another side to the page. We are not 100 per cent. perfect. We have defects, perhaps the defects of our qualities. If we turn around and consider what are the defects of the Australian character, I should say the outstanding defect is an excessive love of sport, not for the sake of sport, but for the gambling opportunities it provides. In no other country in the world, so far as I know, is there such a degree or desire or love of gambling as there is in the Australian character. I mention this because I think it is well that we should see the other side of the picture. Love of sport, yes; as one who took part in a certain sport in my youth, that of cricket, I welcome the fact that our boys and girls are taking part in large measure in outdoor sport, which our climate encourages them to do; but I am not a lover of a so-called sport at which 40,000 or 50,000 people gather together on a Saturday afternoon and roar themselves hoarse in barracking for Tom This or Bill That on a football field, where there are only 36 men taking part; rather would I prefer to see a much smaller crowd of a few thousands looking on and 30,000 or 40,000 taking part in some kind of outdoor exercise for themselves and for their own benefit. My travels, not only in Australia but in other parts of the world, have led me to the conclusion that people nowhere, no race I have any knowledge of, is so given to an excessive love of gambling as is the Australian race. Men who for 20 or 30 years have been employed in good positions on full time wages and reasonably good wages and salaries—this applies also to men in commerce and business—at the end of the first

week they find themselves out of occupation they are looking for some kind of assistance from somebody or other. So, expressing my own opinion and only my own, I say there is that weak spot in the Australian character—an excessive love of sport. If the older men have been governing the Australian States, why is it? It is because the younger men of the present generation have come into a life that afforded them opportunities for leisure and enjoyment which they themselves did not earn and which they themselves played no part in securing. While the serious matters of life, particularly the government of the country, have been left to the older men, the explanation is that the younger men have been absorbed in or obsessed with a desire for pleasure, luxury and ease. If we go to our libraries or to meeting halls where thoughtful addresses may be delivered, we find them comparatively empty, while at the same time all the roads that lead to jazz halls and picture shows are crowded and congested with the youth of the country. My statement seems to be pretty hard, but it is true. I do not blame the youth. They are simply the victims of the environment of the age and generation in which they were born and are living. Just as in older times the youth have done extraordinary or unwise things, so are the youth of today doing things according to the environment in which they find themselves. Let us once and for all get rid of the idea that old men have brought about the state of affairs that exist in the world today. I could, if I cared, have recourse to history to show that most of the great things in the way of reform done in the world have been initiated and carried through by old men.

That speech impressed itself upon me at the time and I have never forgotten it. I thought it worthwhile to read that portion of it to members so that they might have an opportunity of hearing the words of a man for whom, although he followed a different branch of politics to my own, I had the greatest respect, and who did a great deal for the Labour Party. I hope members will read the whole of his speech because I can assure them that it is well worth the trouble.

The speech was made at the time when he took over the Premiership from the Government of which I was a member and which had passed through a very difficult period. The late Hon. Phillip Collier was a man of great vision and one who was capable of giving advice. I think the State profited by his vision. In those days a speech such as that would have

been given half a page in the daily paper, and in that way it helped to educate the people and did a great deal of good.

The Government now proposes to increase railway charges and water rates in order to get more money. Of course, these increases take the money away from the people who have it to spend; but it is only a palliative and cannot be of any great and lasting benefit. These increases might draw in some money that would otherwise be spent injudiciously, and I cannot think of any other way of paying for the services which the Government gives to the people. Consequently, I do not condemn the Government; but after all, the easy way, if one has to get money, and it can be borrowed, is to borrow it.

But I put this suggestion to the Ministers in this House: Would it not be worthwhile to study our various departments to see whether we are getting full value for the money we are spending on them? We have just been listening to a talk by the Postmaster-General of Australia; and I thought, when he was talking of the millions that are being expended on departments under his control, what a saving it would be if we could save only a million or two by a better organised system.

After all, we are using a large number of mechanical devices in these days. The old days, when men worked with picks and shovels, have gone. I am not sorry about that, either, because it was hard work, and I did my share of it. I can remember the sore hands that I used to get, and the bent back I received from work of that type. But by using these mechanical means, are we getting any better financial results? We should be able to do the work at a quarter of the cost.

Some of the big works in this State were carried out by men using picks and shovels, and I refer particularly to the Goldfields Water Supply Scheme. In those days, the pipes were buried; whereas today, they are left on the surface and no skill is needed in doing that type of work.

It was a dreadful thing when the first money was borrowed. It was borrowed by a Labour Premier, the late Hon. John Scaddan. "The West Australian" christened him "Gone a million Jack." But in those days only small sums were borrowed. At that time a sum of £3,000,000 was involved, and the people thought that it was a terrific burden. But gold, which was at the other end of the pipeline, paid for it, and the State has developed quicker because of it. A solid foundation for the State was laid and we have been able to increase our population because of that water supply system.

I do not say that the Government is entirely to blame for the state of affairs in which we find ourselves today. The employers of labour have to take their

share, and it is of no use their thinking that this is a time to get rich quickly and to maintain their industries. They cannot do it. They have to build up businesses that will be able to stand in the future, and they have to put by certain sums for reserves to tide them over the times that lie ahead.

I am not a pessimist—not by any means. I have lived long enough to know that pessimism does not get us anywhere. A smile and an optimistic outlook get us much further. But, after all, it is only commonsense to realise that if folk are going to throw away their huge profits and not worry about the future, their businesses will not be built on a solid foundation. We also have to get the labouring fellows—these days they do not have to work so hard as did the old men who are today grey-headed and receive pensions—to put a little money by for a rainy day.

But even that is of no use unless we do something to stabilise the value of our money. Every year Commonwealth loans, which were subscribed to during the war period—because we had no other way of helping—are falling due; and bonds that will fall due in 1964 will be of far less value, because of the present-day value of the £, than they were when the money was first subscribed. The value of the £ has depreciated considerably, and that can be seen if one reads the daily paper and discovers what the public is prepared to pay for these bonds. Their value has dropped considerably.

I do not know the remedy, but I think that members in this House and employers and employees ought to be told the true story. This subject ought to be discussed outside Parliament House instead of the public being told all the nice plausible things that are mentioned at election times when we try to excel one another in giving everything a nice colour and dealing out sugar-coated medicine. I do not know how the problem can be overcome; but if some organised attempt were made, I believe it would be possible to do something about it.

I do not blame the Ministers but the Civil Service cannot do what the ordinary businessman can do. There are a few State enterprises in Western Australia, and among them we have seven State hotels. A short time ago, a statement appeared in the "Daily News"; it was written by a man who had not been outside the City of Perth. It was a statement on the State hotels; and while I do not wish to use the Press to express my views, I would like to discuss this particular item, because obviously the person who wrote it was not highly educated in these matters.

He referred to the Kwolyin State hotel—and this is not an isolated case—and told quite a good story about it. But he said that that hotel was situated about

48 miles the other side of Bruce Rock; whereas it is 27 miles this side of it. Obviously his geographical knowledge is very limited. He followed that up by talking about State hotel earnings, and said that they paid about £4,000 into Consolidated Revenue each year. I know a man who had seven hotels and he made a little fortune.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: He would not be able to do it today.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: He went through the hard times, too—they were a darned sight worse than they are today. He went through the depression period when a man had to look at every sixpence he spent, although in those days a pot of beer did not cost sixpence. The management of the hotels today cannot make the money, and the problem is made worse by the present Licensing Court. I make that statement because the members of the bench are making no attempt to try to maintain the standard of our hotels; and in my opinion the people are entitled to a decent standard.

The Minister for Railways: What was the standard?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not say that there are no good hotels in the State. There are some very good country hotels; but there are some deplorable ones, too. The Licensing Court is also encouraging clubs; and the clubs are not satisfied, as I have said before in this House, to make a profit only out of what they sell over the bar, but have also introduced gambling machines.

We have a Licensing Court which has the temerity to stand up and say, "We are going to allow you to break the law until December; and then, after that, we are going to enforce it." Ministers ought to dismiss the members of the court at once! How dare they say that they have the power to suspend the law of this country! That is the job of the two Houses of Parliament—of members of Parliament who are elected by the people.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: I think they had gambling in clubs when you were a Minister.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am not saying that it is right or wrong, but it is a statement made with this Government in power.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: What would you do?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Exactly the same as the hon. member—nothing, because it is not in my province. I have enough work to do. I admit that I may have been responsible for the commencement of the State Lotteries. It was probably a bad foundation, but we did say that all the money should go to provide necessities for the people. It is, however, an unfair method of taxation, because it

is only the weak people, or those who do not value money, who would subscribe to it. We have, however, grown worse since then.

I will admit that the State Lotteries Commission has provided good hospitals for the State and a number of amenities in the country. It is a well-run organisation, and it has also provided for some old people. It makes me very sad when I know of people who have nowhere to live where they can be looked after, and no money because they are unable to earn any.

We have now a body called the Licensing Court which is suspending the law of the country; because, under the Police Act and under the Criminal Code, it is definitely regarded as a criminal offence for anyone to gamble. The Code states what gambling is, and it is given a very wide interpretation. We have had Government after Government countenancing this sort of thing since 1928-29 when starting-price betting first commenced. I think it started about that time.

The Minister for Railways: It started before that.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No; it did not.

The Minister for Railways: The bettors?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No; tobacconist shops were used. We used to pick the men up while they were betting.

The Minister for Railways: The bettors.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: We used to collect them and take them to the police station and recover £1 from them for bail. Some of them used that to pay the fine in advance.

The Minister for Railways: You did not go to the racecourse and collect them there also.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I could trace the law back and show that the gambling law was never repealed. I would have to go back a very long period, however, because, as Mr. Heenan would know, to find the foundation of the law dealing with gambling one would have to go back to the first Act passed by Parliament which made it illegal. I have traced it through and I also drew Sir Ross McDonald's attention to it. I felt, however, that if the Crown Law Department wanted to find the Act and do anything about it that department could do as I did. I do not think it has been repealed, though it may have been amended by some of the more recent statutes we have passed here.

We have certainly encouraged gambling a great deal since. As I say, I was probably responsible to a certain extent for the inauguration of the State Lotteries Commission, and I backed the Government in that. The reason for my doing so, however, was that at that time crossword puzzles were in vogue, and

there was a considerable amount of manipulation and sharp practice taking place. At the time, I thought if that sort of thing could happen there could be nothing honest about it; and accordingly I supported the introduction of the State Lotteries.

I think members will agree that of all forms of gambling the lotteries is probably the best we have in Western Australia. If we did not have it here we would find people trying to get rich by some of the methods employed in other States. I have never got very much out of the bobs I have put in, and I do not gamble along those lines.

What powers the Licensing Court has to prevent gambling in clubs, I do not know. But I do know that over a long period of time the police in this State have not done their job properly; they have not done the work they are paid to do. I think that in the old days they used to recover something like £200 a week in the first instance. It then rose to £400 a week, and then to £800 a week. If it were not organised, how could the amounts be cut off at those I have mentioned? Of course it was organised!

The Commissioner of Police should have been dismissed when that started, but he was not. Now, since the Government has licensed starting-price betting in shops, this has got a lot worse. It is most disgraceful and degrading; and, as a minority, I had to suffer it though I did not agree to it.

The Chief Secretary: You will agree the position has improved considerably.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Does the Chief Secretary know the amount of turnover there was last year?

The Chief Secretary: I saw the figures.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Does the Minister mean to tell me that the men who paid into that amount could afford to do so?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Would you suggest that £1 more was spent than previously?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The hon. member probably has more intelligence than I have, and he can answer that. I do not think so much money was spent previously. Does he imagine that Charlie Latham would like the minister of his church to see him come smilingly out of one of these places?

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Have you been around and seen them?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I have never been into a betting shop.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: You should go around. It is your duty.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am not saying the buildings are not attractive, or that they are not comfortable in order to induce the people to enter them. I fear,

however, that the position will become as bad as it did in South Australia. There, the regulation was amended stopping betting in Adelaide, and leaving only one place where it is allowed. If the police can be dilatory in their duty in one respect, they can be dilatory in another. We pass legislation in good faith and that legislation should be enforced.

I do not think the Licensing Court has power to deal with gambling. The police, however, know that poker machines are still in operation in the State. I voiced an opinion on this matter last session, and I am amazed to see how much money goes through these machines. I know of a little town which is outside my province, and therefore I will not mention its name. It is not very far from my territory, however, and I am well known there. I will simply tell members a story about it. A club has been built there at a cost of about £30,000. Would not that go a long way towards providing homes for some of our old people? There is only one machine, and though I am not sure of my facts, I am informed that that machine cannot be purchased.

The Chief Secretary: It is always dangerous to talk of something about which you know nothing.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am now talking about something which is a fact. I was told the machine was worth £700, and they could not pay for it straight out. I know that is a fact, because a close relative of mine gave me that information. I am told that £1,500 was made in less than a year out of that machine; and that happened in a town as small as that. The £1,500 went to the people who made the machine in Fremantle. It came from Fremantle. I am also told—and the Chief Secretary may be able to put me right in this—that the Fremantle Workers' Club is building additions which are to cost £70,000.

The Chief Secretary: They have been built and are in operation.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: An amount of £70,000 is spent on a club, and I am informed that these machines have been very useful in providing a lot of the money; yet the hon. member shakes his head indicating that it is not true.

The Chief Secretary: I cannot say.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Minister is probably like me; he possibly does not go into these clubs. I give him credit for it, and will now put him on my visiting list.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Minister is not allowed to interject.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: He is, if it will help me with my speech! Suppose the police said they would not lock a man up when he was stealing; it would be ridiculous. The law must be enforced without favour or vindictiveness.

I am not sure whether it is a question of ministerial control, and I do not think the Commissioner of Police need worry about the Minister giving him instructions. I think he has sufficient power to do what he should in this direction. It is not a good policy for any Government, whether it be that which I support or any other. I hope we will have an opportunity of saying something more about that later.

I would like to appeal to the people of Western Australia, both employers and employees, to have a thought for the future. The good periods we have experienced over the past 10 years are gradually diminishing. I should like to see the manufacturer in a position where he is able to stand up to hard times, just as we expect the farmers to be able to stand up to drought and less attractive prices. It is also reasonable to expect the labourer to give a fair day's work for the money he receives. If that happened I think we would then be able to withstand the effect of the period through which we may be passing in the near future.

The farmer, of course, is subject to world market prices; he has no say in it. I told members about wheat we had stocked here and could not sell for 1s. a bushel, when the Russians were landing it on the London wharves for about that price. There was, of course, a much worse period in 1890 when the banks were closing their doors, and were unable to make advances available to the people on the land. We now have a reserve banking system which makes all the necessary advances.

I want to say a few words about monopolies. I am dead against any group of people who band themselves together for the purpose of creating a monopoly or controlling an industry. One of the greatest offenders in this State is West Australian Newspapers Ltd. That company has bought up the two leading newspapers, and for anybody to enter into competition with it would be difficult, as he would require a great deal of money to do so.

I would like to examine the news published by this paper. Are those in control of "The West Australian" publishing it to educate the people, or to provide the retail shops with a means of getting rid of their goods? On the first two or three pages is published all the horror news that can be gathered in this State, or in Australia as a whole; and when there is not enough from those sources, it is obtained from other parts of the world. Is that the type of education we want to give our public? I do not think it is edifying or educational.

Hon. G. Bennetts: You will find the same with the pictures that are shown. No wonder the children are playing up!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I do not think some of the pictures are good. I want to finish with "The West Australian" before dealing with the A.B.C.

The Chief Secretary: You are in a critical mood.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I have a duty to express myself in the interests of the people I represent. I may be critical, but as the Chief Secretary must realise, I have not said one word against the Government today.

The Chief Secretary: I appreciate that.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Not that I could not, but on this occasion I have no desire to do so. After one has perused the first three pages of "The West Australian," one notes that in order to place a value on the advertising matter, there is just a little strip of news included with the advertisements. It is something very unimportant; but it is Press matter. Not only do the public have to pay 4d. for the paper, but the advertising rates are very high, too. I am not sure that I would not support a Government that brought out its own daily paper.

Hon. A. R. Jones: What about a select committee?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: A select committee! Who would give effect to its findings? The other day I received a paper from Northern Ireland which cost only 3d. in that country, and it contains very little in the way of advertising matter. "The West Australian" should not call itself a newspaper, as it is only an advertising medium to get more money for its shareholders. I notice that at last we have a representative of "The West Australian" in the gallery, but the paper will not publish any part of my speech tomorrow morning. That will not hurt me, because I have the intelligent members of this Chamber to talk to. They will think I have talked some commonsense this afternoon, even if they do not hold with all that I say. It is deplorable that "The West Australian" has lost the great reputation it had.

In another place a piece of legislation was passed which made it almost impossible to take libel action against the newspapers of this State. When I was a young member in another place a Bill was introduced to remove some of that power. If one wanted to take an action against a newspaper, one had to put up sufficient money to cover all the costs of the case. If the paper said it had a representative in London whose presence at the hearing of the proceedings was necessary, the person taking the action would be required to pay for that individual a first-class fare to Australia and back again. We tried to take some of that power away. There is a new generation in this House now, and I do not think there is one man here who was in the Chamber at that time. The Bill never passed through this House, but it did pass through another place, despite a great deal of opposition from a man who was vitally interested in a newspaper. That particular paper is now increasing its

price from 6d. to 7d. from its next issue, which is going to take a little more money now that it has ceased publishing one of its other papers.

I would have liked to have a word with the Postmaster-General, as I think he controls the Australian Broadcasting Commission. I am disgusted with the horrible screeching noises that come over the air on Sundays during the presentation of some of the horror plays; and unless young people are different from what I was in my young days, they must be disgusted, too. Is that edifying or educational for our young people?

It is time the A.B.C. was asked to give a little thought to doing something better for the people in this country. It is only a young country, with a small number of people, and we are going to depend on the younger generation. Horror stories will not help them.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: What about television? Will we see horror pictures on it?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I saw television in England, but I did not see any horror pictures. I did see Mr. Menzies at times.

The Chief Secretary: Was not that a horror picture?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No. He told us stories in his nice, plausible manner. He was questioned by someone on the other side of the table, and he gave the pleasant smile he can always give when he wants to, and it was very satisfactory.

The Australian Broadcasting Commission is probably giving the public what it thinks it wants; but is it commonsense to give people all they want? Should not a medium of that sort be used to educate the people? I do not object to the broadcasting of sport, such as cricket. But why all the third-rate stuff such as that dealing with the shooting-up of people or the experiences of a man living with another's wife? It depresses me; it really does! I have to listen to it each Sunday evening at a friend's place.

An organisation such as the A.B.C. is able to build up the morale of the people or bring it down to degradation—to educate them, or to put them back in the dark ages. The A.B.C. should use its power and influence to better purpose. Broadcasting is a marvellous innovation when used to build up the morale and point to the best way of life for the people. The Press and the broadcasting people have a very great responsibility, and I do not consider they are living up to what I expect of them. However, they will say, "Why take any notice of an insignificant person like him?"

When I hear the news and wonder just how far away another war is, it makes me—an old man—very depressed. My re-

marks may not be very enlightening, encouraging or worthwhile; but I hope I have made a contribution which will reach the people. The best people outside are probably those associated with the churches, but many people cannot be attracted to them, as the late Mr. Collier said. It is hard to get people to church; but a big fight will fill a hall. I do not propose to say anything further at the moment, but I hope my contribution to this debate has expressed my true feelings.

On motion by Hon. G. C. MacKinnon, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Tuesday, 14th August, 1956.

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