

Government could extend its social service benefits to all natives, irrespective of whether they have citizenship or not. I have learned with interest recently of a pastoral area east of the Warburton Ranges near the South Australian border which is suitable for the raising of cattle; and I believe that if something could be done in that respect, a wonderful avenue of employment for natives could be provided.

The people of my district have been brought up the hard way. They live without many of the amenities enjoyed by people elsewhere; and one of the greatest shortcomings they suffer by living in the North-West is the absence of any sealed roads. During my term here I shall do my utmost to see if I can arrange for the sealing of two important roads in my territory. I refer to the Wubin-Meekatharra road, which is the shortest route to the North-West from Perth; and the Broad Arrow-Leonora road, which would assume a very great importance if any mining or pastoral industries were to be opened up east of Laverton.

The provision of a sealed road in the far outback means more than a comfortable ride in a car. Many times I have seen travellers set off for the North and be defeated before they have gone more than 100 miles or so because of the bumpy roads, which are sometimes in a very bad condition. It has a psychological effect on them. I believe that these two roads are the two main arteries in this State which are not sealed.

I would like to mention one other matter before concluding this speech. I refer to anomalies in the Electoral Act. As is probably known, my victory was in the nature of what is known as a photo-finish; and, to use another sporting phrase, the photo took a long time to come down from the tower. It seems to me quite wrong that although a chief polling place was only three hours away from Perth by air, and had a continuous telephone service, six days had to elapse before the result of the election was known and the fate of the Government determined. I sincerely trust that something will be done to modernise the Electoral Act and render the method of vote-counting less archaic.

To conclude, I would sum up as follows: I feel that my electorate is fast becoming the forgotten one-third of Western Australia. For a district which has produced hundreds of millions of pounds worth of wool and gold, it is in a sorry state indeed; but if something can be done to assist the industries I have mentioned, it will be of benefit to Western Australia as a whole. The most important need is to keep in the district the people who have shown their courage and initiative by remaining there until now, for to replace them would be well-nigh impossible.

MR. CRAIG (Toodyay): I formally second the motion.

On motion by Mr. Hawke, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

MR. BRAND (Greenough—Premier): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. tomorrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.12 p.m.

Legislative Council

Wednesday, the 1st July, 1959.

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

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.**RAILWAYS.***Discontinued Services, etc.*

1. THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND asked the Minister for Local Government:

In connection with the motion and speech of the Minister on the 20th November, 1957, concerning his constituents' requests, and requests of the Farmers' Union for the reinstatement of rail services which Parliament had previously decided should no longer be operated—

- (1) Will the Minister lay upon the Table of the House the Royal Commissioner's report on his motion?
- (2) As a Cabinet minister will he now make sure that his constituent's requests, and those of the Farmers' Union, are fulfilled?
- (3) Will the Deputy-Premier restore the Elleker-Nornalup service?
- (4) If not, what circumstances have caused a change of face?

THE HON. L. A. LOGAN replied:

(1) As the Royal Commissioner's report has not yet been considered by Cabinet, the question of tabling it has not yet received consideration.

(2), (3) and (4) answered by No. (1).

2. This question was postponed.

FISHING BOAT HARBOUR.*Provision at Fremantle.*

3. THE HON. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Has any definite decision been reached to proceed with the scheme prepared by the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers for the provision of a fishing boat harbour at Fremantle?

(2) If so, when is it anticipated that it will be commenced?

(3) Could the details of any alternative proposal (if such exists) be made available to the Fremantle City Council?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) There are no detailed alternative proposals available at present.

CONSTRUCTION OF GROYNES.*Implementation of Proposal.*

4. THE HON. E. M. DAVIES asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Following on the offer by the Fremantle City Council to contribute £7,000 towards the costs of construction of groynes, has a definite plan been prepared and adopted?

(2) If so, when is it anticipated that the work will be commenced?

(3) If not, when is it anticipated that the plan will be prepared and adopted?

(4) Could details of any alternative plan (if such exists) be made available to the Fremantle City Council?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) No.

(2) Answered by No. (1).

(3) Proposals are actively under consideration by officers of the Public Works Department and the Fremantle Harbour Trust.

(4) Answered by No. (3).

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.*Cost per Year.*

5. THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON asked the Minister for Mines:

What is the cost per year to the people of Western Australia of the Legislative Council, including printing and all incidentals?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The cost varies somewhat from year to year. The last time the hon. member asked a similar question was on the 9th July, 1957, and I refer her to the answer given on that date, which is recorded in the Votes and Proceedings for 1957, Volume 1 page 31.

Adult Franchise.

6. THE HON. R. F. HUTCHISON asked the Minister for Mines:

As the Liberal-Country Party Government now has control of both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, will the Minister introduce a Bill this session to grant adult franchise for the Legislative Council?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

No.

NORTH-WEST.*Continuance of Expenditure at Present Level.*

7. THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE asked the Minister for Mines:

In view of the expressed disappointment of the Premier, as reported in yesterday's issue of *The West Australian*, that allocations from the Premiers' Conference would not allow for any big new projects—

Could he give the Government's assurance that North-West area and Kimberley expenditures in all Government departments would be maintained (on at least the present level) during the coming financial year?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

It is anticipated that total expenditure in 1959-60 will be greater than in 1958-59.

ONSLOW HOSPITAL.*Erection of New Building.*

8. **THE HON. W. F. WILLESEE** asked the Minister for Mines:

Will the Government give an assurance that the old Onslow hospital so badly damaged in the last two cyclones will be dispensed with, and a new building on a new site erected during the financial year 1959-60?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

The Principal Architect has been asked to prepare plans for a new hospital on the new site opposite the existing hospital. It is hoped to commence construction of this hospital during 1959-60, but this will depend on the amount of Loan Funds available.

NORTH KALGOORLIE SCHOOL.*Decision on Grounds Improvement.*

9. **THE HON. J. D. TEAHAN** asked the Minister for Mines:

Has any decision yet been arrived at in regard to requests for improvement to the North Kalgoorlie State school grounds?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

Steps are being taken to arrange improvements to these grounds.

P. J. FRANK & CO.*Expediting Issue of Overloading Permits.*

10. **THE HON. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM** asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Is the Minister aware of the unreasonable delay in the granting of overloading permits to P. J. Frank & Co., carriers of ore for Central Norseman Gold Corporation, N.L., without which the contractors are continually being harassed by the departmental inspectors for overloading?

(2) In view of a letter dated the 19th June, 1953 (387/49) from the Main Roads Department to the Dundas Road Board, wherein it was agreed that the cost of bituminising the section of Great Eastern Highway, which is the subject of the overloading permits application, would be shared by the department, the Dundas Road Board and the company concerned, will the Minister investigate the position with a view to expediting the issue of the overloading permits?

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH replied:

(1) No. This matter was dealt with by the Main Roads Department in a letter to the local authority dated the 16th June, 1959, advising what procedure should be followed.

(2) The letter of the 19th June referred to was not concerned with the Great Eastern Highway. It was related to a contributory scheme for surfacing mine roads at Norseman. The latter part of this question is answered by No. (1).

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS**(CANCELLATION OF
PROCLAMATION)****BILL.***Standing Orders Suspension.*

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.40]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation) Bill, 1959, to be taken on receipt of a message from the Legislative Assembly, and to have precedence each day before the Address-in-reply, and to be passed through all stages at any one sitting.

Mr. President, I think members will appreciate, having listened to His Excellency's Speech, that Parliament has been called together earlier than usual this year in order to deal with the Electoral Districts (Cancellation of Proclamation) Bill. I realise that you would not permit me, Mr. President—nor do I intend to encroach in any way—to mention anything pertaining to the contents of the Bill and the reasons for its being brought down; but I think it suffices to say that the Government considers the matter to be of great importance, and I gave notice of this motion yesterday in order that it could be proceeded with today, so that, according to the progress made with the legislation in another place, we, in this Chamber, may be ready to receive the measure when it arrives here.

Rather than wait until the legislation is received in this House by message, I think members will agree that it is preferable that we should be ready to deal with the Bill when it arrives here.

THE HON. F. J. S. WISE (North) [4.43]: I cannot at all agree with the contention raised by the Leader of the House in his reasons for, at this stage, moving the motion. The Bill foreshadowed must be at least as important as a Supply Bill, because this is the sort of motion that would be moved if the Government could not sign the weekly pay cheques and required Supply with which to carry on. But it is not the sort of motion—in anticipation of a measure the contents of which are unknown—which in my view should be passed by this Chamber before the legislation arrives here.

It is possible that the Bill in question has not even been introduced in another place yet. Indeed, I would say it is most likely that it has not been introduced there, and we have no idea when it may reach us. The Bill may not reach here for a couple of weeks.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: What harm would be done in that event?

The Hon. F. J. S. WISE: I am pointing out that a mountain is being made out of a molehill, because this is a molehill in the terms of legislation, yet in the opinion of the Government it is necessary to call Parliament together earlier than usual on this account—just in case, under the law as it exists, certain action is taken by commissioners appointed under Section 12 of Act No. 51 of 1947. I think it is quite unseemly and unnecessary for us, prior to the arrival here of a measure of this consequence, to be asked to agree to a motion to suspend Standing Orders to the degree where the measure in question may be passed in its entirety—suspending the progress of the debate on the Address-in-reply—through all its stages at the one sitting. I oppose the motion.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines—in reply) [4.45]: Briefly, Mr. President, if and when a Supply Bill reaches this House and it is necessary for us to debate Supply, I will, without question, again ask that Standing Orders be suspended for the purpose of considering that particular measure, but I see nothing strange, in my experience—although it has not been as long as that of the Hon. Mr. Wise in this Parliament—in the Leader of the House asking for a suspension of Standing Orders; as during the time I have been here such action has been taken time and time again, without any question or demur, and members have been satisfied to accept the fact that the person in the position of Leader of the House thinks the measure concerned is important enough, in the view of the Government, to warrant a suspension of Standing Orders.

When that is done and we have the legislation concerned before us, that is the time to decide what treatment it should receive; and I am quite sure, if I know the Hon. Mr. Wise, that he will tell us, in no uncertain way, what he thinks about the piece of legislation to which the motion refers, when it does come along. It is necessary, for the very reason that he gave—that we do not know when we are going to receive that piece of legislation—that the motion should be agreed to. I have confided in the hon. member or the Leader of the Opposition, that Parliament will not sit during the third week in July, but will be in recess for that period owing to a set of circumstances to which nobody would object. There is a law convention coming to this State and the Government is anxious that those members who wish to attend it should be able to do so—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: There is no relevance in that.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course there is relevance in that! It is just as relevant as when certain members wish to attend the races in Kalgoorlie—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: I am speaking of the law convention.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is equally relevant. As I have said, we do not know exactly when we are going to receive this Bill—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You are developing a very fertile imagination.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That can be handy at times, but I do not think I am displaying a fertile imagination at all, at the moment. I desire to be in the position of being prepared to receive what, in the view of the Government, is a very important piece of legislation. If, when it reaches this House, members do not think it is important, they will treat it accordingly.

The Hon. H. K. Watson: The carrying of this motion does not necessarily preclude an adjournment of the debate on the second reading.

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Of course not!

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Do you know whether this motion requires an absolute majority?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am well aware of what this motion requires. I do not think that on the day after opening day it becomes me to be taken in to such an extent by the comments of the hon. member, and so I conclude by asking the House to agree to the motion, bearing in mind that the Government is satisfied that the legislation to be dealt with, as the result of the suspension of Standing Orders, is important and that this House should be given an opportunity of considering it ahead of the debate on the Address-in-reply.

Question put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY SUPERANNUATION FUND.

Appointment of Trustees.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.48]: I move—

That pursuant to the provisions of the Parliamentary Superannuation Act, 1948-1957, the Legislative Council hereby appoint the President (the Hon. Sir Charles Latham) and the Hon. A. L. Loton to be Trustees of the Parliamentary Superannuation Fund.

I would like briefly to thank you, Sir, as President of the House, and the Hon. Mr. Loton, for the services you, as members of this Committee, have given to members in the past.

Question put and passed.

CONDUCT OF THE HOUSE.*Explanation of Future Procedure.*

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines) [4.50]: Before you proceed with the first Order of the Day, Mr. President, if you and the members of the House will show me some tolerance, I will make an explanation in regard to the conduct of the House for the coming session.

To Mr. Strickland, who has assumed the office of Leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, I give my assurance, and that of my colleagues, that we wish to be as co-operative as we can in the conduct of the business of the House. In the past it has always been the practice of the Leader of the House to extend a degree of co-operation to his fellow members in respect of legislation and I wish to assure the House that the same circumstances will prevail in the future as far as the present Ministers are concerned.

The procedure surrounding questions without notice was dealt with fairly fully yesterday when an answer was given to a question asked by Mr. Jones. I repeat, that if members desire important questions answered on the day they are asked, it is advisable for them to give the Minister concerned some notification so that he will be in a position to provide answers on the day the questions are asked.

I have already asked you, Sir—and you have agreed wholeheartedly to my suggestion—that when the House gets under way, you will, on each day of sitting, at approximately 9.30 p.m. or 9.45 p.m., leave the Chair for 15 minutes so that all members may have a cup of tea while the House has this short break. In the past, when sitting in the seat now occupied by Mr. Strickland, I found that I was obliged to remain there all night and was unable to leave the Chamber for a cup of tea. In my opinion it is desirable that everyone should have the opportunity to have a cup of tea. Another advantage is that the staff will be aware that we will be having a short adjournment for 15 minutes at a set time.

The Hon. E. M. Heenan: We will not be bound to have a cup of tea, though, will we?

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the hon. member desires to partake of some other beverage he will be at liberty to do so. On behalf of Mr. Logan and myself I wish to explain that the procedure followed in the past in respect to pairs will continue during this session. If a pair is sought by any member we will do everything possible to accommodate him; other than on those occasions, of course, when a constitutional majority is required on any question. I thought I would pass those few remarks, Mr. President, in order that we might step out on the right foot at the start of the session.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Second Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE HON. H. C. STRICKLAND (North) [4.54]: I congratulate the two Ministers on their elevation to their respective offices; one as the result of an election and the other—the Leader of the House—by appointment. I understand that that is the practice followed. In congratulating them I sincerely hope that our efforts in this Chamber will be of mutual benefit to everyone concerned, although unfortunately we have started off on the wrong foot, I am afraid, as far as seeking information is concerned.

I also congratulate the new member for West Province (Mr. Ron Thompson). I am sure that his contributions to the debates in this Chamber will be of particular interest when we are dealing with certain subjects. To Mr. Abbey, I also extend my congratulations on the interesting speech he made before this Chamber yesterday. Contrary to the usual procedure of meeting on a Thursday and adjourning until the following Tuesday, on this occasion the Address-in-reply debate will commence much earlier and will be dealt with more expeditiously than has been the case in the past, with the exception of the session before last.

I listened attentively to His Excellency's speech and no doubt during the past 12 months some extremely fine achievements have been made. I am pleased that mention was made of them in the Governor's Speech.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: We always give credit where credit is due.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Whilst the new Government has been in power for only a brief three months, it has been fortunate enough to be able to supply His Excellency with information of a very encouraging nature. The Governor has been advised that the condition of Government instrumentalities and the economic position of the State have been in excellent shape for the past 12 months and there is every indication that they will continue to be so in the future. I am sure that nobody will deny that the previous Government played an extremely important part in preparing the ground, and fertilising it, to ensure that the various projects initiated would bear fruit, as has been reported in the Speech.

Without fear of contradiction I say that over the past six years the State of Western Australia has shown remarkable progress. Every member of this Chamber will agree with me on that, I am sure. There is not the slightest shadow of a doubt that this State has, in recent years, seen its community progress from a slow-moving tempo to a very rapid one.

All the major schemes referred to in the Governor's Speech were initiated by the previous Government—with the one or two exceptions mentioned. I am extremely interested in several paragraphs of the Speech and I will deal with them in due course. First of all, I would draw the attention of members to the excellent record of industrial peace. This fact was also pointed out in the Speech and I am indeed grateful to His Excellency for advising Parliament of it. Members will recall that the last tragic industrial dispute was the railway strike in 1952 which, in my opinion, was prolonged unnecessarily for several months. I would point out that I have expressed that opinion in this Chamber on previous occasions.

It has often been said that Labour Governments are unable to control the industrial movement. His Excellency's Speech proves without doubt that Labour Governments are able to control the industrial movement much better than their opponents in politics. It is a strange thing that immediately upon becoming the Government, the Liberal and Country parties set about to disturb the peaceful industrial conditions.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: No, they have not. That is not industrial at all.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: What I have said is perfectly true and nobody can deny it; not even the Minister for Local Government.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It is not industrial.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Nobody can deny what has been mentioned about the industrial record in His Excellency's Speech.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: This is not industrial.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: No one can deny what I have just said. Immediately upon coming to office the coalition Government set about to disturb that industrial peace.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Nobody can deny that somebody whipped this up!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It set about to disturb it in no uncertain manner, and by no crueller method than to cast people on the labour market. There is no crueller act than to throw fellow human beings out of work and cast them and their dependants on the labour market.

The Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Like the teachers who were sacked.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: The teachers would have something to say about that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I know that those who were born lucky or are fortunate enough to have influential friends cannot possibly understand what it is like to face a week without any income, or to face one day without any income. But I have been through the mill; I have

faced many days without an income, and without the prospect of a job unless I walked some hundreds of miles with a swag on my back. There is no doubt about that. I do not want to see others being placed in that type of position. It really irks me to think that there are still people in this State being subjected to those very conditions which I and many others have experienced.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: That did not seem to hurt them.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: We know that certain types of people have no sympathy for the poor unfortunates I have mentioned.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: No sympathy from the Liberal and Country parties.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There is no sympathy from them. What do some people care about what happens to their fellow human beings?

The Hon. L. A. Logan: Nothing at all!

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member should be allowed to make his speech without interruption.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: What do they care? You, Mr. President, know what some younger members cannot recollect, namely, what happened during the days of the depression. You would no doubt remember when somebody attempted to throw a stone into this Chamber. I understand that some members were so big that they could not get under the benches and tables. Those were the conditions which prevailed during the term of a previous Liberal-Country Party coalition Government. Whether the present Government is desirous of seeing a return of the same conditions I do not know, but I did mention before the interjections provoked me that—

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: You provoked the interjections.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: —there has been industrial peace for the past six years, but in 1952, prior to Labour coming into office, there occurred one of the worst industrial disturbances we have experienced. It was one of the worst hold-ups this State has known. Upon returning to the Treasury bench, the Liberal-Country Party Government appears to be setting itself to create a similar set of circumstances by provoking the workers and the industrial movement. We know that the Liberal-Country Party Government is usually able to gain some political advantage as a result of such stoppages. It is my experience—and I am led to believe this—that the present Government is desirous of setting out to create a labour pool—a pool of unemployed.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: As Mr. Wise mentioned—a fertile imagination.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I feel certain that is the foremost thought in the mind of the present Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is rubbish!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member says it is rubbish, but he cannot deny the fact that men are being sacked, and sacked under a deliberate policy.

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Have men never been sacked before?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: What is the reason for that deliberate policy, except to throw them on the labour market?

The Hon. A. R. Jones: Don't be silly!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member would not know about these things. In view of his statement to us last year to the effect that he paid nothing in taxation, I doubt whether he is entitled to have a say. If he were to be permitted to speak in accordance with the amount he has contributed to the country by way of taxation, he would have nothing to say at all. I would not feel at all proud if I were to keep on interjecting, knowing that I paid nothing towards the meagre pittance that is handed out to these unemployed people, who have been thrown out of work by the action of the hon. member. No wonder he has been so proud to interject and say that I am talking rubbish! That is the type of thought which prevails in the mind of the existing Government.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: That is what you think.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Government has no sympathy at all for the person who is thrown out of work. I desire to say something about the Liberal Party's campaign at the last election. Judging by the amount of money it spent on the last election in propaganda, and by its denial of assistance to industry in this State, which it promised to assist if elected, the Liberal Party section of the Government is failing very sadly in its election promises.

I have in mind the agricultural community on the Gascoyne River where there are some 200 or more—probably more—families dependent upon agricultural pursuits within a radius of eight miles of Carnarvon. In that area there would be somewhere in the vicinity of 700—perhaps upwards of 700—women, children and men.

Never in the history of that plantation area has the economic outlook been worse than it is today. The prices for bananas have not been lower, over such an extended period, as they have been since last October. It was usual—or not uncommon—for the prices of bananas to recede somewhat for three or four weeks in the year when stone fruit, and other fruits grown in the southern part of the State, came on to the market. But the market usually recovered so that the price for bananas became an economic one. But, since last October the average price of bananas has yielded a return below 1s. a pound to the grower—far below that amount—and from

my experience of growing bananas in 1948-49, I would say it is impossible to produce them at less than 1s. a pound at the present day.

Beans are grown at Carnarvon, and they are sold at a fairly good marketable price—at a good price, as a matter of fact. But beans provide only a short seasonable crop; and although the price for beans might be high, the profit would not be sufficient for the planters to maintain the plantations over the full 12 months of the year.

Bananas can be termed the backbone of the industry, and unless they are bringing in a price which is not below the cost of production, then the plantation area at Carnarvon is going to suffer severely, and there will undoubtedly be many planters who will be forced to relinquish their plantations.

These matters were pointed out to the Premier (Mr. Brand), and he was asked to subsidise the transport of the produce of the agriculturists at Carnarvon. The request was made for a subsidy on the same basis as that on which subsidies are paid to primary producers in other parts of the State where railways do and do not operate. Representation for a subsidy was made to the Premier by Mr. Willesee, Mr. Wise, Mr. Norton and myself; and Mr. Norton was advised by the Premier that bananas from Coffs Harbour were marketed in Perth, after rail and road freight amounting to £29 odd per ton was paid, and that, therefore, the producers at Carnarvon who paid freight of only £15 odd per ton—the correct figure is something more than £16; the Premier has been misinformed there—did not deserve any subsidy, but should be able to sell their produce at a profitable price.

I do not know how the Government can line up that type of arithmetic with the subsidies they are handing out, or are restoring in full, to the primary producers who are situated near railways where the services have been discontinued. Some time ago, I addressed at Beacon, a meeting of some 400 or 500 farmers in connection with the Bonnie Rock line. The strongest argument those farmers could put up for the resumption of the rail service was that they were paying £6,000 and £7,000 a year in taxation. Members will recall that one farmer, by the name of Dunn, wrote to the Press about it. He wrote in that strain and I visited the area. He said, "We are paying £6,000 or £7,000 a year. Surely to goodness we are entitled to a service!"

Because the previous Government, on the recommendation, and with the authority of Parliament, discontinued the service on, say for example, the Bonnie Rock line, that Government said, "To break down the impact of the extra cost, we will subsidise you for the difference in cost and reduce the subsidy by one-seventh each year so that at the end of

seven years the full burden will be borne by you, the producers." But we also said that where it could be shown that an industry required to be subsidised, we would continue to subsidise it.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: What did you do for the banana industry?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: We told this Parliament that, and this Parliament did not query it. I read in the farmers' journal a Country Party advertisement claiming, when the subsidies were restored, that the Country Party had opposed the reductions right from the start, and now the Country Party had achieved its purpose and restored the subsidies. That is quite wrong; no opposition was raised initially to the reductions.

I am asked by Mr. Willmott what we did for the banana growers. The banana growers never previously asked for anything to be done for them, except on occasions following a cyclone or a long period of drought. They owe the taxpayers of this country nothing! They were given interest-free loans, on two occasions; and the largest might have amounted to £400 or £500. These people owe the taxpayers nothing at all. They never asked to be subsidised until they got into this extreme condition.

To get back to where I started, I complain that the Liberal Party is not living up to its advertisement. That is the substance of what I desire to impart. I read the Liberal Party advertisement concerning the North, and stating that the Liberal Party was going to assist to establish industry in the North. That was one of the planks of their platform; but on the very first occasion on which they are asked to give some assistance—and they are only asked to do the very same thing that they are doing in all of the southern half of the State—they turn us down flat. The Liberal Party are going to develop the North and encourage people to go to the North! How can we keep people in the North—in the banana industry alone—unless we are prepared to give them assistance at least equal to that given to the farmers who complain because they have to pay £6,000 or £7,000 a year in taxation?

I feel that this type of outlook takes the present Government back many years to the performances of previous Liberal Governments. I have read where members accused previous Liberal-Country Party Governments of not being able to see over the Darling Range.

I am beginning to think that all the blah which we read about, and all the things which this Government promised to do for industry in the northern part of the State, will not be for the benefit of the small producer—the man who takes his family to live in the North. So I hope the Ministers in this House will ask the Premier to have another look at the request which has been submitted by members representing the Gascoyne district, and I trust that he will soften his

heart towards them and do something to endeavour to keep the people in the North and not drive them out of it.

The promises which the Premier made prior to the election, regarding the winding up of State enterprises, have not been kept. A little earlier I started to discuss this matter but was provoked and got a little out of step; however, I will now take up the subject again. I said earlier that it looked as though Ministers were not going to be co-operative in regard to the supplying of information. Yesterday I asked some questions in connection with the tabling of a report; I asked the Minister for Local Government (Mr. Logan) to table the report of an inquiry made as a result of a motion which this House carried in November, 1957. The present Minister moved this motion and nobody opposed it, hence it was, in effect, a motion of this Chamber.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: It will be tabled.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Despite the fact that the Minister moved this motion he will not supply the House with the findings of the inquiry instituted as a result of his motion being carried.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I did not say that.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do not you think it reasonable that Cabinet should have a look at the report first?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: In reply to the Minister for Mines, I would remind him that I have tabled eight interim reports in this Chamber and on only one occasion have I withheld a report—that report was in connection with Commissioner Clarke and it was withheld because legal action was pending. Every other report has been tabled as soon as possible.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: And this one will be, too.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Minister for Mines knows that this report, No. 9, has been in the hands of the Government for three weeks. I do not want members to be confused about this matter, so I will read the motion which was moved by the Hon. L. A. Logan on the 20th November, 1957. He moved as follows:—

That in the opinion of this House the scope of inquiry of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. A. G. Smith, should be widened to include in his inquiry the discontinuance of the 842 miles of railway, particularly as it relates to—

- (1) The accuracy or otherwise of statements and figures presented to the Government by the committee which recommended the discontinuance.
- (2) The accuracy or otherwise of the tonnage and revenue figures of each area concerned as presented by the Minister when moving the motion for discontinuance.

- (3) The value of each section of line discontinued as it affects—
- (a) the productivity of the area and its effect on the State as a whole and the railway system;
 - (b) the increased cost or otherwise to producers and all people living in the area affected by discontinuance;
 - (c) the capacity of the road system to handle the extra road haulage necessitated by such railway discontinuance.

This Chamber agreed with the hon. member's motion; we never questioned it. I replied, "Certainly I will refer the motion to the Royal Commissioner," because I, personally, was involved in it; the figures I quoted here were the subject of suspicion in the hon. member's mind. Yet, when we ask to see the findings of the Royal Commissioner, we are told that Cabinet has not yet considered the report.

I do not know what Cabinet has in mind, but I am keen to know what is in the report, because it really means something. In my opinion, every member in this House is entitled to know what is in the report, because we all supported the motion which caused the inquiry to be made. I would have thought that the hon. member would be only too happy to table it at the first day of sitting because, after all, he moved the motion. While the hon. member was moving the motion the late Hon. Gilbert Fraser, who at that time was the Chief Secretary, and I, endeavoured to get his opinion on the closure of the lines in question but the hon. member said, "Never mind about my opinion; I will accept whatever the findings of the Royal Commissioner may be," or words to that effect.

Yet now we find this House is simply being ignored by the Government. The motion was moved and carried without any opposition; we were only too pleased to refer the matter to the Royal Commissioner, and yet, when I ask to see the report, because I was personally involved, I am not given any indication as to when it will be made available. I take a serious view of the Government's action in that regard; it is simply ignoring the wishes and desires of the Legislative Council. Members will have time, between now and the next sitting, to consider the matter and perhaps some action may be taken to have the position rectified.

I asked some other questions in relation to employment and dismissals from Government departments, because I wanted to speak about what is a matter of great public interest at the moment. But I

regret to say that the Minister has been unable to secure the information for me. It is a pity that the wheels of government seem to have bogged down and we cannot get any idea of what is going on. We have been given no information at all—absolutely nothing.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Have you never been in a position where you have had to ask for the postponement of a question?

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It seems to me that now we are in Opposition, and our numbers small, we are to get the same treatment we received when we were the Government, when our numbers were also small!

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Absolute co-operation.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is ill-becoming that the Minister should not have made some explanation. I am not blaming the Minister in charge of the House, but the Minister who could have supplied the information.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I told you the figures were being collated so that they could be given to you. You asked the question at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon. You must not forget that.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I know I asked the question yesterday, but 24 hours have elapsed. I have been asked hundreds of questions before and have supplied the information.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: The office staff were here yesterday.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The only exception was when Mr. Murray and Mr. Mattiske asked questions, the answers to which took about 42 man-hours to prepare. Surely the Minister for Labour, who every day is reading in the papers of the distress caused by the dismissals and sackings, is apprised of the situation! Mr. Wild can tell us how many men have been sacked, and how many have found employment elsewhere. What has happened to the Minister for Labour? Does not he have a say, or is he only a figurehead of a Minister? Surely he knows from day to day what the position is in such a vital and distressing matter; surely he knows how many men he is going to sack on Thursday, or Friday, or whatever the day might be!

The Hon. L. A. Logan: I doubt whether the Minister for Labour has been in his office all day.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: If that is the position the portfolio should be given to somebody else.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: He has other duties to perform.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I know that the Ministers are overburdened with work; I have been a Minister myself.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I have known you to postpone questions before this; you have been shuffling around with your papers and have not been able to find them.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: You be careful!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The actions of this Government are causing extreme distress to innumerable members of the community; they are causing distress, because the Government is implementing a policy of disbanding State trading concerns and State activities generally.

The Hon. F. D. Willmott: Giving some relief.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There is nothing which is calculated to degrade a man more than being unemployed; nothing will hurt him more than having an insecure outlook for the future; and there is nothing which, in my opinion, will create more crime than that particular circumstance.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Did you think about this in November last year, when you sacked a couple of hundred employees in the Public Works Department.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I never sacked anybody in my life.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: Your Government did.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I thought of that, but there is a different set of circumstances obtaining today. We dismissed men, because we had no more money with which to pay them. The dismissals that have taken place recently, and as a result of this Government's action, are not because of that circumstance, but because it is the policy of the Liberal Party. It is a deliberate action.

The Hon. E. M. Davies: Premeditated.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: It might also be dictated.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: There is no doubt about that. With reference to that circumstance I would like to read what Mr. Brand wrote to *The West Australian* on the 13th March—one week before the election—when that was a political issue. He said—

We will fire nobody, nor close any concerns down. What we intend is, first to make them payable, based on sound business principles instead of departmental principles, and when this is done we will put them on their own as public companies with shares on the stock exchange, to continue their operations as free enterprise concerns. Their 6,300 personnel will remain in their jobs as far as the Government would be concerned.

What a change of face we have a week after the elections; what a change of circumstances; sackings take place almost

immediately! When I said that the action was deliberate, Mr. Wise interjected and said it might have been dictated. That gives one food for thought; it provides one with a better appreciation of a Leader of a Party who, before he becomes Premier, says one thing, and a fortnight later changes his attitude.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: No, he did not.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: Whether the action was dictated, or whether it was deliberate, it does not alter the fact that it is a scandalous state of affairs in any language; it was scandalous to delude the electors with that type of bait. Some of them might have even supported the Brand Government—some who are now finding themselves on the labour market.

The Hon. G. C. MacKinnon: The article referred to State trading concerns.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The hon. member would not know because he does not associate with these people. But if he would make clear what he does know in his speech, we will endeavour to give him every assistance.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Being helpful.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: That sort of action in relation to the unemployment situation is becoming a Liberal hobby, and it ill becomes those who assist that circumstance to talk about there being a clear mandate. *The West Australian* has said in a statement that there was a clear mandate for such action. Mr. Wild said there was a clear mandate; the Premier claimed a clear mandate, and the Leader of the Country Party (Mr. Watts) also claimed that there was a mandate to sack people.

The Hon. L. A. Logan: So did Mr. Chamberlain.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: How could there be a mandate to sack people when one week prior to the election Mr. Brand stated clearly—as clearly as it is possible to state—that there would be no sackings; that nothing would be closed down. There was no mandate at all; certainly none to sack people. People accepted the fact that there would be a gradual changeover, but that has not been the case. Members should look closely at that aspect of it.

I would now like to quote from a small publication entitled *State Election—The Fall of the Hawke Government—A Brief Account*, by F. K. Crowley. Dr. Crowley is the Professor of History at the University of Western Australia, and he has gone to much trouble and into much detail in preparing this short history of the election campaign. Speaking on mandates he says—

Although the Labour Party and the non-Labour, two-Party Coalition received almost the same overall electoral support (42.8 per cent. and 41.68

per cent.), the Labour Party obtained 21 seats in contrast to the 16 obtained by the Liberal and Country Parties; the Labour Party did not stand in eight of the disputed electorates, and the LCL and CDL did not endorse candidates to oppose the ALP in five of the electorates. After the votes received by the three independent Labour candidates (2,701—1 per cent.), the three independent Liberal candidates (11,307—4.2 per cent.) and the one independent Country Party candidate (1,922—0.71 per cent.) are added to those of the major related parties, the respective percentages were as follows:—Labour: 43.8 per cent. of votes cast, and 53.85 per cent. of all contested seats; non-Labour: 46.6 per cent. of votes cast, and 46.15 per cent. of all contested seats.

So, the coalition parties did not have a sweeping election victory, or a mandate, which they claim as a reason for sacking these people. When the figures are analysed, it can be seen quite clearly that public opinion was not wholly behind even the gradual closing of State trading concerns or State enterprises; and much less was it behind the sacking of people and the casting of them on to the labour market. In his summing up, Dr. Crowley referred to the election result as follows:—

The Liberal Party won two metropolitan seats outright from the Labour Party, but obtained the four additional seats which carried with them the right to govern only because of the windfall of DLP second preferences.

We all know that; we all studied the figures, and no-one can deny that it was a windfall from a splinter Labour party which put the Government of the day where it is today. I could never be brought to believe that those who voted for the Democratic Labour Party, and followed that party's ticket right through, ever thought that they were, in fact, casting a Liberal vote; I am sure they never understood that they were casting such a vote. In effect, however, that is what they did, though they would never have believed that they were casting men out of work, and placing some of their families in dire distress. From the latest information I have been able to get from the Press, only 100 odd have been dismissed. That, however, is information from the Press. When I asked the Minister for up-to-date information, it could not be supplied; but I think we can safely say that there must have been more than that number dismissed. However, the ultimate is somewhere in the vicinity of 2,000. I understand that 2,000 are to be dismissed from the Public Works Department alone.

The Hon. R. F. Hutchison: Shame!

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I would have thought that the Minister could have answered the question I asked today as to whether figures were being compiled in regard to the number of day labour workers dismissed; and whether dismissals were being confined to labourers, or whether they included the professional and administrative staffs. I received no reply to that portion of the question. Figures were not involved; the question merely related to an expression of policy.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: You would not have been able to make this speech if I had replied.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: I would like to have incorporated some of the figures in my speech so that people would know exactly what the position is today and what it is likely to be.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: I will do my best to get the figures tomorrow.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: If the Minister for Labour were not in his office, as mentioned by the Minister, I suppose it was not possible to get the figures; and goodness knows when we will get them.

I was rather interested by the sympathy which emanated from a Liberal conference in connection with this matter. I tie it up with this matter. In the *Daily News* of the 15th June, the State President of the Liberal Party (Mr. F. A. Johnston) said that the Liberal Party had much to offer such employees. In the article, employees were defined as follows:—

Employees drawing high wages were described today as a new class of property owners.

The article is headed "Capitalists in a New Guise." The article continues—

The property: Cars, refrigerators, washing machines—besides houses.

It is a terrible thing to own a house!

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: All on hire purchase.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The article goes on to say—

According to Johnston, these people recognised that they were enjoying standards which reformists had been working for for many years and they were proud of the exciting growth and development of living standards.

To attract them to active association with the Liberal Party it would be necessary to bring the party's beliefs and principles before them constantly.

I have no doubt about that. Here we see that Mr. Johnston is prepared to take into the Liberal Party somebody who possesses a washing machine or a refrigerator. There is no doubt that the people to whom he has referred would be labourers in poor circumstances; and perhaps all they possess is under hire purchase.

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Even the sausage machine perhaps.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is amazing how one's heart can bleed for those who are really in pressing need! This Government puts up socialism as being such a bogey! Heavens above, every Government, no matter where it is, has a working force; and because this metropolitan area possesses a very efficient working force in the way of the P.W.D. workmen, that force is to be disbanded and thrown on the labour market. The men will have to chance whether they can secure employment or not.

Single men can get about and go to another State, or move away to the country. However, the married man has responsibilities. If he hears of a job somewhere he will have to take it, but this will reduce his economic situation, because two homes will have to be kept. As I said earlier, I know of no set of circumstances, in my experience, which will bring about degradation and crime, as will poverty; and forced poverty is the worst form of all that can be inflicted on any person. All this is brought about simply because a party says, "We do not think you should be working for the Government but should work for somebody else." What a state of mind! How does that tie in with the word "liberal"?

I thought the word "liberal" meant broad-mindedness and freedom. Goodness gracious me, I think the time has come when the name should be changed—

The Hon. F. J. S. Wise: Keep it clean.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: It is not fair that people should be subjected to such indignity and humility. Decent people should not be thrown out of work; or some of them have their work periods broken up.

There is one other point to which I would like to draw the attention of the House, and that is the very hasty action of this Government in cancelling the 17s. 6d. per week subsidy paid by the Child Welfare Department to some of the unemployed.

The Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The worst action possible.

The Hon. H. C. STRICKLAND: The Minister for Child Welfare stated in the Press that it was found that some of

those receiving the 17s. 6d. were in employment. In all fairness, the department itself must be held responsible for ascertaining that fact. However, because there are a few dishonest people amongst these unfortunates, the honest people are penalised, because the 17s. 6d. is taken away from them as well. There is no sympathy at all for anybody from this Government. Even those who had the security of a permanent job are thrown into the insecurity of casual employment with private contractors.

Because some people were unfortunate enough—or perhaps were not physically able to find employment—to receive a pension or remittance which was so meagre that it did not provide them with reasonable food and shelter, the Labour Government gave them 17s. 6d. extra, but the incoming Liberal Government cut it out and showed no sympathy at all to that group of people. Time is moving back some 20 odd years when such a state of affairs as this can exist. I sincerely hope that this Government will have another good clear look at the actions it has taken, since it has been in office, to see whether it can find some sort of charitableness in its heart so that people will be at least entitled to work in security, and not be chased from pillar to post.

I believe that the actions of the Government deserve the censure of this House. Therefore, I intend to move an addendum to the Address-in-reply. I move—

That the following words be added:—

We wish to protest strongly against the Government's policy of deliberately sacking many of its employees, and against the Government's expressed intention to sack additional large numbers in the future, as this policy is creating unemployment and hardship and widespread feeling of insecurity and unrest.

We wish also to protest strongly against the action of the Government in depriving many deserving single unemployed persons of supplementary help.

On motion by the Hon. A. F. Griffith (Minister for Mines), debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban—Minister for Mines): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 2.15 p.m. tomorrow.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.