

- (3) If the answer to (1) is "no" are there any plans to develop this historic area?
- (4) Is there a caretaker at Cossack?
- (5) If so—
- is he a paid caretaker provided with accommodation;
 - is he periodically checked on to ensure that he is doing his job in a satisfactory manner; and
 - does he have fixed hours to be in public attendance?
- (6) If the answer to (4) is "no" is it the intention of the Minister for Tourism to install a caretaker?

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

- Yes.
- \$18,334 spent in 1969 on repairing and restoring the Courthouse and cemetery and providing toilet facilities.
- Answered by (1).
- Yes.
- (a) Caretaker is paid a retainer—he rents Government accommodation.
(b) Yes, but at this time, final arrangements have not been concluded.
(c) It is proposed that there will be fixed hours of attendance (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.).
- Answered by (4).

5. ELECTORAL

Redistribution of Boundaries

The Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH, to the Leader of the House:

With reference to the reply to part (3) of my question on Wednesday, the 28th July, relating to Section 12 of the Electoral Districts Act, what conclusion was arrived at by the Government? The answer to the question will not cost the Government any money.

The Hon. W. F. WILLESEE replied:

The reply will not cost much money either. It is as follows:—That a proclamation must be made pursuant to the Act.

The Hon. A. F. Griffith: In other words, continue to avoid it.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY: SIXTH DAY

Motion

Debate resumed, from the 28th July, on the following motion by The Hon. L. D. Elliott:—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency:—

May it please Your Excellency:
We, the Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of

Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

THE HON. D. K. DANS (South Metropolitan) [2.38 p.m.]: Mr. President, members of the Legislative Council, I thank you for the opportunity to address the House during the Address-in-Reply debate. I would first like to pay tribute, and offer my condolences, to the next of kin of those members who passed away during the last 12 months. I refer in particular to The Hon. Fred Lavery, whose position I have taken in this House. He represented the South Metropolitan Province for a considerable number of years. That gentleman had a unique position in this House because he was married to The Hon. Ruby Hutchison to whom I wish a happy, successful, and placid retirement.

I also offer my condolences to those members who were defeated. It is a sobering thought, of course, because anyone who enters politics faces this possibility during his career, no matter how long he may be a member of Parliament.

I would like to offer my thanks to the staff of Parliament House, who have been most helpful to myself and doubtless to other members.

I would like now to refer to the Governor's Speech and particularly to the section which deals with the inability of the State Shipping Service to purchase LASH-type vessels.

No-one denies that the north-west of our State during the last decade or 12 years has seen a considerable amount of industrial activity, and a terrific amount of development; and a terrific amount of export income has been earned from this area, allowing a great amount of cash to enter the State of Western Australia. Ports have been developed where previously there were no ports. Ports that were tidal ports have been changed into all-weather ports that can be entered or left at any hour of the day or night.

All this, of course, can be ascribed to the ingenuity and labours of man. I think it would be true to say that whether one agreed with the method of development or not, if it was not for the export income earned from our mineral deposits, this country would indeed be in a very sorry state. It is a tragedy, therefore, that transport has not kept pace with development.

Before I elaborate on that subject, I would also like to go back into history and have a look at the development of the north-west. It would be quite wrong to think that the development of the north-west only happened within the last 10 or

12 years. The north-west of our continent has been developing for the last 100 years or more.

Up until the end of the 1870s, when pastoralists first started to settle in the Kimberley and the East Kimberley areas, small trading ships or sailing vessels of 25 to 60 tons looked after the cargo requirements and the passenger requirements of those people in the north, and in 1870 the steamer, *Natal*, started to bring Kimberley beef down to Perth and, of course, take supplies back. By the end of 1893 there were 2,000 head of Kimberley beef being brought to the Perth markets and, of course, the other requirements were being taken back.

This service did not serve the people in the manner they expected. In May, 1912, the then Labor Government—I think it was the Scaddan Government—inaugurated a State Shipping Service with a very small ship called the *Una*, of some 68 tons gross; and when I talk of tonnage I mean that 100 cubic feet equals one ton. As members can imagine, of course, this was not a very pretentious kind of ship even for those days. That vessel was followed in the same year by the steamer, *Wrexford*, of 560 tons, renamed the *Eucly*, and later on by the *Mongolia*, renamed the *Western Australia*, and the *Western Australia* has a record to her credit with an 11-hour passage from Fremantle to Geraldton which, despite the effluxion of time, still stands.

In 1912 the *Darius* was purchased and she was renamed the *Kwinana*; and I will not have to remind honourable members where the *Kwinana* is. In 1915 the *Bambra* was purchased and also the old *Kangaroo*, and in 1926-27 the *Koolinda* and the *Kybra*. In 1936 the first *Koolama* was ordered. The *Koolama* did not last very long as she was sunk at Cape Londonderry at the time of the first Japanese assault.

During this period of time, of course, this was the only means of servicing the people of the north-west, and I use the word, "servicing" because that was exactly why the State Shipping Service was inaugurated; and it has done the same job that the railways have done for the rest of Australia; and the Shipping Service has continued to do its job, but during this time, of course, it also pioneered the flour trade to Java and Malaya, places we now know as Indonesia and Malaysia. After that trade was brought up to sufficient quantity, the service withdrew in 1938 and handed it over to private enterprise. Its job was done, the trade was firmly entrenched and away the service went. I am not so sure, of course, for a variety of reasons, whether we still enjoy the benefits of trade into those areas, although it is a tragedy if we do not.

The *Dorrigo* was added in 1946, the *Dulverton* in 1948, the *Kabbarli* in 1951, the *Koojarra* in 1956, the *Delamere* in

1958, and the new *Koolama*, in 1958. The *Kangaroo* was added in 1962. The *Kangaroo*, of course, was delivered in the term of a non-Labor Government, as I well remember, having helped on her plans, and she was ordered on the eve of the 1959 election. The *Dongara* was brought on to the coast in 1966. She was purchased by the State Shipping Service from the depreciation fund which supplied 90 per cent. of the finance with 10 per cent. coming from the Government. The *Koolama* and the *Dongara* were subsequently lengthened or jumboised in Hong Kong.

The point I am making is that in all those years, all of the ships that were provided for the north-west service, with the exception of the *Kabbarli*, were provided by Labor Governments because they realised, of course, that in a remote area such as this there was a need to provide a service for the people.

Of course, we have seen a lot of water flow under the bridge since then. During the last 12 years a period of development the like of which has never been seen before in this State or anywhere else in Australia has occurred and millions of dollars have been won from the earth—to the benefit of the people of this country true, I am not decrying that—but no new tonnage has been added; not one little bit of tonnage. It goes without saying that the best possible means of transport to our north-west is by sea.

On the 9th July, of this year, there was a transport seminar held here in Western Australia. I know that the documents have not been published. These were prepared by some of the most eminent people in transport in Australia. Anybody is at liberty to go down to the Transport Department at Claremont and read them, as I did this morning. I was most interested in a man by the name of Mr. K. Thomas, who is a private road haulier, and who has become a millionaire through transport.

Mr. Thomas's road transport vehicles cover this country, and not only has he been successful in this field here but he has also expanded his business to the United States of America, which only goes to show that a reciprocal business is a two-way business, and he has also extended his business into Canada. He makes the statement that road transport is finished; heavy road transport is a thing of the past. It is a wonder to him that it has existed for as long as it has.

He makes the surprising statement—and one would believe him because he is in business in a big way—that despite 20 years of inflation, road transport hauliers on a full-load basis are now charging \$2 a ton less to transport goods between Sydney and Melbourne than they were 20 years ago. In other words, they cannot compete with sea and rail transport, provided, of course, it is properly handled.

In 1965 the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission was established and, of course, its purpose was to halt the mounting loss of the State Shipping Service and bring about a situation where modern tonnage could be introduced to provide the people of the north-west with a fast and efficient service at very little cost to the public purse; but it stands as a monumental failure.

I notice in this morning's Press a letter about past problems and that the commission was a dismal failure, if that is the right verbiage—a dismal failure. The first commissioner to offer his resignation because he was absolutely frustrated was the previous manager of the State Shipping Service, Mr. Tom Owen, who was widely respected in shipping and transport circles; but, of course, he was, like the others, in the position of trying to make an omelette without an egg. They were just there; no money or plans or anything. I will not elaborate on the experiences of trying to get the proposition concerning the LASH vessels off the ground.

The commissioner who resigned has, of course, now been followed by another, and although we are making some progress it is not very much. When any new tonnage was not obtained, it was decided to have a look for some secondhand tonnage, but no-one seemed to be very interested. Ships, like any other commodity, cannot be bought without collateral, and none was forthcoming. An idea was then proposed—probably the best idea—that the Australian National Line should follow the objects for which it was first formed by the Australian Shipping Board, and take over the shipping service in operation from Fremantle to Darwin.

Capt. J. P. Williams—now Sir John Williams—nearly had a heart attack. He certainly did not want to saddle himself with an old decrepit fleet. I may say that in the fullness of time this would be the answer to all our problems in the north, but this is inconceivable to me because we cannot obtain any benefit from the Australian National Line which is paid for by the taxpayers' money. I agree with The Hon. A. F. Griffith that it is the taxpayers' money and not Commonwealth money, and we should be getting a grip on some of it.

Despite a great deal of material that is available on transport problems and despite the fact that some of the ships are now 25 years of age, nothing happened until the election of the new Government. The plans of some of them were out of date before the ships were built. It is a tribute to the officers of the service, and the officers and the crews who serve in the ships, that they have rendered the service they have to the people in the north and the State generally. The master of any one of these ships had accommodation which a deck boy expects in modern vessels,

and I would also mention that any disputes in these vessels have been extremely light.

Let me quote to the House the losses that have been recorded over the last 12 years. From 1959 to 1964 inclusive the loss on working was \$8,364,040, and the interest and depreciation amounted to \$5,033,386, making a total of \$13,397,426. From 1965 to 1970, the working loss was in excess of \$11,000,000; to be precise, it was \$11,044,929. The interest and depreciation amounted to \$6,975,607, making a total of \$18,020,536. If those figures are added, we get a total of nearly \$31,500,000; or, to be precise, \$31,417,962. That amount of money, by any standards, is staggering to say the least, especially when one considers that no attempt has been made to rehabilitate the service. This is despite the fact also that great progress has been made in our north-west. I give full credit for that.

I will interpolate here just for a moment. I had the experience of having a copy of a paper that was presented by Capt. J. P. Williams,—now Sir John Williams—the Chairman of the Australian Shipping Commission, handed to me. The address was made to the Victorian Branch of the Economic Society of Australia and New Zealand on the problems facing Australian shipping in the next decade. The paper was delivered on the 29th April, 1960, so we have had 11 years in which to consider the position. I will not quote the whole of the document because it has been widely circularised in view of the fact that it deals with modern techniques and knowledge of shipping. In part, the paper reads—

In common with so many material aspects of modern life, methods and means of transporting people and goods from one place to another have changed beyond the imagination of 50 years ago. In the space of one lifetime, the sailing ship has given place to the coal-burning steamer and the latter to the large modern diesel-driven vessel. Horse-drawn carriages and carts have been replaced by the road motor; travel in jet aircraft has become usual; multi-lane highways tie towns and even countries together. Thus we have passed, in a brief period of time, from a world in which distance was so great a barrier, to one in which places—once months—are now only a few hours apart.

Around the corner, perhaps, lie radio-guided vessels, atomic powered submarine cargo ships and other developments in transport, as yet beneath our horizons. In 1919, Alfred Marshall in his work "Industry and Trade" wrote: "The striking economic feature of our age is the revolution—not in production—but in transport". If this were true then, how much more so is it today?

That was written in 1919 and it applies more so today with all the technology that is now known to man. One finds that the greatest advances in science and technology have been made in the field of transport. There is no corner of the globe today that is not accessible in one way or another by some means of transport and, in several instances, by all means of transport.

Man has even found a means by which he can leave the earth's surface—again, by transport—and yet we, in Western Australia, are trying to serve a population of over 20,000 people in the north with outmoded ships that not only lose \$31,500,000 over a period of 12 years—and I am sure those members who represent the northern parts of the State will agree with me here—but also do not even provide a service. How can any ship provide a service if, as soon as it sticks its nose around the North-West Cape in a five-knot breeze, it has its speed reduced to one knot? This is ludicrous, when one considers that the ships are servicing an area that is most neglected in the field of transport, and when one considers that the last census indicates that the area will probably show a far greater increase in population, and that, generally, 80 per cent. of the total Australian population lives less than 80 miles from the coast.

I now wish to mention road transport, because this seems to be a topical sort of subject when we seek to consider how we are to service the people in our north-west. I do not know how we are to service a part of our country that is subject to extreme flooding. Not only is it subject to flooding, but also to cyclonic disturbances that blow away towns.

Let us have a look at the LASH ship. I suppose it can be said that the greatest enemy in respect of the LASH vessel is the Commonwealth Government, because forces were at work within the Department of Shipping and Transport which did not want LASH ships introduced to Australia. For good reasons, any one in the transport business knows—and the members of the Country Party know—that the greatest blunder of all time has been made with containerisation. There are very few container shipping companies in the world that are making a profit, and one of them made a loss of \$29,500,000. The cry now seems to be "You must ship by containers, or else! Pay another 25 per cent., or else there will not be any conventional shipping line."

At the same time, by procrastination, we lose a chance to provide a kind of service that would do a great deal for the people in the north by way of reduced costs and replacing a breakdown of service for the supply of requirements. It has been found that a United States shipping line has plans to introduce LASH ships to

Australia. This was reported in the *Financial Review* of the 11th March, 1971. Part of the article in question reads—

Mr. Ross said the six new LASH vessels would replace the company's present fleet of nine Mariner vessels.

"We expect that the six LASH vessels will be more than we can gainfully employ in the trans-Pacific trade (between the Far East and the west coast) for two or three years at least", he said.

"It is quite possible we will use two of them here."

"Apart from container carriage, these vessels lend themselves to the carriage of bulk cargos. It is in this area of bulk and containers that we are looking to the introduction of LASH ships to Australia and New Zealand."

The LASH vessel would undoubtedly have assisted transport in the north-west as compared with the container type of vessel, and what is stated in the extract I have just read out is that not only is it possible to place containers in the LASH vessel but also any type of cargo that is desired. Of course, the disadvantage of a cellular container vessel is that unless there is a cargo which fits into the container, the container goes back empty into the ship.

This was one of the difficulties that was not readily appreciated when the headlong charge was made into containerised shipping; and today containerisation is doing its level best to get out of the difficult financial problems now confronting it. One of the ways to get out of those problems is to bypass ports like Albany and others, with a detrimental effect not only on the rural economy but also on the people living in the coastal towns which serve the hinterland and the farming areas. That is all history, and I do not think we can gain a great deal by going over past scores.

Since the present Government took office it has had to purchase two secondhand vessels. Whilst these vessels can be adapted for unit loading, container loading, and to carry in the vicinity of 300 tons of refrigerated cargo—and I have had the opportunity to examine one of them in the north of England—and operate at a speed of 16 or 17 knots, the cold, hard fact is that they are already eight years old.

There is a great need, and I hope the Government recognises that need irrespective of what has gone before, to put into operation a properly co-ordinated transport system in the north. The first thing that has to be done is to obtain another vessel. Let us look at the position if we stick to the two ships only. Cargoes in units or pallet loads will have to be called for, and some of the vessels in the old

fleet will have to be retained. We will then have two vessels capable of doing 17 knots, and the others capable of about eight knots. The cargoes will be received in pallets or in units, and it will fall to the lot of the State Shipping Service, again at a great loss, to break the cargoes down so as to enable them to be placed into the 12-knot ships.

There is a great need for three vessels, and when I mention that number I am assuming that the terminal port is to be Wyndham. If four vessels are required in order to extend the service to Darwin, then surely it is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government to provide the fourth vessel, because, of the cargo that is transported to Darwin, 80 per cent. does not emanate from the State of Western Australia.

The other evening I was very interested in the remarks which Mr. Withers made, because most of the matters he mentioned I know to be correct. I know about the high cost of living, because a couple of years ago I was up there with Judge Gallagher and officers of the State Shipping Service. I felt sorry for those officers because they were almost physically assaulted by the people, as a result of the poor service that was provided. This happened particularly at Kununurra.

There is a great need for a co-ordinated transport service, and shipping by itself cannot provide that service. This is one of the technicalities of modern transport. This should be done even if the State Shipping Service has to take unto itself a partner from the private enterprise field of road transport. That would be all to the good if a co-ordinated transport service could be provided. Today, for the type of service which I envisage should be provided for the people of the north, cargoes must reach the ship on wheels and leave it on wheels.

With the further developments going on in the north-west it will be necessary for the State Shipping Service or the Government to obtain long-term loans from the private operators in the field of iron ore and oil, with a view to providing at least one bulk carrier and one coastal tanker to engage in only intrastate trade between Fremantle and the north. The profit to be made from the operation of these vessels would more than offset the loss in the other areas of the service. I do not contend that the State Shipping Service would be able to reach the point where it could make a profit; it might well be that the service could break even, but I do not know.

Last, but not least, the approach to transport should be made through one central body. I shall not weary the House by enumerating all the Government departments which have something to do with the north-west; there are literally

dozens of them. Whilst this situation remains I see very little chance of people in the north getting any relief from the high cost of commodities and the infrequency of service. Even with the subsidies granted on certain cargoes it amazes me at times to learn about the high cost of commodities to the consumers in the north. In travelling around the various places I have taken it unto myself to say, "Why the high cost of that article?" It might be a razor. The stock answer is that the high price is brought about by the high cost of transport. I would like to be transporting razor blades up there at the rates that are charged, because I am sure the transport operator would become a millionaire doing that!

The Hon. W. F. Willesee: That is, if you can sell all the razor blades.

The Hon. D. K. DANS: They can be sold all right. Rather than subsidise cargoes it would be far better to subsidise the people in the north. That is all I have to say in this my contribution to the debate on the Address-in-Reply. I thank members for their attention.

THE HON. I. G. MEDCALF (Metropolitan) [3.12 p.m.]: I would like to congratulate the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Baxter) upon his reappointment to that office. I am quite sure he will carry on in that position in the same impartial manner as he did during the last Parliament. I should also like to congratulate the new members of Parliament on their election to this House. I hope that they will feel they are representing the whole State, and not only their electorates. I also hope that they will be able to say at the conclusion of the next three years that they have made a useful contribution to the House and therefore that their time here has been gainfully spent. I believe they will make a useful contribution, and I sincerely hope that they do try hard to serve the interests of the State, as well as the individual electors in their constituencies. I believe this objective will commend itself to the new members.

I would like to congratulate the Ministers. They are people we have known for some time. They are of the highest probity, and their sincerity and honesty are unquestioned. In a way it is a case of having greatness thrust upon them, because their appointment as Ministers depends upon the numbers in another place and not on the numbers here. This gives them special tasks and obligations, and I am sure they will discharge their functions well and capably, and also in the best and most honest spirit.

I did think that perhaps it would be nice if the Leader of the House, Mr. Willesee, could sing with confidence the song "I know where I'm going and I know who's going with me." It seems to have special application here. Perhaps he feels