

of 21 years. When the Government is considering the matter, let it put that provision into force. Let the police be instructed to enforce it. Fifty special constables are being sought—I do not know where the Government will get them—but let instructions be given to the police to take these matters in hand—sly-grog selling, supplying liquor to inebriated persons or to persons under the age of 21 years.

I feel sure the House will agree to the motion. If so, I hope the Government will accept it. If the Government is afraid of accepting responsibility for action in pursuance of the motion, then it can simply say, "This is a resolution of Parliament; we are carrying out Parliament's direction, and Parliament must accept the responsibility." I am sure that Parliament is quite agreeable to accepting such responsibility, because we all know that much good will be done if the motion is agreed to.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.17 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 22nd April, 1942.

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The Speaker took the Chair at 11 a.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLIES.

Katanning Scheme.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Works: What was the total cost of the recently completed work on the Katanning water scheme?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The final cost of the bituminous surfacing of the catchment area is not yet available. Expenditure brought to account to date totals £23,482.

QUESTION—BETTING.

As to Co-ordination in Punishment.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Justice: 1, As he has informed the House that neither the Government nor Parliament can influence or direct the Police Court bench except by legislative action, is he aware—(a) that Resident Magistrate Craig of the Fremantle Court, when sentencing illegal starting-price betting offenders, declared from the Bench that he intended to commit habitual offenders to prison? (b) that after this declaration the Bench was strengthened by the presence of two Justices of the Peace who influenced a decision by weight of numbers? (c) that these Justices disagreed with an imprisonment penalty being introduced and continued the practice of regularly fining offenders? (d) that the fines imposed were much below the usual penalties imposed in similar cases in other metropolitan courts? 2, Will the Government take action to reduce the powers of Messrs. Farrell and Griffiths, J.S.P., as exercised in the Fremantle Police Court, regularly nullifying the Resident Magistrate's conception of the correct punishment for this form of offence? 3, If not, is it appreciated that these two Justices are exercising authority that is at present denied to Government and Parliament? 4, Will the Government consider the immediate introduction of a roster under which every Fremantle Justice of the Peace will in turn be called upon to adjudicate on illegal starting-price betting offences? 5, If not, does the Government appreciate that it is allowing two Justices of the Peace to carry all the responsibility in adjudicating on this type of law-breaking?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, (a) I believe the Resident Magistrate did pass some comment to this effect. (b) No. (c) I am aware that imprisonment has not been imposed by the Fremantle Court for offences of the nature referred to. (d) Yes. 2, This cannot be done without amending the Justices Act. 3, It is not within the province of the Government to direct Justices regarding the measure of punishment to be imposed as Parliament has given them discretionary powers. 4, No. The Justices Act stipulates that Justices of the Peace shall have and may exercise within their district the powers conferred upon them by any Act of Parliament and the

Government cannot instruct the Court regarding the constitution of the Bench in so far as honorary Justices are concerned. 5, See reply to No. 4.

QUESTIONS (2)—PRISONS.

Food at Pardelup.

Mr. CROSS asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Has he received any complaints relative to the conditions under which food is supplied to prisoners at Pardelup Prison Farm? 2, If not, will he ascertain whether it is true that prisoners have been prevented from communicating with him regarding their complaint? 3, Will he inquire into the conditions under which food is prepared and delivered to the prisoners at the Pardelup Prison Farm in regard to—(a) cut meat is placed on a considerable number of plates before the appointed meal hour, in a place exposed to the ravages of flies; (b) that several times in recent months, as a result of this procedure, fly-blown meat has been given to prisoners; (c) that resentment of this practice has caused prisoners to escape? 4, If so unsatisfactory conditions exist, will he take prompt steps to ensure that all food at Pardelup Prison Farm is protected by fly-proof wire?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, No. 2, On the contrary, comments have been invited. See No. 3. 3, Subsequent to recent escapes the responsible Minister (the Chief Secretary) accompanied by the Deputy Comptroller General and the Superintendent, Fremantle Prison, paid a visit of inspection to the Pardelup Prison Farm and found the conditions of food preparation excellent. Inmates were mustered and complained only of meat being served at three meals per day instead of two as formerly. The three meal system had been introduced at the request of the men's own committee. Inquiry failed to suggest that conditions at Pardelup had anything to do with motives for escape. 4, Unsatisfactory conditions do not exist.

Facilities at Barton's Mill.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary: 1, Are the facilities available at Barton's Mill suitable as a permanent prison? 2, If so, does he realise that the inefficiency of the fences

is, in view of the recent escape of 13 prisoners, causing much unrest in the minds of residents of the district? 3, Are arrangements in hand to improve the holding capacity of the new gaol, and, if so, when is it expected that the construction will be so dependable as to prove satisfactory for the holding of prisoners?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST replied: 1, The natural facilities are there, but progressive structural additions will be required if circumstances demand a degree of permanency at this location. 2, The degree of insecurity of the present compound is recognised, but the presence of an adequate Military guard should allay any anxiety in the minds of residents of the district. 3, Yes. Adequate steps are in progress to improve the holding capacity of the new gaol. These should be completed within three weeks.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Merredin Branch Mortgages.

Mr. BOYLE asked the Minister for Lands: Of the 607 settlers whose blocks are administered from the Merredin branch of the Agricultural Bank what numbers are—(a) Under sole mortgage to the Agricultural Bank? (b) Under second mortgage to the Associated Banks?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: I cannot answer this question at short notice. Each title in respect to the 607 securities will require to be searched. Difficulties caused by depletion of staff prevent us from carrying out this search.

QUESTION—TRANSPORT.

Bus and Parlour Coach Schedules.

Mr. RODOREDA asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that bus and parlour coach schedules have not been altered since the black-out has been imposed? 2, If so how can drivers maintain these schedules without exceeding the black-out speed limit? 3, If answer to No. 1 is "yes," will he see that the Transport Board takes immediate action to remedy the position?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, The Transport Board has discussed and in some instances approved of the inauguration of new schedules and these will be published and brought into operation in the near

future. 2, Instructions were issued by the Metropolitan Omnibus Co., Ltd., and Beam Transport, Ltd., to their drivers during March, 1942, as follows:—Notice to Drivers—Speeding at Nights: Drivers are hereby advised that under the National Security Regulations they are not permitted to travel at more than 25 miles per hour under black-out conditions. If the driver is running behind schedule, he must remain late, and on no account exceed 25 miles per hour to make up time. In the event of heavy rain, drivers must use their own discretion. If, in their opinion, it is dangerous to proceed, the vehicle must be parked in a safe and sheltered place until driving conditions are more favourable. Day Shift Drivers: Drivers on day shift must test lights and windscreen wipers before their lunch break and report defective lights and screen wipers, together with any other mechanical defect, during their lunch break. 3, Answered by 1 and 2.

QUESTION—VEGETABLE GROWING.

As to Seed Supplies.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: In view of the shortage of vegetable seeds, will he take up with the Federal Department of Import Procurement the need of securing the following varieties of seeds from the U.S.A., Canada, or other country capable of supplying; quantity of each for Western Australia to be as shown:—1 ton beet (red), $\frac{1}{2}$ ton beet (silver), 4 cwt. cabbage, 1 ton swede turnips (rutabaga), 4 cwt. spinach (prickly)? And at a later stage suitable for spring planting:—2 cwt. cucumber, 2 cwt. canteloupes?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: The shortage of vegetable seeds is not confined to Australia but is world-wide in extent. The Commonwealth authority set up to promote Australian production of vegetable seeds and to arrange for requisite and essential imports is meeting with the close collaboration of the Western Australian Department of Agriculture.

QUESTION—NEON SIGNS.

Reduction of Rent.

Mr. RAPHAEL (without notice) asked the Minister for Industrial Development: Is it the intention of the Government to take any action in regard to the rent paid by

the lessees of Neon sign contracts as the company is only agreeable to a 33 per cent. reduction, and no Neon signs are allowed to be shown under the brown-out conditions.

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT replied: This matter will be given consideration, and I will be glad if the member for Victoria Park would supply me with as much information as he has in his possession.

BILL—INTEREST REGULATION.

Leave to Introduce.

MR. WATTS (Katanning) [11.7]: I move—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act relating to Interest Regulation.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [11.8]: I am concerned as to whether this Parliament, and particularly the Government, is fully aware of the reasons for Parliament being called together, and whether it has faithfully interpreted and followed those reasons. Parliament was convened for a definite and specific purpose. It was definitely outlined in the statement and, in order that there should be no misunderstanding, the Premier moved that the statement for which Parliament had been called together be printed. There can be no doubt about that. Immediately that was done, Parliament had of necessity to concentrate its attention on the printing of the statement which, of course, gave scope for discussion. To carry out ordinary Parliamentary practice, the Premier had moved certain motions, and he moved one regarding private members' business on the Wednesday sitting. When he did so, he made it very clear in several places—I have read his statement—that members would have scope to raise matters relevant to the subject matter for which Parliament had been summoned. The Premier was baited by private members—they were entitled to do so; they had to protect their rights—but, although he was baited, he maintained consistently throughout his speech that members would be given such scope. In one place he might have said a word that went a little further than his general statement, but he did convey that the scope would be relevant to the subject matter for which Parliament had been called together.

I am concerned about Parliament. I am not concerned with the discussion on the motion for printing the statement, but this is a personal matter. I want to maintain the prestige of Parliament. I do not want the people to get an idea that we are a rabble, that we have no sense of proportion, and that the Government, although it has a majority—albeit a thin one—cannot ensure that the undertaking given by the Premier is strictly observed. I am sorry I was not here yesterday because I would rather have taken this stand yesterday than today. I would have rather done it yesterday because the point was then raised for the first time.

Mr. Thorn: You have received your instructions.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have received no instructions at all.

Mr. Thorn: We know what you have been up to.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: This is not a matter upon which anyone can instruct me. Members know me well, and they know it is very difficult to instruct me when they have the right to instruct. They have no hope in life of instructing me on matters upon which my pledged word has not been given. In this matter I am like the hon. member who has given notice of a motion; I am a free lance. That motion demonstrates that the free lances are trying to use this special occasion for the general discussion of matters irrelevant—this is the point—to the subject matter for which Parliament was summoned.

Mr. Doney: What do you know of the contents of the Bill the member for Kataning is seeking leave to introduce?

Mr. J. H. Smith: What about your question? Has that anything to do with the Premier's remarks?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am glad the member for Nelson has raised that point.

Mr. Raphael: He is always ready to help.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Two things have been emphasised during this debating society discussion, and raised not only by Ministers but also by other members. One was the alunite deposit, which was relevant to the subject matter of the debate. The other motion of which I have given notice is actually the very essence of the reason why Parliament was called together. There was a certain amount of public

opinion behind the contention that the State Parliament should meet and, if members analysed the reason, they would know it was due to questions of civil defence and war precautions; nothing else. The public mind was disorganised; members of the public were fearful; and there was a feeling that we were going just too far regarding the powers given to the Government under the civil defence legislation. That feeling gathered momentum as the black-out or brown-out was extended and became more pronounced.

Mr. Raphael: The wash-out!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Members of the public were asking, "What is Parliament doing? Are we to be subject to this kind of thing without having a voice?" For that reason Parliament was called together. My motion is an endeavour to clinch that—

Mr. Patrick: Are you going on with it?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: —and I have taken that step because I do not want this Parliament to appear ridiculous. If we go away without declaring something along those lines, we shall be acting like a lot of school kids and will deserve all we get from the people. I appeal to the member for Katanning to realise that he is just trying to take the control of the government of the country out of the hands of the responsible Ministers.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Nonsense!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is probably nonsense to the hon. member, but he is irresponsible in all things.

Mr. J. H. Smith: At least I am more consistent.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Under responsible Government we must have regard for the party in power with a majority. The Government's policy was reflected by the Leader of the House, who made it distinct that the session was to be of three days' duration—that was his expression—and right through he told us that Ministers would speak and convey information that the House and the country ought to know.

Mr. Thorn: Are you getting in with your speech beforehand?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am getting in my speech on this matter because I have some regard for the reputation of this Parliament. I do not want Parliament to demonstrate to the public by its actions that

we have become a rabble. I want the Government to govern. If we do not get government by the Government, the position, of course, will be hopeless. The Government does many things that I do not like, but I have always bowed to majority rule and control. Above all, we must have Government control. I submit to the Deputy Premier that he is not faithfully observing what the Premier undertook. Members can read the statements for themselves. The Premier made it quite clear that the subject matter of this meeting of Parliament was the war effort. His statement was to be printed so that the discussion would be confined to that matter, and he gave an undertaking that relevant matters might also be discussed. Again I appeal to members to realise how unfair it will be to other members individually if this sort of thing is to continue. The more irresponsible—and God knows I am irresponsible enough—

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: —will take every opportunity that presents itself to discuss this, that and the other thing, but we ought in our sane and calm moments to realise that it would be a sorry country if we controlled it by these free-lance methods. Therefore, if we are going to allow one or two members to get away from the Ministerial statement, then this sitting will extend indefinitely. There is no doubt whatever as to what Parliament was called together for. I would not be so concerned about the matter—and in saying this I make no reflection upon the Deputy Premier—if the Premier were present. I appeal to the fairmindedness of my friends on the other side of the House to appreciate that the Premier will be a sad man indeed if Parliament authorises the introduction of legislation, and thus extends this special session which he called for a specific purpose. I am aware that I have notices of motion on the notice paper, but I submit that these are relevant. If we cannot keep to relevant matters we should close down altogether.

Mr. J. H. Smith: You are the only one not out of step.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Possibly that is so. It is not a weak thing to be out of step. The hon. member tries to keep in step too rigidly, and consequently he has no reputation for convictions or anything else. A member of Parliament must have convictions and the hon. member must not

blame me because I have rigid convictions. I stick to my opinions and express them when I consider the opportunity is reasonable. I submit the House should defeat this motion as evidence that the Premier did not give an undertaking that we should allow Parliament to get out of hand. We did allow it to get out of hand yesterday, when a certain resolution was carried. We do not want to aggravate the position, however, and thus make ourselves appear ridiculous in the eyes of the people of this State.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [11.22]: I was much surprised to hear from a member of such long standing in this House the statement which he has just made. He is anxious that Democracy should maintain the form of government we have; and he said that he did not wish members to become a rabble. But it is Parliament that is all powerful, not the Ministers.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The control of Parliament is with the Government.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The control of Parliament is in the hands of Ministers as long as Parliament permits them to have it. In my opinion, the hon. member had no right whatever to tell members on this or the other side of the House that they should have taken from them an inherent right which they have enjoyed ever since Parliament was established.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is irresponsibility on your side.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Every private member of Parliament has the privilege of introducing legislation at any time should he consider it desirable. You, Mr. Speaker, with your Parliamentary knowledge, will not be able to turn to one instance of private members being deprived of that right. It is of no use to declare that the majority always rules and that the minority has no say; under our democratic form of government the majority is always tolerant enough to listen to the minority, especially when the House is so evenly divided as it is now. I might have views different from those of the member introducing this legislation, but I would not on that account oppose its introduction, as it is the right of every private member to introduce legislation. It seems extraordinary to me that it should be left to a member who does not attend the House very

often to object. He is taking the opportunity to make a speech, so that the public will know he has been attending Parliament.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is not a fact.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is not.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The hon. member himself has two notices of motion on the notice paper, yet he is objecting to the member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) introducing this Bill. Does the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) contend that members on his side of the House have a prior claim? I heard what the Premier said.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Did he say "legislation"?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No. After all, the Premier is subject to the will of the House; we must not lose sight of that fact. What usually happens is that an understanding is arrived at between the parties. I admit that the Premier told me what he proposed to do and that I passed the information on to members on this side of the House, who will admit that fact.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Did it include legislation?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: No. It is not for the Premier to determine whether or not legislation shall be introduced. A majority of the House can decide that point. There has always been a sense of decency in that respect, and consequently I hope the member for Katanning will be given the opportunity to explain his Bill.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I want Parliament to be decent.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: This sitting of Parliament is no different from any other sitting.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You are irresponsible again.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: If I were to follow the lead of the hon. member, then I should say that this sitting has probably been a nuisance, because there has been so much talk.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is what Parliament is called together for.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: But this is a time for action rather than a time for making speeches. I admit the Government has been benefited by the expression of views of members, and I contend that is the reason why the Government called Parliament

together. I readily concede that we have heard some extremely interesting statements by Ministers, and that the public also have had the benefit of those utterances.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Leader of the Opposition does not appear to understand what we are here for.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That may be so. The hon. member mentioned that he was concerned about the reputation of the Government.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The reputation of Parliament.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: So am I! It is for that reason I have risen to speak. It is my wish to maintain the rights of private members. Those individual rights are much more important than are the collective rights of a Government or of an Opposition. The member for Guildford-Midland himself will appreciate that point. I feel sure he appreciated it when he gave notice of the two motions standing in his name on the notice paper. I am aware that the time of Ministers is all-important. They have much work to do. Today we have some Federal Ministers visiting this State on important missions and they must want to collaborate with our Ministers, irrespective of their politics. I therefore regret that the present sitting has extended as long as it has; but it is entirely in the hands of Parliament itself to say yes or no to the introduction of a Bill. The time may come when the hon. member himself may have some important legislation to introduce; that actually appears to be the case, judging from the questions he has asked during this sitting of Parliament. I suggest that that might even come about.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But this is a special session.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: It is not. It is a prolongation of the session held last year. The rights of private members must be maintained. If leave is refused to introduce the proposed Bill, it would not be the first time that there was such a refusal. However, let us deal with the point logically. Let us say that this is not a suitable time for the hon. member to introduce the Bill; but it ill-befits the member for Guildford-Midland to try to influence members in this matter. He may yet regret the statement that he made this morning. There is one thing we must preserve and that is the right of individual members, no matter on which side of the House

they are sitting, and I have never voted to refuse permission to a member to introduce a Bill.

Mr. Marshall: I heard you move the gag one morning.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is totally different. That did not deprive a member of the right to tell the House what he proposed to do by legislation. I have applied the gag on one occasion and I have had it applied to me on more than one occasion.

Mr. Marshall: No, you have not!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Yes, I have!

Mr. Marshall: You are the only one that ever did it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I think we are getting away from the subject.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am surprised at the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) making an interjection of that sort because, having a good memory, he knows what has happened in this House. I hope that on this occasion the House will not allow one individual member to take away from the whole of the members of this House the inherent right handed down since we have had responsible government.

THE DEPUTY PREMIER (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [11.31]: I did not oppose a similar motion yesterday and I cannot vote against this one, but I think it was understood quite definitely that this was not to be a legislative session. When a discussion took place on the question of taking away the right of private members to discuss their business on Wednesdays, there was no suggestion that legislation would be introduced, but only that members should be given an opportunity to discuss matters of importance. The majority of members here did not desire that this should be a legislative session. I take the view that this is a sensible House and that members will give a sensible decision when these questions come up for consideration. There is always some temerity in opposing a motion for leave to introduce a Bill but, when the consideration of the Bill becomes an order of the day, it is then the property of the House and that is the time for the House to decide what shall become of it. We are not ignoring the House. The Government has sometimes, even with a very slender majority, vetoed things. It is only a question of one vote in this House. When

the time comes to deal with these matters on their merits the House will decide what should be done. This Parliament was summoned by mutual consent but there was never any suggestion that this was to be a legislative session. I think that understanding will be honoured by the House. In normal circumstances—I am not sure of the date—the life of this Parliament would have expired.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The 31st January.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: Yes. All being well—we cannot promise too much—the ordinary legislative session will be held in the usual way, and then everybody will start off from a fair mark. The Government will have an opportunity to introduce its legislation, and the parties on the other side of the House and individual members will have a similar opportunity. The Government has refrained from introducing legislation—as a matter of fact there is no great outside demand for legislation to be introduced—and for the Government which is mainly responsible for legislation to take that attitude and at the same time for other members to introduce legislation, is apt to put things out of joint. If legislation is considered this Parliament will not have carried out the business for which it was called together, the idea having been to discuss matters very definitely associated with the State's administration of war matters. A very comprehensive statement was issued by the Premier and that has since been discussed by various members. Full opportunity was given to discuss practically anything. Even the matters contained in these notices of motion to introduce legislation could have been dealt with. The Premier's statement gave ample opportunity for a full discussion and also for the House, if it so desired, to direct the Government or advise it or acquaint it with the views of members. Since a similar motion to this was carried yesterday I shall not oppose this one.

MR. WATTS (Katanning—in reply) [11.36]: My friend from Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) has completely over-stepped the mark, in my opinion, in objecting to leave being granted to introduce this Bill. During the time I have been in the House, if there has been one member who has wasted the time of the House on matters that are irrelevant, it is the hon. member.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not reflect on another member.

Mr. WATTS: I was referred to as being amongst the irresponsibles, and I think that is as great a reflection on me as is the one I made on the hon. member.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker! I want the statement that I waste the time of the House withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw.

Mr. WATTS: I withdraw, but there has been enough time expended this morning on the discussion of this matter to have allowed the second reading of the Bill to be moved. However, I will not dwell on that. I will simply say that I am not going to disclose to the House what the contents of the Bill are, but I will assure the Deputy Premier—for whose remarks I have the greatest appreciation—that the Bill definitely refers to a matter arising out of the war and is of vital interest to a large section of the community in this State. It is closely related to certain national security regulations as they affect a section of the people of Western Australia, and is therefore a matter that is of as great importance to the districts represented by the majority of members on this side of the House as civil defence is to the metropolitan area and other areas.

It is extraordinary to me that the member for Guildford-Midland should come here and suggest that this House, of all the matters that may arise out of the war, should discuss only civil defence which he knows is particularly applicable, and of particular importance to those areas adjacent to the coast, including the electorate he represents; and suggest at the same time that I should come here and be refused the right to have a discussion on a subject, with some hope of result, that affects, as I have said, a great many people of the country districts and in regard to which the aim of the Bill is to rectify, if possible, for the duration of the war, something which has arisen out of the war. Had there been no war, there would have been no necessity for introducing such a measure.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It should not have been introduced at this special session.

Mr. WATTS: This is not a special session. During the discussion on the motion for Government business to have precedence the member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) said he was sure the Premier would give every opportunity for a discussion on matters of

vital importance and the Premier's reply was, "I am sure he will." In consequence of that it is well known that I and other members on this side of the House ceased opposition to the proposal that there should be in effect no private members' business. So far as I was concerned there would have been no suggestion of this measure being introduced were it not directly relevant and of direct interest to the persons in the country who are affected by the war at the present time. I hope the House will at least give leave to members to hear what the contents of the Bill are at the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Leave given.

First Reading.

Bill introduced and, on motion by Mr. Watts, read a first time.

MOTION—PRINTING MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

As to State's War Effort.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by the Premier:—

That the Ministerial Statement be printed.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [11.40]: The only desire I have is to assist the Government in these times. I realise that the Government has two duties to perform; one on the legislative side and the other on the administrative side. Both are very important. While it is necessary that we should meet in this Chamber at intervals to deal with legislation, I realise the necessity of allowing Ministers to get on with the administrative work which is most important, particularly now. But the times through which we are passing seem to produce no end of regulations which, if they are allowed to go through, just as a matter of form, become legislation. Some are very important. I fear, therefore, it is necessary that this Chamber should from time to time have an opportunity of seeing these regulations, discussing them, and if necessary disallowing some of them. I am of the opinion that some certainly should be disallowed. I feel that one way in which we could help the Government and the country would be by altering our standing orders and bringing about a limitation of speeches.

Mr. Berry: A limitation of time, you mean.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes. I thank the hon. member. If a member speaks for 40 minutes he has had ample time to say all he wants to say. I believe that if members read some of the longer speeches made in this House they would find that all that was said could have been condensed and the speech restricted to 40 minutes. The member delivering the speech would benefit because when a member continues to speak hour after hour he loses the attention of the House. He certainly does not get what he says into the Press and I do not think there is one person in a thousand who reads in "Hansard" what he said. Generally speaking I feel quite certain that a limitation of the time of speeches is desirable and in the near future, if some other member does not see fit to move a motion along those lines, I shall take the opportunity to do so. When I say that 40 minutes is sufficient for a private member, I would be prepared to allow an extension of time to Ministers. Another fact is that there is a shortage of printing staff. On Tuesday you, Mr. Speaker, explained to the House that "Hansard" could not be printed in full because of a shortage of labour in the printing industry owing to the call-up for military service. That is another reason why speeches in this Chamber should be limited as to time.

Some members have agitated for a secret session and there is some justification for that. I have heard the argument raised that a session at which 80 members were present would not be a secret session. However, the Federal Parliament holds secret sessions and the House of Commons does likewise. Some indiscreet things have been said in regard to the war effort in this State and, as pointed out by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox), printed. Most members are diffident about saying what they really think in regard to shortcomings in connection with the war effort.

If a secret session were held I believe good would result, because members would be able to express themselves freely and perhaps make helpful suggestions. At present four Federal Ministers are visiting the State and such a session would afford a favourable opportunity for them to meet members of the State Parliament and convey to them all the information possible on subjects of interest. It may be said that the

Federal Ministers are here for a brief period only and that they may not have time to meet State members. Those Ministers are able to meet outside bodies and surely, if time can be found for that purpose, time also should be found for members of the State Parliament to hear from those Ministers. If it cannot be arranged for the Ministers to meet State members in this Chamber then we could perhaps meet in the dining room for informal addresses.

Many references have been made to the problems associated with evacuation. I cordially support the remarks of the Minister for Mines who is in charge of civil defence matters, particularly when he advised the community some time ago to stay put. A small section of the community has been somewhat hysterical and has been urging people to get out of the city.

Mr. Thorn: Are you talking about the Civil Defence Council?

Mr. McLARTY: I believe people would be well advised if they stayed put. To rush to country districts would not help in the present crisis but would lead to disorganisation. Some city people appear to think it is easy for them to go to the country where they think there are ample supplies of food, firewood and all other requirements. I can assure the House that that is not so. Accommodation is very hard to obtain, and living in the country areas is just as expensive as it is in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Mann: It is more expensive in the rural areas.

Mr. McLARTY: Some members may say that it should not be so, but the fact remains that living is just as expensive in the country districts. Meat is quite as dear there as in the city, and that applies to vegetables as well. Furthermore, in many country towns the problem of securing firewood is hard of solution. Generally speaking, living conditions in the country are as difficult as they are in the city. If there should be an exodus, particularly if it were unorganised, the effect would be detrimental to the national effort. Another matter to which I desire to refer concerns the driving of motor cars in country areas. The restriction on the lighting of motor cars in those parts is extremely absurd.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLARTY: It can only lead to accidents. There have been a number already

and some have proved fatal. Country night driving is exceedingly difficult and that will be accentuated with the approach of winter. When it is raining a car cannot be driven with safety at a speed exceeding 10 miles or so an hour. Always there is the danger from straying stock.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Why do not you keep your fences in repair?

*Mr. McLARTY: The Leader of the Opposition knows that there are some types of stock that no fence will ever keep in check. In these days it is more than ever difficult to keep fences in repair in view of military operations that are carried out in country districts. Soldiers driving Bren-gun carriers and other vehicles go through fences when necessary and do not pay much attention to repairs.

The Minister for Lands: Has anyone ever explained to you the necessity for such action in the country districts?

Mr. McLARTY: I have heard many explanations.

The Minister for Lands: Have you received one that you regarded as adequate?

Mr. McLARTY: No, but I have heard much criticism. I was particularly interested in the speech delivered by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) who commented on the headlight restrictions which had been applied throughout the goldfields and the back country areas, hundreds of miles away from the coast. Surely it is ridiculous to apply those restrictions outback.

Mr. Doney: Quite a number of fatalities have occurred.

Mr. McLARTY: And accidents are bound to result under existing conditions. Extreme dissatisfaction exists in the country districts regarding those restrictions, and I shall be disappointed if before this short session terminates Parliament does not deal with the matter.

Mr. Berry: The regulations are the result of a policy of panic.

Mr. McLARTY: I have not heard anyone say one word in defence of them. There may be good reasons for these restrictions in coastal areas but they should not be made to apply in the outer parts. I trust that the regulation regarding the restriction of motor car lighting will be modified at an early date. I am convinced that we shall have many more

fatal accidents as a result of the present restrictions than we will ever experience from enemy bombs.

I direct the attention of the Minister for Industrial Development to the position of country garages. The Minister and his departmental officers have been endeavouring to do something to alleviate the situation but at present there is no supply of acetylene gas for country garages, which prevents oxy-welding from being undertaken. What supplies are procurable must be used only in connection with defence work.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Unfortunately supplies of gas are not available.

Mr. McLARTY: I believe that is so, but should any supplies be procurable I think some should be provided for use in connection with the repairing of agricultural implements. In consequence of hundreds of motor vehicles having been taken off the roads, country garage keepers have little to do at this juncture. Recently I interviewed the officials of the Munitions Department and requested that an inspection of the garages in my electorate should be made. An officer was given the task and I accompanied him on his tour of inspection. I trust that, as a result, those garage keepers who possess suitable appliances will be provided with some war work to enable them to carry on. I hope it will not be necessary for the garages to be closed.

An agitation is apparent to influence the Government to permit places of amusement to be opened on Sunday. It is suggested that dance halls should be allowed to open and that charges should be levied. I hope the Government will not agree to the request.

Mr. Cross: Charges are levied now on Sundays.

Mr. McLARTY: Yes, at picture shows but I do not favour that course. I am of opinion that if the Government were to agree to places of amusement being open on Sundays the practice would not be confined to the war period but would continue for all time. Many things were done during the course of the last war, and they have continued ever since. Once we commercialise Sundays we will find that it will not be done only for the duration of the war but for all time. I do not see any necessity for it. Every facility should be afforded the troops, both Empire and Allied, to occupy their time and to maintain their interest. We have reading rooms, buffets and so on, in addition to

which entertainment is provided in private homes. In the circumstances I see no necessity at all for commercialising our Sundays.

I make no apology for again mentioning a topic that I have discussed on many previous occasions. I refer to railway fires in country districts. Recently I introduced a deputation, fully representative of all districts from Perth to Bunbury, to the Minister for Railways to deal with this problem. Subsequently I received from the Minister a reply in which he stated that the Government could not accept any responsibility for damage caused by fires set alight by sparks from railway engines. Therefore farmers whose properties adjoin railway lines have to make up their minds that no matter what their losses may be, or how hard they have tried to prevent destruction from such a source, they will receive no compensation whatever should their crops be burnt out. The deputation asked the Minister to place their requests before Cabinet, and that was done, so this was a Cabinet decision. I hope Cabinet will reconsider the position. A further deputation was suggested to the Minister for Lands, but I pointed out that the matter was not within his province, and he would only say that it was one for the Minister for Railways to deal with. Surely it is unjust that engines belonging to a public utility can cause a man's property to be burnt out, and no provision be made so that compensation shall be payable.

Mr. DONEY: I do not think the intention of Parliament when it passed that legislation was that the Government should be able to shelter behind its provisions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nor do I think it is now intended that we shall discuss such matters at this stage.

Mr. McLARTY: I have referred to it because I think it has a decided relationship to our war effort. It certainly affects production and at such a time as the present, when we are anxious to increase our butter production and to augment our output of farm products, it is important that these should not be curtailed. I will not pursue the matter further at present, but I deem it so important that at a later time I shall, when the opportunity offers, ask the House to carry a motion that Cabinet should reconsider the question.

As regards uniform taxation, or handing over taxation entirely to the Federal Gov-

ernment, I hope nothing of the kind will be done; although from what appears in this morning's paper it seems that even if the Premiers are agreed in opposing the suggestion, the Federal authorities will nevertheless enforce uniform taxation. I have not any doubt whatever that uniform taxation would be the forerunner of unification, and that unification would quickly follow upon uniform taxation, which I know will prove highly detrimental to Western Australia. Again I urge that we in this State should show that we are most definitely opposed to it.

With respect to pricefixing, I hope the Minister for Agriculture will closely watch the position as to fixing of prices for primary products. Costs are increasing against the farmer all the time; moreover, price fixation of primary products is difficult. Unless the farmer makes his complaint against the proposal, he will have to carry the baby. I admit price fixation to be necessary; but in enforcing it regard should be had to justice.

The Minister for Lands: You do not agree that it should be done on the Eastern States basis, do you?

Mr. McLARTY: Certainly not. In conclusion I wish to express my admiration of the good work that this State's workers are doing towards the war effort. We seem to be free from strikes, and a feeling of satisfaction appears to exist. I do not know why Western Australia should be so free from strikes and why industrial matters should be going so smoothly here, whilst there is dissatisfaction in other parts of the Commonwealth. I remember that when the Curtin Government came into power Mr. Ward, the Federal Minister for Labour, in one of his earliest speeches, pointed out that there was not a single strike in Australia. This, he said, was due to there being a Labour Government. Well, there have been a good many strikes since Labour came into power in the Federal arena, and strikes are still continuing. Why they should continue is hard to understand. I do feel that party politics should be dropped at this time and that we should be all out to assist the various Governments. But the Federal Minister for Labour does not seem able to forget party politics. My belief is that until there is a new Minister for Labour in the Federal sphere, we shall not have smooth working of industrial activities.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [12.5]: I feel that the results of these sittings will prove highly beneficial to the community. It was the people's desire that Parliament should be called together, and I hold it to be our definite duty to respect public opinion. The people, in expressing the desire that Parliament should meet, prove to this Parliament that it possesses the confidence of the community. At times we have to listen to criticism of our State Parliament, through the Press: but I often think that the few letters criticising this Parliament and advocating its abolition might easily, at a time like the present, be the work of Fifth Columnists, whose policy is to disrupt all organised bodies.

Mr. North: The letters appear over peculiar signatures.

Mr. THORN: Yes. One recent writer was able to inform the public of the cost of Parliament. The figure he gave, whether correct or not, was a very low figure indeed. If he would go into the cost of government and of public services, he would arrive at a much higher figure. Often I think that cost represents a top-heavy service, though not at the present time, because its numbers have been depleted; but under ordinary peace conditions, in my opinion, we have a very top-heavy service indeed in proportion to the State's population. If there is to be any saving of expenditure, the saving should be made in that direction instead of abolishing Parliament. I feel that the desire expressed by the public, that Parliament should meet, now springs from the troublous period we are passing through and the concern citizens feel regarding the preparations made for future safety.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The meeting of Parliament would alleviate all that.

Mr. THORN: These sittings will afford some consolation to the people, because all members who have spoken here, including Ministers of the Crown, have voiced a desire and a determination to make full preparations for the defence of Western Australia. We have a perfect right to discuss these questions. Certainly matters of defence are not a monopoly of the Commonwealth Government. We are just as much concerned for the defence of our State as are the Commonwealth authorities.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We have the power of the man in the street, no more and no less.

Mr. THORN: In point of fact, there have been great activities in this State on the part of private members and Ministers to ensure that proper provision is made for defence. Much credit is due to various private members and Ministers who took up the question of the defence of Western Australia. They have awakened our friends in the East to the need for defending this State. Therefore I say that we should fight to the very last for the maintenance of the Western Australian Parliament. Some people would construe that utterance as evidencing a selfish attitude. They would know the difference if the suggested change came about. To many members of this Chamber it matters not whether we are here tomorrow or the next day, but it is definitely essential that this Parliament should be retained.

Getting back now to the critics, I believe myself to be one of those who have made a pretty close study of them. We have had men collected under the name of Communists. They are not Communists at all. They are anti-British, and have only one desire—to bring about the downfall of the British Empire. Their recent activities represent merely a start.

Member: Under the cloak of Communism!

Mr. THORN: Undoubtedly! Once they have got rid of the State Parliament their next objective will be the Commonwealth Legislature, their ultimate objective being to set up a dictatorship of their own making. Never mind about the few individuals who criticise us! We have a duty to the people who placed us here, and I hope we shall never forget that duty. On the other hand, if we do not fall in with the wishes of the Western Australian people, an entirely different position arises. I assert definitely that this Government took the right step in calling Parliament together, so as to enable this discussion to be held. Although Ministers may feel a trifle embarrassed at the business mounting up on the notice paper, I can assure them that none of it is placed there with any intention of hampering them. The notice I have given has only one object—to bring about a discussion concerning what I deem a highly important question.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It is being discussed in Melbourne.

Mr. THORN: I know that: but already the hon. member has made a speech here in the form of questions on the notice paper.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: A concentrated speech.

Mr. THORN: Yes, and I approve of the motion of which the hon. member has given notice. I have no fault to find with it. However, the hon. member is making quite a good speech by way of interjections. I listened with great interest, like other members, to the statements of the various Ministers who have addressed the House. Their speeches were highly informative, and I am able to congratulate them on their tactics. Through the fact of those speeches having been made here Ministers have invalidated quite a lot of criticism that was impending. Indeed, they have stolen the thunder of many members on this side of the House, and given us a feeling of satisfaction.

Mr. Cross: And now you have every confidence in them.

Mr. THORN: I have a great deal of confidence in them—more than I have in the hon. member interjecting. Yesterday I noticed that the hon. member was very busy, dodging about, and I gained the impression that he wanted to apply the gag yesterday but could not get away with it. When I see the hon. member hopping around, it does not take me long to awake to what he is up to. Arising from statements made by the Minister for Agriculture as to fixation of prices, I say that the Federal proposals in that connection ought again to be a lesson to this State as regards doing away with this Parliament. If that is the sort of treatment we are to receive from the Commonwealth Parliament, there is not much hope for us in the future should the State Legislature be abolished.

Why should the price of pork here be fixed at 2d. a pound less than it is in the other States? Is that fair? Why should a conference be held to deal with uniform taxation? We know that is merely a step towards unification. There are other instances of the extent to which this State is suffering through the fixation of prices. Take the position of our fruitgrowers, for instance? I attended a conference in Melbourne at the end of last November, and put up a case to those in authority regarding the greatly increased cost of production. I think I made out a case for an increase in the price of dried fruits. I pointed out that an increase in the price of meat had been granted, and increases in connection with other commodities had also been agreed to by the Depart-

ment of Health and Food in the Old Country. I considered we had a good case, without exploiting our friends oversea, for an increase in the price of fruit. That view was assented to. Then a flat rate for the whole of Australia was fixed of £28 per ton for currants. The effect of that was to increase the price by £5 a ton to growers in the Eastern States, and leave growers in this State £1 worse off than they are at present.

The Minister for Lands: We are still going to get the benefit of better quality.

Mr. THORN: I want to bring that out. We are told that we shall be paid on the grades.

The Minister for Lands: I think those are £4, £3 and £1.

Mr. THORN: That will be the only result of the Western Australian pool.

The Minister for Lands: It is the result of Western Australia's better quality.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That should be over the £28.

The Minister for Lands: It is.

Mr. THORN: That should have been stated definitely. I am not foolish enough to believe that one body of growers in one State will make a sacrifice to bonus a body of growers in another State. A definite statement should be made on the subject. The average price of currants in the Eastern States over the last four years, 1937 to 1940 inclusive, was £22 15s. per ton. That was paid by the pool.

Mr. Cross: And what would be the price retail?

Mr. THORN: We must not be led astray on that point. We have an Australian price and an export price. Members work out their contentions on the Australian price. We export 80 per cent. of our fruit at world's parity.

Mr. Cross: Not at present.

Mr. THORN: No. The average price for the years I have mentioned has in Western Australia been £29 per ton to the growers, ex the pool. I hope that will be adjusted: if not, there will be a lot of heartburnings in this State. We have had an average price of £29 per ton for the last four years, and now a flat rate of £28 has been fixed.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Our price should be £7 plus the £28.

Mr. THORN: I am puzzled as to the legal aspect, on account of the promises that have been made. The Government has agreed to pay £28 per ton, and a man with the lowest

grade of fruit can therefore claim £28 per ton. I am rather worried about the matter.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I think that is right, too.

Mr. THORN: With reference to vegetable growing, I would point out that there has been a wonderful response to the call that has been made upon our producers and others. Those in authority say that everything will be all right, that we can handle and consume all the vegetables that are produced. My view is that we shall definitely reach a glut period; it cannot be avoided. What is exercising my mind is, what provision has been made to handle the glut. Such provision will be very necessary. We want to know whether vegetables are going to be put into cans or subjected to dehydration. We must see that we lose none of the production, because that will be a great help in the future. If we do not make provision for the excess production, we shall be lacking in our duty to the State. At the Greenmount packing shed, one young man is dealing with that very question and is making a good job of it. He is handling from 25 to 27 tons a day. At present he is dealing with apples, but later on will handle potatoes. That, however, will not help the requirements of the State when we reach the glut period. Another question that has been dealt with is the dispersal of foodstuffs in country districts. There should be a full dispersal of foodstuffs there, particularly in the case of flour. I am concerned when I hear that some millers have 200 or 300 tons of flour in stock at present.

The Minister for Lands: Of export quality.

Mr. THORN: For security reasons that flour should be dispersed. I am not an expert, but I think flour will keep better than will wheat.

The Minister for Lands: The flour comprising millers' stocks is not of the baking quality requisite for this State.

Mr. THORN: I hope that suitable flour will be dispersed into our country districts. I was very interested in the informative and capable speech delivered by the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith). It was very much to the point, particularly when he dealt with the black-out regulations. I am afraid many people have become panicky. The authorities are over-doing things in this matter.

Mr. Cross: It is a case of war hysteria.

Mr. J. Hegney: The military authorities are doing it.

Mr. THORN: I think the Civil Defence Council has been doing it. Many of the officers concerned have not had the requisite experience to enable them to frame such regulations. They are most irritating. Let me refer to the recent casualties on the road. Most of the people injured have been run down by motor vehicles. That sort of thing must happen under present conditions. Any sensible man will admit that under present black-out conditions and with the present motor headlights it is impossible to drive a car efficiently.

The Minister for Labour: The hit-and-run motorists are being encouraged.

Mr. THORN: They are certainly being encouraged to run. The House would be well advised to deal with the question. I know the military authorities are having tremendous trouble because the eyesight of their drivers is being affected. The strain on the eyes is tremendous. They are being seriously worried at the moment. Many drivers of military vehicles are flouting the regulations, and are taking off the black-out masks from their headlights. They run on one bright light and have the other shaded. I do not see that we can prosecute civilians under these regulations unless we are prepared to have uniformity, and insist upon securing it.

Mr. Cross: We should insist on regulations being framed in a commonsense way.

Mr. THORN: The Minister for Mines said that our American friends are not playing the game in this direction. If that is so, I do not see how we can prosecute the ordinary civilian. What is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander. Unless we can secure uniformity, I advise those in authority not to enforce the law against anyone. When I was coming to Perth this morning, I saw a Beam bus on its side on the Guildford-road mounted on top of the radiator of a motor car. The accident occurred last night and was caused through the black-out.

Mr. Cross: The Beam buses travel very fast.

Mr. THORN: Some of the black-out is a wash-out. The whole thing requires serious consideration. I am in favour of some control that will force the whole country to black-out should an alert be sounded be-

cause of an impending air raid. This sitting of Parliament should prove well worth while. I feel more contented myself now that I have heard the views of various Ministers and those of private members. It is right that Parliament should have been called together, and I very much appreciate that being done.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [12.28]: The opinion is generally held that in these days of stress most matters concerning the war should be left to the consideration of experts.

Mr. Cross: Experts have made a mess of it up to date.

Mr. TONKIN: The view is held that members of Parliament, not being experts, should not be permitted to interfere or intervene in certain matters. Some fifty years ago a certain doctor declared to the world that he had discovered the existence of a new corpuscle in the blood. He read papers before scientific societies, and displayed photographs taken through the microscope to prove the existence of this additional corpuscle. One evening, at a gathering of people convened by the doctor, a clergyman by the name of St. Clair—he was not a specialist in anything but religion—had the temerity to point out what he deemed to be an error in the experiment. A number of leading doctors who were present, including the distinguished surgeon, Lawson Tate, pooh-poohed the idea that a mere clergyman could be right and the specialist wrong. The fact remains that nothing has since been heard of that corpuscle. There is an instance where the specialists were wrong, and an outsider or a mere theorist happened to be right.

Occasionally outsiders and theorists can put forward opinions worthy of consideration by experts, who themselves are by no means infallible. I would not regard all those in high places in the Army, Navy, and Air Force as experts. Many of them are capable men, of course, and highly skilled at the work they have taken up. But I submit that their experience, in a number of cases, has been very circumscribed. After all, we derive our opinions from two sources. We rely upon our personal experience, or we accept the opinions of recognised authorities. Some of us rely on different authorities, and therefore we have differences of opinion. Most of us have different experiences, and again we have different opinions. Then,

of course, some of us will arrive at a different conclusion after having had the same experience and consulted the same authority. The explanation of that is that our process of reasoning is different. So we can expect to get a wide diversity of opinion in the carrying out of the war effort. Even though one might not be in the Navy, Air Force, or Army, it is possible for him to make suggestions, well worthy of consideration, to these arms of the Forces.

The system of government upon which we rely in this country, and which we are fighting hard to retain, is one under which the people appoint representatives to express their point of view, and in some cases to do their thinking for them. Unless we have the opportunity to do that, there is a negation of the very idea of democratic government. So I come to the advisability, or otherwise, of having had this sitting of Parliament. It was called for a special reason, even though it might not be a special session. I regard it as an extraordinary sitting, and one which would not have taken place had the circumstances been different from what they are. There was a general desire on the part of the members of all parties, and on the part of the general public, to see Parliament sitting in order that attention could be given to the serious situation confronting the nation. It was in response to that desire that this sitting of Parliament was called.

No one would endeavour to establish that it is an ordinary legislative session when our energy and time should be dissipated in a consideration of a number of subjects which could well be deferred until some other time. The most important matter for us to deal with at the present juncture is the successful waging of the war and a successful defence of this State in particular. These matters are so pressing as to absorb the whole of our time for the present. If this Parliament feels that there are a number of pressing matters not directly related to the war, which need urgent consideration, then it is well within our province to make a decision which will mean the calling together of Parliament again at another date for that purpose.

There is no doubt that this sitting has been brought about for one purpose only, and that is to enable members to suggest ideas to Ministers, to obtain information from them, and to level criticism against them with the end in view of making the security

of this State greater, and of further assisting the nation in carrying out the war effort. Some people wilt under criticism; others are spurred to greater effort. The criticism, in this Parliament, of existing Ministers and the Government, will result in some greater effort as it does in all walks in life. If one is permitted to carry out his work without supervision and inspection, however diligent he might feel, a tendency for slackness occurs as time passes. If one is aware that his work will be subject to inspection and criticism, then there is less likelihood of any slackness or inertia.

The mere fact that Parliament has to meet to give members an opportunity of criticising what has been done will, of itself, mean greater effort on the part of those responsible for executive action. I do not suggest that the criticism should be mere carping criticism. We have an obligation to endeavour to criticise in a way that will be of assistance to those responsible for doing certain things on our behalf. I propose to suggest three or four ways in which it is possible to bring about greater improvement. The Prime Minister, on the 17th February last, during the course of a speech in Sydney, made this statement, "Go forth to the workshop and the factory and work there so long as you can possibly stand up."

What does that mean? It applies to everybody, but a good many people are paying no heed to it. That statement did not only refer to the working men at their lathes; it also referred to the various men in the services which had some responsibility for putting these lathes into operation.

Every person in the community has not sufficient initiative to put himself to work at the most profitable task, however willing he might be to do so. But there are some persons with sufficient organising ability to collect the latent powers which are about and put them into operation. I have, however, seen very little evidence of any definite scheme to do that so far as production is concerned. We have too many idle lathes in this country today. In Fremantle alone there are some dozens. The owners refer to themselves as the unemployed. They have made concerted attempts over a period of more than 12 months to obtain work from the Army, Navy, and the Air Force, but absolutely without success. There is something wrong when that position obtains.

Mr. Berry: That applies all over the State!

Mr. TONKIN: Of course it does! It surely should not be beyond us, as a people, to find some remedy for that state of affairs, because it cannot be defended. It can be explained, but not defended. When one endeavours to point out to highly placed officers in the various services methods by which this idle machinery could be put to work, one is looked upon as an interfering busybody because he happens to be a member of Parliament. If the people in these high places have not sufficient initiative to put this idle machinery to work, they should be made to listen to members of Parliament who suggest practical means by which these things could be done. I could give the House much detail about the number of these workshops in Fremantle. I could give an inventory of the equipment of various shops and explain the circumstances attendant upon their continued idleness. I do not propose to do so at this juncture, but draw attention to the fact that that idle machinery is there, and that we are as short as we can possibly be of equipment. At times we have had aeroplanes grounded here because of lack of certain spare parts, and every one of the places in Fremantle to which I have referred could have made those spare parts had they been asked to do so. Surely we are not going to tolerate such a set of circumstances when we are endeavouring to wage a struggle which is proving a handful for us.

We speak of a maximum effort! The word "maximum" has apparently a new meaning. I always understood it to mean the utmost of which any person was capable. This country cannot talk about a maximum effort whilst it has dozens of idle engineering shops and idle fitters and turners, and that is the position today. It is more a question of organisation than money. I have noticed this unfortunate occurrence about our production, that some department of the Forces requires certain articles. It invites tenders or prices for them, and a manufacturer who proposes to submit a price makes inquiries to ascertain if certain material to do the job is available. Upon being assured that it is available he submits a price, but it takes the persons in authority so long to make up their minds to have the work done that when they do eventually let a contract the material is no longer available. That means further delay; a

further submission of prices and a further consideration of them.

This State is in an absolutely unfair position compared with the other States. Most of our material—such stuff as phosphor-bronze, for example—comes to us from the East, and is therefore more costly here than in the Eastern States. So it is to be expected that when our people submit a price it will be somewhat higher than one submitted by firms in the East, and, as a result, we lose contracts. The Eastern States firms, under these circumstances, take contracts larger than they can handle—the result is that they hold up production. They take many months longer to do a job than they contracted for. What does the difference of a few pounds in the price matter?

Mr. Patrick : The articles might have to be reiled to this State in the finish in any case.

Mr. TONKIN : The question is one of getting the work done. There should be adequate safeguards to see that no exorbitant prices are charged for work performed in this State. All that should be required is a guarantee of good workmanship and a reasonable price for the article. The department requiring the manufacture of that article could then issue contracts for the quantity wanted. Instead of doing that we get no end of delays. I will quote one instance, although I could give dozens. The question of making some winches cropped up, and the State Implement Works at Rocky Bay got the contract. The drop-forgings had to come from Queensland, although we had drop hammers idle in the works here. The State Implement Works carried out their part of the job and then waited for the arrival of the drop-forgings for some weeks, and were eventually told it was impossible to send them from Queensland, and they would have to make them themselves. They were thus called upon to do work which they should have been asked to do in the initial stages. There is far too much of that sort of thing.

At a time when we do not know which way to turn for space on railways and ships, we find stuff travelling backwards and forwards for various operations, sometimes two or three times, though the whole operation could be performed in one place. Why do we cart material from the Eastern States to Western Australia, do portion of the work, and send it back for a further

portion to be done in the East, only to be brought back again for use here? There is something radically wrong if we cannot improve upon that system. The same sort of thing is occurring with regard to foodstuffs on ships. We send certain foodstuffs to the Eastern States, and practically at the same time similar foodstuffs are brought here from the Eastern States.

The Minister for Lands : The nature of some of the cargoes from the Old Country, too, is interesting.

Mr. TONKIN : So we utilise valuable space unnecessarily. We can save space both ways if we use our own article and allow the Eastern States to use theirs. Is it not somebody's job to give attention to this matter? It would be all very well if we had ample space and ample railway trucks, and so on.

The Minister for Lands : And ample time in which to win the war.

Mr. TONKIN : Yes ; but we cannot afford this waste now, and it is still happening. Something appears to be seriously wrong with our railway system. It has broken down under the strain to which it has been subjected. I hope close attention will be given to this aspect. Goods in transit are being lost for long periods. Men are being held up in their production for want of material and, when they finally get into touch with the suppliers, they are told that it has been sent long ago. Then it becomes a matter of hunting it up, and eventually, after some weeks, it is found in the goods yards.

Mr. Thorn : A lot of it is never found.

Mr. TONKIN : That is so. Some people by chance have stumbled across goods in the goods yards and have informed the persons waiting for them that they are there. This happened with regard to a certain article required by the Civil Defence Council. It was urgently required and had been sent for, but nobody knew what had happened to it, and some days later the council was informed of its whereabouts by an outsider who had accidentally stumbled upon it.

Under wartime conditions, we must expect the railway system of this State to be operating under difficulties, but I hope it will be possible to do something to improve the position, because the present state of affairs is too serious to be allowed to continue. I was speaking to a Fremantle manufacturer engaged in making parts for

aeroplanes, a highly-skilled worker who served his apprenticeship during the 1914-18 war, and he told me he had been held up for six months for certain material necessary for a most urgent job. When eventually he got into touch with the suppliers, they informed him that it had been sent several weeks before and that it ought to have reached him. Where it was, nobody seems to have known; it was lost in transit. There is a job for somebody to keep track of these goods, especially those required for urgent jobs, and to ensure that they reach their destination.

Then there is the question of the supply of material generally. It seems to be nobody's job to decide the order of priority for the supplying of material. I suppose we can class most of the jobs as urgent and necessary, and some of them in need of material to be more urgent than others. Yet we find that material required for the most urgent jobs is used for jobs less urgent, and the most urgent jobs are held up while the less urgent ones are completed. That is doing things the wrong way about. I admit that the position is difficult and that we require the services of a man who knows what he is doing, but I do not believe that the difficulty is insuperable. There should be some method of co-ordination under which the most urgent works would receive priority, and under which it would be possible to work out requirements and ascertain just what material was available for the satisfaction of those requirements.

Members had an opportunity last week to inspect a number of workshops. Included in the number was the annexe to the Midland Junction Workshops. In course of conversation, I ascertained that on a number of occasions the annexe was short of material for most urgent work, though it was known that the very material required had been supplied to places engaged on work of a much less urgent nature. There is room for co-ordination in this direction, despite the experts who are supposed to be available to do the job.

On a previous occasion when we were discussing a Bill to authorise the Government to spend certain moneys on civil defence, I stated as my opinion that this was a Federal matter—just as much a Federal matter as the payment of the members of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. I said the Federal Government should assume the responsibility of creating

the organisation and paying for it. I see no reason to alter my opinion. It is impossible to have an efficient A.R.P. organisation under existing conditions. Wardens, in many instances, are no sooner trained than they are called up by the military authorities and their places are left vacant. Men in key positions, such as ambulance drivers, who have undergone a course of training and attended night after night to make themselves efficient, have been called up, and away they go.

Mr. North: An absolute waste of effort!

Mr. TONKIN: As the hon. member says, it is an absolute waste of effort. That is not the worst feature. The warden responsible for the training of those men is left with a skeleton organisation that could not possibly function properly. It is difficult to find substitutes for many of the men called up. Motor drivers capable of acting in an emergency such as is contemplated are not to be picked up at every street corner, and when the warden has hunted for a suitable man and trained him, it is exasperating to find him snatched away and put into camp. And, I ask, to do what? Not more than the part he had undertaken to play in the defence of the country! If A.R.P. work is not necessary, why waste time messing around with it? If it is of value, surely it warrants thorough organisation! The aim should be to make the A.R.P. organisation as efficient and reliable as are the members of the fighting forces.

We cannot play around with this work. Either it is essential or it is not. If it is essential it should be done properly, and it cannot be, and never will be, done properly under existing arrangements. However diligent the Minister in charge might be and whatever amount of money might be spent, while there is no power to maintain in existence the various groups of men and women who have been trained for the work, we cannot have an efficient organisation. We do not know when a raid might be made. It might occur on the very day when the organisation has been broken up because of a further call-up of men for military service. The raid might take place at the very time when the A.R.P. groups are disorganised, and we cannot run that risk if it is worth while having the organisation.

The chiefs of the Army will call up the men for service, but they are not worried

about equipping A.R.P. workers. Consequently we find that some of the equipment required for A.R.P. work is not forthcoming. Steel helmets, stirrup pumps, and respirators are articles used in the Army by the Forces, and they are also required by A.R.P. workers, but they are almost non-existent in the civil defence organisation. Odd members of the organisation have respirators; a few have steel helmets, but very few. We shall drift along week after week and month after month because nobody, except the wardens, seems to be worrying much about the proper training and equipment of the organisation. Surely we shall not succeed in getting proper equipment and organisation in this service unless the Commonwealth Government assumes the responsibility for it, and keeps the people in key positions to maintain the organisation so that it will function with certainty when the time arrives!

People who have given their time and energy to training for this service are to be commended, and it is evidence of remarkable persistence on the part of the wardens that, despite the setbacks to which they have to submit, they continue to discharge their duties and carry on the training. But there must be a breaking point, and unless they see some improvement, unless the required equipment comes forward, and unless greater consideration is shown for the organisation, we will not have anything worth talking about and, if the service is put to the test, it will not function at all. Then the whole thing will have been proved to be a waste of time, money, and effort. I hope the Commonwealth will give consideration to this aspect because I personally regard it as being just as important a function as the equipment and training of the Army service.

Sitting suspended from 1.0 to 2.15 p.m.

MR. WILLMOTT (Sussex) [2.15]: I am pleased that Parliament has been called together, because members have been given a great deal of information. I thought I would have much to say on this occasion; but, having heard the Premier and his Ministers, I find they have considerably cleared the air. I congratulate both the Minister for Industrial Development and the Minister for Lands upon their addresses, which were exceedingly informative.

Mr. Cross: Express every confidence in them!

Mr. WILLMOTT: Another reason why I am pleased Parliament has been called together is because a large section of the public thinks that when the House is not sitting members are doing nothing. My experience is quite the contrary. I find that when I am in my own electorate I have far more work to do than when Parliament is sitting. There is always some constituent who wants information or assistance. It is no use trying to make this explanation to some people. When Parliament is sitting, every member is doing his job. We try to do that whether the House is sitting or not. Personally, I am of opinion that had the Premier called a secret session he might have given us more information than he did. I quite agree that all the Premier and his Ministers know cannot be broadcast; but surely members of Parliament can be trusted to know exactly what is being done for the defence of the State. We all know we have a job to do, which is to win the war.

The enemy has been coming nearer and nearer to our shores; in fact, he has already reached them in one or two places. However, I think it unlikely that he will reach this part of the State or further south, unless he can get nearer bases. That is why I think the regulations with regard to air raid precautions have been too drastic. I fail to see the need for black-outs and the masking of car headlights, because enemy bases are not close enough for the carrying out of night raids. An air raid from an aircraft carrier would have to be carried out in daylight, as planes cannot be taken on aircraft vessels at night time. Therefore, these black-outs are unnecessary. My electorate is affected by the regulation prescribing the masking of motor headlights. Notwithstanding that the greater part of my electorate is situated on the coast, I find that driving at night-time on the country roads is almost impossible and certainly exceedingly dangerous, not only to the driver but to the public. There should be some means of overcoming that difficulty. The regulation might be so modified as to provide for the dimming of lights when the motor vehicle is near the coast or is in a town, but we should be allowed to use ordinary lights on the country roads. Nearly all my travelling is done at night-time, as I have to attend meetings in various parts of my electorate. I find it not merely inconvenient but also dangerous to drive along country roads with dimmed

headlights. Therefore, as I say, I hope the regulations will be altered in such a way as to modify the restrictions.

In his statement to the House, the Minister for Agriculture pointed out that our flax industry is growing and becoming an established industry here. I was very pleased to hear him say so, and I sincerely trust that we shall be able to continue the industry after the war. The Minister pointed out that the value of the straw from the flax produced was about £90,000 and that it was obtained from 7,000 tons of flax straw. The Minister also mentioned that our tobacco industry was holding its own. I am pleased the Government has assisted that industry to the extent to which the Minister referred the other day. I think he said the Government advanced £15,000 to the growers to enable them to carry out their planting and other necessary work and tide them over until the crop had been garnered. There is much suitable land in my electorate for tobacco growing, at Kurrildale, Alexander Bridge, and the Nillup area. I know that tobacco growing has been tried in those areas, with satisfactory results. I trust the Government will give the growers all the assistance it possibly can in order to expand the industry, as I feel sure it has come to stay in this State. Tobacco is at present rationed, and the more we grow the better it will be for the smoker, the producer, and the State generally.

I desire also to touch upon the production of potatoes. There is in my electorate a large district which depends entirely upon potato growing. The growers have expressed concern about the price fixed for potatoes. The Minister for Agriculture told us that the price in Sydney had been fixed at £17 per ton, whereas in Western Australia it was fixed at £11 or £11 10s. per ton. Is it fair to fix that price for this State, simply because we are an exporting State? I cannot for a moment consider that a fair proposition for our growers, as the disparity between the price in New South Wales and this State is too great.

We cannot grow potatoes any cheaper than they can be grown in the Eastern States, so why should we be penalised to the extent of £5 10s. per ton? I am aware the Minister has taken up this matter with the Federal authorities, but he wants the support of every member of this House to help him in the matter. The Commonwealth

Government seems to be trying to do all the harm it can to Western Australia, and we must therefore stand up firmly against the Commonwealth. The same thing is happening with regard to taxation. The Federal Government is desirous of taking over all taxation. We know that the Premier has gone to the Eastern States with full authority to try to prevent the introduction of uniform taxation. Nevertheless, I read in this morning's paper that, even if all the Premiers are opposed to it, the Federal Government intends to proceed with its proposal. It seems to me that if the Commonwealth does introduce uniform taxation, then it will be the thin end of the wedge towards unification, and if unification comes, God help Western Australia!

Mr. Doney: What is wrong with that?

Mr. WILLMOTT: What is right with it?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. WILLMOTT: It is the job of every member of this Parliament to do all he can to assist the Premier and his department to overcome such difficulties. Another matter to which I wish to refer was mentioned by the Minister for Agriculture. It is the question of pig-raising. Again, the Commonwealth seems to think that Western Australia should reduce the price of bacon here. Therefore, the price of our bacon has been reduced by 15 per cent. In my electorate are a number of pig producers. I tried to arrange for a reduction in the price of wheat to enable our pig producers to obtain cheaper feed for their stock. We know that the Commonwealth Government has purchased all the wheat in Australia, but why let it go to waste? Wheat affected by weevils could be sold for feed for pigs and poultry. That would be a profitable proposition. I think the Minister mentioned that 2s. 6d. per bushel would be a fair price to charge pig producers and poultry-raisers for such wheat. I went into the matter before the 15 per cent. reduction was imposed. I discussed it with several of our pig producers, and we came to the conclusion that if wheat could be sold in our district at not more than 3s. per bushel, it would be a payable proposition to the pig producer. That was when they were getting approximately 85s. for bacon, but at the last sale I attended prime baconers were down to about 75s. Lower grades of bacon were very much cheaper. Weaners and slips were practically unsaleable because people are going out of pigs, as that is not now a

payable proposition. I feel sure the Minister for Agriculture is doing all he can to assist the industry and keep it going. It is up to us to give him all the help we can to that end.

I thank the Minister for Labour for the invitation extended to members to inspect, last Friday, different factories in the metropolitan area. The visit was an eyeopener to me, and I enjoyed the whole day very much. I was enabled to see what was being done in the local war effort. I agree with what the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) said, that Western Australia is not doing its utmost in the war effort for the reason that we cannot get the requisite material. We have the plant and the men but the material is not sent to enable us to perform a definite war work because it is said to be needed for other industries, although these are not so essential. It would be a good idea if Parliament were called together a little more frequently than has been the case in the past, although not for long periods. Members would benefit if Parliament were called together, say every three weeks, or every month. That would enable the Premier and his Ministers to tell us what defence work was being carried out. We could then inform our electors that everything was moving in the right direction. Up till now we have not been able to do that. I hope the Government will consider the suggestion and see what can be done to carry it out.

MR. HILL (Albany) [2.33]: There are memories in our lives we can never forget. One of these was the embarkation of the first contingent of Western Australian troops for active service abroad. Everyone of them was singing a song containing these words—

They thought they caught us sleeping,
Thought us unprepared
Because we had our party wars,
But Englishmen unite
When there's cause to fight
The battle for old England's common
cause.

We have to face facts today. One of the outstanding facts is that we have been caught asleep and unprepared, largely because of our party war. Even today in Australia there is not the unity one would like to see. In Western Australia I should like to see a National Government, but the responsibility of forming one rests with the Government itself. Our duty is to assist

the Government of the State and of the Commonwealth to carry on the war. A few weeks ago the Premier sent a letter to members. Various activities were suggested by him, and he outlined the work which individual members were expected to do. In my own electorate I convened a meeting of representatives of local governing bodies, and we all decided to stand behind the Government, the departments and officials, and do all we could.

It is something like 40 years ago since I first took the oath to become a member of the Albany volunteer artillery. A few years later I was known as the boy who swallowed the book. I intended to make the Royal Australian Artillery my career. As we know, man proposes and woman disposes. Some 33 years ago today a certain young lady and I went through a religious ceremony. I then went on the land instead of adopting a military career. My old love, the gun and coastal defence, however, still remains. I have more or less made a close study of coastal defence matters for 40 years, and I am convinced we have to be guided by our Military, Naval, and Air Force advisers. They possess information that is denied to us, and it is even denied to the member for Canning (Mr. Cross). It is in that spirit I look upon the Premier's letter to us.

The first activity suggested by him is connected with air-raid precautions. In the old rule book it is stated that there are three classes of attack that we may have to deal with, namely, invasion, desultory bombardments, and raids. The object of a raid is to do as much damage as possible and with a view to affecting morale. The way to defeat the enemy in a raid is to make complete preparations beforehand. Generally speaking, I endorse the preparations which are being made by the Civil Defence Council. The better we are prepared for a raid, the lighter our losses are likely to be. It is essential that we should make full preparations for the protection of our civilians so that casualties may be kept down to a minimum. We should also insist that the civilian population shows the same kind of courage as we expect to be shown by the fighting services.

Reference has been made to the black-out regulations. In Albany, which is one of the vital centres of the State, there are many anomalies. Everything in the town is blacked out, but the flashes from Eclipse

Island are still clearly visible. Under favourable conditions I believe the flashes can be picked up 90 miles out to sea. I do not suggest that Eclipse Island be blacked out, because it is a signal station. A black-out, however, could be brought about in the space of a couple of minutes. It is one thing to black-out the lights on Eclipse Island and another thing to black-out the lights in several thousands of houses. The regulation might well be modified. The railway station at Albany comes under the regulation. A train leaves at 7 p.m. and another at 9 p.m. It will be very inconvenient to have the station blacked-out when a train is leaving. That is unnecessary because the same conditions apply there as apply in the case of Eclipse Island. It is only necessary to get a message from the forts and a complete black-out can be arranged within a couple of minutes. I suggest that members be given greater power and authority. I believe the districts are to be divided and that divisional wardens will be appointed. My suggestion is that members of Parliament be appointed divisional wardens in their own electorates, so that they may co-ordinate civilian activities, and act as liaison officers between the local organisations and Perth.

Another matter referred to by the Premier relates to evacuations. The Minister for Mines dealt extensively with that question. I agree with General Blamey that we have to be prepared for hit-and-run attacks. I am surprised that some of our coastal towns have not already experienced such attacks. A cruiser could do a lot of damage in a little time. No warning of such an attack will be given. The first warning will be the crash of shells.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What about the reconnaissance planes; will they not give a warning?

Mr. HILL: They are all right under certain conditions. I will relate a conversation I had a few years ago with Colonel Meredith. As garrison artillerymen we were discussing methods associated with coastal defence. We referred to aircraft and guns. The Colonel said we required both, that there were times when we would not think it necessary to man the garrison artillery, but there were other times when we would have to sit by the guns day after day. When the Minister for Works last visited Albany, he went to the Naval lookout station. Under normal conditions the

visibility from there would be nearly 40 miles, but on that particular day it did not extend for more than 400 yards. Those are the days when we have to look out for hit-and-run attacks.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There ought to be some control over the weather.

Mr. HILL: The Premier also referred to increased production. That in itself represents a big job. The Minister for Agriculture dealt with some of the issues that have to be considered. I do not agree with the member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) that we are likely to have a glut. There might be a glut in certain lines but I am afraid that, unless the matter is taken in hand at once, there will be a considerable shortage of foodstuffs. In Denmark alone no less than 184 farms are idle. We have to look to professional growers for our market produce if we are to keep up the supply of foodstuffs. I point out, however, that the manpower problem is one of the governing factors in that production, and an exceedingly difficult one. Men and women will not produce foodstuffs for nothing. The Minister has explained the rather difficult position in connection with price-fixing. It is all very well to fix the maximum price of commodities and thus protect the consumer but, if a minimum price is not also fixed, the growers will not produce.

Mr. Cross: There should be a maximum price.

Mr. HILL: The Minister referred to the rather peculiar position in which we find that prices are being fixed on Sydney parity. Munitions are being made in Albany. The Government does not say to those people, "Whilst you are making such-and-such a thing, we have to pay the railage from Perth or Melbourne and have to cut the price we pay you accordingly." That, however, is what is being done in the case of potato growers. We suggest that the price be fixed. In order to increase production it is essential that the work of production be made a payable one for those concerned. Many people will not produce at all unless they are guaranteed a minimum price. Such a minimum should be provided over a definite period of 16 months to cover the cost of planting, storage, disposal, etc. It is suggested that such a price be fixed by a conference of representative producers, officials of the Agricultural Department, and the Price-Fixing Commissioner. A sum of £10 10s. f.o.r. at siding is submitted as a price for potatoes.

It is essential that a scheme of finance for fertiliser and seed be arranged, such a scheme to include a Government guarantee to merchants in the event of loss by flood, etc. Manpower is, of course, essential. In connection with the Government guarantee against loss by flood or other factors beyond the control of the producer, I think that could easily be arranged by some sort of insurance scheme. The next matter raised by the Premier has to do with the storage of wheat. I am glad the Government is at last waking up to the fact that many futile things are being done in connection with the transport of our bulk wheat. Wheat that has been stored in the metropolitan area is, I think, fairly safe from enemy activity. I could, however, take members to a place where a tremendous quantity of wheat has been stored which could easily be destroyed by a hit-and-run raider. Not only that, but while we are fairly safe from a frontal attack at Fremantle we must remember that there is a rather vulnerable back door not far away where large stocks of our wheat have already been established. I suggest that we should have proper facilities at the ports for handling wheat, but the storage of that commodity is expensive, and we should endeavour to cut down costs in every direction. We require a proper co-ordination of effort as between the railways and shipping authorities to reduce costs to an absolute minimum.

The next matter concerned the storage of foodstuffs, but I think that is being well handled by the department concerned. Industrial development represents a very important phase of our activities, and here again I think we should not shut our eyes to our disadvantages. Personally, I would not agree to the establishment of big munition works in Western Australia. As other members have already pointed out, there are many idle lathes here that could very well be utilised. I was struck by the remarks of the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) who claimed that more use could be made of machinery already available. Closely associated with this problem is that of the provision of a dock in Western Australia. In view of the Minister's reply to a question submitted by the member for Claremont (Mr. North), I will not say very much about that important matter. I merely point out that Sir Maurice Fitzmaurice and Sir Leopold Saville both condemned Fremantle as a site for a dock.

Members are quite aware that at one time an attempt was made to construct a dock at that port, but the project had to be abandoned after the expenditure of £250,000. I had the pleasure recently of inspecting the site for a dock at Sydney, which undertaking involves a big reclamation scheme. There is another similar reclamation scheme in operation at Capetown, and I have photographs of the work, together with the plans. I could indicate where a dock could be constructed in Western Australia at a nominal cost, and I appeal strongly to members not to work for the provision of a dock at Fremantle but one for Western Australia.

Mr. Cross: Where would you suggest the dock should be constructed?

Mr. HILL: I am prepared to discuss that matter with the hon. member privately. I suggest that if he had studied the question closely, as I have, he would not indulge in inane interjections. The next matter in the communication referred to charcoal. Here again it is a question of manpower and price. I am confident that the board appointed to deal with this matter is going ahead with the work, and I do not think much difficulty will be experienced in this respect. Turning now to the employment problem on the goldfields, I admit this is no direct concern of mine and I can leave that, as the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe traversed the ground very ably.

The ninth question related to congestion at the Fremantle Harbour. The Government has been concerned about this problem for years past. When Mr. Bruce was Prime Minister, he realised the need for a sound port policy throughout Australia. The only report dealing with this matter directly was received from Sir George Buchanan, who said—

It is freely admitted that a country which develops one port and one railway system cannot cope with rapidly increasing trade.

Mr. J. Hegney: We all subscribe to that.

Mr. HILL: Throughout Western Australia we have no evidence of a sound policy, but the tendency is to endeavour to make modern shipping use obsolete ports.

Mr. Tonkin: You are not suggesting that Fremantle is an obsolete port?

Mr. HILL: No. It is one of the most efficient ports in Australia. It is a credit to the State and to the Commonwealth, but Fremantle serves only a small part of Western Australia.

Mr. Fox: But a very important part.

Mr. HILL: Yes, very important. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that a few days ago I had the pleasure of introducing to you a young American naval officer. One of the first things he said to me was, "We sailors cannot understand it at all. At Albany you have a magnificent harbour, but all your shipping is at Fremantle."

Mr. Cross: I thought we would come to that.

Mr. HILL: It is easy for the hon. member to laugh. Here is another statement that Sir George Buchanan embodied in his report:—

Albany is one of the finest natural harbours in Australia. Its development is dependent only upon Government policy. Given encouragement and railway communication, it should recover some of its former importance.

There is an expression of independent opinion. Since the Collier Government took office in 1924, no less than £3,500,000 has been spent on our ports. Albany's share of that expenditure was £131.

Member: Altogether too much!

Mr. HILL: A few weeks ago an American sailor went into Caris's shop to buy a ring, for which he paid £145—just exactly £14 more than the total expenditure on Albany harbour over a period of 18 years! The Minister for Works has stated that only one man has advocated expenditure on the port of Albany. For 40 years the people of the Great Southern have realised that Western Australia is too big to be served by one port. They have continuously advocated better administration and a sound policy of harbour development.

Among others—I wonder if the Minister for Works would call them fools—who desired money spent at Albany was the British Admiralty. It may be interesting to members to know that the Admiralty wanted work done at Albany that would have involved an expenditure of £3,000,000. I do not know what work was actually required, but I know what defence measures were intended, and if they were in existence today we would be in a very happy position. A few weeks ago my young son met with an accident. I took him to the doctor—a stranger to me—who, after patching him up and giving us a reassuring report on his condition, turned to me and said, "What is wrong with you politicians? You spent £1,000,000 on the Henderson Naval Base, and at Albany you have a naval base already provided and one that could be made impregnable."

Hon. P. Collier: What association has that with your child's illness?

Mr. HILL: I well remember when Sir Reginald Henderson visited Fremantle in 1910. It is well known that naval officers are not permitted to comment on matters associated with the defence policy, but no regulations in the world will prevent officers from talking among themselves. It is, therefore, well known that when Sir Reginald Henderson had inspected the harbour at Albany, he sent a telegram through the Albany post office advising that after seeing Albany there was no need to inspect the Cockburn Sound site. Today we are paying for our negligence, and payment will be made with the lives of our men. Ministers must shoulder their portion of the blame for having neglected to develop the port of Albany. I wish the Minister for Works in particular could have seen what we witnessed recently when it was proved to us how essential is Albany in our scheme of defence. The port there is an Empire asset, and yet it has been neglected by Government after Government. That is a phase for which we shall have to pay in blood.

The tenth matter referred to concerns manpower and national service. At Albany we consider that this problem has been approached from the wrong angle. Instead of men being called up and then having to apply for exemption, we believe that those engaged in essential services should not be called up at all, but should be compelled to carry on with their normal work. During the 1914–18 war, the manpower system was not in operation. I was one of four young men who worked together, but I am the only one of the four not entitled to wear the returned soldier's badge. The others joined the old 11th Battalion. In 1919 I had the pleasure of welcoming in my home Field Marshall Sir William Birdwood. When I met him I said, "I would like to have been with you oversea." He looked round my property and said, "No, your place was here." That is the position today.

The place for many of our men now is on the farms or in other essential services. It would be no disgrace to them if they were compelled to carry on with their normal activities. On the other hand, young fellows of courage and spirit, when called up, will not apply for exemption. I am pleased to say that that matter is being taken in hand,

and we should impress upon all concerned that we are engaged in a total war, in consequence of which work behind the line is just as essential as is the presence of men in the line itself. We must keep on working. We must cease talking about munitions work as though it were the only phase of our war effort. The production of foodstuffs is essentially a part of our war effort. It is as essential to feed our men and our civilians as it is to feed the guns.

Mr. Sampson : My word, it is !

Mr. HILL : I would like to refer once more to my favourite topic, that of transportation. I have with me the latest copy of the "P.L.A. Monthly," the magazine of the Port of London Authority. On the cover I find these words :—

The enemy recognises the vital importance of transport. . . . We will see to it that the chain of transport remains unbroken.

In 1929, a Federal committee recommended the appointment of a Ministry of Transport. We have in the Commonwealth today a Minister for Transport, and in Britain there is a Minister occupying a similar position, the object of which is to co-ordinate all transport activities. What a peculiar experience the Federal Minister for Transport would have if he were to visit Western Australia to discuss transport problems ! If he were to go to South Australia first, he could discuss port matters with the Minister for Marine, who controls the harbours in South Australia. He is also the Minister for Railways and, as Minister for Local Government, controls motor transport as well. Consider the position of the Minister should he come to Western Australia. He would be forced to confer with various Ministers controlling the several forms of transport, and in order to do so he would have to chase all round Perth. Again, I commend to the Government the desirability of having all forms of transport under the control of one Minister. I have here the latest report of the General Manager of Railways and Harbours in the Union of South Africa. The financial returns of the railways disclosed surpluses during the last four years as follows :—

| | | | | | £ |
|------|----|----|----|----|-----------|
| 1941 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5,581,688 |
| 1940 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3,692,773 |
| 1939 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3,484,431 |
| 1938 | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5,582,106 |

Mr. Cross : What about the freight rates ?

Mr. HILL : The freight rates there represent a penny per ton per mile compared with 1.76d. per ton mile in Western Australia.

The Minister for Labour : Do the figures you have quoted take into account interest charges ?

Mr. HILL : Yes, they represent the surpluses after the payment of interest charges.

The Minister for Labour : How much was written off to save interest ?

Mr. HILL : Not very much.

The Minister for Labour : That is rather important.

Mr. HILL : Despite these wonderful financial results, the authorities in South Africa are still looking for further improvements. There, too, the authorities urge the establishment of a Ministry of Transport, and in his annual report the General Manager included the following reference to that matter :—

I make no apology for referring again to the question of the establishment of a Ministry of Transport in South Africa, a proposal dealt with at some length in several reports of my predecessor and the execution of which cannot, in my opinion, be long delayed after the present world conflict ceases. There is, in fact, considerable support for the view that the organisation aimed at would be of even greater value in periods of national crisis than during normal times, but although it is significant that it was precisely during such days of stress that transport ministries were formed in Great Britain and elsewhere, it is realised that the inauguration of a scheme of this nature might be difficult to bring about in the midst of a war.

The report goes on to deal with the matter at considerable length and I shall make it available to any member interested in the subject. All we have aimed at achieving is to have the various forms of transport brought under one direct control with each working actively where it would best serve the interests of the community as a whole.

Several members have referred, incidentally, to unification, to which I am strongly opposed. To govern Western Australia from Canberra would be very difficult indeed. The strongest argument against unification that I have ever heard came from Federal members. Some years ago the Federal Royal Commission on the Navigation Act came here, and I had the pleasure of taking the members up the Kalga to spend the day at my place. Mr. Prowse was Chairman of the Commission, and he said to me, "Members of this Commission came up to me and said, 'Prowse, we are glad to have had this

trip. Western Australia has solid grievances and problems of its own." I think that is the strongest argument against unification.

MR. FOX (South Fremantle) [3.1]: It is highly difficult to understand the contention advanced by the member for Albany (Mr. Hill), that our state of unpreparedness for war is due to party considerations, when we call to mind that the party with which the hon. member is associated has been in office and in power since 1916. Therefore the hon. member is altogether mistaken.

Mr. Doney: Your workers should combat unification.

Mr. FOX: Western Australia has nothing at all to do with defence matters. If any blame can be laid at the door of any party, it is the Nationalist Party, or the U.A.P., or the various aliases those members have gone under since 1916.

Members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FOX: I recall listening to John Curtin speaking at the Town Hall in 1936 or 1937, and advocating at that time the vigorous building of planes for the defence of Australia. Had that policy been adopted, we would not have been in so sorry a plight at the commencement of this war, and we might not have had the raiding of Darwin and the consequent loss of life. So much for that.

But for the utterance of the member for North Perth (Mr. Abbott), who took as his text "Tolerance," I would not have risen at all. It was a very good text for the hon. member to take. I agree that we should observe tolerance in all things. The member for North Perth, however, showed not merely lack of tolerance but also a lack of knowledge of at least some of the subjects he discussed. I am indebted to the member for Collie (Mr. A. Wilson) for information on one matter to which the member for North Perth referred—a loading machine which the Collie mine-owners endeavoured to introduce. The words uttered by the hon. member were—

... they (the Collie miners) declined to use a mechanical loader. A representative of the mines went down to Collie with a mechanical loader. What treatment did he receive? "We won't have you and we won't have mechanical loaders."

The fact of the matter is that a meeting was held in Perth, as is confirmed by a paragraph published in the "West Austra-

lian" of the 4th April, 1942, which reads as follows:—

Coal supplies were discussed at a conference in the Premier's office on Thursday morning. The conference was convened by the Premier (Mr. Willcock) and he presided. The District Naval Officer (Commodore J. A. Collins), the Minister for Railways (Mr. Nulsen), the Minister for Mines (Mr. Panton), Mr. A. A. Wilson, M.L.A., representatives of the Collie mining companies and the Collie Miners' Union, and departmental officials were present.

The main object of the conference was to discuss means of increasing production so as to obviate the necessity of continuing to import coal from the Eastern States, and thus conserve shipping space. All parties agreed to co-operate to this end.

Following upon that the coal-loader was brought to Collie.

Mr. Abbott: But prior to that?

Mr. FOX: The mine workers rendered every co-operation and assistance to the gentlemen who brought the machine down. It was decided to give the machine a trial not only on the surface, but, by the desire of the miners, a trial underground as well. The trial on the surface proved a complete failure, that the mechanical loader was of no use whatever to the mining industry. The miners informed the man in charge of the machine that they were quite prepared to give it another trial. I consider that the member for North Perth acted badly in making his statement on this subject if he was not adequately furnished with the facts. And he was not! It is easy to get up here and blackguard a body of workers doing their utmost to carry on an essential industry in wartime. But the hon. member went a little further. He spoke about matters pertaining to the waterfront. The congestion in the Fremantle harbour was referred to by the Premier, but that did not involve the loading or unloading of ships. It had reference to the number of ships congregated in the Fremantle harbour. Because of the abnormal number, 80 or 100 at a time, the harbour was unable to supply berths for them all. As a result they were berthed three or four deep on the north shore, in particular, and also out in Gage Roads.

Mr. Abbott: That is a Federal matter.

Mr. FOX: Of course; but the harbour is under the control of a State authority. In normal times there is plenty of space in the harbour, but these times are abnormal. Because of the bombing of Singapore and other ports, numerous ships had to leave

that part of the world and come to Fremantle for safety. They were placed out in Gage Roads and along the harbour as I have said. Had times been normal, I repeat, there would have been any amount of room for all shipping; but at present the Fremantle harbour authorities are constrained for room. After the war is over there will, I am quite sure, be enough accommodation for many years to come in the Fremantle harbour.

The member for North Perth also expressed himself as astounded to learn that a person could not go and work on the Fremantle wharf unless he was a member of a union. I suggest to the member for North Perth that if his particular union affiliates with the A.L.P. or if, preferring another course, he himself goes down and joins any other union, he will be able to get a ticket entitling him to employment under the conditions operating. No member of the Waterside Workers' Federation, on the other hand, could go into a police court or into the Supreme Court to represent one of his mates, no matter what his qualifications were, simply because he was not in the lawyers' union.

Mr. Marshall: He would be a soundly bad lawyer if he could not beat some of them!

Mr. FOX: I am casting no reflections. Is it a good thing for the member for North Perth to advocate that non-unionists should go on the wharf?

Mr. Abbott: Only during a state of emergency.

Mr. FOX: The hon. member could advocate that at any time. We have vivid recollections of what the hon. member's Party did during the first world war—though I do not want to bring that up now.

Mr. Abbott: Look after your own party!

Mr. FOX: Some other members had things to say about workers on the waterfront—for instance, the member for Beverley (Mr. Mann) and the Leader of the Opposition. There was no venom in anything that the Leader of the Opposition said; he was quite moderate. Again, the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) was highly complimentary with regard to what was being done by all workers in Western Australia. I cannot say the same of the other members to whom I have alluded. I wish to describe the conditions under which men on the water-

front work. There are three shifts when work is plentiful, as follows:—

First gang, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one hour for dinner; then 1½ hours for tea; start again at 6.30 p.m. and work till 11 p.m.; start again next morning at eight.

Second gang, start at 12 midnight and work till 8 a.m.

When the Americans came here they expressed the view that the two hours and a-half lost when the men knocked off at five and returned at half-past six, and knocked off at eleven, and the second gang did not start till midnight, should be saved. They considered that work should be carried on during the whole period. The lumpers were quite prepared to scrap a custom which had operated for the last 30 years in order to speed up the war effort. The Americans suggested working three shifts—from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., from 5 p.m. to midnight, and from midnight to 8 a.m. We all know that there has been congestion of shipping at Fremantle as well as a tremendous lot of work since the war began in unloading materials and goods of every description. The Americans were in a desperate hurry to get the goods off the ships in case there were air raids, when the goods might be destroyed. So they asked the men whether they would be prepared to work from 8 to 5, from 5 to 12, and from 12 to 8. The number of men was not sufficient to allow them to work one shift and then stand off for 16 hours.

In order that two hours and a-half may not be lost, consider what these men are doing! I think it will be agreed that nothing is to be said against them; they are doing everything that can possibly be expected. They start work at 8 o'clock in the morning and work till 5 p.m. It takes a man knocking off at five at least an hour to get home and have a wash and have his tea; and he spends another hour looking round. Then he goes to bed. He has to be up again at 11 o'clock in order to get down to the waterfront to start work at 12, continuing until 8 in the morning—going through the same routine that he went through between 5 and 11. And he will return to work at 5 p.m. the same day. That may go on for three or four days, until the work is finished. I think the men are worthy of praise for doing such work as that.

At present there are 900 members in the Lumpers' Union, with about 1,400 men registered on the casual list. That

means about 2,500 men working on the waterfront at the present time. As regards non-unionists, since 1918 we have had preference of employment to unionists on the waterfront. That was granted not by the Arbitration Court but under an agreement with the employers. I think the member for Boulder (Hon. P. Collier) had something to do with securing that preference in 1918 or 1919.

Hon. P. Collier: In 1919.

Mr. FOX: Quite a number of men come to the waterfront seeking work, and they have no difficulty in getting it. All they need is to be members of any Western Australian union. As we have preference to unionists, there is nothing wrong about it. We do not stipulate that an applicant shall belong to our union, but merely to any union. The only difficulty arises when a man comes from the farming districts, where there are no unions; but we get over that also. Perhaps the man has been in business but has had to go out of business as the result of small shops being forced to close down. He is still able to get work on the waterfront, if it is available. In the first place a man has to get a ticket from the secretary of the casual section, and then a ticket from the marine authority in order that he may be able to get through the gates. I have known a member of Parliament to be stopped at the gates because he had forgotten his pass. I desire to pay a tribute to men who are giving of their best, working long hours, and doing their utmost for the expeditious loading and discharging of ships.

There is one matter upon which I should like to say a few words, and that is the difficulty the Fremantle people are in with regard to hospital accommodation in the event of an air raid in their district. I think we are all agreed that one of the most vital areas in Western Australia is the port of Fremantle, where so much shipping is congregated and where such a large number of men are gathered together at the one time. I think I would be safe in saying that in the vicinity of the wharf there are congregated at least 5,000 men at any time during the week; not after 6 o'clock at night, but any time during the day.

When members consider the number of men working on the ships, the dock, harbour, and river workers, the tally clerks, the lumpers, and all the carters and drivers that

convey goods to and from the ships, they will agree that we have a right to be concerned about sufficient hospital accommodation being made available in the event of an air raid. The Civil Defence authorities have ordered the Fremantle Hospital to shift its patients to two centres, namely, Lucknow, north of the river, and Heathcote. We endeavoured to get the whole of Heathcote hospital, but the authorities said there were about 15 patients who could not be removed. We are very much concerned, as only 200 beds would be available in case of a raid. When one considers the havoc wrought in the North-West and at Darwin one can imagine what will happen in a large raid on the Fremantle waterfront. There would not be nearly enough beds to cope with the casualties.

At the present time I notice that men are engaged in building wool stores. I think their services could be better utilised in building additional accommodation around Heathcote hospital or some other place, in case of eventualities. We do not want to have to say "Too late" again if an air raid takes place, and we have such a large number of casualties that we are not able to deal with them. We have a competent man at the head of the medical services. I refer to the Hon. Dr. Gordon Hislop, M.L.C., in whom I have every confidence. If he possibly can do anything, he will do it. He recognises the difficulties.

Mr. Raphael: And the red tape.

Mr. FOX: I do not know about the red tape.

Mr. Raphael: Ask him.

Mr. FOX: If there is a hotel or some other building we want, I think we should get it without any red tape. If a thing has to be done, why not do it at once? We hear a lot about America's lack of red tape, but I think that is all hooey. There is as much red tape amongst the Americans as there is amongst Australians, notwithstanding what we hear about the expeditious way in which the Americans do things.

I have not much to say about the blackout except that I am not very much in favour of it because it is not complete. I went from Parliament House the other night, and looking over Perth across the railway line, I saw one blaze of light. Going through Claremont I found that nearly every house had a light. That is different from the conditions under which we are working in Fremantle. Most of us

in the suburbs have our places completely blacked out and it is fairly uncomfortable. The nights have been warm, and when the doors and windows are shut it is not too good. If the black-out is not to be carried out in its entirety we should have a let-up. Fremantle wharf is a blaze of light, but that is necessary because we cannot stop shipping. We must get rid of the munitions which are coming here. I suppose they are coming, though I have not been down there recently. Other places occupied by the military are also blazes of light.

What concerns me is the number of accidents that occur. At Fremantle on the Rockingham-road in the last six months there have been three fatalities, two during the last week. I agree with the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty), who said it was ridiculous for cars to be blacked-out in country districts. They should be allowed to have their lights full on immediately they leave town. If there had been sufficient lighting, the accidents to which I have referred may have been avoided. I thank the Minister for Agriculture for the attention he has given to my district during his term of office. In that district we have the third largest bacon factory in Australia. I noticed the other day the Minister said that none of the members of the Opposition had visited Watson's bacon factory at Fremantle. That factory employs 150 men, and the management is concerned whether wheat will be made available at a reasonable price to maintain the pig industry.

Mr. McDonald: Have you visited our kapok factory in West Perth?

Mr. FOX: No, but I would be pleased to if I received an invitation. However, we cannot eat kapok. This is a very big industry, and is doing a great service to the primary producers of Western Australia. I hope members on the opposite side will do their utmost to see that wheat is made available at a reasonable price in order that pig raisers may carry on their industry, and that subsidiary industries may be maintained.

MR. W. HEGNEY (Pilbara) [3.21]: I shall be as brief as possible, but there are a few remarks I wish to make, as certain matters seem to need clarifying. I desire to supplement the remarks of the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Fox) in reply to the unwarranted and ill-timed statements of the member for North Perth (Mr. Abbott).

The member for North Perth put a fair amount of vehemence and an equal amount of acidity into his effort, in a rather subtle way, to vilify certain trade unions. The member for South Fremantle has amply replied as far as his numbers are concerned. The only matter I wish to mention in connection with the lumpers is that they are the same class of men who for nearly two years before the war objected strongly to the loading of scrap iron into Japanese ships to be sent over to Japan at the instigation and at the command of the then Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, who belongs to the same party as does the hon. member who made the statements to which I have referred.

Mr. Patrick: Was there not a Government that wanted to sell iron ore from Yampi Sound to the Japanese?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I wish further to refer to what was said about the workers in the Midland Junction workshops. It has been stated that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and it appears that the member in his attack had sufficient knowledge to get himself into hot water, but not quite enough to get himself out of it. The men in the Midland Junction workshops, as in many other parts of the State, are working under industrial awards and agreements and the Commissioner of Railways, who is a party to those awards and agreements, is expected to abide by them. I know that the men in the workshops, in common with the men in shearing sheds and factories and miners who go deep into the earth of this country to earn a livelihood, and the women in the factories, too, are playing a wonderful part in the prosecution of this war, and the remarks of the member for North Perth were absolutely unjustified.

Mr. Abbott: No one suggested that they were not doing a wonderful job.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The position so far as industrial workers are concerned—and I am speaking from experience—is that an organisation has been set up under the jurisdiction of the Australian Labour Party. It contains representatives of different industries and has been constituted for the express purpose of endeavouring to ascertain ways in which the workers in those industries can best assist the respective Governments in the prosecution of the war. It is quite evident that bodies of workers in any country are jealous of their industrial conditions, and naturally so. If one takes the trouble to inquire into what has taken

place up to date in all the States of the Commonwealth, one would find that men who have fought for their conditions in years gone by have been prepared to set them aside in the interests of the Commonwealth.

Mr. Abbott: Like the New South Wales coalminers.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I do not propose to deal further with that aspect of the hon. member's remarks, but to pass on to another of the remarks he made yesterday in connection with the formation of what he terms a "National Government." I wish to quote, in the first place, the decision of a Gallup Poll. I view the Gallup Poll with a certain amount of doubt.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a fraud!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: It certainly would not err in favour of the party I represent.

Mr. Watts: How do you know?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The report of this poll is headed, "All-Party Government Preferred to Election." It states—

Australia's first sample referendum taken by Australian public opinion poll—the Gallup method—in September, just before the change of Government, showed that nearly eight out of ten people in a representative cross-section favoured an all-party Government. In November, in another nation-wide survey, a cross-section of people in all walks of life was asked this question: "If the Labour Government happens to be defeated, would you favour an all-party Government, or an election?"

As the following table shows, about five people preferred an all-party Government against each four who favoured an election. The figures are then given, and less than 50 per cent. favoured an all-party Government. The report goes on—

Non-Labour voters who were almost 100 per cent. in favour of an all-party Government in September were only two to one in favour of the idea in November. In September, two out of three Labour voters supported the idea of an all-party Government, but in November they were five to three against it as compared with an election.

Mr. Menzies and his followers practically fought the last election on the "all-party Government" question. But he is not Prime Minister now.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It is a pity he is not.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: The Prime Minister, **Mr. Curtin**, in the course of a speech made on the 11th December last, and at which the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria handed him a cheque for £5,000 for the Commonwealth, stated, after pointing out

that the Government would have to make decisions—

These decisions will be made by the Government after consultation with, and in association with, the representative leaders of the Opposition parties in the Parliament. Ever since the war began, in the Parliaments of this country, on the major questions associated with the conduct of the war, we have had not only a united Parliament but also a united country. I propose to act on that foundation. This morning the Leader of the Opposition (**Mr. Fadden**) in a way that was most generous—and which has been characteristic of the way the Opposition has behaved and the Government has behaved, no matter which party since the hour that war struck, provided the Opposition and Government—offered his support as a determination on the part of representative leaders in the Parliament to correlate their work so that by joint endeavour they can get the maximum of result.

While talk of a National Government may be all right in theory, in actual practice it does not work out.

Mr. Abbott: What about England?

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I believe the rank and file of Parliament, whatever the political colour of the Government may be, should retain its right at all times of constructive criticism. We have started this war as a united nation, and I hope we will finish it as such. All this talk of National Government should pass into the limbo of forgotten things.

I now wish to refer to the question of brown-out. The regulations have been disallowed. My mind must have been read, because I felt strongly inclined to move for their disallowance, but in view of the fact that the Military Department desires the black-out and the brown-out to remain, one naturally hesitates to take any drastic action. I am pleased that the regulations have been disallowed. It will obviate my going into details in connection with certain phases of brown-out restrictions. I would, in passing, pay this compliment to the Minister in charge of Civil Defence, that I am happy to know that the wardens will not be saddled with the responsibility of acting as policemen in regard to lighting restrictions. Now that the civil police have taken over that phase of A.R.P. work, it should be more satisfactory.

It is unfortunate that the Minister is not here at the moment. He did not amplify his statement in regard to certain equipment. Quite recently I read a report from Sydney in the "West Australian" in which it was stated it was understood that 1,000,000

gas masks would shortly be provided for the citizens of that city. I find that very few respirators are likely to be issued to members of the A.R.P. organisation in this State. The matter needs looking into. The same applies to the question of stirrup pumps and tin hats. I hope the Minister will, during his visit to the Eastern States, obtain some information of a definite character concerning these matters.

I hope, in connection with the civil defence administration, that in the future Ministers in general, and the Minister for Civil Defence in particular, will take some action to alter what has taken place up to date. Too many people are making decisions, and these decisions do not happen to coincide one with the other. I quote now from the "West Australian" of the 5th March, 1942. It is a report of a trial black-out, and is headed "Trial Black-out. South-West area affected." It states—

A trial black-out has been ordered by the Civil Defence Council between dusk on March 7, and dawn on March 8, and to include all hours of darkness during that period. The area affected is that embraced by a line drawn due east from the sea coast to Harvey, thence to Collie, Donnybrook and Busselton, all inclusive.

That is quite clear. In the "West Australian" of the 5th March there also appeared a letter over the signature of L. J. Miller of Donnybrook, in the course of which he said—

The Preston Road Board called a public meeting recently and formed a unit—

He referred to the formation of an A.R.P. unit—

—with the idea of organising the town so that if an air raid eventuated the people would have someone to look to for guidance and organised assistance, and even if that service is never called upon—and we hope it will not be necessary—there would have been no harm in being organised.

The Civil Defence Council was communicated with so that the road board's authority could be delegated to the A.R.P. unit, and it was decided to go ahead with the household register and endeavour to get the citizens' collaboration in the plan of preparedness. The reply from the Civil Defence Council was short and to the point: "It is not intended at the present time to declare Donnybrook as a vital area, and therefore no authority can be given for the formation of an A.R.P. organisation."

This means that although Donnybrook is only 15 miles from the coast and in direct line from Busselton to Collie—two vital areas—nothing can be done as a preparation, and the road board is the only authority to police a black-out.

That gives evidence of inconsistency. I had hoped that it would be the only one to come under my notice. What do we find? The Minister in charge of civil defence matters issued an appeal to the citizens of Perth and its suburbs to refrain as much as possible from crowding into the city. He also gave the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) a slight rap over the knuckles when a statement was made that she was to address a meeting. In that regard the following appeared in the "West Australian":—

When asked to express an opinion as to the advisability of holding the proposed women's demonstration (Allied Women's Day march) on Sunday next, Mr. Lanton said it was very disheartening to the Civil Defence Council, which was endeavouring by every means to prevent people, especially women and children, congregating in Perth, to find leading women of the State taking part in such a demonstration. "We can only hope," he added, "that the latest partner in the Axis does not decide to take part in the demonstration."

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: That is quite unfair because we gave up the proposal immediately.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: I am not criticising the hon. member by any means; I am pointing to inconsistencies. Almost at the same time there appeared in the "West Australian" a report regarding the State's part in connection with the liberty loan. The report embodied the following:—

Tomorrow a parade will leave the Central Railway Station at 12.40 p.m., and proceed through Wellington and William-streets, St. George's-terrace, Barrack, Hay, William and Murray-streets to Forrest-place. The Lord Mayor (Dr. T. W. Meagher) will take the salute from the base in front of the G.P.O. at 1 p.m. The Police greys will head the procession followed by the Western Command band, cadet corps from Hale, Scotch and Aquinas Colleges under the command of the officer commanding the Scotch College senior cadet detachment (Captain C. G. Campbell). It is anticipated that over 200 cadets will parade. A float carrying representatives of Allied nations in costume will follow. The A.S.C. band will precede about 200 members of the A.T.C.

There is another instance of inconsistency. Here we have one Minister setting out to accomplish one thing and another body proceeding to do something quite the contrary.

Hon. C. G. Latham: There was no disappointment regarding the latter instance.

Mr. W. HEGNEY: Here is a further instance. From Kalgoorlie a report under

date the 14th April, appeared in the "West Australian"—

The question of whether owners of motor vehicles on the Eastern Goldfields were obliged to comply with the motor lighting restrictions imposed by the Civil Defence Council order, was hotly debated in Kalgoorlie when it was learnt that the Commissioner of Police (Mr. D. Hunter) had stated that the order applied to areas within 100 miles of the coast.

To clear up the matter the "Kalgoorlie Miner" dispatched a telegram to the Minister for Defence (Mr. Panton) asking specifically if the motor vehicle lighting restrictions imposed by the order applied to the Eastern Goldfields. The reply was that they did. His reply read: "Motor black-out regulations apply to the whole State. Suggest you peruse the copy of the order in the 'Government Gazette' of March 20 last."

Mr. Patrick: That was advertised in the "West Australian."

Mr. W. HEGNEY: My object in making these observations is not to criticise the Minister, the Civil Defence Council or anyone else, but to mention that people naturally wonder who is right and who is wrong. It is due to the people that the responsible Minister and authorities should exercise more unity of action in matters of this description which affect the people generally. I was very pleased to read the statement in the Press yesterday that the Assistant-Minister for the Army had indicated that the rumours circulating regarding the lack of defence measures for Western Australia were without foundation. I believe that to be true. The people in the far North were naturally concerned some time back about their position, and they will be pleased to have the assurance of the Federal Minister that adequate measures have been taken for the defence of that part of the Commonwealth.

My final comments will have relation to the goldmining industry. Personally, I believe that everyone, even though not directly engaged in or associated with that industry, will agree to do whatever is best in the interests not only of Western Australia but of the Commonwealth as a whole. In order to obtain information regarding the man-power position, the Federal Minister concerned is now on a visit to this State, and I am convinced that he will display sufficient interest and breadth of outlook in viewing the situation. I feel sure that if men are to be transferred from goldmining to other essential defence works, the transfer will be effected with the least

possible disturbance to industry here. I do not propose to traverse the history of the industry in relation to State finances. Suffice it to say that the industry is to Western Australia even more than is the sugar industry to Queensland. This State has not shared to any marked degree in the expenditure of defence money by the Commonwealth during the past two years and is therefore entitled to every consideration.

It may be said that there is a shortage of labour in other States, and the contention may be raised that men now working in the goldmining industry should be transferred to make up that shortage. On the other hand, we know that a great number of workers born and bred in this State, where they served their time in various trades, went to the Eastern States when better wages and conditions in connection with munition work proved so attractive. Quite a number of young women also went East where they secured remunerative employment in South Australia and Victoria. Therefore Western Australia has made an important direct contribution to the supplying of men and women for war work in other parts of the Commonwealth. If there is no other way out of the difficulty than by taking more men from industry here, I think reasonable safeguards should be forthcoming from the Federal Government ensuring that our industries will be interfered with to the least possible extent.

There is no doubt that the menace of invasion has for the time being banished all our major differences, but we must look at the position from a world point of view and it is as complex as a master game of chess. However, the Russian and Chinese soldiers are fighting valiantly, the British are patiently enduring but resolute, and the seething masses of conquered peoples in Europe are scheming in secret places and keeping the fire of rebellion smouldering until an opportune moment. Each and every citizen of the Commonwealth, no matter what occupation he or she follows, is only too willing to do everything possible according to his circumstances and general capacity. It is, therefore, the Government's duty to utilise in every way the services of members and the public to assist in the war effort and then, whether the war lasts six months or six years, this country will be saved for future generations in the interests of democracy.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth) [3.46]: I think that most of the matters which have been concerning the minds of members and the general public have been referred to by previous speakers, and therefore I do not propose to take up much of the time of the House. It is evident that members feel there should be some definite idea as to the role they are to fill in the present circumstances. After all, a custom that may be suitable in time of peace may become quite unsuitable in a time like the present, and one custom that must go is that of having the long vacation that Parliament has hitherto observed from the end of one year to the end of July or the beginning of August in the following year.

Members, I think, feel that such a prolonged suspension of the sittings of the House cannot continue in present circumstances. There has been a change in the duties of the office of a member of this House. At this time, when there is very sparse newspaper information and when people are beset with so many anxieties, business and personal, and when so many changes are being made under National Security Regulations, individuals and organisations expect to be able to get advice and information, and more than ever before they look to the member for their district. If he is to discharge his functions adequately, he must be possessed of a reasonable amount of information to enable him to reply to the questions asked of him. I would say therefore, that if this Parliament is to discharge its duty adequately to the people we must meet reasonably often.

I have some sympathy with the view of the Minister for Works that certain sessions should not be devoted to the consideration of legislation unless that legislation is of vitally urgent character. If we once accept that principle, I see nothing to prevent Parliament from meeting every six weeks or two months to hear statements from the Premier and other Ministers that will give members the information necessary to pass on to their constituents.

Mr. Fox: Would you limit them to that?

Mr. McDONALD: I am quite easy as to the period, but it would make for a better working of the machinery of the House if we had an understanding amongst members that we should meet at certain intervals in order to hear statements from Ministers and give members the information they need, and that

members, by means of short speeches, should convey their criticisms and suggestions to the Government. A scheme of that sort would be difficult to work if any session, which it was anticipated would last not more than two or three days, were prolonged by the introduction of legislation into a period of weeks or months. If we can accept the principle that certain parts of the year or certain sessions should be legislative sessions, and if other sessions were called at reasonably frequent intervals to enable information to be given and permit of constructive criticism and suggestions, our Parliamentary system would work much more adequately.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is the kind of session we are having now.

Mr. McDONALD: That, I think, is the primary object of this particular session.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONALD: In saying that, I should be extremely reluctant to vote for anything that would deprive members of the rights and privileges they possess, and I am not opposed to the introduction of any legislation by a private member. I would like to see opportunity afforded a member to explain any Bill he might introduce on the second reading because it might be one of great value, but having given him the right to exercise his privilege as a private member, the question whether that Bill would be dealt with by the House is another matter. The House might well decide that the measure could stand over till the ordinary legislative session. I do not think members would be inclined to tolerate the introduction of legislation of a trifling character or legislation not devoted to the war effort, except at a time when the season is convenient for its introduction.

If the House is to adjourn before completing all the business on the notice paper—the undertaking of the Premier was that the Government would not shut out any private member's business of a kind directly related to the war effort—if, owing to pressure of work upon Ministers, particularly in view of the presence of Federal Ministers in this State, it is desirable in the national and States' interests that Parliament should adjourn before clearing the present notice paper, I, for one, hope we shall meet again, if only for a short period, within the next two, three or four weeks. Then any private member's business relating to the war effort or associated with the war effort could be dealt with by the House, and we would have

an opportunity to hear from the Premier the result of his visit to the Eastern States, where he has been discussing matters of great importance to the stability and economy of Western Australia.

I only want to add one more word—about this State Parliament. Whatever may be the arguments for the abolition of State Parliaments in other States, they do not apply here. Perth is as far from Canberra as is Auckland in New Zealand, or Batavia in Java. Australia, in fact, consists of two continents which, as our secession petition stated, are separated by a sea of sand. The sooner it is realised that we do comprise two continents, the better. As far as this western continent is concerned, if it is to be deprived of its State Parliament and the remnants of sovereignty it still enjoys, then its voice in the counsels of Australia will be reduced to a mere whisper. But while I say that, I am rather disposed to favour, contrary to the view of some of my own colleagues, a measure of simplification or uniformity in our income taxation.

A very thoughtful student of these affairs said to me today that the greatest danger in uniform taxation as now proposed, although made only for the duration of the war, was that after the war the people of Australia would not tolerate a return to the old dual system of taxation. That observation appeared to me to carry in itself a condemnation of our present system. I do not think we can stand in the way of inevitable progress towards a more simple system of taxation in Australia, any more than the stage coaches of a hundred years ago could have stood against the progress of the railways; because the burden of taxation now, when the individual is to such a large extent made the taxing official and he has to keep all the records and collect money, and when the multiplicity of forms imposes such a severe strain upon the community that a large amount of useful labour is diverted into what we may call an unproductive channel, is felt most severely.

It is no good resisting in this country of Australia a movement towards simplifying taxation; and while I am against any system of unification as applied to Western Australia, I do favour, and would support, a review of our income tax collection by State and Federal authorities either on the uniformity principle, or on some other prin-

ciple which will not be a threat to the sovereignty, or the remaining sovereignty, of Western Australia.

The Deputy Premier: But you would not agree that the Federal Government should be the sole taxing authority? That Government does not ask the State how much it needs.

Mr. McDONALD: That would be an undue invasion of the sovereign rights of the State. I would, however, favour a formula by which the present work of collection and multiplicity of labour on the part of Government departments and the public, the collection of dual income taxation, could be modified towards some degree of simplicity. And the move towards simplicity and uniformity will not stop with dual taxation of incomes; it will extend in very many other directions. As a man who is acquainted with the goldfields, the member for Nedlands, intended to make a reference to the position of the mining industry today. I regret that through illness he has not been able to come to the House; and I wish to say, myself, on his behalf and on behalf of those who sit here with me, that we join with all members who urge that there should be no undue interference with this vital industry of goldmining unless there has been a thoroughly adequate examination. I do not want, and I am sure no member wants, to say anything which may make it difficult to re-organise the goldmining industry, if that course should be necessary or essential in the national interest.

There are many industries and many people who will suffer injustices in the national interest before the war has been finished, and it would be unwise for public men to convey to any person or class of persons in Australia that he or they will be victimised or oppressed, and thereby to engender in them an opposition to what may be essential to the defence of our country. So I think that speeches or remarks on this subject have to be made with a due sense of responsibility. However, I do agree, with those who have expressed opinions on this matter, that our goldmining industry and this State are prepared to co-operate in any sacrifice that is essential in the national interest if we are assured that other vocations and other interests are bearing their part in the sacrifice. That is all we want. Until we do get that assurance from the respon-

sible authorities in the Federal Government, we shall be justified in protesting against any precipitate action that is going to affect the mining industry and the economy of our State.

The Deputy Premier: We would want more than an assurance. We would want some evidence.

Mr. McDONALD: We can have it in any form we like. I have no doubt the Deputy Premier will tie Canberra up as tightly as is possible. The member for Avon (Mr. Boyle) raised a question of very wide national interest, to my mind, when he raised what has been raised before but what must be raised again—the position of the primary producers. It seems to me that our Federal Government must get down to a matter of principle; and perhaps the principle is not so difficult to find. If we take all industries, whether they are secondary or primary, and pick out all industries which are indispensable to our war effort, or which it is essential to preserve in the interests of our peacetime economy, then we can say that those interests and the people engaged in them must be guaranteed conditions under which they are able to survive and to work, subject to the limitations of our general finance.

There must be no disparity between any one industry which is working in the national effort and any other like industry; and the duty of the Federal Government must be to ensure as far as possible uniformity in status between all the various kinds of industry, primary and secondary, which are essential to the war effort, or which it is necessary that we should preserve because they will be factors in our peacetime economy. As has been mentioned here today, it is quite unnecessary to remind ourselves that the production of essential foods is perhaps even more important than is the production of munitions.

There has been a certain amount of apprehension on the part of people in some areas as to billeting, and I want to say a word on that. All members appreciate that there is a certain difficulty in strangers coming into one's house on such close and intimate relationship as will be involved by civilians or soldiers coming to live in private houses, especially when those houses—as they are in this State—are mostly very small. But I wish to say this: We have to remember that there will be no billeting of civilians

from target and other areas until those areas have been or are in actual danger of being bombed or shelled, and the people have had their homes destroyed or have been forced out of them.

Like most other members, I have had many communications from constituents and others about evacuees and soldiers being billeted on them. When the time comes, however, the ordinary instincts of humanity will break down any barriers that may exist, because the people of this State could not tolerate for one moment that persons who have been driven from their homes should not be afforded any shelter which their neighbours are capable of giving them. So it is only a contingency, and if it arises I do not think anybody will fail to play his or her part in affording accommodation to such people. The same with soldiers; I understand that inquiries are being made in fairly large areas as to what accommodation there is for soldiers in halls, buildings and private houses. That is obviously only a precautionary measure.

If soldiers can be accommodated in barracks or camps, it would be much better from a military point of view that they should be so accommodated; but it may be that large numbers of soldiers may come into this State—or perhaps into other States, where the same principle applies—and there may be no time and no manpower to build them camps or barracks and there may be no accommodation for them in existing camps and barracks. It is then that the people concerned who may have accommodation for soldiers will most certainly not refuse for one moment to provide the soldiers with sleeping accommodation and shelter. I am sure the people would not permit the soldiers to camp during the winter months on the Esplanade or some other reserve without any shelter at all. These soldiers are not expected to be fed by the householder; they will go to halls and central places where their food will be prepared by the military authorities. All they would expect from householders in this emergency, until such time as camps and barracks can be provided for them, is merely shelter from the weather and sleeping accommodation.

For the information of the Deputy Premier and the Minister concerned, I shall mention something which has just been conveyed to me, and that is the possibility of a shortage in many lines in our shops. This may

be no news to the Deputy Premier and his Ministers, but representations have been made to me by traders that, owing to shipping difficulties and difficulties of carriage by land and on our railways, supplies are becoming very short, and may become shorter still because of dislocation of traffic. The manufacturers in the Eastern States are not now interested in Western Australian sales. It is so much easier to sell their goods in Victoria and New South Wales, where they get their money paid at once, and they have no trouble over shipping or other transport. Consequently, they are becoming disinterested in sending their goods to this State. I am afraid there is a grave danger of a shortage, not merely in non-essentials, but in essentials, such as clothing of various kinds. The remedy, I suppose, would be through the Shipping Board or through the Co-ordinator of Transport, to endeavour to get additional transport accommodation for Western Australian goods, if possible accommodation at regular times.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Eastern States manufacturer has not to look for markets. They are at his door today.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The merchants here must put up the cash in Melbourne.

Mr. McDONALD: Even that would not overcome the difficulty. One of the largest firms in Perth has spoken to me on the matter and cash is no consideration to it. The fact is that it is easier for the Eastern States manufacturer to sell his goods in New South Wales and Victoria.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The Western Australian buyer must take delivery of and store his goods in Melbourne.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes. I have one last thing to mention. It is something about which the Premier and the Deputy Premier know something. I think we are all agreed that this is not the time for legislation, except legislation to meet war conditions. It is above all a time for administration, prompt administration and efficient administration. In addition, it is a time for planning, so that administration will be preceded by adequate vision of what is to be done and consideration of how it can best be done. I have advocated, and do advocate very strongly, that we in Australia—and particularly Western Australia—are treating this war as the concern of the Civil Service and the military authority in the way of direc-

tion, whereas if there is any lesson to be learnt from the history of this war, it is that it is everybody's war.

Our best guarantee of success is to enlist the entire population, men, women and children, in the prosecution and planning of the war. I do not for one moment disparage our civil servants—we have many admirable men in that service—but to ask them to undertake these vastly different duties, superimposed on their present work, is to ask them to do something which is quite unfair. So I advocate that the war, and in particular the direction of the war and the State war effort, should be a matter of co-operation between the best brains of the Civil Service and the best brains outside that service. There seems no reason why men who are leaders and specialists in their particular vocations, and men who are foremen in workshops and know the practical working of their industries—not many of them, but a sufficient number—should not be co-opted to assist the different departments of the State in planning the war effort of the State. The Commonwealth has already done something of that kind. Mr. Essington Lewis, Mr. Theodore, Mr. Hartnett, and others, have been taken from industry in which they were leaders in order to co-operate in the direction of the war effort. In this State, however, we seem to have done very little, and although we have, like all other States, a very reduced function compared with that of the Federal Government, we have some problems that require all the planning and vision of which we are capable.

If there is an invasion here, it does not follow it will come to the target areas, of which the Minister for Civil Defence told us, bounded by two or three streets and containing 9,000 or 10,000 people. It may come to any area and any number of people. It may mean the transfer of tens of thousands of our population. It may mean their transport from one area to another. It may mean feeding them, providing water and medical supplies for them, and deciding where they are to go and how they are to be received. It will mean an immense amount of organisation unless there are to be completely chaotic conditions. I believe the Government has not been unmindful of some of these things, and I give it credit for that. But so far as I know—and I stand open to correction—the full ex-

tent of this problem and this potential danger—I hope it is a remote one, but it is possible—the full extent of the planning necessary to meet all these various conditions, all these alternative conditions that may arise, has not been realised. I mention that as one aspect which, without previous preparation, may bring about chaotic conditions, whereas by forethought and planning and looking at all the various contingencies and providing for them, and assigning a role to everyone so that he knew what he had to do and what his responsibilities were, a possible disaster might be turned into an orderly movement, with corresponding additional safety to the country.

The example of the Commonwealth and of Great Britain and of Lloyd George during the last war can be followed with advantage by the Government of this State, where the Premier has said that Ministers have been overworked and have not the time to think quietly about future planning, because administrative details are so pressing. We can very well get competent leaders in fields outside the Civil Service to co-operate in the effective prosecution of the war effort at this stage. I will not detain the House any further beyond saying that I agree with the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty)—

Mr. J. Hegney: That is very strange!

Mr. McDONALD: —who incidentally is a leader of the voluntary defence forces of our State—about the need for brevity in speeches. When Julius Caesar announced the conquest of Gaul, he did so in three words. I agree with the member for Murray-Wellington that there might be some limitation of the time of speeches. I hope in addition that there will be a general tightening up of the disciplinary side of our civil life. I do not propose to go into details about drink or any other feature, but would mention that the Polish Black Book, issued under the authority of the Polish Government only two or three months ago, showed that as part of the policy of exterminating the Polish nation, the Germans were by every possible means promoting the consumption by the Poles of vodka. We have not got to that stage.

I agree with the member who said that although we have witnessed scenes that have brought us very great regret, in which our soldiers and young girls have been concerned, those men represent only a small percent-

age of our soldiers, and the majority are not to be judged by the behaviour of those who have not conducted themselves as they should. I consider, however, that it is the function of the State Government, and in particular of the Commissioner of Police and his officers, to ensure the full enforcement of the law, and there should be on the part of the people a readiness to observe the law, and bring about that degree of self-control without which we have not as a people much chance of standing up against those who have a greater degree of self-discipline. This particular crisis and emergency are to be met, amongst other things, by the self-discipline of our people, and it is for all administrators and all in charge of these matters to ensure that conditions are not allowed to continue that will reduce the powers of resistance, mental, physical and moral, to the ordeal which this country must face during the next few months.

MRS. CARDELL-OLIVER (Subiaco) [4.22]: I am quite in accord with some of the remarks made about the shortness of speeches, and I will try, therefore, not to take too long. I wish to speak about the report which is on everybody's desk relative to height and weight measurements of children. It may be thought that such a subject has little to do with the war, but we have been assured by many of our speakers, by many in the Press and over the radio, that this is likely to be a long war. Some have said it may last five, ten, or 15 years. So the children of today will be the soldiers of tomorrow, and it is thus with confidence that I speak on this subject.

I feel that we are not doing all in our power to protect children and to promote 100 per cent. efficiency in them, either mentally, morally or physically. The first page of this report vindicates Dr. Stang. It will be remembered that some very unkind things have been said about her in this Chamber, but it will seen that this report thoroughly vindicates her. The outstanding feature of the report is the difference between the height and weight of those children in private secondary schools or colleges, and those in our State schools. On page 6, the report states—

For age, the colleges are the tallest and heaviest group; boys are $\frac{3}{4}$ in. and 4 lbs., girls $\frac{1}{2}$ in. and 6 lbs. above the State average. In terms of months of growth, college boys are 4 months for height and 5 months for weight,

girls 3 months for height and 8 months for weight ahead of the State as a whole at ages 11 to 14.

It is very enlightening to the State generally to know that in our few colleges the children should be so much heavier than those attending the State schools. It is an indictment against the State. If members know anything about children they will know they have to be controlled in the early years of their lives, and trained to do what is right. They will otherwise roam the streets and eat any rubbish. That is why I have continually asked in this Chamber for laws that will force parents to give the children the correct and sufficient diet.

The reason we have so many children—I won't say under-nourished—of a lesser standard than those in the colleges is principally due to our education system. We have a curriculum which provides for numerous subjects, and the scholars only receive a smattering in each of them. When they leave school the girls are not trained to make their homes any better, and the boys are not trained to appreciate civic responsibility. Some two or three years ago educational authorities from England and the Continent visited these shores. They told us at that time that we in this State were, educationally, about two years behind Great Britain and even further than that behind the Continent. Civically, we are drifting; the children, in this direction, are drifting to a hopeless state. Youth delinquents are growing in number. This is due to lack of school and home training and the example they see of disobedience to law all round them by adults. I have in my garden a lemon tree and I find it very difficult to keep any lemons on it. The children come with long hooks, evidently made by adults, and they also have their mothers' shopping bags. They climb over the fence and take the lemons.

Mr. Marshall: Did you not enjoy stolen fruit in your young days?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: It may seem funny, but if the children happen to be charged they become criminals, and if they get away with it they become heroes to their little playmates. The pictures represent another cause for making child delinquents. Many of the present-day pictures portray young American gangsters.

Mr. Marshall: I am a bit with you there.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Those children who appear before the Children's Court really become heroes to other children, and when they are sent to institutions it is looked upon as a distinction for bravery. I would recommend that no child be allowed to attend a picture show whilst under the age of 16 years unless it be an education picture. I am sure the film industry would co-operate in this matter.

Mr. Cross: You tell that to the kids.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I would also like to see that no publicity is given in the Press to Children's Court charges. It mitigates against the children themselves; it makes other children think that those mentioned in the reports are heroes. I wish to mention kindergartens. Because of the war they have been dispersed. It is all too early to do this. We have many children in the metropolitan area now who would be much better off in the kindergartens than they are today roaming the streets. The part of this report which will interest the country member is that which shows in diagrams 5 and 6 how the children in the dairying areas outstrip those of any other area up to the ages of 11 and 12. Their weights are considerably more and they are even taller. When they reach the ages of 11 and 12 the agricultural and dairying areas become practically the same. That, too, is very interesting. It brings me to my annual plea of more milk for the children. I think it is lamentable—and perhaps the member for South Fremantle has found this in his district too—that children who have been on free milk for two or three years are this year, because of war conditions, and because their parents are receiving more money, not to get any milk at all. The consumption of milk in the schools has fallen tremendously.

Again I wish to stress the point that we should bring down a Bill to force parents to give, through the schools, milk or other nourishment to make the children strong. Such a scheme would not cost the Government a penny at present because the parents can afford to pay for it, and the organisation is available to carry out the scheme. I conclude these remarks by saying that it is only by the population and health of the nation that we can expect to defend this country. We have 1,000,000,000 coloured races at our door. They could overwhelm us.

Unless we become strong I feel the white races will, at least, lose in this round.

The member for Claremont (Mr. North) said that he would like to see every family with three children. He forgot to say that unless there were two girls and one boy it would not very much matter. There must be two girls and one boy in every family if the population is to be increased.

Mr. Abbott: That takes a lot of doing!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I would like to mention the extraordinary manner in which men are going around telling the public that they can receive so many soldiers, or be billeted with so many people. They have been to my house, and in certain instances in my district people have been billeted. It is very disturbing, especially when we realise that there are so many shops vacant as we were told by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes). I got in touch with an estate agent in an endeavour to find out the exact number of empty shops. He said that it was almost impossible to say, but a conservative estimate would be 2,000. If the S.P. shops are added to that number, we would have sufficient accommodation in and around the suburbs for the people to be billeted. Then we have the outer suburban hotels. They say that if they only have seven hours trading they will have no business. They could be taken over, and they would accommodate many more people. In King's Park 500 camouflaged tents could be erected. I do not know how many people a military tent accommodates, but I understand that about seven men were put into each tent in the last war. In that one area a small army of people could be accommodated.

Before leaving the subject I wish to say that no provision has been made for a mental examination to be made of the people to be billeted, or the people upon whom they are to be billeted. I would not like to take anybody into my house, and perhaps they would not like to come. They should be medically examined.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They are not getting married.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: No, but they use one's bathroom. The Minister spoke about the removal of the inmates of the Old Women's Home. I regret that he did not apply to any of the women's organisations in connection with that matter. It was done hurriedly. Had he got into touch with me

I could have communicated with others and within 24 hours the whole of the 69 women would have been accommodated easily. The present home was in a bad condition when he took it over, but it is being improved and I feel that he is going to make a decent place of it for the old people some day, but I rather resented the fact that he did not apply to us but criticised our organisations. The Minister also told us that he had moved 12 prostitutes from Fremantle. I cannot understand that statement at all. How does he know that they were prostitutes? If they are, it is against the law for them to be at Fremantle. If he moved them away, where did he place them?

Hon. C. G. Latham: You mean official prostitutes?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: There are no official prostitutes.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You are suggesting that there are.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: No, it was the Minister who suggested that there are. This is not a State where prostitution is tolerated, and I am curious to know how the Minister could make that statement and to what place he moved those people.

Much has been said about manpower. I should like to see tramway conductors, railway conductors, ticket collectors, cleaners, post office officials and hundreds of others in avenues where men are now employed replaced in those positions by women before men are taken from the primary industries where they are really wanted. I should like to see 300 women police appointed for service at Perth, Fremantle and elsewhere. Some members will recall that in England during the 1914-18 war there were voluntary women police who went about in pairs and carried nothing with them but a whistle. They did wonderful work in keeping the streets clear, and even took up drunks or got them off the streets. The same thing could be done here by voluntary effort; there is no need for an expensive force. All that we want are sensible women who would protect men like the member for Nelson from lounge lizards which he complains about and which our system has produced.

Mr. J. H. Smith: If they were young it would be a pleasure to be protected.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I suggest that staggered days should be arranged for the payment of wages in various industries. I

am not aware that we have an arrangement of the kind; the Minister for Labour might be able to enlighten me. If the employees in some industries were paid on Monday, others on Tuesday, others on Wednesday and so forth, there need be no congestion in the city.

Much has been said about the brown-out and the glaring lights to be seen in some places, but I do not wish to refer to those matters beyond saying that I am sorry I did not know another place would disallow the regulation because I have paid to have my car fixed up to comply with the regulation.

A serious matter to which I must refer is that of the staggering of hours in the schools. Teachers are expected to work $5\frac{1}{4}$ hours a day, but under the staggering system they are working approximately six hours, and the department insists that the teachers spend the full time in the schools. The following is a letter I received from a teacher today:—

It is quite wrong that children of tender years should be travelling home at 5 o'clock. In one large school where excess classes from central schools are working ordinary hours, small children of 9 and 10 years are working staggered hours till 5 o'clock. Older children are more able to adjust themselves than younger ones. The solution is that the primary school should work from 8.30 to 12.30 and that the older ones come in from 1 p.m. till 5 p.m. The detention of teachers after children have been dismissed to "sit" their hours out is barbarous. Most of the teachers are interested in other war activities and are all working at top pressure in other fields of service.

According to a statement in the "Teachers' Journal" the teachers are going to discuss this matter with the Director of Education. The journal states—

In connection with the staggering of hours in schools, it was decided to discuss with the Director the differing spread of hours and the teachers' retention beyond teaching hours with the following objects:—

(a) To remove detention of teachers outside teaching hours.

(b) To have the staggering of hours where schools are intermingled left in the hands of the teachers concerned.

I visited the Subiaco school this morning—not the Thomas-street school—where the hours are staggered. Little children of perhaps nine or 10 have to go home at five p.m. Some of them live at Wembley and it would be almost impossible in a brown-out for those children to get to their homes.

Some of them are being exploited in the mornings before they start school. Some of them go out on carts delivering bread and meat and, when they attend school in the afternoon, they are too tired to understand what their work is about. On the other hand, if the little children attended school in the morning and were released early, they would become rather a nuisance in the afternoon. The headmaster of the Subiaco school told me that after having had the hours staggered for a number of weeks, he had decided that he could not put up with them any longer, and so he had reverted to the normal hours. This means that the classes had to be made considerably larger than they were before, but this was preferable to the other arrangement. The Minister might well take this matter up with the Director of Education, and ascertain whether it is not possible for the schools to revert to the normal hours.

Another subject to which I must refer is that of boys on the streets selling newspapers in the brown-outs and at night. I have asked the ages of some of those boys and find they range from 9 to 12 and upwards. The other night I saw a sight. There was a drunken soldier and near him three little newspaper boys of various ages. The soldier bought a paper from one of them and drunkenly put it under his arm, and another boy immediately drew it out from the back and that paper was sold three times to the soldier.

Mr. Cross: He must have been really drunk!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I said, "You boys had better stop that"; and they went away. The point is that these children have no right to be on the streets and able to do such a thing at night. It leads to delinquency, to what we are finding in our civil life today—that people will not obey the law, because they were not taught to obey it in their youth. I discovered that these children, many aged nine or 10 years, earned from 15s. to £3 and even more per week. Only in rare cases is the money saved for the purpose of giving the children some higher education later. If the position of the parents is such that they cannot provide for these children adequately, then the State should make up the difference in some way; but the parents should not be allowed to exploit the children by allowing them to sell papers at night.

Another thing I would like the Minister representing the Minister for Education to attend to is the school fences. Many of the schools have fences broken in places, and the Treasury will not supply money to mend them. It would be better to take down the fences that are broken, especially as the children may have to run out to an air raid shelter, rather than leave those fences in their present condition.

Next I want to speak for a moment about the tea question. The inadequacy of the quantity allotted to elderly people is absurd in view of the amount allowed to children of nine or ten. Children up to 13 or 14 do not need tea; but older people have become accustomed to their cup of tea. If there are only two of them, they get just 2 ozs. per week. That quantity makes very little tea. I think some move might be made to give an extra allowance to such adults and less to children. I also think tea should be on ration ticket, in the same way as petrol. In fact, all rationed commodities should be obtainable only in that way.

I wish to mention the lottery question. At present we have a campaign for thrift. Every night some Minister is giving an oration about thrift. Yet on the screen and in the papers one finds advertisements asking one to take tickets in lotteries. It is not encouraging to go on a platform to speak about thrift, and then to find opposite one a lottery advertisement stating that it is the last day to win £1,000.

Everybody has spoken about the liquor question. I was glad to hear the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) say he did not think things were as bad as had been represented in some cases. But I wish to say quite definitely that I have seen more drunken persons in a small area in Perth than I have seen in my life—at one time—in any city in the world; and I have been in many places. In France, which is a wine-drinking country, one does not see people drunk about the streets, as is the case here. In Germany, a beer-drinking country, one does not see such drunkenness. Neither does one in Turkey, where the people take raki. In the case of Poland, Germany is said to be giving the Poles opportunities to learn to drink vodka, to their debasement. The Russians, as we know, were great vodka drinkers before their revolution. I have seen cafes open all night in most cities of the

world, and I have never seen there the drunkenness I see here. The reason possibly is that people in those countries do not seek oblivion of life in drink, as is the case in Australia. Why? I do not know, except that in this country we are not taught to eat and drink decently.

Before the last war the French were great absinthe drinkers. Immediately upon the declaration of war, France prohibited the distillation and sale of absinthe: it was wiped out in a day. One cannot get absinthe in France now. A little later on, the whisky interests went into France and by advertising campaigns tried to make the people whisky drinkers. And what did the French Government do? The Government immediately started a campaign in schools. It could not, or at all events did not, prohibit whisky; but it started on an educational campaign in the schools, telling the school children what whisky would do to them. The result was that whisky, although obtainable in France, was rarely touched.

Mr. Tonkin: Temperance lessons are regularly given in our State schools.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Another reason is that in France there are two hours for social meals during the day. That does enable people to eat their food instead of gobbling it, and to drink their wine or other liquor instead of swilling it. Here one sees people order expensive wines and drink them like water. Russia, as the result of prohibition being introduced upon mobilisation for the last war, was really a non-drinking country for some time. The Communists have been most careful to educate their children against vodka. One finds youths today in Russia who do not drink because they have been educated not to do it. The member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. F. C. L. Smith) said that since hotels opened at 9 a.m. one does not find people standing outside waiting to get a drink. But that is not so. In Coolgardie, which I visited when the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) was there, I remember a man standing outside a hotel before nine in the morning, and he had to be told to wait until nine. It has been said by some members that 6 o'clock closing of hotels has made no difference. I cannot understand the vision of some people. Our streets are certainly a great deal cleaner than they were a few weeks ago, when the hotels remained open until 9 p.m.

Mr. Tonkin: The military pickets are responsible for that.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: I do not care who is responsible; the fact remains that the streets are cleaner than they were a few weeks ago. Ask any cafe proprietor in Perth today, and he will reply that the improvement is immense. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) suggested that men working hard in his district required alcohol. I can tell the hon. member of another electorate where women are working in tobacco fields today. They are stalking tobacco and burning it, which is a man's job. Some 49 women are engaged in that work. Women are also engaged in the flax industry and are employed on fruit picking and vegetable gathering, all of which are a man's work. Many of these women are living in tents, living as hardly as any man. I add this without any disrespect to men, but the owners of those places tell us that two women do as much work as three men.

Mr. Withers: The reverse!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: That is what we are told. We have it in black on white.

Mr. W. Hegney: Are they getting men's pay?

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: They do that work without any alcoholic drink. They have not asked for it. Therefore, it is not hard workers who in all cases need drink. These women receive a little more than half men's wages, which is a disgrace. If they do a man's work, they should receive a man's pay.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: What is the solution? In my opinion it is the diminution of the alcoholic strength of beer, wine, and spirits. I believe the alcoholic content of beer consumed in this State is five per cent. higher than it is in other States, while the alcoholic content of whisky in this State is considerably more. First, there should be a diminution of alcoholic strength in beer, wine and spirits; secondly, wine should be put into bond and kept there until it is sufficiently matured to be consumed, the vignerons to receive certain financial assistance from the Government whilst the wine is in bond; thirdly, bars should be open to public view. There should be no screens in front of bars. If it is right to drink, let the drinking be done openly. Fourthly, refreshments should be served in all

bars; fifthly, no bottled beer, wine, or spirits should be sold during the war except by ration tickets.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Those points can be debated later, when we deal with a motion of which notice has been given.

Mrs. CARDELL-OLIVER: Open lounges should be provided for non-alcoholic refreshments, except during the hours when liquor may be sold. Then all drinks could be sold. My reason for asking that open lounges should be provided is that we have in our midst such places as the "Silver Dollar," which has just been opened at the corner of Hay and Milligan-streets. It is an absolute disgrace. I had to ring up the Commissioner of Police the other day and ask him to send a constable to it. The number of half drunken men who were going in with bottles as I passed was simply intolerable. It is said that men coming out of that place have molested women who have been in that part of the town. The police have, I believe, tightened up things there in the last day or two. We should have women police in all hotel lounges and military police in all bars; there should be a fine of £100 and a month's imprisonment for all offences against the licensing laws; for the second offence, the publican should be deprived of his license. That is the way I would deal with the liquor traffic.

On motion by Mr. Raphael, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.1 p.m.