

England to the Empire for unity. He ended his poem with these words—

Also we will make promise  
So long as blood endures  
I shall know that your good is mine,  
Ye shall feel that my strength is yours,  
In the day of Armageddon,  
At the last great fight of all,  
That our House shall stand together  
And the pillars do not fall.

On motion by Mr. Mann, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.36 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Wednesday, 29th August, 1945.*

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### WATER SUPPLIES.

(a) *As to Progress at Pingrup.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

1, What progress has been made with the excavation of water tank on No. 1 site at Pingrup?

2, When is the work expected to be complete?

3, Will completion include roofing and bitumenising of catchment area, and if so, what area of catchment will be treated?

4, Is a pipe to be laid to the adjacent road, and what size pipe will be used?

The MINISTER replied:

1, 50 per cent. of excavation for dam and drains.

2, End of October, providing roofing iron is available.

3, Includes roofing, but no bitumen catchment at present.

4, Yes, to adjacent road, but not to main Pingrup-Lake Grace road. Two-inch pipe will be used.

(b) *As to Cranbrook and Mt. Barker.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

1, When is it expected that a start can be made in regard to the approved survey for a water supply at Cranbrook?

2, What progress has been made regarding the proposed water supply for Mount Barker?

The MINISTER replied:

1, In a month's time, when surveyor finishes work in hand.

2, Sufficient information has been obtained to submit a preliminary report to the Director of Works (Mr. Dumas). This will be considered after his return from the Eastern States on the 31st August.

(c) *As to Kalamunda and Maida Vale.*

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Water Supplies:

1, What source of supply was decided on as the result of the survey made in regard to the water supply for Kalamunda and Maida Vale?

2, Was there any alternative source discovered?

3, Does he consider that these places should be left any longer without a water supply?

4, If not, what is it proposed to do to make a supply available in the near future?

5, Can a water supply be guaranteed for next year, and if not, what will be the possible cause for delay?

The MINISTER replied:

1, Mundaring Weir.

2, Every natural local source of supply had been examined without result.

3, Until Mundaring Weir is raised it is impossible to provide a satisfactory supply.

4, Raising of Mundaring Weir has been listed as one of the urgent post-war works.

5, No. See 3 and 4.

### PARDELUP PRISON ESCAPEES.

#### *As to Compensation for Damage Done.*

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister representing the Chief Secretary:

1, Is the Government prepared to compensate those persons in the Mt. Barker district who sustained loss through thefts committed by recent escapees from Pardelup?

2, If so, to what extent, and how and to whom should claims be made?

3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for the Minister for the North-West) replied: 1, 2, and 3, The Crown is not in any way responsible in law to any person in respect of any loss, damage or injury suffered by any members of the public by the wrongful acts of an escaped prisoner while the latter is at large.

### STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

#### *As to Vessels for North-West Trade.*

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for the North-West: What has been the result of the latest representations to the Commonwealth regarding the return of the "Kybra" to the State Shipping Service and/or the addition of a further ship for the Fremantle-Geraldton-North-West trade?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for the Minister for the North-West) replied: The Honourable the Premier recently discussed this matter with the Right Honourable the Prime Minister. Subsequently the manager of the State Shipping Service left for the Eastern States, and he is now negotiating for the return of the "Kybra," and making enquiries regarding the possible acquisition of further vessels for the North-West service.

### COAL.

#### *As to Prices and Storage Bins.*

Mr. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways:

1, The prices of Collie coal in the aggregate, and also (each mine separately) in the railway wagons at pit's mouth for the year ended the 31st July, 1945?

2, The price for Newcastle coal in railway wagons at wharf, Fremantle, for the year ended the 31st July, 1945?

3, How many storage bins of Collie coal have the Railway Department under their jurisdiction, exclusive of the East Perth power station?

4, The places where these bins are situated and the storage capacity of each bin separately?

The MINISTER replied:

1, The average price paid for large coal was 21s. 8d. per ton and for small coal 19s. 8d. per ton.

Separate prices were:—

		Large. s. d.	Small. s. d.
Co-operative	..	23 1	19 7
Proprietary	..	22 5	19 7
Cardiff	..	21 7	19 7
Stockton	..	21 11	19 7
Stockton open-cut	..	19 7	19 7
Griffin	..	22 0	20 0
Wyvern (unscreened)		20 6	

2, Large coal 56s. per ton, small coal 53s. per ton.

3, None.

4, Answered by No. 3.

### TIMBER.

#### *As to Manpower for Local Production.*

Mr. HOAR asked the Minister for Forests: In view of Australia's great shortage of timber for building purposes and the Commonwealth Government's intention to purchase up to 100,000,000 super feet of timber from Russia, and bearing in mind that only a shortage of manpower in Western Australia is holding up the opening of new mills, has representation been made for the release of manpower so that this State's timber companies, and our own timbers, jarrah and karri, might fully participate in the Commonwealth's post-war building programme?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for the Minister for Forests) replied: The availability of manpower in the timber industry has been governed by requirements of the Fighting Services for both men and materials. In order to increase production, arrangements were made recently for the release of several hundred men for the timber industry which has been given a high priority in the allocation of quotas. Western Australia's present annual production of approximately 100 million super feet will be increased to a maximum of about 150

million super feet within one to two years when new mills have been established and adequate labour is available. Australia, even with production increased to 800 million super feet, is faced with a shortage of 400 million super feet which will have to be made up by imports, if these can be obtained. It is expected that the greatest quantity will be obtained from the Pacific Coast of North America.

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.

*As to Approved Extensions in Swan District.*

Mr. OWEN asked the Minister for Railways:

1, Can any definite information be given as to when the approved electricity extensions to (a) Wattle Grove, (b) Roleystone, (c) Bedfordale, (d) Wongong and Westfield, will be put in hand and completed, especially in view of the fact that on the 20th November, 1941, in regard to these works the then member for Swan was informed that the completion of these extensions was dependent on supplies of materials?

2, Since that date have supplies of materials been available for use?

3, Will he give an assurance in view of the length of time since these extensions were approved that they will be given the earliest possible priority?

4, If not, what will be the reason for further delay?

The MINISTER replied:

1, (a) Extension of electricity to Wattle Grove has not been approved; (b), (c) and (d) Extensions to Roleystone, Bedfordale and Wongong will be put in hand as soon as material and sufficient linemen are available. Extension to Westfield has not been approved.

2, No. Supplies of most materials have been barely sufficient for urgent maintenance work.

3, Yes. All approved extensions will be completed as early as resources permit.

4, Answered by No. 3.

### STERLING AND AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE.

*As to Reasons for Continuance.*

Mr. NORTH asked the Premier:

1, Have the reasons which prompted the adverse exchange of 100/125 between sterling and Australian disappeared?

2, If not, which of them remain?

3, If none remain, have others been discovered in the meantime?

4, If not, will he take up this question with the Federal Treasurer, having regard to the burden now imposed on the business community and taxpayers?

The ACTING PREMIER replied:

The question raised by the member for Claremont is one entirely under the control of the Commonwealth Government, and it is considered that any movement on the exchange rate in the direction suggested by the hon. member might have very detrimental effects on Australia, and especially on Western Australia, which is a primary producing State, and which in addition, of course, produces gold for export. Therefore the State Government does not propose to make any representations to the Commonwealth Government in this matter.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Thirteenth Day—Amendment.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. MANN (Beverley) [4.40]: Although peace has come to our nation, we meet to-day under rather extraordinary conditions. We are all agreed, however, very definitely indeed, that although war is no longer upon us, we are confronted with a peace that involves vital and most serious problems. The repatriation of Service men and women will be upon us very quickly, and that will raise issues of grave import. During the forthcoming period of difficulty, I can tell the Government that all members sitting on the Opposition side of the House will help Ministers in every way possible, and that from them suggestions of a constructive nature, having as their objective the building-up of our State, will be forthcoming. At the same time, we will reserve our right, as members of His Majesty's Opposition, to criticise the Governments, both State and Commonwealth, should we find it necessary to do so in the post-war period. I assure members that the job ahead is by no means small.

The Minister for Lands: The job of criticism?

Mr. MANN: I admit that criticism is easy, but constructive suggestions are better. During the period of demobilisation our whole structure generally must undergo a change, and that will be necessary unless the

position is to become very critical indeed. Touching upon recent changes in the Government, much has been said about the ex-Premier, Hon. J. C. Willcock. I think it was wise, from a health point of view, that he should have retired. Public memory is short and a Minister of the Crown may linger on only to suffer from impaired health at the end. The change-over of Ministers, with a re-allocation of portfolios, has been satisfactorily accomplished, and I am glad to note that the former Minister for Health has now assumed the post of Minister for Lands. He will have no small task confronting him in connection with repatriation. Being himself an old soldier, he will, I am sure, display sympathy towards the new diggers, as he did respecting the old diggers in the past.

Referring generally to the administration of the affairs of State, I feel convinced, and so must all members be, that we are endeavouring to carry on the government of the State with a mere handful of Ministers. With the progress of Western Australia and the necessity for Ministerial attention to be devoted to so many different activities, it is impossible for Ministers to carry out the duties attached to their present portfolios with effectiveness. Take the Minister for Railways. I am glad that the member for Murchison, Hon. W. M. Marshall, has been elevated to that position. I believe that, with his occupancy of that position, we shall have for the first time for many years a Minister who will do his best to provide an effective rail service.

Mr. Fox: You must be wanting something.

Mr. MANN: I am not seeking anything at all. The point I am making is that the Minister for Railways is also the Minister for Mines. In the immediate post-war years, mining will play a very important part in the development of this State, and that in itself will provide sufficient for the attention of one Minister. The railways present so many difficult problems that one Minister should be fully employed in dealing with railway matters. The same applies to the Minister for Education. He has the portfolios of Education and Agriculture. Both Education and Agriculture represent a full-time job for a Minister. What is the effect of such an arrangement?

Because of the paucity of Ministers, the country is being run by civil servants and, in particular, by Under Secretaries. That is all wrong. Parliament should have that responsibility, not Under Secretaries. For far too long has this State been dominated by those highly-placed officers. The policy they pursue and their ideas may be quite all right, but Parliament, not Under Secretaries, should dictate the policy. I trust the Government will accept my advice and increase the number of Ministers. Western Australia is large enough to carry the added burden. When it comes to matters of administration and the comparatively small amount of extra expense entailed by the appointment of a few additional Ministers, there is always a tendency to jib at any such reform. To continue as we are at present is not to do the right thing by the public, and we are restricting the possibility of Parliament operating effectively. If I had the power to do so, I would appoint ten or eleven full-time Ministers—and no honorary Minister at all. If ever the time comes for the present Opposition to occupy the Treasury bench, we will see to it and effect that reform, because better results will be achieved.

Mr. Thorn: And the change-over will not be too long delayed.

Mr. MANN: I hope so. While I am pleased to be able to compliment the new Premier upon his elevation, I nevertheless trust it will not be long before the present Opposition will change over and assume control of the reins of government.

The Minister for Lands: What has Western Australia done to deserve that?

Mr. MANN: I hope the present Government will take a serious view of my remarks, and implement my suggestion. Take the position of the Acting Premier.

The Minister for Works: Why pick me?

Mr. MANN: The Minister for Works, who is Acting Premier at present, is a man who has the respect of members sitting on the Opposition side of the House. We recognise his capabilities, but we also appreciate that he has a very heavy burden to carry. It must be obvious to the House that he cannot carry on indefinitely, for there is a limit to human endurance.

The Minister for Lands: But he is not human!

Mr. MANN: The position in the Commonwealth sphere is somewhat better. Federal members, particularly those who have been elevated to Ministerial rank, have assistance furnished them in the carrying out of their duties, and each ordinary member has a secretary who is receiving £250 a year. Despite that fact, we State members do most of the Federal members' jobs for them.

Mr. Thorn: We certainly do the work for them.

Mr. MANN: Of course, and they have plenty of transport facilities to aid them in their work as well. Contrast that with the position of State politicians. Recently I was a member of the Vermin Select Committee. It was necessary for us to visit various country centres, and it was a most difficult job to secure transport, because insufficient cars were available. As a matter of fact, the Government has cut down financial outlay to the very barest margin possible in many directions, and that was apparent when we endeavoured to arrange transport. But let members go to Canberra and they will find a fleet of cars available for members to go about the country, and thus do more effective work for it. There is another point I wish to mention, for it seems to me that a radical change is essential. Recently the member for Murchison accepted an office of profit under the Crown when he was elected to the Ministry. Immediately he had to resign his seat in Parliament and go up for re-election. What a pitiful farce! Merely because his party elects him to a ministerial office, a member has to resign his seat in Parliament and re-contest it. It is all wrong.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: It is stupid.

The Minister for Lands: It cost me £50 to secure my return after I was appointed a Minister.

Mr. MANN: I contend that once a man has been elected to Parliament by his constituents, it should be unnecessary for him to resign his seat and submit himself for re-election, merely because he has been elevated to the Ministry. It is an absurdity, and I hope the Government will deal with that position.

The Minister for Lands: Western Australia is the only State in Australia, if not in the world, that has such a law.

Mr. MANN: I certainly hope the Government will take notice of my remarks on the two points I have raised so far, for I regard the suggested alterations as essential. For a few moments I wish to talk about the balancing of Budgets. I do not profess to be a wizard of finance, but when I realise that every other Government in Australia, including that of Queensland, has finished the financial year with a deficit. Although the member for East Perth recently expressed his profound admiration of the administration of the Government in this State, seeing that it had balanced its Budget not only for this year but for the preceding four or five years, I do not know that there is so much to be proud of. I say that for the reason that for many years in Australia those States that have finished up with deficits have been able to approach the Loan Council and have been able to secure further finance to assist them in carrying on their functions. That has not been the position with regard to Western Australia, and I hope there will be some move as a result of which the objective will not be so much to balance the Budget as to formulate and carry out policies that will make for advancement instead of the stagnation that we have experienced for so long.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: We cannot get the necessary manpower to do it.

Mr. MANN: If the manpower phase is to enter into the problem, why then has South Australia advanced so satisfactorily with regard to her housing programme, whereas Western Australia in that respect has remained dormant?

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Because that State refused to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government with regard to building matters.

Mr. MANN: Has New South Wales, with its strong Labour Party, refused to co-operate with the Commonwealth Government? Have Tasmania and Queensland refused to do so?

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You mentioned South Australia only.

Mr. MANN: I will take the rest as well, and say that all other States have made progress with their housing programmes, but particularly does that apply to South Australia; yet Western Australia has remained dormant. I admit that this State has extended great assistance to the war ef-

fort and has a particularly creditable record per head of population regarding her enlistments and financial contributions to war loans. We made those sacrifices in order to assist in winning the war and perhaps some other parts of Australia did not pull their full weight.

The Minister for Lands: We would not have won the war if we had not pulled our weight.

Mr. MANN: Western Australia has been penalised to a greater extent than some of the other States, and it is all wrong. There is no State in Australia that more urgently requires a vigorous policy of development than does Western Australia. South Australia is in a position to put no more than 2,500 men on the land under the soldier settlement scheme because it has not the land for them, whereas this State has the largest scope for the settlement of repatriated men of any State of the Commonwealth. As against this, however, we have to bear in mind that our water schemes have been neglected and our railways are a disgrace to any civilised country. On Monday night I had the questionable pleasure of travelling by train from Beverley in one of the old-fashioned coaches. Both oil lamps lit up for a start, but one soon gave up the ghost.

The Minister for Lands: To enable you to sleep well.

Mr. MANN: The remaining lamp gave insufficient light to enable me to read, and I spent most of the time watching the oil drip from the burner to the bottom. That coach was built 50 or 60 years ago and lacked paint and everything else. We try to boost our State, but when a passenger leaves the Trans. train to come from Kalgoorlie to Perth, we get a bad smack. That train is a discredit to the State, and yet it is the best we have. I was telling a man from England what a marvellous State Western Australia is, but after travelling on the train for half-an-hour, he remarked, "I must say that your trains are a shocking advertisement for the State." People arriving by boat at Fremantle find nothing that is a good advertisement for the State, and the impression one receives by train is also pathetic indeed.

I believe the new Minister for Railways will talk to the Commissioner as a Minister should do, and if he does, nothing but good

can result. Heretofore, the Minister seems to have been subservient to the Commissioner and to the secretary or person in charge of the department. The Minister must be prepared to accept full responsibility for the department, be its arrangements good or bad. He is answerable to Parliament; it is his job and no-one else's to see that the railway service is improved.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: You will have to alter the Railway Act a bit.

Mr. MANN: Yes, and it is time we altered a few more Acts.

Mr. Styants: There is plenty of power here.

Mr. MANN: In the past we have tried to get improvements and have failed. Yet this Parliament is supreme; it is above the Commissioner of Railways.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Not apart from the Act of Parliament.

Mr. MANN: Lopsided ideas need to be altered. We try too much to evade our obligations. Some people consider that we should have no right to criticise the Government, and if we cannot criticise the Government, it follows that we cannot criticise the Commissioner of Railways. It is our right to criticise the Commissioner through the Minister, and I will continue to do so. I regard the new Minister as a practical man who will grapple with the difficulties. He has often made the long trip on the Wiluna Limited—very definitely limited—and he is in a position to appreciate what railway travel in this State is like.

The Minister for Mines: Limited in speed.

Mr. MANN: Definitely indeed.

The Minister for Lands: Yet a man was killed on one of the crossings recently.

Mr. MANN: There is an old saying to the effect that neglect to balance the Budget is a sin against the light. Well, let us sin against the light and make some progress. The only alternative is to remain stationary or slip back. I made a long tour through the South-West early this year and there, at the end of February, saw beautiful country lying idle with running streams of fresh water sufficient to irrigate thousands of acres. During a trip to the Eastern States I saw land at Mt. Barker, in South Australia, priced at £60 per acre, and it could not hold a candle to the land included in the

Harvey irrigation scheme. I saw more cattle in the Harvey area than there were at Mt. Barker, South Australia. Another point that struck me during my travels in the Eastern States was the high value placed on agricultural land. I saw land at Mt. Barker capable of producing three tons of hay to the acre priced at £30 an acre, while equally good land at Grass Valley can be purchased for £6 or £7 an acre.

We in this State must adopt a vigorous policy and build for the future. There has been too great a tendency to go slow and to lack a broad view. The Loan Council and the Grants Commission were right in saying that we had not developed our resources as they should have been developed. A policy of advancement must be adopted. I have no intention of throwing any bouquets at the Government, but I expect Ministers to get a move on. If they will not do so, I hope the electors for this House in 18 months' time will express themselves very definitely by voting the Opposition to power.

The Minister for Lands: You have been saying that for about 18 years.

Mr. MANN: Pious hopes are sometimes realised; there must be a change some time.

Mr. Styants: The Federal by-election for Fremantle was not very encouraging for you.

Mr. MANN: That is entirely outside the present discussion. No candidate representing the party to which I belong contested that election, and so I was a mere spectator. However, since the hon. member has introduced the subject, let me say that I wish the newly elected Federal member for Fremantle the best of luck. We are told that he is an extraordinary young man with marvellous academic attainments, and I wonder from the talk that has been going round whether in him we are going to find a second John Curtin.

The Minister for Lands: Quite possibly.

Mr. MANN: Having, as he has, a vision cramped as small as my fist, I am afraid not. Doubtless the Commonwealth and State Governments were grateful for the soldiers' votes, but I cannot believe that the soldiers voted in full strength because I think they would have supported their comrade.

Mr. Withers: Ask the boys who have returned from the war.

The Minister for Lands: When you were in the A.I.F., you were never too fond of a brigadier.

Mr. MANN: The member for East Perth, in moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply, spoke of the Upper Chamber and raised the democratic aspect. The member for Pilbara indulged in criticism of my party for having changed its name. I assure the House that the change was made in order to convey a proper indication of the party's democracy. We will remain a thoroughly democratic party, and will continue to have the Union Jack and the Australian Ensign flying over us, whereas the time is not far distant when the Trades Hall will not have the same privilege but will be marching under the sickle and hammer.

The Minister for Lands: You are getting almost poetical.

Mr. MANN: The white ants have got into the Labour movement. While we will remain a part of the British Empire, the Labour Party, which we have admired—

The Minister for Lands: You have?

Mr. MANN: Yes; we have admired it as a sound and solid body, but corruption is already setting in.

The Minister for Lands: That is a nice thing to say when I am the president.

Mr. MANN: When the A.C.T.U. selects a man like Thornton to represent it at the conference in Paris, associated with a little man from Victoria Park named Senator Fraser, a Federal Minister, I see the beginning of the end of that great party.

The Minister for Lands: The Labour Party is not even affiliated with the A.C.T.U.

Mr. MANN: This is the sort of thing that is going on. The members of the Labour Party will find that it will not pay them to criticise their own organisation; but the white-anting has already started.

Mr. Fox: Wishful thinking!

Mr. MANN: It is not. Now I come to the question of democracy. The member for East Perth has youthful ideas and I admire them, notwithstanding that I am grey-haired myself.

The Minister for Lands: You are getting old-fashioned.

Mr. MANN: The idea of the member for East Perth is that democracy is ruining Western Australia because of the existence

of the Upper House. What a marvellous idea! No doubt this young stalwart of the Trades Hall and of the Labour Party, with the ambition of some day becoming Premier and afterwards Prime Minister, has a vision about something that does not belong to the Labour Party. There is no reason why the Labour Party should not exist as a separate entity, nor is there any reason why our democratic party should not also remain as a separate organisation. I was glad to know that the Nurses' Association and the Teachers' Association refused to affiliate with the Labour Party.

In my opinion, the fact that the police associated themselves with the Labour Party was a disgrace. The police are a body of men appointed to maintain law and order. They have taken an oath similar to that which was taken by the Minister for Lands and myself when we enlisted to serve in the 1914-18 war. The police should know no political party. Have the members of the Police Force gained any benefit from affiliating with the Labour Party? Not a scrap! Resignations from the force are frequent; so apparently the men are dissatisfied. I assure the House that an organisation has a perfect right to maintain its entity in any way it likes. We never heard such rot in our lives as that spoken by the member for Guildford-Midland last night. It was blarney!

The Minister for Lands: You must not talk like that about a member.

Mr. MANN: He dealt with what the Legislative Council was, is and should be. Can any member tell me, or you, Mr. Speaker, that the Council has been the cause of retarding the advance of Western Australia?

Mr. Needham: It has blocked progress.

Mr. MANN: I am sorry our Parliamentary system cannot be altered so that when we wish to have a quiet debate on these matters you, Mr. Speaker, may leave the Chair. Instead, you have to remain in the Chair and you cannot speak. I have to listen to interjections to which I cannot reply. I am aware that if I went too far you would immediately stop me, because if I did so it would be against Parliamentary procedure. But what of democracy? Let us deal with that subject, and whether the Legislative Council has retarded the pro-

gress of the State. The member for Guildford-Midland, in his speech last night, definitely tried to make out that the member for Nedlands had said this and that, and that he was in favour of abolishing the Council.

The Minister for Lands: It looked as if he were in favour of abolishing it. He did not deny it.

Mr. MANN: I have an idea that the member for Guildford-Midland spoke as he did because he is about to face a pre-selection ballot. He spoke highly of the ex-Premier, whom we all admire in many ways. I wish to quote from a speech of the member for Geraldton which appears in "Hansard," 1942-43, Vol. I, at page 1327. This is what the hon. member (then Premier) said—

The Commonwealth Grants Commission penalises us every year because of our social conditions. The members of that body say that various State Governments here, over the years, have built up a set of social and industrial conditions superior to those obtaining in any other part of the Commonwealth, and consequently the people of Western Australia will themselves have to pay for them. To that end the Commonwealth Grants Commission imposes what is called "penalties," by deducting amounts that would otherwise be included in the Commonwealth grants to Western Australia. I think we can be proud of our living standards in Western Australia. We sometimes hear people criticise local industrial and social conditions, and contend that they are better than they need be and that they handicap industry. While we hear those statements, I am convinced that those critics deep down in their hearts are proud of the industrial conditions under which the workers of Western Australia are employed. That could not be so under unification, which would place all workers on a dead level.

The Labour Party for a very long time has had implicit faith in the member for Geraldton, as is evidenced by the fact of his having retained the Premiership for so many years. The speech from which I have quoted shows that the ex-Premier himself believes that the Council has been no deterrent to the progress of the State, so what members on the cross-benches have said about the Chamber is humbug from start to finish. I sincerely hope the member for Guildford-Midland will remain in his seat while the discussion on his speech proceeds. As I said, I listened to it carefully, and most of it was on the subject of the Legislative Coun-



cil. The member for Guildford-Midland is actually one of the most conservative members in this Chamber.

Mr. Thorn: And one of the wealthiest.

Mr. MANN: I agree. I very definitely indeed would like to have his income. The Westralian Farmers, Limited, is not a non-paying company and the member for Guildford-Midland enjoys a decent income from it. Let us be true to ourselves. If we belong to the Labour Party, let us be true to Labour. That is the one virtue of the member for East Perth. He is true Labour. He is extreme Labour.

Mr. Thorn: Very!

Mr. MANN: Very definitely extreme Labour.

The Minister for Lands: That means he has to be very broad, too.

Mr. Withers: Absolutely! Definitely!

Mr. MANN: Very definitely indeed. I cannot be more definite.

The Minister for Lands: Has he gone to the Right or to the Left?

Mr. MANN: That is a very personal question, Mr. Speaker. For some unknown reason, when a man goes to the Left he becomes frightfully Red. I shall leave the young man alone now, because as the years pass wisdom will come to him.

Mr. Thorn: Let us hope so.

Mr. MANN: He has ability and will accumulate a little practical commonsense, which will have the effect of altering his outlook entirely. Let us get back to the member for Guildford-Midland for a moment. His policy evidently is this: He spoke last night to the workers of Midland Junction, who toil and sweat, and he pointed out to them in his speech that the cursed Legislative Council was the damnation of the Western Australian Parliament. Now he will probably go into the country and talk about the Westralian Farmers, Limited. This company is a great monopoly, it is entirely capitalistic. So where does the hon. member stand?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: God help us!

Mr. MANN: Let us be true to our colours. If we are Labour, let us be true to Labour principles; if Democratic, let us be true to Democratic ideals.

Mr. Withers: That is a new one!

Several members interjected.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: I was annoyed to hear the speech of the member for Guildford-Midland last night because there is not a particle of truth in it. It is utter nonsense from start to finish. I say to the Labour Party that at any by-election or election for the Council the members of that Party do not put their heart and soul into it because, as the member for Boulder once said, "Thank God for the Legislative Council!"

Government Members: Oh!

Mr. MANN: Very definitely indeed. I listened attentively to the speeches delivered by the Minister for Railways over the years when he was sitting on the cross-benches. I can see him now, making a magnificent speech on world finance. I have heard that severe bark of his in the Chamber, although I think his bark is worse than his bite. I can see him as he spoke, pointing to members, on world finance as it should be. There is a man called Chifley who is now Prime Minister of Australia. He once believed in and spoke about a reform of the financial policy of Australia. He was a member of the Royal Commission on banking. But what does he say today when a reduction in taxation is suggested? When that question is raised, he says it cannot be done because we have to control prices in order to stop inflation. The present Commonwealth Labour Government has led Australia into the position of being one of the highest-taxed peoples of the world.

Mr. McLarty: The highest-taxed!

Mr. MANN: Yes. I will tell members why the miners of Newcastle will not work overtime. I will tell members why industrial workers in Sydney will not do so. It is because these people do not propose to work overtime for an extra 8s. or 9s. of which they receive only 2s. Why the Government will not adopt the English post-war credit system of tax and loan I do not know. It is internal currency and the money could be used again. What is happening is that working people and other people are all being brought to the one level. It is a true socialistic principle to put every man on the same level. As far as the progress of Australia is concerned, there will be no advance until there is an easing of the taxation position. I believe that one of the main effects

of the nationalisation of the Bank of England was that America said, "This is the end of lend-lease."

Mr. Smith: How did you find that out?

Mr. MANN: I have many quiet ways of finding out things! At any rate, that is the position of Australia. It is overloaded with taxation.

Mr. Thorn: We had better send the Minister for Railways over there.

Mr. MANN: The Minister for Railways has a much more important job to do here. If he can place our railways on a sound footing, I am sure he will be honoured for many years after he has gone. Consider the proposal for the nationalisation of airways! This bug of nationalisation has got into the people of Australia and it is becoming a question of nationalising this and nationalising that. Perhaps the most extraordinary man Australian politics has produced, perhaps the most extraordinary man in the history of the Commonwealth House of Parliament is the Hon. Edward Ward. This bureaucrat has charge of our transport. He was too dangerous a man in the position he held in the previous Cabinet with Mr. Curtin as Prime Minister, and had to be removed. This man became Minister for Transport and decided that he would control the whole of the transport of Australia. The result was that he had only one train running from Western Australia to the East, and if one wanted to travel to the East one had to sit up between Adelaide and Sydney. The airlines began to compete and private companies put into commission four planes between Adelaide and Melbourne daily and then ten from Western Australia to Adelaide per week. The consequence was that Mr. Ward was forced to put on more trains.

Today if there were full nationalisation of transport we would have the spectacle of this man, Mr. Ward, being in charge. Even school children who wanted to go home for the vacation were penalised by Mr. Ward! He became the great Pooh-Bah of Australia, the greatest it has ever produced. He was a Yarra-bank orator who learnt his speeches on the Yarra bank.

The Minister for Lands: You are getting a bit mixed.

Mr. MANN: Well, in the Domain then. They are both the same. That is where this man learnt his principles, those of the guttersnipe and nothing else.

The Minister for Lands: Oh, no!

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You should withdraw that statement.

Mr. MANN: I will withdraw nothing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: All right; we will see what happens when he comes here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: Bring him over here.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You will see!

Mr. MANN: God help Australia if nationalisation becomes widespread. Progress will be retarded. Men who have incentive to move on will not tolerate it. No man, of course, denies that a person who reaches the age of 65 is entitled to a pension.

The Minister for Works: How much progress have you made under capitalism?

Mr. MANN: A man who wanted to save money for his old age would require to accumulate £3,200 in order to have an income equivalent to the old-age pension. I suggest that this Government should make the first move towards introducing an old-age pension scheme on a contributory basis.

The Minister for Works: How much progress have you, as a farmer, made under capitalism?

Mr. MANN: I am not trying to discuss my personal affairs. Let us not look at petty things, but consider the position generally.

Mr. Thorn: We have not got capitalism.

Mr. MANN: I am one of those who came back from the first Great War, and I have sons who have taken part in the war just ended, and I say that Australia will be in a dangerous position if effect is given to the policy of nationalisation. Under that system, we will have Government-control. I hope that we shall not agree to Government control of establishments that were used for the production of munitions. I have had experience of State-owned works. I bought a harvester from the State Implement Works which cost me £180 and was of no use to me. Any Government enterprise is a failure and that will continue to be so. I hope this Government will have sufficient commonsense to urge that the munition factories should be released for use by private enterprise and that they should not be Government-controlled. Speaking in Beverley, Mr. Mountjoy, M.H.R. referred to the manufacture of re-

frigerators and other amenities of that kind and said how cheap they would be if Government-produced.

The Minister for Lands: They are certainly not cheap now.

Mr. MANN: No. If these things are Government-controlled, I know what will happen, and so do other members. The cost will be greater and the article inferior. Let us leave private enterprise to carry on. Who is the capitalist but the man who pays the highest taxation? A man on £5,000 a year has very little left out of it when taxation has been deducted. During the time of the Seaddan Government we saw the growth of Government-controlled establishments and what happened. They were ghastly failures and cost this State thousands of pounds. I hope that is not going to happen again.

The Minister for Works: The Post Office has been pretty good.

Mr. MANN: That is a different undertaking.

The Minister for Lands: What would have happened with regard to the cartage of super and wheat if it had not been for the railways?

Mr. MANN: The railways are a Government monopoly and private enterprise cannot compete with them.

The Minister for Lands: Private enterprise could not carry those goods at the same rate as is charged by the railways.

Mr. MANN: I think the Minister will find if it is worked out that that is not so. Ordinary carriers who have transported some commodities at high rates have had to transport other commodities at lower freights.

The Minister for Works: Not wheat or super.

Mr. MANN: Yes, they have been carried as cheaply as they are carried by rail at the present time.

Mr. Rodoreda: What nonsense!

Mr. MANN: It is not nonsense; I know what I am talking about. There is another matter upon which I wish to touch and that is the proposed new rural log. If that is put into operation, there will be a few farmers less. I believe that one of the most important producers on the land is the stud breeder. We have produced the most

wonderful flocks in the world. There are the Bungaree, the Koonona, the Murray, the Dalkeith and other high-class stud flocks.

Mr. Rodoreda: And Tootra.

Mr. MANN: I am speaking of the parent flocks in the East. The value of production from those flocks has amounted to millions of pounds. Our flocks, prior to the drought conditions, had increased from 3 lbs. of wool per sheep to 8 or 9 lbs. per sheep for the whole of Australia. As a result, this has brought to Australia £60,000,000 to £80,000,000 a year. On top of that, we have herds of pigs and cattle. This new log will cripple the man who is trying to carry on and produce those flocks and herds.

I believe that every farmer should pay a reasonable wage to his farm hands; but he cannot pay what is demanded by this new log, because the costs are prohibitive and the scale is stupid. One would need a qualified accountant to travel round all day trying to find out what work the men were doing. If this comes to pass, the farmer will say, "I have had as much as I want of controls and so on and I will have them no longer. I will reduce my efforts." The coalminers have said they will not produce coal and the farmers will eventually adopt the same attitude. What will happen if the farmers are nationalised?

Mr. Withers: What will happen to the men who come to the Government for assistance?

Mr. MANN: Every man cannot be a farmer. Under modern conditions, no one can learn the principles of farming under four years. The old idea does not still prevail that a man can go on to a block and simply become a farmer. It is a scientific occupation today. This country must produce the food to feed Great Britain and other parts of the world. If the cutting-out of the lease arrangement is going to have an adverse effect on Britain, we must help as much as we can. If this log is granted by the court, I make this prediction, that the production of Western Australia will fall by 50 per cent.!

The Minister for Works: What is a fair wage to pay a good experienced farm worker?

Mr. MANN: Some farmers at present are paying £5 a week.

The Minister for Works: You agree that that is a fair wage.

Mr. MANN: Yes, many farmers are prepared to pay it. But, under the log, the day is broken into four or five different parts. Take the position of a tractor-driver. My son has been working 16 hours a day on a tractor. It was necessary to do that to get the crop in because the rains were late. It is of no use saying that the work can be done tomorrow. As a result, two men had to be employed on the job and, under this log, the rate of pay for one of those men would be so great that it would not pay to erop. Our scheme of farming today is one by which the crop must be put in at a certain time and harvested at a certain time. It is different from other work. I hope this log does not come into being, but if it does our production will fall and continue to fall. The farmers will not tolerate its conditions. The costs would be equivalent to £50 a week, which is impossible. This matter should be on a State basis, and not Commonwealth, because Western Australia, with its large area, is different from Victoria and Queensland.

The Minister for Lands: It would be on a State basis if you allowed farm workers to be registered in the State Arbitration Court, but you have blocked them every time. That is why they have gone to the Commonwealth.

Mr. MANN: We must realise the position prevailing during the war. The farmers today are not the class of men who want men to work for 30s. a week. The farm hands will not work for that, either.

The Minister for Works: A 30s.-a-week man is not worth having.

Mr. MANN: That is so. We realise that we have to pay for the right class of man. For long hours we would have to pay a tremendous rate, under the log, and for the balance of the week the man would be on the farm doing odd jobs until Saturday, and would be paid for doing practically nothing, especially if it happened to be wet weather. This is a serious position and Western Australia is the most important State in regard to agriculture. I cannot see large factories in this State.

The Minister for Lands: You are shortsighted.

Mr. MANN: Not for a long time, at any rate.

The Minister for Works: You will see them.

Mr. MANN: I hope so, but I hope the people will not lose sight of the fact that primary industry is the most important.

The Minister for Works: They are all important.

Mr. MANN: I want to touch on the publicity of Western Australia. People in the Eastern States do not know that Western Australia exists. I want to thank the Labour Government of New South Wales for its kindness to me. Few people in the Eastern States know we exist. Why have we no publicity there? They were anxious to know about the South-West and the mining areas of Western Australia, and I gave what information I could to different groups of men. During the war, large numbers of Eastern States soldiers have been here and have returned home with a kindly feeling for the people of this State and our climate, which has not been very good lately. Why does not the Government wake up and institute a publicity campaign?

Mr. North: And a tourist scheme, too!

Mr. MANN: Yes, we have just as pretty sights here as there are from Sydney to Palm Beach. Why has there been no move for publicity? I hope the new Premier will agree to commence a strong publicity campaign in the East, either by means of the cinematograph or by sending men to the Eastern States. By doing those things, a tremendous amount of money and population will flow to Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands: Why?

Mr. MANN: Because land values are low here, and our climatic conditions are the best. The present long drought is hitting the East badly, and the loss has been estimated at 30 million sheep. Are we so bashful that we cannot give ourselves publicity in the East?

The Minister for Lands: You have done more damage to Western Australia this evening than any publicity could overcome.

Mr. MANN: Not a bit. I would like to be publicity officer for a while. I would bring back some help for this State.

The Minister for Works: We shall take your claims into consideration.

Mr. MANN: The present season has not been the best in the Great Southern because of late and very heavy rains and the scarcity of labour. There will, however, be an assured water supply for the whole year.

The Minister for Lands: That is something.

Mr. MANN: The question of hay will be doubtful in my district and in the Great Southern generally. The eastern wheatbelt will be able to produce more hay. In any case, the question must be decided very soon. In the Eastern States, stock is starving. In Adelaide they have been feeding dairy cows on 7 lbs. of chaff per week. That means that the cows cannot carry on. We are all hopeful of a bumper crop, although my district will not do so well. I now come to the question of super. I have heard that there is an attempt to get super from Nauru again for New Zealand. Is it not possible for the Commonwealth Government to arrange for the Nauru deposits to be worked by Japanese labour as the installations have been destroyed?

The super from North Africa, which we get at present, on a 17 per cent. basis, is of practically small value. I mean that it is a tremendous reduction from 23 per cent. to 17 per cent., and this super is not keeping the growth up as did the old super. We in Western Australia require good super more than anyone else. Japan is at war with us, although peace is, or very soon will be, declared. Our men will be returning, and we cannot afford to send Australians to Nauru, but the Japanese could be used, as prisoners-of-war, to produce this commodity, which is the lifeblood of Australia. The Western Australian Government could approach the Commonwealth Government on this matter. The super from Nauru is the only super of its quality that I know of. Japan destroyed the facilities that were there, and they should rebuild them.

Mr. Watts: Are the gantries ready?

Mr. MANN: I understand that preparations are being made for them in Sydney. Prior to their establishment, the basket system, with Chinese coolie labour, was in force. Japan should pay us, for the destruction at Nauru, by sending Japanese to do the work on the island. The North African super is of low grade and, in addition, there is the expense of additional transportation, and the difficulties because of the scarcity

of shipping. The Minister for Lands replied to some questions of mine with regard to the pig industry. I hope the Commonwealth Government will realise that the situation must be met this year and some stabilisation effected. Australia is in the position to produce a very good class of pig.

The Minister for Lands: It is producing a very fat type.

Mr. MANN: Our pigs are considered the best on the market because they are wheat and barley fed. In Canada the breeders are mostly feeding their pigs on maize. I hope the Government will make a quick decision on this matter. There is no time to lose. We are fairly large pig-breeders. Many thousands of pigs are bred in Australia every year, but I venture to say that no farmer is likely to be caught again unless some stabilisation is effected. Rather will he put all his sows on the market as choppers and get the good price that will be forthcoming for them. There has been too much stupid Federal control of the industry, too much shilly-shallying on the part of officials and too many different ideas expressed on the subject.

The Minister for Works: Sir Earle Page had mixed ideas on the question at one time.

Mr. MANN: And Mr. Scully has even bigger and more mixed ideas on the subject today. The State Government should approach the Commonwealth authorities and get from them a definite pronouncement as to what is going to be done with regard to the stabilisation of the industry. In no part of the world can better pigs be bred than in the South-West of this State. I point out that this year Canada is likely to export 10,000,000 pig carcasses to Great Britain, against which Australia will only be exporting about 4,000,000. The shipping question has apparently no effect on the industry because the chilling system is well under control. What I am concerned about is the time when the market has become fairly well balanced. We must have a policy to work to.

We want to know whether we are breeding the right class of pig, good as it is. In Australia we go in more for the Berkshire-Tamworth cross. In Canada men are breeding the large white type. In the Argentine they are breeding a fat type of pig. In Victoria and New South Wales breeders are turning out a heavy type of pig bred

from Tamworth boars out of Wessex sows. I suggest that the State Government would do well to send a man to the Smithfield market to see the quality that is displayed there. He would be in a position then to see what is required of breeders in this State. I feel sure that breeders here could respond in the way desired. The Canadian bacon has been subsidised to the extent of 1s. per lb. sterling, compared with the Australian price of 9d. per lb.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Pigs or lambs?

Mr. MANN: I am speaking of pigs. We have a marvellous opportunity to get into the pig export trade. I know that our lambs will hold their own anywhere in the world. I also know how dangerous the position is today for the pig industry. Men will not breed pigs in the quantity they could do. I feel sure that unless the situation is clarified very quickly breeders will send their sows to markets as choppers and will be content to get the good price of £10 per head for them. It is time the Commonwealth Government made up its mind what to do in the matter. Whether Denmark has recovered sufficiently to launch out in the bacon trade, I do not know. We must watch the position closely. Our Western Australian Southdown lambs will hold their own anywhere in the world. There is also likely to be a big demand for baby beef, and there, too, we can play our part. If conditions are stabilised it should be possible for this State to export from 5,000,000 to 6,000,000 carcasses per annum of baconers. We are far short of that today.

I am very concerned about the question of the export quality. When the market is balanced quality will become a primary factor. The Minister for Lands interjected just now concerning our bacon being too fat. It may be that it is too fat. There are two methods to be followed in the rearing of pigs. One is to improve the quality by breeding and the other is to achieve the same end by feeding. We have a chance of embarking upon a tremendous export trade if the facilities are offered to us. We should send a man to Smithfield and he could then proceed to Canada and make a complete survey of the whole industry. The State would be well repaid for the cost of such a proposal. Too few

of our people observe the conditions of trade when they go abroad. The result is that nobody knows what the position with regard to this pig industry really is overseas. The Agent-General for this State, Mr. Troy, has no knowledge of the industry.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Has he not? He bred pigs for years.

Mr. MANN: Is he an authority on the subject?

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Are you?

Mr. MANN: I am.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: I have been a judge of pigs and have bred pigs for years.

Mr. Doney: He is best pig judge in the State.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Mr. Troy followed the advice of the experts of the Agricultural Department in pig-raising.

Mr. MANN: I do not believe all the advice that is given from those quarters.

Mr. Watts: The member for Beverley is a J.P.

Mr. MANN: Has the Government received any information from the Agent General concerning the subject of pig-raising or the quality of bacon?

The Minister for Lands: Perhaps not, for security reasons.

Mr. MANN: I would not mind betting that he has not visited the Smithfield market for a long time, and that the Government has received no report from him as to the quality of the bacon displayed there. I hope the Government will lose no time in sending a man to make a survey of the position at Smithfield. My opinion is that once the restrictions on the porker trade are lifted the industry will make rapid progress because of the high prices that are almost certain to prevail. I am looking ten years ahead in this matter. Once the industry is established and we have opened up the channels of trade with England, that trade will be ours for all time. It will result in capital being brought into the country, in our soil being better fertilised, and in our breeders becoming more prosperous.

I wish now to touch upon the question of our divorce laws. Numbers of soldiers have approached me on the question. They are men who enlisted and went away to

fight for us. They have now found that their domestic affairs are not in a happy condition. In some instances a man's wife has cleared out with an American or an Australian. The unfortunate husbands are penalised because, on the ground of desertion, they cannot get a divorce for three years. In one unit alone I believe there are some 40 men in that unfortunate position, all round about 38 years of age. They are anxious to settle down, re-marry and have a family, but under the existing law they are debarred from divorcing their wives until three years have elapsed. I know of instances in which lawyers have written to the husbands conveying a message from the wives saying, "I do not intend to live with you any longer." The soldiers have spent years fighting for our country, and when they find that their domestic affairs can no longer be tolerated they have to wait three years for their freedom.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: They can get a divorce on different grounds.

Mr. MANN: There is a certain amount of modesty in some men. They do not desire to apply for their freedom on the ground of the misconduct of their wives with other men. They find it too embarrassing. If the wife agrees to a divorce on the ground of her desertion and there is definite proof that she has left the husband, it is still impossible to break the marriage ties under a term of three years.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: It may be possible to prove that the wife is mixed up with some other man.

Mr. MANN: Some of the soldiers do not desire to prove such a case. There is a large number of men like that in the Forces today.

Mr. Watts: They would have to prove adultery.

Mr. MANN: That is not so easy to prove in all instances unless a case is framed. I trust the Government will bring down some legislation to provide a way out for these men.

When I was in Broken Hill recently I saw the most modern hospital in Australia. This cost a quarter of a million pounds and serves a population of 25,000 people. Of the total, a sum of £140,000 was paid by

that wonderful organisation which is so often sneered at by people, namely, the Broken Hill Proprietary.

Mr. J. Hegney: That was out of the profits they made last year.

Mr. MANN: I do not hold shares in the Broken Hill Company, but I admire an organisation that can treat its men as the Broken Hill treats its employees. Why have there been no strikes at Whyalla or Broken Hill? It is because the men are satisfied with the treatment they receive from the company. Any person who holds shares in the Broken Hill has paid through the nose in taxation.

Mr. J. Hegney: After providing for close on £1,000,000 profit.

Mr. MANN: I do not care what anybody says about the Broken Hill Company. I have no brief for that concern, but it has done a marvellous war job, and Essington Lewis, who, thank God, helped to make Australia's war effort, is a product of the Broken Hill Company. That company produces and sells steel cheaper than it is sold in any other part of the world. The hospital to which I have referred is most modern and it cost £250,000. I saw the quarters and conditions supplied there for the nursing staff, and they were remarkably good. When I returned to Western Australia I visited the Perth Public Hospital—I wish the Minister for Health was present to hear this—and saw the conditions of the nursing staff here.

The Minister for Lands: Did you see the plans for the new nursing quarters?

Mr. MANN: No.

The Minister for Lands: You are like a lot of other people. We have been waiting five years to get the hospital completed.

Mr. MANN: The nurses' quarters at Collie are excellent, and are the most modern in Western Australia. If Collie can have excellent quarters for the nursing staff the same conditions should apply here. The member for Collie can be proud of the quarters there, but at the Perth Hospital and the King Edward we should, for a long time past, have had much better conditions for the nursing staff. If we do not improve those conditions we will not get the girls to stay there, and I hope they are able to approach the Arbitration Court for an award. I am not so much afraid regarding the

younger girls, who may marry, but the conditions are not fair to those who do not marry but remain there over a number of years. As I say, the Broken Hill Company can find £250,000 for a hospital for a population of 25,000, and similar conditions should apply to the hospitals here. I have a small amendment to the Address-in-reply.

The Minister for Lands: Another one? It is becoming a habit.

The Minister for Works: This is developing into a racket.

Mr. MANN: I move an amendment:

That the following words be added to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply:—"That this House considers that as it is now becoming increasingly clear that greater production is vital to the post-war interests of this country and of the British Commonwealth, your Government should take immediate steps to inform the Commonwealth Government of Australia that in the interests of production it is vital (a) that all personnel in the Forces who can be absorbed at once into industry will be released without delay, there being no justification for the continuance of restrictional control in regard to the release of such persons; and (b) that no such person in Western Australia on leave should be obliged to return to his or her unit for discharge, thus wasting valuable time and money."

I move this amendment in all sincerity, as I think the question of the release of Servicemen is a vital one now. What are the facts as to why men are not being released from the Forces more quickly? Is it a fear of the Commonwealth Government that, owing to munitions factories closing down, there will be too much unemployment, or is it just the usual red tape such as soldiers of the last war experienced? Is it just the extraordinary control of Military Departments, by heads of departments, and the usual red tape which was so pronounced in the Australian Forces, or what else is behind it? Why cannot the Government now release these men to private industry or to jobs that are waiting for them? Many farmers and businessmen in my electorate are anxious to have men released from the Forces. The system of points, as published in "The West Australian," appears to me to be the most stupid idea imaginable, and I think it is probably an idea from Dr. Coombs, as the Minister said the other night—

The Minister for Lands: I never mentioned Dr. Coombs. I do not know him.

Mr. MANN: Is he in charge, or is it one of the professorial staff who is in charge of the scheme of demobilisation? The points system is based on years of service, the number in the family, and so on. A man who is being discharged may be going to sweep the streets or do some other menial work, whereas another man, whose release is sought, may be required to fill a key position in a factory. I think it would be much better, from the point of view of production, if the Commonwealth Government would release men when their releases were applied for. The intake at Karrakatta during the war was at the rate of 2,000 per week, but at the present time the rate of discharge is 26 per week. I met a soldier the other day, who had been a prisoner-of-war in Germany for four years. That man reported at Karrakatta every morning at 8 o'clock for ten days for his discharge, but surely if men could be pushed into the Army so quickly there could now be some speeding up of the examination and x-ray of men for release. If that is not done many men will have to wait years for releases, and will become sick and tired of not being able to leave the Army without losing their deferred pay and the possibility of repatriation benefits. Those men are shackled today, and the taxpayers are paying for their keep in camps. There is an enormous waste of money while industry is waiting to absorb discharged personnel.

Is the Government afraid that when the munition factories are closed unemployment will become too general? Apparently there has been no preparation for the present situation, on the part of the Commonwealth Government, to handle repatriation, because the cessation of hostilities has come so quickly. After the last war the same kind of red tape prevailed in England. Numbers of Australian soldiers were waiting in England for their discharges, but were told that they must go back to France to be discharged. The men said, "We will not. We will defy you, if necessary." Fortunately some officer of higher rank came along and said to the men, "Pile your arms and I will give you my word that you will be discharged in England and sent back to Australia, and not back to France." When I returned from the last war there was a job waiting for me, and four days after I



arrived back in Australia I was able to go to my job. If the rate of release is to be so small there will be many men kept in the Services for a long time, and I can assure members that there will be great bitterness among those who desire to get out of the Forces.

I know the Australian soldier. I knew him in the last war and I know him in this. Now that the war is over, they are not anxious to remain in uniform. They want to return to civilian life and to enjoy their home surroundings as formerly. They want to return to their positions and they have their eyes on their future. They do not wish to remain in the Army at this stage, with no chance of any progress. The position that exists today is simply scandalous. Or is the explanation this: There is a bureaucratic body of men in control and they desire to retain their positions as long as they possibly can, for they recognise they have good jobs. We know there has been a lot of graft going on in Australia, and all that has been done has not been of the best. Many of the men in control know that when the Servicemen are released, they themselves will lose the best jobs they ever had in their lives. Many men have been in high positions such as they could never hold down in peacetime. Is that why there is no greater attempt to release men, but rather every effort made to retain them in the Services? It may sound rather extreme and I do not wish to be unkind in my remarks, but I am convinced that there is something behind all this. The war is over. Why are not these men released?

Mr. Withers: They have their jobs to come back to when they return.

Mr. MANN: We know that many of these soldiers when they return have jobs to go to, and their employers will take them back.

Mr. Thorn: But you are not referring to that phase, but to those who are in control.

Mr. MANN: That is so. I am talking about these despots and bureaucrats who are holding down big jobs.

Mr. Rodoreda: You mean the Army heads?

Mr. MANN: Yes, one or two amongst others.

Mr. Rodoreda: Why do you not say so?

Mr. Thorn: That is the point the member for Beverley is making.

Mr. Watts: He is referring to some of those fat majors.

Mr. Thorn: And many others.

Mr. MANN: Is that the explanation of it, or is it merely a further indication of the extraordinary idea the Government has regarding nationalisation of this and that? Does it want to nationalise the control of these men? There is something radically wrong. From time to time we hear urgent requests for increased production. We are asked to promote shearing operations, the production of food, and so on. I assure the House that the farmers are stuck for shearers, and that is very definitely the position. We must realise that not only the farmers, but men in every walk of life will not accept dictation from the manpower authorities in times of peace as they did when the war was in progress.

Take the position of our secondary industries! They will not be content to remain under the domination of the manpower authorities. If the Government wants farmers to harvest their crops and shear their flocks, it will not be done under existing conditions. At this late hour of the season the position is emphasised, and I can tell the House that the fallowing necessary for next year's crops is not being done, not only because of the adverse weather conditions, but because of the lack of manpower. I have moved the amendment in the hope that the Government will be induced to take the sensible course of releasing more men so that the work involved in harvesting, shearing and so on will be carried out and thus enable us to enjoy increased production. As things are, the old conditions go on. I spoke to a business man in Perth last week who told me that he wanted the release of a number of men for work in his factory. The men are available.

Mr. J. Hegney: They are in Japan!

Mr. MANN: They are not. Don't talk such rot! The men I refer to are in Australia. What does the hon. member know about it? He knows nothing whatever about soldiering. The Minister for Lands is an old soldier and he knows all about the red tape associated with Army control. So does every other soldier-member of this House. Again I ask, if the military authorities were able to take in 2,000 men a week at Karrakatta during wartime, why can they not be

equally expeditious in their release of men at this stage? Unless something is done about the matter, when releases do take place what a disturbing position will arise! As an old soldier, I warn Parliament of what is likely to happen. Production is vital to the well-being of this State. If the authorities are going to play about with these men and fool them regarding their release, trouble will come.

Mr. Rodoreda: You think so?

Mr. MANN: If the Commonwealth Government will not expedite the matter, then I suggest that the State Government should do something to prod the Commonwealth authorities into action. Have we lost the last vestige of principle that we must lie down and take it from the Commonwealth? If I know the Minister for Works, who is now Acting Premier, he will talk to the Commonwealth authorities in the right way. Treatment like this may be all right for some parts of Australia, but it is no good for Western Australia. I have moved the amendment in the belief that the men should be released as soon as possible.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: Everyone agrees with that.

Mr. MANN: Then why has it not been done?

The Minister for Lands: But they have not signed the peace treaty with Japan yet, and you know it!

Mr. MANN: Perhaps so.

Mr. Thorn: I will tell the Minister something about that.

The Minister for Lands: Then do so now.

Mr. MANN: The fact remains that Japan is definitely on the rocks and is finished; we have the stranglehold on her. The lend-lease operations have brought home to us what the Mother Country means to Australia, and we must now recognise that the Old Country will be the biggest buyer of our goods seeing that lend-lease has been so arbitrarily withdrawn. I submit the amendment to the House hoping that it will be agreed to this afternoon and then placed immediately before the Commonwealth Government.

**THE ACTING PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke — Northam — on amendment) [5.58]: I think it must be obvious that the Parliamentary members of the Country and

Democratic League, who have seats in this House, are determined to make the Address-in-reply look untidy by tying to it an amendment of one kind or another. This is the third amendment that members opposite have moved within a period of a few days.

Mr. Needham: There will be more of them yet. The member for Williams-Narrogin is next.

The ACTING PREMIER: Everything that was said in connection with the two preceding amendments could be stated in connection with that now under discussion. I am not quite sure what particular objective the members concerned have in mind. They themselves are the only ones who know what that objective is.

Mr. Mann: My objective is sincerity, with a view to getting the men released.

Mr. Doney: And to secure the uplift of industry.

The ACTING PREMIER: I find it somewhat difficult completely to accept the idea that all three amendments moved have been presented entirely with a view to benefiting the State in some way.

Mr. Thorn: That is for want of understanding, I suppose.

The ACTING PREMIER: It may be because of a fairly deep understanding of the methods which some of the members of the party concerned adopt from time to time.

Mr. Mann: Do not lose your charitableness!

The ACTING PREMIER: I intend neither to lose any of my charitableness nor to follow the bad example of the member for Beverley and lose my temper.

Mr. Doney: But you will deal with the amendment on its merits.

The ACTING PREMIER: Paragraph (a) of the amendment now before the House reads—

That all personnel in the Forces who can be absorbed at once into industry will be released without delay, there being no justification for the continuance of restrictional control in regard to the release of such persons.

It is generally true that every man considers he is able to do much better than the man who is responsible for doing a particular job.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: That even applies in football, does it not?

The ACTING PREMIER: Most people feel that, if they were only charged with the responsibility of doing a certain job, they could do it ever so much better than the man or men who have to carry the responsibility for it. Who is there in this Chamber that can say with any degree of certainty that there is no justification for the continuance of any restrictional control at present regarding the release of Australian men in the various Services?

Mr. Doney: That view is not set out in the amendment.

The ACTING PREMIER: It is definitely and clearly set out. For the benefit of the member for Williams-Narrogin, I will read that paragraph again—

That all personnel in the Forces who can be absorbed at once into industry will be released without delay, there being no justification for the continuance of restrictional control in regard to the release of such persons.

The Minister for Lands: Perhaps that is not what he meant.

The ACTING PREMIER: Only a few days have elapsed since hostilities between the Allied Nations and Japan came to an end. So far as we are aware, the Allied Forces have not actually landed in Japan to establish an adequate army of occupation in order that conditions might be enforced under which the leaders of the Allied Nations might control Japan for the purpose mainly of de-militarising that nation and secondly for the purpose, I should hope, associated with an endeavour to direct the minds of the great masses of the Japanese people along more constructive and peaceful avenues in the future. Who can say it might not happen that a considerable number of Australian fighting men will not be directed to become part of the army of occupation?

Mr. McDonald: The number to be sent is 10,000, is it not?

The ACTING PREMIER: Whether 2,000, 10,000 or 50,000 does not matter for the purpose of discussing this amendment.

Mr. Abbott: They will all be volunteers.

The ACTING PREMIER: That may be so.

The Minister for Lands: That would make it worse.

Mr. Thorn: No, it would not.

Mr. Abbott: This assumes that they are to apply.

The ACTING PREMIER: It assumes nothing of the sort. The paragraph I have read declares unequivocally and without any qualification that "all personnel in the Forces who can be absorbed at once into industry will be released without delay."

Mr. Thorn: That means the men with jobs to go to, does it not?

The ACTING PREMIER: Of course, but many of the men with jobs to go to might not wish to return to those jobs. They might prefer to go to Japan as part of the Allied army of occupation.

Mr. Thorn: A small percentage might.

The ACTING PREMIER: It does not matter whether the percentage be large or small. A number might want to take advantage of what I should say would be a marvellous opportunity and would volunteer to go and, if accepted, would go.

The Minister for Lands: If I were there, I would go, and so would the member for Beverley.

The ACTING PREMIER: Apart from this, there are the general aspects. I repeat that no member is sufficiently well informed of the actual situation as to be able to say that all men in the Forces who have jobs to return to in this State should be released immediately. Men in the Services are located in various islands, and it might well be that the Australian Army authorities will, for the time being, have important work in the direction of maintaining order and doing other things in those islands. How can we, as individuals far removed from the scene of operations and with an altogether incomplete knowledge of the facts, coldly declare that all of those men should be released immediately and hurried back to Western Australia for the purpose of taking occupations in the civilian activities and industries of the State? We are not competent to say that, and therefore we would be placing ourselves in an entirely wrong position if we made a declaration along the lines set out in the first paragraph of the amendment. We all know that the member for Beverley is a most impetuous person.

The Minister for Lands: Irresponsible.

The ACTING PREMIER: But we all very greatly admire him, despite that fact. I have no doubt that had he the power to do so, he would issue an edict or proclamation now—

Mr. J. Hegney: To disband the Army.

The ACTING PREMIER:—perhaps so—directing, under pain of great punishment, that all of the men concerned should immediately be rushed back to Western Australia, irrespective of the results which might ensue in the places where those men now are because of their being suddenly, and without warning, brought back to their own State. I submit that we are in no position to make a judgment on this point, and therefore it would be foolish of us—we would be placing ourselves in an entirely wrong position—to carry this amendment. From my experience I have found it always advisable to be in possession, if possible, of all the facts of the situation before reaching a decision on it; if it be impossible to obtain all the facts, then to obtain the greatest possible number of facts, study them as closely as possible, and make a decision. That course certainly is not being followed this afternoon.

We have an amendment thrown at us without any notice, without any warning, calling upon us to make a tremendously important decision, and we are not in possession of any facts except those on one side of the situation, that side being the urgent necessity for additional manpower to be provided for the industries of this State. We have no facts whatever about the other side of the situation, no facts of any kind about the actual requirements of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force in the areas outside Australia where these men are stationed and where they may be doing many things of which we are not aware. It may quite easily be that Western Australia and the other States of the Commonwealth, if they were in possession of all the facts of the position in many of the devastated islands north of Australia, would say that our Servicemen there should remain in order to assist in carrying out many of the urgent requirements existing there at the present time.

We seem to be overlooking entirely the fact that many of the islands in which these men are located have suffered severe damage from the attacks made upon them by the enemy. Consequently we are in no position to agree to a suggestion of this kind. If we did, we might be doing a grave wrong to the men in the Services and might be doing an even graver wrong to the people in those islands who have suffered the des-

truction and horrors of warfare. So I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the majority of the members of this Chamber take a reasonable and broad view of the general situation as far as we are able to understand it. If they do so, I feel confident—even sure—that this amendment will be lost.

Mr. Thorn: What about dealing with the urgency of these releases? That is mentioned in the amendment.

The ACTING PREMIER: Mr. Speaker, we have dealt with the urgency of releases of men from the Fighting Services on many occasions. The State Government has made representations to the Commonwealth Government with a view to securing the release of as many men as possible from the Services. Individual members of the House have done the same thing themselves time and again. I would suggest that no effort has been spared either by the State Government or by the individual members of Parliament to obtain the release of the greatest number of men possible from the Fighting Services. But here, again, I suggest that we ourselves are not always the best judges of the situation. In fact, I would suggest that if the Navy, the Army and the Air Force had during the war released all the men for whom applications for release were made, there would be no Navy, no Army, and no Air Force left.

Mr. Watts: That is not the point.

Mr. Doney: It is an exaggeration.

The ACTING PREMIER: It might be a slight exaggeration, but nevertheless it is true to an extent. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the same practice was followed in every Allied country; and if all the releases asked for in all the Allied countries had been granted, then, instead of celebrating victory a few days ago, we would have been defeated many months ago because we would not have had the manpower in the Fighting Services to win the war.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

The ACTING PREMIER: I know of no worse time to try to make a speech than immediately after a meal! Therefore my remaining remarks will be few. Paragraph (b) of the amendment reads—

That no such person in Western Australia on leave should be obliged to return to his or her unit for discharge, thus wasting valuable time and money.

Generally speaking, there would be little or no objection to that proposal, but it is unnecessary to add even that portion of the amendment to the Address-in-reply. If the hon. member concerned wishes to do something along those lines by way of moving a motion it could be fully debated and probably supported. During his recent visit to the Eastern States, the Premier had detailed discussions with the Prime Minister regarding the release of Service personnel; and if I remember rightly, one of the points he was going to discuss with the Prime Minister was very much along the lines of that set out in paragraph (b) of the amendment, which I now ask the House to defeat.

**MR. WATTS** (Katanning—on amendment) [7.33]: I find myself in disagreement with the Acting Premier. He began his observations by some personal remarks concerning the member for Beverley with regard to which I think it more advisable to save the time of the House rather than to attempt to make the reply which, in my opinion, the hon. gentleman deserves. I think the reason for the amendment moved by the member for Beverley is a point that has been entirely overlooked by the Acting Premier, although I thought it was made quite clear by the mover himself. That point is that discharges from the Australian Armed Forces are to be regulated on what is known as the points system. As the hon. member indicated, the points system practically amounts to the release of personnel on the grounds of their age, family responsibilities, and length of service. It is perfectly true that length of service is a strong ground to be taken into consideration. It is also true that family responsibilities must be regarded as of importance because of the needs of family life, and because of the great cost of maintaining a member of the Forces who has large family responsibilities as against the cost of maintaining a single man. But in recent days we have come upon a state of affairs which I think very few of us expected. I refer to the cessation of what is known as lend-lease.

We have all read, I think, with varying thoughts on the subject, the reports as to the extreme difficulty that will be experienced in Great Britain and in European countries in obtaining the supplies necessary for their

subsistence when lend-lease is stopped. It has undoubtedly doubled the difficulties of our relations with the Old Country. In order to maintain life in their people, I doubt whether it is possible for them to take into consideration a further reduction of the ration available. If that were done, they would practically be reduced, as I understand the position—and indeed as today's reports indicate—to a condition bordering on starvation. Whether or not this state of affairs is going to have any great effect upon European countries, I am not in a position to say. If it is going further to restrict their supplies not only of food but also of raw materials for other purposes, the position is all the more serious.

But let us confine ourselves to production as affecting our own relations and our good customers in the British Isles. They are going to find life as difficult as it has been for many years past because of war circumstances, the tremendous loss of shipping, and other difficulties. There was some prospect of their situation being relieved, if, in conjunction with better sea transport and more of it, they could have been assured of supplies from the American continent without the obligation of having to find money for them. It seems doubtful whether, under international financial arrangements that appear to exist, they are in a position to buy what they might have acquired by other means under the lend-lease system. So it seems to me—and I believe it seems to the member for Beverley—that it becomes rather our duty immediately, and as far as possible, to increase the supplies that we might make available for transport overseas to a country which, in view of our relationship with it both nationally and financially, is able to make arrangements fairly easily with us to buy our goods of which it is in sore need.

Having arrived at that conclusion, one immediately comes to the point of what can be done to increase quickly the supplies that are available. It is not my opinion alone, but it is the opinion of the Premier and his deputy and of every Minister here and, I expect, of every member of this House that the difficulties of supplying foodstuffs from this country to wherever our customers may require them has been considerably accentuated by the shortage of the requisite manpower; and not only of manpower for the actual production itself, but also of man-

power in industry generally to do the many things that are required in order to speed up that production. Machinery is required to be produced and repaired. Other work of a maintenance character has been held over and has to be attended to in order that that production may be advanced. Materials that we can produce, when manpower is again available, are required for these purposes. In the ordinary way, as I see it, it might have been very nice for our Governments to have so arranged the demobilisation of the Forces as to be most convenient for the persons concerned therein, and to have disregarded for the time being, any question of increased production except in so far as the release, by the means proposed, would have made additional manpower slowly available for that increased production.

But, as I have said in recent days we have come across a state of affairs which in my view, and I think in that of most members here, will cause us to re-cast our opinions on that subject. We are suggesting, through the amendment moved by the member for Beverley, that the Commonwealth Government should be asked to re-cast its opinions on this subject because, I think, Western Australia is specially entitled to make representations of this character through its State Government. We have heard repeatedly, and we do not deny them, statements made by members of the Government sitting opposite, that Western Australia has contributed in manpower and cash resources out of proportion to its population. It has, on the other hand, in normal times been the greatest producer per head of population in the Commonwealth. On all these counts, therefore, I suggest that Western Australia, through its Government, is entitled to make representations to the Commonwealth Government on the subject of release of manpower for production purposes. If Western Australia cannot do it and if we are not justified in doing it then no-one is justified in doing it! Let us consider for a moment this points system, which was fully set out in "The West Australian" of the 22nd August, 1945, and is as follows:—

Demobilisation of the Australian Forces will be based on a points system under which points will be allotted for length of service, age and family responsibility. Details were published in "The West Australian" last Saturday. The

Prime Minister (Mr. Chifley) in announcing the decisions, said that the system would be fair to members of the Forces and would allow of orderly demobilisation. Demobilisation would proceed by predetermined stages which would begin as early as possible—not later than October 1, 1945.

Until the scheme began, said Mr. Chifley, the present special releases would be accelerated. The priority system for demobilisation of men would depend on length of service, age at enlistment and family responsibilities. In general men would be made available for demobilisation in the order of priority scores—the higher the score the earlier the release—assessed on the following basis: Each month of service to count equally with each year of age as at the beginning of full-time service, but the release of those with dependants would be accelerated by counting each month of service as time and a half for the purpose of allotting points for length of service.

Then there is a table which indicates that no regard, as far as one can discover, is being paid to the speed with which an applicant for release can be absorbed into industry, nor the needs of the industry into which he can be absorbed. It seems to most of us, in view of all the circumstances that have arisen, that there is room for an alteration in this scheme, to take into consideration the necessity for the quick return of certain skilled persons to certain industries where they are required, whether those industries be primary, from the point of view of food, or secondary from the point of view of providing the wherewithal for the carrying on of production in general.

That, I believe, is the groundwork of the amendment that has been moved. It is with the intention of ensuring, so far as one can do so, that the best possible manpower will be available as quickly as can be for the industries that are required in order not only that we may relieve our friends and customers overseas, as far as we can, but also—a more worldly motive—that we may profit where we can by the fact that they require these supplies. It seems to me that it would be both necessary and desirable to bring this point of view under the notice of the Commonwealth Government in the interests, first, of our own State, for the reasons I have mentioned, and secondly, in the interests of the Commonwealths, both Australian and British. So I offer no apologies for supporting the amendment.

I wish now to turn to another aspect of the release of members of the Forces. We can make some estimate of the time within which all members, of all ages, whether with dependants or without, will be released to the industries in which they may be able to regain their employment, because we are told from the statements made by the Federal Ministers that roughly 700,000 personnel are to be demobilised, and that it is intended to bring about a demobilisation effort at the rate of approximately 5,000 a day. It is not expected that that number can be exceeded. Let us put the best face on the matter and assume that that number is reached. That means that 5,000 a day will be demobilised, so that 140 days will be required to demobilise these 700,000 people. I doubt very much whether that rate could or should be achieved.

There will be other considerations when we get some way on with this question of demobilisation, but let us assume that everything goes well with the plans that have been pronounced and that only 140 days will be utilised for the purpose of effecting these releases from the Forces. That is a matter of five months during which some people who could be immediately absorbed into industry, and for whom there has been a demand for many weeks and months past, will be retained in the Forces not serving—I think we can agree—as useful a purpose as they would if they were restored, in quick time, to the industries in which they are particularly skilled. We must view the position in that light. Should we or should we not do something to ensure that a greater number of skilled men are made available in the industries in which they are required in quicker time than will be the case under the system described in the points programme? I think we are fully justified in making this suggestion, for the discharge of personnel without returning them to the places from which they have come. There is, of course, as the Acting Premier said, little divergence on that question, so I do not propose to dwell upon it.

There is another aspect, affecting production, to which I will refer; that is, the incidence of taxation. We find that we are severely affected by it. It is restricting production in Australia and will restrict it still more in the years to come, unless we

can bring about a state of affairs where it will be substantially reduced. To enable me to put into words what I have in mind I will ask the House to accept this addition to the amendment. I, therefore, move:—

That the amendment be amended by adding the following paragraph:—(c) that the incidence of seasonal conditions and the high rates of taxation will so retard production as to cause in Western Australia a state of affairs in the rural industries similar to that which required the provision of doles and statutory protection against creditors in previous years, and that therefore immediate steps should be taken to relieve persons engaged in those industries and affected by such conditions from taxation to such an extent as will enable them successfully to operate.

I have, in this House, previously drawn attention to the fact that there are two kinds of taxation which today are collecting from the people something like £325,000,000. One is direct, principally composed of income taxation. The other is indirect, largely composed of items such as sales tax and high protection tariffs. The sales tax, in particular, must have a retarding effect on production. It varies up to 25 per cent. On some items it is 12½ per cent., and on others, 15 per cent., and, in consequence, the cost of materials necessary for production is being rapidly and continually increased. It is all very well to decree that we shall have a continuance of price control. I have frequently said in this Chamber that I think price control should exist, and should be dealt with by the Government of this State, but price control does not successfully deal with sales tax, because whatever the controlled price of the article may be, on top of it there is the tax and that tax has been made much more severe in recent years, with the result that the cost of materials, the cost of production, and the cost of the finished article is substantially increased, increased far more than by the actual tax that has been imposed. The effect on the rural industries is very pronounced, and the effect on all industries is pronounced.

On top of that, there is the position which is going to arise—as my amendment says—owing to the incidence of seasonal conditions. Last year, in many districts, there was a reasonable amount of profit to be made by those engaged in rural industry. They were able to put in their taxation re-

turns an amount on which they will have to pay substantial taxation in the year now coming, and they are going to be in a difficult position when it comes to paying it, because it is doubtful whether there will be much return from a great number of the farming properties in this State. Above everything else, we have to contend with the situation in the North-Western areas of the State, where specific representations are being made in regard to relief from this particular type of tax. We find, there, that at a meeting which was reported in the "Mining and Commercial Review" of this month, after a lengthy discussion it was unanimously agreed that the Government be asked to give relief from taxation in the North-West for a period of 20 years, it being pointed out that not only at present is it very difficult for pastoralists, but on receiving a heavy woolelip which would carry them through two or three bad years, they were taxed so heavily on the good year that they had very little left to carry on with.

Again, in mining, it was stressed that where it was possible to get £250,000 invested in mining, on an assured return of £60,000 per annum, all the company would receive was just over £5,000, the balance being consumed in taxation, so that very few companies would risk capital under the present system. Also, the meeting considered that population would automatically increase if taxation were removed, through an influx of people eager to avoid taxation, and capital being invested for the same reason. There is no doubt that the system which has been adopted has had a very severe effect on the two classes of taxpayers I have mentioned. It has had a severe effect also on other sections. I am not for one moment suggesting that relief should not be afforded to those other sections, but I do not think at this stage I should enter into an argument, as I am endeavouring to deal with the particular aspect of production, and no other. During the war, we have had much experience of the difficulty of obtaining any reduction for what is now known as deferred maintenance.

It has been impossible to do repairs and replacements that are necessary, and because it has been impossible to do them no money has been expended on them, and so no deductions have been made for what ought to have been done. The property has

mostly deteriorated. I know the Government has invented a way whereby this deferred maintenance can be allowed for, provided a cash payment is made to the Government of the amount of deferred maintenance claimed, which it holds for a considerable time. I suggest that is a most unsatisfactory system, because the very people who want to claim the deferred maintenance are, in many cases, those who have not the money to pay the deposit, or who would be hard put to it to find the money and would perhaps have to borrow from creditors who are already pressing for what is owed them. That is particularly true in the North-West, in a great many instances, so if we are to increase production we must take that into consideration. Losses can only be set off against profits over a period of four years, and in those areas it is many years since there was a reasonable profit to set anything against.

From what I understand of the taxation laws, it seems that the losses they have made are gone from them, because, if they have been making a small profit in recent years, it is much smaller than the loss they could have written off had their profits been greater, because there has been a lag of more than four years since those losses were made, so the whole scheme seems to me to require careful consideration, and representations to the taxation authorities at Canberra on this and allied subjects. Otherwise I am convinced that we shall reduce many of these people to the state they were in 12 or 13 years ago, when we were compelled to pass Farmers' Debts Adjustment Acts, to appoint Royal Commissions to inquire into the pastoral industry, and to pass legislation of similar types in order to cope with the peculiar problems that were affecting these people. We shall get back to that state of affairs, because we will find people heavily charged with deferred maintenance, which must be done if they are to carry on production, and involved in the payment of taxation in respect of income which they were unable to pay out of current revenue because of the seasonal and other conditions which have affected them, and generally getting into an unfinancial state which might very easily involve a return to the same type of experience as we had in 1932 and subsequent years, over a long period. That is why I ask the House to add these words to the amendment moved by the member for Beverley as



another angle from which attention may be directed to the proposals of that hon. member, so that they may be more effectively implemented.

*Point of Order.*

The Minister for Lands: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I desire a ruling from you. The position is getting complicated, and members do not know where they stand. Are we now bound to speak to the amendment on the amendment and if so, when we dispose of the former one way or another, can we then discuss the amendment moved by the member for Beverley? Can we discuss the whole proposition, if the amendment is carried?

Mr. Speaker: My ruling is that at present the only matter to be discussed is the amendment on the amendment, as moved by the Leader of the Opposition. When it is disposed of, then the amendment by the member for Beverley will be under discussion.

Mr. Doney: I think the Minister for Lands knew that before the ruling was given!

*Debate Resumed.*

**THE ACTING PREMIER** (Hon. A. R. G. Hawke—Northam—on amendment on amendment) [8.3]: I can quite see that it would be easily possible to carry the Address-in-reply debate on until Christmas by adopting the method of moving amendments and then submitting amendments on the amendments. It would also be possible for any one member to speak 10, 20 or even 50 times during the course of the debate. I think the majority of members will probably be anxious that as little time as possible be devoted to discussing this particular amendment. In essence it asks for an expression of opinion from the House that the taxation imposed upon people engaged in the rural industries should be reduced very substantially.

Mr. J. Hegney: A mere sectional consideration.

The **ACTING PREMIER**: The amendment on the amendment asks for an expression of opinion that would be entirely sectional and which, if the responsible Commonwealth authority took notice of it to the extent of acting upon it, would confer a sectional advantage upon some of the people of the State and no benefit whatsoever upon other sections of the community suffering

equally under the burden of taxation. It may even be conceivable that if the course suggested were adopted, it would mean an increase in the burden of taxation upon other sections. I therefore ask the House to defeat the amendment.

Amendment on amendment put and negatived.

**MR. PERKINS** (York—on amendment) [8.5]: There is some justification for a debate on the amendment because it is a matter of urgent importance at the moment that the difficulty it stresses should be dealt with, and apparently the House will not have another opportunity to discuss the question for some considerable time.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: At any rate, it is not the responsibility of this House.

Mr. PERKINS: Unless the matter is attended to promptly, serious damage may result to the economy of Western Australia. In his reply to the amendment of the member for Beverley, the Acting Premier dealt to a small degree with the substance of it, and sheltered to a great extent behind its actual wording. Perhaps the amendment as set out may not perfectly express the opinions voiced by the member for Beverley and held by others in this House, but it is hardly the proper way to deal with it to criticise the opinions expressed and combat them by attempting to defeat the whole amendment. Much the better way would be to alter such words as are embodied in it that do not adequately express the meaning indicated by the member for Beverley in the course of his speech, and so obtain a proper expression of opinion of this Chamber.

The Minister for Lands: Surely we must vote on the amendment and not on the member for Beverley's speech!

Mr. PERKINS: If an alteration in the wording will better express the views of the House, I trust the Minister for Lands will move the necessary amendment, and I think he will receive the support of Opposition members.

The Minister for Lands: I will not interfere with the hon. member's work; I know him too well.

Mr. PERKINS: I speak with particular knowledge of the country angle and not so much from the standpoint of the city. I am aware, however, that there is good ground for the member for Beverley's expression of

opinion that the chaos that exists now will become worse unless there is an alteration in Government policy in the near future with regard to manpower difficulties and releases from the Armed Forces. The Leader of the Opposition set out fairly well the difficulties that are likely to be associated with the points system for releases. Under that system provision is made for the men with long service and with family responsibilities as well. I have no quarrel with the system so far as it can be applied, but it will be a very small service to those men if we release them for resumption of their civil life, if civil life is not geared so as to receive them. So far as I can see, that will be the position unless there is an alteration in the present manpower set-up. I do not know how many members of this House have visited the Manpower Directorate's Office in recent times, but since V.P. day the manpower staff seem to have no idea where their responsibilities begin and where they end. There is almost complete chaos in that respect.

Mr. Seward: They never did know.

Mr. PERKINS: Such powers of direction as they possessed have largely ceased, and certainly employees are ignoring the Manpower Office at the present juncture. The manpower office has no power at this stage to obtain men for industry, notwithstanding the announcements that have been made by the Commonwealth Government in the Press in recent issues. I know from my experience of certain cases I have taken up that it is impossible to obtain key men at present unless the Army is prepared to release them on compassionate grounds. Certainly the manpower authorities have no power at present to obtain the release of these men. The secretary-engineer of one of the largest road boards in this State has been away on active service for a considerable time, and in my opinion should have been back in his peacetime job some time ago if it were at all possible for the Army authorities to replace him in the work he is doing for them. Until he is replaced, it will be impossible for the local authority to go ahead with its normal works programme. At the moment the acting officer, who has not had extensive experience of local government work, has given notice because the job is only a temporary one for him, and so the local authority will be without the services of a secretary-engineer at all.

How is it possible for this local authority, which under normal conditions employs labour to the extent of about 30 men and possibly in the post-war period will require many more, to do any planning whatever for post-war work? Unless that man is released, it will be impossible for those who are to be released under the points system to return to that area and find work under the local authority. That is one concrete case. The same thing applies to a lesser degree to foremen and other key men working for local authorities who are also held up in the Forces and cannot be replaced by other labour. Some of them should be released, and I think the amendment gives the House an opportunity to make representations to the Commonwealth Government to free at least some of those men. So far as I can judge, there is no provision at present for obtaining any of those men other than those who return of their own volition and are released on compassionate grounds.

With regard to country businesses, the position is somewhat similar. A large country co-operative store normally employs five men and a manager. Four of those men have been serving with the Forces, leaving one man who is over age and the manager, plus the female members of the staff. It is impossible for that store to make any preparation in the shape of post-war planning until it gets some of the normal staff back. It might be considered possible for the store to employ temporary staff pending the release of men under the points system. But how can that be done without permanent men who are away with the Forces, have repatriation rights, and will be released sooner or later under the points system, and who, as soon as they return, should have their jobs so that the temporary employees will have to be put off? Until we have some more accurate knowledge as to how men will be released to fill these key positions, it is impossible for such businesses to proceed with post-war planning.

The position in rural work is similar. There are about 800 or 900 applications at the Manpower Office for men to return to rural industry—men who have worked in rural industry most of their lives and who normally will return to those positions in the post-war period.

Mr. Doney: Have those been recommended by the Manpower Department?

Mr. PERKINS: I cannot say; I am not aware whether they have even been dealt with. At the moment, I understand that provision is made for only 60 men released on occupational grounds for rural work in this State, covering all branches of farming, shearing, etc. It is impossible to get the industry functioning again whilst this uncertainty exists. A category of urgent importance at present is shearing. I have a clipping from "The West Australian" newspaper of recent date containing advertisements for shearers. There is a whole list of them. One of the stock agents is advertising for shearers for the agricultural areas generally. The Pastoralists' Bureau is advertising for shearers for the pastoral districts generally. Judging by reports that have reached me, there are complaints from all over the country about shearing being held up through lack of shearers. I saw a man last Saturday who has a four-stand electric plant. Two shearers who were working for him, I understand, left him at the beginning of last week, and his operations were held up later in the week by the wet weather. He started shearing last Monday on his own—one shearer for a four-stand plant.

I am given to understand by the Manpower Office that at the moment it has no shearers on its books, and that an advertisement in the newspaper brings a very meagre response. Here we have this list of advertisements for shearers required immediately. With the unfavourable shearing weather that has prevailed so far this season and the likelihood of grass seeds affecting the wool in the not distant future, the position is urgent. I know there is a number of shearers in military units stationed round about Perth who have no possibility, so far as I can learn, of getting anywhere near the forward lines or being used in the Islands. These men are anxious to get into rural industry and have made application to commanding officers to be released for shearing work. No doubt they would be approved by the Manpower Office if any quota were given for the release of shearers. Yet those applications have been turned down one after the other. The question of securing releases by the Army units themselves is most complex. I heard earlier this evening of an excellent shearer whom I know personally and who applied to be released to go shearing. He has a

job to go to, but his application was turned down by the commanding officer. Yet another man in the unit is being released in order to ride racehorses at Kalgoorlie.

All the evidence we have before us indicates that almost complete chaos exists at the moment in regard to the general manpower position. Had there been open to us some way other than that of moving amendments to the Address-in-reply to get the position clarified, I am sure we would have been happy to oblige the Acting Premier by availing ourselves of it, but it so happens that while the Address-in-reply is dragging on, this is the only avenue open to us.

The Minister for Lands: Who is dragging it on?

Mr. PERKINS: No apology is needed for bringing this question before the House. It is absolutely urgent for the welfare of the whole economy of the State that the matter be brought under the notice of the Federal authorities. In view of the chaos that exists, I can only assume that the Federal authorities are not aware of the position. I do not believe that the Commonwealth Government wishes wilfully to damage the economy of this country. The prosperity of Australia depends upon its revenue, and it is upon revenue that Governments also have to depend. It is, therefore, only reasonable to assume that the Commonwealth Government cannot be aware of the existing chaotic conditions, and there is no likelihood of that position improving in the future unless some drastic change is made in the present set-up. The Commonwealth Government cannot be aware of the present position or it would have repealed or amended the existing regulations, not only to safeguard the interests of the men who shortly will be demobilised, but also to safeguard the economy of the country and provide proper employment for our soldiers who will be returning to the State.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin—on amendment) [8.21]: I regret it was not possible in the circumstances to put this amendment on the notice paper, in which case there would have been ample opportunity for members opposite to get a clearer understanding of the intentions of the member for Beverley than apparently they have now. What is more, it would

have saved the member for Beverley from the mauling given to him by the Acting Premier.

Mr. J. Hegney: We have not even a copy of the amendment.

Mr. DONEY: That is the point I am making. I am going to some trouble to show how I regret it. However, the hon. member should be apprised of the principal intentions in the amendment as the Acting Premier read it twice for my benefit, and no doubt Government members were listening. I can think of no more impelling motive for the amendment than that set out in the introductory paragraph, which has been read to you twice, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister for Lands: The member for Beverley said that that is not what he meant.

Mr. DONEY: I might come to that directly, just to oblige the Minister. No-one would at this time care to dispute that immediate action is absolutely essential if we are to secure greater production to supply the Empire's food needs. It seems to be forgotten that that is the intention underlying the amendment; it is not to be a nuisance to the Government, but to increase food supplies in this State, and everybody, I imagine, will agree that the food position is critical. Therefore, the House should not regard the amendment in any mere party spirit, but should unhesitatingly and unanimously pass it, and use its full power to implement it. The House certainly will not do its duty by the State if it does otherwise. This is an occasion—if ever there was one—when the Liberal Party, the Labour Party and the Country and Democratic League should see eye to eye and work shoulder to shoulder, so that the good which must ensue if this amendment is accepted shall be secured to us. No-one can be foolish enough to assert that the amendment is anything at all in the nature of a censure motion upon the Government, because very certainly it is not.

I was disappointed—as I think every member on this side of the House was—that the Acting Premier, departing for once from his habit of making fair comment, should have charged the member for Beverley—I forget quite how he put it—but we will say, with undesirable motives, or, at any rate, motives not intended to

promote the interests of the State. It can be seen that, following his line of attack, the Acting Premier put himself in the position of one anxious rather to win an argument than to treat the amendment upon its merits, which plainly, as you, Sir, will agree, was the duty of the Acting Premier, as I am sure he, as Leader of the House, now realises.

The Minister for Lands: He is a very sorry man at the moment.

Mr. DONEY: While the Acting Premier was speaking, I said by way of interjection that we did not aim at stopping all restrictional control over releases.

Mr. J. Hegney: Why not?

Mr. DONEY: The hon. member may have a say when I sit down. I think there will be ample opportunity for him. He has given us quite a number of speeches tonight, if his interjections are totalled up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. DONEY: I draw the attention of the Acting Premier once more to sub-paragraph (a), which he read twice for my benefit. I am asserting that we are not averse to a certain measure of control. The Acting Premier, of course, asserts that we want all control removed. Sub-paragraph (a) reads—

That all personnel in the Forces who can be absorbed at once into industry will be released without delay, there being no justification for the continuance of restrictional control.

Then this—

Restrictional control in regard to the release of such persons;

making it very plain indeed that the control we wish to be lifted was to be lifted from those whom we wished to be released from one or other of the Services.

Mr. Watts: Because they could be immediately absorbed in industry.

Mr. DONEY: Yes, for that obvious reason. The Acting Premier's argument, as I understood it, was that it is against the aim of the amendment that 10,000 men, or thereabouts, were wanted for occupational purposes in Tokio. If that is the only objection, I do not understand what it amounts to. It is a poor reason for objecting so strongly to the amendment; but if it really is desired to provide for such an occupation it can very easily be secured

by adding somewhere near the end of paragraph (a) the words—

except in the case of such men as may be required for occupational duties in Japan.

All that we aim at securing, if it has not already been made plain, is this: A division along more or less approximate lines between those who will have jobs when they come back and those who will not. By following that course it must be plain to members that confusion will be reduced to a minimum. Of course, obviously a sufficient number of men will be left for such occupational duties as may fall to their lot. Our total objective may be summed up in this way: We seek an uplift in all forms of industry in this State, and without delay. For that purpose, and so that several hundreds of old, infirm and pitifully overworked men and women, especially on farms, may find the earliest possible release from the burdens of the past five or six years. But, Mr. Speaker, we are going to some trouble on this side of the House to show the Government that we absolve it from any major blame in this matter.

We certainly do not wish to absolve the Commonwealth Government from all blame—far from it! Despite the fact that peace has been imminent for the last three months, and that there were feasible expectations of peace for six months prior to that, we are today equally as unprepared for peace as, in 1939, we were unprepared for war. It is as plain as can be that in regard to problems such as we are discussing now, the Commonwealth Government was caught on the wrong foot, and since then has been doing the wrong things. There is, it must be admitted, a scheme of sorts on foot but not yet has it resolved itself into any understandable and practical disbandment scheme. We are left, too, in considerable doubt, which we would like to have resolved by someone on the other side, as to who is running the business of releases. We know from calling on the Manpower Department that that department is not doing so, and quite a number of calls put through to the military authorities indicated that not yet have they any responsibility in the matter. So, before the debate closes, if it be feasible, I hope that someone on the other side of the House will give members on this side some information on that point.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. A. H. Panton—Leederville—on amendment) [8.32]: The further this debate goes, the more involved it becomes.

Mr. Doney: I made quite a clear statement.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member may have his idea of a clear statement, but I did not obtain a clear statement from him.

Mr. Doney: You showed the confusion in your mind a little while ago.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister will address the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I was wondering whether it was my turn. The member for Beverley moved the amendment; and, after he had made a somewhat lengthy speech on it, the member for York was good enough to explain to us that what had been said was different from what was in the amendment.

Mr. Perkins: I did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the member for York will think back, he will recall that he said we were taking the amendment as typed rather than what was in the mind of the member for Beverley.

Mr. Perkins: I said that if you found anything wrong with it, you could correct it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We did not find anything wrong with it, but with what the member for Beverley said. The farther we go, the less enlightenment we get about this amendment.

Mr. Watts: And the less inclined you are to deal with the amendment on its merits.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am going to try to deal with something on its merits now. We have heard a great deal about the release of men for primary production. I want to tell the member for Beverley and his colleagues that there are those whose release is just as important as is the release of certain men for avenues of primary production; I refer to the men who have been doing the fighting for the last four or five years.

Mr. Mann: I agree.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The question of bringing men back to Australia depends on two things: There must be either air or sea transport.

Mr. Perkins: What about those in Australia?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am talking of the fighting men, and the bulk of the men who are wanted back here are oversea.

Mr. Thorn: No.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member can get the men running around Perth in uniform as quickly as he likes; but I say in all seriousness that 17,000 men of the Eighth Division have been prisoners-of-war in the hands of the Japanese, and those men should have the first say.

Mr. Mann: We agree very definitely.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: According to the argument put up, the hon. member does not agree.

Mr. Doney: You do not expect every little point bearing on the matter to be put in the motion, do you?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is only a little point! The 17,000 men waiting to be brought home constitute only a little matter!

Mr. Thorn: Deal with the question!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will deal with the question as I think fit, and as far as you, Sir, will allow me to go. The member for Toodyay knows me well enough to be aware that I am not likely to be intimidated by interjections of that sort. I want to know just why there should be such an extraordinary demand for preference for primary production.

Mr. Doney: We do not restrict ourselves to that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: For the last three weeks there has been a good deal said about the need for providing more houses, and there has been considerable criticism of the Commonwealth and State Governments for their lack of policy with regard to housing. There has been more said about that than about any other subject that has been dealt with until tonight. I always give a member the credit for being sincere when he gets up to make a speech. If members who have spoken—members on both sides of the House—have been sincere, and the erection of houses, hospitals, schools and other matters of that kind are regarded as essential, why should there be a demand for men to be released specifically for pri-

mary production as against the production of coal and the making of cement and bricks to construct the buildings to which so much reference has been made? Further, men are wanted in the South-West to cut timber for houses.

Mr. Doney: The matter of releases has become prominent because peace has come in the meantime.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I see! The member for Williams-Narrogin said that for the last six months the end of the war had been imminent.

Mr. Doney: It has been a distinct probability for the last three or four months.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It has been a distinct possibility and probability for three years. But when the Prime Minister was here, I was on a deputation to him, with other members from this House, and he could see no probability at that time of the war being over for at least another eight or ten months, and possibly a year; and I think he knew more about it than did even the member for Williams-Narrogin!

Mr. Doney: I question whether he or anyone else did.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If there is going to be an agitation for men to be picked out for key positions, particularly in the primary industries, I want to know who is going to choose them.

Mr. Thorn: The amendment does not say that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, but that is what everybody has said. First we were told that the amendment said certain things, but that the hon. member did not mean that.

Mr. Mann: I will read you my speech again, if you like.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Now that order has again been established, I will proceed. The member for York emphasised the necessity for getting key men. He said certain men were in key positions and he wanted them out of the Services. He will realise, too, that those men who were in key positions in civil life and joined the Army, became in course of time key men in the Army.

Mr. Perkins: There are a lot around Perth who have never been away.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not see them around Perth. I am talking about soldiers.

Mr. Perkins: The men to whom I am referring are in uniform.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I venture to say that the men the hon. member sees in and around Perth would not be much good on a farm.

Mr. Perkins: Would they not!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not think so, unless cheap and inefficient labour is wanted. I want to put in a word for the men who have been doing the fighting in the Army. They have found themselves in key positions. Like other members, I have had requests to get men out of the Services, but invariably they have found themselves in key positions.

Mr. Rodoreda: Every man you want out is in a key position!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Surely the men who fought should have an opportunity to get home. One of my own sons put in for a release. He has done just on six years, being the first boy who enlisted at Merredin. His number is WX115. He put in for his release and in one letter that we received from him he said he thought he had a chance of getting it. However, the next thing we knew was that his name did not appear in a list of officers to be released. The older men are to be released first. Now he has become an adjutant and may not be out for another six months because he occupies a key position. I suppose he is typical of hundreds.

Mr. Perkins: There are many key men from industry who are not in key positions in the Army.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And there are many who are. I am not going to ask Army headquarters, the Commonwealth Government or anyone else to release men for any particular section of industry, to the detriment of other men. It would be quite conceivable that if we did ask this the Commonwealth Government would say, "Let us know just what men you expect us to release." What will be our answer to that?

Mr. Doney: You would get a list of recommendations from the Manpower Department.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Speaker, you and I know that Manpower recommendations have come from individual members who have put them forward because they are requests coming from their own electorates. That is part of a member's job. I have put through scores of such applications.

Mr. Perkins: Members here—

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Members on that side would not do anything like that! I can recall member after member giving personal experiences.

Mr. Doney: They do not come from us, but from the Manpower Department.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They go from members to the Manpower Department. I venture to say that Manpower did not put forward any recommendations unless it was invited to do so by someone or other.

Mr. Doney: I know to the contrary.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the member for Pingelly was right when he said that the Manpower authorities never knew where they were. At the same time I think they knew enough not to make recommendations on their own account. They require someone to give them a lead. That is my experience of Manpower, and I suppose I have had as much experience as anyone else. The Manpower officers have done what they considered to be their job, and I say, quite candidly, that we have no right to ask that certain men shall be released for a particular industry because they would have to be men who went from that industry. Such men have probably been in the Forces for only one third of the time of other men who have been in for five years or more. I do not propose to make such a request, and I hope that the majority of members here will not place themselves in the position of saying to the Army, "Irrespective of how long certain people have been in we want them out, and never mind about the Eighth Division or others who have been in prison camps." We do not stand for that.

MR. McDONALD (West Perth—on amendment) [8.44]: As an impartial observer I approach this matter with a very definite impression of the merits of the case, submitted by the member for Beverley, and also with the feeling that it re-

flects an atmosphere of crisis. It is not too much to say that the world may be on the eve of a very great human tragedy. I do not speak merely of feeding the people in the British Isles, which will naturally be our first concern, but the millions in Europe and the hundreds of millions in China, and the people in other occupied countries. We cannot escape that position; it is staring us in the face today. I do not feel disposed to stand upon formulae, or points systems when it comes to deciding between starvation and food. The Minister for Lands said that he did not like the preferential release of a certain section, and he referred to the amendment as if it embraced only those to be engaged in the primary producing industries. But the amendment states, "All those who are required in production." That means not only production in primary industries, but production in the building of houses and in the materials for houses; and we are, in Australia, on the eve of what I consider to be a very severe crisis in regard to housing.

I do not look lightly on the return of three-quarters of a million men, many of whom have got married and started a family in the intervening years, to find that they have no home to which to go. I do not want to impress my own opinion, but I was advised months ago by men from the Services that if anything is calculated to create severe unrest it is the lack of homes for these men to go to when they return. So, this amendment is not merely for primary production, but for all production, both secondary and primary, and it is aimed to get men, not merely for primary industries, but to meet the present urgent demands, of which housing is the most outstanding. Nothing in this motion will, to my mind, interfere with the return of men of long service. I agree with the Minister for Lands that they must have the earliest possible return to civil life. They have earned it by long years of arduous occupation in the Fighting Services.

Mr. Thorn: They are particularly provided for. This does not affect them.

Mr. McDONALD: They are provided for in the priority points system. They will get the first preference in any return to civil life.

The Minister for Works: This amendment will cut across that.

Mr. McDONALD: Not at all.

The Minister for Works: Yes, it will.

Mr. McDONALD: The people aimed at by this amendment will be taken in addition to those men.

The Minister for Works: Some of the first men who enlisted were not employed at the time and consequently have no set jobs to come back to.

Mr. McDONALD: The first men who enlisted can be returned according to their priority.

The Minister for Works: Not according to the amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. McDONALD: This amendment makes no difference whatever to the priority-return of those men with long service. They will be in the same position as they would be without this amendment. Many months ago, and well before the defeat of Germany, the British Government laid down this policy: It invited all men in the Forces, who had jobs to go to or employment offering, or who had independent means so that they would not need to look for work, to apply for early release, and it had been returning to civil life and to those industries which could absorb them, thousands of men, long before the German war ended. We have done nothing of that kind, and this amendment is merely to make a belated attempt to follow on lines adopted by the British Government many months ago.

I do not wish to enter on criticism now, but the fact remains that the machinery for demobilisation has turned out to be regretably insufficient. Though the Government might be pardoned for not foreseeing the advent of the war, there can be no excuse for not knowing that the war might end at any time. That being so, the amendment of the member for Beverley is a suggestion as to means by which this lack of planning may be overcome, and it appears to me to be one which the House is well justified in discussing. The amendment, applying as it does to all urgent occupations and production, will be operated with extreme simplicity. Already the Manpower Office in this State has hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of applications by men in the primary producing industries and in the building and



building material industries, for specific men in the Forces, desiring their return to jobs which are waiting for them.

In addition to that, if employers were asked to indicate, when jobs were waiting in urgent avenues of production, the names of the men they wanted, the Manpower Office could, I think, within two weeks, compile a list of men whose return to work would make an immense difference in the production of both our primary industries and our urgent secondary industries.

Mr. J. Hegney: Do you not think Commonwealth Ministers are giving attention to that now?

Mr. Doney: They may be, but nothing much is happening.

Mr. McDONALD: As far as we can see, no planning on those lines is in existence at present. Last time I was at the Manpower Office, quite recently—at the beginning of a month—they told me they had no instructions as to priorities for releases. They said the matter was under consideration by the Commonwealth Government and until the policy was announced by Canberra and translated into instructions and sent here from Sydney they could give me no idea as to priorities for releases from the Armed Forces, even where the men were urgently demanded by employers for work in important industries. It is evident that no adequate provision has been made to meet the cases set out in the amendment of the member for Beverley. I suggest that the member for Beverley has done well to raise a matter of great national and even international importance, and if the Government would give an assurance—which I think would be its better course—that it would forward the amendment to the Commonwealth authorities and indicate that it was in general agreement with the motives and objectives of that amendment, it would be doing a service to this State and to the whole Commonwealth.

The amendment does not suggest that men are to be forced out of the Army. I see no grounds for complaining, in the slightest degree as to the wording of this amendment. What the amendment says is that the restrictional provisions now operating, which prevent men leaving the Forces when they want to leave, should be removed when men have jobs to go to of a kind which will speed

up the production of this country. That would not in any way interfere with those who want to stay in the Army or to go to other occupations, nor would it interfere with the retention in the Forces of the very small proportion of men that will be required there in the future. In all the circumstances I think the amendment raises a matter of great national and indeed international importance. It involves the effective role that our State may be able to play in the production of foodstuffs and other essential materials in a time of great crisis, both here and elsewhere, and I would be pleased if the Government could see its way clear to accept the substance of the amendment, and ensure that it is sent on to the Commonwealth Government with an indication that the matter is regarded in this State as one of great importance.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington—on amendment) [8.57]: I believe Western Australia has suffered more from shortage of manpower than has any other State. I do not say that without a sense of responsibility. In correspondence with friends in the East, only a little time back I had a letter from a man who was a senior military officer and who had returned to his farm in New South Wales before peace came about. He told me that the rural industries of New South Wales did not suffer from the shortage of manpower to anything like the extent that they did in Western Australia. A visitor from New South Wales also told me the same thing. Victoria was able to carry on its irrigation work, but we could not do that in Western Australia. We had to close those works right down. From that angle I think we are entitled to some consideration. The Minister for Lands is naturally interested in this amendment, as his new portfolio is very much concerned with the manpower position in the rural areas.

The Minister asked who was going to select these men for release for rural work, but I do not think that will present any difficulty. Surely it is helpful to any Government to get back into industry men who are able to obtain employment and who are not a responsibility on the Government either to find employment for them or to keep them while they are finding employment. I therefore do not think this amendment could possibly embarrass any Govern-

ment. In reply to the Minister, as to who should pick these men, I say they would pick themselves, because, when asked what men were anxious to return to rural industries, there would be volunteers, and, as has already been pointed out, the local District War Agricultural Committees have made recommendations to the manpower authorities, and there would be lists of the names of men in that office.

The present manpower position in the agricultural industry is acute, and it is true that the food position in Britain and in Europe is more acute today than at any time during the actual war period. There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that there is every probability of a reduction in the output of primary products owing to the shortage of manpower. The day before yesterday I was talking to a man who is well on in years and is milking 22 cows seven days a week. His sons are in the Armed Forces. I was speaking to a man and woman who today are milking over 30 cows. They will not be able to continue much longer milking those cows seven days a week. Such people cannot keep going. Surely if that position were put to the authorities, they would make a special effort to release the labour necessary to help such people.

The Minister for Works: The Premier has been putting that position strongly to the Prime Minister during the past few days.

Mr. McLARTY: I believe the Premier is fully aware of the position and has been doing his best to secure relief in this direction. On the other hand, is the amendment likely to retard his efforts? On the contrary, it would be more likely to lend support to his attitude and thus some added notice might be taken of our requests. The Minister for Lands suggested that political influence was being used to get men out of the Armed Forces.

The Minister for Lands: I did not say that; I said that nearly every member of Parliament has been to the Manpower Office, and rightly so.

Mr. McLARTY: I do not know that there is much difference, but if the Minister has any objection to the reference to political influence, I will not persist with it.

The Minister for Lands: My influence was of little avail anyhow; I did not get anyone out.

Mr. McLARTY: I have been told by a number of people that they have written to their representatives in the Commonwealth Parliament and in consequence have had their sons or others released from the Services. That course of action should not be necessary. If there were more sympathetic and understanding administration, the required releases would be made without farmers or parents having to resort to any such action.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then why this amendment?

Mr. McLARTY: Evidently the manpower officials do not know where they stand. One can interview them and make representations for urgent releases, and one will receive the reply, "It is a matter for the Army." My experience of the Army is that it moves very slowly. The Minister should be aware of that fact. Certainly there is more red tape and paper in regard to Army matters than are apparent in any other department.

Mr. J. Hegney: You complain that the Army moves slowly, but they moved pretty fast during the war.

Mr. McLARTY: If the hon. member had followed me in my remarks—

Mr. Mann: He would not know and would not understand.

Mr. McLARTY: If he had followed me, he would have understood that I was referring to discharges and not to action in the field. Should the amendment be carried, it will help to hurry up the number of discharges so urgently needed. The farmer is suffering today, not only from a shortage of labour, but from a shortage of experienced labour as well. There are in the Army many men who are anxious to be released and who are experienced in rural matters. The amendment is fully justified and will be amply warranted if it can do something to hurry the release of such men from the Services.

MR. ABBOTT (North Perth—on amendment) [9.5]: It is quite clear that the Government has no justification for regarding the amendment as in the nature of a censure motion. It could not have been aware when the Lieut.-Governor's Speech was being prepared that the cessation of hostilities would follow so quickly. I cannot understand why the Government has so strenu-

ously resisted the amendment. There is not the slightest doubt that the Commonwealth Government was not prepared for such an early peace, and it is quite clear that the necessary machinery has not been set up to deal with the number of discharges that should be effectuated. It is not a question merely of getting men back for the purposes of discharge, but of discharging them. Recently I was engaged for four months in the section of the Air Force dealing with discharges. It takes quite a time to discharge a man. He has to be medically examined to see that he is fit to be discharged, which is quite a good thing. That takes some time. Then he has to be interviewed by the rehabilitation officer to ensure that he gets protection in every possible way before he returns to civil life. It will be impossible in the near future to discharge the number of men that will be available for release. Unless some action is taken I fear that the Services will proceed in a routine manner in accordance with the plan already set up.

The Minister for Lands: I think that will be so, anyhow.

Mr. ABBOTT: It may be so.

Mr. Needham: What makes you assume that?

Mr. ABBOTT: It takes a fair time to train personnel as rehabilitation officers and to get medical officers as well. I know how long it takes to train such officers and to discharge men. When information was received that all aircrew in England were to be sent back quickly, it was found difficult to train the necessary officers and to deal with the anticipated numbers.

Mr. Needham: The amendment will not do much in that respect.

Mr. ABBOTT: No, but it may suggest to the Commonwealth Government some method whereby men could be placed in industry prior to actual discharge. I suggest that representations should be made to the Commonwealth authorities that men who are so urgently desired should be permitted to go on leave until they can be dealt with for the purpose of being discharged. To a minor degree that system has already been employed in the Air Force, men on return to Australia being allowed to go on leave until they could be properly dealt with. For some reason—I do not know

why—it has been found definitely easier for men to secure their discharges on manpower release in Victoria than it is here. A number of Western Australians passed through my hands and I asked them why they were accepting their discharges in Victoria. They said they were released through the manpower authorities. In reply to my question as to why they were being discharged in Victoria, they told me it was much easier to get a discharge in Victoria than in Western Australia. Some of those men were going into the building trade. I suggest to the Government that the amendment would at least assist the Ministers concerned in ensuring that Western Australia gets the benefit of its full quota of the men that are to be released.

The Minister for Works: You surely do not agree entirely with paragraph (a) of the amendment!

Mr. ABBOTT: I agree that all personnel in the Forces who can be absorbed at once into industry should be released without delay.

The Minister for Works: That is only half of it.

Mr. ABBOTT: I admit that. Paragraph (b) provides that no such person in Western Australia on leave should be obliged to return to his or her unit for discharge, thus wasting valuable time and money. We all know that if they are key men, it might be necessary for them to return in order to hand over their duties. The principle behind the amendment and the one I am supporting is that the Government should represent to the Federal authorities the exigencies of the situation in Western Australia.

The Minister for Works: We have already done that. The Premier has done it during the last few days.

Mr. ABBOTT: But surely an opportunity should be given to this House to throw its weight behind the Government! I am not aware that the Leader of the Opposition has had an opportunity to make such representations.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: He could make them through the Federal member.

Mr. ABBOTT: I suggest that the Federal member does not represent this House and the State in its entirety. Proper representations should be made by this House

on behalf of the State as a whole. Therefore I am surprised that the amendment should be resisted by the Government. I agree with the Leader of the Liberal Party and would welcome his suggestion that the Government should, in view of the amendment, place before the Commonwealth authorities the difficulties this State is experiencing in carrying on its rural industries and its housing programme. If that were done, an excellent purpose would have been served.

**MR. THORN** (Toodyay—on amendment [9.12]: I am rather surprised at the attitude adopted by Ministers on the amendment because I am sure, if I were sitting on that side of the House, I would accept it as being very helpful. As the member for North Perth stated, surely to goodness this House should have an opportunity to express its opinion on this vital matter! The Acting Premier keeps on interjecting that the Premier is in the Eastern States dealing with the question. We understand that he will deal with it to the best of his ability.

The Minister for Works: He has dealt with it.

**Mr. THORN**: Right; but there have been complaints from both sides of the House that we are being governed today by the Ministry and that members of this Chamber do not get an opportunity to express their opinions. The member for Guildford-Midland yesterday spoke along those lines.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Do it in a manly way and move a motion straight out!

**Mr. THORN**: It is all very well for the hon. member to talk about being manly. A few minutes ago he made an interjection about referring the matter to Federal members.

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Order! The hon. member must adhere to the amendment.

**Mr. THORN**: Today, we are doing the work of Federal members, and what is the use of referring anything to them?

**Mr. SPEAKER**: There is nothing in the amendment about Federal members.

**Mr. THORN**: The Acting Premier has complained about the Address-in-reply being held up. Of what value is the Address-in-reply debate as compared with an amendment of this description? On the

Address-in-reply members tell their own bedtime stories relating to their own electorates, and while I believe we should avail ourselves of the opportunity to bring forward matters affecting our electorates, such matters are not so vital as is the question contained in the amendment.

The Minister for Works: Let us get the Address-in-reply out of the way and we can deal with this matter by a proper motion.

**Mr. THORN**: There is no time like the present. I have already pointed out how vital is the matter dealt with in the amendment and how urgent it is that we deal with it because it means so much to the State. Regarding the release of men on points, I do not wish to be critical, but I do not think I have ever heard of a more confusing or ridiculous system of releasing men from the Army. Any fair-minded man of any experience at all would agree that the most vital requirement today is the release of men who have jobs to return to and who will be no responsibility on the Government. By releasing those men to return to their positions, a start will be made to create work for others. That is what we want. As to the statement of the Minister for Lands about the release of men who have had the longest service, that prevails today. Only the other day I read that a man with five years' service or more could be released under that scheme or under the rehabilitation scheme. He is already provided for.

**Mr. Willmott**: That is not being carried out.

**Mr. THORN**: That has been laid down by the Commonwealth Government and we are told that it will be done, but I am afraid that before we are much older, we shall awake to the fact that many other things will not be done. I know that there is no object behind the amendment other than to give members of the House an opportunity to discuss this important matter in order to support the Government in its efforts to get men released and put back into industry. The Minister for Lands and other members have referred to primary production. The amendment does not mention primary production. It refers to the release of men to be absorbed at once into industry. With that object, I think, every member can agree.

Mention has been made of the number of releases in the Eastern States as compared with this State. Some cases have been brought under my notice that upset the committee I have been assisting so much that it wrote to the Deputy Director of Manpower, Perth, recommending the release of men for work in the viticultural industry, which is absolutely starved for labour. We recommended the release of a certain man to help a widow who had lost her husband and was left with a big property on her own. The request was refused. To our surprise, however, we found that men had been released for the sugar industry in Queensland—men who belonged to this State and had joined a section of the Army that left this State. Yet, because they wanted to get out of the Army, they were released to enter the sugar industry instead of being sent back to the State and to the industry to which they belonged. That was entirely unfair. These questions are exercising our minds and that is why the amendment has been moved. This debate should have quite a good effect, and though it has delayed the adoption of the Address-in-reply slightly, I do not think the Acting Premier need harbour any grievance on that score, because he knows perfectly well that he will soon be able to get the Address-in-reply over.

The Minister for Works: The point is that when we finish the Address-in-reply we shall be able to deal with these matters by way of proper motions.

Mr. THORN: Of course, there is no assurance when the Address-in-reply will be concluded. We all hope it will conclude shortly. However, we consider these matters of such great importance—I feel I am only repeating myself—that we should be given the opportunity to discuss them. I hope I have made a helpful speech for the Acting Premier and not a destructive one.

**MR. SEWARD** (Pingelly—on amendment) [9.21]: Briefly, I congratulate the member for Beverley on his amendment. Had I not spoken on the Address-in-reply, I certainly would have looked for some means of bringing the matter forward. The Acting Premier suggested that we might conclude the debate on the Address-in-reply and bring this matter forward then. But even if we finished the debate on the Address-in-reply this week, the matter

could not be dealt with for the next three or four weeks at the earliest, because there are many private members' motions on the notice paper, quite sufficient to keep the House occupied for two or three Wednesdays. This matter is of too great importance to allow it to stand over for two or three weeks. We want something done immediately. Members on the Ministerial bench have said that the Premier is now engaged on the matter, but what action is he taking? He cannot deal with the matter; it is far too big for him to deal with it on his own. We want some competent authority to deal with it. It is popularly thought that the manpower authorities can deal with it, but they have not done so since manpower control was created. They make out a case which they submit to the Army, that is what should be the civilian side of the case, but they cannot themselves decide the matter. If the Army says no, that is the end of it. Manpower does not fight the case. I have been able to secure releases from the Army that the manpower authorities could not obtain.

I have particulars of several cases, but shall mention only one, that of a woman about 75 years of age. She and her husband, who is older, have been carrying on a business and have got to the stage where they can continue it no longer. When the husband is not in bed, his wife is. They have no staff. She asked me whether I thought I could do anything to secure the release of her boy from the Army, even if it were only for a period sufficient to enable her to sell the business.

I got in touch with the manpower authorities and was informed by them that they are now merely acting as a kind of glorified employment agency, or something of that description. These activities on the part of the Manpower Department have ceased. I then said that there was only one thing I could do. I would write to the commanding officer of the boy's battalion. I did so. I told him I was not writing as a member of Parliament trying to try to bring any influence to bear, as I knew that if I did so he would take no notice of me. I said I merely wished to put the facts of the case before him as I knew them so well so that he could decide the matter.

In due course I received a reply from the commanding officer of the battalion to say that either the boy's application for release

was granted or that he would be given two months' leave, I am not sure which, subject to the Western Command's approval. So the Western Command steps in. As the boy was not released, I wrote again and received the following reply:—

Your letter of the 3rd August, 1945, has been received. I wish to advise you that the application submitted by this unit for compassionate leave for—was not recommended by headquarters, Western Command.

So we have Western Command overruling the commanding officer in the field! I want to know who is running the show. If the Commanding Officer of the Australian Army were to indicate that a particular soldier was not to be released, nobody would hesitate for a moment to accept his decision. There can be only one authority, and that is the Commanding Officer of the Army. He alone is able to determine what units he requires. But when this man's unit commander says, "Yes, he can go," we get headquarters, Western Command, stepping in and saying that he cannot go. It is time the matter was taken up. The man in question is in New Guinea, and what Western Command has to do with him I do not know. I could understand Western Command having control of men in the Western Australian Lines of Communication or of personnel that might be engaged in Army occupations within the State; but when men get under the direct control of the General Officer Commanding the Army, I take it he is in command. The recommendation of the unit commander goes before the G.O.C. and, if he approves of it, I want to know what Western Command has to do with the matter.

That is not the only case. I have three other practically similar ones. There is the case of a man from another area whose father is 73 years old and whose brother has just been taken to the Home of Peace. The brother is ill and elderly. The fences on the property have been washed away by the floods, stock has got out and 70 sheep have been lost. The fences cannot be repaired, as no-one is available to do the work. I applied for the lad's release, but was unsuccessful despite the fact that he is not in a unit overseas. It might be asked, "What are we going to do?" The Premier, as I said, cannot deal with this matter. It is high time that the manpower authorities were

put in possession of all necessary information to permit of their making recommendations to the Army headquarters regarding these cases. I would not dare to suggest that every case should be passed on to the Army with a request that the application be granted. The Army must, however, be supplied with all necessary details, and that is what the manpower authorities should supply. They should collect all the information and make a recommendation, as they know the case from the civilian point of view.

Unless the men are in operational areas or otherwise indispensable, I take it the release would be granted upon the recommendation of the manpower authorities. The Minister for Lands said by way of interjection that no exception should be made for primary industries. That is his opinion, but if the primary industries have been stressed by speakers on this side of the House, surely to goodness that is one branch of industry which we should be entitled to accentuate. I have been engaged nearly all day on applications for release of tractors. Orders for some 1,200 tractors are held up here because it is said that supplies are not available. The main trouble is that the tractors are not in this State, so I am told. However, there are between 60 and 70 in this State, but these cannot be released because wheel centres for them cannot be obtained. I took the matter up. It appears that those concerned have made arrangements with a company to manufacture wheel centres within the State for Fordson tractors. I asked whether wheel centres could not also be manufactured for other makes of tractors and was informed that moulders were not available to do the work.

I am besieged with requests from country districts to endeavour to get tractors released for farmers so that they may carry on with their fallow; but because moulders are not available to make wheel centres in the State, these have to be imported from the Eastern States, and then it is impossible to get the ships to bring them to Western Australia. Those are some of the reasons which impel me to support the amendment. Some authority should be appointed immediately to deal with these matters. It is all very well to be wise after the event. Few of us thought that the war would end as quickly as it did. We have had peace now

for a week or two, and when we get to the point all we are told is that there are plans—plans for this, plans for that and plans for something else. What is the sum total of those plans? A report in "The West Australian" this morning mentions that unemployment relief is to be granted to personnel who are discharged from the Army while awaiting absorption into industry.

If we cannot get something better than that, it is high time the Commonwealth Government got out of office and let someone else step in who could get something done. As the member for Beverley mentioned to-night, these men are not going to be fooled about with unemployment relief, particularly the men who are in Australia. I sincerely hope that not a small number of long-service men will have reached Australia by now. They do not want unemployment relief for three months. They want to get back to work.

The Minister for Lands: I think the reference this morning was to munition workers.

Mr. SEWARD: Well, there are works at Gosnells lying idle! There is something to get to work on.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think those machines would make tractors.

Mr. SEWARD: No; but surely we can get the machinery together and get these moulders. There is so much to be done. The Leader of the Opposition said recently that he could employ every man on the basic wage for the next five years on work requiring to be done in this State. I want to see plans established whereby proper representations may be made to the Army authorities. It is not fair that members of Parliament should get these requests and that they should have to put forward these representations every day of the week to the Army authorities. We have something else to do. As somebody interjected—I think it was the member for North Perth—it is bringing Parliamentary influence to bear. Nobody wants to do that. There should be a proper authority to whom to appeal. People come to members of Parliament because they do not know where else to go. I support the amendment and hope some action will be taken to establish the Manpower Department on a proper basis.

MR. J. HEGNEY (Middle Swan—on amendment) [9.33]: I have listened to the speeches on this amendment by members of the Opposition, and I am convinced that it has been purely a matter of politics. Members opposite do not believe in the amendment submitted.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not impute motives.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The member for Beverley spoke for about an hour and attacked Mr. Ward and the Commonwealth crowd and a lot of others before he launched the amendment. The Leader of the Liberal Party said that the amendment was of national and international importance, and that the Government should have known full well that the war was coming to an end. The member for North Perth said that when the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply was moved, the Government could have had no knowledge that the war was coming to an end. The fact that the member for Beverley took an hour to talk about things of minor importance and to attack Mr. Ward and the Commonwealth Government generally before he thought fit to launch the amendment indicates how much value he placed on that amendment. There is no question that the point that has been raised was raised for no other reason than to provide an attack on the Commonwealth Labour Government.

Mr. Mann: What rot!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: The Opposition launched an amendment when the Fremantle by-election campaign was in force. That was done for propaganda purposes, too. There is no doubt that the Commonwealth Government is confronted with a difficult situation because of the sudden end of the war. No-one in his wildest dreams could have foreseen that the Japanese would have collapsed so suddenly. Not even far-seeing military advisers could have advised the Government that the war would terminate so suddenly.

Mr. Thorn: How do you know?

Mr. J. HEGNEY: I do not think that the hon. member should make an all-round attack on the Commonwealth Government before he thinks of launching an amendment, with a view to his Party gaining some political advantage. This Chamber should not be used for that purpose, and I do not

think members on this side of the House should fall for such tactics. I certainly am not going to do so, and I intend to vote against the amendment.

Mr. Mann: That is quite natural.

Mr. J. HEGNEY: This matter rests with Commonwealth Ministers who control the Armed Forces and who also have the responsibility of providing for rehabilitation. It would not be judicious for them to allow men to come out of the Armed Forces pell-mell unless they were able to go into organised industry. That would not be an advantage to the men concerned. Provision has to be made for men thrown out of employment because of the immediate collapse of factories engaged in munitions production. There will be difficulty in transferring them to productive industry. There are, in addition, thousands of people to be transferred from the Armed Forces to industry. That is a difficult job and cannot be tackled in the glib way that members of the Opposition think it can. At this moment, the Deputy Director of Manpower and his assistant are in Melbourne conferring on this issue; and any proposition that we submit would not have much bearing on the question.

I am positive that Commonwealth Ministers, most of whom were in this State recently, are aware of the fact that there are considerable manpower difficulties in Western Australia. That applies to every industry. They are anxious that rural industry should be in full production. I have no doubt that the Commonwealth Government will not retain men one hour longer than is necessary on the pay-roll of the Commonwealth; but that as soon as they can be transferred from the unproductive pay-roll of the Armed Forces and placed into production for the well-being of the Commonwealth, that will be done. I have heard it said that the rural industries have had reasonable consideration so far as the release of manpower is concerned, though naturally there are difficult problems for which a solution has not been found. There are, however, men who went from the primary industries into the Armed Forces and who will not want to go back to the primary industries.

Mr. Mann: Do not talk such rot!

Mr. J. HEGNEY: They will not go back to primary production because of the low wages. I read the other day of a member of the Country and Democratic League who attacked a certain log provided for rural workers on the ground that it was too high. We know that the rural industries are notorious for the low wages paid. For that reason many members of the Armed Forces will not want to go back into the primary industries, but will seek employment in more remunerative enterprises where they will receive reasonable consideration for the labour they supply. So the proposition submitted by the member for Beverley only beats the air. He knew before he started that he would not succeed in having his amendment carried. That was not his intention. But it suited his book and it suited his friends to use the amendment to form the basis of an attack on the Commonwealth Government.

As one who believes that the Commonwealth Ministers are doing a good job I am not prepared to support such an amendment which, after all, would only be a bald resolution to be forwarded to the Commonwealth Government which is already taking action. These things are being considered. Our own Premier has been in consultation with the Prime Minister and other Commonwealth authorities. We know that he has given expert advice concerning rural industries. He knows their requirements throughout the Commonwealth, and I have no doubt he has fully apprised Commonwealth Ministers of the needs of our own State. So it is unnecessary for this amendment to be tacked on to the Address-in-reply. This is not the only amendment that has been put up. We have had four put forward in the last six weeks. If this matter was so urgent why was it not raised six weeks ago?

If members opposite foresaw that the war was going to end so suddenly why was not the amendment brought forward immediately Parliament was opened? No, it was held over until now to be used for political purposes! I hope it will not be carried. If it is carried, it will be taken to the supporters of the Opposition in the country areas where difficulty is being experienced in maintaining the Country and Democratic League. The members of that organisation will go out there and say



"We got this amendment through the Parliament of Western Australia; let us now shake up the fellows in the Commonwealth." I hope the amendment will be defeated.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes .. .. .	13
Noes .. .. .	22
Majority against ..	9

## AYES.

Mr. Abbott	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Hill	Mr. Seward
Mr. Mann	Mr. Thora
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Watts
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Willmott
Mr. North	Mr. Doney
Mr. Owen	

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Fox	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Graham	Mr. Panton
Mr. Hawke	Mr. Read
Mr. J. Hegney	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Smith
Mr. Holman	Mr. Styanta
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Telfer
Mr. Leahy	Mr. Triat
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Millington	Mr. Withers
Mr. Needham	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

## PAIRS.

## AYES.

Mr. Stubbs	Mr. Collier
Mr. Kelly	Mr. Cross
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver	Mr. Coverley
Mr. Keenan	Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Leslie	Mr. Tonkin

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. OWEN: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

**MR. OWEN** (Swan) [9.45]: At the outset I wish to join with the previous speakers who have expressed regret that the member for Geraldton has, owing to ill-health, had to give up the office of Premier. I sincerely trust that with the less arduous duties of a private member he will soon regain his health and be able to give the House the benefit of his long experience, and members his usual kindly advice. With the cessation of hostilities it is time that Western Australia took stock of herself to see how she came off in regard to industry. Some of the other States benefited to a large extent by the building-up of many manufacturing industries, but Western Australia, probably for many reasons, but mainly I think because of her isolation from the seats of the mighty, did

not participate in that big build-up of industry. However, although we lost quite a lot in that direction it may be that now we have come to the rehabilitation stage we will get back to normal life much earlier than the other States.

The Minister for Works: We certainly shall.

Mr. OWEN: The secondary industries of Western Australia certainly did show quite an increase. Some of the industries engaged in the making of munitions and the machinery of war expanded considerably, and so did our secondary industries which supplied our local needs that were cut off because of the war. I think that many of these industries are here to stay. It is pleasing to note, from the fruitgrowers' point of view, that at least two Eastern States firms have come over here to participate in the preservation of fruit and in jam-making. As a result our fruitgrowers will have a better outlet for their product. I think also that, with the fruit-canning industry that is already established here, there will be quite a build-up of the fruitgrowing industry in the South-West. For many years before the war we imported large quantities of jams and preserves from the Eastern States. As a fruitgrowing State that was quite unnecessary because we could, and can now, grow any amount of good fruit. I venture to say that we can hold our own with any other State or, indeed, with any other part of the world, when it comes to fruitgrowing.

Other secondary industries, including the manufacture of machinery, have been built up to some extent. A few new firms and many of our older established concerns adapted their factories to the production of machines of war. They are now in the position to supply much of the machinery needed in this State and needed in some places oversea. Just recently I had the pleasure of seeing a number of heavy lifting machines that had been made by one of our local engineering firms to the order of the Indian Government. Other machines were going to the islands to the north of this State. Those are good omens, because these orders were received in the face of competition from the other States. Having established the name of Western Australia in those countries that are receiving

the machinery, there is no reason why we should not obtain further orders of the same nature.

The primary industries of this State have not fared quite as well. Statistics show that the net value of production was somewhat in advance of the pre-war figures, but that was brought about mainly by the increased market return of the production, rather than the amount of production. Primary producers, in particular, have suffered a lot through the shortage of manpower, materials, and such things as fertilisers. Many speakers from this side of the House have pointed out how badly primary industry has fared, particularly when it comes to rehabilitation, and I am sure it will take many years, with favourable seasons and also a policy of encouragement by both the State and Commonwealth Governments, together with much hard work on the part of the personnel in those industries, before they get back to anything like the pre-war footing. As a student of agriculture, I am interested in the volume of wealth that can be coaxed from the soil. In agriculture—by agriculture I mean all the industries allied to the working of the land—by scientific methods not only can the land be made to yield considerable wealth, but it can be improved so that it increases in value as the years pass on. Without scientific methods the reverse is the result, and though it yields a lot of wealth the land eventually deteriorates and in the end becomes almost useless. We see that in many cases, and I believe we must encourage scientific methods of investigation and research.

This war has shown, above everything else, what science can do. Unfortunately, most of the scientific effort has been directed towards destruction, but I see no reason why the scientists cannot turn their attention now to construction and reconstruction. There have been many new inventions of engines of war, and machinery and methods to counteract them. There have been great inventions and advances in the destruction of pests, in the improvement of health, and the control of disease. Probably one of the greatest of those inventions or discoveries during the war was the drug penicillin, which is a product of agriculture, or of plant life. There are many other drugs also which have played a great part in alleviating the sufferings of those unfor-

tunates who were injured during the course of the war, but one is almost afraid to look forward to what future inventions might be made in the interests of war. One thinks of the awful destruction caused by the atomic bomb, but if scientists direct their attention along the right lines, enormous advantages might be derived in the form of cheap power from atomic energy.

The scope for scientific investigation is enormous, but so far as our own State is concerned, I think there is room for much scientific investigation and research in the agricultural industry. The present Government has to some extent realised that, as has also the Commonwealth Government. Australia has the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, many of the officers of which have been here recently to investigate problems confronting industry in Western Australia, but enough has not been done, and there is room for expansion one hundredfold in that direction. We have some good scientists in Western Australia, both in straight-out agriculture and in animal husbandry, who are of almost world-wide repute, but they are handicapped in many cases by lack of assistants, apparatus, funds, and the means to travel about, even within our own State. I would therefore like to point out to the Government where it might direct its attention with great benefit to the State of Western Australia.

Speaking of agricultural research, I am pleased to see that the portfolio of the Minister for Education has been combined with that of Agriculture. I agree with the member for Beverley that each of those portfolios carries sufficient work for one man, but agricultural research and education—particularly rural education—should go hand in hand. I would like to bring to the notice of the House a letter, addressed to the farmers of Australia by an American visitor, Major Miller, who was employed here by the Commonwealth Government to give a helping hand in the great increase in vegetable production that was necessary to supply food-stuffs for our troops. In this letter Major Miller states—

Because of this demonstrated thirst for new knowledge I think perhaps Australia might well consider strengthening its educational facilities available to rural people. An increase in the numbers of trained field instructors (we call them farm advisers in the U.S.) for the farmers, might well be considered. I have a hunch, too,

that your farm womenfolk might appreciate a version of our home demonstration agents, university-trained home economists, who live right out in the farming communities, working shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts, farm advisers, teaching farm women more about child welfare, food preservation, balancing the family budget, home beautification, garment designing and construction, and yes, even a bit about personal beauty hints so that American rural women may feel that they rate on an equal footing with their city cousins. These women instructors have assisted the agricultural engineers in designing economical, comfortable, really liveable modern farm homes which are rapidly displacing the bleak, poorly-planned buildings which in years gone by used to characterise American farm houses. In the United States, this adult farm education work, known as Agricultural Extension work, is co-ordinated by the U.S.D.A. and usually supervised by the State Agricultural Colleges or Departments. Australia, through its several State Departments of Agriculture, has, in my opinion, made a good start on such a programme, and these departments have on their staffs efficient, well-trained men. But their numbers are far too few. Home demonstration work for the rural women has almost been overlooked. Several States have a home economy specialist in the central office, but none located permanently in the farming communities. Personally, I believe agriculture must be made attractive if the cream of the farm youth is to be sold on the idea of staying on the farm. To this end perhaps Australia might well consider enlarging the field of agricultural education in its rural high schools. We have found in the United States that high school vocational agriculture has saved for an agricultural career many fine young people who otherwise might have been attracted to the apparently brighter city lights. In this connection, the nation-wide 4H Club, a leisure-time agricultural youth organisation, has played a highly important function, for beginning with farm youngsters at 10 years of age, we demonstrate to them that farm life has infinitely more to offer than life in some smoke-filled, crowded rural city. Yes, I feel sure that Australia might well re-survey her education programme to ascertain if it is encouraging the retention on the land of the youth which originates from it.

I agree cordially with those sentiments, and I think it behoves the Minister for Education and Agriculture to proceed further with the work that has already been undertaken. The final paragraph in this letter is well worth reading. Major Miller goes on to say—

Now, as never before, is the stability, the security, the very future of the world dependent upon its farm people and agriculturists. From what I have seen of Australian rural people and their colleagues, the agricultural scientists, I am convinced that they are keenly aware of their responsibility and of the fact that farming is a good way of life. I am

wondering, however, if Australia as a nation is fully appreciative of the importance of agriculture to its welfare as a nation.

I, too, am wondering that. The treatment that the agriculturist or primary producer has received in the past, leads one to suspect that the importance of agriculture is not fully realised in Government circles. To deal with something slightly more local in its application, there is the question of refrigeration. According to a report that appeared in the Press recently, the Commonwealth Government is devoting its attention to an investigation along those lines. It is time we realised that refrigerators are a necessity, not a luxury. That is particularly so in the rural districts.

To me it has been rather amazing that in the post-war years people in the city—I do not begrudge them their refrigerators; they are a necessity here, too—where there is a butcher's shop just around the corner or a ham and beef shop next door, it has been possible to get electric refrigerators more easily than it has been possible for the people in the outback districts to secure kerosene refrigerators, which is the only type suitable for their purposes. Surely it is of far less importance for city folk in such circumstances to be supplied with refrigerators than for the folk in rural centres, where the climate is hot and amenities are so few, to get kerosene refrigerators. There is possibly some reason for this. We know that Army personnel are sent to all parts of the world, including the tropics, and we recognise that they must be supplied with refrigerators. Nevertheless, I hope the Commonwealth Government will see its way clear to ensure ample supplies of kerosene refrigerators for the people outback. Besides what is known as household refrigeration, there is scope for greater use of refrigeration machinery in the houses themselves.

In some of our public buildings and on one or two of the coaches used on the trans-Australian railway, there are air-conditioned rooms, and they are certainly pleasant to live in or travel in. It would be very appropriate, particularly for the people in the northern areas and in the hot, dry areas of the State, to have installed in their homes some machinery that could be availed of for air-conditioning at least one room. The kerosene refrigerators can be

operated comparatively cheaply, with the use of from one to one and a-half gallons of kerosene weekly. If the principle were applied to the use of heat from the kitchen stove, there would be enough refrigeration developed amply to cool at least one room in each home. After reading of some of the scientific discoveries in America, I can see no reason why that should not be done at very little cost to the individual concerned. After all, it would not take much to insulate one room and the power necessary to provide air circulation would be very small.

I hope the Commonwealth Government, when investigating the question of household refrigeration, will go into the problem of developing something along the lines I have suggested. Many people in the Swan electorate have been concerned about the hold-up in connection with the extension of electric lighting installations. In reply to a query I submitted to the Minister, I was told that the installations in question would be proceeded with as soon as the necessary manpower and materials are available. Some of the extensions I have in mind have been approved for something like four years.

Mr. McLarty: For a longer period than that.

Mr. OWEN: With regard to one installation, the Government, or the department concerned, accepted quite a substantial deposit—it was over £100—from the settlers, but now it appears that the scheme was not even approved. In those circumstances, it seems to me that the Government took that money under false pretences, and I think restitution should be made to the settlers concerned. As to the schemes that have been approved, I have received the assurance of the Minister that the work will be undertaken as soon as men and materials are available.

I protest, however, against an extension that has been carried out in my electorate to the Youth Centre at Bickley reservoir. I quite agree that a supply of electric current is essential at that youth training centre, but I do not think it should have priority over the requirements of permanent settlers. Various organisations will rent the training centre for varying periods of from one to two weeks at a time. Surely it is more important that permanent settlers should have the advantage of light and power than that youth trainees should enjoy them for

pleasure during the period they are at the camp. I hope the Government will give those schemes which have already been approved a much higher priority than the job I have mentioned, which, by the way, is now under construction.

My electorate almost adjoins the suburban areas and is really an outer suburban area. We hear much about the need for the decentralisation of industry, which is a very admirable thing. All the industries should not be established in one centre and that a vulnerable centre, but many industries have been established in and around the metropolitan area that could not very well be decentralised at present. Consequently I suggest the decentralising, to some extent, of the population engaged in those industries, and the outer suburban areas would be ideal places for many of the workers in industry to live. There they would have more room than they have on the usual quarter-acre blocks in the city and nearer suburbs; they would have room to establish a small garden where they could undertake a healthful hobby and produce something for the kitchen; they could keep a cow and a few fowls, and the children reared under such conditions would be much healthier and would have a much better outlook on life than those cooped up in the environments of the city where many of them have to play their football and cricket in the streets.

To encourage the workers in industry to live in the outer suburban areas, they must be provided with the amenities of life, and the main ones, I consider, are electricity, good transport, a good water supply and good educational facilities. So far those amenities are not as good as they should be; in fact in many instances they are entirely lacking. Take transport in my particular centre. The Government transport is the train which, for a distance of 26 miles, takes approximately two hours to reach the city. That is a daily train. Further out, about 30 miles by rail but within 25 miles radius of Perth, there are places that have only three trains a week. I venture to say that plenty of places 300 miles from Perth have a better train service; yet that is the only means of public transport to the city.

If the Railway Department cannot see its way to improve the transport, the Transport Board should make it possible for pri-

vate enterprise with buses or the Government buses to undertake the work of providing a transport system for those settlers. That relates to only one area. We have practically the same state of affairs at the Mundaring end of the district. Mundaring is only a little over 20 miles from Perth and the train service is much better than that provided on the Upper Darling Range branch. Still, it is a poor service and on Sunday there is no service whatever. People in that area, particularly in summer when they desire to go to the beaches for surfing and swimming, have no means except their own transport of getting there. I have mentioned some of the troubles in getting electric current into those districts, and I hope the Government will make a bigger effort to obtain the manpower and material so urgently needed for those works.

Mr. J. Hegney: Would the patronage be there for a Sunday service?

Mr. OWEN: Yes, there would be the patronage for a train, but I think the district could be better served by a bus, because it would be more mobile and could choose its own route for picking up passengers.

Mr. J. Hegney: How far does the bus run on Sunday?

Mr. OWEN: To Glen Forrest; not to Mundaring. I omitted earlier in my remarks to offer my congratulations to the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Railways and the Chairman of Committees on their appointment to those offices. I believe that the ability and capacity which they have displayed for hard work and which brought them promotion will have excellent scope in the near future. We have had much experience of the capabilities of the Premier and the Deputy Premier, and as to the new Minister for Railways, I can honestly say that if he succeeds in instilling into the Railway Department and its train service some part of the speed of delivery and despatch with which he conducted the business as Chairman of Committees, he will do a great service for the State.

Mr. Seward: I am afraid there would be a breakdown.

Mr. OWEN: As to the new Chairman of Committees, I fully expect that when the House resolves into Committee he will conduct the proceedings with the customary dis-

patch and that the work will be in quite capable hands.

On motion by Mr. Fox, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.17 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 30th August, 1945.*

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### RAILWAYS.

(a) *As to Land Resumption South of River.*

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Works:

1, At what period was land first resumed in anticipation of a south side of river railway in the vicinity of East Fremantle?

2, What was the total sum spent on this anticipation?

3, Is the area so resumed still in the possession of the State?

The MINISTER replied:

1, 1902.

2, £59,362 expended over whole of route from Cottesloe to Fremantle. Approximately £39,000 referred to purchases south of the river.

3, Portion only. The Commonwealth Government has acquired land at Preston Point for the Naval Depot. Other proper-