

inserted the word "principally" in order to conserve certain forms of traffic. Later on, under the first schedule, we agreed to exempt the particular class of vehicle from license fee under this measure. There is now no necessity for the word "principally" because it would conflict with the wording of the schedule. I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (c) "principally" be struck out and the word "solely" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 47—Limitation of time for which drivers of certain motor vehicles may remain continuously on duty:

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: During the passage of the Bill, paragraph (d) was inserted in this clause. It is now found that it is not in order, and should not find a place in the measure. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (d) be struck out.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill again reported with further amendments, and the reports adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

BILL—FREMANTLE CITY COUNCIL LANDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned 10.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 30th November, 1933.

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

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Government Railways Act Amendment.
- 2, Public Works Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LAND.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

No. 1: Clause 113, Subclause (5), page 52.—Delete the words "except as provided by the last preceding subsection."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The words are unnecessary. In the original draft of the Bill, Subclause 4 contained an additional proviso, which was struck out before the final print. The words alluded to that proviso, and when the proviso was struck out these words should have been struck out also.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2: Clause 141.—Insert a subclause to stand as Subclause (2), as follows:—

(2) This section shall not affect the provisions of any Crown grant whereby a resumption shall not be made without compensation of any part of the land granted or demised upon which buildings are erected or other improvements have been made; and such compensation shall be

assessed at the value of such buildings or other improvements, without regard to any increase in the value of the remaining land of the grantee, and shall be payable without any deduction by a set-off against the value of such buildings or other improvements of any increase in the value of such remaining land of the grantee.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The original Act entitles the Crown to enter upon any lease or area and resume for public works purposes. The Bill as introduced imposed a time limit, requiring the Crown to exercise the right of resumption within five years after the issue of the Crown grant. The Bill further provided that if the purpose of the resumption increased the value of the land, such increase should be set off against the compensation. Another place proposes that the value of buildings shall not be so set off, but shall be paid for in full upon resumption, even though the purpose of the resumption increases the value of the land. I regarded the Council's amendment at first as going too far. However, I move -

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3: New Clause.—Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 149, as follows:—

Mortgages of leases or licenses to be transferred to Crown Grant, cf. No. 26 of 1911, s. 2.

149. If a lease or license is mortgaged under the provision of section one hundred and forty-five, or is subject to a mortgage under section one hundred and thirty-eight of the Land Act, 1898, and the lessee or licensee, during the continuance of such mortgage, becomes entitled under such lease or license to a Crown grant in fee simple of the land, the mortgage, unless discharged, shall by the operation of this Act be transferred to and apply to the Crown grant and the land thereby granted in all respects as if such Crown grant had been referred to in the mortgage; and on the lease or license being filed in the Office of Land Titles with a certified copy of the mortgage as registered under this Act or the Land Act, 1898, a memorandum of such mortgage shall be endorsed by the Registrar of Titles as an encumbrance on the Crown grant and on the folium of the Register Book on his registering such

grant, and when so endorsed shall have effect as if it contained all the covenants, powers, and conditions which, by the Transfer of Land Act, 1893, are implied in mortgages under that Act or conferred on the parties thereto, except so far as such mortgage contains express provisions to the contrary.

The term "license" includes an occupation certificate or permit to occupy relating to a free homestead farm.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is an entirely new clause, and highly desirable. Numerous leases still in existence under the Land Act were issued before leases came under the provisions of the Transfer of Land Act. When such leases were mortgaged, the Crown grant could not issue until the mortgages were discharged. It was consequently necessary for mortgagees to prepare discharges of mortgages, and also fresh mortgages which had to be registered in the Titles Office simultaneously with the issue of the Crown grant. The mortgagees were, therefore, temporarily without any security between the time of the discharge of the mortgage in the Lands Department office, and the registering of the new mortgage in the Titles Office, with the consequent cost of preparation of discharges, new documents, etc. Under the Council's amendment the Registrar of Titles will be notified by the Lands Department of the encumbrances, and will automatically transfer them to the Crown grant. This action will bring all these old leases into line with present-day leases. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

BILL—MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

No. 1: Clause 3.—Insert after the proposed new Subsection (2) a further subsection to stand as (2A), as follows:—

(2A) Subsection (1) of this section shall apply to any person who, whilst a mine worker within the meaning of the Act, is medically examined under the Act and found to be suffering from silicosis with tuberculosis or tuberculosis without silicosis, but who dies before notice of prohibition under subsection (1) of this section has been served upon him; and in such case such notice of prohibition may be issued by the Minister notwithstanding that such mine worker shall have previously died, and when issued shall be published in the *Government Gazette*, and when so published shall be deemed to have been served upon the deceased mine worker and his employer at the time of his medical examination aforesaid, if the deceased person was then employed as a mine worker. Upon notice of prohibition being published as aforesaid, the dependants of the deceased mine worker shall be entitled to all the benefits under this Act and the Workers' Compensation Act, 1912-1924, to which they would have been entitled as such dependants if the deceased mine worker had not died until after notice of prohibition under subsection (1) of this section had been served upon him personally.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The insertion of this new subsection was asked for by the Mines Department after the Bill had gone to another place. The reason for it is that, as the Act stands, if a man is certified to be suffering from silicosis advanced, or silicosis advanced plus tuberculosis, he must be served with a notice prohibiting him from working in, on, or about a mine. That process takes some little time. It was discovered that if a man suffering from silicosis died before the prohibition notice could be served on him, his dependants were not entitled under the Act to any compensation. On the other hand, had it been possible to serve the notice on the man prior to his death, his dependants would have been entitled to full compensation under the Act. There was actually a case where a man died before the prohibition notice could be served on him, with the result that his wife and children could not claim. The new subsection empowers the Minister to certify by pro-

claiming in the "Government Gazette" that the notice has been served, which is to be accepted as sufficient to entitle the wife and children to compensation. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2: Clause 10.—Delete the words "the mine worker," in the third line of paragraph (a), and substitute the words "such person."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The object of this amendment is to correct an oversight or misprint. It proposes to reinstate the words "such person" in place of the words "mine worker," which were substituted for them. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3: New Clause.—After Clause 8 insert a new clause to stand as Clause 9, as follows:—

Amendment of Section 50.

9. Section fifty of the principal Act is amended, as follows:—

(a) By deleting subsection (1) and inserting in lieu thereof a new subsection, as follows:—

(1.) Subject, as in this section hereinafter provided, any mine worker notified in accordance with section sixteen of this Act that he is suffering from silicosis in the early stage without tuberculosis, may within three months after the date of receiving such notice, or such further time as the Minister may allow, give notice in the prescribed form to the department stating the name of the employer by whom he was last employed as a mine worker underground, the class of work in which he was so employed, the date when he so ceased to work, and the rate of pay which he was then receiving.

(b) By inserting after subsection (3) a proviso, as follows:—

Provided that a mine worker who is working underground as a mine worker when notified as aforesaid shall not be entitled to be registered under this section until he ceases to work underground, and then shall only be entitled

to be so registered, if he has ceased to work underground within two years after the date of receiving the notice aforesaid and applies for such registration within three months after ceasing to work underground as aforesaid.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: This is another amendment requested by the Mines Department after the Bill had gone to another place. It is necessary, because the original Act provides that when a man is certified at the Laboratory as suffering from silicosis early, it is mandatory that he be served by the Mines Department with a notice that he is so suffering. The Act further provides that if the man should leave the mining industry within two years from the date of the receipt of such notice and register at the Mines Department, he must renew the registration each year, being permitted to work anywhere else he chooses in the State. At any future date, should he go to the laboratory, be examined and be found to be suffering from silicosis advanced or from silicosis plus tuberculosis, he would be entitled to the full £750. As the Act stands now, it is compulsory that unless the man receives his notice while he is working underground, he cannot be registered. We had a case in point regarding a man named Bodinner who was working on the Great Boulder mine. He was examined at the laboratory and found to be suffering from silicosis early. A notification was sent by the Mines Department to him acquainting him accordingly and intimating that in his own interests he should leave the mining industry. Before the notice reached Bodinner, he had left the mine and returned to his farm. Because he had done so, he was not entitled to be registered. That is altogether wrong and was never intended. The Act was designed to encourage affected men to leave the mining industry and to grant them certain benefits if they did so. The amendment will overcome the difficulty that arises in such cases as that of Bodinner. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1933-34.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 23rd November: Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Note—Departmental, £82,259:

MR. LATHAM (York) [4.50]: There are one or two matters I would like the Premier to explain as I can hardly follow the figures he has submitted, particularly in view of the fact that he has given notice of his intention to introduce a Loan Bill, which I cannot discuss now. I presume it will be the usual type of Bill, although the figures are somewhat puzzling. The Loan Estimates last year covered an amount of £1,955,000, which was the sum allocated to Western Australia by the Loan Council. The expenditure was actually £2,217,982. I suppose the balance represented stores carried forward from the previous year, because the actual cash received from loan funds was £1,955,000. This year the Loan Estimates cover an expenditure of £2,750,000, but I notice that the Premier does not propose to spend the whole of that amount. He explained that he anticipated spending £2,686,311, leaving a surplus of £63,689. I am pleased that the Premier has found it possible to carry on without spending all the money that the Loan Council were able to hand over. I cannot follow the figures, seeing that the Premier indicated to the House, in moving for leave to introduce the Loan Bill, that it was proposed to raise £3,946,000.

The Premier: That frequently happens.

MR. LATHAM: I have gone back over a number of such Bills, and I have been unable to find one that exceeded the amount authorised on the Loan Estimates to such an extent. Generally, when the Loan Bill was brought before members, it covered the same total amount that the Committee authorised when it agreed to the Loan Estimates.

The Premier: I will explain that.

MR. LATHAM: I shall be glad to have the Premier's explanation.

The Premier: But it will be on the Loan Bill, of course.

MR. LATHAM: I appreciate that, but, for the moment, the figures are somewhat puzzling to me. As the Premier pointed out, he has the advantage of additional money made available this year amounting to £532,000, which is more than the Premier

stated would be available and presumably he did not take into account the money he has not asked Parliament to vote him. There is no doubt in my mind but that the amount indicated will be spent, and, naturally, the Premier's greatest trouble will be to get sufficient money to enable him to carry on till July next year.

The Premier: That will be the trouble.

Mr. LATHAM: It is useless to expect any Premier in charge of the Treasury funds in these days to be able to carry on the affairs of the State without borrowing some money. While the gold-mining and the pastoral industries have picked up somewhat because of the enhanced prices for gold and wool, one of our principal industries is languishing very seriously. Then again there is difficulty in promoting the circulation of money, which naturally compels any State Government to borrow. Many of our sources of revenue supply are cut off and people are not prepared to spend money in absorbing the unemployed. We should be very careful regarding the way in which expenditure is indulged in, and I am not too sure that the members of the Opposition are able to agree with the Government's policy at the present juncture. I do not refer to their policy generally, but to that obtaining at the present time. I believe that, quite unknowingly, the Minister for Employment is building up an artificial shortage of labour. It is useless dismissing queries put to the Government by Opposition members by the mere intimation that the question raised is receiving attention. The fact is that to-day a dearth of labour in the agricultural areas is hampering operations, and that should not be. It should not be the duty of the Government to find work for people who can get employment in other directions. If a big programme of public works that were necessary were in hand, the position might be different, but to-day work is being undertaken that is quite unnecessary.

Mr. Raphael: If the men could get paid for the work they do for the farmers, there might not be the difficulty that exists to-day.

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member lives in Victoria Park and knows nothing beyond Victoria Park. He endeavours to display a lot of knowledge that he has not got. I want to stress the point that the Government are absorbing in Government work men who could be engaged in other industries. I know that the conditions in the wheat indus-

try to-day are not attractive enough to enable farmers to pay high wages.

Mr. Raphael: They do not pay wages at all.

Mr. LATHAM: Wages far in excess of those the Government are paying to-day have been offered, and men have refused to take the work.

Mr. Raphael: No such thing.

Mr. LATHAM: The argument advanced to me by a man in the country the other day in explanation of his refusal to take work when asked to do so was, "Well, the farmer will not employ me for very long and when I have finished the job, I will have difficulty in getting back on Government work." That is what is happening. The Government should not enter into competition with people who desire to secure labour. I know it is not reasonable to ask that married men be sent to undertake work on farms, but the Government could send single men to the country districts. Certainly they would do just as well there as they do in the South-West. Last year the policy was to close down on Government employment of single men during harvest time. I am anxious to assist the Premier who has to find money for the employment of men during the winter months when other persons cannot provide work.

Mr. Raphael: You suggest the single men should be shanghaied down to the farm.

Mr. LATHAM: I wish I could shanghai the hon. member, and if I had him at the end of a length of rope, I would pull good and hard.

Mr. Raphael: Of course you would.

The Premier: You would like to adopt American methods.

Mr. LATHAM: I have a letter from the Dalwallinu Road Board and I shall read it at this stage—

At the last meeting of my board attention was drawn to the fact that it was almost impossible to obtain casual labour for the purpose of taking off the harvest. It was stated that from 50s. to £3 per week and keep had been offered for competent harvester hands, but men were declining to come into the country for a few weeks' work, their reason being that they were doing quite well on sustenance work. I was directed to ask that you draw the attention of the Premier to this matter with the object of devising some scheme whereby sustenance for single men decreases during the harvest period, thereby making work in the country more attractive.

Anyone who goes through the country areas will find that that describes the position. At York the other day, five men were required, and it was impossible to secure them.

Miss Holman: Are you referring to the instance you mentioned the other day?

Mr. Raphael: He is telling the same old story.

Mr. LATHAM: It must be recognised that every member of this House has to accept his share of responsibility to the wheat-growers. It is useless for members to attempt to evade that responsibility.

The Premier: Were not the farmers able to get them the next day.

Mr. LATHAM: No, they were not. Men refused to take the work because they said it would be difficult to get back on to Government relief work afterwards. Of course, that phase of the difficulty might be solved in some way, but I do not think such men should be allowed to depend entirely on the Government. That sort of thing will have to stop some time. Men cannot expect the Government to continue along the present lines. They should not expect to be picked up for Government relief works the next day after leaving other work. They should be expected to make some provision for themselves to cover a week or so, and the time would all depend on how long they had been employed on farms. To-day the problem is a serious one. I know that the harvest will be taken off, but the work will probably take longer than it should. The most important factor is that the Government are employing men who could obtain work in other directions.

The Premier: There are many men who are not on relief work at all.

Mr. LATHAM: It is difficult to get men to work on the farms.

The Premier: We have 3,000 men on sustenance who are not on relief work at all.

Mr. LATHAM: Perhaps they are married men. I would not be so stupid as to say that the Government should send married men into the country districts unless they are prepared to make provision for the maintenance of the families of those men. I realise that the men could not earn enough on the farms to maintain two homes.

The Premier: If a single man received £2 a week he would be better off than he would be in receipt of sustenance in town.

Mr. LATHAM: I received a letter the other day asking me to send an elderly man to the country to carry out knock-about

work on a farm. He had to milk a couple of cows and do a few odd jobs. A likely looking man came to see me; I engaged him and sent a wire to the country accordingly, asking the farmer to meet the man. Later on I received a communication informing me that two visits had been made to the siding to meet the man, who had not put in an appearance. I found out that the man had not used the ticket at all.

The Premier: You made a bad selection, or perhaps you are a bad judge.

Mr. LATHAM: The man seemed to me to be a good type.

Miss Holman: Are you quite sure that he was on sustenance?

Mr. LATHAM: I did not make that inquiry. I wanted a man to go to the country. Two or three days ago the same thing happened again. On this occasion the man wanted light work. He had been getting an invalid pension, but the payment had ceased. He told me he thought the wages were a little low, but I said if he could do the work probably he would get extra wages. He was issued a ticket, but he did not go, for in the meantime he had secured another job. We ought to look into that aspect of the problem, for it would relieve the Government for a month or two. The Government ought to allow those men to be available. We have to do one of two things: We must either keep our wheat industry going or make some arrangements for a compromise in regard to our overseas interest. There is only one way of paying that interest, and that is by exporting goods and commodities. It would be better for the Premier to find some money to assist the farmers in absorbing labour, better to give the farmer £1 a week towards the payment of a man, who would then be doing reproductive work by enabling the farmer to produce. Down in New Zealand, the Government have made considerable grants for assistance in building, grants up to something like one-third of the actual cost of the work. I do not suggest anything of the sort here, but I say that instead of having men down in the South-West falling trees that can wait, we might employ some of them on the farms and make a grant to the farmer to enable him to absorb that labour and so get his crop off. Of course, I do not suggest the Government should assist any farmer who can afford to pay the men he requires, but many farmers cannot do that.

The Premier: Your Government tried that policy. Did not you abandon it after a while?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, because we thought the proceeds of the harvest should be able to meet the cost of the harvest. We provided 15s. per week for the purpose, and it was very successful. Later we reduced it to 7s. 6d. per week.

The Premier: But eventually you abandoned it, I think.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, the trouble we found was that in some cases a farmer would put off a man he was already employing, so that he might get this additional money. There is always that difficulty.

The Premier: But it would not apply during harvest time.

Mr. LATHAM: No, not to any extent. We should render assistance to any farmer who consequently will take on an additional man until he gets the crop off; and it might be worth while giving consideration to it for the remaining portion of the current financial year. When I see a man employed doing merely trivial work, not useful work, I always think it would be far better to have him clearing a bit of country or doing a bit of fencing; anything that is useful, that will one day enable us to avail ourselves of the improved conditions that must come again. I hope the Government will look into that question of getting men out to assist in the harvest.

Mr. Hegney: Did not that system of subsidising farm labour break down because the farmer exploited it?

Mr. LATHAM: I have explained that we thought at the time the harvest should be able to pay for the labour required in harvesting. No assistance was given in our first year, but in the second year it materially helped the farmers to get in a much bigger crop. When discussing the Loan Estimates, we can only tell the same old story over and over again. We cannot achieve prosperity by borrowing money with which to find work for the unemployed. We have to get back to the basis of assisting industry wherever possible, as for instance, assisting the change-over from wheat production to wool production. I am sorry there is not a bigger sum available on the Estimates for assisting farmers by the provision of additional capital for the Agricultural Bank. I know what the Premier's reply will be, namely that they are having difficulty in getting

back all that is owed to the bank now, and indeed even the interest. But I believe that if we could advance for water supply and fencing on a number of abandoned properties, we might be able to convert them into sheep propositions. The Minister for Lands, when speaking on the Revenue Estimates, said that serious consideration would be given to the position of those farmers who are producing less than a payable quantity of wheat per acre. If a farmer has a block which is better as a sheep proposition than as a wheat proposition, the change-over would put a number of men into work and would greatly improve the position of the farmer. If we do not do that, or if assistance be not forthcoming from some other source, quite a lot of farmers will be forced off their holdings.

The Premier: Some 1,200 wheat farms are now on the hands of the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. LATHAM: Not all wheat farms; some of them are in the South-West.

The Premier: No, there are 200 group farms in addition.

Mr. LATHAM: Only to-day the member for Kanowna (Mr. Nulsen) told me the Esperance country is now producing fairly good grasses. If water can be procured there and conserved, that would help considerably. We have spent a lot of money down there, and some of the clearing is only going back to nature.

The Premier: Much of that will be good stock country as well as wheat country.

Mr. LATHAM: I believe the Premier is right in that. Despite the low price of wheat, a man who is running both sheep and wheat will be able to make ends meet. After all, for stock and sheep, fencing and the provision of water supplies are essentials. Fencing provides a fair amount of work and would be a means of employing many who will be looking for work during the winter months. For some little time to come we must get sufficient out of our wool and gold and timber to meet our overseas indebtedness. To-day £5,000,000 worth of wheat goes abroad every year. That must be, for our creditors will not take our notes, and it is better to spend Australian money producing wheat and keeping people employed until the markets adjust themselves.

The Premier: At the same time the Commonwealth have agreed to bring about a reduction of production.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, but there will not be any need to do that, for it must adjust itself. Governments and banks cannot go on advancing money year after year on something which cannot meet its own current accounts. Some people seem to think that because the recent loan of £10,000,000 floated by the Federal Government through the Loan Council was quickly subscribed in Australia, it may be taken as a sign of prosperity. Actually it is just the reverse, for it means that people have not been prepared to invest their money in ordinary channels, but have been waiting for some gilt-edged security to come along. If the people's money were invested in industry, as it should be, the Government would have difficulty in floating an internal loan; but on this occasion, in two days they raised £10,000,000, which must have been lying idle. So I do not by any means regard the success of the loan as a sign of prosperity. I would prefer to see the Government, any Government, finding a little difficulty in getting money, for that would mean that the people were prepared to invest their money in private securities. Our goldmining industry is not sufficiently attractive to capital, particularly in this State. When we read the glowing reports of the Minister for Mines on the Lady Gladys mine—

The Minister for Railways: You should see the little bottle of gold he has!

Mr. LATHAM: That mine apparently is a very attractive proposition, and I am hopeful that such ventures as goldmining and sheep raising will attract all the capital required. The most unsatisfactory form of capital is that which is available to Governments alone. The Premier stressed the importance of making funds available to the Railway Department to carry out improvements to the roads and to effect belated repairs. I remind the Committee that, while the previous Government may have been responsible for deferring repairs and renewals, they left to the State a legacy of not less than £40,000 a year, which might be used for making good some of the repairs required. I wish to stress that point particularly, because the member for North East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) told us how badly we had treated the Railway Department by using up the stock-in-hand. To use the stock-in-hand was preferable to paying 30 per cent. more for the importation

of additional stock. Nobody possessed of business acumen would send money out of the State, especially when requested not to do so, and pay 30 per cent. exchange for the purchase of additional stores, when the obvious course was to use the stores in hand. If we were responsible for the bad state of repair into which railway rolling stock has fallen, at least we have left the Government £40,000 a year, and that will compensate them to a considerable extent.

Mr. Hegney: In what way have you left the Government £40,000 a year?

Mr. LATHAM: By the saving on the cost of coal.

Mr. Wilson: You have not got the saving yet.

Mr. LATHAM: I should be surprised to learn that the suppliers of the coal had not paid. On the previous occasion they paid fairly punctually. Of course they have to abide by the agreement reached.

The Premier: That applies only till the expiration of the agreement in March.

Mr. LATHAM: I am aware that there will be the same old fight again in March next.

The Premier: In March there will again be no tenders for coal.

Mr. LATHAM: But the position of the Government has been considerably strengthened by the knowledge gained during the last 12 months.

The Premier: There will be no tenders at that rate.

Mr. LATHAM: Then we shall have to find other means. I am not afraid of what the Government will do now. No doubt the price of coal will be more reasonable in future, and a direct saving has been made. I am satisfied that the inquiry instituted by the previous Government was justified, and that the saving on the coal bill will materially assist the Government to maintain the rolling stock at a high standard.

Mr. Wilson: We shall have to bonus coal as well as wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: When we compare the prices of coal at the pit's mouth in New South Wales and in Western Australia, we must realise that the Government grant a benefit to the local article. I am quite prepared that that benefit should be given. All Governments have favoured a 10 per cent. margin for the benefit of the local article, and I hope the practice of allowing that margin will be continued. Perhaps it is a

pity that there are coal mines not too far away from this State, because they give a basis for comparison. In view of the resolution of the House that further assistance, by inquiry or otherwise, should be given to group settlement, I am disappointed that the Premier has cut down the vote for group settlement by nearly one half.

Mr. Raphael: Do not you think that sufficient millions have been poured away in that direction?

Mr. LATHAM: The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) is not in his seat at the moment, and I am wondering what he will say to that reduction. The member for Sussex (Mr. Brockman), however, is present and he, too, is interested in group settlement. The expenditure on group settlement last year was £78,958, and the provision for the current financial year is only £47,000. Perhaps that constitutes one of the surprises that the Premier had for us. In view of the low price of butter fat, something will undoubtedly have to be done, for a time at least, to enable settlers to remain on their farms and maintain the improvements. These are some of the big problems that the Government of the day have to face. On one or two items I shall seek information, and no doubt the Premier will supply it. I hold that it is idle for any member to stand in his place and criticise unless he can offer constructive criticism. Western Australia, placed as it is at the moment, has very little control of its finances, and little control of its destiny. All that can be done is to go quietly along rendering assistance to such industries as can be aided with the limited amount of money available.

Mr. Needham: Why did you enter into the financial agreement?

Mr. LATHAM: That is past history. The member for Perth is in a singularly happy position. I think he was one who opposed it at the time, and I am not sure that he is always right. I have turned the matter over in my mind during cooler moments, and have considered what might have happened had all the States been permitted to go on the loan market independently and without some form of control. Each State would have been competing with the others for the limited amount of money that has been available—a limited amount, particularly during the last three years. No doubt the control of Australian finance under the Financial Agreement was the means of enabling the States to come together and formulate the

Premiers' Plan. I know that some members disapprove of the Premiers' Plan, but undoubtedly it accomplished some good. It enhanced our reputation in the eyes of the financial world. It enabled us to reduce interest rates which could not have happened had the States been free to bargain against each other. Only by collective bargaining was it possible to secure reduced interest rates, and so in some respects the Financial Agreement has proved useful. I hope the Premier will take notice of the points I have brought under notice. The important one is that the Government should not compete with those people who require labour. We should make available to the farmer all the labour required. It is useless to criticise the farmer. At the end of the year he will not have a shilling out of his wheat crop. He cannot possibly have anything for himself with wheat at 2s. a bushel. It is a matter of importance to the State that he should be able to harvest the present crop and put in another crop next year. Otherwise we shall be placed in the position of having to confess to the Old Country that we cannot meet our interest obligations. There will be no alternative. We have to send our goods overseas to meet our interest bill. We cannot send our notes—they would not be acceptable—and we do not produce sufficient gold to enable us to make all our payments in gold. From the viewpoint of gold production, Western Australia is more fortunately situated than are the Eastern States, but we are now a family of States and it is useless for one State to think that it can do much single-handed. Working collectively, something can be done. We should assist the men who are producing at a loss in an industry that is important to the Commonwealth as a whole. We should try to give the farmers some encouragement by aiding them to get the labour necessary to harvest their crops. I ask the Premier to investigate the question of getting some of the available labour absorbed by the farmers, as that would reduce the claims on the Government, be more satisfactory to the men than relief work, and more beneficial to the State.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.24]: The Premier should be congratulated on having returned from the meeting of the Loan Council in Melbourne with all the money he asked for. We need all the money we can get for the reasons so ably pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition. I wish to direct attention to a very interesting con-

mentary on the situation published in "The West Australian" on the 13th November. It showed clearly the position with which we are confronted. It pointed out that if the State continued to borrow heavily—as we are doing—we would soon be face to face with a day of reckoning. On the other hand, if we ceased to borrow, we would be confronted with an immediate crisis. That is the dilemma facing us, and it is a fairly difficult one to get out of. The newspaper proceeded to say that what we should do was to borrow less and to balance the Budget. The whole point of borrowing more money was to reduce the deficit and absorb the unemployed, so it is difficult to understand how, if we reduce our borrowing, we can balance the Budget. Of course it is absolutely impossible. A loan of £10,000,000 has recently been raised in Australia, the object, in effect, being to feed the people and pay off Treasury bills. This revives the question as to when our interest bill will absorb the whole of the proceeds of taxation. An occurrence of the kind is not pleasant to contemplate. I would not have raised these obvious points if I did not believe there was a solution which I have presented in this chamber, namely, not to worry about tremendous production but to alter the system of accounting to gain from production some benefit. I sensed from the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition that he, too, is beginning to feel that the position has become hopeless. The fact that the Premier was able to obtain all the loan money he sought was, in itself, very satisfactory, but it is clear that we shall have to expend that loan money either to produce in excess goods that the world will not require, or to construct works merely to employ and feed the people.

The Premier: Your system could not be given effect to by an individual State.

Mr. NORTH: I think action by the Commonwealth Government would be necessary. I am aware that the State Government have asked the Commonwealth to make an inquiry. I suggest that the Commonwealth Government be urged to avail themselves of the first-hand evidence of Major Douglas, who is due to arrive in Australia in January next.

Mr. Moloney: Do you suggest that you have converted the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. NORTH: No; I think the remarks of both the Premier and the Leader of the Op-

position show that we are simply heading towards a position when interest commitments will absorb the whole of the proceeds of taxation. At the present time interest does not absorb quite all the revenue from taxation. The raising of the loan of £10,000,000 recently was another step in that direction. To raise £10,000,000 at 3½ per cent. interest merely to feed the people must bring nearer the day when interest on borrowed money will absorb all the revenue from taxation. When that day arrives, there will be no funds available for providing for police, justice, civil service or Parliament. If the book-keeping system were altered as has been suggested by the new economists, the Loan Estimates would have a healthy flavour, and instead of spending loan funds on increasing production for export, where already there is excess, we could probably use part of the money to relieve some of the needs in the cities. For years and years we have been driving men from their homes to take work in the bush, under the export complex, and I consider the day has come when the cities might well claim some attention from the Government. A start should be made with some of the works needed in the cities. I am aware that this is a new idea. We should not exhaust our energies in simply chopping down trees to prepare the country for excess production for export when London has definitely decided against that policy, when restrictions are being urged against wheat exports, and when the British farmers are fighting the Cabinet to secure a reduction in the commodities supplied by us. The time has arrived when thousands of people living in the cities should be entitled to do some of the necessary works that could be undertaken. I am aware that it is hopeless to propound such a policy under the existing financial system, but seeing that that system is breaking down and that it is useless to expend borrowed money to increase exports, the time has arrived when we might justifiably ask the Government to consider the employment of those thousands of men, not on chopping down trees and similar jobs, but on sewerage, drainage, and such like works for the benefit of the cities. If that could be attended to, we should be occupied for many years in a useful and necessary way. It is possible to obtain most of the rates due for sewerage and drainage work.

Mr. Thorn: Your proposition is a hopeless one so far as the towns are concerned.

Mr. NORTH: In existing circumstances it would be a hopeless proposition, but the existing circumstances are leading us to still more hopelessness. At the moment we are quickly arriving at the point when interest will absorb the whole of the taxation, because of the millions that are being borrowed for various works. Is it not better to use the men in the cities for the improvement of the homes in the cities and the standard of living of the people in those homes? The member for Northam said that 75 per cent. of the taxation raised in Australia went to pay interest. If that is not the exact figure, it is one we are rapidly approaching. There can be no escape from it. No one can say it is possible to increase taxation. The Premier told us that 14s. 6d. in the pound was being taken from some citizens, and that if he took the other 5s. 6d. from them they would not be able to meet the 4½d. tax he required at the time. This indicates that taxation cannot be increased. The system of borrowing money to meet the food bills and retire Treasury bills must stop. What cannot stop is the need for work; therefore the system that requires to be altered is not that which makes for work, but the accounting system which goes with it. I hope that during the next few months it will be possible to have a complete transfer of policy from one forcing a surfeit of commodities that are not required in London, to one of allowing thousands of our citizens to work in their own district in renovating and improving their own cities and surroundings, carrying out drainage, sewerage and other urgent works, which require to be done and cannot be done because we continue to produce goods for export. What is called economic nationalism will force itself upon the nation. That will mean that we shall have either to bring more people into the country, or the birth rate will have to increase so that our population may develop. We have to face a situation in which we can build up our country so that it may consume our own wheat. That is the final aim in view. All European countries are now prepared to feed themselves. If we can build up our own country so that we can consume our own wheat and meat, we can face our financial problems in a much stronger manner. Parliament will be able to charge an economic price for the com-

modities we produce, and the producer will have no further worry. We cannot go on attempting to force export, and taking thousands of men from their homes and placing them in the country, not with the object of improving the position of Australia or of their own standard of living, but in order that we may export an increasing amount of unwanted produce. If we handle the situation in the way I have outlined, this country will soon become a place that can take care of its own financial situation.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.35]: I am pleased that the Premier has decided upon an extension of the electricity supply. The story is an old one, but I hope the position is gradually reaching the stage when we can say that extensions are definitely going to be made. We know how difficult it is to secure money, and how difficult it is to get what is needed. I am very hopeful that progress will be made with the extensions. They are of outstanding importance, particularly in the outer suburban producing areas. There is a good deal of land there containing poor soil, and of practically little value as things are. It requires a cheap water supply, without which the land is comparatively unproductive. Those who hold it are unable to make a living out of it. It is important that water supplies should be available for the development of the poultry industry. I am pleased to note that in certain districts the size of the water pipes is being increased. That is being done in the hills districts, and is a justifiable work. I have received a number of letters from the localities concerned, urging that this work should be carried out. I am pleased to learn that it has definitely been put in hand in certain places. At Darlington the water supply is inadequate for the needs of the people. When, in 1923, a scheme was provided for that district, it was regarded as a temporary expedient to alleviate the difficulties then existing. The pipes were secondhand. While the work done was much appreciated, it could not be expected to continue in that state for very long. I hope that the work which is being done now will be continued, and I know that those concerned will be very grateful. Certain matters dealing with my electorate I intend to refer to the departments concerned. The position with regard to relief work is a difficult one. It may be that the department will give consideration to the erection of

poles and other work for the extension of electricity and water supplies when deciding the kind of relief work to embark upon. In many instances it is also necessary to improve both the school grounds and the school buildings. If that work cannot be said to be reproductive, it is at all events essential work, and I hope it will receive consideration. Extensive work could also be provided in connection with our agricultural and show grounds. I was particularly pleased to note the remarks of the Premier with respect to the Forests Department. A great deal of wealth is represented in our timber. In some countries that are better placed in the matter of rainfall great progress has been made in the timber industry. I am glad to note that £30,000 has been hypothecated by the Premier for the development of certain trees. I notice that mallet bark is referred to. I have expressed the desire on several occasions that consideration should be given to the planting of experimental plots on which the broad leaf or commercial wattle might be grown. In South Australia the wattle bark industry is now a commercial proposition.

Mr. Ferguson: And in South Africa, too.

Mr. SAMPSON: I believe we were rather short-sighted when we provided seed for South Africa. With his known keenness in respect to forestry, no doubt the Premier will, I trust, try out a small plot for the production of wattle bark. It is a subject about which I do know something, for as a boy I stripped many wattle trees in the district in which I lived. It is a nice side line, and brings in many pounds to the small farmer. The position in respect to pulp for paper is becoming increasingly important. There is ample justification for what has been done there. I am advised that £30,000,000 worth of paper is used each year. In the United States in 1930 the value of forest products imported was £126,800,000. This goes to show what a tremendous sum is represented in timber. According to the "Statesmen's Year Book," the area of timber that is used annually for commercial purposes in the United States of America is 5,500,000 acres.

Mr. Moloney: Are you sure of these figures?

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes. They were given at the British Empire Forestry Conference during the year before last, and have been taken from the "Statesmen's Year Book."

The figures are therefore authentic. In the United States and Canada trees do not grow as quickly as they do here, owing to the difference in climate. In those countries it takes 40 to 50 years to develop a tree to the stage when it can be used for paper pulp purposes. Up to 80 years are required if the tree is intended for marketable timber purposes.

Mr. Doney: What length of time does it take here to develop a tree?

Mr. SAMPSON: In New Zealand, where the climate is colder than it is in Australia, the trees nevertheless develop quickly, and within a period of 12 years can be used for pulp purposes.

Mr. Wise: What sort of timber is that?

Mr. SAMPSON: This is soft wood, *pinus insignis*, and other pines.

Mr. Doney: I do not think the *pinus insignis* can be cut at that age, even for that purpose.

Mr. SAMPSON: Remarkable wealth is associated with that industry. There are 4,600 uses to which the pine can be put. I have a chart showing some of the products of pine wood and its by-products. The main lines are groundwood pulp, newsprint, wrapping papers, cellulose acetate, artificial silk, and even sawdust, and from sawdust there is made wallboard, artificial woods, insulation, wall paper, and fibre plaster sheets. There is also a variety of other side lines. It is gratifying to know the interest and enthusiasm which has been shown by the Premier for many years past in regard to forests. As Minister for Forests, he has had the opportunity to do so. I do believe it would pay us to go further and use for the growth of the pine some of the poorer land around the outer suburban districts, such as that around Guildford, which is more or less of a nondescript character and is comparatively idle. The pine also grows wonderfully well in the hills. Members have only to remember what the Premier said a few nights ago regarding the growth of the pines in the Mundaring Weir area.

Mr. Hegney: And down at Cottesloe.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, and Maida Vale, and indeed in practically every part of the State. The warm climate makes for a ready growth. Our main difficulty is the shortage of water, but we must not forget that in California where they have to depend on

irrigation, they produce a large quantity of the timber. There are three kingdoms, the animal, vegetable and mineral, and it's worth while giving our attention to these. From the three kingdoms every human need is supplied. A number of needs are supplied by timber and I am on safe ground when I say this.

The Minister for Justice: Even silk stockings are produced from it.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister is perfectly right that artificial silk is a product, and artificial wool is made from pine pulp.

The Premier: Is there any danger of it becoming a competitor of wool?

Mr. SAMPSON: We may take time by the forelock and develop our pine forests so that if anything should happen in that direction we should be able to do something ourselves with the product. At the same time I hope that nothing will interfere with our wool. It is interesting to note what is being done in New Zealand. I was in the Dominion in 1922 and even then there were over 90 million trees planted mostly by prison labour in the Rotorua district. The estimated value at that time was £1 per tree. To-day a company which is operating in New Zealand has planted 110 million trees, and it is claimed, and the claim has not, I think, been disputed, that the demand which exists for this timber and particularly for pulp, is sufficiently large to warrant an even greater production. The Government of New Zealand to-day has planted 240 million trees and the area covered is between 300,000 and 400,000 acres. So noting what has been done by other countries, it is but right that we should give our fullest support to any action that might be taken by the present Government and to what has already been done by preceding Governments, with regard to the development of this wood. I hope the work will be continued and extended. Beyond again urging that the utmost consideration be given in respect to electric current, a subject on which I have talked so frequently that I have become sick of my own voice, I shall support the vote.

MR. HAWKE (Northam) [5.53]: The point raised by the Leader of the Opposition in regard to the reaction developing in country districts to-day as the result of the employment policy of the present Minister in charge of that department, is important and requires the consideration, not only of

the members of this Committee, but also that of all people interested in the question of maintaining the productive industries. The Leader of the Opposition, in my opinion, did not go into the question as deeply and as fully as is necessary to a proper understanding of the position. The main reason for the difficulty now existing in regard to obtaining farm workers, can be traced to the fact that a large number of married men in country towns formerly depended upon farmers to provide them with sufficient work during the year to enable them to maintain themselves and their families in some sort of comfort. When the depression came and prices, particularly the price of wheat, fell heavily, farmers were no longer in a position to provide a measure of employment for married men resident in country towns. And when those married men found that the amount of work available on farms had shrunk to such a great extent, they were compelled to seek the assistance of relief works provided by the State. I know of a large number of married men in country towns who were forced into that position, and because of that fact they now are employed the whole year round on relief works. It is true they had their period on and period off, but it is also true that it is risky for them to accept outside work during their standing down period on account of the danger that it may interfere with their chance of again obtaining relief employment.

Mr. Doney: That does not operate in the case of married men.

Mr. HAWKE: Their earnings during their standing-off period have to be taken into consideration. For instance, if a man did his four weeks or five weeks period on relief work and then went on to a farm and worked during his standing off period, the Minister in control would be compelled to take some notice of that, otherwise it would be giving that man a much greater income than really he was entitled to receive, and probably as the result of such action he would have to forfeit some of the relief work that would otherwise be available to him. It seems to me that is the main reason for the difficulty existing as far as the obtaining of farm labour to-day is concerned. Single men are not being employed on relief work during this period except those fortunate enough

to have been booked up prior to two or three months ago.

Mr. Ferguson: Why do they not go out on the farms?

Mr. HAWKE: I think they will. I have found single men in Northam quite willing and anxious to work on farms. When I made some inquiries at Northam last week from the local branch of the Labour Bureau and from the district police office as to whether there were any farmers in the district who required workers, I was informed that neither the local branch of the bureau nor the district police office had been notified by one single farmer of his desire to employ labour of any kind.

Mr. Latham: Did Inspector Crow tell you that?

Mr. HAWKE: No, he did not. I am not suggesting that he told me, but I have it on good authority, and unless the engaging of labour is done through the recognised channel, it is difficult to set up a system that will be at all satisfactory. I am sure that if farmers would work through country branches of the Labour Bureau, or through police stations or some other recognised authority, much of the difficulty at present being experienced by them would be overcome.

Mr. Moloney: What about the wages?

Mr. HAWKE: Wages are an important consideration; but single men unemployed in country towns find that if they are offered any sort of wages, it is best for them to accept what is offered. Numerous men in Western Australia to-day are working on farms for a wage much lower than they would have accepted five years ago, and probably much lower than the farmers would have offered five years ago. I feel that with the co-operation of the farmers in the matter of engaging labour a good deal of the dissatisfaction now existing could be removed. Much benefit would result if members, instead of coming into this Parliament and complaining and—if I may use the term—moaning about the situation, were to direct the attention of the farmers to the best method by which the position might be met.

Mr. Doney: There is ample evidence, though, that farmers put their applications through the right channel, because the Marquis-street bureau have a large number of vacancies which cannot be filled.

Mr. HAWKE: The hon. member may speak with authority on that aspect, but I

maintain that a considerable proportion of the labour required on farms could be obtained in country districts without troubling the city at all. I go further and say that if the farmers could engage for their work men who have been resident in country districts for some years, they would get a better type of employee for the class of duties required, than would be the case if they drew their labour from the metropolitan area. The subsidising of farm labour raises a big and highly debatable question. If the principle is to be conceded that farmers shall be subsidised in regard to their labour because farmers generally are in a serious financial position, the same principle must be conceded in regard to all other activities conducted in the State. If, for instance, certain business concerns are finding it difficult to carry on their activities, there is a similar claim to be conceded in their case. If manufacturing industries in Western Australia are finding it difficult to carry on because of the absence of a demand for the goods they produce, they have an equally logical claim with other sections of the community for subsidised labour.

Mr. Patrick: Those sections are subsidised in other directions.

Mr. HAWKE: That contention would probably be met by the same contention from the manufacturers in regard to the farmers.

Mr. Patrick: Give us an artificial price for our product and we shall be content.

Mr. HAWKE: The manufacturer may logically argue that the farmer is indirectly subsidised in ten or twelve different ways, or even twenty. However, that is not the point to be argued. Although it might not be wise to subsidise farm labour directly, it would be possible, I think, to devise some method whereby farmers who are financial clients of the Government might be assisted in regard to necessary improvements and the maintenance of the State's asset. It would be risky for the Government to make any such scheme universal among farmers, because other financial institutions stand behind what are known as the private settlers. There is the Bank of New South Wales, there are other private banks, and there are stock and station agents; and private farmers are clients of those institutions and firms. It becomes the duty, then, of those institutions and firms to carry their clients through this troublesome period, if it is

financially and humanly possible. Should the Government devise some method that will be generally acceptable in regard to assisting farmers who are clients of Government institutions, it will be a step in the right direction. It is generally admitted that the class of work being carried on to-day by our otherwise unemployed workers is a class that is not of great financial benefit to the State as a whole, a class of work that will not be reproductive, a class that will not even be productive of the interest to be paid on the money borrowed to enable the work to be done. Therefore I urge upon the Premier, the Minister for Lands, and the Minister for Employment to confer together on this important aspect. If the assets of the State in the shape of farms can be maintained and the position of the Government's clients made more secure, it would be a far more beneficial expenditure of Loan money than is the case under existing methods of relief work. There is the rabbit menace; there is the urgent need for the netting of numerous farms in the wheat areas. If the necessary supplies can be obtained, I would not seriously object to the Government making men available to assist in the efficient erection of that netting. It may be possible for the Government to do something in that direction. Similarly it may be possible for them to act along the same lines in regard to other necessary improvements of the farms on which their clients are placed. As to railway work and water supply works, I find there is a tendency not only in Western Australia but in all the Australian States, or it may be in all countries, for the whole of the repair work to be centralised as far as possible within the city areas. Only a few days ago there came under my notice a case from the Northam electorate. At Northam there is a small workshop for the purpose of dealing with repairs to trucks used in connection with the goldfields water supply. Two men were employed in that workshop for the purpose of carrying out those repairs. Then some person in a position of high authority in the big repair shop in Perth had a brain wave that it would be desirable to remove that workshop from Northam to Perth and have all the work done in the city. On the face of it this may appear sound policy, concentrating all repair work in the city; but, after all is said and done, there are disadvantages involved. There is the loss of time and the expense of bringing the vehicles from the country to the

city, and the loss of time and the expense in returning them to the country after being repaired. In view of the fact that half of our population is already concentrated in the metropolitan district, this sort of policy instead of being encouraged should be discouraged, and to some extent a reverse policy should be operative. It is beneficial to the Government and the State as a whole to encourage as many people as possible to go into the country districts. I sincerely hope and trust that there will be no further attempt to centralise Government activities in the direction I have mentioned. The question of borrowing generally is one that has been discussed and re-discussed times out of number. Undoubtedly the borrowing of Australian Governments during the last four years has been the salvation of Australia. Except Governments had borrowed, and except they had made that borrowed money available as purchasing power to the unemployed people of Australia, most of our commercial activities would have broken down long ere this. It has been this extra purchasing power which has circulated by virtue of Government borrowing that has assisted to hold things together and to prevent the crash that otherwise would have come about. The system of borrowing itself is, in my opinion, dangerous and unnecessary. If Governments go on for another five years operating the same policy, then, as pointed out by the member for Claremont (Mr. North), the burden of debt and—what is more important—the burden of interest upon the Australian people will become so great as to be impossible to meet. Therefore it seems to me that within the next five years there must be a drastic change as regards the system of borrowing that Governments will indulge in. The policy carried on up to the present has been successful to the extent that it has prevented a collapse; but in preventing one collapse it is tending to bring about another, and that will be the collapse of Governments and industry through the inability of the taxpayers and industry to carry the increased burden of taxation that will be necessary to meet the ever-increasing interest bill. We are told that the position will adjust itself, and must adjust itself, that it is only a matter of waiting a little longer when something will happen to set the whole position right. I do not hold with that view at all. During the whole of the depression period we have had

the same argument put before us. The people have been told to remain patient, to be optimistic, to display hope and expectation, because things must adjust themselves. But things will not adjust themselves, and Parliaments will have to take the initiative before things do adjust themselves. Some people think that because in the past, depressions came and disappeared, this one, having come, will disappear, naturally and automatically. This depression came because of unnatural forces which were operating, and those unnatural forces will have to be wiped away before the position can be rectified. I sincerely hope and trust that the Premier on his visits to the Eastern States in the future will hammer away to achieve a sane and scientific alteration in the present system of Government borrowing.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [7.30]: I thank the Government for proceeding with the Bunbury Harbour Works. When he introduced the Estimates, the Premier's remarks gave me the impression that he doubted the advisability of the operations. The work has been advocated for many years and has been justified for a long time. When the timber trade was in its heyday, Bunbury was one of the main export centres of Australia. In fact, I think it was the third largest from the standpoint of exports. Although there was a big volume of trade and large revenue was derived from the port, very little was done to improve the harbour facilities. Had the work been put in hand much earlier, the cost of dredging for years past would have been practically eliminated. Last year £11,800 was spent on the harbour, and this year's Estimates show that about £40,000 has been provided. Of last year's expenditure, a considerable portion was spent on dredging and I find that a certain proportion is also included in the expenditure provided this year. I understand that the work will take between four and five years to complete. If the scheme proves as effective as the engineers claim, the reduced cost of dredging, year by year, may represent a saving to the State. Great hopes are entertained of a revival of the timber industry in the South-West, and it was pleasing to read in this morning's "West Australian," the references to the prospects of the trade this year. The

arrangements for supplies of hewn sleepers will be of considerable benefit to those connected with the industry. From the timber trade, revenue is derived by way of royalty, railway freight and wharfage, and in the past those charges have had a detrimental effect on the industry generally. I hope that if there should be a revival in the timber trade, the Government will not be all-grasping in the future, and endeavour to cripple an industry that has done so much for the State. They should be satisfied with the royalty that is imposed to-day, even though it could with advantage be reduced somewhat, and I trust that the railway charges obtaining to-day will not be increased. On one occasion I stated in this Chamber that the timber trade had been of greater benefit to the State than wheat, from a railway point of view. I quoted figures to show that more revenue was derived from timber than from the whole of the wheat handled throughout the State. That is not the position to-day. We can go back to the period when Bunbury was not the port of export for any wheat at all, whereas to-day, under the zone system, practically the whole of the wheat grown in the South-West is exported from Bunbury. I have some figures that disclose the position to-day. During last season, 26 vessels loaded 1,434,000 bags at Bunbury, whereas during the previous season 18 vessels shipped 1,275,000 bags. It was in 1914 that the first shipment of wheat, representing 40 tons, was despatched from Bunbury as an experiment. It was in those days that the timber trade was so buoyant, and tremendous quantities were exported from Bunbury overseas to Africa, India, England and elsewhere. It will be seen that the wheat shipments from Bunbury have expanded enormously in the meanwhile. The trade started in earnest in 1916 when 3,758 tons were exported. Wheat was shipped through Bunbury every year subsequently, except in 1918, when the conclusion of the war complicated markets, and wheat supplies were kept in stocks here. In the peak period, the 1930-31 season, 22 vessels lifted 1,537,167 bags and the trade has grown steadily with each succeeding year, allowance being made for seasonal fluctuations. If we can continue, through the operations of the zone system, to secure the benefit of the trade to which Bunbury is entitled, and we are

able to provide the deeper water berths and other facilities to which shipping at Bunbury is entitled, then the money to be expended, as indicated in the Loan Estimates, will be reproductive and well-worth while. The revenue aspect is important, but from that standpoint the report of the Bunbury Harbour Board Commissioners may not be very encouraging. There was a time when the Harbour Board contributed very largely towards Consolidated Revenue, and it is to be hoped that that will be the experience in the future. The people of the South-West have been looking forward for many years to a proper scheme for the improvement of the Bunbury Harbour. Apart from the exports of timber and wheat, there are prospects of great expansion in the fat-lamb trade, and the great bulk of our dairy production is in the South-West. The people in that part of the State are so concerned about this matter that, at a conference held some time ago in Bunbury, it was decided that the various interests concerned should combine to erect cool storage facilities at that port. The object was to provide for the storage of perishable produce, such as apples, frozen lambs, and butter. Those people did not ask the State to spend money on the provision of the facilities; they were prepared to do so themselves. The expenditure on the harbour will assist those who have been prepared to spend their own money in providing those facilities. The pity of it is that we will have to wait three or four years until the harbour improvement scheme is completed, before the people at Bunbury will be able to secure the advantage. Nevertheless, once the people know the Government are sincere and are prepared to make provision for completion of the scheme, they will be encouraged to go ahead and to promote additional export trade from the whole of the South-West, through its natural port, Bunbury. When I was discussing the South-West with a railway official to-day, I learned that, from a railway standpoint, that portion of the State is proving the salvation of the system at this juncture. The South-West line is practically the only one that is really paying. The pity of it is that even to-day trains are being sent from Perth to Brunswick Junction to pick up loads for railing to Fremantle. That seems unfair, but there must be some reason why ships are loading at Fremantle, cargoes railed from the South-West. Those cargoes should be

loaded at the natural port at Bunbury. The position is all the more interesting when we know that from time to time statements appear in the metropolitan press, and photographs are published, indicating that the Fremantle harbour is congested.

Mr. Tonkin: When have you seen that?

Mr. WITHERS: Often, and we are proud of the fact. Nevertheless, when it is realised that Bunbury is 90 miles from Fremantle by sea, it obvious that a ship can pick up her anchor at night, and be at Bunbury next morning ready to load. In the circumstances, it is unfair to deprive Bunbury of the shipping to which that port is entitled. In making those remarks, I am not speaking in any derogatory sense regarding the harbour at Fremantle, but if the shipping trade at Fremantle continues—

Mr. Tonkin: We will have to enlarge the harbour.

Mr. WITHERS: If we are to concentrate our trade in one central port, it will not be long before the harbour will be unable to cater for the shipping. In those circumstances, it will be necessary to have a harbour adjacent to Fremantle where the surplus shipping can be handled. That would be preferable to allowing ships to be hung up waiting for berths. I compliment the Government on the manner in which they are spending money to-day in the re-laying re-grading, and re-sleepering of the railways, on general renovation and repair work that has been neglected for years. Some years ago I had the temerity to mention that the money the Government were providing for the unemployed at that time was being wasted in scraping grass off the footpaths in the suburbs and towns. At the time, the Minister concerned said that I was partly to blame as I was connected with a local governing authority. Of course, we could not blame local authorities for taking advantage of cheap money.

Mr. Latham: But you could blame them for blaming someone else.

Mr. WITHERS: Although the Government of the day were prepared to provide local authorities with funds to enable them to give work to the unemployed instead of allowing them to draw sustenance for nothing, the fact remains that no return was derived from that expenditure. I admit that Bunbury, for instance, was greatly improved as a result of the expenditure of that money, and to-day her streets are among the finest

outside the metropolitan area. What was Bunbury's gain, was certainly not the State's gain. If that money had been spent in the way it is being expended now, it would have been much better, and the railway permanent way, buildings and rolling stock would not have fallen into present-day disrepair. The Government are playing a laudable part in seeing to it that their assets are improved by the expenditure of this money. The Premier also said that money spent in re-grading was of benefit to the State railways. We realise that. In the course of his remarks he mentioned the Collic-Brunswick railway. It is almost impossible to re-grade the line to such an extent as to render practicable the hauling of anything like heavy loads. But for many years past we have advocated that, instead of re-grading that line, another line should be constructed from Collic through Wellington Mills and Dardanup to Bunbury, along a much easier route. Then the existing line would not be congested and we would get over the new line all the produce, coming through some wonderful agricultural land which could be opened up and developed right along the line. Now we have the Wellington dam and the irrigation scheme adjacent to those properties, and it would prove a wonderful asset if we could get the railway put through. It is admitted that, by an efficient survey, we could secure a line of easy grades. What we are asking for at present is that another survey should be made in order to see whether it would not be more economical to construct a line from Collic through Wellington Mills to Bunbury, which would be of about the same length as the existing line and would give us much easier grades. In the past a strong argument against the construction of that line was the cost of the bridge that would be needed over the river. But more recently that bridge has been constructed for the use of the railway out to the Griffin mine, and so that difficulty has disappeared. That question should receive consideration when the Government are giving attention to the regrading of difficult railways: whether it would not be easier and better to construct the railway I have suggested than to re-grade the existing line. The question of farm labour raised by the member for Northam is worthy of grave consideration. I mentioned it on the Address-in-reply and, when discussing it subsequently with one or two Ministers, I concluded they had come to my way of thinking and were prepared to grant the

established settler, particularly the Agricultural Bank client, assistance from the unemployment fund. Many of those men are to-day clearing land long distances away from existing railways. Recently the Minister for Lands informed me that it was not for the purpose of helping the established settler and keeping him on his holding, but that his idea was to clean up some of the abandoned holdings that were going back. When we notice the abandoned holdings, we wonder sometimes what the cost may be of reconditioning them and getting suitable settlers to carry them on. However, my point is that the men struggling to remain on their holdings constitute the State's asset of the future. If we are going to expend money at all, why not tell those settlers that we are prepared to allow them the same rate as we pay single men for clearing country, to extend their holdings or to clean them up. In the group settlement areas particularly, the settlers cannot keep pace with the undergrowth and debris on their holdings. Once a settler establishes himself as a 20-cow man, he has quite enough to do in looking after his property without any assistance other than that rendered perhaps by his wife and a small family. Some of the settlers in the Sussex district have informed me that they could get crops of 40 tons of meadow hay if only assistance in collecting it were granted to them. If they are not in a position to gather their meadow hay, it lies in danger of destruction by bush fires. I hope the Government will consider looking after their own assets in that respect, because it would mean that many deserving settlers would be placed in a more favourable position than they now occupy. I congratulate the Government on their Loan Estimates, and I assure them that the work to be carried out in the South-West is fully justified.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [7.52]: I have been looking through the Estimates to see if any provision is made for some safeguarding measures along the Melville-terrace water front at South Perth. For a distance of about a mile the shore there has been gradually washed away by winter storms, and unless protective measure be taken before long, a large portion of South Perth will disappear into the river.

Mr. Hawke: That would be a national disaster.

Mr. CROSS: It is imperative that before next winter action be taken to construct a

protective wall along that water front. It would not be a very expensive work, although the cost would be more than could be shouldered by the local authority, who, however, are prepared to accept their share of responsibility for the work. One other requirement on the south side of the river is the widening of the Canning bridge. I should like to know from the Premier whether any provision is made in the Estimates for that work. At present the bridge, which is on one of the main thoroughfares in the metropolitan area, is dangerously narrow for the traffic that it has to carry.

Mr. Latham: I am told it has a swinging pile or two.

Mr. Hawke: Its narrowness impels drivers to be careful.

Mr. CROSS: The time has arrived when something should be done to widen the bridge in accordance with the traffic.

Mr. Hegney: What you want is a bridge like that at Belmont.

Mr. CROSS: I understand consideration has been given to the erection of a new central secondary school in Plain-street, East Perth, which is not much more than a mile from the central school in James-street. Is not the Premier aware that very many more people would be served if the proposed new secondary school were erected on the south side of the river, either in Victoria Park or in South Perth?

Mr. Tonkin: I am afraid I cannot support you.

Mr. CROSS: I congratulate the Ministry on having improved the class of work provided for the unemployed. It is now of a much more useful character than it was during the regime of the previous Ministry. I remember that 18 months ago there were 300 or 400 men engaged in hoeing up grass, all of which has since grown again, rendering the work absolutely useless. If the Government will do something about widening the Canning bridge and putting in that protective wall at Melville-terrace on the South Perth foreshore, those works will be greatly appreciated.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [7.58]: I do not propose to congratulate the Government at all; in fact I feel more inclined to place them on the rack. The only bright spot I can see in the Government's policy is the carrying out of the harbour improvements at Bunbury. And even that was laid down by the previous Government. How-

ever, in all the Loan Estimates that is the only thing I can see containing any scrap of hope for the South-West.

Mr. Tonkin: You have had millions spent on the group settlements.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If it were not for the group settlements, there would not be any metropolitan area to-day; the metropolitan area is entirely dependent on the rural and agricultural areas of the State. However, I presume the continuation of the policy of improving the Bunbury harbour is a sort of sop to the member for Bunbury. I intend to prove my words before I sit down. Why do not the Government come out openly and definitely say, "We have no time for the South-West. It is right off our picture and out of our book, and we have no time for it in any shape or form, whether in the Loan Estimates or any other Estimates. As a sop to Bunbury, we are going to continue the work on your harbour, although we do not care a twopenny damn whether you produce a ton of butter fat, a ton of potatoes, an acre of pasture or anything else." I intend to prove my words right up to the hilt.

Mr. Needham: Why not succeed!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: In 1926, a year to which I am about to refer, the member for Perth was enjoying a position in the Federal sphere, and he does not know what he is talking about tonight. In 1926 the Labour Party were in power, and they spoke about our possessing the most wonderful country in the world and promised to build railways through that country. Ministers have visited the South-West. If the Premier consulted the Minister for Agriculture, he would realise that the remarks I made a few nights ago were not exaggerated.

The Premier: They never are!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I spoke of the carrying capacity of the country, and when the Minister for Agriculture perused the records, he was satisfied that I, for once in my life, had under-estimated the figures. In 1926 railway Bills were introduced by the Labour Government and there was a proposal to spend £10,000 as a commencement. Of course it was never expended. In 1930 the same Government were going to spend £20,000 on the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway, but that amount has not been expended. In the Loan Estimates for the current financial year, £30,000 is provided for the same purpose, and it will not be ex-

pended this year. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) is taking notice. He is guilty. He has political influence behind him. Mine is a lone voice crying for justice for the South-West.

The Premier: You had three years with a majority and why didn't you build the railways?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I depended too much upon my friend, the Leader of the present Government. Perhaps I was too innocent or was too easily gulled by promises of road trains and other things. That does not excuse the present Premier for breaking his promise made in 1926.

The Premier: I made no promise.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Premier made no promise! He introduced a Bill and got it passed by both Houses and placed an amount of money on the Estimates for the commencement of the railway. He employed men to stack 86,000 sleepers for use in building the line, and those sleepers have been lying there for eight years and the taxpayers have been paying interest on the cost.

The Minister for Works: What about the Yarramony line?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will leave the member for Avon to speak of that. The Government are quite prepared to play up to the member for Bunbury and to carry on the harbour improvement work undertaken by the previous Government. They have a member of the party representing Bunbury and so they are prepared to expend money there, but they are going to starve the back country meanwhile, and when the money has been expended at Bunbury, there will be no timber or anything else with which to fill the ships that use the Bunbury harbour.

Mr. Moloney: Do not you think that expenditure is warranted?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have spoken often to urge the construction of the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway, but I am only one member of 50, one with possibly 49 against him. I cannot understand why other members do not support me in this proposal. It is a crying shame and a scandal that the railway was not built years ago. If any part of the country justified the building of a railway, it is this area. On the reports of the Advisory Board, there is one railway that ought to be built and that is the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook line.

The Premier: How many sheep to the acre will that country carry? We have forgotten the figures.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Premier is aware of the figures. I hope that before the year is out the Premier will recognise the claims of that district.

Mr. Cross: How many sheep per acre will it carry?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I suggest that the hon. member pay a visit to the South-West. Let me direct the Premier's attention to another part of the South-West as yet undeveloped. In regard to that part, the Loan Estimates tell the same story. In 1926 I was most appreciative of the Premier when he introduced a Bill for the construction of a railway from Manjimup to Mount Barker. That line should have been built years ago. The Premier placed £10,000 on the Estimates for the commencement of the work in 1926, and to-day the Estimates show that the amount has been unexpended. Why has the Premier altered his opinion regarding the South-West?

The Premier: I will tell you. Seeing that the Government you supported for three years did not do anything, I thought there must be some good reason for their inaction.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is a very paltry excuse. If the building of the railway was justified in 1926, and if the Premier accepted the reports of his officers on that occasion, its construction should be warranted in 1933. If there was any justification for the Premier's change of attitude, I would not mind; I would conclude that I had been bolstering up a bad case, but the country is improving: its carrying capacity is increasing.

The Premier: I can see that your capacity is increasing.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Railways are being authorised to serve the wheat areas and encourage the expansion of an industry that has to be bolstered with a Federal bonus.

Mr. Hegney: You voted for those lines.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I did not; I said there was no justification for constructing them. There is one bright spot in the Estimates, namely, the reference to the Westcliffe-Northcliffe railway.

Mr. Tonkin: You said Bunbury was a bright spot. That makes two.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But there is a blot on this bright spot. There is no guarantee that the line will be built. Although an amount is shown on the Estimates, I know

that the men have been taken off the job and that the whole of the machinery and plant have been removed from the district. Though the amount is shown on the Estimates, the work will not be proceeded with. I presume the Government intend to use the plant for constructing the Yuna-Dartmoor railway or the Southern Cross southwards railway.

Mr. Ferguson: You have had the plant down there a long time.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not too long. There is every justification for building the railways I have mentioned. The Advisory Board have approved of their construction, but I do not know that they have ever approved of the building of a line from Moora to Jurien Bay, as advocated by the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson). One could talk for hours on the South-West and get no further. I am asked why I have not made this a party matter. I only wish I could do so and that I possessed the deciding vote, for there would then be no doubt as to what would be done. I would be very definite, and if it were within my power to put the Government out of office, I would not hesitate for a moment to do so.

The Premier: You would not do that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I would, because of their attitude to the South-West.

Mr. Coverley: Which party would you join then?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A few months ago the House almost unanimously agreed to a motion that the Government should give attention to the dairying industry of the South-West, more particularly as it applied to the group settlers and soldier settlers.

The Minister for Works: You cannot deal with that under the Loan Estimates.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I can, because an item appears on the Loan Estimates.

The Minister for Works: That is a matter we are going to consider.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The price of butter fat is down to 8d. per lb.

Mr. Coverley: And you want the Government to build another railway down there.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Government have promised to do everything possible for the group settlers and yet they have reduced the amount for group settlement by almost one-half. What do the Government propose to do? Will the Premier tell us? Do they propose to close down group settlement, or to carry on the industry?

The Premier: Which vote has been reduced by one-half?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The group settlement vote.

The Premier: That is surely a misprint.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Are the Government sincere, or are they hoodwinking the people down there? What do they propose to do? Of the amount on the Loan Estimates, about one-third will be spent on fertiliser, while the allowance for sustenance will be reduced. How can the settlers make a living and be content with their lot while butter fat is fetching 8d. a lb., and the vote has been reduced by half? Whilst the Government are starving the outback parts of the country, they are endeavouring to do something to appease the people of Bunbury. I have frequently referred to the forests policy. Governments have never appreciated the difference between a forests policy and a policy of agriculture in the South-West. They have been proceeding along wrong lines. A sum of nearly £200,000 is being spent from Loan on forestry. In addition to that, the Government draw three-fifths of the revenue from royalties, and are also expending that upon forestry. It is a scandal, and a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into it. Every South-West member knows that thousands of pounds are being squandered per medium of that policy, but we have no influence with Parliament.

Mr. Hegney: The electors will have to change their representation.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Conservator of Forests has supreme control. Caesar in the old days had no more control than the Conservator has in these days. He may be right in some of his decisions, but in many instances he is wrong.

Mr. Moloney: What have you done in the last six years?

Mr. SMITH: Mine has been the voice of one crying in the wilderness. If I could induce the member for Subiaco, with his knowledge of the economic situation, to visit the district, I am sure he would bring a lot of influence to bear upon the authorities to remedy this situation. Endeavours are being made to establish pine plantations in the middle of the jarrah forest. That is a most foolish policy, and yet the officials are spending thousands of pounds upon it. We have only to look at East Kirup to see how foolish it is.

Mr. Hawke: Who is the Caesar?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Conservator has the power of a Caesar.

Mr. Hawke: Are you thinking of playing the part of a modern Brutus?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We have no control over him. At Pemberton something like 7,000 acres of karri forest have been cut out for the Pemberton mill, and pines have been planted there. The karri stumps have been left six or eight feet high, the scrub is growing up eight or ten feet high, and small pines a few feet high are trying to make headway. If a fire swept through, the whole of the plantation would be burnt. I am not opposed to reforestation; I know that every town in the South-West has been built up on the timber industry. As a practical man who understands the difference between jarrah and red gum I also know there is land which should be set aside for the growing of timber, and other land which should be thrown open for agriculture. What is needed is a classification of the whole of the dedicated area. Instead of the Premier dealing with the matter piecemeal, he should have a classification made, and have set aside all the land that is suitable for agriculture. I am bitterly disappointed that the Premier has not carried out the pledge he made in 1926. He was in a desperate hurry to secure authorisation for the construction of these railways, and the Minister for Railways at the time said it would be a crying shame to delay them. Bunbury depends upon the outback part of the South-West for its trade, but it is futile for the Government to spend £200,000 on the harbour there and to neglect the outback part of the country.

Mr. Lambert: And the people of Bunbury buy crude oil from America to help them in generating electrical power.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will leave the member for Bunbury to answer that interjection. We thought in 1926 that the railway we particularly required would be built. A change then occurred in Government, and the depression struck the State. The Government of that day said that immediately they had foreclosed on the manganese line, the South-West railway would be built.

Mr. Hawke: Who said that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The previous Government, but they had not the backbone to foreclose. When the Labour Government came into office they decided to pull up the manganese line, and appeased the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie by telling him they

would build a railway from Southern Cross, southwards. It did not matter to them what happened to the great undeveloped country of the South-West.

Mr. Ferguson: Would you have been satisfied with secondhand rails?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I would be satisfied with anything. If the Government desire to get a return for their expenditure, they will set about constructing the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway, and the other lines in the South-West. I presume at all events that the Vote will not be allowed to stand idle.

MR. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [8.27]: I feel rather depressed after the gloomy picture painted by the member for Nelson.

Mr. Needham: Not impressed?

Mr. MOLONEY: The point that impresses me particularly, and softens the blow administered by the member for Nelson, is that there is a bright ray in the position appertaining to our water supply. Considerable initiative has been displayed by the department concerned. They are now augmenting the supply, a work that has been long overdue. This will eliminate the obnoxious decoction which is called water, and which has been purveyed to the people who, if they do not contribute readily to the exchequer in payment therefor, will find themselves in an embarrassing position. I am pleased that the Government recognise the necessity for augmenting the water supplies throughout the State. I have my eye particularly upon the Subiaco electorate, which up to now has experienced considerable vicissitudes in the way of having to use water which is unfit for human consumption. I do not know whether it is the advent of the present Administration that has been responsible for it, but evidence is forthcoming of a serious attempt to remove the discoloured water that has been purveyed to the people. Even in the street where I live, pipes are being taken up. It is an education to view those pipes, many of which have been under the ground for 30 years. I am indeed pleased to state that the pipes are a product of the municipality of Subiaco, cast-iron pipes that after 30 years underground give evidence of the admirable work turned out by the local foundry of Monteath and Sons Proprietary. Those pipes are now being reconditioned

and are having removed from them all the rust, mud, and other factors of corrosion aggregated on them, and are being rendered fit for further service by a system of cementing. Despite the evidence afforded of the excellence of those pipes, the men at the foundry are not being employed. In that regard I am making further representations to the Minister for Water Supply. I enjoin upon that hon. gentleman to see that his engineers appreciate the quality of those pipes, which are capable of being utilised again. I am pleased to see the great initiative which is being exercised in regard to works at Skenton Park and the reticulation which is taking place in the suburbs. During the last fortnight 20 houses have been joined up in Subiaco alone. This represents a considerable amount of work and material, and is indicative of the energy being displayed by the Water Supply Department. Water has been a vital question in the metropolitan area. The people of North Perth still require some consideration in that respect. However, I know that if there is any man who can galvanise the Water Supply Department, the Minister is that man. He has shown himself deserving of the faith we repose in him by pushing on with the Canning dam. That work, I judge, is now about to be consummated and put into operation. It is overdue. Not only will it mean the providing of a long-felt want, but it is also a work which is essential and reproductive. Again, there is the contemplated sewerage work in Claremont and other districts mentioned in the Loan Estimates. That also will provide employment, and will be, not a drag upon the State, but something of a reproductive nature. There are two or three matters I wish to mention with regard to bridges in the Subiaco area. I particularly refer to Subiaco now, because, like the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), I realise that unless I raise my voice to stress the disabilities of my electorate, the various parochial matters requiring attention there will be disregarded in favour of the doubtless weightier problems confronting the Committee. There is the Axon-street railway bridge. That bridge as it now exists is a menace. Subiaco being one of the oldest and most important suburbs, it is a disgrace to see a bridge there in such a condition. Again, there is the bridge at Daglish. Deputations

of Daglish residents have already pressed the matter, but up to the present I have been unable to carry it to fruition, although it is a worthy object of expenditure. If the Minister can see his way to please the people of Daglish—assuming that he does not desire to please me—let him have that bridge taken in hand. I do not desire to be caustic. I recognise that up to date the Government have done remarkably well under most adverse conditions. As they have displayed initiative in instituting the Canning dam and in trying to re-absorb those who to-day are unemployed, so I venture to say that those other instances which have been adduced here will receive the attention of the Government. The Loan expenditure has been augmented by fully £400,000 as compared with that of last year. I shall not be one to criticise the Government unduly. I recognise the task that lies ahead of them. While I am a member of this Chamber and find the Government functioning as they have functioned up to the present, irrespective of anyone else I shall be prepared to give them my utmost encouragement and support.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Ayon) [8.37]: I have heard many references during this debate to the Yarramony railway. At the risk of proving wearisome to hon. members, I shall offer a few particulars bearing on that subject. Looking back through "Hansard" I find that I raised this question in 1924.

The Premier: But what was the last time you raised it?

MR. GRIFFITHS: Since those days there have been 25 changes in the personnel of the Chamber. Though it may be wearisome to the Premier to listen to what I am about to say—

The Premier: I have never heard of the subject before.

MR. GRIFFITHS: The Premier has heard of it before, and is likely to hear of it again. For the benefit of new members, however, I wish to mention one or two happenings in connection with the Yarramony railway since 1908, which is going back 25 years. Before setting out on that phase of the question, I wish to remark that in "Hansard" of 1927, Vol. 76, on page 539, there will be found a motion standing in my name and reading as follows:—

That in the opinion of the House the Yarramony Eastward railway should be built without delay.

That motion was carried unanimously on the 14th September, 1927. When I brought the motion forward I enumerated various attempts since the days when a former Agent General, Mr. W. C. Angwin, in collaboration with the then Minister for Lands, Sir James Mitchell, endeavoured to evolve some scheme which would absorb unemployed lumpers at Fremantle and also a body of public servants in Perth. For that purpose the Yorkrakine settlement was decided upon, and a great deal of activity occurred on the part of Mr. Angwin and Sir James Mitchell. The lumpers and the public servants in question were drafted to Yorkrakine. That is 26 years ago. Since then there have been deputations without number on the subject of this railway. Indeed, I have been informed only to-day that the Premier is about to receive another deputation on the matter. The people of Yarramony, eastward of Yorkrakine are full of optimism. They are not prepared to lie down and let this railway project die, as it will be unless it is kept moving. Glancing through the Loan Estimates I see that for the Southern Cross Southwards railway £20,000 is being voted and £10,000 is to be expended this year, leaving an unexpended balance of £10,000 to the end of June, 1934. That railway was authorised this year. Contrasted with it is the Yarramony Eastward railway, which was authorised in 1924. For it I find the same old £30,000, the unexpended balance of a previous loan authorisation. For estimated expenditure during the financial year 1933-34 there is no provision whatever on these Loan Estimates.

The Premier: You know what the Bible says, "The last shall be first, and the first shall be last."

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am speaking in the hope that something will be done towards raising the morale of those people, and encouraging them to go on fighting for settlers who are 18 or 20 miles from a railway.

The Premier: That deputation will not be necessary now; you are stating the case to-night.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am stating the case now in the hope that by the time the deputation interview the Premier he will be prepared to listen sympathetically and to provide a sum for making at least a start upon this railway.

The Premier: You have slept on it for three years past, you know.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I wish to remind the Premier of a letter he wrote on the 3rd February, 1921, reading—

Dear Mr. Diver,—As I have been busy with the elections, time has not allowed of a reply to your letter earlier. You ask for a clear statement of my attitude on the proposed railway, Yorkrakine-North Bannock, and my answer is that if returned to power at the elections, a Bill for the construction will be brought forward, and if still in Opposition, the railway will have my support, believing that when Governments place settlers on the land it is their duty to provide all necessary facilities to enable them to market their produce without imposing on them undue labour or expense. I gather from your letter that the Premier promises the railway next session; but if sincere, why not have introduced it last session as well as the Bolgart extension? This is important, because Parliament has already decided "That new lines must be built in the order in which the Bills pass the House," and four new railways have been authorised for the past four or five years.

The Premier: What is the date of that?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That letter was written in 1921. I am drawing the attention of hon. members to the fact that here we have the Premier himself stating that the House had decided that railways should be built in the order of their authorisation, and yet we find the Southern Cross Southward railway, authorised this year, 1933, under construction, and a railway authorised in 1924 shelved indefinitely, so far as I am able to see.

The Premier: As Billy Hughes said, what does it matter what we said yesterday?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The Premier very often turns aside these things with a joke.

Mr. Tonkin interjected.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I wish the member for North-East Fremantle, who seems to know so much, would stop interjecting; he is becoming the rogue elephant on the Government cross-benches.

The Premier: You had four country Ministers in a Government for three years.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: And the Premier knows that he has more loan funds this year; much more than the Mitchell Government had.

Mr. Cross: They would not trust that Government.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is useless talking about what was done, or what was not done, during the past three years. The Govern-

ment then did not have the money that is available to the present Government. Now that a little money is available, the Government put through the Yuna-Dartmoor and the Southern Cross railway Bills.

The Premier: The Southern Cross line may be like yours; it may be authorised for many years to come and not be constructed.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: When I noticed the published statement by the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) that the earthworks were to be started almost immediately, it seemed to me that the money would be quickly spent.

The Premier: He may have been a little previous.

Mr. Hawke: At any rate, you are clearing the pitch for the deputation next week. You will get the Premier's back up.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The Premier is in sympathy with my proposal, and if he had had his way he would have built the line. I have quoted his letter.

The Premier: I would have built it long ago only they would not let me do so!

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In the concluding part of his letter, the Premier wrote—

This is important, because Parliament has already decided "That new lines must be built in the order in which the Bills pass the House," and four new railways have been authorised for the past four or five years, and the Bolgart extension makes another in the list for priority of construction, and Mr. Mitchell admitted at that time that the line could not be built for some years to come. The suggestion of Mr. George regarding the Kalgoorlie-Perth 4 feet 8½ inches gauge is absurd. The responsibility for such a line is entirely that of the State, the Commonwealth have nothing to do with it. Such a line would cost three millions, and of course is out of the question for many years ahead. I trust that your district will be served by a railway before very long, thus removing the handicap under which the settlers of the area have laboured so long.

I know what these people have gone through since then.

Mr. Moloney: What have you done all these years?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: What have I left undone? Let the hon. member look through the pages of "Hansard" and see what the member for Avon has done. The hon. member is a newcomer and does not know. My name somehow has been linked up with the Yarramony line and members have come to look upon me and that line much as they did on the late Tommy Walker and his

Esperance railway. For years they treated the late Mr. Walker and his line with levity, but he persevered until the line was built, and I shall persevere with my protests in the hope that in the course of time a measure of justice will be extended to the people interested, and that the required transport facilities will be provided. They have been promised those facilities for over 26 years. The record of what has happened in the meanwhile appears in the columns of "Hansard," and six or seven Premiers, Ministers of Works and others have been mixed up in matters associated with the Yarramony proposition, in connection with which there have been half promises, evasions, side-stepping, political expedients and other delaying actions that have effectually prevented anything being done to mete out justice to the settlers concerned. The trouble commenced when, through log-rolling, a railway line was deviated seven or eight miles further north than it should have been, depriving the settlers I am concerned about of their long-promised railway facilities. A little while ago I communicated with the Minister for Works asking that something should be done to provide water supplies for the settlers in the Kodjokodjin area. They are about midway between two railways. The Minister replied pointing out that the work would involve too much expenditure. Some members of Parliament have received letters regarding the matter, which has been treated in the usual official way. It has been pointed out that the cost is regarded as excessive, as there are very few settlers concerned. One of the settlers was here last night and we interviewed the Minister for Lands (Hon. M. F. Troy). We pointed out that even at this period of the year, 10 of the settlers were carting water and the available supplies of eight or nine others would be exhausted shortly. Not only have those settlers to cart their produce long distances to the nearest railway, but they have to cart water from 10 to 15 miles as well. Under those circumstances, their position becomes impossible.

Mr. Cross: Could they not put down dams?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: They have, but in many instances the soil would not hold the water and in others the dams are too small. The settlers in this area have been carting for the past 26 years over distances upwards of 20 miles to the nearest railway.

That has retarded progress and has prevented them from doing many things that would have been possible had they been closer to railway facilities. Some of the farms have been abandoned and the position is so serious that I appeal to members not to regard the Yarramony line as a subject for levity. The member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) knows that a settlement was started at Quellagetting, but nearly all the original settlers left because they were starved out.

Mr. Hawke: The Mitchell Government promised them a road train.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Each Government promised them something. Each Government has been as bad as the other. I am not condemning any particular Government but all of them.

Mr. Hawke: That is a very fair statement.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is impossible to make wheat growing pay under such circumstances and certainly they cannot stock their holdings without water. At Merredin the school facilities are inadequate, although the Government have agreed to provide an additional classroom. The pupils are increasing in number and the question of accommodation has been a constant source of worry. The headmaster has no office where he can keep his stock, which is put away in odd places round the school. I understood that arrangements had been completed for the construction of an office and storeroom, but now I find out that it is not so. I trust that that matter will receive some attention. I shall not deal further with matters affecting the wheat-grower because we shall probably have another opportunity when discussing the Bill to amend the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act. In conclusion, I ask members to go through the 1927 volume of "Hansard" and read the happenings affecting the Yarramony line since 1908. They will be astonished at the miserable story of evasion, equivocation and worse during the 26 years the unfortunate settlers have been waiting for railway facilities.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [S.55]: I am pleased that £160,000 has been provided for goldfields water supplies. I ask that special consideration be given to the provision of water supplies in my electorate. When the amount of money that has been advanced by the Agri-

cultural Bank, and the almost impossible position of farmers in the outer eastern areas are considered, it must be manifest to the Government and to anyone who takes the trouble to study the problem, that unless water supplies are provided, there is no hope for the settlers concerned. I have in mind the miners' settlement at Southern Cross, the settlers at Bullfinch, and in the Moorine Rock district. Each of those areas is capable of great production, given water supplies adequate to carry stock. It is impossible to do that at present. Transcending all other conditions is the necessity for the provision of water supplies. Throughout the farming areas, the Agricultural Bank has advanced upwards of £14,000,000 and the arrears of interest represent about £2,000,000.

Mr. Piesse: What percentage of the farmers in your district are without water supplies and stock?

Mr. LAMBERT: Practically none of them has a water supply that would justify the stocking of his holding.

Mr. Ferguson: There are some good rock catchments there.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, and the Minister for Works should give that phase some attention.

The Minister for Works: Why do not they give attention to that themselves?

Mr. LAMBERT: Why do not the people in the metropolitan area do the same?

The Minister for Works: They do.

Mr. LAMBERT: They do it by turning on a tap. That is all they do to help themselves.

Mr. Hegney: And they pay for the water they use.

Mr. LAMBERT: Do you imply that the people in my area will not pay?

The Premier: You have just told us they cannot pay.

Mr. LAMBERT: Only by the efforts of those in the agricultural areas is it possible for the people in the metropolitan area to live.

Mr. Hegney: The way you are talking, it's a wonder we live at all.

Mr. LAMBERT: There is no doubt about your capacity to live, or the capacity of a lot of others in the city to live and criticise those who are carrying out the useful work of the State in the agricultural areas.

Mr. Hegney: You are living pretty well yourself, I think.

The Premier: Did you not say that too much consideration was given to those people?

Mr. LAMBERT: No, I said too much consideration within a given area.

The Premier: I thought you said too much consideration was given to the farmers.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not believe in your giving people within a stone's throw of the metropolitan area special consideration when you will not give it to people in the outer areas. Take mining: Only the other day a prospector was going out to some ranges north of Southern Cross, and I had to spend two or three hours in getting a special permit for him to take with him a piece of rope and a blower for the sharpening of his tools. We here are charged with the obligation of taking a broad view towards the whole of the State, not towards merely the people in the metropolitan area. The miners' settlement at Southern Cross contains a body of men who were advised to leave the mines on account of their health. They went out there, and the settlement was formed, and in the majority of instances those ex-miners have done well. But there is no real hope for them unless we can reticulate that area from the goldfields water scheme, or alternatively use the local rock catchments for the provision of a water supply, so that they can carry some stock. Instead of their being unable to pay bank interest or road board rates or other charges, if they had an adequate water supply they would soon be satisfied and reasonably contented. The same thing may be said of Bullfinch and other areas, and it is becoming increasingly necessary for the Government of the day to realise that position. Whether we have been discreet or indiscreet in pushing out the wheat areas to a point eastward which will not allow farmers profitably to operate I am not going to discuss to-night, but I say there is hope for them if some of this money is used for the provision of necessary water supplies. From the evidence already tendered to the Royal Commission now investigating the affairs of the Agricultural Bank, I believe the Commissioners themselves must be coming to realise the importance of this question. I will not say that money should not be spent on a progressive policy of water supply in the metropolitan area, for that is essential; but what probably is equally essential is that we attempt to conserve a

little of the State's money which has been spent in the eastern agricultural areas. Unless we do that, we shall have many of the holdings out there abandoned. I hope consideration will be given to this, not only in the interests of the farmers themselves, but also in view of the enormous amount of money that has been advanced. In the zone east of the rabbit-proof fence, the Agricultural Bank, including a couple of million and apparently it is impossible for many of the farmers to pay even interest. Our troubles have been brought about domestically, brought about by the Agricultural Bank, and even by the State Savings Bank when we had it, for no doubt our liberal policy of advances undermined the State Savings Bank, and so we lost it. There is about 14 million pounds owing to the Agricultural Bank, including a couple of million of accrued interest. On to-day's commodity prices success is impossible for a majority of our farmers, and so I hope the Government will curb expenditure in the metropolitan area and carry out some reticulation work in the agricultural areas.

Mr. Moloney: People in and around Perth are starving for water.

Mr. Griffiths: What about the rock catchments in your area?

Mr. LAMBERT: There are some very fine catchments down there. All the rock catchments in the State should be reported upon, but it should not be gone about in the manner in which it has been done in the past. On the Kurrawang line the Kurrawang Firewood Company for £2,000 or £3,000 will throw in a rock catchment capable of impounding an immense quantity of water. Private enterprise is prepared to do that, but not the Government. In some of the outer areas the rock catchments are of immense potential value, and they ought all be saddled up. I sincerely hope a critical survey will be made of our rock catchments. I am not like the Leader of the Opposition, who sees ruin and disaster in the progressive indebtedness with which the State is saddled. In 1914 the total Commonwealth indebtedness was a little over 50 million pounds, whereas to-day it is 1,200 millions, with an interest commitment of over a million pounds per week for the external and internal debts. While false economists find fault with our continuing to borrow money, they do not point to any other way in which we can develop the State. The difficulties are our interest com-

mitments, and the indifferent values we have had for loan expenditure in the past. I have every confidence that the Government will give attention to necessary reticulation in my area, believing as I do it is only by that means it will be possible for the farmers to pay their commitments to the Government.

MR. BROCKMAN (Sussex) [9.13]: I do not intend to criticise the Government; in fact, I want to be helpful to them in the carrying out of their work, for no doubt they have prepared these Loan Estimates in such a way as they think will suit the country best. I wish to support the remarks of the member for Nelson as to the Cranbrook railway, and I am sorry the Government have not been able to see their way clear to complete that long-promised line. I feel sure the Government and the House do not fully realise the value of that country, of which there is a very fine tract from Boyup to Cranbrook. It is valuable, not only from an agricultural point of view, but also from the point of view of the timber area which, if developed, would very soon pay for the construction of the line, especially as they have all the sleepers cut for the work. Those sleepers are only deteriorating and will soon be of no use. For a number of years the Advisory Board has urged the construction of this line. I am satisfied with the amount provided on the Estimates for railway repairs and rolling stock. Such provision is long overdue. Probably that is the cause of the low speed that characterises our traffic. It is difficult for members to attend to their duties in the country owing to the time occupied in travelling from one centre to another. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) referred to the Forests Department, but I have no doubt that the Conservator of Forests understands thoroughly what he is doing. With the member for Nelson, I feel that much of the country locked up for forestry should be thrown open for selection, and I hope something in that direction will be done in the near future. I do not know what is going to happen to group settlement unless the Government take steps to assist the settlers. The price of butter fat is down to 8d. per lb., and there is talk of its being 6d. next month. If that happens, I can see nothing but disaster for the group settlers. Much has been said about the dis-

abilities of the wheat farmers and Governments have taken action to secure a bonus for them, but it is time we considered the settlers engaged in producing other commodities. I hope the Government will do all that is possible with the limited amount of money at their disposal for those engaged in the dairying industry. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) dealt with the Bunbury harbour. I am pleased that the Government propose to continue the work there. It is the port of the South-West, though there are other ports deserving of consideration. At the port of Busselton, the jetty is in a bad state of repair, and I had hoped that the Government would provide sufficient money to put it in trafficable condition. It is a pity that jetties built years ago should be allowed to deteriorate. The jetty at Flinders Bay has been neglected for many years and to-day is useless because portion of it has been washed away. If repairs are not soon effected to the Busselton jetty, part of that structure, I fear, will become unfit for traffic. I was pleased to have the Minister for Lands and the member for Subiaco on that jetty last week, and I think both of them could testify to the state of disrepair in which they found it. The jetty at Flinders Bay has been allowed to deteriorate so greatly that a new jetty would have to be built there. The cost of providing a new structure is not warranted at present, but the time will come when the jetty will be required. Flinders Bay is a natural port with deep water a short distance from the shore. About 300 yards from the shore, a depth of 30ft. to 40ft. is obtainable, so that, apart from the cost of the jetty, no great expenditure would be needed to equip Flinders Bay as a port. It is the natural port of the South-West from which should be shipped all the timber from the Pemberton district. I have been told that there is a long-standing promise by the Minister for Works to bridge the river at Augusta.

The Minister for Works: What I said was that I would swim the river.

MR. BROCKMAN: The residents told me the Minister had promised to bridge it. I hope the Minister will see his way clear to provide the bridge and make the road through to Nannup. Much has been said of the work of the previous Government. They were greatly handicapped owing to lack of funds, but they did good work with the

money at their disposal, particularly in the direction of building roads and opening up the back country.

Mr. Hegney: Most of the complaints tonight have been that they failed to build railways.

Mr. BROCKMAN: I am referring to road making. They opened up a considerable area in the South-West by means of roads which, I believe, will return their cost through land settlement and production. I hope the Government will complete some of the roads begun by their predecessors in office.

The Minister for Works: What about the Nannup-Pemberton road?

Mr. BROCKMAN: I hope that work will be continued. There is much good land on the western side which will carry many hundreds of settlers.

The Minister for Works: How many settlers are there now?

Mr. BROCKMAN: Sixty, and I believe they are the most successful of the group settlers in the South-West. I hope the policy of developing that land will be continued because the expenditure is certainly warranted.

The Minister for Works: That road cost £40,000.

Mr. BROCKMAN: It was well worth the money, not only to open up the land there but to provide a public highway and to provide for unemployed in the district work of a reproductive kind.

Mr. Ferguson: Worth it, with butter fat at 8d. per lb.?

Mr. BROCKMAN: I am more optimistic than is the member for Irwin-Moore.

Mr. Ferguson: But you said there was talk of the price being 6d. next month.

Mr. BROCKMAN: Low prices will not last for ever. If they do, assistance will have to be granted to the dairy farmers, just as it is being granted to the wheat farmers. To consider only one section of the community indicates selfishness and narrow-mindedness. Why not treat all settlers fairly and justly? I sympathise with the wheat farmers, but they are not entitled to all our sympathy to the exclusion of the dairy farmers, than whom no section of the community are in greater need of help.

Mr. Latham: The Federal Government are introducing a special Act to benefit the butter industry.

Mr. BROCKMAN: I am pleased to hear that.

Mr. Patrick: The consumer has to pay something more for every commodity thus assisted, except wheat.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [9.23]: The most I can hope regarding the projected railways referred to by the members for Avon, Nelson and Sussex is that they will be built in the order of their economic urgency. I do not know the value of the districts to be served by those lines, but I have made up my mind to pay them a visit during the approaching recess so that I may be in a position to speak with a little more authority when those matters are again discussed. Nevertheless, during the past week or fortnight I have found myself losing a little of my enthusiasm for new agricultural railways. We have been discussing railways that the Government have promised to build in order to assist the settlers and increase production. What worries me is that when that increased production ensues there is a possibility of difficulty—resulting from labour shortage—of making it available to the market. The matter of most immediate consequence referred to in the debate has been that of the need for extra farm labour. It was dealt with copiously by the Leader of the Opposition and by several other members. Ordinarily I dislike repeating what has been said by other members, but the seriousness and importance of the question demand that it be reiterated—I do not care how many times—until the Minister for Employment appreciates the need for taking action at once. I cannot see that it brooks of any delay. The Minister will understand that there are several grades of work, the most important of them being necessary urgent reproductive work. Then there is reproductive work of no particular urgency and, of course, there is work that is just work and nothing else—work merely to occupy men's time. I find myself wishing that the Minister would give a little more attention to the most important of these three phases of work. The Committee will recall that the Minister, under pressure from members, mainly through the medium of questions, made a statement to the effect that the matter was receiving attention, or that the department were doing their best to cope with the situation. To me that was an extraordinarily inept reply. There are thousands of men in the State, divorced from their usual occupations, devoting their energies to

what might be termed mark-time jobs, and the Minister's reply almost suggested that there was a shortage of labour, a difficulty in finding hands to do work, than which it will surely be admitted there is none more important at the moment—the work of garnering the harvest. The Leader of the Opposition stressed the fact, and I cordially agree with him, that there is a strange lack of co-ordination between the Premier and the Minister for Employment. I cannot help thinking that if the Minister for Employment had been somewhat less lavishly endowed with funds this season, he might have been only too glad to ease the pressure upon the funds by letting the farmers pay portion of the wages that he himself is now paying. Mention has been made of the reluctance on the part of men, mainly single men, to take work on farms. There is very good reason for that reluctance. Similarly situated, I believe I, too, would be reluctant. It is well known that single men who have taken up farm work have found it difficult, after that work has ceased, to get back to relief work at the moment, or at all. I suggest to Ministers that it would be quite reasonable to give single men offering for work in the country a guarantee that on their return, after the expiration of the usual standing-down period, they would not suffer in any way from having accepted farm work, but would be put back on relief work or sustenance without loss of time or money. It is not good that men should be completely satisfied with sustenance or relief conditions; rather is it to be regretted. A man should never be quite as well off from following relief work as he should be as the result of work that has come to him from having himself searched for it and found it. Ambition should always be profitable. I suggest to the Premier that if he does not lend the agricultural industry the hand it so plainly needs, the position will trouble him all the more in six or 12 months' time. It would be a good investment now to help them in their extremity. I hope that the Treasurer will suggest that to his colleague when that Minister returns from the country. The position to-day is difficult to understand. It is almost tragic to think that wheat should be wasted—it looks as though some of it might be wasted—for want of labour at a time when the Government are financing so many idle hands. Particularly is it hard to understand when we learn that

so great is the need that many farmers are offering 50s. to £3 a week, plus tucker, for good men. These rates are considerably higher than those which obtained in normal times. There must be something wrong with the department of employment when this kind of thing prevails. Someone asked why farmers should, as a general rule, be paying low wages. The wages are in keeping with their incomes. At 2s. a bushel they cannot as a general rule afford to pay more than £1 or 25s. a week plus tucker. The member for Northam was searching for a reason why the farmers were so short of labour. The reason for that is staring us in the face. He imagined that if only farmers would seek the necessary labour through the recognised Government channels they would no longer experience difficulty in securing it. There is ample evidence to show that they are already seeking labour through the proper channels.

Mr. Moloney: What about guaranteeing their wages?

Mr. DONEY: I was not talking about that.

Mr. Moloney: But you want your wages, do you not?

Mr. DONEY: Between 100 and 200 farmers have applied for labour through Government channels, and this is ample evidence that they are seeking it in the right quarter. The hon. member also went on to say that farmers would have a better chance of succeeding in their desires if instead of seeking labour through the Government bureau they would look for it in their nearest home centre. The hon. member has accordingly expressed two points of view, one being entirely at variance with the other. I will reserve any further remarks I have to make upon the wheat industry until the time when the Minister for Lands brings down a Bill to amend the Farmers' Debts Adjustment Act.

MR. WELSH (Pilbara) [9.35]: I wish to draw the attention of the Government to the bad state of repair into which the wells have fallen on the stock route from Meekatharra to Nullagine. Not only have some of the wells fallen in, but in many cases the buckets have fallen down the wells and it is impossible to draw supplies from them. It is of vital importance that the wells should be put in order before the next season's cattle come down. As things are to-day a

mob of cattle can hardly be given a drink at the wells. I hope the Government will be able to put them in order. I notice there is no vote on these Estimates for State steamships. The service is an excellent one, both from the passenger and freight point of view. I would point out that the tourist trip of the "Koolinda" to the Malay States will deprive the North-West coast of her services for the Christmas trip. I was interested to hear the Premier say that he looked upon the "Koolinda" as a child of his own creation. I am only sorry that he stopped there, and that he did not have a larger family of the same sort. The service has been of great advantage to the people along the coast. I should like to see either another vessel added to the service, or arrangements made to run the existing service at more frequent intervals.

MR. PIESSE (Katanning) [9.37]: One cannot review these Estimates without a certain amount of concern regarding the annual expenditure and the substantial addition to our national debt. The large increase represented in this year's loan expenditure seems hardly in keeping with the spirit of the Premiers' plan of recovery. It is to be regretted that the increase has been so substantial this year compared with the two previous years of the depression. Much of the expenditure would not have been incurred except for the desire to provide work for the unemployed. It might have been expected that more than ordinary vigilance would have been displayed by Parliament as well as the Government in the expenditure of loan funds, especially as we are not yet out of our difficulties. I hoped the Premier would have made clear the intentions of the Loan Council with respect to eliminating entirely the deficits represented by the annual budgets. It was understood that with the slow recovery of our primary industries, and the general dislocation of trade, the forecast that budgets would be balanced within a reasonable time might not be fulfilled. We should know what are the intentions of the Loan Council with respect to the balancing of budgets in the near future. Seeing that we are borrowing £2,600,000, and that including deficits there will be added to our national debt over £3,000,000, we should scrutinise the expenditure more closely than ever, especially when that expenditure comes from loan money. Whilst consideration has been given to

making some of the expenditure reproductive, and to provide some useful work, in my opinion more useful work could be carried out with the means at our disposal. We have had two years experience of the depression. It is to be expected that many of the people employed in clearing in the South-West and on other relief work, might soon be put into more profitable and permanent employment. This could be provided by entering upon a policy of farm improvement through the Agricultural Bank, thus bringing the wheat farms into a more productive state by combining stock raising with wheat growing. Some 35 or 40 years ago in the Great Southern, many of the small farmers were entirely dependent upon wheat and cereal growing, and were on the verge of bankruptcy when they took to raising stock. I could quote the names of many people in the district who were in that position. As members know this is one of the most successful sheep districts in the State. One-tenth of the number of sheep in Western Australia are now to be found in that district, although I remember the time when it did not carry 10,000 sheep. I well remember when men were trying to grow cereals alone, and were entirely unsuccessful until they secured a few sheep. Some of them started with only a hundred ewes, but in a short time they became successful farmers. If wheat remains at its present price the settlers in the outback districts have no hope of succeeding in their ventures. They must find some other source of primary production to help them. Stock raising is one of the quickest methods by which they can get a return for their expenditure. The development of farms for this purpose involves the putting down of dams, the erection of fences etc., all of which work represents a good winter job. In a short time, under a proper Agricultural Bank policy much good could be achieved in this direction. The associated banks are already making available advances for purposes such as these. They realise that the farmers cannot succeed if they are engaged in wheat production alone. I wish to refer to the development of the country along the proposed Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway. I was pleased to hear the Premier say that the road which was constructed as a relief work would ultimately serve as the earthworks of the railway. It is in sufficiently good condition to carry the railway when the time comes. It is useless to expect a railway to be built

there within the next year or two. Before that can be done, there must be further development. However, I know of no other part of Western Australia which could be so easily developed and put to such profitable use as that part. I suggest that when the Minister for Lands makes his visit to the Frankland River district, he should take the opportunity—towards which I shall assist him—to inspect the country between Cranbrook and Boyup Brook, with a view to transferring the Frankland River workers to that district, where the cost of clearing will be only one-tenth of that on which they are engaged at present. Further, the settlers are there to make use of the improvements, and there will be a quicker return from that expenditure than is likely to result from the Frankland River work. I do not wish to condemn the latter work; in fact, I regard it as wonderful. Had it not been for the unfortunate unemployment, the Frankland River development work would have been carried on for the next 50 years under normal conditions, adding a valuable province of fertile Crown lands to Western Australia. However, the time has arrived when the Frankland River men can be put to more useful and more profitable work. Many of them went there quite inexperienced, never having done such work before. It has been an education to them. Many of them who had not previously been on a farm are now qualified to fill satisfactorily many positions on farms. It is absurd to keep men in something like a Blackboy settlement, 45 miles from a railway, with no means of communication by either telephone or telegraph, and missing the opportunity of securing more permanent employment. That seems to me a foolish and also an expensive policy for the Government to pursue. I regret that the Loan Estimates do not provide more money for the Agricultural Bank. In my opinion, it is unfortunate that so many clients of the Agricultural Bank who are in need of further assistance, for water supply and stocking more especially, should be unable to secure the help that they require. I can only hope that when the Royal Commission's findings are before the Government, something will speedily be done to find more capital for Agricultural Bank purposes. Unemployed labour could be utilised in connection with such developments. In days gone by many dams were put down by the barrow, the earth being

wheeled out at 1s. 6d. per cubic yard. Many of the unemployed could be put on such work. There is no need to wait for horses and scoops. A man need not be highly experienced for such a task. It is not everybody who can put up a fence, but under supervision many of the Frankland River men could be usefully employed in that direction. The regrading of certain railways I regard as a profitable and useful work, and I do not see why the unemployed mentioned could not be put on it. The Premier said that £45,000 had been spent on the Mt. Helena tunnel deviation. Is the whole of that expenditure to be charged against the Working Railways, and will all these deviations carried out by part-time work be charged at full rate to the Working Railways? I do not think the Working Railways should be charged with the full cost of relief works, but only with their actual value. The railway system is already over-capitalised, and if the full cost of the works in question is charged against it, working costs will increase. Apart from the Agricultural Bank, the Government might make loans available to other than Agricultural Bank clients for the utilisation of unemployed labour, or new labour, or extra labour, in clearing, fencing, and water supply.

The Minister for Works: What security would the Agricultural Bank get?

Mr. PIESSE: With good, safe people the Government would run less risk by taking no security at all. In any case, the Government are not likely to get back more than 30 or 40 per cent. of the money spent at Frankland River. They are likely to lose only a very small proportion of the money lent to farmers of approved standard. The rate of interest should be low—3 or 4 per cent. As regards farm labour, my district has not so far felt much inconvenience. We are later than York or Northam, but undoubtedly our position will soon become acute. In the matter of finding work for the unemployed there should be some co-ordination or co-operation. Members of Parliament, to judge from my experience and that of other members, have been fully occupied during the depression in endeavouring to co-operate with Government departments and local authorities in finding work for the workless.

Mr. Hegney: Would you say it was a full-time job?

Mr. PIESSE: Yes, indeed. I realise that the position of Ministers is not an enviable

one. I am satisfied that they have done their utmost to meet the situation. In this respect I wish to pay a tribute to the Employment Board, the Marquis-street Bureau, the Public Works Department, and the Main Roads Board, who all, to my knowledge, have never spared themselves in co-operating with members of Parliament and local authorities in endeavours to find work for those unfortunate people. We have every reason to be proud of what the Government departments and all associated with them have done to relieve the unhappy position of the last two or three years. I can only hope that when we meet again next year, the Premier will be able to tell us of a better position than that in which Western Australia finds itself this year. I hope that next year it will be possible to curtail our Loan expenditure considerably, thus avoiding further additions to the burden of interest.

MR. CLOTHIER (Maylands) [9.57]: I had not intended to speak on the Loan Estimates, which are new to me. However, being a metropolitan member and not a country member, I think it desirable to offer a few words. The aims of Country Party members are, I consider, more in accord with the interests of the primary producers than with those of the country as a whole. However, the success of the primary producers means likewise a metropolitan success. I desire to thank the Government for what they have done for Maylands since I have represented that electorate. Firstly, there is the work now in progress on the Maylands drain, which is giving employment to 90 men. That is a satisfactory feature. There is also work proceeding on the mains in various streets of Maylands. I say without fear of contradiction that the water supply in 40 streets has received attention, with the result that to-day Maylands has clean water. There is one matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Minister for Works. The bridge at Seventh Avenue is not safe. It has been patched up time after time, long boards being laid across to strengthen it. It is an old structure, and a spark from a locomotive would suffice to set it on fire. Already it has been alight more than once.

Mr. Moloney: If it gets burnt, the Government will build a new bridge.

Mr. CLOTHIER: If new flooring were put on the bridge, it would stand for a long

time yet. As regards the large drain I have already mentioned, I believe the Government intend to carry it through to Inglewood.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [9.59]: There are one or two matters I wish to mention before the debate closes. The main point raised during the discussion is the question of farm labour. Many references have been made to the need of labour to get off farmers' crops. Undoubtedly it is highly important that the harvest should be garnered, and that the wheat should eventually reach the seaboard. I do not understand why there should be a dearth of labour in that regard. Even excluding the number of single men now on relief work, there are hundreds of single men in the metropolitan area who are not on relief work but are out of employment. There are many married men who are out of work and are not in receipt of sustenance or relief. Knowing that there is a fair supply of labour available in the metropolitan area, I cannot understand why the supply is not sufficient for the requirements of the farmers to-day.

Mr. Doney: They either will not go into the country, or are not suitable.

Mr. HEGNEY: Many of them have made complaints about the conditions, and it is not remarkable that some men are not willing to go to the country areas.

Mr. Latham: I do not wonder, in view of the doctrines preached here.

Mr. Moloney: And the doctrines are true.

Mr. Latham: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. HEGNEY: Irrespective of what doctrines may be preached, I know of many instances of these men having been defrauded of their wages, even since I have been a member of this Chamber.

Mr. Ferguson: Defrauded by farmers?

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes.

Mr. Doney: But that happens in all industries.

Mr. HEGNEY: Some of these men have been defrauded by farmers of amounts running up to £40 and £60. I have brought the matter under the notice of the managing trustee of the Agricultural Bank with a view to finding out whether the farmers concerned can be made to pay the men their wages. Some of the men were to be paid 30s. a week and their keep, and after working the hours they do on farms, they should have been paid their wages.

Mr. Latham: I have been farming for 30 years, and I have heard of very few such instances.

Mr. Moloney: We hear of them.

Mr. Latham: You get exaggerated information.

Mr. HEGNEY: I have not exaggerated in the statements I have made.

Mr. Stubbs: Why do they not prosecute the farmers?

Mr. HEGNEY: They have no power to prosecute. The policy of the Employment Board at present is that no relief work shall be made available for single men, and that has obtained for some weeks past. When I made representations to secure work for single men in my electorate, I was informed that farm work was available and that the men should apply to the Labour Bureau for directions. I have done so, but whether the men have applied for work in the country, I do not know. With wages at from £1 to 30s. a week, with keep, and the necessity to work from daylight to dark, it is difficult to get men to take work on farms.

Mr. Latham: The farmers are doing that for nothing.

Mr. HEGNEY: But that is no argument why the workers should be asked to accept nothing for their services. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Doney) complained that the Premier was too lavish in the provision of money for the Minister for Employment. The most important problem to-day is to find work for the unemployed. The unemployment trouble has been acute for years and no particular Government can be held responsible. That condition is merely a part of the economic system and, in the circumstances, work has to be found for the unemployed. It cannot be expected that an army of single men shall walk about for a month or two and starve, while awaiting employment.

Mr. Doney: When employment is offering, there should be no need for that.

Mr. HEGNEY: Under existing conditions, they are doing essential and necessary work, most of it of a reproductive nature. The member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) and I have waited on the Minister for Employment regarding the provision of work for single men, numbers of whom are still unemployed in the metropolitan area. Perhaps if the position in the country were advertised and brought before their notice,

a supply of labour might be made available. Then there is the question of compensation. In many instances the farmers do not make provision to cover their employees under the Workers' Compensation Act. That has been a bone of contention for a long time and men are reluctant to accept employment under conditions that are not reasonable. It is said that the industry can pay such wages only as are consistent with the difficult times. On the other hand, when the farmer was getting a very high price for his wheat and the wool-growers received fabulous returns, the employers, by every means, contested the right of the worker to secure a reasonable return for his labour. As a result, workers do not favour work on the farms. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) complained that the Loan Estimates contain no provision for works in the South-West, apart from the Bunbury harbour. That was a remarkable complaint in view of the fact that we have spent millions in the South-West and the State has to pay £400,000 in interest annually on that expenditure, as the result of which a return of about £4,000 every half year is received. The taxpayers have to bear that heavy burden. Then the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) complained of the amount of money spent in the metropolitan area and urged a curtailment so that a much larger amount could be provided to meet country requirements. If he had read the Estimates at all, he would have known that the amount to be spent in the metropolitan area is very small compared with what is to be spent elsewhere. Had he glanced through the Estimates, he could not have made such a ridiculous statement, and would have had a better appreciation of the real position.

Mr. Lambert: I was talking about water supplies.

Mr. HEGNEY: I am pleased that the Government have been able to secure increased loan funds. When the Government were returned to power, it was suggested that confidence would be forfeited and that we would not be able to get the loan funds necessary to enable the requirements of the State to be met. I believe the Government, who have received £468,000 more than was available last year, will spend the money wisely and well. In my electorate many matters require attention. It is not city interests that I

represent, for in my electorate there are many primary producers, men engaged in pig farming, poultry raising and fruit growing, and many other industries, in addition to a large industrial population. On their behalf I desire to place a few matters before the Committee. I hope the Government will succeed in getting the consent of the Loan Council to the raising of the necessary funds for the extension of the electric power house, in which event they will be able to convey the current beyond the present termini. A number of small settlers at Wattle Grove earnestly desire such an extension, and in the hills districts at Helena Vale both power and electric light are required. If the Government can get the necessary funds, they will be able to give those services to all desiring them.

Mr. Sampson: And it will help them tremendously.

Mr. HEGNEY: No doubt it will. There is on the Estimates provision of £20,000 for tramways. I take it that sum is for the extension of the Victoria Park tramway and the Wembley line. I wish to bring under notice another desirable extension, namely of the Ferguson-street route, which ought to be run on to Garrett-road. That would be a boon to many workers who have to leave their homes early in the morning and who have not available to them an adequate bus service. Then there is the extension of the Maylands drain. I am glad the Government have provided money for that. I understand the scheme will take two or three years to complete and should employ a fair number of men. Certainly when completed it will be of great benefit to Maylands and the surrounding areas. There is also the necessity for a sewerage scheme in the Inglewood area. I know the putting down of an outfall will cost a considerable sum, but I do urge that it be taken into consideration. At present the sewerage scheme extends almost to First Avenue, and there is a fair area beyond that. Inglewood, I may say, is likely to develop at a very fast rate and sewerage, of course, is very necessary in any city area. No doubt when the other schemes are brought to fruition, the Government will concentrate on extending the sewerage through that area. Another thing, which I have mentioned before and upon which we have had a deputation to the Minister, is the construction of a subway on the main road at Rivervale. We urge that a subway be constructed on the

Bunbury railway line at Rivervale, so as to eliminate that dangerous crossing. I understand the Minister is giving consideration to that and I hope that before long he will be able to do something definite about it. In the Middle Swan electorate one or two roads are necessary to enable the producers to get to and from the Midland Junction abattoirs and markets, and also to the metropolitan market. I have put up to the Minister in the previous Government, and to the present Minister, the desirability of making funds available for the construction of Wellington-road, which will be of benefit to many producers in that area, which is in close proximity to Perth, and which, in course of time, must carry a large population of primary producers. Then there is that other road, known as Government-road, which will also be of benefit to the producers in that district. The road board concerned have not the revenue for the building of those roads, and so are not able to give much assistance to the primary producers in that area. I am glad the Government are proceeding with the Canning dam. When that work is completed we shall have a supply of water which will be of great benefit to the metropolitan area. In the North Maylands area the water, during the last summer, and even for a little while this year, was almost putrid on some days. I have gone home from the House and tried to get a drink of water, but it was simply undrinkable.

Mr. Ferguson: I suppose you used it for topdressing the lawn.

Mr. HEGNEY: Yes, and in some instances it killed the grass. However, it has now improved in the area in which I live. I brought the matter to the notice of the Water Supply Department and discussed it with the Under Secretary and certainly there has been an improvement. Last year the new cement lined pipes were being laid, and we were told that when that job was finished the supply would be quite satisfactory. However, the water remained badly discoloured, even at the beginning of the year, although during the past fortnight it certainly has been more palatable. Evidently the discolouration has been due to the mixing of the supplies. The Canning dam scheme, which will be a wonderful feat of engineering, will supply the needs of the metropolitan area for many years to come, and in the meantime will give employment to a large number of workers. I notice in the Estimates an amount of £35,000 for workers' homes, and

I understand that of that sum £20,000 is being made available for what is known as the small loans scheme. It is for workers in the metropolitan area, and particularly those in outlying districts who have each a block of land as a backing to the loans they desire from the Workers' Homes Board.

Mr. Hawke: Why not in country districts?

Mr. HEGNEY: The Workers' Homes Board operate in country areas as well as in the metropolitan area. I understand they do not operate in the mining areas, because there they cannot be certain of their security. I hope the matters I have spoken of will receive the consideration they deserve.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.20]: Despite the tremendous thrust at me made by the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths), I am quite prepared to compliment him upon the persistency he has shown in urging the need for the construction of the Yarramony railway. I hope it will be built for him—

Mr. Moloney: Hear, hear!

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: Built by him.

Mr. TONKIN: —but not before a new traffic bridge is built at Fremantle. Members are familiar with the song about the old rustic bridge by the mill. That line could be suitably applied to the traffic bridge at Fremantle. No provision is made in the Estimates for rebuilding the bridge, and I suppose one could hardly expect provision to be made, but I direct attention to the need for a new bridge in the hope that it will not be overlooked in future. All that the present bridge requires is that a little ivy be trained along the rails at the approaches and a few bushes of lavender planted in order to complete the rural scene; that is, if the bridge will stand up long enough to allow us to admire the scene. A system of patching has been followed from time to time with the result that the bridge is now like Nelson's old flagship "Victory." Very little of the original remains but the shape. It is to be hoped that at the earliest opportunity the Government will have a structure erected worthy of the State. Various members have mentioned the need for bridges in their district and have said that they mentioned them in a parochial sense, but a similar charge cannot be levelled against me because the building of the

bridge at Fremantle has nothing of the parochial about it. It is essential from the State point of view, Fremantle being the front door to the State, and the present structure is no credit to anyone. Apart from that aspect, the rebuilding of the bridge would provide a source of local employment, would be the means of circulating a considerable amount of money in the State, and would be beneficial in every way. Side by side with the building of the bridge, one could reasonably urge that a dock should be provided at Fremantle. Figures have been quoted by the representative of Lloyd's indicating that a dock would be a payable proposition.

The Minister for Works: The figures were exaggerated.

Mr. TONKIN: I am pleased the Minister has mentioned that; I was not previously aware of it. It certainly puts a different complexion on the matter. I was present at a meeting when the figures were supplied, and the representative of Lloyd's certainly made out a case that a dock would be a payable proposition and that the State was losing a considerable sum of money because it lacked dock facilities.

The Minister for Works: I sent an officer to see him and get the information, and the representative wrote me afterwards saying he was sorry he had exaggerated.

Mr. TONKIN: The Minister should have published those facts, because a large number of people in Fremantle who attended the meeting are still of opinion that the figures were authentic.

The Minister for Works: I do not think the people took the figures very seriously.

Mr. TONKIN: Unfortunately, the Minister is the only one who has seen the letter.

The Minister for Works: Oh, no.

Mr. TONKIN: I do not know of anyone else who has seen it. I certainly was not aware that he had written the Minister to that effect.

The Minister for Works: I understood that he sent a copy of the letter to the Fremantle Business Men's Association.

Mr. TONKIN: Then they kept it very dark.

The Minister for Works: You bet your life they did.

Mr. TONKIN: That is a further reason why the contents of the letter should be published. The people should not be misled. If a dock would not be a payable proposi-

tion but would be an expense that the State could not bear, I would not be the one to advocate its construction. From what I heard at the meeting I was prepared to assist in any effort to secure a dock at Fremantle. The building of a new bridge at Fremantle would give the Government an opportunity to provide work for a number of men who find it difficult to leave their homes in order to accept work in the country. There are men who at times find it next to impossible to leave their homes, and they could be well and profitably employed on a work such as the building of a new bridge. There is another aspect to be considered. In times of depression like the present, private spending is at a minimum. People withdraw their funds from industry and deposit them in the banks where they remain idle. The result is that unemployment steadily increases, and if that state of affairs is to be arrested, it must be done by the spending of Government funds on Government works. Money is now considerably cheaper than it has been for years, and despite the statement of the member for Katanning (Mr. Piesse) about borrowing, I am of the opinion that to borrow money at present for works such as the rebuilding of the Fremantle bridge would be a wise policy. It would utilise some of the money at present lying idle, it would put money into circulation, and it would give a fillip to private industry which would create additional employment. The Commonwealth recently floated a loan. About half of it was used to retire Treasury bills, the net result being that the bank simply exchanged one form of security for another, but at a higher rate of interest. That policy should not be pursued, and I hope that the Premier, when he attends the next meeting of the Loan Council, will urge that more money be raised locally for expenditure on Government works.

Mr. Piesse: If we had not such a large interest bill to meet, we might construct such works out of revenue.

Mr. TONKIN: I am afraid that the time has passed when we were able to construct such works out of revenue. I see no argument against using cheap loan money for the construction of useful works at a time when private people absolutely refuse to embark their capital in industry. The banking figures show the position clearly. One has

only to peruse the bank returns to appreciate how large is the amount of deposits, and the bank circulars emphasise that point. They state that money is available for advances, but that people are not desirous of utilising it. If people find they cannot get a sufficient return on capital invested in industry and are prepared to accept a much lower rate of interest in order to have their money safe, the position is intensified. When that happens the Government must step in and spend money, and there is no better policy than that of floating a loan in our own country and utilising the money for works such as the one I have mentioned. The construction of works of the kind creates a useful asset, employs the people, and circulates money, and gives a fillip to private business so that the field of employment is further expanded. I feel sure the Premier will urge on the Loan Council the need for providing as much loan money as can be obtained for expenditure in the way I have indicated. They need have no fear that it will not be well spent in this State, because the record of the Premier inspires the necessary confidence. Several members have claimed that farmers cannot secure the labour they require in order to take off their crops. My experience has been that when single men have been out of work and have applied to the Labour Bureau for it, they have been told there is none available unless they are experienced farm hands. Therein lies the difficulty. Hundreds of single men are seeking employment, some being in receipt of Government relief, and some not. These men have been told that because they are not experienced they are not wanted on farms. Where are the experienced farm hands? Those men who are not experienced must be given a chance on the farms, or else we must look for the men who did the work before. Very likely many of the single men who were doing the work have since been married, and have become absorbed in relief work under the scheme for married men. It is possible they have compared their present conditions with those that appertained when they were working as single men on farms, and were not prepared to go back to that sort of labour. I know of married men who have looked for employment on farms, but they have been told that unless their wives were prepared to do the cooking, etc., there was no room for them. It is not to be expected that every man will

take employment under such conditions. It is no wonder farmers cannot secure the labour they require when they impose such conditions. References have been made to the expenditure on railways and tramways. I heard the Leader of the Opposition say that the previous Government could not be expected to replenish the stock of the Railway Department when they had to pay 30 per cent. more than would have been necessary in normal times, because of the high rate of exchange. The Leader of the Opposition cannot have things both ways. He belongs to a school of thought that welcomes a high rate of exchange because it benefits the primary industries.

Mr. Latham: I was only replying to you. I was not finding fault, and you should have known that.

Mr. TONKIN: I am not finding fault with the hon. member.

Mr. Latham: But you say I cannot have it both ways.

Mr. TONKIN: That is so. If it is an advantage to the country to have a high rate of exchange, the country must be prepared to pay the extra charges and put up with the situation. It is no argument to say that stocks could not be replenished because of the high rate of exchange. If we are going to wait until the exchange comes down, the stocks will never be replenished. The present Government have had to do it despite the high rates, and it should have been done before as a matter of Government policy. The member for Nelson sought to show that my figures dealing with expenditure on belated repairs were incorrect, and endeavoured to support that remark by quoting a number of statements at random. I asked him if all railway expenditure was incurred from revenue, meaning to imply that a large proportion might be incurred from loan funds, as these Estimates prove to be the case. The figures show that, whereas the expenditure previously was £178,880, this year the amount is £404,500. The Premier explained the reason for the increase, and how the money was to be allocated. The Estimates disclose the best allocation of available money that could be devised in the circumstances. We have to be satisfied with things as they are, but I look forward hopefully to the time when one particular work, namely the Fremantle traffic bridge, may become an accomplished fact. I hope that

work may be commenced next year. The Government are to be complimented upon their programme, and I feel sure that the State will benefit considerably from it.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly) [10.37]: In his speech the Premier defended the policy of borrowing money to keep men in employment. That is all very well, provided the men are engaged on profitable and re-productive work, and there is none other available. One or two members have doubted that there is any inability on the part of the department of unemployment to fill positions on farms. If they like to accompany me, I can disabuse their minds of that thought. I was in the department last week, and was shown a sheaf of letters from farmers asking for men who could drive a harvester or a header, and offering from 35s. to £2 a week. While passing from one room to the other, an officer said to me, "You see that crowd in front of the counter; not one of those men will go into the country." The men are urgently needed there but they will not go. I do not blame them for their reluctance. If a man can get work in the metropolitan area in pleasant surroundings, and earn about £3 a week, he cannot be blamed for declining to go to the country for 35s. a week. It is the duty of the Government to see that men capable of doing harvesting work shall take that which is offered.

Mr. Tonkin: How do you say that can be brought about?

Mr. SEWARD: Single men should be made to take the work. If the wages were considered to be too low, the farmers should be subsidised.

Mr. Tonkin: They are being made to do it. I know of many single men who have taken on farm work.

Mr. SEWARD: The department cannot induce the men to go. It has been said that men have been exploited. One member remarked that a certain individual was owed as much as £60 in wages. If that is so, no farmer would stand up to justify such a condition of affairs. We have to remember, however, that if a man is owed £60 in wages, it means pretty nearly a whole year's wages. If a man is content to go on working, receiving no wages but allowing the arrears to grow to that extent, he cannot be held blameless in the matter. If he finds that he cannot get his wages from

the farmer, it is his duty to communicate that fact to the person who sent him to the job. If he did that, he would probably get his wages. There is another aspect of the matter. Many farmers may in all good faith let the wage run on. The man does not want the wage at the moment, and it is easy to pay a wage of 30s. or even more per week accumulated over a few weeks. But it becomes a different matter when the amount arises to £30 or £40. If there is a bad harvest, the average farmer cannot possibly meet such a demand. While there are faults on one side, there are also faults on the other. I myself had in my employment a young fellow out from Home who had not received his wages from the previous employer. I wrote to the Migration Department on the subject, but got no assistance from them. I do hope the Minister for Employment will go thoroughly into the whole question of farm labour. The letters I have referred to are at the Labour Bureau, and the men are wanted and cannot be got. During the last week-end a farmer in my district wrote to me saying that he had communicated with the Labour Bureau a fortnight back and had not been able to get a man, and that one who had just been sent up was over 60 years of age and totally unable to do the work required. I must urge upon the Government the need to provide more capital for the Agricultural Bank. I have had several applications on the subject from my electorate. The applicants are men on Agricultural Bank properties who have not been able to obtain sufficient horses to carry on their work. If that state of affairs is to prevail, it means that the securities of the Agricultural Bank, which is to say the State, will languish for want of proper cultivation and maintenance in productiveness. There may be an excuse at the present juncture for not making fresh capital available, as the Agricultural Bank Royal Commission are still pursuing their investigations; but the time is fast approaching when arrangements will have to be made to enable next year's operations to be put in train. Therefore the attitude of making no fresh capital available to the Agricultural Bank cannot be maintained much longer. On the Loan Estimates certain amounts of money are made available for duplication of railway lines, especially

the section from the Mount Helena tunnel to Northam. That is a work I was indeed sorry to see put in hand. I regard it as a big mistake. I would much prefer to see the money put into the building of a line from Brookton to Armadale, and that for many reasons. If the Armadale-Brookton line were built, it would immediately convert a hopelessly non-paying line into a payable one. I refer to the Brookton-Corrigin line, which starts nowhere and gets nowhere and runs about one train per week. A connection from Armadale to Brookton would reduce the railage of goods from Corrigin by about 100 miles. Therefore the construction of the Brookton-Armadale railway would be an economic gain to the State, obviating the necessity for bringing that huge volume of traffic from Spencer's Brook to Midland Junction which comes from Narrogin and eastward of Narrogin. The proposed line would have an added value from a defence point of view, because it has to be remembered that at present all communication from Perth eastwards goes along that one strip of line between Midland Junction and Spencer's Brook. In time of war it would not be a difficult matter to put that strip out of operation. Therefore the Armadale-Brookton railway is essential as a second line of communication. Another matter which interests me greatly was referred to by the member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) and also by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin). It is the alarming increase in our interest bill. Unquestionably the amount is increasing at a most disquieting rate. However, the reason for that increase is not the fact that we are borrowing money, but the fact that we have been borrowing money at increasing rates of interest. It is those rates of interest that are pressing unduly on the taxpayers of the State. I desire to quote a few figures from a rather interesting return showing how the rate of interest on loans has varied during the present century. In 1901—before the Commonwealth came into the borrowing market at all—18 per cent. of our loans carried interest at three per cent., and 78.5 per cent. of our loans carried interest of from 3 to 4 per cent. So that 96.5 per cent. of our loan moneys in 1901 carried interest at from 3 to 4 per cent. In 1911, 99.8 per cent. of our loans carried interest of from 3 to 4

per cent., leaving only .2 per cent. of our loans carrying interest at anything over 4 per cent. But then a tragic alteration came about, until in 1931 we find that 5 per cent. of our loans carried interest at 3 per cent. while 17.2 per cent. of our loans carried interest at from 3 to 4 per cent., or 22.5 per cent. in all of our loans carried interest at from 3 to 4 per cent. That is an alteration in 20 years from 99.8 per cent. down to 22.5 per cent. The remainder of 36 per cent. of loans carried interest at from 4 to 5 per cent., and 38 per cent. carried interest at from 5 to 6 per cent. What is bearing so heavily on our taxpayers is the fact that successive Australian Governments have increased the rate of interest. I may add that they increased it in opposition to the best economic advice given them. Therefore it is necessary that every available opportunity should be taken to reduce the rate of interest. The member for North-East Fremantle, when entering upon this subject, referred to the advisableness of borrowing within Australia. In my opinion he was certainly on solid ground when he made that suggestion. It has to be remembered, of course, that the amount of money in Australia is limited, and that it would be inadvisable for Australian Governments to borrow too freely here, as thereby they would prevent Australian money from being invested in private industry. At the same time, it seems to be held by most authorities now that more of our loans should be floated in Australia instead of outside our borders. I have not heard any explanation of the large increases in salaries under the heading of "Goldfields and Agricultural Water Supplies," and that of the "Railway Department." The increases indicated seem to me to be very considerable.

MR. NULSEN (Kanowna) [10.51]: The Kanowna electorate has been well treated, and I had not intended to say anything on the Loan Estimates. The prospectors and the mining community generally have been dealt with on a very generous scale and, to a certain extent, so has our port of Esperance. The farmers in the district have received the consideration due to them, but more could be done to place them on a better basis. I thank the Government for having taken in hand the long delayed work on the Esperance jetty. They intend to spend £120,000 on that work, which is neces-

sary, and without which the port and its hinterland could not continue. The British shipowners and others refuse to make use of the port of Esperance unless something is done to improve the jetty. Without the expenditure of money to improve the harbour facilities, the money already expended in the district would be, to all intents and purposes, lost. In expressing my thanks to the Government for the action they have taken, I am merely re-echoing the gratitude of the people of the district. The Government have taken a stand in promoting decentralisation in connection with our ports, that should have been taken years ago. It is surely in the interests of the State that each port that has a productive hinterland should be adequately opened up and developed. Queensland and New Zealand were developed more successfully than many other places, because their ports were opened up properly, and those engaged in production were able to use their natural port. A policy of that description is sound and good business. In the past Esperance suffered as the result of vested interests, and had it been opened up and developed as it should have been, it would to-day be a much more important and better port than it is. I am sure that the money to be spent at Esperance will be to the advantage of the State.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Railways and Tramways, etc., £404,500; Harbours and Rivers, £269,000—agreed to.

Vote—Water Supply and Sewerage, £785,500:

Item, Water Supply in Agricultural and North-West Districts (including drainage and irrigation), and loans and grants to local authorities and boards, £250,000:

Mr. STUBBS: Six or seven years ago, when the previous Labour Government were in power, the 3,500 farms scheme was inaugurated. I remember visiting the district with the present Minister for Lands, and the Surveyor-General pointed out that if the country were to be settled, it was essential that water supplies should be provided. Recently work was started on one in the northern part at Lake Fox and while the men and the plant are there, I hope the Minister will consider the advisability of

providing another supply in the Lake King or Lake Camm areas.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: A request was made for the provision of two dams in this area, one at Lake King and the other at Hope Rock. The trustees of the Agricultural Bank and the officials of the Lands Department were consulted regarding the site and, as a result, it was decided to construct a 1,000,000-gallon tank at Lake King. That work is in hand. If money can be found when that work is completed, the plant will be transferred straight to the other job, which is about 30 miles away. The member for Pilbara spoke about the wells along the stock route. Those wells are under the control of the various local authorities who were paid a subsidy of £10 per well. When the slump came the amount was reduced to £5 but since our return to office I have made special grants to a number of local authorities to enable them to put their wells in order. That money is there for them: £5 for each well along the stock routes in their district and if special circumstances can be shown I am prepared to put the wells in proper order, and I have done it. But the work of keeping them in order is for the local authorities. The hon. member had better remind the local authority that the money is there.

Mr. Coverley: That is the trouble. A few of the local authorities have not applied for it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am advised that some of the local authorities said their wells were in good order and there was no need to spend the money. Consequently an amount has been unclaimed, but I think the word has since gone round and much of the money has been claimed recently.

The Premier: Perhaps they have taken it into the rates.

Mr. COVERLEY: I was glad to hear the Minister's announcement that special consideration would be given to each well on its merits. In the northern parts of the State there are many wells that require the expenditure of considerably more than £5 or £10 per annum to keep them in repair. The local authorities in my electorate have made an effort in each year to replace all iron tanks by cement tanks, and many other local authorities will follow that example if they can get the necessary money. One point the Minister might consider is the payment of an annual subsidy to the local

authorities for this purpose, instead of waiting for them to apply for the grant.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources, £110,000; Development of Agriculture, £798,952—agreed to.

Vote—Roads and bridges, public build-£237,000.

Item.—Roads and bridges in country and goldfields districts (including feeders for railways, and grants to local authorities), £80,000:

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I should like to ask the Minister whether any provision is made for bridges at Willyeyoung, North and Elleker.

The Minister for Works: No, they are not specially provided for.

Item.—Public Buildings (including sewerage and equipment, new buildings), £100,000:

Mr. PIESSE: I should like the Minister to take into consideration the urgent necessity for removing the small school at Woodlyn to Fifield, east of Broomehill. Sixteen children are attending the school in a very small room, and on a hot day it is impossible for them to remain in the school and so they have to be taken out under the shade of a tree. The removal would serve to provide work for some of the unemployed carpenters. I hope the Minister will make a note of this.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is a matter for the Education Department; it does not rest with the Works Department.

Mr. Piesse: But they put it in the list of urgent works.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Works Department act as contractors for other departments. If the Education Department want the school removed, we are the contractors to do the job. The authority to shift the building must come from the Education Department; it does not rest with the Works Department.

Vote put and passed.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 11.11 p.m.