

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 1st October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—FISHING, PALLINUP ESTUARY.

Illegal Netting.

Mr. WATTS asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that illegal net fishing is almost continuously proceeding at Pallinup Estuary, on the south coast, the waters of which are closed against such fishing? 2, If so, is he aware that such net fishing is seriously depleting the fish in the waters referred to, and that such depletion will deprive a large number of residents of the lower Great Southern districts of the opportunity of a cheap summer holiday, to which they are entitled? 3, Will he take immediate action to instruct a departmental inspector to police the area referred to with a view to preventing further breaking of the law? 4, Is it the practice of the department to grant licenses under Section 15 of the Fisheries Act, 1905-21, to persons who have been convicted on a number of occasions of offences against the Act? 5, If so, is he prepared to have the practice discontinued?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Steps have been taken. 4, No. 5, Answered by No. 4.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 26th September.

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [4.37]: The Minister for Lands, when he moved the second reading of the Bill, pointed out that it was necessary to continue the operation of the principal Act for another year. I

have no doubt that the Act will be continued for many years yet, due to the fact that it represents the only means by which necessary assistance for the farmers can be made available and securities protected, unless we transfer the necessary powers to the Commissioners who are administering the Agricultural Bank Act. At least, members might have had before them a copy of the report of the Industries Assistance Board for the year, in order to enable them to study the position as it is now and know exactly how the board has operated financially. The Minister gave the House some information in that regard, but reports from bodies operating under Acts, such as that which we are asked to continue, should be before members when they are required to deal with such measures. I enter my protest now against the delay experienced by members in having presented to them the statement of Public Accounts for the financial year. That document should be before members when the Estimates are introduced, or as soon afterwards as possible, and they should also have a copy of the Auditor General's annual report.

The Premier: We do not control the Auditor General.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: No, and, of course, I do not always blame the Premier, although I make complaints. Members should have before them a copy of the Auditor General's report because he is the official charged with the investigation of accounts. The Auditor General is a servant of Parliament, and he is able to advise us whether payments have been made legally or otherwise, so that we can take what action we may deem fit in circumstances that he may represent to us. The practice I am complaining of has been going on for years past. I do not know if the cause of the delay is that the Auditor General has not sufficient assistance. If that is the trouble, it is for the Auditor General to make application to the Treasurer for the needed help.

The Premier: There has been no application to me for additional assistance.

HON. C. G. LATHAM: The report should be before us. The Estimates will possibly be disposed of in the next week or two, and we will, in all probability, have the Auditor General's report presented to us after we have dealt with the Estimates. That is quite wrong. We should have the Auditor General's report and other reports affecting

legislation that, if continued, will make inroads into the public purse. I do not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill, because I believe the Act will be necessary this year. I regret having to make that statement. In the Mukinbudin area, the farmers are experiencing a rather rough spin. The average wheat yield in that district will be about 6 bushels, and unless we have early rains, that will not be the only district so situated. Farmers have no reserve fund with which to meet contingencies that may arise owing to a bad season. Western Australia has been exceedingly lucky over a period of years with regard to the seasons. We have had more than the average rainfall for a number of years past. If we had had less than the average rainfall and low prices as well, the farmers would have been in a very difficult plight indeed. As I have already indicated, I shall not object to the passage of the Bill because the Act may be required to enable the Government to provide assistance to farmers in the drier areas. Last year about £130,000 was made available by the Federal Government for the assistance of farmers, but that amount will probably not be forthcoming this year. From what information I could extract from the Acting Treasurer's speech in introducing the Budget in the House of Representatives recently, there will be little money from that source for the assistance of the men on the land. I received a letter from the secretary of the Nungarin Road Board in which he pointed out that, of a total area of 203,525 acres of agricultural land in that district, 40,816 acres had been abandoned. If unsatisfactory seasonal conditions continued as they were at the time the letter was written, it was estimated that probably another 20 per cent. of the farmers on the remaining holdings would have to abandon their properties. That is very serious and I know the Government, as well as Opposition members, are anxious to retain all the farmers we can on the good holdings, so that when prices rise again—and there is that tendency now—the State may avail itself fully of the better prices, and, to that end, give assistance to those who at present are having a rather depressing experience. The Minister told us that the total amount owing to the Industries Assistance Board on the 30th June last was £1,891,000. Most of that amount can be written off, because I think there is little hope of ever securing the payment of any of that sum.

The amount owing as at the 30th June, 1934, was £1,905,000, so it would appear that a small proportion of the indebtedness must have been written off or repaid. I suggest that it was written off, not repaid. The advances for the last financial year totalled £11,519, whereas in the previous year the advances amounted to £30,525. Collections during the last financial year, including interest, amounted to £36,862, or £1,627 less than the amount of last year's receipts. There is not much hope of ever getting that money repaid, unless there should be better prices for farm produce. In the circumstances, it is essential to retain on the statute-book legislation that will enable the Government, should the contingency arise, to help farmers who are in a bad way. The Agricultural Bank Act contains no provision that will enable the Commissioners to make advances for seasonal operations, and the Industries Assistance Act seems to be the only measure under which assistance can be rendered and securities taken, without great difficulty being experienced. Although Opposition members will not oppose the passage of the Bill, we would have appreciated an opportunity to peruse a statement from the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank showing what is the actual position. They have had plenty of time since their appointment to carry out the necessary investigations regarding the Industries Assistance Board, and, in fact, the House practically instructed them to carry out that investigation. Under the provisions of the Agricultural Bank Act it is necessary for the Commissioners to submit a return to Parliament in November. That will not give the House a reasonable opportunity to ascertain what the report contains and to consider it, let alone criticise it. As the Act provides that the report shall be furnished not later than the 1st November, members may reasonably expect to receive it about that date. I suggest that the Minister take up the matter and ask the Commissioners to expedite the tabling of the report as much as possible, so that members may ascertain the correct position.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—WORKERS' HOMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.43] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill containing only two amendments to the Act. The definition of "worker" under the Act is limited to persons receiving an income of not more than £400 per annum. The Bill proposes to increase that amount to £500. One of the greatest problems of the board is the disposal of homes that revert to them from their clients, and experience has shown that many applications come from persons with incomes ranging between £400 and £500 per annum. Those persons would make suitable clients. The board are debarred from doing business with them because of the limit placed upon incomes to £400 per annum. The extension to £500 would greatly assist the board in this part of their business. It has also been found that there are many deserving people with incomes slightly in excess of £400 a year who desire to apply for homes. Men earning between £400 and £500 and having a number of children are not always in a position to finance a home privately, and those people should be entitled to the benefit of assistance by the Workers' Homes Board. For those reasons the Government have decided to introduce an amendment to increase the income limit from £400 to £500. The second amendment is to alter the name of the institution from "Workers' Homes Board" to "State Housing Board." This alteration may not be considered important, but in all the circumstances we think it desirable. The administration of the board extends beyond the Workers' Homes Act and covers several activities. In the State sphere are the following:—

1. Workers' Homes Act, freehold and leasehold sections.
2. Small Loans Scheme.

The Small Loans Scheme was introduced by the Government to enable alterations and additions to be made to properties. It will be within the knowledge of members that last year the Government introduced a scheme in order that people in the possession of homes might make necessary improvements. To that end we made advances of small sums amounting in the total to £25,000 to assist owners to make improvements and also to provide employment.

3. Housing Trust Act.

This Act was passed in 1930 to provide homes for old-aged and indigent people.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I think 1931.

The PREMIER: It became an Act in 1931, and provides for applications for small sums for cottages.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That was the McNess fund.

The PREMIER: Another activity is administered by the Workers' Homes Board—

4. Herdsman Lake Settlement.

The board have constructed cottages at Herdsman Lake, and act on behalf of the Lands Department. The Herdsman Lake scheme, of course, is administered by the Lands Department, but the building side is administered by the Workers' Homes Board. The board perform services on behalf of the Commonwealth—

1. War Service Homes Commission.

At the outset the Commonwealth Government set up an administration of their own, but after some experience of it, the Workers' Homes Board were asked to take over the administration again, and that arrangement has been operating for several years.

2. Commonwealth Housing Act.

An Act was introduced by the Commonwealth Government in 1928 for the erection of homes for eligible persons in receipt of incomes up to £12 a week. In view of the activities administered by the board, the proposed new name is considered to be more applicable. It is also considered that the alteration of name will remove doubts that now exist as to eligibility for assistance under the different Acts administered by the board. This will enable more sales of reverted homes to be effected. During the past few years of depression especially, many workers' homes have reverted to the board because of the inability of those concerned to keep up their payments. The reversions have occurred, not because of any drastic action by the board, but simply because the owners were unable to carry on. The number of homes in that category, I believe, is 63, and it is not easy to find new clients for those homes. I do not say that the 63 homes are unoccupied; they are occupied by people who are paying rents for them, but it is not in accordance with the principle of the Act to have any considerable number of homes occupied by people merely as tenants. The object of the Act

was to enable people to acquire homes of their own. Because of the salary limitation of £400 a year, it is not easy to get clients and the board believe that if the income limit were raised to £500, it would be much easier to get clients for homes which have reverted to the board. At present many suitable applicants do not inquire at the department because they think they do not come within the definition of "worker." I have always believed that the term covered everybody except those who lived on rents and interest and had no useful occupation, but we cannot deny that a very narrow view has been taken of the word "worker." Many people engaged in shops and offices, who perhaps are not in receipt of salaries equal to the earnings of a person recognised as a worker, would not classify themselves as workers. Some years ago there was a little snobbery behind it, but I think that has all disappeared. I believe there are many office employees and persons in occupations of a similar kind who believe they are not eligible to apply for workers' homes, and that they do not come within the definition of "worker." Therefore it is desirable that the alteration be made. It will not in any way affect the continuance of assistance to workers. One point about which I made special inquiry was whether, if we increased the income limit from £400 to £500, there would be any possibility of the board's giving preference to people in receipt of higher incomes because of the greater security that those people would offer. I have been informed that there is no risk of that happening. Even in the past, where a man on the basic wage applied, preference was not given to a man on an income of £400 a year. All applications have been treated in the order in which they have been received. If a man on a lower salary or on the basic wage provided the security required—in some cases the amount involved would be lower, and perhaps considerably lower, than the amount required of a man receiving £400 a year—his application would receive equal consideration. So long as a man provides the security, he has the same chance as another applicant, even though the other may be on a higher salary and may be considered to provide a better security.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What is the largest amount that can be advanced by the board for one home?

The PREMIER: Either £750 or £800.

Mr. Doney: Nearer £900, I think.

Mr. Mann: I inquired and was informed that the amount was £750.

The PREMIER: It is either £750 or £800, but that is governed by the salary or income of the person concerned.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I was wondering what was the highest amount that could be advanced. The amendment in the Bill only governs the applicant's salary.

The PREMIER: Yes, it will only enlarge the field of applicants. Those who may apply for workers' homes now are those in receipt of salary or wages up to £400. The Bill will extend the salary amount to £500, but will not enlarge the amount of the advance.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It will probably improve the present security.

The PREMIER: Perhaps it will, but the principal point stressed by the board is that the amendment will enable them to place houses which have reverted to them. No doubt it is very convenient for people to be able to rent such homes, but the object of the Act was to enable people to purchase them. Those are the only points contained in the measure. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boul-
der) [4.58] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is really intended to give effect to the policy I outlined in the Budget speech. As I there announced, the Government have decided to terminate, as from the 31st December next, those sections of the Financial Emergency Act referring to wages, salaries, pensions and grants. This Bill, therefore, repeals, as from the 1st January, 1936, Parts II., III. and IV. and the Schedule of the principal Act. Part V. of the Act reduces by 22½ per cent., with a maximum reduction to five per cent., the interest payable on all mortgages in operation when the Act came into force in 1931. The Government consider that this provision should be continued for a further year as from the 1st

January next, and the Bill has been drafted accordingly. The only need for the Bill is to continue the provision governing the reduction of interest. The Government consider that the provision for the reduced rate of interest should continue for another year.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That will be the only provision made?

The PREMIER: Yes, with one slight alteration which I will mention later. The only provision in principle that is left is that the reduced rate of interest shall continue. I refer to rates of interest on all mortgages in operation when the Bill became law. The position has greatly altered since then. The reduction did not apply to mortgages made subsequent to the Act becoming law, but only the mortgages then in existence. There may not be many of these because the operations of the Act applied mainly to long-term mortgages. Mortgages made after the passing of the Act did not come under it. It may have been that long-term mortgages were entered into, some at high rates of interest of seven or eight per cent. Having regard to the rate of interest to-day the Government consider it would not be fair to omit this provision from the Act, and so allow mortgagees to go back to the rate of interest they were in receipt of prior to the passing of this emergency legislation. By Part V. of the Act the rate of interest is reduced by 22½ per cent., with a maximum reduction to 5 per cent.; that is, interest payable on all mortgages in operation when the original Act came into force in 1931. That is one provision we propose to re-enact in this Financial Emergency Act. We consider it should be continued for a further year as from the 1st January. The Bill also contains a saving clause with regard to the superannuation of officers of the public service who are retired. The superannuation Act provides for pensions to be based on the average rate of salary paid to an officer for three years prior to the date of retirement. The Financial Emergency Act protected the rights of officers by providing that their pensions should be based on their classified salary, and not on the reduced rate actually received by them. An officer may have had a certain classified salary when the Financial Emergency Act came into existence. His salary was reduced. The

Public Service Commissioner made a re-classification, and again the salary was reduced. If these reductions were to apply to that officer it would mean that he would be reduced doubly.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Twice-over.

The PREMIER: He would be reduced not on the classified salary but on the reduced amount received, which would have brought the superannuation down accordingly. There is nothing new about this, for this is how the Act operated last year. The reason why it is necessary to introduce it in this Bill is that that part of the Act of last year was contained in the provisions which we are dropping entirely this year. If we are going to carry on with the same principle in regard to those in receipt of superannuation it is necessary to make this safeguard. There is nothing new about it; it only leaves persons in receipt of superannuation entirely where they were last year. It is necessary to embody these matters in the Bill if we are to continue to protect officers who are retired after the 31st December of this year. I need not labour the question. I dealt with the whole aspect of it and the Government's attitude towards these cuts, on the occasion of the Budget speech. I have nothing new to say. I endeavoured to justify the policy of the Government, and do not desire to cover the ground again. We are not re-enacting anything except the provisions to which I have referred. This Bill will not cover other reductions that were made under the amendment of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act. It will not apply to the Lieut.-Governor, nor to those who are receiving payments from the Crown under Constitution Acts. The abandonment of the reductions would not apply to the Lieut.-Governor, to Ministerial salaries as such, to Judges, to the private secretary at Government House, and to the Clerk of the Executive Council. With these exceptions we are dropping all cuts and reductions that were made. The Government have not yet dealt with these exceptions. If the principle is to apply to everyone embraced in the original Act who has been subject to the cuts throughout these particular years, the Government will allow the Constitution Acts Amendment Act to lapse. We have not yet decided upon a course of action in this regard, but if it is decided to bring everyone into line, leaving out no one, that is what we will have to do. An announce-

ment may be made to the House at an early date. Apart from that everything else goes out of the Act except the reduction in the interest rates. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purpose of the Bill.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 1—Substitute the figures "1935" for the figures "1934" in the second line of the clause.

No. 2. Clause 3—Delete the numeral ("1") in line 38 and substitute ("2").

No. 3. Clause 5—Substitute the figures "1935" for the figures "1934" in the last line.

On motions by the Minister for Agriculture, the foregoing amendments made by the Council were agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the reports adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1935-36.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 26th September, on the Treasurer's Financial Statements, and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council £1,742.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [5.13]: I desire to express my keen appreciation of the treatment accorded to me by many officers of the Public Service in the various departments, since I have been a member of this Chamber. I do not intend to select any one in particular, but the departments to which

I wish to refer are those connected with employment, child welfare, mines, education and the draftsmen's branch of the Lands Department. I am also indebted to officers in the Public Works Department and in the Metropolitan Water Supply Department. I was extremely pleased when the Treasurer brought down his Budget to notice it was his intention to do justice to the officers of the service by restoring the reductions that were unfairly made to those salaries in 1930-31. On that account I strongly resented what I regarded as savouring of body-line tactics towards the service adopted by the Leader of the National Party when speaking the other evening.

Mr. Sampson: You had better be careful.

Mr. CROSS: My opinion is that the Public Service of Western Australia is underpaid, and this applies especially to some of its officers; and the remark has the more force in view of the salaries paid to men performing similar duties in the Public Services of other States and in private employment. My belief is that Western Australia is extremely lucky to have some of the officers it possesses, men who in the Eastern States services and in private employment would command far higher salaries.

Mr. Raphael: We are unlucky to have some of them, too.

Mr. CROSS: While listening to the debate I have been greatly interested by some of the speeches delivered. Especially was I interested in a belated admission made by the Leader of the Opposition, speaking on the 17th September. I took a note of the remark at the time. It referred to the cuts which were being restored, and told us what had been done by the Government with which the hon. gentleman was associated. The remark was as follows:—

We therefore gave power to employers to approach the court, and we instructed that court by Act of Parliament what it should take into consideration.

I also have a recollection of remarks made by the present Leader of the Opposition when delivering his policy speech at York. Although on several occasions he denied the use of the words reported, or that he intended what they express, yet I regard the observation I have quoted from his speech on this Budget as a belated admission. I desire to remind hon. members of a statement made by the Leader of the Opposition at York. In announcing the intention of his party to review the Arbitration Act, he

went on to specify what he meant, as follows:—

The Federal basic wage, as it applies to this State, should be adopted.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I did not. Be truthful! I have taken the opportunity of contradicting those statements here. I cannot follow you around the country contradicting them. Those statements are not true.

Mr. CROSS: The statement appeared in the report of the hon. gentleman's speech.

Mr. Marshall: It was said, and it was contradicted—the Leader of the Opposition declared he had not said it.

Mr. CROSS: I am pleased to have the Opposition Leader's belated admission.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Oh, belated admission!

Mr. CROSS: I am pleased to see, in connection with this Budget, the end of wage and salary cuts.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I am very glad of it, too, if the Government have the money.

Mr. CROSS: Turning now to another subject—

Hon. C. G. Latham: I thought you would do that.

Mr. CROSS: —I am glad to see the Minister for Mines back from the Old Country. A matter to which I drew attention when speaking on the Address-in-reply I wish to bring up again to-day, because I want the Minister for Mines to give it some consideration. It might be said that the matter is one which does not concern my electorate, seeing that my district is not a mining area. However, numerous people in my electorate are interested in mining, and not only as mining investors but in connection with prospecting parties.

Mr. Thorn: Had you not better leave that matter to goldfields representatives?

Mr. CROSS: Numerous prospecting parties are operating in the mining areas to-day, and the subject I am about to refer to affects them. In addition, what I have to propose is entirely in the interests of the State. Moreover, any member who believes he can bring before the Chamber something of material advantage to the State, is in duty bound to do so. The matter to which I want the Minister for Mines to give consideration is whether the time is not opportune to instal several additional State batteries in selected mining districts. There are numerous districts in need of State batteries; and my belief is that if State batteries were in-

stalled the result would be reproductive work which would prove profitable from a State point of view. I understand that after years of agitation arrangements have been made for the erection of a State battery at Leonora. Certainly this is not before its time. To show that what I propose is warranted, I shall bring to the attention of the Committee the difference in annual revenues from State batteries during the last few years. I desire to prove that an extension of the system is fully warranted. For the year ended 30th June, 1931, the receipts from State batteries were £30,572. For the year ended 30th June, 1934, the receipts had increased to £110,406. Now I wish to demonstrate that the increase is continuing. The figures I have quoted are taken from the last report of the Auditor General. In addition, I have here a return from the Mines Department showing receipts from State batteries during the year ended 30th June, 1935. They amount to £118,781, representing an increase of approximately £88,000 over the receipts for the year 1930-31. I am hopeful that the Minister for Mines and the Government will give serious consideration to the installation of a few more batteries in suitable centres. I believe that the result of doing so will be to benefit the whole State. There are two or three other subjects on which I wish to touch, subjects affecting my own electorate. I do not know whether it is intended to provide on these Estimates for expenditure on the various river jetties. I appreciate the fact that during last winter the department concerned, in sheer desperation, spent a small amount on the Mends-street jetty. I hold an opinion, which I know to be shared by the department, that it is time the whole of the Mends-street jetty was reconstructed. If the South Perth jetty does not receive further consideration, it is quite on the cards that one day the structure will be down altogether. The shore end of the Mends-street jetty was erected many years ago by a private company, which put in only 10-foot piles at the shore end. These piles are now almost rotted through. Their condition, I am informed, is so bad that the department dare not touch the top decking at all, realising that if the top decking were taken off the piles at the shore end, these would fall over. I suggest that the Minister controlling the jetties should consider the advisableness of

reclaiming three-quarters of an acre or an acre of ground round about the shore end of the jetty with a view to reconstructing the jetty altogether.

Mr. Thorn: You are exaggerating the position.

Mr. CROSS: I am not exaggerating the position at all. The hon. member interjecting has not seen the jetty as many times as I have.

Mr. Thorn: Yes, I have.

Mr. CROSS: I repeat that last winter, in sheer desperation, the department effected some repairs, and that when one of the piles was moved it was found necessary to shift quite a number, because the bottoms of the piles had rotted off and the department dared not put decking on top of them. In the circumstances, it was not possible to do the job of repairing properly. In my opinion the proper course is to reconstruct the whole jetty. When the departmental dredge is on the spot, it would be a simple matter to reclaim about an acre of ground and reconstruct the jetty. The Barrack-street jetty, too, is in need of repair. I have discussed the matter with engineers who have examined the piles.

Mr. Thorn: What is your opinion of the Fremantle bridge?

Mr. CROSS: We are not discussing the Fremantle bridge at present. In any case, if a quarter of the money spent on repairing the Fremantle bridge were available for what I am urging, a new jetty could be built. I hope something will be done to bring all these jetties into a state of reasonable repair, otherwise we are likely to find, one morning after a storm, that we have no jetties at all.

Mr. Marshall: We could always put up a spring board.

Mr. CROSS: I am also keenly appreciative of the fact that the Government have decided to put down a 24in. watermain from Queen's Park to serve the Applecross side of the river. That work will be of some benefit to Fremantle as well. I wish to call attention to the necessity for putting in a main to serve Applecross, and also Mount Pleasant, which at present has no water supply at all. I should be glad to know whether it is the department's intention to run a main to Mount Pleasant. There is a fair amount of settlement in that neighbourhood now, and the people there are dependent on spear pumps and bore

water. When the main is laid, I hope the local people will be given an opportunity to use the water for which they will be compelled to pay. While referring to Mount Pleasant, let me express also the hope that on these Estimates provision will be made to extend the electric light service to that district. Although Mount Pleasant is within half-a-dozen miles of the city, the residents are still compelled to use either hurricane lamps or candles. I hope something will be done to supply that urgent need. At this stage I do not propose to mention other matters, as to which I shall have opportunities when items are being discussed. I trust, however, that the Minister for Mines will give consideration to my suggestion regarding State batteries.

MR. BOYLE (Avon) [5.29]: These Estimates appear to be based on a better State outlook. I notice that for the year 1935-36 the total revenue is estimated at, in round figures, £9,406,000, and the anticipated deficit at £255,000, representing a total expenditure of £9,662,000. The State estimated revenue for the current financial year is within £541,000 of that of the pre-depression year 1928-29—£9,947,000. This is £1,571,000 greater than the 1931-32 amount of £8,035,000, the lowest depression point. That shows a remarkable recovery in the two years since 1932-33 of an anticipated revenue of 1½ millions. So I agree with the Premier that his optimism, if restrained, is certainly justifiable. I wish to draw attention to the fact that unfortunately this season is finishing up very badly. I have just completed a tour through my electorate and the eastern portion of the wheat belt. During the past 10 days I have traversed the country from Tammin in the west, finishing up on Sunday last at Nungarin. I must say the position of that portion of the wheat belt is deplorable. I do not wish to pose as an apostle of gloom, but we must face the facts, and I am satisfied that, even if we were to get an inch of rain within the next week or 10 days, the position would be merely ameliorated, and would not in any circumstances give us a good season in that area. In the Avon electorate last year's returns of wheat forwarded from 57 sidings was 57,000 tons, with 9,000 tons of chaff. That 57,000 tons of wheat carried by the railways was equal to 2,150,000 bushels,

and the quantity of wheat milled for flour at our mills would account for another 500,000 bushels. So one can realise that in the estimated revenue for the Railway Department this year—I hope I may be wrong—the quantity of wheat for carriage will be 200,000 tons less than that of last year. That will be reflected in the Estimates of Revenue by a reduction of at least £120,000 in the revenue of the Railway Department, and will be reflected also in the revenue of the harbours and ports of the State. I dealt with only one electorate, but my electorate abuts on the Mt. Marshall electorate, and the member for Mt. Marshall, with whom I have conferred, is very much of the same opinion regarding his own electorate. The Avon electorate is one of the most highly developed agricultural areas in the State, yet I do not think it will average this year more than 7 bushels to the acre. I have here a letter from the north-eastern zone districts of the Wheatgrowers' Union, and this communication only confirms my pessimistic outlook. Under date 26th September, the secretary of that organisation wrote—

At a recent meeting of the north-eastern zone council of the Union discussion arose on the effect of drought in that area. It was pointed out that conditions were serious, and the suggestion was made that a conference be held comprising representatives of the Union, the P.P.A., Country Party members, and the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank, to discuss relief for the coming year. We shall be pleased if you will let us know whether you will be prepared to attend this meeting.

I have also a letter from the Nungarin Road Board which points to the fact that of the 203,525 acres of rural land within the board's district, 40,816 acres have been abandoned. I have referred to these letters in order to impress on the Government the necessity for taking early organising steps to combat what I fear is going to be a calamity of a major nature in the central portion of the wheat belt. Another point to which I would draw attention is this: the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank have definitely set their faces against the supplying of motor tractor fuel. I think this can be carried to extremes. We have numbers of tractors in the wheat belt lying idle, because the authorities will not permit fuel to be purchased for them. The farmers in that area unquestionably will have to be supplied with fodder such as chaff, costing from £6 to £8 per ton. Would it not be infinitely better to supply those men who have tractors with

fuel, that they may carry on their work? It is an economic proposition. I do not for a moment advocate the use of tractors as against horses.

Mr. Marshall: The fodder would be locally grown, and the money would be kept within the State.

Mr. BOYLE: Unfortunately the hon. member is not correct in that statement. A good deal of the chaff recently imported came from South Australia. The opportunity to get rid of that chaff must have been a perfect godsend to the farmers of South Australia, for in our districts complaints are rife as to the quality of the chaff sent to us. It is not a question of the supplying of chaff grown in the local districts, for, as it is, a much greater area will have to be cut for chaff, and in all probability it will not be possible to get sufficient to supply all who require it. But I say it would be perfectly justifiable to supply with fuel those men who have tractors.

Mr. Marshall: And so make Western Australia a bowser for the consumption of imported fuel.

Mr. BOYLE: Another phase of the problem confronting us gives me opportunity to compliment the Minister for Agriculture on the very interesting speech he delivered at Katanning in reference to the finding of markets for our produce. Today the markets of the world are practically closed against primary products of this and other States of the Commonwealth. Some time ago the Government appointed the Economic Council, which has perhaps fully justified itself. But its purpose was the finding of a local market and local consumption for the secondary products of the State. I would urge on the Government the desirability of setting up a wing to that Economic Council with the purpose of endeavouring to find markets for our primary products outside the State. For the past two years I have been engaged on this problem by inquiry and investigation in the Eastern States, and by correspondence abroad. I have here a typical letter from a big and important firm in the Philippine Islands. This letter is on all fours with correspondence I have received from other important firms and corporations outside of Australia. Messrs. Elizalde and Co., Incorporated, is a company with a capitalisation of £4,000,000. It is a very old-established firm and has a great deal of influence on the import and export trades of the Philip-

pine Islands. Under date 6th August, the firm wrote this to me—

I have before me statistics of Philippine imports from Australia for a period of five years, from 1929 to 1933, which show a steady decline from the four-million-peso mark in 1929 to the two-million-peso level in 1933. The Philippine exports to Australia show the same tendency, from the one-million-peso high-mark in 1929 to the two-hundred-thousand-peso level in 1933, with the balance of trade always unfavourable to the Philippines by a wide margin. In 1933, for instance, trade balance was favourable to Australia in the amount of more than two million pesos. This gives an idea of the disparity in Philippine-Australian trade. The two outstanding reasons for the decline of the Philippine-Australian trade that I can think of at this moment are:—

1. Australia in general has kept its own market closed to Philippine products.

2. The Philippines used to be a big exporter of lumber and timber, but Australia suddenly cut off its trade with the Philippines in these commodities by an impossible import tariff.

This country is a natural producer of cigars, rope, cocoanut oil, sugar, which might be acceptable to Australia to facilitate the maintenance of a fair exchange between the two countries. It is a foregone conclusion that the great discrepancy in trade obtaining at the present time can't long continue, and exhaustion of trade relations will only be a matter of a few years unless better arrangements are made for mutual benefit. Under present circumstances the Philippines obviously has to shift to countries that buy from her in appreciable quantities. We are all agreed that trade between Australia and the Philippines is very desirable owing to their geographical positions, which offer mutual advantages, but we also believe that it behoves Australia to offer inducements to Philippine products in order to keep a market for her that is gradually dwindling and which may ultimately disappear as soon as the Philippines feel the necessity to enter into agreements with countries which offer more fair interchange of trade.

It is obvious to all that under Federation we have practically no say in what shall constitute the import tariff. However, in British Columbia they have found a way to overcome that difficulty. They occupy practically the same position in the Dominion of Canada as Western Australia does in the Commonwealth. Strange to say, the ratio of trade between British Columbia and the rest of Canada is at the rate of 25 to one against British Columbia, whereas in our State, as against the Eastern States, the ratio is about 9 to 1 against us. But the British Columbians are determined that that state of affairs shall not continue with them. They are in the same position as we are; they are in the federation whether they like it or not: but this is the

proposal they are putting up and it is the proposal I think will be practicable in this State so long as we remain in the federation. I have here an article from the "Christian Science Monitor," which is accepted as an authority on most questions, being a most reliable journal published in the United States. It says:—

This State might well profit by the example of British Columbia, which is, according to the "Christian Science Monitor," preparing to buy manufactured articles in large quantities from foreign countries instead of purchasing them in eastern Canada. This was indicated recently in the British Columbia Legislature. The plan outlined provides for the establishment of a large provincial government importing and exporting corporation. This corporation would buy up a large quantity of British Columbia product, like lumber, and barter it with a foreign company for some manufactured article, such as motor cars, which the Province now buys in eastern Canada. The corporation would pay the duty on the imported article and then sell it, without profit to dealers and through them to the public. This would achieve the double purpose of making British Columbian goods saleable on a large scale in foreign countries who would buy them if they could pay for them in their own goods, and of showing eastern Canadian manufacturing interests that the Province cannot continue to operate on the present economic basis. British Columbia is buying 25 times as much in eastern Canada as it sells there, while it must sell its own products in the unprotected world market.

Is that not an absolute parallel with the position we occupy in the federation of Australia? I am sure that under the suggested wing of the Economic Council, something of a similar nature could be evolved.

Mr. North: Is this in force now?

Mr. BOYLE: It is now before the British Columbian Legislature, and appears to me to be a workable scheme. We are tied to the Eastern States through the tariff, and we are the dumping ground for them. They sell us £9,000,000 worth of their goods annually and only take from us in return £1,000,000 worth. That is a position that cannot last. As far as Germany is concerned, when I was in Melbourne a little while back, I interviewed the Consul for Germany and he had the same complaint to make that we were expecting Germany to buy from us while we took a very small proportion, about one-eighth, from his country. The proposed wing of the Economic Council could examine the position in all its phases, and I am sure that nothing but good would result. Reverting to the Philippine Islands, strange to say, the meat contract for the

American Army there is held by the Japanese. They competed with us to secure that contract, and it shows that the necessity for a co-ordinated scheme is absolutely apparent. Last year Victoria sent 70 per cent. of her wheat to Japan. We must look to the East for our markets. It is said that we can produce any amount of wheat if we can get a sufficiently high Australian price for it and dump the balance on the markets of the world. But it is the greatest fallacy to imagine that other parts of the world will take it from us if we take nothing from them. The only civilised State that has not a law against the importation of our wheat is the black republic of San Domingo in South America. We cannot get nations to allow their own agricultural industries to be submerged, nor have we any desire to go back to the 1929-30 year, when we dumped wheat into China at £4 a ton, and undersold Chinese rice which was £8 per ton. What a position for wheat farmers in a civilised community to be in, dumping our product under cost of production into a country the people of which we industrially despise! The suggested committee could at least collect necessary data. I have nothing further to say beyond reiterating and emphasising the fact that as far as the wheat belt of Western Australia is concerned, and particularly the central wheat belt, the position is serious. I cannot over-emphasise that. It is essential for the Government to prepare for a calamity that I think is facing us. I am usually of an optimistic nature—I would not be here otherwise—but I do urge upon the Government to view this matter seriously.

Mr. Lambert: Your electors were optimistic.

Mr. BOYLE: My electors to-day are not; they are very depressed. The price of wheat is higher than it has been for five years and to-day they have no wheat to sell. The price has increased at the end of the season when most of the wheat has gone. The wheat position at present is the best since 1928, and here we are faced with very little product with which to take advantage of the price. I sympathise with the Government in their hard luck, and I sympathise with this House and the people of the State. In the Mt. Marshall and Avon electorates the farmers will consider that they have had a satisfactory return if the yield gives them seven bushels to the acre. That is a most deplorable position for us to have to face.

MR. MOLONEY (Subiaco) [5.52]: I was pleased to hear the sentiments expressed by the hon. member who has just resumed his seat, particularly his concluding remarks in which he referred to the difficult position the Government have had to face. It was pleasing to me to hear such a statement coming from the other side of the House. In the course of the debate on the Budget, we have heard a considerable amount of criticism, some of it delivered with petulance. It was pleasing to learn that in the past our wheat was able to compete with that from other parts of the world, but, examining some of the statistics relating to the farming industry in Western Australia, I must confess to having been staggered by the colossal amounts of farmers' debts outstanding. When we remember that the interest bill amounts to £3,063,000, and that, since the present Government have been in power, an additional £900,000 by way of interest has piled up, and that on top of that we have to pay £138,000 as extra interest for the amount they have gone behind, it will be admitted that the position is staggering.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What is the reason for it?

Mr. MOLONEY: It is the economic position that confronts the people. It is, however, sufficient to show that there has been no harassing of the primary producer by the present Government. We must remember also that seven millions sterling has gone down the sink through group settlement. This also proves that the farming community have received a greater measure of assistance at the hands of the State than has any other industry. Recently I heard the Deputy Leader of the Opposition refer to the need for additional assistance for the purchase of wire netting. Analysing the position again, I find that there is an amount of £80,000 which will have to be paid to the Commonwealth Government for wire netting.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: It shows what they are up against.

Mr. MOLONEY: Again, with regard to group settlement, not one penny has been paid by way of interest.

Mr. Thorn: That is rather exaggerated.

Mr. MOLONEY: It was a statement made by the Minister for Lands.

Hon. C. G. Latham: When did he make that statement?

Mr. MOLONEY: He said that not one penny piece had been received by way of

interest, and that all the interest, if there had been any paid, amounted to very little. Irrespective of group settlements and the amount the wheat farmer owes the State, this, too, in spite of the assistance given in various directions, particularly by way of cheap carriage of fertilisers, we are told that no assistance has been given to that section of the community. I began to believe that until I went through the figures and found what the position really was. At the same time I am not averse to assisting the farmers, and I only want to emphasise that the primary producers of this State have received a great measure of help.

Mr. Thorn: Every worker in this State benefits by the activities of the farming community, and you know it.

Mr. MOLONEY: I am not saying that the farming community are not a necessary asset. Indirectly each person is a cog in the wheel of the economic structure and I am merely pointing out that we hear, in season and out of season, what the Government are doing for the farmers, and figures are paraded before us.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: And they sell their wheat 50 per cent. lower than the cost of production.

Mr. MOLONEY: To-day every man, woman and child is contributing towards the exchange by which the farmers benefit.

Mr. Patrick: That is a silly statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MOLONEY: I am only too pleased to be corrected, but I have yet to learn that the hon. member can show otherwise than that the primary producer is reaping a benefit as a result of the exchange.

Mr. Patrick: What is responsible for the exchange?

Mr. MOLONEY: We are always told the adverse trade balance.

Mr. Thorn: It should be higher, too, according to the low prices.

Mr. MOLONEY: No doubt the hon. member considers that there should be an absolute monopoly, as there is in connection with dried fruits.

Mr. Thorn: You are talking nonsense now.

Mr. MOLONEY: Now we find Opposition members accusing the present Government of every crime in the calendar. The other night the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) took the Government to task with regard to the financial emergency legislation. Opposition members, when they were

in power, sponsored the original legislation that was introduced in this Chamber in 1931. Those members, including the member for Nedlands, had no qualms in imposing burdens upon those respecting whom they are so solicitous now. They gave legislative effect to the Premiers' Plan, and went further than any other State by their action in attacking private employees. There was no word of protest then from the member for Nedlands or from any other member at present sitting on the Opposition side of the House, although they were in power at the time. We can remember the action that was taken by the unions in order to test their position. Following upon an Arbitration Court decision, the unions briefed the member for Nedlands to deal with the appeal in the Full Court, the object of which was to test the common rule decision of the Arbitration Court. The member for Nedlands knew all about the position, but there was not one word of protest in the House regarding the iniquity of the Financial Emergency Act. On the other hand, anyone who reads "Hansard" will know that members of the Labour Party, time and again, pointed out the iniquity of the legislation, and emphasised the fact that Western Australia was the only State to implement the Plan on the lines adopted by this State. I can cite an instance to illustrate to members what was the effect of that Act. A man who was not a bricklayer but merely a labourer, was employed in the construction of a manhole on behalf of the Perth City Council. The only body that could cite a case against him in the Arbitration Court was the Perth City Council, and when that action was taken, the Council secured relief under the Act. The decision respecting that man applied automatically to every bricklayer throughout Western Australia, whether he worked under an award or not. The unions briefed the member for Nedlands to appear in the Full Court in support of their appeal against the decision in that man's case being made a common rule in the industry. Despite his knowledge of the position, did the member for Nedlands raise his voice in protest on the floor of this House? During the course of the Premier's remarks, it was pointed out that it required merely a small amendment to deal with the common rule position, but did the member for Nedlands, who knew that that was the position, endeavour to force the Government, of which he was at one time

a member, to pass such a small amendment? Of course he did not. He did not raise his voice against it at all. And yet the other night he was so solicitous about the underdog; in fact, so solicitous was he that his voice broke with emotion. When the Premier and I interjected during the course of his remarks, the member for Nedlands became petulant as usual, swept us aside and said that we were talking nonsense. In fact, the member for Nedlands seems to get irritated and peeved if any member so far transgresses as to indicate that the member for Nedlands is incorrect. He is the member who knew of this absolute injustice under the Financial Emergency Act, but when he makes charges against the present Government, he must remember that he, together with other members of the Opposition, must accept responsibility for what transpired in the past. Presumably he thinks that the time is ripe to bring this point before the notice of the people. There is an election looming, and it will be nice for members to read from the platform the speeches they made in Parliament in which they drew the attention of the Premier to the fact that his recognition of the iniquity was tardy.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Now we know why you are talking in this strain.

Mr. MOLONEY: Members can look through the columns of "Hansard" and see what members of the present Government had to say regarding the iniquity of the legislation when it was presented to Parliament. It is useless for Opposition members to endeavour to draw a red-herring across the trail by pointing out that the Premiers' Plan was sponsored by Mr. Scullin and Mr. Theodore. That sort of talk will cut no ice with the people. That will not blind them to the fact that Opposition members, when their party were in power, told them it was a matter of national necessity that the State should compel every man and woman employed privately or otherwise to have their wages or salaries reduced, and it was their Government that dictated to and told the Arbitration Court to adopt a certain course. On the 17th September last, the Leader of the Opposition, when dealing with the Budget, said:—

We therefore gave power to the employers to approach the court, and we instructed that court by Act of Parliament what it should take into consideration.

It will be seen that the Mitchell Government, by an Act of Parliament, instructed the court what to do. That was done by members of this House, who state always that they will not interfere with the Arbitration Court. Thus the present Leader of the Opposition, and also the Leader of the National Party, must accept their share of guilt in this matter. They even refused the President of the Arbitration Court the right of appeal to the Full Court against such an iniquity. The President of the Arbitration Court was so incensed at the action of the Government that he wanted the right of appeal to the High Court, but the Government of the day would not allow that to be done. As a consequence of the common rule that was established under the Financial Emergency Act, it meant that the man who was building the Commonwealth Bank was able to impose a cut on the wages of the men who were engaged in that big undertaking. As a matter of fact, the Act allowed the employers to do just as they liked. It was merely a case of walking into the Arbitration Court, the employers' advocate putting up the request, and stressing the national emergency; the unions had to accept an adverse decision, because they could not put up a case against that plea. It was merely for the employer to walk into the court and get what he desired.

Mr. North: You will remember that the member for Nedlands attacked the Cabinet at the time, so there was some protest.

Mr. MOLONEY: But it was not on this point. The member for Nedlands claimed that the present Government had no plan and that they were merely drifting along, borrowing as much money as they could. On the other hand, we find that, comparing the Mitchell Government's last three years with the three years the present Government have been in office, there is a difference of only £144,000. On the strength of that, we are told the Labour Government are heading the State for disaster. Despite the fact that millions of pounds have been made available for the assistance of primary producers, the Opposition are the people who are always telling us that the present Administration are a spend-thrift Government, who are getting too much money. The Mitchell Government could not get sufficient to enable them to carry on. Despite that fact, they told the people that if a Labour Government were returned to power, confidence would be lacking on the

part of Capital. Let us contrast the financial experience of the two Governments and see how they pan out. In the first year I will deal with, 1930-31, the deficit was £1,420,000. In the next year, 1931-32, the deficit rose to £1,558,000, and in the third year, 1932-33, it dropped to £864,000. What a wonderful record! Then again in those days there were 14,000 men unemployed or working part time. Over 5,000 were not doing a hand's turn, for they could not get a day's work anywhere. Then the member for Nedlands suggests that the present Government had no plan. In those days the member for Nedlands was a member of the Government. He knew that disaster was looming ahead and he deserted his colleagues. His protest was not on behalf of the down-trodden worker and his iniquitous treatment under the Financial Emergency Act; he took that step merely because he could not see eye to eye with his colleagues in the Government regarding the State Savings Bank difficulty. What attitude did the member for Nedlands adopt when he was a Minister of the Crown? The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) told us the other evening how he had favoured the inspectors at the expense of the lower-paid teachers, and how he had deprived them of their long-service leave. Yet we witnessed the member for Nedlands almost weeping with emotion when he told us how he felt for the widows.

Mr. Cross: His were crocodile tears.

Mr. Thorn: What about saying something about the Budget?

Mr. MOLONEY: In due course I shall do so. I have already dealt with the Mitchell Government's deficits. Let me now indicate to the Committee what the present Government have done. Let members see if the Labour Government have improved the position, despite the prediction of the dire peril that confronted the people if Labour were returned to power.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MOLONEY: It must be apparent to the meaneast intelligence that the comparison I was drawing before tea was to the advantage of the present Government. The financial administration of the previous Government was indeed an appalling record. Notwithstanding that they received so much money, the slipshod manner in which they

expended it and the ineptitude which characterised them left little cause to wonder that the electors gave a verdict so overwhelmingly in favour of the Labour Party. I mentioned the colossal amount of £34,000,000 which the Royal Commission said represented the amount of the farmers' debts. Out of that total a sum of £16,500,000 is owing to the Agricultural Bank; liens represent over £996,000 and water rates £150,000. It strikes me that the farmers were on an exceedingly good wicket while previous Governments held office.

Mr. Thorn: Not half so good as the people of the city.

Mr. MOLONEY: That the people of the city receive the solicitude of the hon. member was reflected in the Financial Emergency Act and in his attitude since that Act came into operation. I have only to recall the occasion when the present Government desired to amend the Act and raised the incidence of the tax to make it apply to people receiving £3 12s. a week. The previous Government thought fit to apply the Act to any married man who earned over £2 a week. Just what the solicitude of the Opposition for those on the lower rungs of the ladder is worth may be gleaned from their attitude to our proposal to raise the amount to £3 12s. We desired that single men, instead of being taxed on whatever small amounts they earned, as they were previously, should be charged on a minimum of £2 a week, but the Opposition were adamant and the Government had to compromise by agreeing to 30s. The present Government have certainly been actuated by a desire to relieve the people on the bottom rung of the ladder. Let me recall the remarks of the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) when we endeavoured to abolish the flat rate of tax that oppressed the people who earned the smallest amount. Even the little servant girl came within the scope of that taxation. When we desired to grant relief by imposing a tax of 4d. on those earning more than the basic wage and 9d. on those receiving £293 a year, the member for Nedlands waxed eloquent in his opposition to the measure, describing it as iniquitous. Verification of my remarks can be found in "Hansard." I told the hon. member that even though I was much poorer than he, I would welcome the lifting of the burden off those on the bottom rung and the placing of it on those better able to bear it.

Mr. McDonald: We did not require men to pay 25s. to join the A.W.U.

Mr. MOLONEY: The hon. member belongs to a more exclusive organisation than the A.W.U., one to which the payment of 25s. would not give admittance. It is one of the closest corporations in the world, an organisation buttressed by privilege, and he should be the last to throw stones at the honest, common toilers who comprise the A.W.U.

Mr. Sampson: You are protesting too much.

Mr. MOLONEY: The previous Government, which included the present Leader of the Opposition and some of those associated with him, reduced salaries and wages through the medium of the Financial Emergency Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We were concerned to make the money go around amongst the greatest number.

Mr. MOLONEY: Let us examine the motive that actuated the present Leader of the Opposition at that time. In making his memorable policy speech at York in 1933, he announced his intention to review the Arbitration Act, and then proceeded to specify what he meant. He said that the Federal basic wage, as it applied to this State, should be adopted.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That statement is not correct. I have already corrected it. That was propaganda issued by the Trades and Labour Council.

Mr. MOLONEY: An extract from the "Primary Producer" is rather illuminating. As that paper is the official organ of the primary producers, no doubt its statement can be accepted.

Mr. Thorn: Have you got it there?

Mr. MOLONEY: I have the words used by the hon. member. There is no question that he meant what he said. It took him a considerable time to rebut the statement. I do not think he realised the importance of it until after the die had been cast.

Hon. C. G. Latham: As a matter of fact, I gave the public credit for more common-sense than to believe your propaganda.

Mr. MOLONEY: It seems like a death-bed repentance for the hon. member to endeavour to controvert what was said in 1933.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I never put men in gaol because they told a lie in order to get work. Tell us something about that.

Mr. MOLONEY: I will tell the hon. member what his Government did. The member for Nedlands appeared to be very solicitous for the welfare of the youth of the State. I have yet to learn that he has ever done anything to implement his desire to that end. The Government of which he was a member had no compunction in dismissing 500 young men from the Railway Department. That indicates the extent of their solicitude for the youth of the country. Immediately those employees reached the age of 21, they were put off. The Secretary of the Railway Employees' Union and others could give information under that heading, if members desire it. I speak feelingly regarding the youth of this State. I have been associated with movements affecting the youth of the country for many years. At present I am a member of the Building Trades' Apprenticeship Board, who view the existing position with great concern. The Government, as an earnest of their desire to improve apprenticeship conditions and make them as elastic as possible, have put into operation the Apprenticeship Board, which is one of the finest systems in the world. That the member for Nedlands was merely indulging in lip service was clearly exemplified by the dismissal of 500 young men from the Railway Department, and it shows how much importance should be attached to his statement about safeguarding the interests of the youth.

Mr. North: Did not you quote the deficits of the previous Government?

Mr. MOLONEY: Yes, and I was staggered at their magnitude, but despite their proportions, the sole policy of the Government was retrenchment. Nothing was done; it was a policy of mark time. Buildings deteriorated; railways deteriorated; everywhere men were idle. No fewer than 5,000 men were unable to find work, while those men who were employed were mainly engaged in unproductive work. Buildings generally were in a lamentable state. I was greatly concerned to see how the Parliamentary buildings were being allowed to deteriorate. I raised the point with the present Government, and the result was that almost overnight bricks appeared and men were busy renovating the building. At Blackboy Hill the Mitchell Government raised a monument to their own ineptitude. They established a camp, not with any idea

of training troops for Abyssinia or elsewhere, but to house a thousand unemployed. The men housed there engaged in no work of a productive character; they just lived in idleness and became demoralised.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Surely you do not suggest that you object to their having been given a roof over their heads.

Mr. MOLONEY: I object to the policy which allowed men to live there in idleness whilst the State deficits were piling up. No work of a reproductive nature was being carried out. It is not a matter of the money but of what is done with it. The previous Government piled up a deficit of 1½ million and produced nothing to show for it. At Hovea 600 men were employed in cutting wood. The Government only marked time. The member for Nedlands and the Leader of the Opposition castigated the present Government. The member for Nedlands said, "Where is your plan. This Government is doomed to destruction. The country is going on the rocks; destruction is ahead." The first speech I heard him deliver was on the same lines. He has never departed from that dismal attitude, except that on this occasion there was more rancour, spleen and vituperation in his remarks than heretofore. He was not prepared to give the Government credit for anything.

Mr. Thorn: You seem to be working yourself into a fury.

Mr. MOLONEY: I am solaced by the knowledge of what the present Government have done. The previous Government adopted a policy of following the line of least resistance. They cut wages, interfered with the Arbitration Court, and placed the unemployed in concentration camps.

Mr. North: And yet you say the deficits were too high.

Mr. MOLONEY: Those men could have been employed on works of a reproductive nature, as they are to-day. The present Government have found work for the unemployed. In Subiaco there were 500 men who could not get work when I first went to see them, and to-day there are only 40 who are mostly unemployable. Seeing that the previous Government were piling up deficits all the time, they should have given the men useful employment. Immediately the present Government came into office, the Minister for Employment closed all the camps, and stopped the subsidised road boards from exploiting sustenance men.

The camps disappeared and the men were put on to useful work. They regained their manhood and are now working for that which they receive. That is a tribute to the Minister for Employment, and yet the deficit has not mounted up. The last deficit was £167,000, compared with £1,558,000 in the second year of the Mitchell Government's administration. The present Government have spent £83,000 on the rehabilitation of public buildings and a like sum on new buildings that were in course of erection. The railways have been rehabilitated and staffs have been augmented.

Mr. North: You are starting your barrage early.

Mr. MOLONEY: In his report the Public Service Commissioner says that things have become so good that he is augmenting the Public Service. These facts are incontrovertible. It is all very well for members opposite to laugh, jeer and ridicule. Those things will never detract from the merits of the case as I am presenting it.

Hon. C. G. Latham: "Although I say it."

Mr. MOLONEY: The present Government are restoring to the workers all the cuts from the 1st January next.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Who are the workers?

Mr. MOLONEY: Every person who comes within the ambit of the Financial Emergency Act.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Who comes under it to-day?

Mr. MOLONEY: Those who are under it will have their cuts restored.

Hon. C. G. Latham: A few civil servants.

Mr. MOLONEY: There is contention immediately the Government talk about restoring the cuts.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Who is objecting?

Mr. MOLONEY: What did the member for Nedlands say when we wished to restore the cuts on a previous occasion? He was opposed to any person receiving more than the basic wage if there was one unemployed man left in the State. The wages standard has been built up in the last 30 or 40 years. If there is to be no redress for those who have had the axe applied to their incomes, we shall never get anywhere. It would be used as an excuse on every occasion. According to the argument of the member for Nedlands, our hands must be tied, and we must not restore the cuts to the workers so

long as there are any unemployed left. The cuts, however, will be restored. It has been said that the Premier declared that to be his policy if he was returned to office. On the other hand, Hon. J. J. Holmes in another place, a member who cannot be called an ardent democrat, or an enthusiastic admirer of the Government, declared that the Premier stated he would, if returned, take the first opportunity to make drastic alterations in the situation. In 1933 the Premier, speaking at Boulder, said his policy would be a three-years' policy, and that it was not possible to achieve everything in one year. He had a well-ordered plan. We now find the consummation of our desires, namely, the restoration of the cuts. The previous Government interfered with the Arbitration Court concerning the fixation of the basic wage on a falling market. They instituted the system of quarterly adjustments, so that as goods fell in price, wages could be adjusted accordingly every quarter. They did that despite protests from the workers. The previous Government also made the workers work 48 hours a week for the same wages as when they worked 44 hours a week. These are some of the doings of the previous Government who expressed so much solicitude for the workers. Every person of intelligence will realise that these things are consistent with the attitude of members opposite. The present Government have lived up to all their promises. It was part of their plan that the cuts should be restored. Every matter has been dealt with as occasion has offered. As a result of the transport legislation, there has been a co-ordination of transport activities, and the Railway Department is functioning in the interests of the people. There has been very little friction in directions where the Opposition prophesied it would happen. It is pleasing to find that the restrained optimism of the Premier is characteristic of the Government. They are moving forward and are implementing those things for which we stand. Whilst we are part of the economic system, and are subject to the dictates of financial institutions, there is no royal road to emancipation. The member for Claremont said these matters will have to be remedied before there can be any real progress of the people. The Government are doing everything possible for the State. I thank members for a patient hearing, and I

trust members opposite will realise that the questions to which I have referred are indeed part and parcel of the policy of the present Government.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [7.55]: The Premier set out to show that his optimism was restrained, but the member for Subiaco cannot be accused of restraint. There was nothing restrained about his remarks.

Mr. Moloney: I gave the facts.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The speech he made was similar to that which he delivered at Subiaco three years ago. He will require to have something fresh for the electors next time. His remarks were a mass of inconsistencies. He blamed the previous Government for piling up large deficits, and compared their record of three years with the record of the present Government. When the depression hit this country it affected everyone. Everything was in turmoil. There was no organisation, and the Government had to feed the people and open camps for the unemployed. The camps placed a roof over the heads of those people, but the expenditure meant adding to the amount of the deficit.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: The same thing happened in every State.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: In New South Wales, at the time when Mr. Lang was Premier, the deficit rose to eight or ten millions in one year. The member for Subiaco belittled the part the people outback played. He seems to delight in broadcasting the statement that our farmers owe the country 34 millions. Where would he be but for the man outback, the man who faced all kinds of privations to build up this great city, the railway services, and all those things we have to-day? I think the hon. member was only trying to put something over the Opposition, who, for the most part, represent country electorates, lest one of them should intend to contest the Subiaco seat. He has endeavoured to belittle the man on the land by referring to this debt.

Mr. Thorn: I do not think he was serious.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: When a Labour representative contests a country electorate, he will say, "What sort of sympathy can you expect from country electorates when you have a city representative saying that sort of thing?" The hon. member attacked the member for Nedlands and the Leader of the Opposition, who, however, can take their own part. Still, I do regret that the

hon. member went out of his way to belittle the people on the land, and merely on the score of their debts. The entire depression is due to the fall in prices. While the people on the land are doing well, everyone in the State is doing well. While seasons are good and prices are good, the benefit is reflected throughout the country. I shall not draw a comparison between the farmers and the men in unions, whose wages and conditions are based on Arbitration Court awards having regard to a standard of living. Unionists enjoy those advantages while the people on the land are starving. The Treasurer, in introducing the Budget, said he spoke with "restrained optimism." I am prepared to admit this is a good Budget, one of the best submitted for many years. The Treasurer has reason for optimism, even if restrained. I for one believe that in a sense we are turning the corner. The Treasurer, however, forgot to tell us how greatly improved is the condition of the finances. About three years ago we were told from the hustings that the previous Government were to blame for the deficits and the financial position, and that a Labour Administration would reduce taxation. Analysing the present Budget we find that taxation has been increased by nearly £350,000. Money has been borrowed by the present Government all through the piece for the purpose of giving employment. On top of increased taxation of nearly £350,000, the Treasurer has a Federal grant of £200,000, making a total additional revenue of £550,000. From that aspect the Treasurer need not be restrained in his optimism henceforth. Now I come to the restoration of wage and salary cuts. In my opinion those cuts should never have been made. Neither should Arbitration Court awards have been interfered with to the extent of that well-known 10 per cent. I even crossed the floor to vote against the then Government on the question of wage and salary cuts and the 10 per cent. reduction. The proposal was carried on the vote of the then Acting Speaker, who sat for Subiaco. I am pleased that the Treasurer has seen fit even at this late hour, in a sort of death-bed repentance, to restore the cuts. However, three years ago we were told that a Labour Administration would reduce taxation, and that the emergency cuts, upon which the previous Government were defeated at the polls, would be abolished.

Those statements were made by the present Premier in my home town of Bridgetown. The hon. gentleman said that the dastardly tax of 4½d. in the pound would be abolished. He spoke similarly throughout the country. I told the previous Government in this Chamber that by introducing emergency taxation in November they were committing political suicide. Still, the present Treasurer and his Ministers found that money had to come in. Emergency taxation was returning about £125,000 per annum, and the yield has increased since then. It is now bringing in about £600,000 annually. And that is emergency taxation which was to have been abolished by a Labour Administration! Our friends opposite will find great difficulty in persuading the people to believe, when election time comes round in April, that the Labour Government have lived up to their obligations. They have not done so one iota as regards that taxation. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) will have to find another battle-cry for the next election, because the old cry will no longer do. As regards railways and improvements to them, I am one of those who believe that railways should still be built. As mentioned by the member for Subiaco, the Commissioner of Railways has had to dispense with many employees under the age of 21 years, owing to the depression. The depression has had a similar effect in all countries. There is no use in constructing roads in our South-West; the haulage is too heavy, and this applies particularly to timber haulage. I am glad to note that the timber industry has improved greatly. This improvement means that more railways must be built in the South-West. Various new lines have been promised for the opening up of that vast tract of country. There are three railways urgently needed. A line from Boyup Brook to Cranbrook is one of them. Thanks to the Government of the day, subsidised motor transport is available in that district. At the other end of my electorate, where there is no timber to contend with, transport might be suitable; a few miles from Boyup Brook and for about 30 miles there is some of the finest jarrah forest in the country, and a railway is an absolute necessity there, a railway capable of dealing with heavy traffic to which roads will not stand up. Another railway

needed is one to serve the port of Albany, which line was approved here about 10 or 11 years ago but has not yet been built. We were pleased when the Government of the day approved of surveying the routes and authorising the construction of the railways I have mentioned. Then there is a railway from Manjimup to a point a little south of Mt. Barker, which would open up a vast tract of country, including some of the finest forest in Western Australia. That would give to Albany from Manjimup southward the natural trade of the port. Two years ago I approached the then Minister for Works, Mr. McCallum and asked him to build a road linking up with the Frankland River. The member for Subiaco has said that the last Government squandered public money. The present Government have had many men engaged, at a cost of thousands of pounds, building roads from Mt. Barker to the Frankland River and clearing the land for future settlement. The land that has been cleared there will all go back to a state of nature. And nearly a thousand men were working there. When another Administration takes the place of the present Government, I will recommend the putting-through of a road in that district, if the railway cannot be built. Then there is the question of continuing the railway from Northcliffe to link up with the Walpole settlement. I remember the Albany Chamber of Commerce inviting members of Parliament to that town to discuss the problem. Our friends of the "West Australian" said it would be madness to build the railway, and illuminated their arguments by quoting the earnings of the line between Frankland River and Albany. But that comparison is not quite just. If the proposed line were built, it would also open up a vast timber tract, which, in conjunction with settlement, would make the line payable. The Walpole settlement requires railway communication, and the same remark applies to the wet areas in which road transport is impracticable. While on the question of railways, let me mention a work which I have advocated many times. I have recommended it to the present Government and also to their predecessors. That is regrading the line in the hilly country between Donnybrook and Pemberton. Had that work been done years ago, it would have paid for itself by now. The

journey from Bridgetown to Perth takes 12 hours, and that from Pemberton to Perth about 16 hours. This fact shows that money spent on the regrading I have suggested would be money well spent—money better spent than that applied to clearing land on the Frankland River and making unnecessary roads there. I commend my suggestion as regards regrading to the Minister for Works. The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) could tell the Committee what a boon the small regrading done on the Collie line has proved, and the grade there is practically the same as that at my end of the country. Years ago I commented on the building of roads parallel with railway lines. I said then that we were making our highways competitors with our railways. That has proved to be so, and a State Transport Board had to be constituted. The board having relinquished the railways, the Railway Department is now in its old position and should provide proper facilities for the people using the lines. Until that is done, the Railway Department will never get the passenger and goods traffic it should have. Goods traffic and passenger traffic should be separated. Passengers should not be bumped from one end of the compartment to the other on mixed trains. Let the goods traffic be carried separately from the passengers. At Manjimup, one of the most progressive areas in Western Australia, and one whose population is increasing by leaps and bounds, there is no railway station; there are no facilities for getting on and off trains. That is a matter which should be attended to immediately. Let a railway station be built at Manjimup without delay. Residents have to walk across three or four sets of rails while a mill train is shunting, and someone is likely to be killed there. On the question of education, it seems to me unfair that members should always have to complain. We have a particularly good Minister for Education, though a great deal of money is being spent in the metropolitan area. This criticism may not suit the member for Subiaco and others who, like him, consider that not enough is being spent on schools in the metropolitan area. For my part I would like to see more attention given to schools in the country districts, more especially to schools in the wet country, where shelter sheds are an absolute necessity. A school at Manjimup has been promised for many years. We were successful in getting a former Minister for Educa-

tion, the late Mr. T. A. L. Davy, to agree to build a school, but unfortunately the parents and citizens' association opposed its being built of wood instead of brick, and so we have not got that school yet, although a start has been made with a classroom. I hope the present Minister for Education will see his way clear to complete the building of that school in the near future and so carry out the promise made by the late Mr. Davy. I am sorry the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) is not present to-night, but in her absence I will be careful not to criticise her very much. The other night she said I was supposed to have a great deal of sympathy with the timber hewers, but that I had not expressed my sympathy by supporting her Bill when it was before the House. I had good reasons for declining to support it, because to my mind it did not meet the situation. It was proposed to put the timber hewers under the Arbitration Court. But everyone who knows anything of the industry is fully aware that it is impossible to fix a rate for timber hewers. It all depends upon the nature of the bush. A man could make a good living in one locality at a price of about £2 8s. per load, whereas in another locality that same price would spell starvation for him. In some of the areas that are now open it is impossible to hew the timber. Recently I gave an illustration here, showing that one of our best cutters had to fall seven marked trees to get two sleepers. As I have said, it is a question for a board of reference. We must have a board of reference selected from men in the industry who know the conditions and who could equitably fix the rate of cutting. To-day the men are hewing sleepers at £3 12s. 6d. a load. The recognised award for hewing sleepers is £2 8s. a load, and some of the sleepers have to be carted for 30 miles, and the cutters have to pay up to 29s. 6d. per load royalty. Someone is going short. Then they have to pay inspection fees, turning fees and loading. The Government did reduce the turning fees and the inspection fees, it is true, but some members will remember the brush I had with the late Mr. Scaddan, a former Minister for Forests, in regard to inspection fees. The previous Government increased those inspection fees by 150 per cent., and the present Government brought them back to what they were before that increase was made. Touching

those inspection fees, the Government are exploiting the industry. When the member for Forrest asked the Premier if he knew the Government were exploiting the industry, the Premier said "No," and he pointed out that the bush was sold by tender or public auction. When the sawmillers require an area to establish a mill, they tender so much for the timber, but invariably not more than one tender goes in, for there seems to be an arrangement made amongst the sawmillers. It is an exception when more than one tender goes in, and so they get the timber at the upset price. What do we find in the hewing industry under the control of the Forests Department? Less than 12 months ago the price was from 7s. 6d. to 15s. per load. That was the price fixed. If a man wanted an area on which to hew sleepers he would go to the member for the district and try to get a little area thrown open in proximity to the town to suit the married men, or the cutters who have been licensed for years past. The old school is going out, and hundreds of younger men are deprived of the right to go on Crown lands. But to give those older men work, we get an area thrown open and it is put up for public auction, with the result that people are out-bidding each other above the upset price. Only the other day the price was 12s. 6d. a load and two men got in and competed against one another for 29s. 6d. a load. They are receiving £3 12s. 6d. per load on trucks. So who is going short? Are not the Government perpetuating this system by putting the area up by public auction? I am drawing a comparison between the miller who tenders for an area and has nobody tendering against him, and the man hewing sleepers whose area is put up at public auction. At Northcliffe the other day the price was 12s. 6d. per load and competition came along again and ran it up to 25s. a load. That was at Northcliffe, the extreme end of the South-West, 20 miles beyond Pemberton, where the freight is very high. That is why we should have a board of reference and a board of appeal. Then the price would be fixed, instead of having this unfair competition and the consequent questions put up by the member for Forrest. We could then work together and the board of reference could fix the price. That is the only way in which to get satisfaction for the industry.

The Premier: This is your annual tirade, you know.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I should not like to say that. If my friend the Premier had been here a little while ago he would have heard me make out a very good case for the industry.

The Premier: Never in your life.

[Mr. Hegney took the Chair.]

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If the Premier takes a pride and delight in exploiting the industry, he is welcome to it. To-day the Government are exploiting the industry and getting every possible penny they can out of it, instead of arranging to have the price fixed.

The Premier: That is an unprincipled way of putting it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There is nothing unprincipled about the truth, wherever it is told.

The Premier: We know you well.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Government are right when they say they have reduced rates to the timber industry. They have reduced rates it is true, and the industry, especially the saw-milling industry, has appreciated it, and as a result many mills have started again.

The Premier: And reduced the royalty, too.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: How can the Premier sit there and say that? I defy contradiction on this subject. How can the Premier say, "The royalty, too," when the member for Forrest also tells the House the royalty on hewn sleepers has increased by over 100 per cent.? Freights should be reduced on a zone basis. It costs no more to produce sleepers at Donnybrook or Kirup than it does at Pemberton. To my idea, unless the Government determine to go on exploiting the industry the freight should be fixed on a zone basis, even if it be found necessary to increase the freight between Donnybrook and Bunbury, the port of shipment. Now I want to say a few words about the group settlements and the Agricultural Bank clients. The board of control has specialised on group settlements, and while they are endeavouring to work out a policy, the settlers themselves are leaving wholesale, without any ray of hope, without any expectation for the future, except to go on the unemployed market. If the controlling board or the Minister would

make provision for £100 living allowance before the collection of interest, that first allowance to come off the land, I think the proposal would be more acceptable. At least it would be a policy, to provide £100 for food and clothing. They have to make provision for fertiliser, and after that we should have the interest paid in time or work done to the equivalent of that interest. That would give a ray of satisfaction to the people on the land. To-day we have complaints in all directions, and members of Parliament are not allowed to take up the claims of the settlers. In the past it was said we interfered with the working of the Bank. But I believe it is the duty of a member of Parliament to assist those people on the land by coming to Perth and interviewing the Minister or the board of control, and I think he should be allowed to do so. I do not propose to go into the whole of the pros and cons, but I strongly recommend to the Minister for Lands that before the first charge is made for interest there should be at least £100 allowed for food and clothing. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) to-night attacked the Leader of the National Party for his plea on behalf of the youths. I am not going into all the ramifications of the subject as I did on the Address-in-reply, but I will say that the unemployment position throughout Western Australia is still very acute. In the metropolitan area and some of the country towns the conditions have improved wonderfully and the Treasurer could very well delete that word "restrained" and say he was optimistic about the future. We have still many unemployed with us; there are hundreds of sustenance workers in my electorate on 30s. per week and I assure the Premier that it is pretty hard for them to exist on that. But what we are forgetting entirely are the boys and girls who are leaving school, those who are between the ages of 15 and 19 and some even 21 years of age. There is not a ray of hope or sunshine in any way for them and no one seems to be bothering about them. What can we do by raising a few paltry thousand pounds by an appeal to the public? That will not help. Moreover, those that can give are not willing to give. We must find some other solution for the problem. Last night I attended a meeting in the Perth Town Hall, the subject of which was the abolition of poverty. I listened with a great deal of interest to what took place there and I agree

to a great extent with everything that was said. There must be an alteration in our existing monetary system and it has to come very soon. We know all about the miracle of the loaves and fishes and feeding the multitude in abundance, and 2,000 years afterwards although we have food in abundance we are not able to feed the starving people. There is something radically wrong. We read recently that Mr. Bruce at Geneva advised all to eat more food, but we have the spectacle of thousands of tons of foods being destroyed every year and millions of people remaining hungry. The Parliaments in Australia are ignoring the whole question. They are waiting for someone to offer a solution. The only thing to do is for the whole of the community to devise ways and means of altering the existing monetary system which seems to be sacrosanct. But we are told "It must not be altered, it must not be interfered with in any shape or form; we must have our boys and girls out of employment because we do not know where the money is to come from." I do not propose to say anything further because there will be other opportunities for speaking on the items. Further, the Loan Estimates will shortly be brought down and I hope to find the Premier in a generous mood when he submits those Estimates. I suggest that he should demand another million of money, not go cap in hand for it. He has been very successful during the last three years. I can remember that he wanted to write a cheque for £100,000 and put the onus on the Federal Government to honour it. I suggest also that he should do something with regard to the railways, the construction of which has been authorised in the South-West. He must be aware that they are badly needed. Then again I remind him that there is such a thing as Empire settlement and Empire trade. I admit that 12 or 14 years ago we made a bad bargain with the Commonwealth Government and the Imperial Government and that we became loaded with the baby. Everything was prosperous for a time while the money was being spent and the work was going on, but the money has not been lost entirely because there is considerable production in that part of the State now. Again we have an opportunity to take part in the Empire settlement scheme and fill our empty spaces. No one will say that the land is not there

and that the climate and rainfall are not everything that is desired. I suppose it is the best growing area in any part of Western Australia. Not only there, but there are opportunities for occupying our vast wheat lands. It is only through the depression that the wheat areas are not carrying a thriving population to-day. What we want to do is to encourage capital and practical farmers to the State. The result of the migration to the South-Western part of the State is the rearing of families, in many instances of seven and eight which are a credit to the State. They are the best asset we have. But unless we help them further, they will have to look for fresh yields and pastures new.

The Premier: What did the Government you supported do for them three years ago?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not interested in that, but I do know what the present Government and their supporters told the group settlers what it was intended to do for them. The present Government's supporters told the group settlers that they would get for them £14 per month.

The Premier: You are romancing.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not say that the Premier said that, but his supporters did assure them that they would receive £14 per month.

The Premier: What did your Government do for them?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They endeavoured to make farmers out of them, and they did very well too. However, I am not concerned about what past Governments did; all that concerns me is the future. Let us look to that and not worry about the past. Something must be done in the future to improve the position and make things brighter generally for the State.

MR. CLOTHIER (Maylands) [8.40]: I do not think it is too late to congratulate the Government on the good work they have done during their term of office, and particularly now on their decision to restore the emergency cuts. The previous Government's policy was one of wait and see, but the present Government believe in progress and are ready to carry out necessary undertakings. One has only to see what has been done in the way of renovating the public buildings to appreciate this. The idea also is to get as many people as possible back to work.

In this way more money has been put into circulation and traders generally have benefited from the expenditure, while a considerable number have been taken off the dole. No fewer than 3,671 workers have benefited in this way. What the Government have done has also been an incentive to private employers. We heard the cry that there were not sufficient tradesmen and that boys were not being employed as apprentices. Employers approached the court for relief in this respect and obtained it. This was made a common rule. In a case in which I appeared before the court—it dealt with the boot trade—I proved beyond doubt that the manufacturers were competing against the Eastern States. One particular factory opened a big store in the Eastern States and they applied for shorter working hours for their apprentices in this State and a reduction of wages. When these firms appear before the court they will not show their balance sheets except to the court. The attitude generally of the employers is the reason why to-day there are not so many tradesmen as there otherwise would be. All of them did not fail to take advantage of the state of emergency in which we found ourselves. There is one thing about which the Government can well be pleased. There has been a slight rise in the price of wool, as there was last year.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: A rise last year?

Mr. CLOTHIER: At any rate, there has been a rise this year and there has also been a rise in the price of wheat. I presume the Country Party members will not deny that.

Mr. Doney: The pity of it is that the rise in the price has come when there is no wheat to sell.

Mr. CLOTHIER: What is required is something along the lines of the Canadian scheme under which any rise in the price of wheat is spread and maintained. In the first speech I delivered in this House I referred to the rise in the price of bread. Now the same thing has occurred. I have always been of the opinion that such matters should be controlled by a price-fixing board. To-day the price of bread has gone up as it did in 1914 and 1915, when the price of wheat was greater but bread was no dearer than it is to-day. If a price-fixing board were in existence, the baker would secure a fair margin of profit, the grower would receive a fair price, and the consumer would get a fair article at a just price. Until some

such system is installed, the position will always be the same. The Government should take into consideration the passing of legislation to deal with third-party insurance. Since my return from the Eastern States, I have been told that that matter has been adopted, but I think the Government should persist with it and secure the passage of the necessary legislation. I have spoken to members of the Legislative Council, and I believe such a Bill would be agreed to. I had the misfortune to be involved in an accident and in dealing with that question I do not speak on account of myself but on behalf of those unfortunates who may suffer because someone may be killed as a result of an accident. By such means a breadwinner might be killed and the widow and children would be without any compensation. It is a pity that this phase has not been dealt with by legislation. In New Zealand an Act has been passed dealing with third-party insurance but it applies only to the person who is hurt, not to those in the motor car. I think the Government should make investigations with a view to introducing legislation. When I was in Victoria I discussed this matter with members of Parliament there and they told me that the Government intended to introduce legislation this session. During the course of the debate in this Chamber, some members have compared the position regarding unemployment in Western Australia with what obtains in other States. For my part, I think we can be proud of the position in which we find ourselves because those who have to receive assistance are paid better than in any other part of Australia, including Queensland, although in that State they do pay a little more under one or two headings. I think that is very satisfactory. We have heard something about the "Eat More Food" campaign. When I think of Mr. Bruce and the present Federal Government and the position of the unfortunate people who have not the money that will enable them to buy additional food, I get impatient. The unemployed recently approached the Federal Government with the request that additional work should be provided for them, and they were told that married men would get one week on and one week off, while single men would have one week on and three weeks off, with possibly a month's continuous work before Christmas and a month's work next winter. Fancy the Fed-

eral Government trying to put that across the people! It is a darned shame. If the Federal Government had left out the reference to a month's work next winter, it would not have looked so bad. At any rate, it serves to indicate that the Federal Government think the unemployed difficulty will last for a long time.

Hon. C. G. Latham: That does not affect this State.

Mr. CLOTHIER: No, but the Federal Government are supposed to be the king pins of Australia and in reality they are not a patch on any Government in this State, whatever party may be in power. Next I want to deal with the position regarding domestic servants. There are many people in the metropolitan area who are employing girls at the paltry wage of 5s. or 7s. a week. An advertisement appeared in the "West Australian" the other day for a girl to undertake all household duties at 7s. 6d. per week. Girls do not receive a fair deal in that respect. Many of them do not get any time off and some are required to wait upon people who attend bridge parties. The other day an advertisement appeared in the Press—it may have been put in by a Country Party member; of course I do not know—to the effect that a girl was required for all household duties and to milk a cow, the wage being 5s. a week.

Mr. Sampson: That was for a lady help.

Mr. Stubbs: And the cow would soon go dry.

Mr. CLOTHIER: I hope the time is not far distant when girls in domestic service will receive better treatment than they are getting at present. During the course of the debate, members who have spoken about the requirements of their own electorates have been accused of window-dressing. That is a new one on me. I have been perfectly satisfied since I was elected to represent Maylands, with the wonderful work the Government have done for my constituents. That is all the window-dressing I require for the next general election.

Mr. Patrik: They must have concentrated on Maylands.

Mr. CLOTHIER: I have not gone blustering around but have appealed quietly for what I wanted, and have received a fair go.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I will have a quiet talk with you and learn how you managed it.

Mr. CLOTHIER: The hon. member will have to pay for it. At the same time, I will

not be satisfied, in view of civil servants having their financial emergency cuts restored, until the unemployed are put back at work on full time. I will be honest with members. I worked for wages myself at one time and when I knew that I was to be put off on a Saturday, my employer never got the same work from me as would have been the case had I been employed full time. The same applies to all sustenance workers. If they knew that they were to finish up in the following week, they would not do such good work as they would if they were on full time. Let members be honest and recognise that that is the position. If the unemployed were put back on full time work, I recognise it would mean the expenditure of more money, and the State would receive additional benefit. The Premier has already made a step forward, and I hope he will go the whole way. Regarding my own electorate, the area served by the Walcott-street tram has grown to such an extent that it requires a duplication of the tramlines and an extension of the service. I think the work was promised by the late Hon. J. Scaddan, and I am sure it would have been attended to had he continued in office.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You could add the Claremont section as well.

Mr. CLOTHIER: I do not know anything about that. I hope the Government will look into the matter and duplicate and extend the Walcott-street line as they have done with the line in Beaufort-street.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [9.56]: I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition upon his change of front regarding the wants of our distressed people. I had the pleasure of listening in the other night when he addressed a meeting that he very kindly attended in conjunction with others. When I listened to him, I was reminded of the fact that, in his policy speech at York two and a half years ago, he advocated the adoption of the Federal basic wage to his many farmer friends who were listening to their young member addressing them. Last night the Leader of the Opposition spoke in a different locality and mixed with a different class. He fraternised with the Douglas Social Credit people. In passing, may I say I do not cast any aspersions on the Douglas Credit movement.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I would not, if I were you.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Nor do I cast aspersions on those who advocate the cause of Major Douglas. In my opinion, the Leader of the Opposition definitely went in for window-dressing at the meeting with an eye on the forthcoming general elections. I was able to visualise the happy family that would assemble if the Labour Government were defeated at the next election.

Hon. P. D. Ferguson: Happy party?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The present Leader of the Opposition, of course, would become Premier and force on the Leader of the National Party (Hon. N. Keenan) and the members for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) and North Perth (Mr. J. MacCallum Smith) the creed of the Douglas Credit people. Those die-hard Nationalist members who represent the banks, money and vested interests, would have forced upon them a monetary policy representing the antithesis of what they advocate.

Mr. North: Are you sure that Douglas would hurt the banks?

Mr. RAPHAEL: The banks have got their representatives in this House and expect them to do as they are told.

Mr. North: It sounds like a conspiracy.

Mr. RAPHAEL: It would not be a very deep conspiracy if the hon. member were in it. I desire to be a little parochial and touch upon several matters affecting my electorate. The member for Maylands (Mr. Clothier) said he did not think it would be regarded as window-dressing on the present occasion. I am not indulging in window-dressing, and I hope there will be no need for me to do it. Whatever happens, I am prepared to abide by the decision of the electors. I am sorry that the Deputy-Leader of the Labour Party (Mr. McCallum) resigned on account of ill-health. For the work in which he was engaged, Mr. McCallum was practically irreplaceable. Though ill-health was one reason for his retirement, it was necessary to find a suitable man for the position of Chairman of the Agricultural Bank Commission. We were fortunate in getting the member for East Perth (Hon. J. J. Kenneally) to fill the office of Minister for Works, but before long he was forced to relinquish his duties temporarily, also through ill-health. Since his illness, unemployment has increased considerably, at any rate in my electorate.

Member: You had better be careful.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do not care which party happens to be in power; I am here to espouse the cause of my electors, and intend to do it. As the number of unemployed is increasing and it seems impossible to provide work for all of them at present, the Government should again appoint a full-time Minister for Employment. Although the member for East Perth made many enemies, both in and out of Parliament, he took his work seriously and gradually the unemployed were absorbed, thousands of them in private industry and 9,000 on public works. That gave the workers an opportunity to earn money instead of accepting Government doles, and to win back their manhood. There are several jobs to which the Acting Minister might give immediate attention. The most urgent is the work of providing sewerage on the south side of the river. I believe that the job is to be held up for a time, perhaps for many months. Mr. McCallum had to take direct action with the engineer on the job, Mr. Parr, and his services were dispensed with. There are about 138 unemployed at the Victoria Park bureau, which number is about 100 too many. The building trade is enjoying activity almost as great as that experienced before the depression. In Victoria Park quite a number of shops and houses are being erected. If the Government's policy of work for the unemployed is allowed to lapse even for only a short period, private industry will be stifled and probably the condition of unemployment that prevailed a few years ago will be recreated. Previous to the last meeting of the Loan Council the Government had the money with which to finance the sewerage work in Victoria Park and South Perth. I believe that the cash was actually available in the Treasury, but that the work was held up so that it could be used as an excuse to get extra money from the Loan Council. If that is so, the people on the south side of the river are entitled to the best that can be done for them in the matter of sewerage those areas. The filthy system still in vogue is a hundred years out of date, and it is a disgrace for the Government to allow it to continue longer than necessary. I hope that the Acting Minister will stir up the civil servants who were so eulogised by the member for Canning (Mr. Cross) to-

night, and see that they carry out their work as they are paid to do.

Mr. Cross: They do, too.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have nothing to say against civil servants generally. I am pleased that the Government propose to restore their salary cuts, because I do not believe in class taxation. There are many people who do not receive from civil servants the courtesy that is extended to the member for Canning. Unemployed, when they attend a department, are entitled to the same courtesy as the hon. member receives, but many of them, defenceless women amongst the number, do not get the courtesy to which they are entitled. I do not wish it to be concluded that this applies generally, but many civil servants do not extend courtesy to those people.

Mr. Cross: Why do not you report them to the Minister? Why make sweeping statements? Why not report specific cases?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have reported it, and the hon. member knows it. To report it is a waste of time. I do not come here with balderdash and lies as the hon. member does.

Mr. Cross: Mr. Chairman, I ask that the hon. member withdraw that statement.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member takes exception to the statement, and the member for Victoria Park will withdraw.

Mr. RAPHAEL: What portion of the statement?

The CHAIRMAN: The reference to balderdash and lies.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I withdraw the remark, but I am allowed to think it.

Mr. Thorn: It should be an unqualified withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may proceed.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I congratulate the Government, the Perth City Council and the South Perth Road Board on the reclamation work carried out on the south side of the river. I hope the Minister will shake up his forces with regard to filling up on the other side. The City Council are subsidising the Government to a tune of £1,000 a year for the general scheme.

The Premier: What is the contribution from the Government?

Mr. RAPHAEL: Some £11,000 or £12,000.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It was £28,000 last year.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Government are putting in about £12,000.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You'd better keep quiet about it; you are getting too much already.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I hope the Government will go ahead with the scheme for filling up on the other side. They should work in with the road boards and other local authorities that are employing labour on work of this nature. Seeing that the Perth City Council are spending some thousands of pounds in beautifying the place and in giving employment in the locality, I hope the Minister will work in with them. That would be the means of relieving the Government of the necessity for supporting some of the sustenance men. Reference has been made to the necessity for legislation to control starting price betting shops. That is a Government job. Our racecourses are touting for business, and the Railway Department are working in with them by providing cheap facilities of transport for men and women. When the people get to the course those in charge are prepared to admit women free. On Monday morning no doubt many women are unable to pay the butchers, the bakers or the milkmen's bills. The argument against the registration of starting price betting shops is that the working man will lose his wages, and the wife and children will go hungry.

Mr. Warner: Does he never have a win?

Mr. RAPHAEL: Sometimes. The situation has reached alarming proportions. In our streets on Saturday afternoons it is impossible for people to get along except in the road. The evil is one that will never be wiped out so long as there are Australians in the country.

Mr. Marshall: It is world-wide.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have looked into the registration of betting shops in South Australia. Despite the existence of adverse reports upon these places, I think it would be better if we had control over them in this State also.

Mr. Marshall: The legislation there is a credit to the South Australian Government. The Premier: Did you go to Victoria?

Mr. RAPHAEL: Yes.

The Premier: In Melbourne there is not a single betting shop in the street.

Mr. Marshall: There was not one in Adelaide prior to the legislation.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Why, people were betting in public houses, in alley-ways and everywhere.

The Premier: You cannot make a bet in a shop, hotel or anywhere in Melbourne city.

Mr. Marshall: Nonsense.

The Premier: There is no nonsense about it.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I know the Premier is opposed to betting, but I must be allowed to hold views of my own as well.

The Premier: That type of betting does not exist in Melbourne.

Mr. RAPHAEL: It does in Sydney. I have made bets there. The police raid a shop and they leave it alone for a while, and then raid another. On Saturday afternoons the streets are filled with men and women who are making their bets. I remember when there was one betting shop in Victoria Park, and to-day there are about ten. If betting is to take place in these establishments they should be registered, and facilities provided to keep people off the streets. The police should have the right to see that pedestrians are allowed to walk along the footpath without having to take to the roads. It is particularly dangerous for women who are pushing perambulators.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Perth City Council are in charge of the footpaths. What are they doing to stop this?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I would advise the hon. member to look into the by-laws. The police are permitted to take action. Betting is not under the control of the City Council. Unless means are taken to govern this business by law, the evil will go on for the next hundred years.

The Premier: It is a perfect nuisance, but the question is how to rectify it.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the shops are registered the authorities could see that they were carried on under proper conditions.

The Premier: There are other means besides that.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I wish to refer to the continual rise in the price of petrol. Some time ago a new company started in New South Wales to import petrol, in opposition to the big companies. These new people had ambitions about coming to Western Australia to market their petrol, possibly at a cheaper rate than the other companies

were doing. When petrol is brought into the State reduction after reduction is made until the small people are forced out of the business. That is what was tried with regard to the Purr Pull Company in New South Wales. Members may recollect that an effort was made to blow up the company's plant by means of a bomb. I inspected the locality and went through the place, and saw what occurred. The competing companies followed this up by putting kerosene and deleterious matter into the bowsters that had been erected by the new company. Mr. Smith, well known in Australian motor circles, was appointed as inspector to supervise the disposal of the company's petrol. Several attempts were made upon Mr. Smith's life while he was engaged in seeing that a fair deal was meted out to the company. The new people secured from the State Government a lease of land at Fremantle with the right to construct tanks there for the holding of a bulk petrol supply. Time went on, and after about six or nine months the company were informed by the State Government that they were sorry but that the lease of that particular block of land would be cancelled.

The Premier: You are misinformed. The Federal Government did that.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the Premier will let me make my case first—

The Premier: I know the facts.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I know them too.

The Premier: Perhaps not.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The lease was secured from the State Government, and then the State Government informed the company that owing to the fact of the Federal Government having stated they required the land for defence purposes the lease had to be cancelled.

The Premier: Well, the action was taken on behalf of the Federal Government.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the Federal Government did that, why was not action taken at least to protect petrol consumers by allowing competition to come in?

The Premier: Surely you know we have no power to override the Federal Government. In this case the Federal Government overrode the State Government. You should make sure of your facts. We granted the lease, and the Federal Government notified us that it could not be granted.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Yes, under the Defence Act.

The Premier: The member for Victoria Park should make sure of his facts.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am sure of my facts; and I know what is taking place at the present time, too.

The Premier: You do not know.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do.

The Premier: You do not. The Federal Government overrode the State Government. Those are the facts of the case; I know them perfectly well.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Federal Act gives the Federal Government authority to override leases all along that foreshore.

Mr. RAPHAEL: When the debate ceases I shall be able to carry on. As regards unemployment, there is a matter I have failed to touch on. Numbers of my electors have complained that they do not get the period of work to which they are entitled, and that certain men are given two or three periods of work, though not at the dictate of the Minister—I do not bring this matter forward by way of castigating the Government. However, the Minister should take the necessary action. I am prepared to supply, if necessary, names and addresses of men who have had two and three periods of work whereas men residing in the Victoria Park electorate, who have supplied medical certificates that extra nourishment is needed by their wives and kiddies, have not worked even their full period but have been stood down by the gangers in favour of other men from other electorates.

The Minister for Water Supplies: Why did you not take the Minister into your confidence?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have only just got the facts of the case. I am now bringing them under your notice.

The Minister for Water Supplies: I am not the Minister concerned.

Mr. RAPHAEL: This applies to the Minister for Works.

The Premier: No. It does not apply to him at all. It applies to the Minister for Employment.

Mr. RAPHAEL: It has been explained to me that for years the position adopted by the sustenance authorities has been as follows: Immediately a man is picked up for a job, he ceases to be a charge on sustenance and becomes an employee of the Government Department employing him.

The Premier: Yes. When did you hear of those complaints?

Mr. RAPHAEL: A short period back.

The Premier: Why did you not go to the Minister concerned?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have a perfect right—

The Premier: You have a perfect right to get publicity, but the right thing to do is to speak to the Minister.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I do not want publicity. However, I do say that I have a perfect right to bring the matter before the Chamber; and while I have the right to do it, I shall do it.

The Premier: Tittle-tattle!

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the Premier—

The Premier: I do not mind, but a reasonable man would go to the Minister and submit his case; he would not tittle-tattle here.

Mr. RAPHAEL: In conclusion I wish to say that the Government have made big strides towards putting the State on a sound financial basis, as compared with two or three years ago.

Mr. Thorn: They do not appear to have done so in Victoria Park.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Nor have they done too well in Toodyay, apparently. The people of Toodyay tell me that the hon. member interjecting is not too wide awake. The roads in his electorate are not too passable.

Mr. Thorn: You have been misinformed.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am not misinformed. I have been over those roads. Mostly they are not roads but holes. The man who picks his way to Toodyay needs to be a sound driver. In conclusion may I congratulate the Government on the financial position of the State. I believe that public confidence is entirely with Ministers, in this State anyhow. They will be returned to power at the next election. We shall not have the spectacle of a cocky Government ruling Western Australia. I hope the time when that will be the case will never arrive. The demoralisation which overcame the National Party at the last election will probably be repeated next year. If they have a policy, I have not heard of it yet. However, they have four or five months to announce or to formulate a policy. Up to the present time, to judge of the castigation of the Government on the Address-in-reply, a policy has not been promulgated.

Mr. Thorn: Now you are spoiling your speech.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I hope my remarks of this evening will sink into the mind of the Minister who has taken on a certain job. I hope also that the Minister for Education will give a little attention to the East Victoria Park school, where much needs to be done.

The Premier: There is need for lots of education in Victoria Park.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Yes, especially when the Premier arrives there. I hope further facilities will be provided in the way of school accommodation at East Victoria Park. At present there is a class of 35 kiddies held in a cloakroom, where the air is humid and foul. The ground is not adequately drained; gravelling is urgently needed there. I was out of the State for about 3½ months, and in that period I fully expected the departmental officers would have attended to the job of gravelling. In conclusion I hope that at any rate matters affecting my own electorate on which I have touched will receive attention from the Government. It is a pretty poor old thing if one has to be castigated by one's Leader when one finds it necessary to bring up matters for consideration. However, I have the hide to take a castigation and, if necessary, look for more. I will not be sat down in the middle of my remarks if they are needed. I prefer to make them and take what is coming. In conclusion I congratulate the Government on what they have done up to the present time, and I trust that matters needing attention will receive it.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.31 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 2nd October, 1935.

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

QUESTION—STATE TRANSPORT BOARD.

Truck Licenses.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many of the 589 motor trucks referred to in his speech on the 26th September on the State Transport Co-ordination Act Amendment Bill are licensed in the metropolitan area? 2, How many motor trucks outside the metropolitan area have been granted a license to convey commercial goods, and on what routes do they trade? 3, How many of the motor truck licenses outside the metropolitan area are engaged in work for the Main Roads Board on road construction?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, None—see Section 33 of the Transport Act. 2, (a) 589. For interpretation of "Goods" see Section 3; (b) Involves the preparation of a return. 3, 128.

QUESTION—MINING, WATER PRICES.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What is the price charged for water per 1,000 gallons used for mining purposes at—(a) Marvel Loch; (b) Burbidge; (c) Palmer's Find; (d) Bullfinch; (e) Southern Cross? 2, (a) Have the prices charged in these districts been recently raised; (b) if so, to what extent; (c) what is the reason for the increase? 3, What is the price charged for water per 1,000 gallons used for mining purposes at—(a) Kalgoorlie; (b) Coolgardie? 4, (a) Have the prices charged in these two localities been recently raised; (b) if so, to what extent; (c) what is the reason for the increase? 5, What are the prevailing standpipe charges at—(a) Palmer's Find; (b) Marvel Loch; (c) Burbidge; (d) Bullfinch? 6, Is it a