

politician in the world, let alone in Australia, is afraid to come to this State. There is one man in this Chamber for whom I have the greatest respect—I refer to Mr. Holmes—but I saw a letter from him that was published in the Press in which he suggested to the people of Western Australia that they might forget what Sir George Pearce, Bertie Johnston and others had done, and thereby vote for the Labour candidate; whereas he wanted them to vote anti-Labour.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I never said that.

Hon. B. C. WILLIAMS: Yes, you did! I would certainly not misconstrue what you said. When Mr. Holmes claims that this Chamber is non-party, it is not so. If there is a Chamber that is a better party House than this, I do not know of it. In the ranks of the Labour Party, we are pledged to stick together, unless we twist, in which event we are entitled to do as we like. I could tick off those who have twisted on Labour, but I do not want to make this a personal matter. They stick to their new political party, without which they would not be members of this Chamber. Why be hypocrites? If the Labour Government will do what I want them to, they will suit me down to the ground. I want them to dissociate themselves from the Premiers' Plan right away. If they do not do so, they will not be returned at the next election.

On motion by Hon. J. George, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 21st August, 1931.

					PAGE
Question: Bird trapping	...	...	...	...	189
Address-in-Reply, eighth day	...	...	...	...	189

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

QUESTION—BIRD TRAPPING.

Traffic with Eastern States.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Premier: 1, Is the Fisheries Department aware that Eastern States bird trappers are alleged to be trapping in the Kimberley district, and using motor trucks to transport birds through the Northern Territory to the South Australian market, to the detriment of West Australian dealers? 2, Is it a fact that 1,200 birds were shipped from the Zoological Gardens to a dealer named Turner, in Sydney, this year?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, No.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 16th August.

MISS HOLMAN (Forrest) [4.33]: I was interested in reading in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech a very promising paragraph about the timber industry. It means a great deal to the State for the timber industry to be in a prosperous condition, and it is a fact that during the past 12 months or so many of the mills in this State have been re-opened. My own electorate, Forrest, has shared in the revival of the industry, and many of Millar's mills have now been re-opened. There are several that have not yet re-opened, Jarrahdale and Marrinup being two of them. It means a great deal to the State to have the men employed in the timber industry, and it is of great credit to the Government that sustenance and relief work have been reduced by so much, and that by their encouragement the timber industry has come to life again, so to speak, and taken into employment so many of those men. I expect there are over 1,000

men employed in the mills at the present time. The State Sawmills are working at full-man rate. They deserve great credit for the work they did during the depression, for they were the only mills that remained working at least part-time during the whole of the period. I notice in the Speech a reference to the long period of uncontrolled exploitation, which has created a position that, according to the Speech, can only be met by reasonably restricting the output from existing forests until the second crop is nearing maturity. In times gone by there was uncontrolled exploitation of forests, and many companies had great tracts of timber land, out of which they took the pick of the timber, without replacing a single tree. It was left to the Government to come along and start reforestation. As I mentioned just now, the State Sawmills, which were not concerned in that period of uncontrolled exploitation, have worked for the benefit of the State all through; they were the only employers that kept their mills going throughout the terrible depression that was suffered by this State, in common with other countries. The Government have reduced some of the freight on timber. In 1933 they introduced a reduced scale of freight on timber, and that has now been extended till next year. The railway charges for export overseas have been rebated 16½ per cent., and on timber for the Eastern States 12½ per cent. There is no reduction for the traffic within the State itself, and possibly it would be a good thing for the Government to take into consideration that the carriage of timber over the railway system returns are second largest amount of all the paying traffic in the State. Thus, in 1932-33 no less than 175,026 tons of local timber was carried over the State lines, and in 1933-34 the quantity carried was 265,863 tons. Those two tonnages meant that, in 1932-33, £145,000 was paid in freight to the railways, and in 1933-34 the amount rose to £207,400. During the last financial year the money received by the State railway system from the carriage of timber amounted to 10.07 per cent. of the total receipts of the railways. Then firewood was responsible for .95 per cent. of the receipts of the system. There was only one other freight which paid more to the railways, and that amount was received for the carriage of wheat. So I feel that the Government could afford to do a great deal to

help the timber industry, since it is of such a great benefit to the State. One part of the timber industry I should like to particularise is that of the sleeper-cutters, of whom there are about 600. The sleeper-cutters, as members have been told before, are exploited to a great extent by contractors and sub-contractors. Some contractors own blocks, while others have no bush at all, but just put in a price on spec, as it were. Sleeper-cutters are exploited, and are not covered by the Industrial Arbitration Act nor by the Masters and Servants Act. This was not discovered until 1931. Prior to that time we always held the idea that sleeper-cutters were workers, just as other members of the industry. However in 1931 a sleeper-cutter named Milentis sued a sub-contractor named Tucak, but lost the case and also the wages he had earned by cutting sleepers. The award certainly made provision for a man using a broad axe or adze, and it was thought that this covered sleeper-cutters. However, that was not so. The Timberworkers' Union applied to the court for an addition to that clause, specifying what it meant. This was the addition they asked for—

Means a worker using a broad-axe or adze in connection with the hewing of timber, and includes a sleeper-cutter or beam-cutter.

But the Industrial Arbitration Court found that this was outside its jurisdiction, and so the application was refused. The sleeper-cutters have been suffering a very lean time during the depression, and indeed the rate the ordinary sleeper-cutter gets is now only £2 per load. The injustice of this will be seen when I quote the 1917 rates, which were £1 16s. and 1 14s., with an allowance for tools. There is now no allowance for tools. In 1919 those rates had to be calculated on 13s. a day, day wages, and the prices for loads of sleepers were 48s. 9d. and 46s. To-day the price is £2 per load, and unscrupulous contractors or sub-contractors still persuade the men to sign agreements, in order to avoid having to pay insurance. One case recently came to my notice in which a man got £2 4s. for cutting wandoo sleepers, and there was no insurance. The men have to pay their own insurance, or else not be insured, and naturally they were not insured, because they could not live on the amount earned. On that particular job the men averaged over

a given time 8s. wages per day. We must realise that wandoo is heavier to cut than is jarrah and the price is very low. The royalty is a very heavy charge on timber. There has been a rebate in the forestry royalty, a 20 per cent. rebate, since April, 1931. From the 1st July last a 5s. rebate per load was given on sawn timber exported beyond Australia. Then there are rebates of 25 per cent. on inspection fees on timber from Crown lands, and 50 per cent. on hewn sleepers for export from private property. But the inspection is still about 1s. 7d. per load. A comparison between the royalties paid by a hewer and by a sawmiller owner shows that the owner pays a little more in royalty; but naturally he gets better timber, and the sleeper-cutter is put to work in inferior bush, or in bush that has been worked over many times. The sleeper-cutting industry is of great importance, and I should like to refer to a paragraph in a newspaper the other day in which the Minister for Commerce, Mr. Stewart, is reported to have said—

From January 1 to June 30, 1934, 406,326 railway sleepers valued at £110,082, were exported from Australia, as compared with 252,714 sleepers with a value of £62,517 for the corresponding period last year. Western Australia was the principal exporter with 295,608 sleepers, followed by New South Wales with 109,217 and Victoria with 1,501.

So it will be realised that the sleeper-cutting industry in Western Australia is a very big part of the timber industry. Sleeper-cutters are practically the only workers not protected by awards. These men are unquestionably workers. They neither own the land nor conduct the business. They accept work at piecework rates, and are entitled to a minimum wage, just as other workers are. They must be exact, and cut to specification. If the labour is not up to specification, all the man's work is lost. The royalty has to be paid just the same, and the carting and inspection fees have to be paid. He is at a loss, not only for his labour but also for what he pays for royalty, carting and inspection on condemned sleepers. Under present conditions, men are dumped on to blocks in groups, whether they are Government blocks or privately owned, and all further responsibility in them is disclaimed. I have already produced evidence to the House showing that in some instances the sleeper cutters work

only for their food. They get their stores from the storekeeper, and see practically no money. Whether the bush is good or bad, it is all the same for the sleeper cutters. The contractors pay by the load, and what the sleeper cutter earns is no business of the contractors. The nature of the bush where the sleepers are being cut in the South-West precludes the hewers from earning an adequate wage. Many are unable to earn the basic wage although they work for long hours arduously, under dangerous conditions, but with great skill. The sleeper cutters work from daylight to dark in order to earn what they receive. The Government charges, the royalty, freight, inspection fees, etc., absorb fully 40 per cent. of the f.o.b cost of the sleepers. A statement was made recently with regard to the earnings of sleeper cutters at Holyoake. The average earnings per week were drawn out to show exactly what their position was. Some of the averages were £2 8s. 1d. per week, £3 13s. 1d., £3 6s. 8d., £3 11s. 6d., £3 14s. 4d., £2 14s. 9d., £4 9s. 2d., and £3 10s. 3d., working out at a general average of £3 9s. 9d. The sleeper cutters were paying 3s. a week for travelling to work, and their tools cost them 2s. 6d. a week. This is evidence signed by the accountant. No one will deny that the sleeper cutter's work is skilled, and is very arduous. It is a scandal and a crying shame that this particular group of men were only able to earn £3 9s. 9d. on the average. It is hoped that it will be possible this session to have the sleeper cutters provided for. About two years ago I brought down a Bill to extend the operations of the Masters and Servants Act and the Industrial Arbitration Act, to embrace persons engaged in manual work under contract in the timber industry. The Bill was passed by this House, but not by another place. The sleeper cutters are not covered by industrial awards. I hope the Government will sympathetically treat the industry, including the sleeper cutters and other workers engaged in it, so that the employees may no longer be compelled to work at these low rates. With reasonable consideration, the industry can employ many more hundreds of men, and can be of more substantial benefit in improving the position of the unemployed, as it has done in the last six months. All we ask is that the sleeper cutters be placed on the same footing as other workers, and protected from exploitation.

The object of the Bill was to remove the anomaly in the Industrial Arbitration Act, whereby hewers are excluded. In 1923 an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act embraced sleeper cutters, but it was not then imagined that they would not come under the Industrial Arbitration Act. It is impossible for hundreds of men engaged in the industry to make a living because of their low earnings, and because of the charges made by the Government and other people. They cannot earn a decent wage in the production of sleepers. The Government spend hundreds of thousands of pounds annually on relief work, which may or may not be reproductive. This is an important primary export industry, and it is absolutely necessary that some consideration should be given to it. The Timber Industry Regulation Act was passed some years ago, but owing to the depression the number of inspectors appointed under it was reduced. Now that the industry is reviving and employing so many more hundreds of men, inspectors should be appointed. One Government inspector is working in the industry, but the Act also provides for the appointment of two workmen's inspectors. These men found their offices dispensed with, and have not since been reinstated. It is hoped the Government will make these appointments in the near future. I am sincerely grateful to those who have done so much work for the industry, and helped to put it back into prosperity. I trust the industry will become even more prosperous as time goes on. The timber workers suffer greatly because of the condition of the roads in their centres.

Mr. Hawke: Hear, hear!

Miss HOLMAN: The hon. member has had experience of them. Members of the Government also have driven over them. We have not had much assistance in that direction yet. The roads around the mills are, generally speaking, remains of old whim tracks or old railway formations. Unfortunately the Forrest electorate has no road board headquarters in the mill centres, the only one being at Donnybrook. Motorists pay their rates, and other people pay theirs, to outside road boards. We are very badly treated with regard to our roads, particularly the road from Nanga Brook to Waroona and from Nanga Brook to Dwellingup. It is about 14 miles from Waroona to Nanga Brook, and nine

from Dwellingup to Nanga Brook. These are about the worst roads in the timber area.

Mr. Hawke: In the world!

Miss HOLMAN: The road from Nanga Brook to Dwellingup, leading to the hospital, is the worst within my knowledge.

Mr. Ferguson: You need a hospital at the end of it.

Miss HOLMAN: People would scarcely live long enough to reach the hospital.

Mr. Latham: I got through there very well some time ago.

The Premier: When was that?

Miss HOLMAN: I took the Premier over this road, and he scarcely survived the experience, but we did not get any money for it. The road from Waroona to Nanga Brook, 14 miles, has had some money spent upon it. For a distance of a mile and a half out from Waroona, a sum of about £1,000 was spent some years ago, and a few more pounds have been spent in another portion. I believe there is a possibility of a further grant being made for this road, but for the road between Nanga Brook and Dwellingup nothing has been done within my knowledge except by the local people. It is a very bad road. A man drove to see his wife at the Dwellingup Hospital by motor car, but knocked the sump out before he got there, and had to walk back to Nanga Brook. These people deserve better treatment than they have received. Unless they are given roads, they are practically isolated in this locality. Nanga Brook, on account of the bad roads on the other side, is particularly badly off in cases of sickness. Recently a grant of about four acres of land was made to the Holyoake school. We are hoping to get assistance to have the land cleared, as it is on the side of a hill and requires to be cleared so that it may be used as a playground. Our schools generally are in a fairly good way. At Brunswick there is a shortage of accommodation. During the winter the children have had to walk a mile extra over the railway crossing to the church hall because there is insufficient accommodation at the school. Further accommodation has been promised, and I hope it will soon be given. The irrigation scheme around Brunswick has been completed, and should be of great benefit to the community. I notice from the Speech that the dairying and fruit industries have a brighter outlook. Unfortunately the people concerned

are having a bad time. I thank the Minister for Child Welfare for the improvements he has effected in that particular department. A woman probation officer has now been appointed, the first of her kind for many years. The women of the State have been asking for this for a dozen years. We feel it will be a great advantage to the department to have this officer. The Minister has also placed women attendants in the department, and has effected several other important improvements. I was sorry to hear the Premier's reply to the question he was asked the other day about the psychological clinic. It is a matter of expense, but the cost of a State psychological clinic in 1930 was only £1,268, whereas the cost of administering the Lunacy Department in the same year was £112,000, and for the following year £91,000, exclusive of buildings and upkeep of buildings. It is very important to have a psychological clinic. The work of the Government Psychologist in the Eastern States is giving incalculable results, and is having a great effect upon education and welfare work generally. It is a wrong thing to house mental deficients with those who are entirely insane, as is being done at Claremont. It is very costly to keep them at Claremont, namely, about £80 per head, and it harms the defectives to put them with the insane. Defectives should be properly housed and properly trained. The Government should establish a psychological department to deal with these people. The Minister for Health when previously in office established such a department and I was sorry to see it abolished. It is to be regretted that it has not yet been re-established. In Queensland the Government go further. They have what are called "opportunity schools," and these schools are for mental deficients. The teachers in our own schools have neither opportunity nor time to teach any child that is below the average standard mentally. Such children are just left aside. The teachers have large classes, and if a child cannot keep up with the class it just wastes its time and nothing can be done for it. I would like to see the Queensland system established in Western Australia. In the Queensland opportunity schools defective children are cared for thoroughly. The report for 1932 notes that in seven grade A schools 335 pupils receive special instruction, and that

the number in the grade B schools is 15. Grade A schools are established for the purpose of helping children who are backward from any cause—lack of opportunity, poor health, defective hearing or vision, and to a small extent feeble-mindedness. One cannot but feel that these opportunity schools are doing a great work for mentally deficient children. They teach such children how to play games and how to do useful work. Exhibitions are held showing the work that is done by the children in those schools. The very name "opportunity schools" tells us what kind of schools they are and how useful they must be. A home for mentally deficient girls has been talked of, and indeed promised, in Western Australia for many years; and I would like to see the Government re-establish the psychological clinic and let that work go further. It must be a severe drawback in the work of the Children's Court that there is no State psychologist. The State psychologist, when we had one, did a great deal of work in many directions; and Western Australia is lagging behind in not having such an officer to do the necessary work. Another matter I wish to mention is of great importance from the point of view of the general public of Western Australia. We have in this State a great number of swimmers, but notwithstanding that fact there is no swimming pool in our capital city. In fact, Perth is the only capital city in Australia that has not an indoor swimming pool for the use of the public. Swimming is a great sport, and it has been recognised all over the world as being a most healthy sport, excellent for the building up of the physique of those who engage in it and for keeping them fit and well. Unfortunately, we have not given sufficient encouragement to swimmers in this State. True, we have a fine river and beautiful beaches; but it is not always opportune to visit those beaches and that river.

The Minister for Lands: What about the unfortunate people of the Murchison and the back country generally, who never see a swimming pool?

Miss HOLMAN: The Queensland schools, in the country as well as in the towns, have swimming pools. If the Government or any other authority would make a start in the matter, it would be a help. I do not consider that sufficient publicity

has been given here to the sport of swimming. There are 22 swimming clubs, with a total of over 1,000 members; and more than five competitive clubs use the Swan River as their headquarters. It is compulsory, I may say, for Western Australians to take part in Interstate competitions. Every four years what are called the Australian Games are held. These games have never been held in Western Australia, simply because of the lack of adequate swimming facilities. It will readily be understood that it would be an excellent advertisement for the State to have swimmers going away from here, and swimmers coming here to compete. The money spent in such a visit to Western Australia would be of great advantage all round, but we cannot invite swimmers to this State, because, as I have said, we have not the necessary swimming facilities. Anyone who knows anything about swimming will realise the disadvantage arising from the wind and the tides in our river. We cannot put up the same times here as are put up in the East, because our waters are disturbed by wind, floods, mud, algae, and everything else that comes down the river. In fact, some parents will not allow their children to bathe in the river, because, it is said, they get sore throats from such bathing. As regards a swimming pool in Perth, I would like to see the Government or the Perth City Council or the State Gardens Board, or some other authority, build a proper pool. Such a pool is a necessary public utility.

Mr. Latham: The Government will do it.

Miss HOLMAN: I do not know that the Government will do it. We must ask for this to be done, and possibly we shall get it from some authority or other. If the Government do not build a pool, they will nevertheless, I feel sure, give every possible assistance in getting some other authority to do it. In 1936 the National Australian Swimming Championships are to be held here, and I would like to see proper facilities created for that occasion. In that same year the Australian Games will be held, and all of them may not take place in Adelaide. If we have proper indoor swimming facilities in Perth, there is the possibility of some of the games being held here. That I am not asking for anything unreasonable is proved by what the New South Wales Government have done. I

have a letter from Mr. Dunningham, Minister for Labour and Industry in New South Wales, from which I quote the following—

During the past 12 months the Unemployment Relief Council has made money available mainly with the object of creating employment in the building trade, but from my own personal viewpoint the facilities provided by affording adequate bathing accommodation have a more far-reaching and more beneficial effect on the community as a whole. Your association with swimming will possibly give you the same viewpoint as I have myself expressed. I personally think that money expended in providing recreation facilities for the community, young and old, has an effect on the people that cannot be measured in terms of £ s. d. The money is made available by way of loan in each instance to the councils, repayable over a long period at a rate of three per cent. per annum. In practically every instance attendances at the baths have been greatly in excess of the estimates.

Mr. Dunningham makes mention of numerous councils to which advances have been made for the construction of baths. The Broken Hill Municipality has had an advance of £7,250. Other shires and municipalities to which loans have been granted are Clyde, Grenfell, Walgett, Goulburn, MacLean, Young, Enfield, and so forth.

Mr. Raphael: Are there any algae in the rivers there?

Miss HOLMAN: I do not know. However, I do know that this is a crying necessity for the City of Perth. In New South Wales the question has even been studied by the Education Department. The investigation was made by a committee organised by the Education Department and including representatives of the Department of Public Health, the Government Architects' Department, the Local Government Department, the Royal Life Saving Society, and the New South Wales Amateur Swimming Association. A pamphlet has been issued which is designated "Bulletin No. 2. Fresh Water Swimming Baths." This deals with swimming activities and with the construction of baths and the purification of the water in the baths. I mention these things to bring to the notice of the public that we are far behind other Australian States in affording swimming facilities to the public. I think it will readily be admitted that a delegation of swimmers going from this State will probably give it a much more useful advertisement than would a delegation of members of Parliament. I know that when the Western Australian swimmers reached Queensland recently,

there was not much talk of this State in the Queensland newspapers until Mr. Sheedy began to speak of what the Western Australian swimmers were going to do—and, I may add, what eventually they did. However, I wish to bring under the notice of hon. members that Western Australia is sadly lacking in regard to swimming facilities. Other countries have shown much activity in this direction. In connection with every swimming carnival and the Olympic Games we read of strong teams of Japanese, for instance, competing. I feel that the Government will confer a great benefit on the community if they assist in the establishment of indoor swimming baths. I wish to conclude by congratulating the Government on the work done towards reduction of unemployment during their term of office. On this subject I can speak from my heart, because at the time of the last general election there were hundreds of sustenance workers in the Forrest electorate, and now there are comparatively few. Almost all of the mills are working again, and the sleeper cutters also are at work. This means that the Government are receiving considerable revenue from royalty, lease rents, and railway and wharfage charges. Demands for our timber are distinctly more active. I again congratulate the Government on their good work, and I trust that that work will continue to go forward.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [5.14]: I join the previous speaker in congratulating the Government, if not unreservedly on what has been done by them for the unemployed, yet on their efforts to assist unemployed workers back into private industry. The Premier in the course of his speech said that over 3,000 men had gone back into private industry mainly through the efforts of the Government. As our unsophisticated friend from Toodyay would suggest—

Mr. Thorn: I was just going to ask which Government you were talking about.

Mr. RAPHAEL: When the previous Government were in power, the matter that should be paramount with any Government, namely unemployment, was treated as a side line in conjunction with many other side lines. The Minister in charge of unemployment also administered police, forests and other departments. The Labour Party, as promised during the general election campaign, have appointed a full-time Min-

ister to look after the biggest responsibility any Government have to face—that of unemployment. We can be assured from the available statistics that the Minister for Employment has made a definite step forward in the absorption of men in industry. I generally do not agree wholly with anyone, and I do not altogether agree with the manner in which the Government have kept certain works going for certain men. I think many thousands of pounds have been wasted in continuing work in the Murray-Wellington electorate, for I believe the money could have been better spent elsewhere.

Mr. Thorn: You might mention the Causeway.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I will deal with that later on. My objection is not to the provision of employment for the men, but I consider that the work carried out in the Murray-Wellington electorate was altogether wrong. I do not blame the Minister for it but rather the engineers who approved of the work. In many instances the water merely washed in the soil that had been excavated and men were occupied in removing the clay that had been washed back again. That had to go on continually. The clay was washed in as quickly as the men were able to remove it. I hope the Government will give consideration to that matter as soon as possible. I hope, too, that they will give prompt attention to increasing the allowances to men in receipt of the lower rates of pay. When the previous Government were in office, as many as 800 men were to be seen drawing sustenance at one bureau. Nowadays not more than 150 men can be seen engaged in that operation. A small measure of praise is due to the Government for having altered the position to such an extent and given to the men concerned an opportunity to win back their manhood, an opportunity that was denied them by the previous Government.

Mr. Latham: And you were one of those who tried to prevent those men from going out and earning their livelihood.

Mr. RAPHAEL: That is not so. At any rate, I could not stop you from earning your living, because you could not do so.

Mr. Latham: What about when you went North?

Mr. RAPHAEL: And what about when you—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he leave the North alone because I can give him something about that, too.

Mr. Latham: I will give you all you want.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am not afraid of anything the hon. member may say. The Minister for Works is to be congratulated for putting in hand once more the reclamation of the river foreshore. When the previous Administration took office, their first step was to stop the work that had been undertaken there. Despite the fact that the City Council had subsidised the work to the extent of £1,000 a year, the Government could not find a measly £12,000 a year to carry on that great work. Although what had been accomplished at the end of a little more than a year no doubt led those who did not believe in the work to think that a mistake was being made, I hope the work will be continued, and that the swamps that have been such an eyesore, will soon be made things of the past. I hope the Minister for Railways is listening because I want to refer to the overlapping of the penny sections in Victoria Park. Previously the residents desired the extension of the tramway service and agitated for it for a number of years. When the extension was obtained then, apparently, some of the residents found that they did not really want it. The trouble now is that the old age and invalid pensioners who have to travel by tram to the Victoria Park post office to collect their pensions, have to pay 2d. instead of one penny as formerly. That means that each time they go to collect their pensions they have to pay 4d. That matter should receive attention, and I hope the Minister will at least arrange that the pensioners are allowed to travel at the old rate seeing that they cannot possibly walk to and from the post office.

Mr. Latham: Do you mean that the Government increased the fares out there?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I hope the Minister will give attention to that matter promptly. When the member for Sussex (Mr. Brockman) delivered his eloquent address a few days ago, he referred to the "kitty," as he so aptly termed it, or fund built up by the unemployed workers who, although they had earned it, were not allowed by the

previous Government to collect the money after so much work had been done, nor yet during the standing-down period. It would have been better for that hon. member had he been a member of Parliament when the previous Government took certain action, because he could have joined with members of the then Opposition in howling down the suggestion that the workers should be denied the right to the money they had earned. Immediately the Labour Government assumed office, that "kitty" was wiped out and men were able to draw their pay as soon as they earned it.

Mr. Latham: Some of the workers now get 2d. after working for a fortnight.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If you got 2d. for a fortnight's work, it would be more than you would be worth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! These personalities must cease.

The Minister for Employment: The statement of the Leader of the Opposition is not correct.

Mr. Latham: No? I will show you.

The Minister for Employment: You know it is not correct.

Mr. RAPHAEL: The Leader of the Opposition is no more right this time than he generally is, for he is always wrong. The Minister for Employment is to be congratulated upon the untiring efforts he has put forth to promote the purchase of local products. The Minister has travelled many miles to attend shows and other gatherings, and it has been rather astounding to find at many of those functions members of the Chamber of Commerce congratulating a Labour Minister upon his work and upon what he has been doing for the State. On no one occasion while the previous Government were in office—I do not know whether it was due to lack of foresight—did they make any attempt to absorb the unemployed by that means. I next desire to refer to matters affecting the Electoral Department, which represents a burning question at the moment. I wish to make this statement advisedly and as the result of my personal experience. When the latest Legislative Council elections were held, I was one of the organisers—not that we were successful.

Mr. Sampson: Cause and effect.

Mr. RAPHAEL: At 9.45 p.m., after the votes had been counted at the Victoria Park booth, I went to the South Perth polling

booth, where I found, much as I hate having to say it, 80 per cent. of the men doing the job there, including the returning officer, were, if not drunk, strongly under the influence of liquor. I had to point out to them that a ballot paper was lying on the floor. They were so strong in drink that they could not even see it. That is a charge that I hope will never be lodged against the officers at Victoria Park. The officials there conducted the count as it should be carried out. I do not think that such things as I have indicated should be allowed to take place. The returning officer was drunk and he should have been put out of the place.

Mr. Thorn: That is a pretty serious charge.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I have made it. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) reminds me about a quotation he made the other night regarding the wool situation. He said the wool clip returned to Australia in the 1931-32 season an amount of £20,000,000, whereas the return for the following year was £46,000,000, or an increase of £26,000,000 over the 12 months. It might be interesting to that hon. member to know that the wool clip throughout Australia for the past five years has averaged a return of £45,683,000.

Mr. Ferguson: You are pulling the wool over his eyes now.

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am not trying to do that, but, in view of the official figures, I must take into consideration the fact that the member for Toodyay is a potential Minister in a Government to come.

Mr. Ferguson: Coming events cast their shadows.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the member for Victoria Park should cast any reflection upon an hon. member!

Mr. RAPHAEL: I did not intend to do so, but as a young, unsophisticated member of this Chamber, I thought that the very seat that he occupies shows that the member for Toodyay is a potential Minister.

The Minister for Employment: Why look 30 years ahead?

The Minister for Works: It is too far altogether.

Mr. RAPHAEL: There was nothing to prevent the member for Toodyay, as a member of the Country Party, giving the figures correctly.

Mr. Thorn: You are quoting the wrong figures altogether. I quoted the figures for last year.

Mr. RAPHAEL: It is a pity the hon. member did not look up other years.

Mr. Thorn: I quoted the returns for 1932-33.

Mr. RAPHAEL: Nonsense! I am afraid we would have to go back 100 years to get figures anything like the hon. member quoted.

Mr. Thorn: You are speaking nonsense, but I suppose we had better let you go on.

Mr. RAPHAEL: It would be better. There are one or two other small matters of local interest that I wish to deal with. There is that stupid regulation that prohibits bicycles being ridden within 3 feet of the kerb. I hope the Government will reconsider that regulation, for it is a burning matter in Victoria Park, which is 80 per cent. an industrial suburb. The people there are up in arms against it. They claim that if they suffer any damage, the insurance companies will be able to evade responsibility by suggesting they were riding outside the prescribed distance. I trust the Government will withdraw that regulation. Another matter that might be considered by the Government is the manner in which the Workers' Compensation Act is being flouted by certain employers. I refer mainly to dago restaurant keepers of Perth. Five instances have been brought under my notice by medical men during the last few months of girls having been injured while working for Greek or Italian restaurant keepers, and in no instance was a girl able to claim compensation. The bosses told them that, if any action were taken, they would lose their jobs. The Government should insist upon employers insuring their employees, as is provided by the Act.

Mr. Thorn: That would not prevent them from taking action if they had a claim.

Mr. RAPHAEL: If the amount involved were only £5, and there was a risk of the girl losing her job, no claim would be made. Protection should be afforded to those who cannot protect themselves. I am gratified at the steps being taken by the nurses to form a union. We say definitely that there is one place where industrial wrongs should be righted, and that is the Industrial Arbitration Court. The nurses have been foolish in not having gone to the court for the protection that they so sorely need. I do not wish to say that the Perth Hospital is a dis-

grace to the Minister, but the congestion existing there should be relieved. If the Government cannot see their way to build a new hospital to replace the present institution, early consideration should be given to the question of constructing another hospital. I hope that the progress made by the State under Labour Administration during the last 15 months will continue, and I wish the Government all possible success in their endeavour to find employment for those men who have been without work or only on part-time work for so many years.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5.32]: I do not propose to make a long speech, but I wish to deal with a few points of interest to the country generally. I read with pleasure the references in the Speech to the dairying, mining, timber, and fruit industries, and to the legislation intended to be introduced this session. It was pleasing to hear the speech of the Premier a few evenings ago. Every member enjoyed it. It was just what we expected of him—diplomatic from beginning to end. Everyone is pleased that the mining industry is progressing by leaps and bounds. The price of gold has increased over 100 per cent., and even if it does not go any higher, we trust it will maintain its present level, because it is the one bright spot amongst all our primary industries. Some people say that the timber industry has experienced a revival, but that is hardly correct. The industry is looking to the Government for consideration in the matter of reduced royalties and railway freights. I wish to show how the Government could assist the industry. Of course the Minister will tell us that the industry is being assisted by the recent freight reduction of 16 per cent., but that reduction has not brought the rates back to the 1924 standard. Another 14 per cent. reduction would be necessary to revert to that standard. The Minister for Agriculture is aware that what we believed would occur in the dairying industry is not occurring. The powers-that-be, instead of paying the producers of butter fat 1s. per lb., have reduced the price. Some people will argue that the only way to overcome the difficulty is to adopt a scheme of orderly marketing and create a board. If the Minister seeks statutory authority for the creation of a board, I hope that the members comprising the

board will be representative of the producers and consumers. I do not want the manufacturers to enjoy the privileges they have had in the past of exploiting the dairy farmers. I hope the Minister will be fully alive to that aspect. An effort has been made to persuade the Minister to prevent small producers from marketing their butter. It is said that the farmer should pay to an equalisation fund 2d. per lb. on every pound of butter marketed. That suggestion will never be adopted with my support. A scheme of orderly marketing may be all right, but I do not think it possible to bring such a scheme into operation. The Minister should be careful not to be hoodwinked. If a farmer were making 100 or 200 lbs. of butter per week, it would be all right, but in the wheat belt the housewife often supplies a few pounds of butter to the storekeeper. If an attempt is made to legislate against that being done, I hope that representatives of the wheatgrowers will know how to deal with it. Small producers like that should not be required to pay into an equalisation fund. We know how the agreement made regarding the price of butter fat has been broken. We know that producers were to receive 1s. per lb. for their butter fat, and we know that supplies of butter have actually been imported. We now find that merchants have adopted three grades for butter fat, but does any member know where three grades of butter are sold? The three grades of cream go into the one vat, but the producer is paid at the lowest rate, and of course the butter is retailed at one price. I believe that the Minister, since my conversation with him, has a full grasp of the situation. The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty) has suggested a restriction of the number of factories. If it were possible to control the industry from Manjimup to Margaret River, there might be something to be said in favour of the proposal, but that is impossible. At present there are privately-owned factories, proprietary factories, and the supposed co-operative factories. The chairman of directors of the South-West Co-operative Factory is receiving £750 a year and expenses. All of that comes out of the pockets of the farmers, and it is such like people who are trying to hoodwink Parliament into passing legislation to restrict the proprietary factories, put them out of existence,

and give control of the whole industry to the co-operative factories. When the question comes before the House for discussion, I shall have more to say on it, but I hope other members will be both forewarned and forearmed to deal with those who, under the cloak of the dairying section of the Primary Producers' Association, are endeavouring to secure control of the industry. We should expose their hypocrisy, and safeguard the individual who has only one or two cows, and is selling only four or five lbs. of butter a week. I listened with considerable interest to the references by the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) to the timber industry, and her praise of the Government for what they had done for the industry. I know something of the industry. Speaking of the timber hewers' section, the outlook is much brighter, but legislation, which I propose to introduce this session, is needed to amend the Forests Act. It is a well-known fact that numbers of orders have been lost to Western Australia by a margin of 2s. or 3s. per load. We lost to New South Wales a New Zealand contract for 30,000 loads of sleepers by a margin of 2s. 6d. Why? Because New South Wales collected a royalty of only 2s., whereas the royalty here is 10s. Nobody is permitted to hew sleepers on Crown lands unless he possessed a license or permit previous to 1918. The men who held licenses all those years ago are going out of the industry, and we should now grant licenses or permits to young men who are capable of hewing sleepers. Orders are available and they could be fulfilled if men were permitted to hew on Crown lands. If we go to the Conservator of Forests with this request, he replies, "We are running to a certain plan and a certain schedule." I do not know anything about that, but I do know that an enormous quantity of timber is going to waste through over-maturing. Why not license young men who have been in the industry since the war, and who could produce great wealth for the State?

The Minister for Railways interjected.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is the policy to put in spot mills, but surely the Minister knows that it is impossible to saw timber at a price within 10 to 20 per cent. of that for hewing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How much would you destroy in the process?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Does not my friend know of the test made at Jarrahdale many years ago, when logs were taken to the saw-mill and when the sleeper hewers, with their broad axes, got a much better percentage? He should remember that; he was Minister for Works at the time. To-day, under the existing system, the mills go there first and the sleeper hewer follows.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: As it should be.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about. There are thousands of acres on which the sawmills cannot operate to-day. At a later stage in the present session it is my intention to submit an amendment to the existing Act, and I believe I will receive the support of the Government. In any case, I shall approach the Government before I submit the amendment, the object of which will be to license these men, who are masters of their craft, in the hope of their being able to reap a benefit from some of the wealth that is now lying dormant. I have been successful in getting areas thrown open, but there are thousands of acres along our existing railways that could be cut at the present time. But the Forests Department say that they will impose a royalty of 10s. per load on any timber that is cut. Then the areas are gazetted and advertised for sale and the contractors sometimes pay 17s. or 18s. per load. That is a scandal and the Premier must know that someone is going to suffer if royalty has to be paid. The Premier must also know that the industry is right down to its lowest ebb. In years gone by it was possible to get even up to £11 a load; to-day the price is down to £4 or a little over. The department should not demand a royalty but should be content to have the people at work. By having to pay 6s., 7s., or 8s. per load more than the value of the timber, someone is bound to suffer. The cutters are suffering to-day by not paying insurance and by signing receipts for £2 a load when they are getting 36s. If the cutters can get £2 per load and insurance, they will be quite satisfied. He is a poor man in the bush to-day that cannot cut two loads in reasonable timber.

Mr. Latham: What do they have to pay for insurance?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Insurance to-day is 5s. A man has to work pretty hard to cut two loads a week.

Miss Holman: Four pounds is not much wages for a skilled sleeper cutter.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Some of the young chaps can cut three loads.

Mr. Sleeman: They would not get too much for their work.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But they are satisfied if they can get £2 a load. On account of the high royalties, some are getting only 35s. a load. I told some of those who were cutting that I had no sympathy for them and that they were scabbing. If we could stick to the principle I am advocating, it would be all right, but it is being broken by the Forests Department in putting up these areas for sale. Why does not the Conservator use a wise discretion? Why does he not say to Smith or Jones, "There you have an area left; put your cutters into it"? Instead of that, he bludgeons it through, and his action means squeezing the lifeblood out of the people. I do not think the Premier knows what the position is to-day. An area is thrown open, and half a dozen are after it. Will that kind of thing do any good? Will it be the means of bringing in any revenue? The real effect is that it is putting more revenue into the Conservator's coffers, and he is squandering that money in what he calls reforestation. The former Minister for Forests told us at one time that he had been to Kirup and had seen wonderful forest growth and that in three years' time the mills would be operating there on coppice growth.

The Premier: Who said that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not the present Premier, but his predecessor in the last Parliament. The Conservator to-day is doing things that no sensible person should ever allow to be done. He is planting pines everywhere. My friend the member for Northam recently went through the Pemberton area, and there saw a wonderful pine plantation. The member for Sussex has also been through that part of the country and he too saw a pine plantation. I guarantee that the pines planted four years ago are now surrounded by scrub that is as high as the gallery in this Chamber. That is the way money is being squandered. If the Conservator were doing some good or getting some return for his outlay, there might be justification for it.

The Premier: You are romaneing.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not in the slightest. If I had my way I would dedicate a mil-

lion acres in the South-West for land settlement. We are now blocking all land settlement in every direction by our foolish forestry policy. We are locking up thousands upon thousands of acres of the finest land in Western Australia.

The Premier: Where are the people that want the land?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Applications are being made every day for land, and they are being turned down by the Forests Department. That department seems to have control over all Crown lands throughout the South-West, extending as far as Albany, and the Lands Department does not seem to have any say at all.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What does the Forests Department want the land for?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Certainly not for growing wheat. The land could be used for dairying or development in other directions. I admit, of course, that those who are on the land to-day have no outlook, but we must bear the future in mind.

Miss Holman: Have you any outlook for the timber industry?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, and perhaps more than anyone else, because I realise that the South-West depends almost entirely on its timber industry. It was the timber industry that built it up. I remember the present Minister for Railways some years ago boasting in this House that the timber industry brought in by way of railway freights £160,000 more than the whole of the wheat carried from every part of the State. I realise what the industry needs and that if we want to keep it going, we must give our young men every chance to work in it. The member for Forrest thinks that I would not build up the South-West in the way I propose; but can she tell me how long it takes a jarrah sapling to grow to maturity? Does she know that every year this timber is going to waste—to the extent of thousands of pounds? Why not turn it into good money? Why not cut all the mature timber, and let the industry go on? I know of my own knowledge where there has been a growth of jarrah for 30 years, that it is quite impossible to get a telephone pole from it.

Miss Holman: Do you want the whole State to be like that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There are hundreds of thousands of acres in the South-West that are only fit to grow jarrah, and no-

thing else. No one suggests for a moment that that area should be destroyed or interfered with. What I say is that we should have a classification of the whole of the country, and the land fitted for agriculture or intense culture should be set aside for that purpose, while the forestry lands are left there for all time. I am appealing to the Minister to see if something cannot be done in the way of reduction of royalty. Instead of setting up a royalty of 10s. per load for sleepers, we should be reducing it. It costs no more to produce a load of sleepers at Pemberton than it does to produce a load at Wellington, yet look at the difference in the freight! Would it not be possible in the interests of the country to introduce the zone system, so as to bring together the 7s. per load at Wellington and the 25s. at Pemberton; would it not be possible for the Government to introduce the zone system and equalise the whole thing at a flat rate of, say, 16s. per load? That would be a fair proposition. The industry will survive, if only it gets sympathetic legislation. The Minister for Railways will say he has reduced the railway freight by 16 per cent.

The Premier: And the royalty on export timber also.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Not on hewn sleepers. Indeed there you have increased the royalty. In 1921, or was it 1924, the rate was largely increased.

The Minister for Railways: Because wages were doubled during that period.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, it was merely that the industry was buoyant at that time, and so the charges were loaded up. It will be remembered that I fought the previous Government on the increase in inspectors' fees. It takes a jarrah tree at least 200 or 300 years to mature.

The Minister for Railways: Oh no!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: A jarrah tree will not come to maturity at less than 200 years. If such a tree were used for piles, under the existing royalty it would bring in two or three loads in the round, perhaps six or seven shillings, whereas if used for internal purposes it would cost £5 or £6 in royalty. An inquiry should be made into the whole of the timber industry, for the Conservator of Forests has too much power to-day. I propose later in the session to introduce a Bill to amend the Forests Act. The other night I listened attentively

to the Premier's speech on the Transport Board. He used "co-ordination," "strangulation," and every other word that could be introduced. I say our railways are here and have to stay here, for every other industry is supported through our railways, but we must have decent restrictions imposed.

The Premier: In other words, co-ordination.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, I am not going to use "co-ordination," nor am I going to agree to annihilation either. When we were building roads alongside of existing railways, I gave evidence before the committee of inquiry, and contended that the policy should be the building of feeder roads to our railways. What has happened? We have built up a road transport system. I do not agree with it. I attended two meetings in my own electorate, and asked who were the promoters. They said they were the business people of various towns. I said I would listen to them as business people, but not as producers. Some contend that we should grant compensation to the transport people. It may be that the Government should agree to something of the sort; if after consultation with the Transport Board it is found that hardship has been inflicted, possibly the Government should grant some compensation. The Premier the other night said the railways, if they could get a 1¼d. per ton mile freight, would pay very well. That may be so, but we require to make our railways much more attractive than they are. Let them carry parcels and reduce the minimum, and there will be no outcry from the public on the score of road transport. If the railways can serve the people, the people will be satisfied, but to-day it does not seem that the people are receiving proper service, although under the new Commissioner of Railways that service may be improved. When the road transport was being worked up in competition with the railways, why did not the railways endeavour to combat it, endeavour to brighten up their own attractions instead of waiting for Parliament to do something? Let all members of the House impress on the Minister for Railways the necessity for providing a better service. The big bug-bear is the length of time it takes for goods consigned via the railways to reach their destination. If a consignment be going from Perth to Manjimup or Pemberton, would it not be possible to get it sent direct instead of running it into

Bumbury and allowing it to lie there a day or two before going on to Pemberton? Again, regarding the passenger traffic, our trains are too slow and they stay too long in every siding. A resident of Pemberton can step into a motor car and be in Perth in five or six hours, whereas by train the journey occupies 14 or 15 hours. I remember when the train leaving Bridgetown at nine o'clock was in Perth by six o'clock, whereas to-day it does not get in until eight o'clock. This is very tiresome to passengers. Then there is the discomfort of the railway carriages. There should be no distinction between the classes of carriage; second-class passengers should be entitled to the same comfort as first-class passengers. Actually the seats in some second-class carriages are as hard as stone. We have too much at stake to think of jeopardising our railways. On that I am entirely with the Minister, and I applaud the Government's action in creating the Transport Board in order to give the railways the supreme right to carry our goods. It now remains to bring in legislation under which passengers will have to be carried over our railways. It may be that I shall be regarded as of a class with the member for Avon if I talk about the Boy-up-Cranbrook railway, which has been officially approved for a number of years, even by the present Government, and by the Railways Advisory Board. Years ago a survey was made and the sleepers for the line were cut, while the then Government promised to go on with the building of that railway immediately. I do not wish to weary members with the report of the Advisory Board, or a recital of the great potentialities of the country to be served by the line, but I say it is wrong that this railway should not have been built long ago. A new Government came into office, and now the sleepers have been removed from the route.

The Premier: A road has been made.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not say it was not right that the sleepers should have been removed to be used elsewhere, but I think before the Minister allowed his officers to remove them he should have given the local people an assurance that the sleepers were being removed only for the time being. Many of the old settlers who have been battling along down there for 50 years are heartbroken over this attitude towards the approved railway.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Before tea I was speaking about the removal of sleepers which had been cut eight or ten years ago. I feel sure it is the intention of the Government to have the sleepers re-cut and to build the line for the first 30 miles. The Premier knows that near that line there is no better belt of timber in Western Australia. I would also remind the Government of the line from Manjimup to Mt. Barker, which was approved by the Advisory Board. If this work were started the Minister for Employment could put on 500 or 600 men to clear the route. The Government of to-day were the Government of eight years ago which agreed that this was a necessary undertaking, and it was approved by the Advisory Board. A Bill was put through both Houses of Parliament authorising the construction of the line. I now ask the Government to show their sincerity in this matter. This work would be of a reproductive nature. The Government should immediately issue instructions for the clearing of the route for the first 30 or 40 miles. They would thus be carrying out the policy they adopted at the eastern end when they built the road from Mt. Barker to the Frankland River. What I want them to do is to continue that road from the northern side of the Frankland River to Manjimup, which I presume was in their minds at the time. Another project I have in mind is a railway from Northcliffe to link up with the Frankland River portion, known as Nornalup. That would open up much good country and would serve the new settlers on the Walpole Inlet. Possibly Mr. Hill, who opposed the member for Albany last time, will say that is the only solution for the South-West Province. If the railway were continued from Northcliffe to Nornalup it would open up a fine belt of country. I would suggest that a deviation be made, and that the line be taken further inland to work through the Walpole area. That would mean going a little farther south-east. I understand that a proposal has come before the Transport Board in regard to the Cranbrook area. The people there are asking for a little subsidy to enable them to transport their super some 30 or 40 miles to their holdings. I hope the Government will see that a subsidy is given for this purpose. In the Speech we are told that we had a record crop of fruit last

year. The apple growers are at a very low ebb just now. With the exception of the war period I do not think the industry has ever been in such a bad state. The growers would certainly be grateful for any assistance that could be given to them. If a truck is filled by one grower he gets a concession of 6d. per case on the freight, but if a dozen growers fill a truck they have to pay the full charge of 1s. a case. That is a great detriment to the industry. For the most part it is the railway freight, with the cost of the case and so on, which prevents the industry from making a profit and makes the return to the grower so small. Last year a subsidy was supposed to have been given, amounting to about £11,000, for necessitous growers. I do not believe that any grower has received one penny piece of that subsidy, although many of them are in necessitous circumstances.

Mr. Ferguson: The Prime Minister said the subsidy had been distributed in the other States.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister for Agriculture has told me that the Government have written innumerable letters and telegrams to the Federal authorities on the subject, but cannot reach finality.

Mr. Hawke: Mr. Lyons will fix that up.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: He is a good man, and should prove the leader of Australia. I do not know where the money is, it is not in a trust fund, but it has not reached the growers. I do not like the word "necessitous." Who is to determine the necessity of a grower?

Mr. Ferguson: They are all necessitous.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Everyone should get relief in some way. The local market cannot absorb all that is produced by the fruit-growing industry. The best thing the Commonwealth could do would be to secure a reduction in freights from Australia to the overseas markets. I cannot see that any benefit is to be derived from a bonus. It only means bolstering up one industry at the expense of another. All our primary industries, with the exception of gold mining, are in a bad way. We have been twitted with regard to the establishment of industries in Western Australia. What have the present Government done in that direction since the previous one went out of office? I could enumerate a number of things that were

done by the previous Government, but cannot find a trace of anything that has been done by the present Government to establish fresh industries. I admit the Minister for Employment has been going around the country urging public support for local goods. That is the song we must all sing. It is the only way to build up the country. I now wish to refer to the rabbit pest in the South-West. I recently went through portions of my electorate to see for myself whether the statements that had been made on the subject were extravagant or not. I can assure the Minister for Lands that the trouble has become a hundred times worse than it was a few months ago. It is heart-breaking for dairy farmers and group settlers who from many more cows than they had last year are getting 30 per cent. less butter fat, on account of the depredations of rabbits. One group alone recently lost 42 head of milking stock from starvation. That is a dreadful thing, and some action must be taken immediately. Nothing like the present position has ever been seen before. A plague of mice is nothing to it. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon I saw thousands of rabbits all over the countryside. Crops that had been sown and had grown to a height of 2ft. or 3ft. were eaten off as bare as the floor of this Chamber. Not one blade of grass could be seen. The karri country was just a mass of rabbit burrows.

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: What about rabbit netting?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I propose to read some correspondence—I know the Minister for Lands will not mind—which passed between the hon. gentleman and the settlers in question. The settlers wrote to him—

During your visit to this district in January last, in speaking to a body of settlers appointed to discuss with you the various difficulties the settlers generally were working under, you admitted at that meeting from your own observation the seriousness of the rabbit invasion of the South-West. Since your visit the large majority of the settlers have thoroughly poisoned their holdings, acting under instructions from the local board.

With my own eyes I saw miles of furrows in which poison had been laid.

After the summer the results of the poisoning as to any noticeable decrease are nil, but there is a slight decrease in settlers' stock, including cattle, pigs and poultry, the death

of such stock being, under post-mortem examination, definitely traced to be from phosphorus poisoning.

I believe the stock were picking up the baits as fast as they were laid down.

At the meeting mentioned above you informed the settlers that sufficient netting would be made available to enclose the land of the settlers that is under pasture, but you would not consider enclosing bush paddocks.

The settlers say that for every square mile there are six holdings. In place of each holding being netted separately—and there are brooks running through some of the holdings—they suggest that a whole area of 640 acres should be enclosed.

At a meeting of settlers a committee was appointed to go into the matter of the netting of holdings, using your promise to the settlers re netting as a basis to work on. It is the findings of this committee that we wish to respectfully put before you for your serious consideration. In the Pemberton district, approximately every six settlers are surrounded by a good road; area of country so surrounded, approximately 640 acres. Suggestions: (1) Netting in the Pemberton district to be made compulsory; (2) Each group of settlers surrounded by a road to be enclosed in a block, as against the suggestion to net each individual settler's pasture, for the following reasons:—(a) Taking the average area of settlers' pasture, it will require $5\frac{1}{4}$ miles of netting as against four miles if the block of 640 acres is enclosed in one area; (b) Block netting will require six netting gates as against 13 under the individual proposal; (c) In numbers of blocks where a stream rises in one block and flows through four or more other blocks, under the individual suggestion it would mean in some cases the erection of five or six flood gates as against one under the block system; (d) Under the block proposal in a number of cases the netting would not have to be erected through summer land, a class of country that the life of the best of netting would be very short on. Under the individual system every settler would have to erect netting through more or less of it. Estimated cost of completed fence under the block system, £30 per mile, possibly less with bulk purchasing of netting, and also rail charges would be in truck lots. Freights on netting this committee reasonably expect would be at a very cheap rate. Finance: flat rate tax on all settlers enclosed under block system to be £3 per settler, payable the month of October each year: average revenue from this tax per block, £18.

The settlers can make that payment in October, which is their flush month.

As the road board is vitally interested in the survival of the South-West as a dairying centre, we would suggest that 50 per cent. of

settlers' rates be paid by the road board to finance the scheme. If something is not done and done quickly, the revenue from rates will be reduced considerably less than half through the rabbits forcing people to leave their holdings. With the flat rate tax, road board payments would give a revenue of approximately £24 per annum from each group of six settlers. Labour: sufficient labour is available in the district for extensive contracts to be let, consisting of settlers' sons and sustenance men sent to this district to clear more country. If you were on the spot the same as we are, and really saw the state the country is getting into with rabbits, your opinion, we feel sure, would be the same as that of the members of this committee, that the work being done by these sustenance men is about on a plane with putting new iron on the roof of a building whose foundations were eaten away with white ants.

I do not agree with that last statement.

These suggestions that are humbly placed before you, even if not considered worthy of consideration, we hope will be the means of obtaining from you considerably better and cheaper ones, and if submitted to any members of this committee, whose names are given below, they will be placed before the settlers. The position here is desperate, and requires quick action to check large losses to the State and settlers.

The Minister for Lands replied as follows:—

Mr. J. T. Davies, secretary, dairying section, Primary Producers' Association of Western Australia, has forwarded me a letter dated the 11th June, and signed by yourself as chairman, Mr. J. B. Willis as secretary, and Messrs. W. A. Griffiths, G. J. Phillips and W. N. Campbell. In this connection my attention is drawn to the depredations of the rabbits, and a scheme submitted for netting in a combined number of holdings. Before discussing your scheme I desire to remind you that at the meeting referred to in your letter I did not inform the settlers that sufficient netting would be made available to enclose the land of the settlers under pasture. I very definitely in my own mind decided to make no such promises, and the notes taken at the time bear out this decision. Nowhere in the notes taken by my secretary is such a promise given, and I am sure this must be so because I had determined to make no such promise. I strongly resent your putting into my mouth promises I did not make, and still further emphasising the injury by reiterating that a committee had been appointed to go into the matter of the netting of holdings, using, as you state, "my promise to the settlers" as a basis. I suggest that if you desire to do business with this department you must restrict yourself to facts, and you will find this course will have the best results.

In response to the Minister's communication Mr. S. P. Stirling, on behalf of the

committee, wrote a letter including the following paragraph:—

This committee herewith tender you an apology for using the word "would" instead of the actual word used by you, which from the shorthand notes of the meeting happened to be "might."

I think the Minister said he might, not would, be able to do these things. The meeting took it that he said he would do them. My point is the absolute necessity for immediate action on account of the established fact that there is 30 per cent. less of cream production now, and from a larger number of cows, than there was last year. If it is possible for the Minister, either through some financial device or through the Commonwealth, to get the necessary funds, he should secure netting for the purpose of shutting out the rabbits. My own observation leads me to believe that the settlers cannot possibly carry on their industry under present conditions. Men with experience of the rabbit pest in Victoria and elsewhere tell me that the only method of combating it is wire netting, more especially on small holdings such as those in our South-West. The South-West is full of swamps and thickets in which the rabbits live; burrows are to be found all over the place, and everywhere dozens of rabbits are seen. These facts point to the absolute need for some immediate action. Can the Minister make provision, in any shape or form, for a supply of netting? The settlers are willing that half the local road board rates should be paid to the Government in return for netting. In my opinion the plan of the settlers, to enclose six blocks in one area of 640 acres, is the best. This having been done, an inspector should travel around as a boundary rider, and not by motor car, to look after the fences. If such steps are not taken, then, as sure as we are sitting here to-night, the result must be utter disaster. I have never before in my life seen anything like the present position—millions of rabbits everywhere. I saw three cows on the point of starving in that district, just because of the depredations of the rabbits: and I have since been informed that the cows have died. I know the Minister is handicapped by want of funds; but something must be done, or else all the settlers there will be forced to leave their holdings. Now let me for a moment touch on the problem of un-

employment, and on what hon. members opposite say has been achieved by the present Government for the working community of Western Australia. I speak with a full sense of responsibility. I listened with close attention to the Premier's speech. The hon. gentleman devoted almost an hour to a criticism of the utterances of the Leader of the National Party, and a few minutes to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. The Premier's remarks were most diplomatic, but they did not touch on the Government's policy for relieving the unemployment position as it exists to-day. Unemployment is just as acute now as it was three years ago, at the start of the depression. This is so notwithstanding the fact that the present Government have had fully a million more of loan money to expend than the last Government had. They boast that the people are back in employment, on which aspect the member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) waxed eloquent, saying, "Look what we have done to uplift the workers; look at what a satisfied community this is to-day; I applaud the Government for what they have done to improve the conditions of the working people." Then the hon. member waxed still more eloquent, using phraseology that I cannot employ, "We have lifted the masses; we have done this, and we have done that." The present Government have done nothing.

The Premier: Ah now!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The present Government have had £1,200,000 more money to expend, and what have they done? They have broken down on their principles in every way. They stand for day labour. They say, "We will not for a moment support the obnoxious contract principle." They declared that they would insist upon the payment of the basic wage, and intended to see that every man was worthy of his hire and that the basic wage would be paid, whether the worker was competent or incompetent. On the other hand, what do we find? Was that policy capable of being put into operation? Of course it was not. During the regime of the previous Government, it was found that the State was up against it right to the hilt. The Government fed the people. Ministerial members say that we put the people on the dole. We did not do that at all. The House is indebted to the member for Perth (Mr. Need-

ham) for some interesting figures he secured. Members who support the Government say, "Look at what the Government have done. They have reduced the number of people on sustenance from 6,000 to 2,000, and have put people back into industry." Into what industry.

Mr. Ferguson: The rabbit industry.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is not so, because, if the Government had put men to work to exterminate the rabbits, some good would have been accomplished. The other evening the Premier took the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) to task because he said the State was borrowing money with which to relieve unemployment. The Government are giving the people a pittance to-day and have established the contract system. We heard the other night that bank managers and others had gone out on the works and were contented. It is true that men of all types were taking up the work, but to earn their 30s. a week on contract work, they had to put in five and six days a week. Where are the boasted principles and the basic wage of which Ministerial members talked so much? The Minister for Employment has told us often and long, "I stand for the workers." Frequently when he was fighting legislation introduced by the previous Government, he boomed forth, "I stand for the workers." There is a different story to tell to-day. It may be that some new method will have to be adopted in order to rectify the position, perhaps something along the lines suggested by the member for Claremont (Mr. North), who said that the old age had gone and asked why we should make slaves of the community and why they should not be fully fed in a land of plenty. It is for the Government, as I formerly told another Administration, to see that the people receive at least the basic wage. On the other hand, because people go out and work by contract for 30s. a week, it is suggested that we can sit down contentedly! What is the country coming to? How can we build up a nation under such conditions? It is distinctly impossible to do so. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) and others have applauded the Government for what they have done, but where do we stand? The other night when the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) was speaking, the member for Forrest (Miss Holman) accused the Government of which he had been a supporter, of having levied a

tax of 4½d. in the pound. It is true that the previous Administration did that, and they were turned out of office for doing so. Certainly the Premier later denied having made the statement, but Labour members went round the country and told the people that the financial emergency legislation would go by the board. Did it go by the board? Quite the contrary. Last year, the same legislation was re-enacted, although the Legislative Council effected some alterations. As a result of that, instead of taxing the people and securing £200,000 from them, as the previous Government did, the Labour Government passed legislation so that they were able to extract £400,000 from the people. That is a fact that cannot be denied, and I thank the member for Perth (Mr. Needham) for having secured the figures. Despite that, we have Government supporters contending that everything in the garden is lovely. Everything is not lovely. How about the thousands of boys and girls who to-day have no outlook on life. I appeal to members, irrespective of party ties, to consider whether something cannot be done. We have in this House 50 representatives of 50 different constituencies. Cannot something be done to alter the present state of affairs?

Mr. Hawke: Consult the banks.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The member for Northam (Mr. Hawke) suggests that we should nationalise the banks. I do not think that will help us at all.

Mr. Cross: What do you think should be done?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I want members to consider that phase. Some may suggest that it is a job for Ministers to tackle in an endeavour to solve the problem.

Mr. Lambert: Could not we chat the matter over?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We should endeavour to formulate a scheme so that there may be some hope for the future. We should endeavour to effect something of that description, rather than have the spectacle of Government members ridiculing the previous Government and claiming to have improved upon what they did.

Mr. Cross: At any rate, that is quite true.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is not true. The present Government have had the benefit of £1,250,000 more loan funds to spend, and they secured an additional £200,000 by means of direct taxation imposed on the

people. Of course, the claim is not true. The Government have not done one iota towards improving the position. Mere sitting down complacently and telling a man who is starving that it is all right, and assuring the youth who cannot find a job that he can rest content as something will turn up, is no good. I suppose some alteration will be effected later on when the Premier will go to a conference in the Eastern States and, especially if the Federal elections should take a turn contrary to what we anticipate, will say to the then powers-that-be, "The position is this: I have got to get back, and I want some more money."

The Premier: I would be cheap at the price.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not desire to be critical, but merely to point out to members sitting on the Government benches just where they stand. They must prove their bona fides. The member for Canning (Mr. Cross) will have a hard job to win his seat again. Where does he stand in this matter? Members must advocate some new method; I do not know what it will be. It may be that we must provide some new monetary system. I do not know where the plan will come from, but I am convinced we must change the whole of our past procedure. I believe a definite alteration in conditions is taking place, and we will have to feed the people, particularly as we have an abundance of food in every direction. Our primary industries are starved because no adequate price is available for our products. I do not desire to deprecate anything the Minister for Lands is doing, for I want to assist him in every possible way, but it is impossible for group settlers, especially those with families, to exist on the present allowance of £5 a month. How can they be expected to do so when they have boys and girls of ages ranging up to 21 and 25 years who are practically starving, while the girls have no clothes and the boys no boots to wear?

Mr. North: Would you approve of reducing the retiring age?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know what I would do. That is a function of the Government. They should see to it that such conditions do not obtain. The Premier gave us some illuminating information the other night when he discussed his dissatisfaction with the findings of the Federal Dis-

abilities Grants Commission. Unfortunately he had to leave before he could conclude his remarks. It is dreadful to think that we must be subject to such domination by the Eastern States. Passing to another subject. Is it not time the Government gave us some indication as to the personnel of the delegation to be sent overseas in support of the Secession petition? With all due deference to the Leaders of the Nationalist and Country Parties, I would prefer to see a non-political delegation, composed of members of the committee who did all the work in preparing the Case for Secession. If representatives of particular political parties are included, it will give the delegation a political atmosphere, whereas the delegation should be representative of Western Australia as a whole. I do not desire to discuss the position regarding the Agricultural Bank but I believe I can voice a protest on behalf of every member of the House when I say that it was a matter of bad taste on the part of the Government to have released the Royal Commission's report to the Press before members of Parliament had had an opportunity to peruse it. I believe the Speaker was wrong in allowing any discussion on the subject, seeing that members had not received the report. The Press were allowed to take extracts from it, and we have had to accept what has appeared in the newspapers.

Mr. Latham: It was a matter purely for the Government, not for this House.

The Minister for Lands: Do you not know that every Royal Commission's report has been released in the same way?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Two wrongs do not make a right.

Mr. Ferguson: The report was made to the Governor, not to this House.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: As Parliament passed the motion, surely members should be entitled to receive the report first.

Mr. Stubbs: The Government made the appointment without reference to Parliament.

The Minister for Lands: And the Commission reported to the Governor.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not wish to comment on the report at all, but the Speaker was wrong in allowing any discussion on this matter.

Mr. Wansbrough: You are reflecting on the Chair.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I have no desire to do that. I trust the Minister for Railways will make a note of my protest regarding the removal of sleepers required for the proposed Boyup Brook Cranbrook railway. I wish to assure the Minister for Railways that I am entirely with him. The railways are necessary to open up the country. I should like the Minister for Lands to accept my remarks in the spirit in which I intend them and endeavour to provide wire netting for the settlers in my district. I am certain that unless something is done immediately there is a grave danger of the dairying industry in my district being closed down, and any action of that kind would of course spread throughout the whole of the South-West. The rabbit menace is a really serious one.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [8.16]: I propose to address only a few words to the House, particularly in reply to the complaint made by the Leader of the Opposition regarding the distribution of Commonwealth relief to wheat growers. I should like to explain the position as I understand it, and to show that the criticism of the hon. gentleman was not entirely justified. The hon. member complained of the manner in which the bonus was distributed. He stated that in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, it had been distributed much more satisfactorily. New South Wales and Victoria, he said, paid 4s. per acre, by way of the bonus, whereas Western Australia had paid only 3s. 6d. per acre. He said that in South Australia the Government paid only 2s. per acre, but it became 1s. 6d. more in necessitous cases. It seems peculiar that New South Wales and Victoria were able to pay 4s. per acre, whereas in South Australia only 2s. per acre was distributed. We in Western Australia have been able to distribute 3s. 6d. per acre and have retained £65,000 for necessitous cases.

Mr. Ferguson: A big percentage of the farmers in New South Wales were not entitled to receive it, because they were wealthy people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Perhaps so. The distribution in New South Wales and Victoria has not been free from friction as the Leader of the Opposition suggested.

Mr. Teal, President of the Farmers and Settlers' Association of New South Wales, made the following statement in speaking of the Lyons Ministry—

Unfortunately that particular Ministry had seemed to be singularly devoid of knowledge of the industry and we had had a repetition of the bungling methods of preceding years. The financial assistance granted had been so hedged around with irksome conditions that some of the growers had not yet received payment and it would be weeks or months before the distribution was completed.

So the association consider it has not been satisfactorily distributed in New South Wales. In Western Australia, apart from the complaint made by the hon. member as to no payment having been made by way of a necessitous grant to owners of motor cars, the distribution has been made speedily and there has not been a solitary complaint. In fact the Bank officials have done excellent work. They have distributed the whole amount available at the rate of 3s. 6d. per acre, and are now dealing with the necessitous cases, and a few other cases.

Mr. Latham: And a few other cases!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes; I will give reasons for those few cases. Here we have retained £65,000 for necessitous cases. The possession of a motor car is not regarded as proof that a man is not necessitous.

Mr. Latham: That is the excuse for it in every instance.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

Mr. Latham: Then I will show you the letters.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Bank holds that a man who is able to buy petrol is not necessitous.

Mr. Latham: Some farmers have been refused although their cars have not been licensed for two years, and they could not give them away if they tried.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There has been no distinction whatever. The Bank is operating on precisely the same principle as was followed last year, and takes the attitude that when a farmer applies for assistance as a necessitous case, he is not in necessitous circumstances if he can purchase petrol for a motor car.

Mr. Latham: I say it is a violation of the Commonwealth Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Commonwealth Government have agreed that our attitude is right. South Australia

has also retained a certain amount for necessitous cases.

Mr. Latham: South Australia paid 1s. 6d. per acre to any man who had not got three bushels per acre.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Such a man would be necessitous. If a farmer in this State does not get more than three bushels per acre, he must be in necessitous circumstances. In this State we paid men who had reaped six bushels and ten bushels per acre, but we did not pay a man who could buy petrol for a motor car. A farmer came to my office the other day and told me that he did not have 2d. with which to buy a stamp. When he went out I picked up a docket from the floor, and it proved to be a receipt for £1 worth of petrol obtained by that man in Perth. Yet he had told me just before that he could not afford 2d. for a stamp. I have no objection to a farmer's owning a car, but the Bank has adopted a reasonable attitude in saying that if a man can buy petrol for a motor car, he is not a necessitous farmer. A necessitous farmer is a man who is in want of food for his family. If the Bank attempted to meet the claims of all such persons, there would be a very small amount available to distribute to necessitous cases. We have reserved £65,000 for necessitous farmers, and they will receive only about £12 each. If that sum were divided amongst the whole of the farmers, it would be so small that the division would not be worth while. A sum of £12 to a necessitous farmer, however, is something. I know that in some instances a car might be dilapidated, but once the door were opened wider, once the Bank paid the necessitous grant to any person possessing a motor car, it would have to pay to all. There could be no distinction. Although I bear in mind that a farmer is entitled to have a motor car, all things considered, I have to stand behind the Bank.

Mr. Latham: The farmers keep thousands of motor cars in the terrace.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not support that. If the hon. member is correct that all the farmers are down and out, how can they keep motor cars in Perth?

Mr. Latham: They pay their contributions through everything they buy.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If a man is in necessitous circumstances, how can he keep a motor car in Perth? As a

matter of fact he does not. The Bank has done its best to distribute the money, and the same principle operates as operated last year. I admit that the principle operates somewhat harshly against a man who has an old car, but if the door is left open, every car owner must be entitled to the grant.

Mr. Latham: I think we should challenge that ruling in a court. I do not think it would stand.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I had the advice of the Crown Law authorities in the beginning, and we also consulted the Federal Government. I am prepared to say that the Bank's attitude is legally correct, although it may not be quite morally correct.

Mr. Latham: I will wire the Prime Minister to-morrow asking if the possession of a motor car prevents a man's receiving the grant.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Senator Johnston spoke about motor cars, but we have to remember that an election is impending. What would he not advocate when there was an election? He is all things to all men. I have a perfect contempt for Bertie Johnston's opinion on anything at this or at any other time. An election is impending and he will not take risks. I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition will get an affirmative reply because of the approaching election. However, the correspondence is on the file before me. I agree that there are harsh cases, but I want members to realise that if the Bank opened the door to an owner of a car, it could not draw the line at the man with a dilapidated car, but must give the grant to every farmer. As regards the necessitous cases admitted, the amount will permit of only £12 being distributed per head, a very small amount.

Mr. Seward: A very considerable amount to some people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the total were distributed amongst all the claimants, the amount per head would be so small that it would not be worth while distributing. I would rather have something substantial for those who need it badly than an unsubstantial amount for everybody.

Mr. Latham: At that rate there must be 5,000 claimants.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am taking the report of the general manager.

Mr. Latham: Twelve times five would make £60,000.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The general manager informs me that all are claiming as necessitous cases, and the distribution of the necessitous grant will be determined by the necessities of the farmer and his family, not on the possession of a motor car. The Leader of the Opposition stated that the payment on an acreage basis was most unfair.

Mr. Latham: No.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the hon. member was so reported in "Hansard." He may have been misreported.

Mr. Latham: I do not think so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member criticised the documents submitted by the bank to claimants. I want to show the House that those documents are not so objectionable as he would have us believe. They are perfectly reasonable. Certain forms have been issued, similar to those issued last year. The Wheatgrowers' Relief Act prescribes that people who paid income tax last year are not entitled to relief.

Mr. Latham: It provides something further.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, it provides further that if the applicant shows circumstances by which he will not receive income tax this financial year he will be entitled to the relief.

Mr. Latham: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Quite a number of farmers have applied under that section of the Act, but when those people make application for the grant on the ground that they will pay no income tax this year, they must show proof.

Mr. Latham: The form has nothing whatever to do with that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Bank would not be entitled to pay a person who merely said that he would not pay income tax this year. Claimants must give proof, and that is all the Bank asks.

Mr. Latham: Is it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Bank is entitled to ask that. If it did not, it would not be interpreting the Act properly.

Mr. Latham: The Bank authorities have no right to do it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They have, and under the interpretation of the Act, they do it. Now what are the objectionable forms to which the hon. member

referred? Here is one form merely asking the applicant whether he is share-farming or leasing land—particulars that the trustees must have. Then there is the declaration by the wheatgrower with regard to financial assistance. There can be no objection to that. Next there is the application for assistance under the Commonwealth Wheatgrowers' Act. The applicant has to give particulars showing for what purposes the grant is required. That is, the necessitous grant, not the bonus. Then there is a declaration by settlers claiming assistance if income was earned during the year ended June 1933. This is used only in the case where a farmer paid income tax in the previous year and because of that was not entitled to assistance.

Mr. Latham: The Commonwealth Government told you that a certificate from the Commissioner of Taxation would be sufficient.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We shall have to wait until next year for that. The farmers in this country are not required to submit their income tax returns for 1933-34 until the end of this month, and the Taxation Department does not get the assessments out until next year.

Mr. Latham: The very questions you are asking there are outside that altogether.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

Mr. Latham: Yes, read it again.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is the information they asked for. The applicant is required to submit particulars of income for the years 1932-33 and 1933-34.

Mr. Latham: The year 1932-33 has nothing to do with it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He has to give the locations cropped in the 1932-33 season and the same for 1933-34, the area cropped in 1932-33, the quantity of wheat, oats and barley and the area cut for hay in 1932-33 and 1933-34. The trustees ask for the total expenditure. Now since the income tax Commissioner will not issue his assessments for some months, it is reasonable that the bank should be able to check this year's expenditure as against that of last year.

Mr. Latham: I will reply to that when we come to the Estimates.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: After all, what is wrong with asking for information from a man claiming to be entitled to a bonus on the ground that he will be exempt from income tax this year?

Mr. Latham: Why do not they ask for all the information?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Now the Leader of the Opposition is changing his ground.

Mr. Latham: No; I say they have the effrontery to ask for that information. It is impertinent.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the Opposition now says it is impertinence on their part.

Mr. Latham: Of course it is.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member would know all about that if he had to administer the Act. We must be able to make comparisons between a man's operations last year and his operations this year.

Mr. Latham: This is the only State that does so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would not have the slightest hesitation in giving all that information.

Mr. Latham: Would you send your assessment notice to a district office?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would not care to whom it was sent.

Mr. Latham: They asked for it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the Opposition said that they did not ask for all, they asked for only part. They required an indication that the applicant for relief under the Commonwealth law was entitled to it.

Mr. Latham: I hope that if there is to be any more distribution while you are Minister for Lands, it will be made by the Commonwealth Government.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If it comes to that we do not want the distribution. I am just as fair as is the hon. member and he knows that the matter will be as safe with me as it was with him last year.

Mr. Latham: I had nothing to do with it last year.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Very well. The hon. member knows that he did the same thing. What was there unreasonable about it? Does he think that every settler in this country will apply for this money? Of course he will not. Some will and some will not. The Bank is entitled to get the facts. Personally if I think I am justified in giving it I will do so and what is more I am warranted in giving it, otherwise I cannot prove my case. The Leader of

the Opposition became unduly warm about the matter and he can have no cause for complaint about the investigation. There is another matter. The Leader of the Opposition said that the interpretation of Section 11 was causing great dissatisfaction, that is, in regard to the payments in deceased estates. The Crown Law Department ruled as early as last February that the executors could not handle the money, that it must be paid to the beneficiaries, and that if the executors were allowed to handle the money it could be used to pay debts, which was contrary to Commonwealth intentions. What disturbed the hon. member's mind disturbs mine also, and that is the reason why the matter has been held up. I asked the Commonwealth Government to give an opinion on this matter, and I should like to quote Mr. McLarty's minute to me—

A letter was received on the 21st June from the Department of Commerce asking for certain information. We wrote to the secretary and mentioned the various letters written from this office and asked if they could do anything to expedite the reply. This was dated the 7th July. On the 18th July a further letter was written by the Premier to the Prime Minister, and on the 30th July a reply was received from the Prime Minister which dealt only with the question of payment in the case of wheatgrowers who subsequently died after putting in the crop. A telegram was sent on the 1st August to the Secretary, Department of Commerce, asking if he could deal with the cases specifically mentioned in the letter of the 28th May addressed to the Prime Minister, and a reply was received on the same date that the Federal Crown Law authorities had been requested to expedite the reply.

This is not clear-cut legislation. It is legislation that is very difficult to interpret and I cannot understand how the Federal Government could have passed it. We can get no direction from the Commonwealth and so we are holding up these matters because the Crown Law Department say we cannot pay. Although we have written to the Commonwealth they will not let us have a reply, and we cannot pay until the matter is cleared up. That disposes of the question of the wheat bonus and I hope hon. members opposite will realise that the distribution in Western Australia has been very satisfactory. All the farmers have received their payments except those whose applications have been held up for the reasons I have given. We have paid necessitous farmers a sum of £11,000. I hope in the future the Commonwealth Govern-

ment will pass legislation that will be clear and that they will distribute the payment themselves, because it costs us a considerable sum of money to do so. The member for Nelson made some comment regarding the correspondence between Pemberton settlers and myself on the subject of the rabbit pest. I admit that this pest in the South-West has become very troublesome, and I admit also the possible devastating effects on the pastures. When the proposition was put up to me by the Primary Producers' Association, representing the group settlers, and their scheme was advanced, I rejected it because it proposed a scheme by which a number of holdings should be enclosed. A rate was to be struck and boundary riders employed, and members know perfectly well that a scheme such as that would never be successful because what was the responsibility of all would be the responsibility of none. One man might do the job and 11 others would not. Therefore the scheme did not commend itself to me. I would not embark upon it and I do not think any other member would either. Furthermore the scheme had no possibility of success because the settlers could never finance it. The settlers put up a proposition about finance but I was not impressed with it, because, I am sorry to say, I have never found a number of settlers willing to pay for anything advanced by the Government.

Mr. Ferguson: Not all settlers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Unfortunately only too many are not prepared to pay for anything advanced by the Government. The group settler has a very bad habit of writing to departments and saying, "According to your promise made to us—" I do not make many promises, and I try to keep those I do make. Those people wrote to me and said, "In keeping with your promise we have formed a committee to act on your suggestion." I made no suggestion. When I went down to the district represented by the member for Nelson, I came away again with a very depressed feeling. I found that quite a number of the improvements were going back to nature. I saw improvements made years previously not being maintained, and I said to Mr. McLarty when we visited one of the groups, "This country has gone back badly." He said, "It has." In only one or two places did I find a bit of machin-

ery under shelter. The Government have supplied vast quantities of material, and I found much of it without shelter and most dilapidated. So when I met those gentlemen at Pemberton, I was not in a state of mind to make more concessions. Unfortunately, my experience is that every concession made by the Government is regarded by the settlers as a precursor to further concessions. So I was not impressed by this scheme, and furthermore, was not impressed by the ability of many of the settlers to pay for any scheme. The hon. member has asked the Government to do something for the settlers. I say he can assist materially by speaking to those people and impressing upon them a sense of responsibility. The Government, even with their limited resources, might be able to do something, but the people must reciprocate. So, what is the use of the Government providing wire netting when the netting will not be looked after, and when the settler will not repay a solitary penny? I do not get these complaints from the other settlers in the South-West, many of whom are carrying greater handicaps than the group settlers; they have worse properties, less improvements, and not one-sixth of the assistance that has been afforded to the group settlers. Yet these men are bearing their burdens bravely, and last year they paid 48 per cent. of their interest and bought their own super, while the group settler paid no rent and only 2 per cent. of interest—not on the total expenditure on group settlements, but on the expenditure under revaluation of £1,806,000. I told Mr. McLarty that, although the rabbits had come, I was not going to engage upon a heavy expenditure on wire netting, because I felt sure the fences would not be maintained, and little of their cost would be paid off. So I am not impressed by the schemes contemplating boundary riders and excess income which could not be realised. The member for Nelson throws his arms about and makes remarkable statements, calling upon the Government to do something. There is only one thing he can do, and that is to urge his constituents to stand up to their responsibilities and take their places in the community with others, and bear their burdens like other people, when undoubtedly they will get

Parliament to assist them. But the hon. member in championing alleged grievances is merely taking his constituents down, because that sort of talk cannot do any good.

The Premier: And it encourages them in their attitude of refusing to do anything.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In the Walpole settlement, initiated by the previous Government, the present Government have provided rabbit-proof netting. When I was down there I travelled round one property and found the netting down for chains, with trees lying on it. Those trees had not just fallen, but had been down for a month at least. I told a settler that his wire netting was down, with trees lying on it, and he said the trees must have just fallen. I assured him they had been down for a month. This Government farming has been disastrous. When the Government find everything up to 100 per cent. the settler does not regard the block as his own. Certainly he has not paid for it and what a man does not pay for he does not value. So despite the fact that the rabbits are a pest in the South-West what encouragement is there to advance wire netting to people who do not value it but will regard it merely as another concession? Furthermore I am afraid that even if the properties were fenced the rabbits inside the fences would not in many cases be dealt with. I do not like to speak in this way but it has to be done. Then there is the further objection that this wire netting is financed to the farmers out of trust funds provided by the Commonwealth Government, and if the farmers do not pay, the State has to pay. This year, because many of the farmers cannot meet their instalments of interest, representations were made to the Federal Government to stand in with the State in meeting the losses. However the Federal Government said in effect, "No, not a shilling. This is a trust fund and must be paid." When the payment was one month in arrears they charged interest for the accommodation. So I am not justified in advancing wire netting in those circumstances. It may have to be done one day, but the settler and the community generally must recognise their responsibilities before it is done. I am sure the rabbit trouble in the South-West is really bad, but before the Government can come to the aid of the settlers, the settlers must reciprocate. The member for Nelson said the cattle were being starved off the holdings

because the rabbits were eating the feed. But before the rabbits ever went there, the cattle were being starved off the holdings. We have over the years repossessed thousands of cattle on the score of starvation. This year the increase in calves on the group settlements has been only 898, where the cows on the group settlements number 22,000. This year I advanced to settlers carrying under 20 cows there superphosphate as a charge against the holdings. Some regard it is a free gift. I did that, not because it was sound policy, but because, if we had not financed the super, there would probably have been no pasture. As the member for Sussex knows, we are repossessing cows down there and selling them because they are starving.

Mr. Brockman: Giving them away.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, giving them away. The increase in the group settlers' cattle should be 8,000 or 10,000 calves, whereas the total number is 898. The member for Nelson declares that we must do something. He must tell his people that nothing can be done for people who will not help themselves. I am not against the group settler. I have the greatest sympathy with his difficulties and with his incapacity in some instances to make for himself a home in this country. But I do not feel justified in recommending the spending of money in such circumstance as I have related. To-day I had brought under my notice a request for mowers and separators. Every settler must have a mower, because if he does not mow the pasture at the proper time it will soon become of no value, and he cannot wait upon his neighbour. But rarely on the group settlements have I seen a mower in a shed. A settler published the statement in the "Daily News" that he was starving and could not even afford to buy cartridges with which to shoot rabbits. Yet he had enough money to buy a runabout, and when I visited his holding he was away on a holiday in Bunbury. He had a shed in which to park his runabout, but his brand new mower, supplied by the Government, was left out in the open. We put it into the shed. In only a few instances have I seen a shed sheltering a mower in that area. How can the administration have the heart to do anything in those circumstances?

Mr. Stubbs: It is a tragedy.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member no doubt intends to do the right thing towards his own constituents, but unfortunately he always does the wrong thing in the House, he misleads them. If he tries to cultivate a sense of responsibility in his constituents, we may be able to do something for them. I do not wish to indict the group settlers; quite the reverse. In every settlement in Western Australia, wherever the Government are advancing 100 per cent., the settlers are gambling on it. Under this system no settlement is capable of success: the settler must first put some of his own money or labour into the property.

Mr. Latham: Are none of them at Walpole or Nornalup doing any good?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would not say that.

Mr. Latham: You suggested it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Probably, because already in one settlement the settlers are asking for a writing down. That is not at Walpole.

The Premier: Something in the atmosphere.

Mr. Latham: Down there they seemed to be a better lot of people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They are, too, but all the same we shall have to put a few out. I am convinced that on any settlement where 100 per cent. is advanced to a man on his holding it is regarded as a gamble. I do not wish to indict the settlers, but rather to help them. I am satisfied that I can do nothing, and that no other Minister for Lands under heaven could do anything either. If a settler constantly has in mind that he must receive concessions, no Minister can help him. If the Government are to embark on farming, it cannot be done under a system by which the individual can exploit the community to his own advantage. It may be possible under a system, such as that prevailing in Russia or Italy, where the government that pays the piper calls the tune. The individual must learn to exploit his own efforts and not the State. Except by the observance of that principle there cannot be much success in our settlements. We have many able settlers who have done good work. I hope the leader of the Opposition will be satisfied with my explanation of the distribution of the bonus.

Mr. Latham: I will have a chat with you privately.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Then we are bound to agree. As I have pointed out, I consider that the bank officials have done their best in the circumstances and I have not heard a solitary complaint save that voiced by the hon. member.

HON J. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [9.1]: I am very pleased with the efforts of the Government to cope with the problems arising from the revival of the mining industry. It is pleasing to note from the Speech that the gold yield for 1933 eclipsed that of the previous year by 31,646 fine ounces, and that the six months yield to the 30th June of this year exceeded that of the same period 1933 by 16,516 fine ounces. The Government, in making available money for assistance further to prospect the auriferous areas, have done good service to the State. I desire to bring under the notice of the Minister for Mines means whereby the scheme may be enlarged by providing additional water supplies in the drier areas. There is a large extent of auriferous country that is untouchable because of the scarcity of water. This fact is known to the Minister, and I am confident that he will take the matter up with his colleagues in order that, by the provision of adequate water supplies, prospecting may be carried into areas which so far have been largely neglected because of the scarcity of water. The increased activity in gold mining has created a problem on the eastern goldfields, particularly in Kalgoorlie, Boulder and Ivanhoe. This is the problem of homes. Many people attracted to those areas are not financial. They have gone there mostly in search of employment and have not the wherewithal to build homes for themselves. The available accommodation has been overtaxed, rents have increased enormously, and to-day it is difficult for people to secure homes of any kind. I was disappointed at the attitude of the Workers' Homes Board in this connection. It is extraordinary that money may be secured under the workers' homes scheme for building homes in agricultural areas and that a similar measure of assistance should be refused to people associated with gold mining. It would appear that the Workers' Homes Board have lost, or never possessed, confidence in the gold mining industry. Other people are prepared to invest their money to provide homes in those areas, but for some unknown

reason the board lack equal confidence in or are not prepared to extend their policy to the goldfields. Many people on the goldfields are prepared to find a certain sum of money if the board would assist them. I should like the Government to consider this matter with a view to bringing under the notice of the board the necessity for making advances for homes on the goldfields. The Minister for Employment should be congratulated on his efforts to place the unemployed in work. Unfortunately he is not yet in a position to provide a continuous system of employment. However, he is doing his best. The most distressing feature of unemployment, to my mind, is that presented by the youth of the State. This applies, not only to Western Australia, but to every State of the Commonwealth. I realise that the responsibility for finding work for the people does not rest solely with the Government. No doubt the Government are doing their utmost, but it is a rare experience to find young men working on Government jobs. Apparently the Government have their hands full in providing for the heads of families, but it is distressing to see lads round about 20 years of age who have not yet had an opportunity to earn a living for themselves. This remark applies equally to girls. The heads of families are compelled to support their offspring up to the age of 20 years, but the young people are not entitled to draw the sustenance allowance and apparently there is no opportunity to absorb them in Government work. They are denied the right to earn a living and they are denied opportunity to learn a trade or calling and thus fit themselves to become tradesmen in the industries of the State. Surely there is a moral obligation on private employers to do something for the young people. Hundreds of boys and girls who have secured their University junior certificate and many who have secured the leaving certificate have had no chance at all. I know of lads possessed of leaving certificates who are seeking employment in the agricultural areas. Some people might say they are fortunate in having parents who could afford to give them that degree of education. That may be so, but there are others who have not had that opportunity. Still, after large expenditure on their education, they find themselves at a dead end. This stultifies their minds and

is a menace to their future. They have nothing to look forward to. Every effort should be made by the people of the State to provide some employment for the young people, if only sufficient to enable them to earn enough to live and dress decently. Doubtless I shall be reminded that this state of affairs arises from the depression that is not only affecting us, but is worldwide. I admit that argument, but I am nevertheless of opinion that private employers have not risen to the occasion and that there is ample opportunity for them to do something for the youth of the State. There are other matters of importance on which I could touch, but other opportunities will be presented later. When the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank is discussed, I shall avail myself of the opportunity to speak. On the Budget discussion we shall be able to ventilate some of the smaller matters of concern to individual electorates. The Government deserve commendation for their efforts to find employment for the workless. Twelve months ago 6,265 men were on sustenance and the number has been reduced to 1,196. That is an achievement, and I hope that the 1,196 will be wiped off the slate within the current year. All members desire that our people should be able to go off sustenance and become absorbed in the ordinary avenues of employment so that greater prosperity may result, not only to themselves, but to the State.

MR. WELSH (Pilbara) [9.13]: The Speech with which the Lieut.-Governor opened Parliament contains a note of warning that the financial position of the State is still grave. His Excellency also put forward a plea for rigid economy, which is extremely good advice that doubtless will be followed. Reference was also made to the revival of the mining industry as the most satisfactory feature of the State's development, and to the capital flowing in from various parts of the world. In the Pilbara district gold mining appears to have taken a new lease of life. There is a chance of capital being introduced into that district, and if the hope is realised, it will prove a big factor in assisting the industry in the North to go ahead. The State batteries in my electorate have been working for some time, with fair

returns to the miners. The mines are, almost without exception, held by men who have worked them under adverse conditions for several years. It is gratifying to know that the men are now getting a fair return for their labour. Different companies have taken options over some of the mines, and, if those options are exercised, it will be a big factor in giving a much needed fillip to the industry. With regard to the pastoral industry, unfortunately the good prices realised for wool last year have not prevailed this year, and from to-day's paper I notice that the market is still weak. Probably we are in for a bad time, although the prices may yet improve. It is an unfortunate position. The industry has a lot of leeway to make up. For the last two years, on account of the low prices for wool and sheep, pastoralists have been unable to keep up their usual rate of repairs and improvements. No doubt the industry will recover as time goes on. My own opinion is that wool will hold its present price. It is very gratifying to those who brought forward the flying doctor scheme to see the support that has been given to it. This will prove of inestimable benefit to people out-back, who would not otherwise be able to secure medical assistance owing to distance. The hospital at Port Hedland is running at high pressure. I should very much like to see the Government increase the subsidy, seeing that the £100 that is now given is quite inadequate. If the Government would increase the subsidy, it would be of great advantage to the hospital and the people who make use of it. The sisters in charge have at times great difficulty in making ends meet. Formerly many donations were given by private persons, who thus kept the hospital going, but, since the introduction of the hospital tax, these donations have not been made. Owing to the heavy season in the North-West, the roads have become in a deplorable condition and a lot of money will be required to be spent this year to put them in order. The station and mining people have to get all their produce by road, but the condition of the thoroughfares is at present heartbreaking. There is no money available to keep them in order. Last year the Government gave a grant for the maintenance of roads in the North. If they would do the same again this year, or increase the amount, it

would be of great advantage to all the people concerned.

Mr. Hawke: The Government will look after them all right.

Mr. WELSH: They have been very sympathetic in the matter but when one sees the roads in the country districts of the South, one cannot help comparing them with the roads in the North. I repeat I should very much like to see a further subsidy given to the Port Hedland hospital, which is badly in need of financial support.

MR. HAWKE (Northam) [9.20]: I congratulate the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) on the opinions he expressed concerning the bad habit that has developed in Western Australia in recent years of criticising at every opportunity and often without excuse the other States of Australia.

Mr. Latham: The position is better to-day than it has been for a long time.

The Premier: We have tried to study it up a bit.

Mr. HAWKE: The hon. member struck a very good note. We must all agree that there is plenty of room for improvement in the relationship between this State and the other States and this State and the Commonwealth. A number of individuals in recent times have merely used this question as a means of getting into the limelight which in ordinary circumstances they could not have done. The cry has been raised without excuse and at every opportunity. I agree with the hon. member that a great deal more judgment should be shown on the whole question. If we are to make any progress in our relationship with the other States and the Commonwealth we ought to proceed along better lines and adopt a more sensible attitude. When circumstances offer and they justify criticism that is the time to indulge in it. To keep up a continual wail as some individuals do achieves no good for Western Australia and only intensifies the position. I congratulate those farmers who are members of the Primary Producers' Association upon their unanimous decision in favour of compulsory unionism within their ranks.

Mr. Latham: There is no alternative to-day.

Mr. HAWKE: That does not affect the issue.

Mr. Moloney: They were preaching the opposite the other night.

Mr. HAWKE: The farmers who constitute the Primary Producers' Association of Western Australia have decided unanimously in favour of compulsory unionism for all farmers of the State and also decided to enforce that compulsory unionism by legislation passed through Parliament.

Mr. Moloney: What will the Opposition do now?

Mr. HAWKE: The farmers have taken a wise stand. If the farmers of Australia had concentrated in the past on organisation as they have promised to do in the future they would have been in a happier position than they occupy to-day. In these days the most powerful organised bodies are those that are getting the best deal. Because the farmers of Australia are the worst organised body naturally they are getting the worst deal in this time of difficulty. The only hope for them as for other sections is to intensify their organisation and make it as perfect as possible. I congratulate the farmers on the stand they have taken and hope they will be successful in their attempt to bring about 100 per cent. unionism within their ranks. Farmers that I have met have raised no objection to the policy of compulsory unionism within the ranks of the working classes. They are consistent, which is more than can be said for their representatives in the public life of the State. The dispute that occurred in regard to the Government policy of preference to unionists some months ago had some special features associated with it that can well be emphasised. A widespread attempt was made to use the issue with the object of gaining party political advantage on the part of certain public men in the State. It was felt by them that the opportunity was available to condemn the Government and stir up public opinion against them.

Mr. Latham: But the attempt was not made.

Mr. HAWKE: The attempt failed miserably. The Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Nationalist Party were bitter in their denunciation of the Government policy, if my memory serves me right.

Mr. Latham: Your memory is very faulty.

Mr. HAWKE: They expressed great sympathy for some men alleged to have been dismissed from their employment, because they refused to shoulder any responsibility in regard to the maintenance of unionism in Western Australia. A section of the local Press also took the matter up. In the leading newspaper an appeal was launched for the raising of a fund for the dependants of those who allegedly were sacked for a certain reason. The outstanding feature of the controversy was that the public were not impressed by the claims of those men, who alleged that they had been wrongly treated. The total amount raised by that appeal through the "West Australian" was only £40, whereas a few weeks before many times that amount had been raised through an appeal to assist foreigners who had been affected by the Kalgoorlie riots. The public saw through the whole business of the unionism dispute. They saw it was being stirred up largely for political purposes, and came to the conclusion that what had happened was not deserving of any financial support from them. I was of opinion, and have remained of the opinion, that the men who were dismissed on that occasion chose to be dismissed, not because they did not want to take a union ticket, but because they did not want to take a job. For years they had been living in the metropolitan area receiving a certain amount from the Government each week. They would have preferred to continue with that arrangement rather than to go into the country and do work for the money they were receiving. The unionism issue was only raised for the purpose of assisting their desires in that direction. It was unfortunate for those members of Parliament who attacked the Government on that issue that they chose such poor individuals upon which to build their case.

The Minister for Employment: They backed a loser.

Mr. Latham: Not one man in the House raised the question throughout the special session.

The Minister for Works: Was not a telegram sent to the Eastern States about it?

Mr. Latham: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. HAWKE: Although the matter may not have been raised in this House, it will

be remembered that it was raised in the newspapers, and raised in a very strong manner by the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Nationalist Party.

Mr. Latham: I ask for a withdrawal of that statement, which is absolutely untrue.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Northam has been asked to withdraw the statement.

Mr. HAWKE: I have no objection to withdrawing the statement, but proof of it will be produced in due course.

Mr. Latham: You prove it.

Mr. HAWKE: It is also true, as the Minister for Works has suggested, that some person in this State, holding a position in public life, or some high position in the State, sent a telegram to the Prime Minister urging that he and the Loan Council should refuse to grant loan funds to the Treasurer of the State until the policy of the Government on this question had been altered.

Mr. Latham: I deny any knowledge of that telegram.

The Minister for Works: A wire was published in the Press to try and stop us getting the money.

Mr. Latham: I never saw it.

Mr. HAWKE: There is no need for the Leader of the Opposition to make denials, as no one has suggested that he sent the wires.

Mr. Latham: But there might be such an implication.

Mr. HAWKE: I think the Leader of the Opposition is a little too touchy on that point.

Mr. Latham: I am touchy when statements are made which are untrue.

Mr. HAWKE: That point will be decided in the future. I am sure every member on this side of the Chamber remembers that the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party condemned strongly the Minister for Employment and the Government at that time in regard to the policy put into operation. It is true, as suggested by the Minister for Employment, that they failed badly in the attempt made then to gain political advantage. As a matter of fact, they were backing a bunch of communists, as was known to most people at the time. The Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party have found this out since, and as a consequence have kept silent about the matter.

Mr. Latham: The statement is untrue.

Mr. HAWKE: I am afraid the memory of the Leader of the Opposition is not as good as it might be.

Mr. Latham: It is not a matter of memory.

Mr. HAWKE: A Federal election is now on the people. I have no desire this evening to deal with the issues of the election, but the speeches delivered here this afternoon show that the country is in a sick condition, that the primary industries in particular are having a life-and-death struggle. They show that thousands of young men and young women are without employment, and without any prospect of it. Utterances made here to-day and also last week show up remarkably the extent of the bluff that has been indulged in during recent weeks by the Prime Minister and those associated with him in the election campaign, because the cry of the Prime Minister and his Government is that they have restored confidence and have established a substantial measure of recovery, and that things have brightened up wonderfully in Australia during the last year or two. It is necessary that the people should face the true situation. It is necessary that they should realise that conditions in Australia are being maintained to some extent, and that industry is being maintained to a large extent, only by the policy of all Australian Governments of borrowing large sums of money and putting them into circulation by providing employment of one kind and another. That policy is having a beneficial effect, inasmuch as it is circulating additional purchasing power and thus increasing the demand for goods, and by that means maintaining industry at a certain level. On the other hand, though, it is having a most dangerous influence upon the stability of every Australian State, because it is loading up a debt burden and an interest liability already highly serious for the industries and the people of Australia. That system cannot continue a great deal longer. Australian taxpayers are now paying £1,000,000 a week in interest on the national debt. That debt is growing continually, and the interest liability is increasing continually; and the whole thing is being kept up in a most unreal and artificial way.

Mr. North: We are borrowing ourselves out of debt!

Mr. HAWKE: We are endeavouring to borrow ourselves out of the depression; but under the present financial system that is not possible, because the more one borrows the worse one's position becomes, and the more deeply into depression one sinks. When we of the Labour movement suggest that a change in the financial system is required, we are immediately charged with being irresponsible, and are immediately told that the present banking system has met every demand upon it, has saved the nation, and is the secure basis upon which we must build up our future prosperity. I am quite prepared to admit that we of the Labour Party do not know anything about the question, that our analysis of the situation is wrong, and that the policy we put forward is wrong. I do not ask the people to consider our views at all. But I propose to quote a statement made by the president of the Bankers' Guild, when speaking at the annual meeting of the guild in London during May of this year. The statement I propose to read is taken from the "Bulletin" published in Scotland, which appears to be a much better paper than the "Bulletin" published in Sydney. The statement is as follows:—

Control of the financial system is coming. You have clear evidence that it is not merely a party political stunt. The dire needs of an industrial world in chaos, nationally and internationally, make it inevitable. No one except the unintelligent can imagine the continuity of the financial system as we now know it. Don't waste your time in formulating resolutions asking for the executive committee to declare its policy on nationalisation of banking or its control. If and when it comes, it will come from far greater forces than you can control; and, incidentally, it is as likely to come from the Conservative Party in power as from a Labour Party; and even it may come from the banks themselves, driven by economic stresses they cannot control.

I am largely in agreement with that prediction. I feel positive that the people of Australia and the people of other countries will not continue for many years longer to suffer the imposition of the contradictory situation now existing. I feel positive in my own mind that men and women the world over will demand a radical alteration of the existing financial arrangement. They will demand that the benefits of scientific production shall be made available without the hindrance of a private monopoly control over the credit system in the various countries of the world. Whether one party or

another party puts this new system into operation, it will come, in spite of what some people may do to prevent its coming. Some parties and some individuals, by spending huge sums of money, by spreading propaganda of a terrorist type, may delay the coming of this very necessary change in the financial system; but although they may delay its coming for a period, they cannot prevent its being set up eventually. So I rest content in the sure and certain knowledge that before a great period of time passes, we shall see the ushering-in of a new financial system, which will assure to the peoples of the world the full advantages of the great advances made in scientific production during recent times. I wish briefly to suggest to the Government and to the House certain things which I feel ought to be done and can be done. We in this Parliament are in a rather unenviable position. We all have our own ideas of what ought to be done. We can all, like the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), urge that this be done, and that that be done, and that something else be done; but we are always conscious, if we are responsible, that the present Government, like most other State Governments, are under the control of whatever amount of money is made available to them. They may wish to do a million and one things, but they cannot do those things unless the necessary money is available. Under the present financial system money is doled out to Governments according to the decisions of an organisation which works to a large extent under cover. I have been of the opinion for some time past that a great deal of benefit could be achieved in the way of efficiency if an expert investigation were made into the departments of government in this State. I feel that if the Premier and his Cabinet were to look carefully through the Public Service, they would be able to choose a young man with organising ability who could undertake the task of co-ordinating the various departments in Western Australia. That has been done in other States of the Commonwealth, and with excellent results. I am not suggesting that any inquiry be set on foot with the object of retrenching a hundred or a thousand men. I am merely suggesting that a co-ordinating inquiry should be held with the object of so arranging and co-ordinating effort in the different departments that the

maximum of efficiency and benefit may be received.

The Minister for Works: There is a high-salaried man whose permanent job it is to do that.

Mr. HAWKE: Possibly that individual has been in the position too long.

The Minister for Works: He has been there for only two years.

Mr. HAWKE: That may be the case. In any event, we have not been acquainted with the results of any of his work. If that officer is doing the job, then I sincerely hope and trust we may be informed just to what extent his work is being carried out and just to what extent co-ordination is being accomplished.

Mr. Thorn: If your ideas were carried out, they would mean retrenchment.

Mr. HAWKE: I do not think so. My belief is that they would mean an improvement in services to the public. I think the effect would be to make some men available for other services which could well be rendered in this State. The Government are spending thousands of pounds each year in paying salaries to a certain number of officers. They could go on expending the same amount of money, but they could so increase the efficiency as to obtain for the public a much better service; and as a result there need not be one man or one woman retrenched. So I hope that if the officer is on the job, we may be able to obtain some definite information as to how his work is progressing: for if he is doing the job satisfactorily, there is no need for any other action to be taken. I suggest, too, that the Government during this Session give consideration to the question of amalgamating the Commonwealth and State rolls. This has been attempted on previous occasions, but without success. In past years another place has defeated the proposal, simply because it was a new proposal. In these days, when economy is the cry, and when efficiency should be demanded, the amalgamation would be a step in the right direction. It would abolish a good deal of duplication and expense, and place the public in the position of having to trouble about only one electoral roll, instead of two, as is the case to-day. In consequence of there being two electoral rolls, some people will find that their names do not appear on the Commonwealth rolls when the next Federal elections

are held. Many think that because they attended the polls when the last State election was held, that their names will be on the Commonwealth roll. If we had a uniform roll for both State and Commonwealth, there would be no such difficulty.

Mr. Latham: What about when the boundaries of electorates are not co-terminus?

Mr. HAWKE: I think that difficulty could be overcome easily. It would necessitate an arrangement with the Commonwealth with a view to establishing electoral subdivisions that would coincide with our electorates. In several of the other States there is but one electoral roll, and although the Commonwealth would require to alter the Federal subdivisions in Western Australia, I believe that one electoral roll would give great satisfaction. I am of the opinion that the elections to choose members of both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council should be held on the one day.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAWKE: It seems absurd that the people should have to go to the polls in, say, April of this year to elect one set of members of Parliament, and then, a month later, a certain section of those electors have to go to the polls to elect the members of another branch of the Legislature. Before the present Parliament has run its course, I hope a favourable decision will be arrived at in that regard. It would be better for all concerned and would save much unnecessary expense caused by the present system. The money so saved could be spent in far better ways. I am of opinion, too, that members of both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council should enjoy the same period of parliamentary life. I have never been able to understand why one section of the Legislature should be elected for six years, and another section for three years. I offer the suggestion that members of the two branches of the Legislature should be granted a four-year term of membership. I believe that a six-year term is too long for Council members to enjoy, and a three-year term is too short for Assembly members, especially when we consider that the Assembly members really constitute the Government of the State. I hope Ministers will give some consideration to that question. I feel that the public are of the opinion that the three-year term is too short, and if the members of all four political parties

—I include the Independent in this Chamber—were to go to the country at the next general elections favouring a policy of a four-year Parliament for members of both branches of the Legislature, I am sure the proposal would be endorsed by an overwhelming majority of the people. Such an arrangement would help Governments, and it would bring about greater continuity of policy. It would give members at least two years within which to do the really effective work for the State. There are many other subjects with which I desire to deal but as the Premier is desirous of forcing this debate to a conclusion this evening, I will make way for other speakers, unless the Premier feels inclined to report progress, in which event I shall inflict myself upon members to-morrow for a little while longer.

Mr. Latham: We could not agree to that; it would be a new departure. You might be inclined to agree to five-year Parliaments then.

Mr. HAWKE: No, I think that period would be too long, particularly if an unsatisfactory Government were in power.

Mr. Latham: We have one now.

Mr. HAWKE: To keep an unsatisfactory Government in power for five years would be more than the State could stand in its present position. The Government should give some consideration to the consolidating of the statutes. I have been following up by investigation what is being done in the other States. I do not say that we should follow what they do if what they are attempting is not right, but in the consolidation of statutes, I think what has been done is right, and, in those circumstances, it is our duty to follow them. The following telegram from Adelaide, dated the 4th April of this year, appeared in the Press:—

The work of producing the statutes of the South Australian Parliament in six or seven volumes of convenient size has been begun by the Parliamentary Draftsman (Mr. E. L. Bean), with the idea of simplifying the law at a minimum charge. The volumes will also contain references to the regulations and proclamations in force, corresponding sections of the Imperial Acts and a reference to the judicial decisions of the various sections of the State Acts. Before the work is completed, a large number of Acts will be consolidated, and a number of obsolete Acts repealed.

Mr. Latham: That work will certainly not be finished in your time, nor in mine either.

Mr. HAWKE: It may be an endless sort of job, but the Leader of the Opposition will agree that a great improvement can be achieved if the task is taken in hand.

Mr. Latham: Quite so.

The Minister for Justice: You know that we are proceeding with that work and that the Land Act was consolidated last year.

Mr. HAWKE: I was glad to note that a start was made last year, and to have the Minister's assurance now that the work is to continue.

The Minister for Justice: The Road Districts Act is being consolidated now.

Mr. Latham: And the Health Act as well.

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Mr. HAWKE: A Press telegram from Canberra was also published indicating what the Federal Government were doing regarding this particular matter, and I trust the consolidation of our Acts in Western Australia will be speeded up so that the public may know what laws are in existence and what is expected of them. There is also the question of the simplification of our system of taxation. I shall not dwell upon that matter in detail because it has been before the public in recent months. There have been conferences between representatives of various Governments and between the Commissioner of Taxation and the Deputy Commissioners of the various States and Commonwealth. Much progress has been made, and I am sure the taxpayers will be pleased if the result is a substantial simplification of the present taxation system. At present people are no sooner finished with the worry of putting in one set of forms than they have to worry about—

Mr. Latham: The subsequent queries.

Mr. HAWKE: I was not going to mention that, but the question of the payment of taxation, only to have the worry of filling in other forms shortly afterwards. Some time ago a matter cropped up in connection with the railways at Northam that requires further consideration. A railway official was in default to the Government to the extent of about £7,000 over a long period. He committed suicide when the trouble was discovered and the officials of the Railway Department to date seem to have satisfied themselves that everything necessary was done by reducing in status one officer.

Mr. Wansbrough: And he was a petty clerk.

Mr. HAWKE: That is so. There is a strong feeling that this matter should be inquired into more deeply, and the opinion is held that there are other officers holding much higher positions in the department who should shoulder some of the responsibility. As is so often the case, there seemed to be a tendency to pick out some harmless individual well down the ladder, and make him a scapegoat. I trust some more searching examination will be instituted, particularly regarding the looseness of administration that permitted this sort of thing to continue undetected for so long. The responsibility should be sheeted home to individuals other than the one already punished. Then, again, the question of overtime in the Railway Department has developed seriously, particularly since the administration of the Transport Board commenced. The business of the Railway Department has grown and the department has attempted to carry on with the same staff as formerly. As a result, no one has been given any satisfaction. People who formerly received their goods by road were suddenly forced to depend upon the railways for service, but apparently the railway authorities made no preparation to deal with the additional traffic, and many people in the country districts have been compelled to wait for long periods before being able to secure the goods consigned to them from Perth. A definite responsibility has been placed upon the management of the Railway Department to handle this problem much more expeditiously than they have dealt with it so far. They should have been prepared for the increased traffic available for the railways. No doubt economy has been uppermost in the minds of the authorities, and those in charge are anxious to show the best possible financial results. In addition to achieving those results, some determined effort should be made to provide the clients of our railways with the best and most prompt service possible. That is the only thing that will restore the popularity of the railways. The people who are forced to support that system should at least be given up-to-date service. The overtime that has been worked in recent weeks has been so excessive as to have become something in the nature of a scandal. If proper preparations had been made for the additional traffic that should have been anticipated, many men who are out of work

or on part-time employment would now be enjoying permanent jobs in the department. I trust something definite will be done to deal with this matter. There is one other question I will deal with and, much as I regret having to do so, I feel so strongly about it that the facts should be placed on record in the pages of "Hansard." A deputation from Northam came to me last week and asked me to take them to see the Secretary of the Premier's Department, Mr. Shapcott, in order to discuss certain matters that might arise during the visit to Northam of H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester. We were unable to see Mr. Shapcott, but we met his deputy, Mr. Stitfold. The deputation asked for certain assurances, and those assurances were given. The deputation came from Northam because they knew certain influences were operating for a purpose that would achieve a certain result unfavourable to Northam. So they felt that the best thing to do in the circumstances was to come down and discuss the matter freely and frankly with those in charge of the arrangements. We received certain assurances, and when presently I read this letter, members will get a better grasp of what I am driving at. This letter was sent by Mr. Shapcott to the secretary of the West Australian Turf Club, Perth. The matter in dispute is that of the entertainment of the Duke at Northam and York on the 8th October. Personally, I am not in the least concerned about the form of entertainment, or whether a race meeting is held at Northam or at York.

Mr. Latham: We shall see that you get an invitation for York.

Mr. HAWKE: I thank the hon. member. This is the letter from Mr. Shapcott, dated 15/8/34, and addressed to the secretary of the W.A. Turf Club, Perth. It reads as follows:—

Dear Sir,—Should a country race meeting be arranged in honour of the visit of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Gloucester, to York and Northam on 8th of October, it is desirable that such race meeting should be held in York, where His Royal Highness will have more time to attend a race meeting.—Faithfully yours, L. E. Shapcott, Director of Royal Tour, 1934.

That letter was perused by the Mayor of Northam, who was a member of the deputation, and by Mr. A. M. Jahn, who was

also a member. In reply to that, they wrote me as follows under date 20/8/34.

Dear Sir, -Having had the opportunity of perusing a copy of the letter sent by Mr. Shapcott to the W.A. Turf Club committee, in which he urged the claims of York Racing Club to have a race meeting on October 8, we wish to register a strong protest at such action and express our deep disgust at the improper tactics employed by Mr. Shapcott. You will remember we accompanied you as a deputation to Mr. Stitfold on Tuesday, August 7. In view of certain influences that were operating to deprive the Northam Club of the right to race on October 8, and even deprive it of any fair consideration in that regard, we asked Mr. Stitfold for the following assurances: (1) That the Northam and York clubs be allowed to go before the W.A. Turf Club committee without any influence from Mr. Shapcott, or any other person officially associated with the Duke of Gloucester's visit, being exercised in favour of either club; (2) That the suggestion to hold a race meeting at Northam as included in the Duke's programme for Northam, be officially endorsed by Mr. Shapcott, the same as had been done by him in the case of York's programme. Mr. Stitfold willingly gave those assurances. When Mr. Shapcott accidentally or otherwise entered the room where the deputation was being held, we asked him for assurances on the same points. He also gave the assurances, in what impressed us as being a sincere and honest manner. We then gave Mr. Stitfold and Mr. Shapcott the following assurances: (1) That we would forward to them next day an official and complete suggested programme for Northam for October 8; (2) That the W.A. Turf Club would meet on Tuesday, August 14, and would then decide between the applications for permission to race as sent in by York and Northam clubs; (3) That Northam would loyally abide by the Turf Club's decision, provided it was arrived at without any influence or pressure from Mr. Shapcott or other Government official. Those three assurances were accepted. In view of the foregoing you may well imagine our feelings when we learned that Mr. Shapcott had wilfully and in writing acted in such a way as to make it impossible for Northam's application to receive any consideration at all. For Mr. Shapcott to suggest, as justification for his action, that he was asked for guidance, is too shallow to carry any conviction. His suggestion that he wrote the letter because he wanted finality is falsified by the fact that he accepted our assurance that the matter would be finalised on August 14. In any case, in view of his pledged word to us, Mr. Shapcott could have urged the Turf Club to finalise the matter immediately without using the whole of his official influence for the purpose of denying Northam a fair hearing. That a man holding Mr. Shapcott's high position should wilfully and without any excuse break his pledged word to a deputation is a happening that must astound the people of Western Australia. We can accept his

action as being nothing less than an insult to ourselves and to the municipality and people of Northam.

As I said before, I am not interested and I have no feeling in regard to where any function should be held, but I am very much concerned, and I feel very strongly that when we took the precaution to get certain assurances because we feared certain influences, and when we were assured that each application would go before the W.A.T.C. without the slightest influence or interference by Mr. Shapcott or any other Government official, and when in face of that Mr. Shapcott writes a letter urging the claims of York and murdering the chances of Northam, I say the whole thing disgusts me, and I am only sorry that anything of the kind should happen in Western Australia, especially as it involves the State's leading public servant. I have written Mr. Shapcott, and spoken to him per telephone, and if he would wish me to tell him to his face what I have told him in the letter, and what I have spoken here this evening, I should be only too pleased to do it if he would make an appointment with me. Now I think I have spoken sufficiently long to gain the adjournment for those other members who desire to speak.

Mr. Thorn: There is no limit. You may go on.

Mr. HAWKE: There may be no limit, but I have covered the ground I wished to cover, although I have not elaborated all the points as in other circumstances I might have done. I have placed before the House certain things which I believe can be carried out without expense to the State or to the taxpayers, and I feel sure the Government during this and the next session will carry on very effective work legislatively and administratively, and that in the next Parliament we shall all meet here together again and look forward to enjoying a term of a four-year Parliament.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [10.8]: I was amused by the remarks of the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) the other evening. He seemed offended because there was not any more in the Governor's Speech than there is. It is about the tenth speech of this kind I have heard, including some when the member for Nedlands was in the Ministry, and I have never yet seen much

in the Governor's Speech. I only look on it as a frill for the social day of the year, the opening of Parliament. However, in my opinion the time has arrived when we should have an alteration in the opening ceremony. Under the existing system we assemble here and await the arrival of the chap with the black stick, who orders us to go up to another place forthwith. Although it is an old and long-established custom of the Parliaments of the British Empire to open in the Upper House, I think it is time we should make a move and see to it that Parliament is opened in the place where the business of the session is done.

Mr. Latham: And invite the King's representative down here.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not care. We must have a Governor, and he has to open Parliament, and the proper place for the ceremony is in the Assembly.

Mr. Latham: Do you remember that the members of the House of Commons once threatened a King that if he came into their House they would behead him?

Mr. SLEEMAN: We are not likely to behead anyone here. In any case the holder of the position is a fine old gentleman, and I would rather see him in that position than an imported Governor. At the same time, if we are to have an opening of Parliament by the Governor, let him come to this Chamber, and, if necessary, members of the Legislative Council could come down here.

Mr. Thorn: You believe in reform?

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is not a very drastic reform, but it is a necessary one. The most important subject dealt with in the Speech is that of unemployment. The Government have done quite a lot, and there has been an improvement in the position, notwithstanding the statement by members of the Opposition that there has been no improvement.

Mr. Latham: We did not say there had been no improvement. We pointed out how the improvement had been effected.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The member for Nelson stated to-night that there had been no improvement. I maintain that there has been improvement, though not as much as I would like to see. We are still a long way from the corner. I wish to make one or two suggestions to the Government in connection with unemployment. It has been the practice to send away to country jobs

all grades of men, irrespective of their previous occupations. It is not of much use to send a watchmaker to the country as an A class man to undertake pick and shovel or other laborious work. The men should be graded so that the watchmaker and the tailor will not be put to the same work as those men who are accustomed to use a pick and shovel. Some weeks ago I was one of a party who went to Yarloop to inspect the drains there, and one of the first men I saw in the drain was an acquaintance who had been a boot salesman ever since I had been in the metropolitan area. To my knowledge, he had been selling boots for the last 22 years, which was the hardest work he had done in all that time, and yet he was engaged on work in a drain. Much to my astonishment, he was holding his own with the men who had been following that class of work for many years. Still, it is not right to send all classes of men to that kind of work. I hope something will be done to secure a better grading of the men in future. I suggest also that next winter the men should not be kept working in the drains up to their waists in water. The Government have experienced difficulty in finding work to keep the men employed, but in future I should like to see the men engaged on other work during the winter months.

The Minister for Employment: Eight hundred were shifted this year.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Quite a lot were working in water at Yarloop a few weeks ago, and there was quite a lot of sickness amongst the men, apart from injuries, resulting in claims under the Workers' Compensation Act. The men told us that if we stayed over night, we would think we were in Wooroloo, owing to the coughs and colds prevailing amongst the workers. I know that the Government were hard pressed to find work for the unemployed, but I hope that road jobs and railway work will be kept for the winter and that the drain work will be done in the warmer months of the year. Another suggestion is that, in order to keep a large number of men at work, we should undertake a housing scheme, which is very necessary.

Mr. Latham: A scheme of building cheap houses.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes. I notice that Mr. Boas, of the Economic Council, suggested building houses costing £400. While it

would be very pleasant to many people to own a house of that value, it is too high.

Mr. Latham: Better keep it away from the Economic Council.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The people I have in mind are men under relief schemes and sustenance workers, and they could not find the amount required to secure a £400 house unless they were in permanent work. A suitable cottage could be built for half of £400. The houses built by the trustees of the McNess Fund are satisfactory and I do not think they cost more than £200.

Mr. Thorn: Would you build them in a separate area?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, I would build them anywhere and everywhere. A number of houses were built some time ago and were a godsend to the people who secured them, but we could improve a little on them. Those houses were built for about £70, the unemployed being required to do the building themselves. Under a housing scheme, I consider that we could do a little better, but I hope the Government will not consider building houses at a cost of £400 for sustenance or relief workers. A sum of £200 would provide a suitable home for a start, and, by limiting the cost, the funds available could be made to go further. Quite a lot of people in my district started with homes of less value, but have added one or two rooms and now have nice homes. If the Government could see their way to proceed with the scheme with houses costing £200, many people in the metropolitan area would be pleased at the opportunity to secure homes, while the work entailed would provide employment for carpenters, bricklayers, brickmakers, timber workers and other suppliers of material. That would obviate the need for sending many men to the bush.

The Minister for Employment: The Government have agreed to the appointment of a board to report on a housing scheme.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am pleased to hear that. There is another scheme that would provide work for a lot of men and would be quite as good as much of the work now being done, though no doubt it is all valuable and will prove useful. I refer to the building of a bridge across the Swan River at North Fremantle. That would enable many men to be employed locally. I do not consider it necessary to have a steel bridge. By supporting local industry, we could make

concrete from local cement and, with the aid of our jarrah and other timbers, it should be possible to erect a substantial structure. The existing bridge at North Fremantle is not only a disgrace to the community; it is also a danger.

Mr. Cross: What about the Canning Bridge?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The day is not far distant when there will be an accident, and people will say, "I told you so." The existing structure is no ornament. I am satisfied that it is dangerous, because I have spoken to men who were employed on the reconditioning work and because I have been under the bridge when vehicles were crossing it. When a horse and cart were crossing, the vibration could be distinctly felt. If a horse and cart cause vibration, how can we expect the bridge to hold up much longer?

Mr. Ferguson: Was it not the same 20 years ago?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, and it is getting worse every year. The same thing was said about the railway bridge. It had been in the same condition for twenty years, but we woke up one morning and found it gone. People said it was not the bridge but the approaches which broke down. If the approaches had not gone the bridge would have gone, but the approaches happened to be the weakest part of it. So much timber had been driven into the structure that something had to go. The fairway was blocked with timber. The approach happened to be weaker than the bridge, and so the approaches went. I hope something will be done by the Government concerning a new structure. It would provide work for various trades and callings and would keep many people employed. They could then live on in their homes in the metropolitan area, which would be preferable to sending them away to the country.

Mr. Moloney: Has there been an under-water survey?

Mr. SLEEMAN: There have been two or three. If one speaks to the officers privately one is told that the under-water survey was not too satisfactory, but if the matter is discussed departmentally one is told that things are not so bad. That is the departmental style. At all events the bridge is not safe, and is not an ornament. The member for Canning (Mr. Cross) said just now, "What

about the Canning bridge?" I think that is safe enough, but it requires to be widened. I pass over it very frequently, as does also the Minister for Works. It is not right to have a bridge of that width when so much traffic is travelling over it. When two motors are passing each other it is very difficult for a pedestrian who is on the bridge at the same time to get out of the way. Vehicles often meet on the bridge, and I am afraid that one of these days there will be a catastrophe because the passage way is too narrow to enable people to stand quite clear of the passing vehicles. I believe that when the new road was built it was intended to be used to take all the heavy traffic along the south side of the river, and relieve the congestion on Stirling Highway. The road, however, cannot serve that purpose unless the Canning Bridge is widened. A lot has been said about bulk handling. Two or three members opposite, who claim to represent the farmers, have had a great deal to say on the subject. One member said it would not throw many people out of work. As a matter of fact, that is just what it will do.

Mr. Latham: It may throw out a few.

Mr. SLEEMAN: One member said the scheme would throw out of employment a handful of lumpers in Fremantle. I contend it will throw out of work a large number of men in the country districts, those who are engaged in handling wheat at sidings, sewing bags, and carrying out other multifarious duties associated with farming. The scheme will not be of much benefit to the farmers either.

Mr. Latham: Boys on the farms will be enabled to go to school during the harvest.

Mr. Ferguson: You do not suggest that is the responsibility of the wheat farmers, do you?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Any industry that adopts labour saving devices, and throws on the scrapheap hundreds of thousands of workers, must carry some of the responsibility for those who are affected by them. The time is coming in Western Australia when the gold mining industry must foot the bill for those who are crippled, maimed, broken in health and confined to hospital.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Can you combat the statement of the member for Guildford-Midland when he said the scheme was of great benefit to the farmers?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I suggest the hon. member should argue that with the member for Guildford-Midland. There is not as much in the scheme as the hon. member makes out.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I was referring to the interjection of the hon. member.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Whether or not we are supposed to be enemies of the farmers, I contend that the scheme will throw a lot out of work.

Mr. Thorn: You are only trying to stick up for the lumpers.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am opposed to something that I think will act detrimentally for most of the people in the State. If the scheme is going to be of benefit to the State, let us have it, but my view is that it will have the opposite effect. If members have kept their eyes open they will have realised what a dismal failure it has been elsewhere. If members opposite viewed the matter fairly and impartially, and were free to express their opinions without fear of insulting their electors, they would agree with me.

The Premier: The Wheatgrowers' Union is with you.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I would say that the pick of the farmers belong to that union, because the pick of any industry belongs to the union concerned. If the Wheatgrowers' Union is with me, I am more than satisfied that I am on the right track.

Mr. Latham: You ought to be satisfied to have the pick of the men in the unions, without trying to force others in.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Evidently they have come to the conclusion that their representatives in Parliament are not doing their job, and that they must organise themselves in order to get a fair deal. If they would look into the matter members opposite would see that bulk handling is not what it is said to be. Mr. Thomson of the Westralian Farmers has come out as a champion of the scheme, and talks about the way wheat is damaged in bags. He is as good as a circus. He now claims that bulk handling is the right thing for Western Australia. Some time ago I drew attention to the manner in which wheat was being left out in the weather on the wharves at Fremantle. I tried to show my friendliness to the farmers, and indicated that wheat to the extent of thousands of pounds in value was being destroyed. Mr. Thomson's firm came along and said that it was no such thing. They

claimed that it was impossible to damage wheat if it were kept in bags, and that when the bags got damp all that happened was that a small film was created on the inside of the bag. He said that it was the proper way to handle wheat, and that it could not be damaged. Indeed, one of the heads of the Western Australian Farmers came up to the House and asked me what I was making such a fuss about. He said the trouble was that there was not enough moisture in Western Australian wheat. They also said that if I had not drawn attention to the fact of bags being there with whiskers on them about fifteen inches long they would have started shifting them next day.

Mr. Latham: Did Mr. Thomson tell you that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No; one of the firm.

Mr. Latham: One of the wharf lumpers?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No. A member of Mr. Thomson's firm. If the hon. member wants to know who it was, let him ask the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson), who was there at the time. That member of Mr. Thomson's firm told me that the trouble in this country was that enough moisture did not get into the wheat, and that wheat could not be destroyed in bags. Now Mr. Thomson comes along and says to us, "Look at the damage being done to wheat in bags." As a matter of fact, I invited down to Fremantle a former Minister for Works, Mr. Lindsay, and the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths), and the late Mr. Harry Brown; and when they saw what was going on they admitted that I had not exaggerated at all, but had understated the case. I said the wheat was being left uncovered all around the place. The fact, though I am sorry to say it, was that every merchant's stack was covered. The merchants looked after their wheat, but the others left their wheat out in the open. The same thing is going on to-day. These people cannot have the argument both ways: either they were wrong then or they are wrong now. Let me pick out a few of Mr. Thomson's remarks. Here is one—

When wheat merchants were dealing with bagged wheat acquired by themselves, they were, as in the past, the sole judges as to whether the wheat should be shipped abroad.

That is where I start my argument. I say these people have no right to be the sole arbiters as to the wheat to be shipped. The name of this State is too important to be

exposed to such a risk. If we continue as we have been doing during the past 12 months, the reputation of Western Australian wheat will be ruined. I hope the Government will see that the present state of things is altered. Something should be done to prevent wheat being shipped from this State unless accompanied by an official certificate.

Mr. Ferguson: The buyer does not want a certificate.

Mr. SLEEMAN: What buyer does not want it? The Pool does not want it.

Mr. Ferguson: Any buyer can get the certificate if he wants it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Minister stated that only 34 per cent. of the wheat leaving this State was certificated.

Mr. Doney: Because certificates are not wanted.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Government should see that no wheat leaves this State unless certificated. Are the interests of the farmers protected if wheat is shipped in any sort of condition? The effect must be to ruin the name of Western Australian wheat. The Government should step in and prevent any wheat in bad condition being shipped. Mr. Thomson further said—

The Government had refused to grant certificates in respect of considerable quantities of bagged wheat, and the owners of this "condemned" or "rejected" wheat had either disposed of it locally, or included it in other shipments for which no Government certificate was required.

There is an admission that the Government had refused to grant a certificate. But wheat condemned has been brought back and shipped under cover of night. The same thing is being done in connection with bulk wheat as was done in connection with bagged wheat. Trucks are condemned and then are brought back and put into a ship in the darkness of night. In reply to a question of mine the Minister for Agriculture said there was no check. It is time we had a check. Otherwise the wheatgrowers of Western Australia are likely to be ruined. I repeat, it is up to the Government to see that the wheat does not leave our shores in bad condition. Here is another of Mr. Thomson's statements—

Following these inspections the merchants had rejected, or as the Minister put it "condemned," a few trucks of bulk wheat; and there was no doubt that there would have been rejections for similar reasons if bagged wheat had been tendered.

Right through the piece we are told that damage is being done to bagged wheat. Formerly we were told that there was only that thin scum. Again Mr. Thomson says—

Is it suggested that condemned wheat has been shipped in a clandestine manner? I have not been able to trace a single instance where this was done, nor indeed would it be possible, as all merchants on rejecting the wheat take the truck number, so that it would be impossible to slip in the same trucks without the knowledge of the shipper.

Mr. Thomson may be able to fool some people, but certainly he cannot fool the people in Fremantle who know what is going on. Trucks are brought down and rejected and taken away, and then brought back, though not to the same ship, but put into the Pool's own ship, where there is no one to check these things.

Mr. Latham: There has been no dockage oversea for that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the Leader of the Opposition refuses to take an interest in the condition in which wheat leaves this country—

Mr. Latham: The dockages were for light wheat.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is said that a few trucks have been condemned. In reply to a question of mine it was stated here that 270 trucks had been condemned since January.

Mr. Seward: Out of how many?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I did not ask for that information. The hon. member interjecting can ask for it to-morrow.

Mr. Seward: Out of 140,000 tons.

Mr. SLEEMAN: July rejects were:—3rd July one truck, 4th 10 trucks, 5th three trucks, 10th nine trucks, 11th four trucks, 12th three trucks, 13th four trucks, 14th eight trucks, 16th eight trucks, 17th four trucks, 18th three trucks, 19th six trucks, 23rd three trucks, 25th eight trucks. During part of July, therefore, 74 trucks were condemned; and July was far from being the worst month of the year.

Mr. Latham: Were all those trucks bulk wheat?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Every one.

Mr. Latham: Did you find out how many bags were rejected during the same period?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No. Very little bagged wheat has been shipped this year. Those details show that 74 trucks of wheat were condemned during part of July only.

Mr. Ferguson: Was the wheat re-conditioned before it was put back in the trucks after being condemned.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No. Some of the wheat that was reconditioned was condemned. Some truck loads came from Leighton, and they were rejected. Of one rake of trucks from Leighton more than half were condemned, and that is where the officials of the Pool themselves stand condemned. Wheat taken from Leighton is supposed to be reconditioned. There may be some excuse for damaged wheat being received in trucks from the country, but there can be no excuse for bagged wheat from Leighton being in an unsatisfactory condition. There is another phase of the bulk handling business respecting which the farmers do not get a fair deal. I refer to the loss of weight in bulk wheat. On a shipment of 8,000 tons of bagged wheat, the increase in weight is estimated at 80 tons, or one per cent.

Mr. Ferguson: Who furnished that estimate?

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is my estimate. On the other hand, on every shipment of 8,000 tons of bulk wheat there is a loss of weight representing 80 tons, or again one per cent.

Mr. Latham: What becomes of it?

Mr. SLEEMAN: With regard to bagged wheat, the extra weight is caused by the added moisture, but with bulk wheat the experts as yet have been unable satisfactory to explain where the loss of weight comes in. The member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson) may laugh, but the weights are checked at the weighbridges at Fremantle, and in Japan the weights are checked again in an endeavour to arrive at a conclusion regarding the loss of weight. The Leader of the Opposition may be more clever than the experts, but to date the latter have not been able to decide the question.

Mr. Latham: I do not pit myself against you as an expert.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Japanese are very shrewd business men, and they want to know what becomes of the 80 tons. They have had their experts checking the weights here and also in Japan, but they cannot determine the question. That is another phase to be considered on behalf of the poor struggling farmer. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Thorn) said he was suspicious regarding my

attitude towards bulk handling and suggested that I was behind the attempt to prevent it. That is a compliment to me. If I could be responsible for holding up the bulk handling of wheat, I would accomplish it to-morrow. As a matter of fact, the Government realised that they could not go on with the system as it obtains to-day in its Charlie-Chaplin-meccano condition.

Mr. Latham: The Government are not interested in the matter, whereas the farmers are.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Government have a duty to the farmers to see that the wheat is shipped away in a proper condition. If they allowed the wheat to be shipped away otherwise, the Leader of the Opposition would be the first to condemn the Government for lack of supervision.

Mr. Latham: I suggest that the farmers be left to manage their own business in their own way.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the Leader of the Opposition believes so much in the bulk handling system, why did he not have a Bill passed by Parliament when he was a Minister, seeing that the Government with which he was associated had a majority in both branches of the Legislature? As a matter of fact, they could not agree on the subject at all. One section wanted the Charlie Chaplin system and the other wanted a Gilbert and Sullivan type.

Mr. Latham: You remember there was the monopoly clause.

Mr. SLEEMAN: One section wanted the monopoly and the other section would not have the monopoly at all, but wanted something else.

The Minister for Works: At any rate, the Labour Party included more farmers than the then Government did and they delivered more wheat into the Pool.

Mr. Latham: That is not so.

The Minister for Works: Of course we did.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If the Leader of the Opposition suggests that the farmers should be allowed to manage their own affairs, why did not they push through a Bill to enable them to do so? The fact is that the farmers themselves could not agree. On the 7th September, 1933, I asked the then Minister for Railways the following question—

Does he intend to table all the papers relating to the bulk handling of wheat in the

Fremantle zone, and all papers dealing with the arrangements and proposals to date between the Government, Railway Department, Harbour Trust, Co-operative Wheat Pool and wheat firms for the bulk handling of wheat in the State?

The Minister for Railways furnished the following reply—

As many of the matters involved in these papers are the subject of correspondence and are still under consideration by the Government, it would be inadvisable for them to be made available at this stage.

If the papers had been tabled, we would then have seen where the political influence came in and how the sites were granted at railway sidings in the country areas.

Mr. Latham: The sites were granted by the previous Government.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Of course they were.

Mr. Latham: And if we were in power to-day, they would again be granted the sites.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That shows where the political influence entered into it. The Government of the day did something they had no right to do. On the eve of an election, they ordered the Commissioner of Railways to grant the sites, and the Government had no right to do that. It means that on the eve of the election, they decided to make sure that the sites were made available, whatever happened to the Government afterwards. Had the papers been tabled when I asked for them, the Leader of the Opposition would not have so much to say about it now.

Mr. Latham: You can have the papers to disclose anything about my connection with the matter or that of the then Government either.

Mr. SLEEMAN: You admitted that the Government did it.

Mr. Ferguson: I deny it absolutely. It is not true that the previous Government ordered the Commissioner of Railways to grant the sites.

The Minister for Works: Perhaps not in writing, but you did it.

Mr. Latham: No, I will move for the papers.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If bulk handling is to be adopted, let us be satisfied that it will be of benefit to the State as a whole, and that it will bear some of the cost incurred through the displacement of people in the industry. The gold mining industry should be dealt with in the same way.

° Mr. Latham: Then let us start on the mining industry.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If 1,000 men are displaced from the industry, then the system that displaces them should be made to pay towards the upkeep of those who are forced out of work. If the bulk handling system is to be of service to the State, then the hours of those who work in connection with it should be reduced.

Mr. Latham: And also the hours of those who work to produce the wheat.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have no complaint to make on that score. I believe the farmer is entitled to have his hours of work curtailed just as everyone else in industry should have that right. As a matter of fact, that has to come before long, a reduction of hours to make up for the labour-saving appliances coming in. A pernicious system has grown up in the Child Welfare Department in arriving at the amount payable to the units of a family. The present Government are not responsible for it, for it has been growing up for some years and going from bad to worse.

Mr. Latham: It has been worse lately.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, it has not been worse lately, and I expect to see it improve. The department takes into consideration the pensions in a family that has applied for relief. If there be four children in the family, and the father is in receipt of an invalid pension, the department rule that the pension has to be spread over the children, and the applicant is then told that each unit of the family is getting so much. We do not stand for that. Mr. Lyons and Mr. Beasley, and I suppose the Douglas credit people also, are promising to improve the pensions. Certainly 17s. 6d. is not sufficient for an invalid pensioner. I am satisfied that if Mr. Scullin is returned he will increase the pension to £1 per week. But what is the use of the Commonwealth Government providing an invalid pension if the State is going to use some of it to pay for the children who should be helped by the State? Under the existing system, a man with an invalid pension and his wife and four children, would be getting 8s. 5d. per unit.

Mr. Lambert: The care of the children should be an obligation, not on the State, but on the Commonwealth.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Still, it is an obligation on the State, and I only wish the hon.

member could persuade the Prime Minister to accept that obligation on behalf of the Commonwealth. However, at present the Child Welfare Department is using the invalid pension of the father to assist in the maintenance of the children, in consequence of which the invalid pensioner gets only 8s. 5d. a week, the same as the other units of the family. I hope that in future that invalid pension will be regarded as sacrosanct, and will not be touched for any other purpose than the treatment of the invalid pensioner. Coming to the question of motor traffic, I have long advocated that no motor vehicle should be allowed on the road unless the owner has taken out third party risk insurance.

Mr. Latham: I will agree with you in that.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Because of my advocacy, I have been told I did not want any but rich men to have motors, men who could afford to cover third party risks. I claim that a poor man cannot afford to have a motor car unless he has the third party risks covered. Without such precautions, in the event of an accident he might lose even his home.

Mr. Thorn: Speaking of the poor man, does the hon. member know one who has insured against third party risk?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, under a comprehensive policy. In New Zealand, one can take out cover for the third party risk only. There the Traffic Department make the motorist pay £1 with the license fee, and that covers him for third party risks alone. That is done through the Traffic Department, a Government institution. I repeat that no man should be allowed on the road with a motor vehicle unless he has third party risks covered. Too often we see that a man has been killed, leaving behind a family unsupported.

Mr. Latham: By pooling that pound and drawing on the fund, the New Zealand Traffic Department covers the risk. With the insurance companies here it would cost £6 or £7.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It covers only the third party risk. I suggest that our Traffic Department, or our State Insurance Department, should attend to it here. I hope the Government will take steps in that direction, in order to spare the dependants of people who lose their lives in motor accidents, and to save also the cost to the hospitals of indigent men injured in motor acci-

dents. I am pleased to know the Government are arranging for an inquiry into the price of bread. It is certainly necessary. I am not sure whether it is the baker or the miller at fault. I am inclined to think the price of flour is the main factor in increasing the price of bread. I know two or three bakers who are hard put to it to keep things going, but that may be due to bad debts. I fancy a lot depends on the price of flour, and I hope the Government will push on with that inquiry. There is only one other subject I wish to touch upon, namely the dock at Fremantle. I was pleased to see that the Premier made representations to the Prime Minister, and I regret that Mr. Lyons did not see his way clear to assist the State in the construction of a dock. We do not seem to be fairly treated by the Commonwealth, and it is no wonder that people become secessionists when such treatment is meted out to us. We are not given the same consideration as was given to Victoria when she secured a large amount of money for the Alfred graving dock. When Western Australia wants a dock, it is denied to her. I hope that the Premier will not allow the matter to drop, but that after the impending Federal elections, irrespective of the party returned to power, he will again take up the matter with the Commonwealth Government and see if something cannot be done. The construction of a dock at Fremantle would provide a lot of work that otherwise must be lost to the State.

Personal Explanation.

Mr. HAWKE: When I spoke earlier in the evening, I suggested that the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Nationalist Party, during the dispute over the policy of the Government respecting preference to unionists, had condemned the Government, the Minister, and the policy. The Leader of the Opposition declared my statement to be untrue and demanded its withdrawal. In accordance with your wish, Mr. Speaker, I withdrew, although I was positive at the time that my statement was correct. With your permission and with the indulgence of the House, I would point out that in the "West Australian," of the 14th February, there was a column headed "Sustenance Workers. Union Membership Dispute," and further down "Mr. Latham's condemnation," and this was followed by his

condemnation of the Minister and the policy. On the 16th February there was a heading "Wagerup dispute," over another long statement by Mr. Latham condemning the Minister and the policy, together with a condemnation of the statements of Mr. Herney, Secretary of the A.W.U.

Mr. Latham: No, it was a reply to a letter which had appeared.

Mr. HAWKE: I have already pointed out—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may make an explanation, but he must not make another speech.

Mr. HAWKE: I merely wished to point out that one of the statements is headed, "Mr. Latham's condemnation." I have no desire to read it because it would take too long.

Mr. Latham: I think you ought to read it.

Mr. HAWKE: I am prepared to do so, but members can find the statement in the book of Press cuttings. There are two definite statements, and no doubt my statement to-night that Mr. Latham condemned the policy and the Minister and the Government at the time was correct. As I am always in the habit of making correct statements, I make this personal explanation.

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.