

influence this practice has on the rising generation which sees the freedom with which laws—and good laws, too—can be infringed without any serious attempt on the part of the Government to check such infringement. As for the viewpoint of those who say that a community cannot be made moral by Act of Parliament, I would ask members to consider where we should be in regard to our personal safety, or any of the things we prize, if there were not in existence Acts of Parliament to protect us and to prevent people from doing wrong.

Finally, I would ask the Government to consider whether it is worth while to continue Charities Consultations during the war period. The amount of money obtained from this source last year was less than £60,000. The expenses amounted to approximately 20 per cent. and the prizes to about 30 per cent. It is an entirely anti-social proceeding, opposed to all the principles of a Socialist Labour Party. The idea that a great number of people should be induced to put their savings into a pool so that one or two may become rich! The patronage of these sweeps is steadily declining. A considerable amount of money used to come from the Eastern States. The sum so received has decreased and is well below the quota guaranteed by the appointed agents. Taking it all in all, I am sure the community generally would welcome a discontinuance of the Consultations. It is a thoroughly uneconomic and expensive method of raising money, and one that has harmful effects on the community as a whole.

I hope I have not detained members too long but there were those two or three things I wished to say without voicing any undue criticism of what has happened in the past. I ask members to consider whether the status of this Parliament and its usefulness to the community, particularly in the difficult times which will face us after the war, would not be increased by more frequent rather than protracted sittings. We have a duty to perform which I am sure every one of us is anxious to do. We have endeavoured to perform that duty in the past. Let us recognise that the obligations cast upon us will be much greater in the future than they have been formerly. I do not believe there will be any material improvement in conditions after the war except by the removal of abuses that are fairly

well known to us all. It has been well said that "In human society there can be no progress, no development, no uplifting, unless there is discipline, unless there is work, unless there is order, and unless there is disinterestedness in those who rule."

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [6.12]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 12th August.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 6th August, 1911.*

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

### QUESTION—MEAT CANNING.

*As to Erection of Works.*

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Was any financial assistance offered by the Commonwealth Government to this State, or did this Government make any application to the Commonwealth Government for such financial assistance, to enable canning works to be erected in Western Australia? 2, Have

any arrangements been made for the erection of canning works either by private enterprise or by the Government (a) in the metropolitan area; or (b) in any other centre in the State? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, No financial assistance was offered by the Commonwealth Government to this State for the erection of canning works. Full details were sought through the Department of Commerce and the Australian Meat Board of all requirements likely best to meet the needs of this State. It has in hand, through the general manager of the Wyndham Meat Works, who is an authority on this matter, all inquiries and safeguards likely to be considered necessary. Retorts have been brought from Wyndham to meet any emergency that might arise.

#### QUESTION—COLD STORAGE ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What additional cold storage accommodation has been erected or provided in this State since January last; and where has it been provided? 2, What, if any, responsibility has the Commonwealth Government offered to accept in such work, and what conditions, if any, did that Government attach to any such assistance?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Additional cold storage accommodation is being erected on the premises of the Meat Exports Co., Ltd., Robb's Jetty. Capacity 100,000 cubic feet, sufficient to accommodate an additional 1,000 tons of meat. Other treatment works have constructed additional cold storage space since January to build up to the minimum requirements of the Commonwealth. 2, To meet the unusual needs anticipated in this State, the Commonwealth Government was approached for finance. The Commonwealth Government policy required that all meat export companies should make provision for a minimum storage of six weeks' kill during the peak killing season. Since not any of our treatment works had storage in excess of six weeks' peak killing, no assistance has been provided by the Commonwealth for this additional storage.

#### QUESTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

##### *Petrol and Charcoal-driven Vehicles.*

Mr. McDONALD asked the Minister for Works: 1, In view of the desirability of encouraging the use of gas producer equipment on vehicles (a) Does the Government intend to take steps to revise the traffic license fees in order to ensure that vehicle owners installing gas producer equipment will not be penalised by having to pay additional license fees? (b) Will the Government make representations to the proper authorities with a view to the relaxation of the regulations as to the installation of gas producers for vehicles, which it is claimed now debar the use of a number of efficient types of gas producers? 2, In view of the petrol restrictions, and of the reduced vehicular traffic on the roads, will the Government revise the traffic regulations in order to remove restrictions on turning to the right at certain intersections, and other regulations which at present involve vehicles in additional petrol consumption?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, (a) Yes. (b) It is assumed that the regulations referred to are those issued under the National Security Act. If so, all complaints received locally have been submitted to the proper authorities. 2, The points raised will be referred to the Traffic Advisory Committee for report.

#### QUESTION—INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, ASSISTANCE.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Industrial Development: 1, Has he noticed the report that a Bill is to be introduced into the South Australian Assembly providing that where the introduction of an industry was considered to be essential and of community value, the South Australian Government would be empowered to give the necessary financial aid for the industry to become established? 2, As on the face of it the proposition appears to be of considerable worth, is it his intention to take steps to endeavour to ensure that similar action is taken by the Western Australian Government?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT replied: 1, Yes. A copy of the South Australian Bill is being ob-

tained. 2, Financial aid is frequently being made available by the Government to industries in this State.

### QUESTION—DEFENCE INTERNEES.

*Harvey, Potato and Onion Crops.*

Mr. FOX asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is it within the knowledge of the Government that large areas at Harvey are being planted with potatoes and onions by internees? 2, Is the Government aware that the quantities planted would normally yield crops far in excess of the needs of the internees' camp? 3, Will it take action in protest against this unfair competition with local commercial vegetable growers?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2 and 3, When it was realised that the possible production from the area to be planted would be in excess of the need of the settlement, a protest was lodged by the State Government. We are advised that of all such vegetables grown, those required will be used at the Internment Camp and quantities produced over requirements will not be sold but will be utilised in other military establishments.

### QUESTION—DROUGHT RELIEF.

Mr. WATTS asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Of the sum of £570,000 lent to the State for drought relief, what amount has been (a) allocated to applicants; (b) actually paid to them? 2, Can figures be supplied showing the amounts allocated and paid respectively to persons whose properties are mortgaged (a) to the Agricultural Bank Commissioners; (b) to other lending institutions? 3, If such figures are available will he supply them?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, (a) Allocated to applicants, £435,009; (b) actually paid to them, £322,985. 2, Figures cannot be obtained without dissection showing actual payments to other lending institutions but the allocations of the £435,009 are: (a) Agricultural Bank Commissioners, £375,757; (b) other lending institutions, £59,252. total, £435,009. Harvesting advances yet to be provided from the fund.

### QUESTION—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN WAR INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE.

*As to shipbuilding.*

Mr. BERRY (without notice) asked the Speaker: Is there no constitutional method whereby the adjournment of the House can be moved so that my motion on shipbuilding, No. 14 on the notice paper, can be given preference over the Address-in-reply?

Mr. SPEAKER replied: It is not customary for the Speaker to answer questions, either written or verbal.

Mr. BERRY (without notice) asked the Deputy Premier: Will he telegraph the Premier, now in the Eastern States, to confer with Mr. Curtin and any other Western Australian members of the Federal Parliament who can be contacted, with a view to the immediate release of the report of the Western Australian War Industries Committee, of which Senator Collett was chairman, and to press for the immediate inauguration of that portion of the report dealing with shipbuilding in Western Australia?

The DEPUTY PREMIER replied: I shall certainly telegraph to the Premier to press that that portion of the report referred to be given effect to.

### COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the Deputy Premier, Sessional Committees were appointed as follows:—

*Library.*—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Tonkin, and Mr. Patrick.

*Standing Orders.*—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Doney, Mr. Withers, and Mr. North.

*House.*—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Needham, Mr. McLarty, Mr. Stubbs, and Mr. Wilson.

*Printing.*—Mr. Speaker, Mr. Styants, and Mr. Thorn.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Third Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [4.38]: When speaking to the Address-in-reply yesterday afternoon, the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. C. G. Latham) said there was, in Western Australia, a shortage of skilled tradesmen, which was apparent owing

to the state of emergency in which we are living. He went on to say that this shortage was due to the policy adopted by the Labour movement regarding apprentices. That statement is without foundation, because, although there is a shortage of skilled tradesmen, as I am prepared to admit, it has not been in any way caused by the Labour policy with respect to the proportion of apprentices to journeymen. But for the policy adopted by the Labour movement in this State and for the conditions the trade unions have secured in the various awards of the Arbitration Court, we would not now have the number of skilled tradesmen that are available. The average number of apprentices permitted to journeymen is something like one to two, and very often unions have had to go to the extent of compelling employers to engage the proper number of apprentices. If some form of regulation had not been adopted regarding the number of apprentices allowed in any given trade, those young men would not have been properly taught, with the result that skilled tradesmen would not have been forthcoming. Had it not been for the policy pursued by the Labour movement throughout Australia, we would have had the exploitation of juvenile or youth labour, with the result that we would not have turned out skilled tradesmen but half-baked men of the type referred to as "improvers." I contend, therefore, that the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition was based upon wrong premises, which were far removed from fact. It should be remembered that Western Australia was suddenly called upon to undertake much skilled work that was formerly not carried out to anything like the extent apparent during the past 18 months. In the Speech delivered last week by His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor we find the following paragraph:—

The Railway Department has been successful in its tendering for defence work, aggregating many thousands of pounds, and overtime and extra shifts are being worked to aid the national effort to build war machines and equipment on an unprecedented scale. A modern tool room for the manufacture of necessary tools and equipment is being erected in the metropolitan area, and by arrangement with Commonwealth Government accommodation at the Midland Junction Workshops has been substantially increased. Portion of this extension is set aside as an annexe for the manufacture of munitions, and includes locally manufactured machines for the turning of shells. Machining of the rough

steel forgings for the first order will commence shortly. During the recent visit to this State of the Director-General of Munitions approval was given to double the original capacity for shell making.

Mr. Holmes, the visiting British Labour Leader, was conducted on a tour of inspection of the Midland Junction Workshops, together with the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon W. D. Johnson) and the member for Middle Swan (Mr. J. Hegney). I was also present, and had the opportunity of seeing for myself what was being done at the workshops, and of appreciating what will be carried out in the future. No tradesmen in any other part of the British Commonwealth of Nations could turn out better work than I saw during that inspection. I admit that there has been, and still is, a shortage of skilled artisans. When war broke out, it was patent that better conditions and greater opportunities than obtained here were offering for skilled men in the Eastern States in connection with war work. I know of many skilled fitters, turners, machinists, boiler-makers and others who proceeded to the Eastern States. Some went to the workshops in Melbourne and Sydney, while others went to Adelaide. When portion of the work associated with Australia's war effort was made available for manufacturers in Western Australia, those artisans were naturally not available here.

Had it not been for the policy adopted by the Labour movement, we would have had a still greater shortage of skilled tradesmen. If there is anything wrong with the system followed, or with the policy adopted, by the trade unions with regard to the apprenticeship question, the Leader of the Opposition had his opportunity to effect an alteration. For a period he was a member of a Government and had a seat on the Treasury bench. His leader was Sir James Mitchell, the then Premier. Throughout that period, the policy of which the Leader of the Opposition now complains was in existence, but he did nothing to alter the situation. If he had pursued any course to give effect to his contentions, then, according to his remarks last evening, any such effort should have been in the direction of abolishing the present apprenticeship system.

Mr. Withers: They suspended the apprenticeships of some who were in employment then.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Quite so! So much for the statement of the Leader of the Opposition regarding Labour's attitude towards the apprenticeship system. The Labour movement is proud of what it has done in that regard, and is proud of the tradesmen who are to-day rendering such valuable assistance to our fighting forces in providing the necessary equipment for them. In another paragraph in the Speech reference is made to Western Australia's war work and our contribution in men, money and materials. The paragraph reads—

Consistent with their high reputation for practical patriotism, the people of Western Australia have responded magnificently to the demand for men for the Fighting Forces, and for money with which to feed, clothe, equip and pay them.

That paragraph merely sets out the bare truth. In proportion to our population of about 500,000 souls, the response of the people of Western Australia through the three channels mentioned has been really magnificent.

I have here a report from the War Savings Certificate Committee, of which the Leader of the Opposition and I are members. This gives one a very striking idea of the figures arrived at in connection with the movement in this State. The report tells us that—

Over 1,400 war savings groups have been formed, and that upwards of 50,000 members are contributing from 6d. to 1s. per pay. The war loan contributions have reached £1,600,000, the free of interest loans £500,000, gifts to the nation £25,000, while the war savings certificate sales may be computed at over £1,500,000 for the year, making a grand total from all sources of £3,620,000, or over £7 15s. per head of the population.

These figures deal only with cash. We have not the actual record of the time and the goods that have been given by people in the State. We must also remember the contributions to the various war patriotic funds, to soldiers' dependants, to the Red Cross Queen carnivals and the Spitfire funds. When members have regard to all these contributions they will agree that the reference in the Speech is a well-deserved compliment to the people of the State. The Labour movement of Western Australia through its trade unions has rendered a magnificent contribution to the war loans and war savings certificates. To date, something like £20,000 has been contributed from the various trade unions.

Another paragraph appearing in the Speech is as follows:—

The pledge given by Ministers on the outbreak of war to assist the Commonwealth Government to the fullest possible extent has been honoured in every way. Constant and close co-operation is the key note of this State's relations to the war effort.

I regret there has not been reciprocity in that regard on the part of the Commonwealth Government. That the State Government has rendered every possible assistance and offered sincere co-operation to the war effort of the Commonwealth Government is undoubted. Members will recall the figures I quoted dealing with the cash contributions made by the people of this State. The money put into war savings certificates in Western Australia, and subsequently allotted to the war work of the Commonwealth, is most creditable and will go a long way towards making the Commonwealth Government realise what we in this part of Australia are doing. As it is we are still, I am afraid, regarded as a Cinderella State. Not only has what I have said concerning the State Government been the case, but this applies equally to other organisations of all political parties. Every Party has done its share of the war work in this State. We have the men and the materials, and we have the ability to deliver the goods. I hope from now on the Commonwealth Government will realise what we are doing, and will see that Western Australia gets a better share of the war work than it has hitherto received—so long as this great conflict lasts. Each one of us hopes that the war will not last long, but for however long a period it lasts we should be better treated in this part of the Commonwealth than has been the case in the past. Another interesting paragraph in the Speech refers to civil defence, as follows:—

The Civil Defence Council, appointed under the powers conferred by the Civil Defence Act, passed last session, is steadily evolving measures for the protection of the civil population, and public and private property. The organisation is progressing smoothly and effectively, and is achieving good results.

Many local governing bodies have recently complained about the cost to which they have been put in carrying out the provisions of the Civil Defence Act. A keen debate took place in this Chamber last session concerning one of the clauses of the Bill then before the House. I was successful in secur-

ing an amendment to the measure, which had for its purpose the placing of responsibility upon the Commonwealth Government to meet the cost of civil defence. I contended then, as I do now, that while it is imperative that every local governing body in Australia should do everything possible to prepare for any aggression that may occur, the cost of that work should be borne not by them but by the Government of Australia. I understand that local governing bodies are sending a request to the Commonwealth Government in the matter. A further paragraph in the Speech makes gratifying reading—

The number of men dependent upon the Government for casual work is now approximately 4,000 less than at the outbreak of war.

The position would be more gratifying if the cause of the improvement in our employment situation was an economic one and not a military one. Unfortunately the cause of the Government's responsibility being lessened by 4,000 persons does not constitute an improvement in our economic position. It is due to the fact that the world has again been plunged into another shambles. The price being paid for that easement in the employment situation is too high, but for the time being it must be faced.

Members of this Parliament are facing the most worrying times in history. For many months people have been saying that Democracy is on its trial. Undoubtedly, Democracy is fighting against heavy odds, and how long that fight will continue no one knows. What we do know, however, is that Democracy must continue to fight against the odds arrayed against it. Prior to the outbreak of war in 1939 the world was complacent. It looked upon the people of Germany, or the leaders of that country, with a certain amount of contempt. It remained very quiet when the gigantic steel trusts of Germany placed Hitler in power, and made him a dictator. There was a belief then that Germany would never again become a powerful force. The world now realises that it has been taught a severe lesson. Those very German people have lost their freedom of thought, their freedom of expression, their freedom of family association, freedom of the Press, freedom of religious action; and in Germany trade unions have been smashed

and trade unionism destroyed. All these things have occurred as the result of the Hitler regime. What has been destroyed in Germany and in democratic countries the British Commonwealth of Nations with its Allies is to-day fighting for. Because of that fact the Labour movement of Australia is in the struggle to the bitter end, and will continue in that struggle until victory is assured. It is not to be thought that the Labour movement welcomes a war. The movement has always been directly opposed to war. The mention of war is anathema to the Labour movement. Some people say that this is a war of commerce. We say it is not. We contend that it is not what is usually termed a capitalistic war, but a war to preserve the liberties of democracy which have been won as a result of centuries of hard struggle. That being so, we realise that if we lose this fight, then goodbye to freedom; and to liberties of every kind, should the man who is seeking to dominate the world succeed.

The member for Hannans (Mr. Leahy) in moving the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply declared himself unable to say how the war should be conducted. I am in the same category as is the hon. member. There are men at the head of affairs to-day who are eminently fitted for that task. All I know is that we, as an integral part of the British Commonwealth of Nations, must fight to the last ditch for victory; otherwise we shall be conquered like the Czechs, the Poles, the Norwegians, the Danes, and the Hollanders. Like them, we shall simply become hewers of wood and drawers of water. Whilst we are fighting for victory, whilst we are determined to leave nothing undone that is needed to achieve victory, we can also strive for victory in peace. I have no doubt that no matter how long the conflict lasts, the British Commonwealth of Nations and its Allies will ultimately emerge victorious. But we have to do more than that. Whilst winning the war we must also win the peace. In that respect we had a highly salutary lesson after the last war. We won the last war in a military sense, but we did not win it in an economic sense. In fact, we lost it in the economic sense. Had we not lost it in that sense, we would not have endured the seven years of economic depression from 1929 to 1936, would not have suffered from

the worst economic depression ever known, a depression which I hope will never be experienced again. That was the aftermath of the military struggle from 1914 to 1918. I venture to say that there was at least as much physical suffering, as much poverty and distress and starvation, endured during those seven years of economic warfare as during the four years of the military war. Therefore I say that whilst fighting for victory we should be planning for peace. That can be done simultaneously with doing everything possible to win the war itself. If we do not now lay the foundations of what so many people glibly term the "New Order," and see that socially, economically, industrially and otherwise the world is in a better way by the time the war ends than it is in to-day, we shall have failed in our trust, shall have been recreant to the trust reposed in us, and all the sacrifices made by our fighting forces will have been in vain.

By some people the opinion is held that we cannot dissipate our energies and our thoughts in trying to improve the social position simultaneously with the propagation of the war effort; but I believe that it can be done, and I hold it is the duty of this continent, Federal and State alike, to do it.

Mr. North: There is child endowment, for instance.

Mr. NEEDHAM: Yes. There is a practical illustration of how we can improve the social system simultaneously with doing everything possible to win the war. Child endowment has been introduced by the Federal Government and is now in active operation. Child endowment has been a principle of the Labour movement for years; but the Labour Party has never had sufficient strength in the Commonwealth Parliament to put the principle into operation. Still, child endowment has for many years been in existence for Commonwealth employees. Moreover, the system has existed in New South Wales for many years. As a national project, however, this is the first time it has been in operation. The Labour Party would like to see a better system of endowment than the child endowment scheme now in operation. The Labour Party in the Federal Parliament did not oppose the enactment of the present system because it wanted to see child endowment on the statute-book with the further view of improving the system when Labour occupied the Treasury benches. There is one

tangible example of how the two things can be done at the same time—everything possible being done to win the war and at the same time something being done to improve the social condition of the people.

There is a tendency already to injure the child endowment scheme and take away some of the benefits which that scheme will confer on many of our people. The Commonwealth Government is about to eliminate the income tax deduction for every child in respect of whom endowment is granted. I do not consider that is right, because it means giving assistance with one hand and taking it away with the other. The Commonwealth Treasurer points out that £2,000,000 is needed to supplement an amount of money the Commonwealth Government has at its disposal in order to meet the cost of child endowment for this year. But he stopped there. If it was only for this year, then there would be agreement instead of contention. But he leaves us under the impression that those deductions will be in abeyance not only for this financial year but for other financial years. If that is done, the child endowment scheme will be, in a sense, sabotaged at its birth. It should stand entirely clear of all other things. It might be said that when the maternity allowance was introduced in 1911, a similar kind of taxation should operate. But it did not. I contend that the Commonwealth Government, while doing the right thing in introducing and enacting the child endowment scheme, is certainly doing wrong now in reducing the benefits of that scheme by the abolition of the income tax deduction for each child.

That is not the only attempt to use the child endowment scheme as a means of easing some people in other directions. We have a local instance. Recently the Arbitration Court, when about to fix the basic wage for the ensuing year, was asked by Mr. Carter, the advocate of the Employers' Federation, to adopt a novel idea. He urged that the basic wage should be reduced by 5s. per week, representing the allowance for one child. So that I may not do Mr. Carter any injustice, I shall read what he said—

At the outset of his judgment, Mr. President Dwyer said: "Mr. Carter, for the employers, agreed with Mr. Davies as regards the standard of living and family obligations; but he submitted to the court that in assessing the basic wage the amount prescribed in 1938 in its present equivalent should be reduced by the amount of 5s. per week representing the en-

dowment for one child to be paid to mothers under the provisions of the Federal Family Endowment Act.

So there was an attempt in this State to sabotage the Child Endowment Act.

Mrs. Cardell-Oliver: Not by Mr. Menzies.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I have already referred to the attempt of the Menzies Government to sabotage the Child Endowment Act by eliminating the tax deduction for the children for whom the child endowment is paid. I dealt with that attempt, and said that was not the only effort to sabotage the Act. I am referring now to another attempt made in this State by Mr. Carter, the advocate of the employers, when he appeared before the Arbitration Court recently in connection with the fixation of the basic wage for the current year. Unfortunately, a section of the Press in this State made a statement that the officers representing the Government Employment Department asked the court to reduce the basic wage by 5s. weekly, that is, by the amount of the weekly child endowment payment. As a matter of fact, the request for the 5s. reduction was made by Mr. L. L. Carter, the employers' representative, and neither the Government representatives nor the Government made any such request. But strange to say, that very day, after the court had given its decision, there appeared in the evening paper a statement that Mr. Fisher, of the Labour Department, a representative of the Government, made a request for a reduction of 5s. a week, the equivalent of the child endowment payment. Actually, Mr. Fisher made a statement in the court that he was simply representing the Government and had no request or remark to make, good, bad or indifferent. He was followed in the same strain by Mr. McKenna, of the Railway Department. Of course, the statement in the Press was afterwards corrected but, unfortunately, once a mis-statement is made it is hard to overtake. The President of the court asked for some figures to show how things would work out in the event of Mr. Carter's request being agreed to. According to the information before me, I find this is what happened—

At the request of the court, Mr. Fisher and Mr. McKenna had a subsequent statement put in showing the effect of the suggestion of Mr. Carter. That return showed that by the deduction of 5s. from the workers' wages, the Government would be relieved of a payment of £226,000 in their wages bill, showing a saving

in the transaction of £80,000; or, if teachers were omitted from the calculation, of £97,750.

The President went on to say—

The only conclusion that one could draw from that was that such action on the court's part would result in a very profitable adjustment from a monetary point of view on the part of the Government. Speaking roughly, it would result in the wage and salary-earners in the Government service paying out of their salaries and wages not only the amount of the Federal endowment tax but nearly as much more again. The result would be more easily appreciated by a simple example. Assuming an employer with 24 adult men at an average wage of £5 per week, his wages bill for a week would amount to £120. Of this amount (less £20 statutory deduction) he would pay 2½ per cent, that is, £2 10s., by way of Federal endowment tax. If those workers had their wages reduced by 5s. per man per week, the employer's wages bill would be reduced by £6 per week. Thus he would pay £2 10s. by way of tax per week but be relieved of the payment in wages of £6 per week. In fact, were the 5s. reduced by half he would have the whole of his tax refunded to him.

There is proof that on two occasions an attempt has been made to sabotage the Child Endowment Act, and to deny to the parents of the Commonwealth the full benefit of a reform that has been welcomed on all hands. The first attempt was the elimination of the income tax deduction in respect of the children for whom the endowment is being paid; and the second—which I am glad to say failed—was made in our State Arbitration Court by the representative of the Employers' Federation. We need to be on the qui vive even when a reform is introduced, with a view to ensuring that it is administered in the correct way.

The British Labour leader, Mr. Holmes, who has been in this State, referred in one of his speeches not only to the necessity for manufacturing munitions of death—which was of course necessary for the equipment of our fighting forces in the present conflict—but also to the necessity for manufacturing munitions of life. In recent years members of all parties in this House, and in other Houses of Parliament throughout the Commonwealth, have been crying out for funds to improve the social conditions of the people. The inevitable and invariable reply has been, "There is no money." No money has been available to provide reasonable conditions of life, but millions have been found to provide the munitions of death. Then, when we do obtain a social reform which in some little way will pro-



vide some of the munitions of life—I refer to the paltry 5s. a week to be paid to help parents in educating their progeny—two attempts are made to render the reform of little value.

At the end of the last war, a treaty was signed in Versailles. I venture to say that the conditions of that treaty constituted a big factor in the precipitation of the present conflict. We do not want a repetition of that kind of treaty. When it was framed in 1918, only one representative of the workers of the allied nations was present. I hope that this time when the sword is sheathed and the world is no longer at war, the workers of the British Commonwealth of Nations and their allies will be represented at peace negotiations.

Hon. N. Keenan: How many representatives do you want?

Mr. NEEDHAM: More than one, and under a better system than obtained the last time. It has to be remembered that the great majority of the men in the fighting forces to-day are drawn from our workshops, factories and mines; and, of course, those who are supplying the necessary equipment for the fighting forces are also engaged in similar establishments. These men are fighting the war or making implements of war, and when it is all over they should be represented at the conference table and have some voice in the formation of the peace treaty. We do not want a repetition of the last treaty. I venture to suggest that my learned friend, the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) will agree with me that the last peace treaty contained some unfortunate clauses. I hope the day is not far distant when the sound of battle will cease, when victory will come to our Empire, and a lasting peace will be established.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [5.28]: I have not risen to speak from a sense of great urgency, or because I am anxious to make a speech; but there does not seem to be any great desire on the part of other members to participate in the debate at present. Consequently I am pleased to have the opportunity to make my remarks at this stage, instead of later when I might say more and occupy the House for a longer period, which would perhaps not be to the advantage of the Chamber.

The first matter with which I wish to deal is the attitude of some members of the public towards Parliament. Members must have noticed a considerable increase recently in the attacks on this institution made by anonymous writers in the Press. A single instance of this kind of thing would be unimportant but, as one who has noticed the effect of publicity and advertisement, I feel that it would be a most dangerous thing for us to permit the continuance of such a practice. The average elector who continually hears statements made about this Chamber is likely to come to believe gradually that Parliament is the kind of place that it is said to be by irresponsible people. What do writers to the Press suggest? They say that Parliament is costly and a burden on the community. Secondly, they declare that members have undue privileges, that they have gold passes with which they career around Australia on free tours. Thirdly, they assert that members are really of no value to the community because for the greater part of the year Parliament is in recess, and members are presumably lounging about or using their gold passes to make long tours. At any rate that is the implication. The fourth contention in the letters is that Parliament never achieves anything and that all it can do is to whine to the Federal authorities about matters over which it has no control. In other words, there is a deep-dyed attempt by means of anonymous letters to create in the minds of people the idea that the State Parliament should be closed. I will not let anything of this kind go unchallenged. Some members may be prepared to ignore the matter, but I take a different view. I believe the action in question is part of a definite attempt by certain individuals—possibly financed from the East, though perhaps not—to undermine and dissolve this and other State Parliaments. The time has come when leaders should let the people know the truth about this institution.

My first step is to disabuse the minds of members of the public, who think along the lines I have mentioned, that this institution is a costly one. It represents possibly the cheapest system of control in the world. This year the Parliaments of Australia will be spending some £350,000,000 and the cost of the Parliaments, including the Governor General, Governors and all the

staffs and trappings of the democratic parliamentary machine will be £1,300,000. According to economists, the national income of Australia last year was slightly less than £1,000,000,000, and so the burden of the seven Parliaments on the people represents less than a farthing in the pound on the incomes of the people and only 3s. 11d. per head of the population. Those are official figures. For this burden of a farthing in the pound on the incomes of the people, we are receiving immunity from the gangster, from racketeering and all those other undesirable things that have been tried by individuals in other parts of the world and in some places have succeeded. I hasten to assure the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes) that if a few rackets are carried on in Australia, the people have a right through their 600 members, and under this very cheap system of government, to bring about any necessary reform. This, however, is only as one grain of sand on the seashore compared with what I wish to bring forward.

Doubtless every member has been the means of returning to his electors a hundred times over his cost to the community. I might instance the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. McLarty). He induces Ministers of different political parties to visit his constituency and seems to mesmerise them to such an extent that they spend large sums on reservoirs, thus bringing thousands of pounds worth of wealth annually to his district. Other instances could be quoted of better conditions secured for the people by their parliamentary representatives. Let me quote my own experience. Before I had occupied a seat in this Chamber for three months, I signed a document which placed in the pockets of my electors the equivalent of £5,000 or £6,000 a year immediately, and additional thousands in succeeding years, all the result of a simple deal with the Government of the day. It was the Mitchell Government, but this would have happened regardless of the party in power at the time. The people of my district were supplied with electric current at 1d. per unit instead of 5d., and loans to the extent of thousands of pounds were wiped off in the one deal. If members look over the records, they will find that action has been

taken in various directions which has resulted in thousands of pounds being left in the pockets of the electors. Therefore to suggest that this institution is a burden on the people, and should be closed, is childish. It is time the official facts were explained.

There are people who say that this House should sit all the year round. This is part of the propaganda to which I have referred. Yet other critics contend that the Parliament should be abolished. All this propaganda comes from experts who have not taken the trouble to compare notes as to what they do desire. Every elector with whom I have discussed the matter has been astounded that remarks so derogatory to the parliamentary institution should be made and has urged that pamphlets be distributed setting forth the facts. Fortunately, the great majority of the people do not hold that Parliament is a wash-out, existing solely for graft and grabbing and that sort of thing. The matter should be taken up by the Government and some of this nonsensical propaganda, which might be the work of fifth columnists, should be combated. I have a far higher opinion of the value of publicity than some members show. If a certain soap is advertised long enough, the merits claimed for it will be believed, regardless of whether they are false or true. Admittedly, when one advertises an article, the statements should be true or the sales soon decline. I deplore the constant repetition throughout the State of the jokes about the parliamentary institution while the achievements of Parliament are overlooked or ignored.

I do not propose to throw bouquets at any particular Government; I give credit for substantial achievements to each party that has occupied the Treasury bench since I have been in Parliament. It is high time the people realised that they are getting service very cheaply, especially when they have the right to approach their member to get any grievance redressed. Probably there will be found in each district several constituents who are bent upon getting more than full value from their member and with whom the member has to mind his p's and q's. Though a few constituents may be a menace in this way, most electors are law-abiding, reasonable people. All of them have the right to get value from their member, if

they so choose, and this institution exists for their benefit. Why all this bickering? Why all this discontent? I hope to show the reason and indicate how the situation can be improved.

I shall leave that point for a moment in order to say a few words about reconstruction. The subject of reconstruction is lightly dealt with in the Speech. I am glad that mention was made of it because I am thus afforded an opportunity to offer a few remarks. I am not in sympathy with the view that, because a war is raging in other parts of the world and Australia is ready for war if necessary, the men elected by the people to control their affairs in Parliament should shut their eyes to the future and forget that the problem of reconstruction will soon have to be faced. To adopt such an attitude is foolish. We had experience in 1918 of what must happen if we rely upon some patched-up arrangement. According to to-day's issue of the "West Australian" the mayor of New York, Mr. F. La Guardia, who must know a good deal of what is happening, expressed himself as confident that the war will be over in seven months. He may be right, or the war might last for another seven years. Still, it would be foolish for Parliament and for public men generally to ignore the fact that problems of reconstruction lie before us.

The Commonwealth has set up a body to investigate post-war social problems, and hints have been given in the Press from time to time of what is proposed to be done. I am glad the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald), who made suggestions about reconstruction in his last policy speech, is so strongly supported by Dr. Evatt, Director of Reconstruction Research in the Commonwealth Department of Labour. The hon. member advocated during the 1939 elections that the Commonwealth should set up a tribunal with a view to devising methods of developing this State in a big way, so that eventually it could carry a denser population, similar to that of the more happily situated States in Eastern Australia. In the hurly-burly of party politics, that suggestion may have been overlooked, but I regarded it as highly important. We now have Dr. Evatt making a similar suggestion. He is reported as having spoken to the following effect on the 12th June:—

Those who contended that research into post-war reconstruction should be postponed were advocating a dangerous policy. A similar wait-and-see policy was followed in 1914-18 and it

led to great trouble and confusion. Schemes of repatriation, soldier settlement and housing had to be hastily improvised, as a result of which there was much injustice. The main internal post-war problems for Australia would be to provide social security and constant employment.

These proposals dovetailed with those of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Anthony Eden. The need for action along these lines is recognised throughout the English-speaking world. The report continued—

Unemployment and the dole would have to be treated as enemies of the State. The reinstatement of soldiers in civil occupations and the movements of munition workers to other trades would involve at least 500,000 people. If the unemployment problem was to be solved, it might be necessary for the Commonwealth to adopt a much less orthodox attitude towards financial reform.

The reference to financial reform might come well from some speakers, but I do not wish to revive the question.

Dr. Evatt suggested that changes in finance would be necessary to develop Australian natural resources and to decentralise Australian industries.

His next remarks coincide with those of the member for West Perth.

Whatever the cost, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania would have to be made industrial centres. The nation's constitutional framework might have to be investigated and revised.

That is the point. When we have this body in the Commonwealth Department of Labour working on reconstruction and the chairman, Dr. Evatt, stating that Western Australia must be industrialised, I feel that at last we are getting somewhere. As the Yanks say, "We are getting some place." Last session, in an attempt to follow a motion of the member for West Perth, I moved to the effect that the Federal Government itself should enlarge the scope of the Grants Commission, and confer upon it the power to advise finance for approved public works. I was trying to put the idea of the hon. member in another way and was glad and grateful on that occasion to hear the magnificent speeches—speeches sound magnificent when they support what you say—of the member for West Perth and the member for Netherlands (Hon. N. Keenan). Undoubtedly they made a strong contribution to that discussion. Here we have something which we should not let go. If we can induce the Federal Government to establish Western Australia as an industrial State, at what-

ever cost, that will be an achievement. It is something we can all work for and be sure of obtaining some results.

That brings me to my point, namely, the discontent expressed by the community generally with the Parliamentary machine. First, we hear a great deal about the cost of Parliament, and then we are told that members sit about and do nothing. The people see many things that should be done that are not being done. We have heard elegant speeches from the member for East Perth (Mr. Hughes), the member for Subiaco (Mrs. Cardell-Oliver) and other members upon such subjects as malnutrition and the declining birth rate. Even I myself have once or twice wearied the House with speeches about the destruction of valuable fruits, vegetables, fish, and other comestibles which should have been sent to our markets for sale.

The Minister for Mines: You never weary the House.

Mr. NORTH: That is a bouquet, thank you! The points I have mentioned make the electors disgusted with the Parliamentary institution. They ask, "What is this malnutrition? Some doctors say it is malnutrition and other doctors say it is not." They see the hospitals overcrowded, and hear doctors say that is often owing to want of proper care and attention at home. Then there is the question of small families, a question that has been discussed by various members. We are becoming experts on it, and have been talking in this House for years about that danger. The electors inquire, "What is wrong?" The men with small families reply, "Our wives will not have more children because there are too many wars. Blame Parliament." They say, "There is too much malnutrition. Blame Parliament." The present system of marketing is blamed for the destruction of fruit, vegetables, fish and other comestibles which should have been distributed to the homes of our people. Those three points I have raised are, in the hurly-burly of party politics, either ignored or not given the attention they should receive. We should give publicity to them; that is as necessary in politics as it is in business.

The suggestion I make is that committees should be appointed to deal with these various problems. I am aware that a similar proposal has been opposed on the ground

that it would be said the Government of the day was trying to evade responsibility, or that the responsibility would not be properly distributed. It has also been said that the members of such committees would not stand up to their responsibilities, and that if things went wrong they would blame the side of the House opposite to the Government. But what can be done is this. For the past 20 years the tendency has been to exaggerate party politics to such an extent that the main questions affecting the community do not receive attention. That can be clearly shown. If there were time to engage two King's Counsel to prepare a case, it would clearly show that one of the faults of our political system is that we have exaggerated the importance of political questions to such an extent that they are comparatively side issues which receive attention, while the three big questions of malnutrition, falling birthrate and destruction of commodities are put on one side. I believe that if Parliament were to appoint a select committee to deal with these questions, 90 per cent. of the objections raised against Parliament would disappear. It would be found that there was complete unanimity on the need for remedying those important evils. The following is a list of matters which I believe to be the common function of all parties, whatever their political colour:—

(1) Modernisation and standardisation of Australian railways.

Who would oppose that as a general plan for the State and the Commonwealth?

(2) Completion of Australia's first-class road system, including trans-continental routes.

(3) Deep sewerage to be completed in all large cities and also extended to all country towns.

Even in Claremont, which has the deep sewerage system, fair-sized areas are not yet sewered.

(4) Complete harnessing of all necessary water sheds to provide adequate water facilities in country areas.

(5) Completion and extension of up-to-date school buildings and equipment throughout Australia.

(6) Rural electricity projects in suitable areas.

(7) Slum clearance and the building of decent homes for the homeless.

All these works would represent an enormous expenditure of public funds and would take years to complete. Other projects, which would receive the support of

all parties in Australia, could be added to the list. If these matters were put in the forefront of the various Parliaments of Australia, the electors would know what they were voting for and the small issues which generally divide Parliament would disappear. Constant employment would be provided for the people, men would marry and make homes, and in the natural course of events would be raising families. The time-payment system, which has been deprecated because members realise it is dangerous, could, where employment is constant, be resorted to. In such a case it seems to me that the time-payment system has much to commend it.

Mr. Seward: Has it?

Mr. NORTH: That is for others to say. If resort were not had to the time-payment system, it would mean that the demand for goods would be greatly lessened and the turnover reduced. The hon. member can deal with that point when his turn comes and I shall be pleased to hear what he has to say on it. Personally, I consider the time-payment system a good one, and I have little fault to find with it provided employment is constant. But if people purchase furniture on time-payment and seven or eight months later lose their employment, then the system is bad.

Mr. Fox: Before you conclude, tell us how we are to do all these things.

Mr. NORTH: I thank the hon. member for his interjection. I heard my friend say what a rotten speech I was making, but I welcome criticism, because I might say more than usual under the spur. I hope he did not make the remark, but whether he did or not, in the excitement of party politics we are all looking for something to gallop over. If we leave the question where it is, then some people will still refer to members as blackbucklers, grafters, liars and rogues. Then the electors will say, "Politics is a dirty game; we will not touch it," and they will vote blindly. But the people to whom I have referred entirely misrepresent the position. They do not see the truth behind the parliamentary system for which we stand. They read the paper I mentioned, which refers to the system as a complete wash-out. The underlying basis of our parliamentary system, to maintain which we are fighting Germany and our other opponents, is that no Gov-

ernment must be allowed to become dictatorial. When that happens, the people should have power to turn it out of office. Our constitution is not designed to emphasise party politics any more than, shall I say, a risqué picture is designed to emphasise sex. No! The object of the parliamentary institution which has been handed down to us throughout the centuries will never be defeated. For instance, if the member for East Perth . . .

Mr. Hughes: Leave me out of it.

Mr. NORTH: I am going to pay the hon. member a compliment. If he were at this moment to grasp the leadership of the Government and become a dictator, and shoot down people as has been done in Germany, the constitution provides that the whole force of law and order will be invoked to depose him. He may have only one voice in this House, although he might be supported by thousands of people outside, yet under our system we could end such a dictatorship. We have had during the past 25 years two world wars and a world slump and we must now set ourselves the task of reconstruction on sound lines. That is why it is so important for members of this and other Parliaments to get together by some means—perhaps by a committee system—and ascertain in what respect our political parties are at one. It will be found that they are at one upon 95 per cent. of the questions affecting Australia. We could then say to the big financial institutions, "This is the financial policy of the Parliaments of Australia. We have this reconstruction plan to carry out and we ask you to make arrangements not for inflation, not for wild-cat schemes, but to maintain constant employment upon Arbitration Court conditions. The people of Australia require us to carry out this particular work in this particular priority or order."

That is the proposal. What is the alternative? It is to carry on as we are now. To do that would be to ignore largely the big questions looming before Australia, to some of which I have made brief reference. I shall not speak any more regarding them but the declining birthrate, malnutrition, and the destruction of valuable crops and commodities represent outstanding problems. They can be tackled, provided they are placed on the list I have suggested. By adopting that course, we could avoid the

implication that there was an attempt to belittle an opposing political party, or the Government of the day. Most decidedly we are not trying to attack the Government; I certainly have not that object. Naturally when an election has to be fought members are forced, particularly when there is no consensus of opinion on the issues confronting us, to adopt a contrary attitude. What does that mean? It amounts to this, that if I could find some people living in East Perth or in Claremont who were actually starving—then it would be the fault of the Government that such conditions could obtain! The truth is that the real issues that separate us are very small indeed. Does any member of this House deny that assertion? Of course not! But that is all forgotten in the hurly-burly of politics—and it continues to be forgotten through the years.

To conclude my remarks, I shall quote from a review of a book, published recently in the "West Australian." As the price of the book is 15s., obviously very few people will spend that much on a work on political economy. The book, the title of which is "English Saga, 1840-1940," is by Arthur Bryant. I shall place before members some extracts from the article, which I consider worth repeating. Both sides of the House may apparently come in for castigation, and so I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am certainly not endeavouring to make use of this article as party political matter. I wish to point to the need for uniformity in this Parliament in regard to the work that has to be undertaken. Here are the extracts—

Much of Mr. Bryant's "English Saga" is devoted to exposing the ill consequences of the English mind being indoctrinated with the Benthamite principles of *laissez faire*, connoting non-interference by Governments or Parliaments with industry.

That appears to support Labour's outlook so far as it goes, but Mr. Bryant certainly does support some Labour views, as members will see—

Only by slow degrees were breaches made in the fortresses of this false economic doctrine. Parliamentary reforms, which from time to time rendered the House of Commons more and more responsive to public opinion, and the growth, against formidable opposition, of trade unionism and the Labour movement, ultimately leading to the formation of a Parliamentary Labour Party, proved the most effective battering rams against the *laissez faire* citadel which, though shaken to its foundations, has even today to be reckoned with.

So far there is an indication of the writer's appreciation of the great work of the British Labour movement during the past century. No one will deny the greatness of that work; we are not so small as to attempt to do so—

Mr. Bryant pays a warm tribute to Disraeli (afterwards Earl Beaconsfield) who, Conservative leader though he was, was more democratically minded where social legislation was concerned than was Gladstone, the idol of the Liberal Party. Here we have a portrait of Disraeli as a socialist before socialism became a political force. The idea of private wealth not based on the fulfilment of social duty, was repugnant to him because it was contrary to nature. "Rather than England dominated by the possessors of irresponsible capital," he declared, "he would prefer a real revolution in the distribution of national power."

Therein we see a definite attack upon both sides of the House of Commons respecting differences as they were then—

From the beginning to the end of his "English Saga," the author attributes very largely the nation's social and economic ills and most of our present discontents to the English tendency to worship profits. He regards as the main cause of the Allies not winning the peace after their victory in the last world war, their failure to substitute an economic system based on co-operation for the competitive system. He points to the great illusion of which the Fighting Forces of all the belligerents were the victims. "When the war ended," he writes, "the simple fighting men who had won it thought that a new world was about to be built on the ruins of the old. . . It was not to this new world that the returning soldiers, marching with set faces to demobilisation across a broken Europe, return. . . Industrial society as it had grown up in the past century did not permit the fulfilment of the soldier's need." In short, they came back to the old profit worshipping world and a world soon to prepare for the second and greater world war.

Contemplating this wider capitalism, Mr. Bryant writes—"Nations like men must reap what they sow. The justice that is visited upon the children's children is an inescapable law of existence, yet there is another eternal principle governing the world. It is that of redemption. Man may learn from his mistakes and, when he has made atonement, raise his stature by self-regeneration. . . A great nation is a society that learns from its prior follies and in learning recreates itself. England is now learning that neither wealth nor power nor comfort, whether for class or individual, are ends in themselves. . . England is now fighting a war of redemption not only for Europe but for her own. Facing dangers greater than any in her history, she has fallen back on the rock of her national character. Her future and that of the world depends not only on her victory but on her ability to restore in a new form the ancient laws of her own moral progress and unity. By so doing she may discover a common denominator for

human reconstruction more glorious than anything in her long past."

On motion by the Deputy Premier, debate adjourned.

## COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

### *Council's Message.*

Message from the Council received and read notifying the personnel of Sessional Committees appointed by that House.

## BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,500,000.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

*House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 7th August, 1941.*

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

## QUESTION—CIVIL DEFENCE (EMERGENCY POWERS) ACT.

### *Government Expenditure.*

Hon. N. KEENAN asked the Minister for Health: 1, What moneys have been spent under the Civil Defence (Emergency Powers) Act, 1940? 2, If any, how much of such expenditure has been incurred in respect of machinery or plant, and how much in salaries or allowances?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied:

1, Prior to commencement of Act, £840, since commencement of Act, £2,306 10s.; 2,

(a) Equipment, £2,458 10s., (b) Salaries and allowances, £684. The Government has also made available the services of professional and administrative officers in all departments, provided office accommodation and equipment, the value of which cannot be assessed. In addition the Government has met the following expense:—Special police, £17,298; concessions to Government employees on active service, £4,915; concessions on soldiers' fares, £2,861.

## QUESTION—PETROL RATIONING.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Premier: Will the Government obtain from the Commonwealth Government and lay upon the Table of the House a return showing the name and occupation of every petrol license holder, and the ration allowed to each?

The DEPUTY PREMIER (for the Premier) replied: No. I am informed that there are approximately 90,000 license holders in Western Australia, and preparation of the list from the files would cost a considerable sum.

## QUESTION—DEFENCE, NAVAL MEN'S ALLOWANCES.

Mr. BERRY asked the Premier: Will the Government make strong representation to the Federal Government to bring the allowances to naval men for wife and family into line with the allowances made to air force and army men?

The DEPUTY PREMIER (for the Premier) replied: "I am advised that the allowances for families of men in the navy, army, and air force serving abroad are all equal.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to Mr. Holman (Forrest) on the ground of military service.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

### *Fourth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. TONKIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.33]: I thank His Excellency for the