

and when there is to be a bridge party it means a much later hour. It is time legislation was brought in to give our domestics a fair chance for recreation, which they do not get to-day. As one who has for long supported the purchase of locally-made goods, I have often heard it said the people require educating up to that ideal. However, I know that the people for the most part do buy local products when they can get them. The trouble is that we require to educate the shopkeepers to stock local products. One can go to shop after shop in Perth and ask for locally-made goods, only to be disappointed. The time has arrived to educate our shopkeepers in this regard. That is all that is required, for our local manufactures are quite capable of competing against those of the Eastern States in point of quality. I sincerely hope the Government will take steps to put the Lotteries Commission on a more satisfactory footing. The appointment of the commissioners gave rise to a great deal of controversy, and I contend the Government should appoint a committee to make an inquiry into the working of that commission. The lottery, I am sure, could be run much cheaper and better than it is at present. When the commission were appointed I wrote a letter to the Press, but it is still in the press box. Being interested in some friends on the group settlements, I have come to the conclusion that if not a Royal Commission, at all events somebody, should be appointed by the Government to go and see the way in which the group settlers are living down near Busselton. I was there for a month last Christmas and I was surprised to see the way in which the settlers worked and lived. If that occurred in the city, we would call them the slums of Western Australia. In some of those homes the people camp on beds made of chaff and superphosphate bags, which, in a country like this, is a crying shame. Some of the settlers were ordered off their holdings and some have left through no fault of their own. The wives of the settlers work as hard as do the men, and though the settlers have boys working for them at 5s. a week, they cannot make a living. The cream cheque, in some instances, is not worth nearly as much as is sustenance, and yet those settlers have to remain on the groups and put up with such conditions. As to my constituency, I consider it

is the most neglected suburb in the State. I regret to have to say that my predecessor, who was a Minister, could have done much better for the district than he did do. It is surprising to me that there has not been an accident near the railway station. The crossing over the line is such as to give one the impression of a switchback railway. If some alteration is not made there, an accident must occur before long. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Moloney) spoke about the reconditioning of the railways. I endorse his remarks. The paint on the Mt. Lawley station can almost turn round and bid one good morning—it sticks out so far. The entrance to the railway is paved with rough stones not fit for a woman to walk on, especially if she is pushing a perambulator. The condition of the school is no better than that of the Subiaco and Jolimont schools mentioned by the member for Subiaco. There are some stumps of trees in the school yard but there are no seats for the children. The seats have disappeared. Perhaps some unfortunate unemployed man has taken them for firewood. I hope the Minister will see that the children attending that school are properly catered for in the near future.

On motion by Mr. Hawke, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.3 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 25th July, 1933.*

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

## QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE, GOLDFIELDS ALLOWANCES.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is it the intention of Cabinet to review the remuneration received by Government servants on the Goldfields, at present receiving less than the basic wage? 2, If so, when will the position be adjusted?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The matter is receiving the consideration of the Government.

## QUESTIONS (2)—MINING.

### *Government Prospecting Scheme.*

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What is the aggregate amount per week now being paid to the men who are working under the prospecting scheme instituted by the Minister for Mines? 2, What fund is being charged with this amount? 3, Is any of the money being charged to General Loan Fund?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Orders for sustenance to the extent of £1,200 per week are at present being issued to prospectors under the Government Prospecting Scheme. 2, General Loan Fund, Development of Mining. 3, Answered by No. 2.

### *Reservation of Areas.*

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: Having regard to resolutions recently passed by the Industrial Union of Workers, Prospectors and Tributaries' Organisations, together with expressions of opinion of the Goldfields Press against granting gold mining reservations throughout the State, will the Minister state—(1) How many such reservations have been granted? (2) In what goldfields districts are they situated? (3) By whom are they held? (4) Are any of them transferable? (5) On what dates were they granted, and when do they expire. (6) What are the conditions governing each reservation and the acreage thereof?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The information required appears on the accompanying list. Paper laid on the Table.

## MOTION—CONDOLENCE.

*The late Hon. T. A. L. Davy, K.C., M.L.A.*

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.43]: The mournful event, which occurred soon after the close of last session, imposes upon me to-day a duty, the necessity for which we can all deplore. On the 18th February last Mr. Thomas Arthur Lewis Davy, K.C., Attorney General and Minister for Education in the previous Government, passed away. Only too often we fail to recognise a man's worth until he has been claimed by death. It sometimes happens that when our minds become warped with party prejudice, we are tempted to ignore the virtues, and see only the shortcomings, of those who are opposed to us in public life. It is, and always will be, a very pleasant memory to me that, at a time when party feeling was running high, I was able to tear myself away from such a temptation and pay to the late Mr. Davy a tribute that was due to him. In acknowledging the merits of certain legislation which was before the House last session, I said that the late Attorney General had given practical proof of a desire to effect necessary reforms in connection with the administration, and I added that the Bill then before the Council was an instance of the humanitarian trend which he sought to give to certain rigorous laws that appeared on our statute-book. "Humanitarian" was the word I used, and in the sense in which it was intended, it was the correct word, for it implied the possession of some of the choicest qualities that can adorn human character. Those characteristics to a large degree were to be found in the late Mr. Davy. His sympathies were with the helpless and his broad mind knew no distinction of persons. A most approachable Minister, even the humblest person with a grievance could always enlist his closest attention. He was just to all and his sincerity of purpose was beyond question. The late Mr. Davy's career was one of continuous upward movement. Commencing his education at the old Fremantle Grammar School, we find him distinguishing himself at the Perth High School, then winning a Rhodes scholarship and entering Exeter College, Oxford. He qualified for the English Bar. He responded to the call to arms in the Great War and attained the rank of captain. The

war ended, he came back to Western Australia, and in 1924 was elected as member for West Perth in the Legislative Assembly. In 1930 he became a Minister of the Crown. In 1932 he was appointed King's Counsel. Then, within a year, the end came at the comparatively early age of 42 years. It is inexpressibly sad that one endowed with such gifts and imbued with such high ideals, who gave such promise of continued public service, should have been called away so soon. The loss to the State is great, but the loss to those who were dearest to him cannot be measured. We can realise the poignancy of their sorrow, and sympathise with them in their grief. I move—

That this House desires to place on record its sincere appreciation of the public services rendered to Western Australia by the late Hon. Thomas Arthur Lewis Davy, member for West Perth in the Legislative Assembly and Attorney General of the State at the time of his death, and to express its deepest sympathy with Mrs. Davy and the members of the family in the irreparable loss they sustained by his death; and that the President be requested to transmit this resolution to Mrs. Davy.

**HON. C. F. BAXTER** (East) [4.49]: It is with poignant feelings of personal loss and a recognition of the public loss to the State that resulted from the death of the late Hon. T. A. L. Davy, that I rise to support the wonderful and well-deserved tribute paid by the Leader of the House to the passing of the former Attorney General. That honoured gentleman was one of the most promising young men whose services were gained by the public, while his professional career was characterised by similarly high ideals. His loss will be felt in many circles. One may know a person fairly well in ordinary life, public or social, but the way to know the real man to a much better degree is to serve a period with him in Cabinet. Personally I thought I knew a great deal of Mr. Davy before we joined the Mitchell Administration, but I found I had yet to learn much of the wonderful character of the man whose loss we mourn to-day. Mr. Davy was not only an able man in public life, a good man in the social sphere, and a most noble character generally, but he was a very keen sport. He was a man who loved human nature, and his one hobby, which he indulged in in the little spare time at his disposal, had reference to animals and birds. Members

of the Mitchell Administration suffered a severe blow by his death and the State a terrible loss. Personally I have lost a very close friend, and our association represented one of those friendships that are so rarely formed in life. Great as may be the loss to the State and to individuals personally, his loss is felt greatest by his widow and family. My deepest sympathy goes out to those who were near and dear to him and who are living to mourn his loss to-day. I support the remarks of the Chief Secretary.

**HON. J. CORNELL** (South) [4.52]: I desire to associate myself with the motion on behalf of a section that is sparsely represented in this House, but is represented in large numbers outside. I refer to the returned soldiers of Western Australia. My acquaintanceship with Mr. Davy dated back to 1919, and from that time onwards until his death, I was on terms of closest personal friendship with him, particularly in relation to the affairs of the Returned Soldiers' League. I know the services he rendered in the Great War were effected as a member of the Imperial Army and not as a member of the A.I.F. On the other hand, there was no more dinkum digger in the A.I.F. than the late Hon. T. A. L. Davy. No member of the A.I.F. was more seized with the point of view of the returned soldier from the private upwards, than was Mr. Davy, nor has anyone done more than he in helping to promote the interests of that section of the community. I have met many men, but I cannot remember having encountered a greater "mixer" than Mr. Davy. He was equally at home with the humblest as with the highest in the land. That is one of the characteristics of a really great man. Frequently I have stated in council meetings of the R.S.L. that to the late Mr. Davy much was owed that was not fully known. At a time when the R.S.L. was not very popular with ex-officers, it was men like Mr. Davy who did so much to promote the success that the organisation has attained to-day. On that ground alone, I would desire to associate myself with the motion, and to convey the sincerest sympathies of the returned soldier section of the community to the widow and children of the late Attorney General. I have suffered a great personal loss, for Mr. Davy was one of my closest friends and one of the finest men I ever met.

**THE PRESIDENT** [4.56]: Before carrying out the mournful duty of asking members to pass this motion, I wish to say what a dreadful shock it was to me to hear of the sudden end of the late Hon. T. A. L. Davy, a young man full of health and strength, with a career of great usefulness ahead of him. As a returned soldier, as a University man, as a brilliant lawyer and as a distinguished Parliamentarian, he was a type of man that the Legislature and the public life of this State can ill afford to lose. To me it was not only a great public loss but also a personal one, for Mr. Davy was a friend I valued and esteemed, and one I shall never forget. I shall ask hon. members to carry this motion in the usual way.

Question passed; members standing.

### FEDERAL SENATE VACANCY.

#### *Lieut.-Governor's Message.*

Message received from the Lieut.-Governor transmitting a copy of a despatch received by him from the President of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia, notifying that a vacancy had occurred in the representation of the State of Western Australia in the Senate, Senator Sir Hal Colebatch having resigned his membership on the 20th March, 1933.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, ordered: That the President be requested to confer with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in order to fix a day and place whereon and whereat the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, sitting and voting together, shall choose a person to hold the place of the Senator whose place has become vacant.

### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £1,500,000.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Second Day—Conclusion.*

**HON. C. F. BAXTER** (East) [5.4]: Before speaking to the motion, I should like to claim the privilege of saying a few words of welcome to you, Sir, after your return from a trip abroad. We in this State are fortunate in having a gentleman like your-

self who has the time and inclination not only to take a trip abroad, but to become familiar with world events and to act as an ambassador for the State to which he belongs. I doubt, Sir, whether there are many whose knowledge of the State is as complete as is yours. I have met you as far south as the east of Esperance and as far north as Wyndham, and I am certain that there are very few parts of the State with which you are not familiar. Your knowledge also of the industries of the State is extensive, and we were glad to find that while you were away you made full use of the information which you possessed. The opening of the present Parliament was graced by the presence of a gentleman none other than our former Premier, who has received the appointment of Lieut.-Governor. I know of no more fitting tribute that could have been paid to Sir James Mitchell than to select him for that high honour. Ever since he became associated with politics he has done a great deal for the country of his birth, and I think it was rather unfortunate that Sir James should have been laid aside altogether from politics at the present juncture, when the services of men of his ability and knowledge are so badly needed. He is one of the best financiers the State has ever had. I know there are some who will not agree with me, but I want them to carry back their minds to the position the State was in some years ago, and to remember also that other Treasurers enjoyed an abundance of money which enabled everything to flow along very well. Sir James Mitchell was Treasurer during the worst crisis ever experienced by this State. During that unfortunate period I consider that he did remarkably well with the limited funds at his disposal. Therefore it ill-becomes public men to belittle Sir James's appointment to the Lieut.-Governorship, no matter even by whom that appointment was made. Are we to quarrel because this or that party did not appoint him? Why drag the matter through the dirt like that? A public statement that appeared in the Press recently does not in any way reflect upon Sir James Mitchell, but rather does it reflect upon those who made it. The change of Government has been responsible for one event that gives me considerable pleasure, and that is the return of our friend, Mr. Drew, to his customary seat on the front bench as Leader of the House. No gentleman has a better record of service than our present Leader; no Leader of the House has

ever shown more consideration to his fellow members. Every one of us who has sat here year after year with Mr. Drew knows that he can be depended upon, that he would not wilfully mislead any member of the House, and that if by any mischance he did do so, he would take the first opportunity to rectify the error. Outside the House our experience of Mr. Drew is exactly the same. There is one matter that is unpleasant to me and possibly also to some hon. members, and that is the manner in which the Lieut.-Governor's Speech was presented to the House. This, too, was followed by a most inappropriate speech by Mr. Gray who, I regret to find, is not present in the Chamber. We invite guests to the opening of Parliament and we are treated to a doleful speech which follows the Lieut.-Governor's Speech which is also doleful. In addition, the speech of the mover of the Address-in-reply was almost insulting to those who were assembled here as guests. I am ready to admit that Mr. Gray has every reason to be proud of the good work he has done for the unfortunate section of the community. We appreciate it, but he has to remember that there are others—and possibly they were here also on the opening day—who have done just as interesting work without broadcasting it. While on the subject of the opening addresses on the assembling of Parliament, I do not approve of the custom of inviting the most newly returned member to deliver the first speech. It would be better if we entrusted that important task to members who had more experience in the legislative halls. It is hardly fair to a new member to ask him to make his maiden speech in the presence of a crowd of visitors. In some cases, of course, it is all right; in those cases where a member perhaps is possessed of colossal conceit and does not feel the nervous strain.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Mr. Gray is not a new member.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am not alluding to Mr. Gray. Members are asked to agree to a motion expressing thanks to the Lieutenant-Governor for his opening Speech. I heard the Speech read, and since then I have perused it and I can say that I have never heard or read anything more doleful.

The Honorary Minister: It is the three years' record of the Government with which you were associated.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is a record of nothing. Every member of this House felt

very uncomfortable when that Speech was read.

The Honorary Minister: Was it not true?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It was only a record of everything we knew. Take the first matter to which reference was made—the result of the referendum which was known to every man, woman and child in the State. Why go to the expense of repeating that? We know, of course, that it is a question needing a lot of consideration, and I am not criticising the Government on that score. What I object to is putting it in the Governor's Speech, when that fact in itself will carry us no further.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We must have a permanent record of it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We have enough records of it. Then there is also reference in the Speech to the position of wheat, wool and other commodities. We all follow that position very closely. As far as the North is concerned we are told that it is experiencing hardship. In that respect I trust the Government will be able to do something to relieve the hardship. Again, we are told that the North is growing bananas and pineapples.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The North was not even mentioned in the previous Governor's Speech.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There were no bananas grown then.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is a reference also to the different industries and the improvement in the values. We all sincerely hope that those values will go on increasing, and I would say to the present Government that they should follow the lead of their predecessors by not only assisting to keep down the cost of production but to endeavour to reduce the cost even further. I know that a great deal cannot be done in that direction because so much depends on the Federal Government. At the same time I am sorry to remark that very little is being done by the Federal Government at the present time to reduce existing costs. Until such time as the Government fully realise the position, and take action, the position will continue to be very difficult. Notwithstanding the fact that prices are improving, we are in this position, that during the past few years not only the producers, but almost every section of the community, have been forced to patch up their plants and resort to that kind of makeshift which is admittedly always costly. No one appears to be

in the position of being able to replace machinery that is worn out, and that will not be possible until conditions improve. The problem is how to finance a new plant. There is not only the question of recovering the previous position, but also the question of being able to meet the aspect of new plant. Nowadays we hear a great deal about the North-West of our State, conjointly with the remainder of the northern portion of Australia. Western Australia has two cattle ports—Wyndham, where cattle are treated and the products exported, and Derby, where cattle are shipped on the hoof to Fremantle.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And some oversea.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: But not enough oversea. At Derby there is terrific economic loss in sending livestock oversea. As I intend to deal with the chilled meat question later, I shall say nothing more on that phase at present. At Wyndham the position is not bright. In spite of the fact that tremendous reductions have been made in operating costs the price of meat is so low that the near future looks gloomy indeed. The latest quotation of 2½d. per lb. for beef is not alimring. It augurs ill for the meat industry, and I hope that soon there will be some recovery. True, other things, such as hides and tallow, have appreciated recently. I trust there will be further increases in that direction. The main product, however, is what we have to consider. Speaking of the Wyndham Meat Works generally I maintain that no Government, let alone private persons, should have allowed the works to continue along the lines upon which they were being run for so long a period of years. Hon. members representing the North in this Chamber were always clamouring for reduction of charges. I for my part felt that reduction was justified, but never in my wildest dreams did I imagine the position to be so bad as it actually was.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There is the report of a committee of inquiry which sat about 16 years ago.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It may be well to let hon. members know of two or three extraordinary items of expenditure, a phase on which I could elaborate for some considerable time. Let us consider expenditure for the past four years; the inquiry will prove interesting. In 1929, the year prior to the Government of which I was a member taking office, 25,766 head of cat-

tle were treated for operating costs which reached a total of £132,497, a colossal sum.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Four pounds per head.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Over £5 per head. In 1930 the number of cattle treated was 31,051, and the operating costs totalled £140,732. I ask hon. members to mark the decline in costs. The season had been arranged for by the previous Administration, just as the present season has been arranged for by the former Government. In 1931 the number of cattle treated was 31,170, and the costs totalled £103,805; and for 1932 the figures were 28,459 cattle killed at a cost of £88,000. Last year at Wyndham it cost only £88,000—still too high a figure, and one which should be reduced—to treat 28,459 head of cattle, whereas four years previously it had cost £132,497 to treat 25,766 head. Naturally, the cattle growers benefited by that reduction. With further reference to operating costs, I may point out that remarks are frequently made on the profits shown by the Wyndham Meat Works. Many people seem to think that a surplus over and above operating costs is a profit. However, there is an annual interest charge of about £72,000; and there can be no profit until that interest charge has been met.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What does the surplus amount to, anyhow?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Last year it amounted to £42,000, 90 per cent. of which went to the cattle growers, who otherwise could not have carried on. They received £38,000, whilst the Government got only £4,000. The position will be somewhat better this year, because the arrangement has improved slightly in favour of the works. An important feature of the situation is the number of cattle from the Northern Territory killed and treated by the Wyndham works, the Northern Territory being administered and taxed by the Federal Government. The loss under that head runs into close on £400,000 since the Wyndham works began operating, about 16 or 17 years ago. I have taken up that question with the Federal Government, and I know that the new Government of this State will follow the matter up diligently, since it is only reasonable that the Federal Government should bear portion of the loss caused to Western Australia by the handling of cattle from the Northern Territory. Until recent years there was at

Wyndham the unfortunate position that ships calling there could not obtain sufficient supplies of water. Members who have seen the King River at Wyndham will agree that it is one of the finest sheets of water in the State, and the water is of the best quality; yet ships calling at Wyndham and wanting 70,000 or 75,000 gallons of water could only get 15,000. The plant is quite adequate to the demand, but the water was being pumped from the King River above the works to be used for irrigating vegetable gardens at Wyndham. I may mention that about two acres of garden land had cost hundreds of pounds to clear in the first place. The garden was run by an employee of the meat works, who was, incidentally, in receipt of a good salary. He had the ground free and the water free, and I suppose a lot of other things free, and then he sold the vegetables to the works at high prices.

Hon. J. Cornell: An enterprising young chap!

Hon. J. J. Holmes: To what amount?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: A very substantial amount, though I cannot recall the exact figures. Of course all that has been done away with, and the garden is a waste to-day. Fine web steel reinforcement material was used by the same person in connection with all the fences, outhouses, etc. It is all perishing now, though it could have been sent South and put to good use. Reverting to water supply for ships, last season the ships took 76,000 gallons of water, for which they paid at the rate of 10s. per thousand gallons, and still there has been at all times more than enough water in the reservoir, whereas previously the works were held up for the want of water which was supplied to the vegetable garden. It is frequently stated that the Wyndham works cannot supply preserved meat. I hope that not another tin of preserved meat will be put up at Wyndham until the machinery there has been altered. Part of the preserving plant was obsolete 25 years ago. Tins were made by hand because the tin-making machines were useless. To operate the preserving plant at Wyndham this season would have meant a loss of £10,000 on that section of the works alone. Instead, the greater portion of the meat was turned into boneless beef, and this was sold on the London market at a reasonable

price, instead of a loss being incurred on preserved meat. Again, I have been told, not by casual persons but by men employed on the works and also by two members of Parliament, that if I dared to run the Wyndham canteen by a private person the works would not operate. That was indeed a direct challenge to offer to any Minister. I have said that one year showed a loss of £2,774 for 20 weeks' operation of the canteen. That fact gives some idea of how necessary the change was. I do not know of any other meat works in Australia attempting to run a canteen; it is always done by private persons. Last season the Wyndham canteen was run by a private person, and instead of a loss there was a return of £5 per week rent, and the price of meat while the works were running was doubled.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The canteen paid a halfpenny per pound.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The canteen is now paying one penny per pound.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The men earned enough in six months to keep them for the rest of the year.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Everything cannot be remedied in one season. I am now putting certain considerations before the Government, so that they may continue the good work. These may be small things in a sense, but in the aggregate they are highly important. As regards the stores, I am thankful I made the trip to the North-West, because never in my life before have I seen any thing so stupefying as the stores position at Wyndham. After heavy writing-down, there were £6,000 worth of useless stores, useless so far as Wyndham is concerned. There are on the works about 30 steam gauges, which cost approximately £2 12s. 6d. apiece, whereas two would be sufficient to carry the works on indefinitely, for all that goes wrong is the glasses, which could be replaced cheaply. All sorts of things are lying about, and will never be of any use. The careless way in which stores have been handled is a disgrace. The oils, the piping, and many other lines were left open to all to help themselves, and some persons did not fail to do so. A motor car was supplied to run visitors around the country at a cost, to the works, of 1s. per mile. This car was owned by an employee

of the works, and represented another perquisite to him in addition to the garden I referred to. The meat works are not supposed to run people around, as they were not advertising the country. At the stocktaking it was found that 900 gallons of petrol were short. It is absolutely necessary that the costs be brought down if there is to be any hope for our cattle industry. Let me now turn to the highly important question of cold storage space for Wyndham meats. Here we have splendid meat works, but they are entirely isolated and there is no hope of loading anything but the special ships that come to Wyndham for the purpose. Fortunately the late Government were successful this year in securing six ships instead of the customary four. When I took over the Wyndham Meat Works there was about 1,400 tons of cold storage capacity, which for an isolated plant is ridiculous. In the event of steamers being late, the works would be held up. The "Port Sydney" with leaky boilers had to put back to Fremantle, so was nine days behind time. Fortunately the position was met by slowing down the killing for a few days. The works were fortunate by reason of the fact that I had another 300 tons cold storage provided, making 1,700 tons in all. Even now the position is altogether too dangerous, for in a contingency the works might have to be stopped altogether. I bring this before the Government in the hope that they may find money for extra cold storage, although it might mean an additional £20,000. How any engineers could have recommended an additional 1,400 tons at a cost of £180,000 is beyond my comprehension. We were able to secure the 300 tons additional at very little cost, because the room was there and so also were the labour and material.

Hon. H. Seddon: What about the refrigerating plant?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: By reason of savings in the preserving department, and with alteration to the extract plant, we had enough power from the plant to operate the 300 tons additional cold storage; but even so we cannot afford to take the risk of a stoppage arising from the breakdown of a ship or some dispute with the men. I am informed by experts that £20,000 would suffice to build the necessary additional 900 tons cold storage to

meet such contingencies, and I hope the Government will be able to find the money to have this work done. I have been astonished to see a number of public statements based on the surmise that because there was a fairly successful shipment of chilled beef by the "Port Fairy" from New Zealand, we also could send chilled beef to London. Nothing is farther from the truth. That "Port Fairy" shipment was treated at a cost which would make commercial shipment impossible. In addition, what meat could we send forward that would pay the double freight involved? For chilled meat would mean double the space required for frozen meat. Then some people seem to think that any chilled beef we sent to London would be of the same quality as the Argentine chilled meat which secures such splendid returns on the English market. But we cannot produce the 24 months' old stock such as are produced in the Argentine and chilled for London. Certainly our meat would not be of the quality of theirs. Personally I had intended to show the people of the South what the position is by having sent down a shipment of chilled meat from Wyndham. What we are doing at present represents an economic loss. We cannot get good beef down here at certain periods, but it could be chilled and sent to this southern market and so save an economic loss. However, there is a lot to be done yet before we allow ourselves to be carried away in support of chilled meat. I know there is an organisation forever pushing forward chilled meat, but there may be some reason for that.

Hon. H. Seddon: It pays much better than frozen meat on the London market.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: They would have not only to overcome the difficulty of transport and land the meat in good condition, but they would have to overcome the commercial position and in addition produce the higher quality meat required. One of the most important laws we have is our Electoral Act. I agree that amendments in many directions are required, but I am not going to deal with that phase of it now. I would ask members to consider abuses revealed at the recent elections, and would urge the Government to take action to prevent those abuses in future elections. The matters I intend to refer to came before me officially, so I have a pretty good idea of what I am speaking about. The Electoral Act should be respected to the letter. It is a very important Act. It returns representatives of



the people to Parliament, and they in turn appoint the Government, which administers the departments and controls the destinies of the State. Unless that Act be carefully guarded it is easy to see where we shall drift and what will happen—as has happened in many other countries. I have heard some strong statements made about irregularities at the last elections, and I suppose some of them really must have occurred. Serious allegations regarding the Gascoyne electorate have been made, but since they did not come before me I will leave them to members who are better acquainted with them. However I do urge the Government to institute an inquiry and, if necessary, take further action. A most unsavoury occurrence was that of Victoria Park, where the department had to cancel the appointment of a postal vote officer owing to his actions, and after the cancellation were unable to secure departmental papers in his possession. Finally, to protect itself the department had to send an officer of the police with a warrant to secure those papers. Another occurrence which the Government should not overlook is one vitally concerning a member of this chamber. In January last a man named Craig, an ex-employee of the Wyndham Meat Works, sent in a claim card to be enrolled for Fremantle. He was quite within his rights, because he was domiciled in Fremantle, having accepted a position as engineer at the Fremantle Meat Works, and there being no likelihood of his returning to Wyndham for the following season's operations. But a few weeks later, when it became evident there would not be any election in the Fremantle electorate, Craig put in another claim card, for the Kimberley electorate, although there was no chance of his returning to the Wyndham Meat Works.

Hon. H. Seddon: Was he still residing at Fremantle?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. Notwithstanding the generous treatment meted out by me, Mr. Gray again transgressed the Electoral Act by witnessing that man's claim card.

Hon. E. H. Gray: I did nothing of the sort. It was quite in order.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I cannot understand Mr. Gray. I ask the Government to have an inquiry made into that, because the circumstances demand it. Whoever transgresses that Act should be brought to book.

Hon. G. Fraser: There is another inquiry that should be held, concerning a member of the late Government.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is not pardonable that an ordinary member of the community should ignore the Electoral Act, and it is worse when the offender is a member of this Chamber. I regret having to refer to an interpretation of the Electoral Act by the Judiciary. If this unfortunate finding is allowed to stand it will become a precedent, which will not be well for the Electoral Act. I refer to the judgment of the Court of Disputed Returns on the result of the recent Kimberley election. In the election for Kimberley two nominations were received, but one was not in the prescribed form and thus was not valid. The other complied with the Electoral Act. Therefore the returning officer should have exercised his powers under the Act by declaring the one nomination invalid and declaring duly elected the candidate whose nomination form was in order. The returning officer should have been conversant with the Act. I realise that the Electoral Department cannot be blamed for what happened; the department engage the services of the best officials offering, but some of them do not make themselves conversant with the Act previous to undertaking the duties. The returning officer should have declared the one nomination invalid.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You want him to be returning officer, judge, and everything else.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Not at all, but I do wish to see the Act respected. Section 77 reads—

Nominations may be in the prescribed form and shall (a) be signed by the candidate; (b) state the place of residence and the occupation of the candidate, and (c) addressed to the returning officer.

Those provisions were not fulfilled, and the returning officer failed in his duty. For some reason that I cannot ascertain, the decision of the Court of Disputed Returns was that Mr. Coverley's nomination was invalid, and that as the votes cast for Mr. Povah were in the minority, to declare him elected would be plainly contrary to the desires of the voters who recorded their choice.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The nomination was either in order or not in order.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is so. The nomination was invalid, and the electors should not have been considered at all.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You do not want to consider the electors?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It would be impossible to knock sense into the hon. member's head.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I think the hon. member will withdraw that remark.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I withdraw. Now comes the aftermath of this unfortunate occurrence. First of all a precedent has been established. That is the important fact that I wish to impress upon the minds of members.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What precedent?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The precedent of allowing the election to be upset when one nomination was not in order and of ordering another election. The State has to bear the cost of conducting another election.

The Honorary Minister: Are we in order in criticising the decision of the judge?

Hon. E. H. Gray: The hon. member would do anything.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Povah knew enough to have his nomination form in order. He incurred the expense of a big election campaign and he has now to go through it all again, due to no fault of his own. However, when the Court of Disputed Returns ordered another election, that election should have been conducted on the roll used previously.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you say they are now fighting a general election on a by-election roll?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. Since the election 246 names have been put on the roll. At the general election 968 electors were enrolled, but the number on the roll now is 1,132.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They are entitled to vote.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Be quiet! Wyndham alone has had 193 names added. A number of electors who doubtless voted at the general election in April will thus be entitled to vote a second time. It is safe to say that 2 per cent. have become eligible to be enrolled since the general election, and thus we can assume that 193 electors, having voted in other constituencies at the general election, will now be permitted to vote again. When another election was

ordered, it should have been held on the old roll.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It could not have been.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member was a member of the Government for three years, and did not amend the Electoral Act.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It was not my fault; I realise the need for amendment. However, I am dealing with the abuse of the Act as it stands. I hope that action will be taken so that the decision on the Kimberley election will not be used as a precedent. Mention has been made of a statement by me a few months ago regarding civil servants standing for Parliament. I do not think it right that men in the employ of the State should be able to use their positions up to within a short period of the election in order to influence the people among whom they work, and then get leave of absence to contest a seat, and, if unsuccessful, return to their work.

The Honorary Minister: They are citizens of the State.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is not the point. The point is that they have an undue advantage. No civil servant should be permitted to contest an election unless he has severed his connection with the service six months previously. Why should a civil servant be placed in a favoured position? We know that civil servants were able to go around electioneering during part of the time they worked in the employ of the State. That is not right. In April last the electors decided upon a change of Government.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Very wisely, too.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: During the last three years the State has passed through a serious crisis, and I think it is to the credit of the Mitchell Government that we have surmounted our difficulties so well. All the people were succoured; free services were rendered to the people, and taxes that were likely to cause hardship were not inflicted. One tax that was greatly criticised was the financial emergency tax. Pressure from without the State forced the Government to impose that tax.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It should have been imposed two or three years earlier.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Perhaps that is right. It was spread so that undue hardship would not be inflicted. Surely the people who enjoy the free services provided by the

State should be prepared to contribute a little towards the cost of those services! Some critics contend that people receiving less than a certain amount should not be taxed. I believe that such a tax should be spread, and that people in receipt of the lower grades of income should contribute a small amount. It has been the practice to burden a relatively small number of taxpayers to provide the whole of the money necessary to carry on the services of the State. That principle is wrong. A certain amount of taxation is necessary, but care should be taken not to make the taxation burdensome, and thus produce a reflex in the shape of diminished revenue. To reduce the avenues of wealth production causes unemployment and must delay our return to prosperity. There is urgent need to establish confidence amongst people who have capital, and burdensome taxation is a thing to be avoided. It is of no use looking to the Government to carry on the industries of this country. We have to instil confidence into private enterprise, and to do that great care must be exercised when imposing taxation. Rumours of shorter hours, higher wages and lower outputs are apt to frighten investors. Such ideals may be workable if applied universally, but we in this State cannot be alone in adopting ideal conditions. Take the building trade as an example: The reducing of the hours of labour has the effect of increasing costs, and who is going to run the risk of investing money in an industry when risks of that kind are present? In conclusion I desire to assure the Government, who have been returned with an overwhelming majority, that I shall always be ready to give what assistance I can, and I feel sure that other members will do likewise. We realise that there is no value in destructive criticism. The past three years have shown that this Chamber realises its responsibilities and is prepared to assist whatever party may be in power to improve the position of the State. I wish to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and the Chairman of Committees for the many kindnesses extended to me in the three arduous but pleasant years when I was Leader of the House. I also wish to thank Mr. Drew for his advice. His example I followed as closely as I could, and the little success I obtained, I owe to the three gentlemen named, as well as to the kindness and assistance extended to me by members generally.

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [6.0]: I wish to extend to you, Sir, a welcome on your return from a very useful trip abroad, where you have been able to tell people what a wonderful country Western Australia is, what wonderful possibilities it has, although perhaps you may not have been able to establish the fact that we have done all we should have done or might have done. I also desire to congratulate Mr. Drew and Mr. Kitson upon their resumption of Ministerial office. I can promise to give them a fair deal, and that they will be supported up to the hilt when they do anything I think is right, although, if they want to do anything which I think wrong, I shall be aggressive in the other direction. I can only describe Mr. Drew, whom I know better than Mr. Kitson, as a gentleman. When I speak of him as a gentle man I mean that he is a gentleman. In every capacity in which he has acted in this Chamber, he has shown himself to be a gentleman. I think I can say the same of Mr. Kitson. If Mr. Drew puts up a Bill, he invariably tells us where the nigger in the woodpile is. He does not leave it to us to find out, as has occurred in the past, but tells us exactly what it means. I cannot pass on without making a reference to the appointment of the Lieut.-Governor. I have always understood that when referring to a Governor, a Lieut.-Governor, or a judge of the Supreme Court, one has to be guarded in one's remarks. I hope no offence will be taken at anything I may say in connection with this appointment. I entirely disagree with the principle of appointing a local Governor, but if we are to have a local administrator of that kind, I do not think we have a more worthy son of the soil than Sir James Mitchell. The danger I fear is of these appointments being associated with the politics of the country. We see that in the legislative halls to-day. We see gentlemen threatening what will happen if the present occupant of the position of Lieut.-Governor refuses to sign some document that the Ministry of the day put up to him. We have the member for Bunbury, the member for Fremantle, and, last but not least, the member for Victoria Park, complaining that they were not consulted about the appointment. They fail to realise that we are only holding this portion of the Empire in trust for His Majesty the King. I am inclined to think that unless we do better than we have done in the past some-

one else will want to take control of portion of the country. There is this to be said about the appointment, that the Premier has scored two definite points. I am quite satisfied he was consulted in the matter. The first point is that he has branded himself a generous opponent, and secondly he has made a distinct step forward in the direction of abolishing State Governors, with which I entirely disagree, and is a plank which figures prominently in the platform of the Labour Party. This has to be remembered, that, so far as we can judge, this is the only State of the Commonwealth that cannot afford a Governor. I think in Victoria at present they have a Lieut.-Governor, but another Governor from Home is about to be appointed. Despite the affluence this State is supposed to possess, as disclosed in the Speech, we let it go abroad that we cannot afford a Governor to act as a representative of His Majesty the King and as an ambassador or go-between, between this State and the rest of the Empire. A Lieut.-Governor has, however, been appointed. I grant that he is the most suitable man who could have been chosen if we are to have a local nominee, a principle with which I entirely disagree. Reference has been made by Mr. Baxter to what had been taking place in connection with one of our State trading concerns. I understood that the Government, of which the hon. member was a member, came into existence three years ago to abolish State trading concerns. Knowing how the trading concerns have been run, particularly the State Sawmills, to which no reference has been made, I should have thought that during those years of office the hon. member himself would have made some attempt to live up to the electioneering promises that were given, and abolish the trading concerns, which are a nightmare to the community, and will remain so until they are dealt with. Mr. Baxter also referred to our getting back to better times. That remark should not be allowed to go unchallenged, and before I sit down I propose to show that we have a long way to go before we get back to better times. The sooner we face the difficulties ahead of us, the better. It is my intention to offer a few suggestion as to how they should be faced. Knowing the difficulties of the situation, and knowing the occupants of the Treasury bench as I do, I shall not go out of my way to make

their lot more difficult than it would otherwise be. The position is clearly defined in the Speech from the point of view of the Government. No one can read it without being impressed on that score. True, they are only departmental figures that are put before us, but no one could fail to be impressed by the possibilities of this country. We find reference to wheat, wool, dairy produce, fruit, eggs, gold-mining, railways, land, forests, and almost anything that, if developed, would make the State self-supporting. Here we are with one-third of the territory of the Commonwealth, and about 425,000 people spread over it, a great many of them unemployed. Surely something is wrong that should be rectified. There is one important reference in the Speech, namely, to the vote on secession. On this point it says—

My Ministers are giving careful consideration to the best methods to be adopted in order to give effect to the decision of the people. In due course the result will be submitted for the full deliberation and decision of both Houses of Parliament.

I opposed Federation when the vote was taken 30 years ago. For 30 years I have remained silent on this subject, my impression being that the majority of the people knew better than I did. In the last year or so, however, when I found we were being bled white by the people of the Eastern States, I declared I would vote for secession, and made no secret of the fact. I hope I am quoting him correctly, but I understood the Premier to say, before the vote was taken, that no matter how the vote went he would see that effect was given to the decision of the majority of the people. That was a definite promise. The people have asked for secession. Whether we can separate or not I do not know—I have my doubts. When we have the leader of the party in power making a definite statement before a vote is taken, I do not think it is too much to ask that he should live up to his promise after the election. I gather from the Speech that a new railway is proposed. I had not heard of this before. I would remind the House that there are already five authorised railways which have never been built, representing a length of 320 miles. I think when Esperance was pressing for a railway a motion was carried in both Houses that railways should be built in the order of authorised preference. The Es-

perance railway was, however, held up until all the other railways were built. I have been told that this new railway is in the province of the Chief Secretary. I am inclined to think that the money to build these unconstructed railways has already appeared in various loan schedules, but where it has gone is another matter. In private life we are not allowed to borrow money for a specific purpose and then use it for something else, but Governments seem to have some system whereby they borrow money for a specific purpose, but use it for any other purpose they think fit. Politically that may be honest, but commercially it is dishonest.

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

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I propose to show members exactly where, in my opinion, Western Australia has drifted and where it is continuing to drift. I will deal first with the latest figures I could get regarding the combined indebtedness of the Commonwealth and the States. The total indebtedness amounts to between £1,500,000,000 and £1,200,000,000 and the actual per capita indebtedness represented £58 under the heading of Commonwealth and an average of £113 for the States, making a total average per capita indebtedness of £171 per head. Turning to the figures relating to Western Australia only, I find that the Loan expenditure to the 30th June, 1932, was approximately £81,000,000. The per capita indebtedness in 1930 was £167; in 1931, £178, and in 1932, £185. If we add the Commonwealth per capita indebtedness to the State indebtedness for 1932, we have a total of £243 per head of the population. In view of the fact that our population is at a standstill, it appears to me that every child born in this State is confronted with a weight for his shoulders of £243 worth of indebtedness. That is bad enough in itself, but the debt is a continually increasing one. I have not forgotten a statement I read many years ago, which set out that financial men of the world claimed that an indebtedness of £100 per head was as much as any community could carry under ordinary conditions. Despite that dictum, we find that every person in Western Australia has to shoulder an indebtedness of £243.

Hon. W. J. Mann: We are great weight carriers.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The question is how long we can carry the weight and how soon we shall break down under it. With regard to State expenditure, our indebtedness represents £81,000,000, £26,000,000 of which has been invested in the railways, £28,000,000 in the development of agriculture, £10,000,000 in the provision of water supplies, £6,000,000 on harbours and rivers, £2,500,000 on the development of mining, and £1,500,000 on the construction of public buildings. These amounts, which I have quoted in round figures, total £74,000,000. Incidental expenditure accounts for the balance of £7,000,000, which brings the amount to £81,000,000, which Western Australia owes. What concerns me is that the revenue for the year ended the 30th June, 1929, amounted to £10,000,000 and the expenditure to £10,250,000. For the following financial year ended the 30th June, 1930, the revenue totalled £9,750,000, and the expenditure still remained at £10,250,000. For the year ended the 30th June, 1931, the revenue declined to £8,500,000, while the expenditure totalled £10,000,000, and for the year ended the 30th June, 1932, the revenue had dwindled to £8,000,000 and the expenditure represented £9,500,000. So it will be seen that whilst between 1929 and 1932 our revenue dropped by £2,000,000, the expenditure, as between those two years, was reduced by only £750,000. That is an important point, of which we must take cognisance. Western Australia is a country of primary production and unless we can produce at a profit, we cannot continue producing and carrying on our ordinary activities. Let us consider the position regarding our main industries—agricultural, pastoral, dairying, forestry and fisheries. According to the Statistical Register, in 1929 the value of those industries in this State was £32,000,000. In 1930, the value of the industries was represented at £30,000,000; in 1931 the value had dropped to £23,500,000, and in 1932 to £25,000,000. Take the value of our wool. I look to the profitable production of wool and wheat as the hope for the salvation of Western Australia. Mining and other industries are under a different heading. With a mine, every ounce of gold taken from the earth means an ounce less to be recovered, whereas with agriculture, if a man tickles the soil with a hoe, it will laugh with a harvest and go on thus for ever. In 1929 we produced 57,000,000 lbs. of wool valued at

£4,000,000 and in 1930 we produced 63,000,000 lbs., which represented 6,000,000 lbs. more than in 1929 and yet we received £1,200,000 less for it. In 1930 we got 7,500,000 lbs. more and received £2,400,000 only for it, as against £1,000,000 in 1929. In 1932 we produced 66,500,000 lbs. of wool and we received £2,300,000 for it. Thus, it will be seen that for that 4-year period, taking the 1929 returns as against those received in 1932, we produced 9,500,000 lbs. more but received £1,700,000. less. When we come to the position regarding wheat, I find that the departmental figures deal with centals, which represent 100 lbs. each, whereas we are accustomed to calculating in bushels. According to the departmental records, in 1929 we produced 17,000,000 centals of wheat valued at £7,600,000. In 1930 the production was 15,750,000 centals valued at £7,000,000. In 1931, the production totalled 27,250,000 centals but we received only £5,750,000 for it. In 1932 we produced 24,000,000 centals and received £5,900,000 in return. Thus, members will see that comparing 1929 with 1932 we produced in the latter year 7,000,000 more centals of wheat but received £1,700,000 less for it. Those figures are worthy of study. When people talk of the State having turned the corner, with all due respect to them, I do not think they know what they are talking about. We are confronted with a continually increasing expenditure and a constantly declining revenue, with no attempt to balance the Budget. I stress the position regarding wheat production because that industry has the advantage of absorbing a considerable number of men, far more than in the production of wool. In these days that is a phase that must be considered, especially when we have an industry that will employ labour in large numbers. There is nothing worse for a community than to have many in its midst who are unemployed, and Western Australia is faced with an ever-increasing liability under that heading. The other evening I heard the Premier speaking over the air. He made a very good speech from his standpoint and he stressed one point of which I made a mental note. He said the Labour Party had a definite policy, in the forefront of which was the decrease in hours and an increase in pay. I suggest that no man in this State knows better

than the present Premier that such a statement as he made is not in accordance with facts. What he stated may represent the definite policy of his party but he is fully aware that if such a policy be embarked upon, his Government will cripple Western Australia once and for all. It must be remembered that we cannot get more than two pints out of a quart pot. If we take the full two pints and leave nothing for the man who fills it, it will never be filled again, and unless there is something left for the people who have been and are carrying the responsibility of this country, the primary producers, it is not common honesty to go on asking them to produce as they have done in the past. I know that Queensland is not a very popular State to quote. All the same I should like to read to the House an extract to show what happened there the other day. The combined industrial unions asked the Industrial Court to fix the working week at 30 hours. The advocate for Labour spoke for an entire day. He contended that greater employment would result; but the question of how the industry could carry the burden of 30-hours per week at 48 hours wages, he did not touch upon. It was hardly necessary for the wage payers to state their side of the case. The President of the Court, for himself and his colleagues, pointed out that to grant the application would paralyse the industry. He added that a 30-hour week was just about as practicable as one hour a day, and he told the unions that unchallengeable facts were against them. So spoke the President of the Arbitration Court in Queensland. Yet we have intelligent men in this country saying that the way out of our difficulties is to decrease the number of hours and increase the pay. There are one or two things in the Government's policy that are not often referred to. We often hear of the nationalisation of banking in Australia. I do not hold a brief for any of the banks, but when we come to analyse the position we find that it was the Associated Banks which saved Australia in the recent crisis. It was rather a surprise to me to learn that under the Canadian Bank Act, the banks in that Dominion are absolutely prohibited from advancing money on fixed assets. That is set out clearly in the Canadian Bank Act. Land is a fixed

asset and buildings are fixed assets. What is more it will be found that Australia is the only country in the world where the banks advance money on wool to be grown on the sheep's back, and on harvests not yet sown. That is what the banks have done for Australia. It is something that has never been done in any other part of the world, and yet we hear of the nationalisation of banking! The banking industry saved us in the crisis and there are hon. members in this House who have suggested that money should be advanced by the banks without interest. The greater part of the capital of the banks is fixed deposits. People trust the banks. I know scores of people in the State at the present time who are putting money in banks at fixed deposit. They will not have bonds or anything else; they trust the banks. The banks pay interest, and if they do that how can they grant overdrafts and make advances as suggested by one hon. member, free of interest. The question of the basic wage I understand is in the forefront of the Government's policy irrespective of what industry can pay. Talk about killing the goose that lays the golden egg! The position is magnified. There are men producing wheat and wool without any wages at all, and in some cases they are on sustenance. Are they not to be considered? Every time you put up the basic wage you rob those poor individuals of part of their anticipated profits. I cannot understand how people try to mislead the public in this manner. Certainly there is a plank in the Government's platform referring to the encouragement of primary and secondary industries. That reads very well, but every action is in the direction of penalising industry and stopping production. Then there is a plank on the Labour platform to impose a tax on unimproved land without any exemption, plus 50 per cent. for absentees. The Mitchell Government abolished the tax on agricultural land, a very equitable and proper thing to do. The Federal Government, I think, are considering doing something similar. The irony of the position now is that you can grow wheat and wool at a tremendous loss and you have to pay your land tax out of capital, if you have it; and if you have not it you must go cap in hand to the bank. Then there is the iniquitous proposal, "preference to unionists." Coupled with that is the right to work. How can people be gulled by this kind of thing? These two matters do not synchro-

nise. Unless one becomes a unionist he cannot get work and unless he pays the union fees of 20s. or 25s. a year, there is no work for him. We sent our Premier and his chief lieutenant to the Eastern States to borrow more money, which, I think, is a step towards unification, although the people voted two to one for secession. What do they borrow money for? Not to employ the unemployed of the community, but the unemployed unionists. I presume that the first charge upon the wages the men get is the payment of union fees. So we have the Loan Council providing money for the unionists to provide the party funds, and we have the general taxpayer of the State asked to foot the interest bill.

Hon. E. Rose: What becomes of the funds?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not know; probably Mr. Kitson or Mr. Drew will tell the hon. member what becomes of the funds. I can see a lot of money drifting into the party funds, and judging by what we have been told in the way of legislation to be introduced, some of us will be asked to pay increased land tax, and other taxes to pay the interest on the money borrowed. I have an interesting clipping from the "Worker" of the 21st of the present month. It sets out that every worker employed on Government works must make application to join the union which has an award covering the employment, and that the application must be made within two weeks of commencing employment. The extract goes on to say, "Provided that if the worker has a current ticket, he shall not be required to join until the expiration of same; provided, further, the period does not exceed three months." Legislation is to be introduced giving preference to unionists in all employment.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Have we not heard that before?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: You cannot hear it too often.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: I think we can.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the hon. member does not want to hear it again, there is plenty of room for him outside.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Thank you.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: "In respect of preference to unionists, the motion previously carried by a number of the unions means, unaffiliated with the party." Perhaps Mr. Kitson will explain that. So we find

ourselves borrowing money from the Loan Council to favour one section of the community and asking the whole of the community to pay for it! On the subject of unemployment, work has been found for men shifting sand from one side of the road and putting it on the other, and digging holes and filling them up again. I do not want to pose as a know-all, but four years ago I did put forward what I considered was a fair proposition to deal with the unemployed. When I travel through this country, I do not go about with my eyes closed. Last year I travelled from Wyndham to Esperance and saw what was going on in all parts of the State. What I suggested four years ago was this: That Crown lands and alienated lands adjacent to railways should be put to use. I advocate this: That Crown lands should be cleared by contract and that the owners of alienated lands should be told to clear and cultivate their land or the Closer Settlement Act would be put into force. If this were done, profitable employment would be found for all. Travelling through the country and along the route of railways recently built, one will see tens of thousands of acres that ought to be producing wheat. Before I resume my seat I will try to prove that we in Western Australia produce wheat cheaper than any other part of the world. What I suggest would be the means of increasing the revenue of the railways and providing employment for many people as well as increasing production. In this way there would be obviated the necessity for shifting sand and paying a week's basic wage to those doing only one day's work. The only way to clear Crown or other land is by contract. The present Government are aware of that because in the group settlements land was being cleared by day labour and was costing £40 an acre. The Labour Government, which is pledged to day labour, let contracts for the work and got the cost down to £10 an acre, as against an expenditure of £40 by the Nationalist Government! Why can this country produce wheat more cheaply than it can be produced anywhere else? First of all, we have the cheapest land. True, some people have paid £4, £5, and £6 per acre for land that was never worth such prices; but the bulk of our wheat lands have been bought at from 10s.

to £1 per acre, unimproved. We have the cheapest land. We have what is most essential to growth—an ideal rainfall for wheat. That rainfall comes at the right time of the year, having missed, I think, only once in a hundred years. The first essential to growth is rain, and we get that over these millions of acres every year. Next, we have the most modern agricultural machinery in the world. Last, but not least, there is no climate in the world like ours for harvesting. We get clear sunshine day out and day in; and the farmer who harvests properly gets 100 per cent. of the wheat, and not half of the yield, as in New Zealand and other countries. However, small people fooling about with a couple of horses, with sore shoulders, and broken-down, and a single furrow plough will never get anywhere. We have to tackle big farms—I should say, nothing less than 3,000 acres. Let a man put in 1,000 acres of wheat this year, and fallow next year, and so on: rotation of crops. Moreover, we would produce our wheat and our wool right up against our railway lines.

Hon. J. Cornell: And against the ports, almost.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is no question of motor transport, no question of competition with the railways. Production would be alongside the railways. Again, what we are going to produce in the way of wheat will not affect the world's prices, because even now Australia's production represents only 3 per cent. of the world's supplies. Doubling this State's output would not have much effect on prices, but if we produce in the proper way we shall put some competitors elsewhere out of wheat production. The advantage to the man alongside the railway is this: To-day, if he is 15 miles from a railway, it costs him 3d. per bushel to cart this wheat to the railway siding, and 20 miles costs 4d. Yet Governments have sent out men 20, 30, 40, and even 50 miles to grow wheat, while land in plenty is lying idle alongside the railway system, involving no cartage worth considering. Now I come to the average price for Australian wheat during the last three years. That is not encouraging, but I am satisfied that we can go on producing wheat while many other countries cannot. Recently I read that in some parts of Europe where efforts



are being made to encourage local production of wheat, the cost is from 8s. to 12s. 6d. per bushel. The object is to keep out over-sea wheat, though I do not think any community will stand up against such costs too long. If we handle the wheat proposition rightly in this State, we shall be able to squeeze out a lot of competition elsewhere in the world, and be able to sell all our production at a profit. Any banker who knows his business will say that if wheat and wool cannot be produced at a profit in Australia, and Western Australia in particular, he will not be worried about overdrafts, but will be looking for a position himself. Yet we go on borrowing and spending, and talking about increased wages and decreased hours, without any attempt at economy. In my opinion, we are not around the corner yet. On the question of secession I do not want to say much. I voted against Federation, and split with my colleagues then in the front rank of politics here on that subject, and on that subject only. Having been bred white for 30 years, I certainly did vote for secession, and advised all with whom I came in contact to do the same. I can only repeat that as the East treats the West, so does the South treat the northern portion of Western Australia. It is the same position. The matter is one which must be faced. True, the Mitchell Government extended the pastoral leases and in some cases reduced the pastoral rents; but there are other charges imposed which are still crushing the northern producer. There is the 20 per cent. war tax. Again, the cost of transport on a ton of flour, to say nothing of the cost of the flour itself, from Fremantle to a station, say, 100 miles back from Wyndham amounts to £13. The Wyndham wharfage on a ton of flour is, I understand, 6s. plus 20 per cent. A bullock, to be fit for marketing, has to be nursed for four years. Half the calves are male, and no one wants to buy the females. By the time bullocks reach the Wyndham works or this market, the pastoralist finds that he is disposing of only about one-third of his branding. Some are fat kine, and some are lean; and some die of disease. However, the bullock brought from Wyndham to Fremantle costs the grower £5. The cost of a West Kimberley bullock shipped from Derby is £4. Putting bullocks through the Wyndham works involves even greater disabilities. I think Mr.

Baxter said to-day that it cost £4 to handle a bullock at the Wyndham works.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I said £5.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Let us put the cost at £4. I give the hon. gentleman credit for having done good work at Wyndham. However, the man who nursed the bullock for four years, marketing only one-third of the branding, gets about £2 17s. 6d. to £3.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Not on the average.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Can the industry continue? Some attention should be given to the northern portion of the State, attention which no Western Australian Government has yet been able to find time to give. Let me take the case of one station, Ann Plains, near Broome. A Melbourne syndicate bought that cattle station in 1918 for £50,000, and has since spent £20,000 in improvements—not only in improvements to the property, but in the importation of 90 stud bulls and five stallions. It was customary for that station to send overland about 1,000 head of cattle every year. The cattle were sent South, and southern pastoralists bought what they required, fattened them up, and sent them on to this market. As I have remarked, about 1,000 head were sent South every year. Then came a certain regulation. I have given the previous Government credit for administering that regulation in accordance with the intention of Parliament. Mr. Millington administered the spirit of the regulation; but the Minister for Agriculture who followed him, Mr. Ferguson, administered the regulation according to the letter. Let me give an instance of what I mean by administration according to the spirit and administration according to the letter. When the Health Act was being amended some years ago, power was given to the police to arrest any woman at any time. I need not go into details as to disease. The Act as amended empowered the police to arrest any woman at any time; but have the police arrested women in that way? No. The police go to certain localities and say, "You had better go and report, or we shall have to arrest you." In that instance the police administered the spirit of the Act. But the Minister who controlled the Agricultural Department during the last three years administered the regulation in question according to the letter. The regulation gave certain powers in the event of an outbreak of disease, rinderpest or something of the

kind, in a herd. The Minister took full power to tie up any and every part of the country he thought fit, under that regulation. On the last occasion that the Anna Plains station moved cattle, they could not be travelled South. Therefore it was decided to send them into Broome and ship them there. The cattle started for Broome—I think the number was 480 head—and they came from clean country. However, as soon as they came into the tick area, they developed tick, and tick fever, and one-third of the mob died before the port was reached. And still that station stands isolated; it can neither ship nor sell, and it has in the vicinity of 100,000 cattle. Now I turn to Kimberley.

Hon. E. Rose: Millions of acres have been thrown up there.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes. To ship a bullock from Derby to Fremantle costs £4, and only the best, the fat section of the herd, can be shipped. The Kimberleys need an outlet to travel their cattle South, so that the animals can be fattened down here. I do not care what the departmental officers say about cattle diseases: just as a human being never gets malarial fever outside malarial country, so tick fever will never do any harm outside malarial country. How is it that malaria has not travelled South among human beings? Malaria is confined to a certain area, and when one gets outside that area one does not get malarial fever. And outside malarial country there is no tick, or tick fever. Now we come to the proposal to develop the Northern Territory, including the North of Western Australia. It is only an electioneering stunt. Regularly it comes up, immediately before either a State or a Federal election. Mr. Drew will remember the Irwin coal mine of some years ago. Whenever the Geraldton seat was hanging in the balance, the Government of the day sent out a body of men to open up the Irwin coal seam, and as soon as the election was over they withdrew the men. This Northern Territory development is only another electioneering stunt. I remember when the proposal cropped up some six or seven years ago Mr. McCallum went through the North and said, "I am not going to allow the Federal people to get hold of this country; this is our country." No sooner did he get into office than he discovered that the North was too big a proposition for this State, that it was really a Federal matter. Now we have the

Federal authorities again taking their turn before their general elections, and so when the time comes we shall have the State Government proposing to do something before their next general elections. While we can make out a good case for secession of the whole State, we could make out even a better case for secession of the North from the South. In my opinion, when that proposition is tackled, it will be tackled at the instigation of the Imperial Government, who some day will tell Australia, "If you are going to hold that country you must do something with it." Let me show members what the Federal Government have done with the Northern Territory. In 1930 they produced in the Northern Territory 30,000 lbs. of wool, whereas Queensland, adjoining, produced 161,000,000 lbs. of wool. We do not know what the present Government's taxation proposals are, but I was pleased to note that Mr. Gray, when seconding the Address-in-Reply, said that every man on a salary or wage should pay his quota towards keeping people employed. The only man who to-day can pay is the man on wages or salary; people engaged in industry have no income at all and will not have any income until they get back to a profit on production. On the 30th June, 1932, the Federal Government had £7,500,000 of taxation outstanding, actually 40 per cent. of the total tax. It clearly proves that the people are over-taxed and cannot pay. The Federal Government know it, or they would not allow so much to stand over. Following on that, a member of the Federal Parliament said in the House that the Government had issued instructions to the taxation authorities not to hurry the taxpayers, because the surplus at 30-6-33 was big enough as it was, and to get in more money would make the Federal departments look more ridiculous than they really were. The only other matter I wish to refer to is that of the Economic Conference in London, where there is a very large number of delegates from all parts of the world, each striving to see what he can get for his own country. I have not read the reports of the proceedings, because I knew from past experience what it would mean—that the whole thing would burst up. There is only one way out of our difficulty, and that is to produce as cheaply as possible the articles this State can well produce, and sell them on the markets of the world at a profit. We know we can do that with our two chief primary in-

dustries, wheat and wool. This meeting in London reminds me of the building of the Tower of Babel, when men came from all parts of the world to erect as a monument a tower that would reach the sky. Members who are interested can read it all in the eleventh chapter of Genesis. But somebody saw the fallacy of the whole thing and stepped in, and when the men came back to work next morning they all spoke in different tongues. So the bricklayer who wanted a brick could not tell the other man of his need, because the other man spoke a different tongue. So to-day we find all the nations seeking to build a tower of Babel in London; everyone wanting everything he can get for his own country. However, it has fallen through, as all expected it would. I think the completion of that parable was that the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the earth. So we have our World Conference that has been trying to build up a set of conditions which the industries of the world cannot carry. The only way I can see out of the difficulty is to get down to bedrock and let each country produce the article most suitable to its conditions, and produce it at a profit. I repeat that we in this State can do it with wheat and wool, but not by growing wheat 50 miles from a railway, and the Government paying part of the cartage cost, while at the same time land suitable for wheat production is to be found right alongside the railway. There is one mission we all should have in life, and that is to leave this world better than we found it. I do not know how far we are fulfilling that mission, but it seems to me it is the one object we should have in view. It is the duty of all of us to ponder this and see what we can do to meet the existing difficulties. For my part I can assure members that I am backing my own opinion. This year I have in fourteen times the quantity of wheat I had in last year. I am going on producing wheat and wool because I know that if the prices come right I shall be on the right side; if they do not come right, I will be out with a fishing rod and a loin-cloth, as many other people are to-day. That is the view I take; let us go straight ahead as if nothing had happened; reduce the cost of production— which we can—and produce at the price at which we can sell in the world's market. If this be done, we shall have done our part. It can be done and it must

be done. We have valuable assets in this wonderful country—I do not say this in sarcasm—a country with every natural facility for production, but which for the last 20 years at all events has been grossly mismanaged. I hope we shall all put our shoulders to the wheel, try to forget the past and see what we can do for the future. I will support the motion.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply adopted.

## FEDERAL SENATE VACANCY.

### *Joint Sitting.*

**The PRESIDENT:** I have met the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly regarding the message from His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor, and in conformity with the Standing Orders relating to the election of a Senator to the Federal Parliament, the Speaker and I have made arrangements whereby a joint sitting of the Houses will be held in the Legislative Council Chamber, on Thursday, 27th July, at 3 p.m., for the purpose of electing a Senator for the Federal Parliament in place of the Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch, resigned.

*House adjourned at 8.27 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Tuesday, 25th July, 1933.*

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