

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 17th August, 1927.

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

QUESTION—PERTH-ADELAIDE COMMUNICATIONS.

Aerial and Telephonic.

Hon. G. W. MILES asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is it the intention of the State Government to urge upon the Commonwealth Government the establishment of an aerial service between Perth and Adelaide? 2, Are the State Government doing anything to urge the Commonwealth Government to inaugurate telephonic communication between Perth and Adelaide?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, No.

QUESTION—ROYAL VISIT, CHILDREN'S CHOIR.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the total cost of the children's choir that sang before the Duke and Duchess of York this year? 2, What was the total cost of the stand to accommodate the children, and who paid the bill? 3, What was the total remuneration paid to the bandsmen, and by whom were they paid? 4, What extra remuneration was paid to the conductor, and/or was any other concession made to him; if so, what? 5, What extra remuneration was paid to the teacher who relieved the conductor from his usual school duties?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Unknown, as this function primarily concerned the Perth City Council. 2, Unknown. The Perth City Council provided labour. The Government supplied the timber, and took it back into stock. 3, This was not arranged by the Government. 4,

(a) Nil. (b) Petrol account for his own motor, and meal allowance for choir rehearsals away from home were paid, and three days' leave given. 5, No amount has yet been fixed. It is under consideration in accordance with Regulation 42.

PAPERS—TRAINING COLLEGE APPOINTMENT.

On motion by Hon. H. J. Yelland, ordered—

That all papers dealing with the appointment of the Vice-Principal of the Teachers' Training College be laid on the Table of the House.

MOTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

To disallow Regulations.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Hon. G. Potter:—

That the regulations prescribing omnibus routes Nos. 7, 16, 20, 42, 48, 54 and 55, under "The Traffic Act, 1919-1926," published in the "Government Gazette" on the 22nd July, 1927, and laid upon the Table on the 2nd August, 1927, be and are hereby disallowed.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West)

[4.35]: I have listened attentively to the remarks of various members on this subject, and have come to the conclusion that as these regulations seem to cover a very wide range and are somewhat involved, it would be wise if we supported the motion for their disallowance. I have taken some steps to ascertain the feelings of the people concerned in this matter, and I find that those persons particularly interested, those in the Cottesloe-Claremont section, hold that the existing route should stand. If the motion is carried it will clear the way for another set of regulations modified in a manner that will satisfy all parties.

HON. G. POTTER (West—in reply)

[4.37]: The Chief Secretary in his opening remarks said it was not surprising that there should be a motion for the disallowance of these regulations. In that the Chief Secretary truly interpreted the views of the majority of the people served by the existing means of motor transport. As I pointed out, if those means of transport had not served a public want, they would very soon have gone out of existence. It has been suggested that Mr. Kitson, Mr. Gray and I have constituted ourselves monopol-

ists. Monopolists for whom, or for what reason? I have searched the Chief Secretary's speech to discover just for whom it was supposed we were monopolists, and what interests we might be representing, but I have failed to find there any direct reference, except a reference to someone unnamed and not connected with the Legislative Council, who was so financially interested as to obtain champions of the routes assigned. If attending to the clamant desire of the public is constituting oneself a monopolist, I must admit to being a monopolist. But I am not interested one iota financially or otherwise in the Alpine Taxi Co. or any other taxi organisation, nor with the motor bus organisation. I am concerned solely with the convenience of the public. So the whole panegyric of the Chief Secretary goes by the board. I repeat that when the Minister said it was not surprising that such a motion should have been brought before the Chamber, it only showed that even so august a body as the routes advisory committee thoroughly expected it. In further substantiation of that, there were references made to terminal points. In the course of the debate mention was made of Beach-street, Fremantle. I would point out that Beach-street is not officially before the House. It is not incorporated in the regulations before us, and in order to obtain a degree of sanity by regulation it is necessary to disallow the whole of the regulations, and act upon the suggestion by Mr. Mann that by a merely minor degree of amendment the regulations might be so modified as to be acceptable not only to members direct, but through the public to hon. members. It has been stated that there were many diverse interests concerned. There are among the protagonists of this motion no diverse interests, unless the interests of the public can be considered diverse. For what is Parliament but the voice of the people? Even if it is only a fleeting expression of opinion, it is there nevertheless and, naturally, there must be in every community diverse interests. But on this occasion I consider those words "diverse interests" were used with a view to suggesting that there were on the one side the motor bus section and on the other side the taxi cab section, and that those were the diverse interests. In this debate largely the public has been forgotten. It is the

public's point of view that I wish to express. I am not interested as to whether there is unfair competition between one class of motor traction and another; I am not interested in that, but I am interested in the expression of the requirements and desires of the public. The Chief Secretary said that by comparison there was no further disability in the people coming from South Perth and walking up Barrack-street, as against having to go down to White City to join the means of transportation to Fremantle or intermediate places. But the Chief Secretary did not remind members, although Mr. Miles was careful to do so by interjection, that there is a tramline from the South Perth ferries into the centre of the city. Certainly we cannot bring the South Perth ferries into Hay-street, and so the passengers disembark at the Barrack-street jetty and have a tram line to convey them wherever they wish to go. Again when they are proceeding homewards towards South Perth, by day or night, they have that same facility to save them walking the distance between the centre of the city and the jetty. The gradients in Barrack and William-streets are very much on a par. I notice that in consideration of the public safety, as outlined by the traffic authorities, and those who are appointed to speak for them, William-street has been designated as a very grave danger to the travelling public. In Inspector Hunter's report he says he has even seen the inner side wheels of a motor car adjacent to the kerb. It is inferred from that that the brakes of the cars are not of sufficient quality to maintain the load and start off. Let me refer again to Barrack-street. Outside, say, Weld Club, or any of those chambers around there where people have business to transact, it is no uncommon thing for someone to see a car parked with the nearside front wheels adjacent to the kerb. According to the various makes of car there is provision to prevent people from starting them. Some have ignition locks and some transmission locks. Take a car with a transmission lock. Anyone can fool around with that car, release the brake, and away goes the car, although no one can put it into proper gear. A few weeks ago someone tampered with a car in Harvest-terrace, and released the brake. As the starting gear was so finely adjusted, as a result of someone

tampering with the brakes the car ran down Harvest-terrace, across Hay-street, and crashed into the fence. No material damage was done to the car, but a good deal was done to the fence. It is necessary and advisable for the safety of the public to place a kind of lock on the starting wheels, so that if anything happens to the car, in the momentary absence of the driver, the safety of the public will not be imperilled. Wise motorists always take that precaution. In the report of the inspector it is held to be an indication that it is unsafe for the car to be there. I know from reading the newspapers that the Traffic Department is efficient. Any one of its officers is competent to test the brakes of any car, whether it is used for hire or privately. They are entitled at any time to test these brakes. If the brakes are not of sufficient efficiency to carry the total load for which the car is built, and is authorised to carry, the owner will soon find himself in the law courts, and very properly fined for having inefficient brakes. That phase of the question is the main factor in the Chief Traffic Inspector's report, forwarded through the Commissioner of Police for the information of the Chief Secretary. What happens on a hill like William-street? It is competent for any traffic inspector to ask anyone who is driving a car or bus to stop in the middle of that hill. Unless the brakes are sufficiently holding the car or omnibus, the driver or proprietor will soon find himself face to face with the presiding magistrate in a law court. That is the way that the danger of William-street as a starting point for the taxi cars is overcome. Those men who have been allowed a stand for two cars in William-street have been described as undisciplined. That was unfair criticism. An attempt is being made to take a privilege away from these men, and to class them as undisciplined is an indictment against what I consider the efficiency of the department. If the men are undisciplined, why have they not been disciplined? Why has not the department taken such action as is necessary to enforce the discipline laid down either by Act of Parliament or regulation? It was suggested to the House that these men had ignored the regulations. They have not done so. They were told by a police constable on duty that they would have to remove from William-street

to White City. I have it from authentic sources that these men, these undisciplined people, in obedience to the command went to White City. An inspector of the Perth City Council saw them there and said, "If you start from there we shall prosecute you." This was immediately reported to the executive of the association, which is supposed to have no head, tail, body or soul. The Chief Executive Officer immediately saw the Perth City Council authorities. He was instructed that if the vehicles started from that terminal point, they would be prosecuted. He thereupon went to the Chief Traffic Officer to explain the position. He was given to understand that the same thing would happen if he started from William-street. Now we come to the crux of the question, that of dual control. On the one side we have the "Government Gazette" of the 22nd July containing instructions and saying that certain things shall be done. On the other side we have the instructions emanating from the Perth City Council. In the opinion of legal advisers, that is the body which shall say just where these people shall have their stand. The Traffic Department say that White City shall be the departing point, whereas the Perth City Council say that it shall be William-street. What are these men to do? They are between the upper and the nether mill stones. They do not know exactly where they must go. One inspector says, "We will prosecute you if you start from there," and another inspector says, "We will prosecute you if you start from that place." The men can only obey the authority they are legally advised they should obey, and start from William-street. They have been advised by a legal authority that the Perth City Council's edict must stand. Instead of running counter to the regulations they even go to the length of inviting the Traffic Department to make a test case. There is nothing undisciplined in that. In the case of many large corporations and business interests, and even in trade union circles, a test case has been asked for. It is a friendly legal action in the highest court of the land to find out what the position is, and to have it taken out of the hands of departmental officers. By that means the opinion of the most brilliant legal luminaries of the land is obtained. This is what these allegedly undisciplined people asked for. It has been alleged that they refused to obey

instructions. They did not refuse. They are quite prepared, as they must be prepared, to abide by any route that is provided for them. It has been insidiously suggested that much of the opposition to the disallowance of the regulations is due to the fact that taxi cars can go to the trots, the races or wherever they wish, but that this is denied to the charabanc service. It is just as well to get down to the facts of the case. If the authorities deny to the charabanc service the right to go to the trots, it is competent for them to deny this to the Alpine service running between Perth, Fremantle and Cottesloe. There is a very clear and definite definition as to what a bus is. Quoting from the amending Act of 1926 I find that a bus is a vehicle used as a passenger vehicle to carry passengers, etc., and fares. If the Traffic Department do not choose to put that into operation, surely they cannot blame these people, who now fear lest the investments they have made in their cars will be lost. I am speaking of the owner driver, the man who has invested his life's savings in a car. I am not speaking of the person who may have a private car that is on its last legs, who tinkers it up and put it on the road, and who hires a person to drive it for him. Those are the people referred to, not the legitimate wage earner, but the person who wishes to operate at peak periods. I use the information of the charabanc service proprietors and also the information of the Traffic Department officials. It is not the owner driver of the car who would be a menace to the public, but the person who puts a car on the run and pays a man so much per trip or so much commission, whichever is decided. It has been suggested also that there are 150 cars running certain routes, and that these would be overloaded. That is not a fact. There are not 150 cars running consistently upon that road, but 80 cars. I have here a list of the numbers, and am prepared to hand it over. This is absolutely authentic. As the cars run continuously day by day and supply the public need, and run to a time table that will compete with every degree favourably with the railways, these men are entitled to some consideration. It has been suggested to me that these taxi cars can go, say, to the Fremantle Oval. I know what that means. Anyone arriving in Perth and wishing to go to the Fremantle Oval can engage a taxi car or a Yellow Cab, and take the vehicle anywhere

he likes. We hear no complaint about that. There was a complaint, which I think was a fairly legitimate one, on account of omnibus and charabanc people taking a foreign football team to Fremantle, and through lack of thought on the part of the driver, running them to the Fremantle Oval, a few hundred yards beyond their destination. A prosecution followed. I think that was straining the position somewhat. Had the executive thought of it, they might have got a permit for the drivers. Because those people suffered a prosecution, is it any reason why they should enlist the sympathy of departmental officers to extinguish another section of motor transportation? I have been careful to state that I am not an advocate for either one side or the other. I would like to mention that the Routes Advisory Committee, in furnishing the Chief Secretary with the information that he conveyed to the House, made reference to inexperience. They accused Mr. Gray, myself and others of lack of experience in these matters. That is no reason why the judgment of experts on this question should be set aside. In any case, who are the experts, and what constitutes an expert? The experts on the committee are chiefly civil servants. What qualifications have they as experts in traffic? I do not pose as an expert, and never did. Apart from Mr. Sumpton and Mr. Irvine, two of the outside members of the committee, nominated in the one case by the local governing bodies and in the other by the metropolitan charabanc service, I certainly say there is not another member on the committee whom I would permit to drive my car through the traffic of Perth. Those are the gentlemen who consider themselves experts.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Has any of them a license?

Hon. G. POTTER: I believe one member of the committee has a license, but he has never been seen driving through Perth.

Hon. J. Cornell: You do not mean to infer that the termini are fixed by the Advisory Committee without consulting Inspector Hunter?

Hon. G. POTTER: I do not know; that is what I would like to find out—whether the inspector has conferred with the local governing authorities officially. We have it from the Chief Secretary that the interpretation of "local authority" is "Commissioner of Police," but after all, the Com-

missioner of Police is in Perth, and he has much executive work to do. Therefore, how can he be familiar with the requirements of the travelling public, diverse as they are, between Fremantle and Perth? Is it not from the members who represent the various districts that the true desire of the people can be obtained? It is the duty of members to bring these things before the Legislature.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Commissioner and the inspector have safety in view.

Hon. G. POTTER: Sometimes we can aim at too great safety. Mr. Holmes, who is 100 per cent. humanitarian, talks of safety, but I would ask him where is the safety in respect of the health of the community? Why should we compel young people to walk down to White City, which, despite what the Chief Secretary has told us, is badly lighted and, I repeat, is only sufficiently lighted to accentuate the darkness.

Hon. J. Cornell: They can walk down there to gamble.

Hon. G. POTTER: We are not discussing gambling at the present time. It is not an extraordinary thing for either House of Parliament to disallow regulations. If we disallow the regulation that is the subject of the discussion, we shall not be doing anything that will inflict a tax upon the people. I have heard a debate in both Chambers on a question of a much more serious nature than this, and to which there was shown considerably less opposition. I have heard members declaiming against the danger of government by regulation. I have heard members rightly say that organisations that have invested large sums of money in a concern should be consulted in connection with the formation of regulations, and that the framing of such regulations should not be left to civil servants. The motion that I have been privileged to put before the Chamber merely asks for something in the nature of a stay of proceedings, so that the Government officials who preponderate on the Routes Advisory Committee should have an opportunity of consulting with the local governing authorities. Apart from that, it is due to these bodies, as a matter of courtesy, that they should be consulted. They are an elective body and if they do not handle local affairs to the satisfaction of the ratepayers, they are soon got rid of.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What view of the position do the local bodies take?

Hon. G. POTTER: It has been stated that two conferences took place with the Fremantle Municipal Council, and that that body endorsed the suggestions made by the Routes Advisory Committee. That is very far from being a fact. There has not been any conference at all with the Fremantle Municipal Council.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They were invited to confer, were they not?

Hon. G. POTTER: Yes. On one occasion the Routes Advisory Committee went to Fremantle without any notice and saw one of the officers of the council. That officer sent for the Mayor. A conversation followed, but it is not my purpose, nor do I think it is right for me to state what took place. The fact remains, however, that no agreement was reached. Later on there was a second alleged conference. It was an unannounced affair and the subject was never debated at all. Those are the conferences that are supposed to have taken place. The Fremantle Municipal Council have never at any time supported the regulations that are now before the House.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: On the contrary, the Fremantle council supports the existing termini.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: The Cottesloe authorities strongly object to the regulations.

Hon. G. POTTER: Of course they do, and the meeting that discussed the matter a few weeks back found the civic hall incapable of holding the large number of people that attended the meeting and it became necessary to adjourn to a larger building, where the people could be accommodated. It is idle, and spurious even, to suggest that any of the local governing bodies favour the regulations. It has been said that there has been some opposition by a section of the motor transport people who do not wish to abide by the routes. If a regulation is brought down prescribing routes, those men will have to abide by it. Moreover, they welcome it. It has also been said that 50 per cent. of the taxi drivers are in favour of the regulations. I have a statement before me that if 10 per cent. of the taxi drivers will vote for the regulations, then those regulations can go on. If the Chief Secretary was advised that 50 per cent. of the taxi drivers were in favour of the regulations, I can only say he was wrongly informed. I submit that, in the interests of the public the regulations should be disallowed, so that Par-

liament may have the opportunity of putting up others. What is the crux of the question? We find that Beach-street has been suggested. But Beach-street is not before the Chamber except by suggestion. Therefore, if the Routes Advisory Committee wish to put charabancs or taxis into Beach-street, such a proposal should be incorporated in a regulation. For that reason alone the regulations should be disallowed. The taxis do not mind starting from Queen-street, but, I would ask, what purpose will that serve? The 150 taxis mentioned are really non-existent; only 80 are continuously and 100 intermittently employed. A taxi driver cannot drive his car throughout the 24 hours of the day. He must have time to rest and to attend to his car. The charabanc driver is in a more fortunate position in that he can run his bus into a depot and leave it there for the mechanics to do the necessary repairs. If the taxis have to go to Queen-street there is not much objection, but it will not relieve the congestion of traffic because the taxi men must take their vehicles to the depot. We cannot have 80 taxis—I shall not adopt Inspector Hunter's figure of 150—in a little street. The Bill I introduced last session had for its object the relieving of congestion and, if 80 cars were put into the street, the congestion would be great. There is not room for them.

Hon. J. Cornell: They would not all be there at once.

Hon. G. POTTER: No, but there are not 150 on the road at once. The taxis, after depositing their passengers, must proceed to the depot. Whether a car is full or empty, it occupies as much space on the road, and nothing will be gained by the alteration. Therefore why commit the taxi people to further expenditure when nothing will be gained by the alteration? This is a phase that the Routes Advisory Committee might consider in the light of the debate that has taken place. Let us now consider the Perth termini. The motor buses have a stand in St. George's-terrace. The Traffic Department consider it is safe for them to start from and finish in the Terrace. Let the point be decided in or out of the courts whether the Routes Advisory Committee alone should decide what stand should be allotted or whether it should be decided in conjunction with the municipal council. Once the point is decided, if it is dangerous

for two taxis to stand at the intersection of William-street and St. George's-terrace, why not move them along the terrace?

Hon. G. W. Miles: They swing a good distance into the roadway when rounding the corner, too.

Hon. G. POTTER: Two cars do not occupy much space. Let the authorities arrange for two taxi cars to stand either in rear or in front of the chars-a-banc. I mention this to show there is no question of being monopolists, but I do object to my constituents being doomed to walk down to White City, a place that is not desirable and one where we would not like our wives and children to have to go in the evening.

Hon. J. Cornell: What action should I take? None of my constituents is affected?

Hon. G. POTTER: Then I can trust to the hon. member's good judgment to vote for the disallowance of the regulations.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	13
Noes	6

Majority for .. 7

AYES.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. G. Potter
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. G. A. Kempton	Hon. H. A. Stephenson
Hon. W. H. Kitson	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. Sir W. F. Lathlain	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. W. Hickey	Hon. E. Rosa
Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	Hon. A. Burvill
	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day—Conclusion.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [5.24]: Before I proceed to offer any remarks on the Address-in-reply let me congratulate the Chief Secretary on his re-appointment to the leadership of this House. During the brief period I have been a member I have had nothing but admiration for the way in which he has con-

ducted the business of the House, and I feel sure that in the time that is to come he will be equally successful. Reference has been made to the Royal visit. It was my good fortune to see the manifestations of loyalty and the illuminations in honour of the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York in New South Wales and Victoria as well as in this State, and I am pleased to say that Western Australia suffered nothing by comparison. I congratulate the Government and the people of Perth particularly on the manner in which they rose to the occasion and showed their loyalty to the Empire. I have a feeling that I am expected to say quite a lot on what has been described as one of the most burning questions of the day, namely, group and land settlement. Had time permitted, I would have had more to say than I now intend, but I understand there is a desire to close the debate as early as possible and therefore I shall endeavour to be brief. I read with a good deal of interest the speech of the Minister for Lands delivered in another place. I believe it is the most comprehensive speech that has yet been delivered on the subject. I agree that the rapid increase in the cost figures of group settlement calls for serious investigation, but I totally disagree with the impression that some people are endeavouring to broadcast that the scheme is an absolute failure. Four years ago and in this House last year I stated that wrong methods were being employed. I have stated that wasteful, slipshod and foolish methods have been pursued, such methods as would not be countenanced by any private concern or any individual wishing to establish himself on the land. I agree that it is questionable whether some of the areas selected will give quick results under a scheme of this kind, and I am afraid that too many of the settlers have been permitted to regard the scheme rather as a job than as an opportunity. I think most members agree that this scheme has, as one of its fundamentals, the opportunity for men to go on the land. I do not wish to pose as one of those "I told you so" artists, but the very scheme that the Minister for Lands now proposes to inaugurate, that of creating an advisory board to give the whole of their time to the scheme, has been consistently urged by me, both with voice and pen, almost since the inception of group settlement. I urged it on Sir James Mitchell

when he was Premier, and I urged it on the ex-Minister for Lands, Mr. Angwin. I have no hesitation in saying that had I and others who were of the same opinion been listened to and three boards, such as are now proposed, been appointed, group settlement would have been in a much more satisfactory condition to-day and the country would have saved probably a couple of millions of money. I am certain that the settlers would have been much further ahead, and that many of the discontents existing would have passed away. Had those boards been functioning then, I am sure many of the blocks which have been found unsuitable would have been eliminated long before this. It does not take long for men who have lived in the South-West to know good land from bad. While I would be slow to say there is much bad land in those districts, I do say there is much land which could have been selected in preference to some that has been taken up. Had the boards been in operation, unsuitable settlers would have been weeded out before this, and a stimulus given to the good men to carry on. As I have said, a deaf ear was turned to that suggestion, with the result that many of the better settlers abandoned their holdings, together with the capital some of them put in. There have been patchwork concessions given from time to time, but these have not touched the kernel of the difficulty—such concessions never will. My sympathies are with the old advisory board, who have been carrying on, or attempting to carry on, the scheme. I said last year, and I repeat, that their regular duties made it impossible for them to devote any time worth mentioning to the administrative work in Perth, and that they were able to devote still less time to work in the field. I am looking forward to the announcement of the personnel of the new board which the Minister for Lands has promised. I hope the board, when constituted, will be allowed to operate without dictation under the Minister's direction. The only link with the old board that is necessary for the new one is the accountant, who has knowledge of the findings of the old board, and, naturally, of the figures relating to the scheme. I understand that other members are desirous of speaking and that it is wished to close the debate this evening, and therefore I shall not review the figures of the Minister, much as I should like to do so. I would, however, for a minute or so, refer

to some of the methods which have been adopted in the field, and which in some measure explain why the average costs, particularly in the case of pasture, are so high. I was astonished, as many other have been, at the Minister's figures. I do not for a moment doubt the instances the hon. gentleman has given, but I cannot bring myself to believe that they represent anything like the broad average of the scheme. What member with any knowledge of agriculture would expect permanent pasture to result from merely ploughing in the virgin land, sowing it with seed, scattering sometimes too little and more times too much fertiliser on it, and then, as soon as the pasture gets three or four inches high, turning cattle in to eat the whole lot out? And that was done not only in the first year, but also in the second year, and even in the third. It has been done in hundreds of cases, and if it is allowed to continue I shall not be surprised to hear before long that the cost has risen to £150 per acre. That kind of thing was never intended, and should never be countenanced.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You must establish your artificial grasses first.

Hon. W. J. MANN: No artificial grasses can be established unless they are given a chance, and no virgin land—I care not how rich it may be—can be expected to establish permanent pasture if it is merely rough-ploughed, sown, and given a bit of fertiliser, the pasture, on coming up, being eaten down before it has time even to seed or get a decent root system. With my own eyes I have seen a man standing in the back of a spring cart into which he had tipped a number of bags of fertiliser, and with a shovel in his hand simply pushing the fertiliser out as the horse walked along. I have one recollection of a paddock which had the appearance of having been under a severe snow-storm, the white mantle being superphosphate. That is wicked, wilful waste; and it is that kind of thing that has forced up the cost of the scheme. It may be said that the land got the value of the fertiliser, but any man with practical knowledge of agriculture will agree with me that in the case of land treated in that manner the last stage would be worse than the first. I have seen, not once, but often, seed sown on water-logged land, land so water-logged that one could barely walk over it. I have seen

the men pull their feet out of the soft soil, and it was as much as they could do to pull one foot after the other; and those men were sowing the seed over it. One might as well endeavour to establish permanent pasture on a block of granite as on such soil. Such a proceeding merely courts disaster, and is another contributory cause to the failure of some of the pastures. I have seen land ploughed, and very soon that land has had a grey mantle of salt across it; and yet I have known foremen tell unfortunate group settlers that they must sow the land because the instruction was that they had to get so much area down in pasture. No salt land in the world benefits by such treatment, and no scheme could possibly stand it. One of my complaints is that not nearly enough attention has been given to the field work. Twelve months ago I said there was a great inclination on the part of those administering the scheme to adopt the principle of mass production. That has been continued. The idea seems to have been to turn out all the blocks just as one would turn out motor cars, aeroplanes, or anything else that is mechanical. The board, although in charge, seemed quite unmindful of various factors such as personality, locality, soil, and so forth. We look to the new Advisory Board to remedy that. The personal equation is one of the greatest factors, and should be given full consideration. Locality should also be taken into consideration, and so should soil and the other factors. In most respects the settlers have not been given anything like a reasonable chance. They have been given no encouragement whatever in regard to intense culture. I realise that fundamentally this is a dairying scheme; but men should be encouraged to grow side lines such as potatoes, pigs, tobacco where the land is suitable—and some has been found suitable—in order that they may earn something for themselves quickly while at the same time improving their land. Mr. Glasheen painted a most doleful picture of the dairying industry. He talked of the bedraggled man and the bedraggled children, and the two starving dogs, and the old kind of thing that has been, ever since I was a child, used as a sneer and a reproach against the man living in the country. I am rather surprised that Mr. Glasheen should revive old gibes of that description. He might

have shown himself a little more original if he was disposed to speak in such a manner, and not put that kind of thing on to very worthy men. Mr. Glasheen instanced the Paterson scheme as evidence that there was no good in the dairying industry. My own opinion of the Paterson scheme, as I understand it, is that it was brought into being primarily to help the Eastern States dairy people, who had reached a rather difficult phase, caused chiefly by abnormally high prices they paid for their land. This applies particularly to returned soldiers on repurchased lands. Other factors were heavy local taxation, and the incidence of a tariff which presses so heavily on most primary producers. Those three things largely caused the Paterson scheme to be brought into being. I wish to inform the House, if members have not the knowledge already, that the Victorian dairying industry, including pig-raising, which is of course a concomitant, according to the last "Victorian Year-book" I was able to get hold of, that for 1924-25, produced more wealth for the State than did Victorian wheat. Dairying cannot be such a despised industry if in a rich country like Victoria it produces more wealth than wheat produces there. The "Victorian Year-book," which I presume to be authentic, says that in the year I have mentioned wheat returned £11,993,000 while dairying brought in a total of £14,768,000. The latter figure was made up of butter £6,618,000, milk £1,784,000, cheese £204,000, cream £190,000, condensed milk £1,582,000, and pigs £4,390,000. Those figures speak for themselves. There is a difference of £2,791,000 in favour of the dairying industry. I think it was Mr. Macfarlane who said last night that the annual returns from dairying in the Commonwealth amounted to about £140,000,000. Such figures should make one pause and think. They should prevent anyone from decrying an industry that means so much to Australia as a whole.

Hon. V. Hamersley: What is the amount of earnings per head of those engaged in the dairying industry.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I have not worked that out.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We have the land and the rainfall in the South-West, but we have not got anyone that knows his job.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Well, we soon will have. In Western Australia for the year 1925-26 we produced 3,202,000 lbs. of butter, and in 1926-27 the production had increased to 3,750,000 lbs.

Hon. A. Burvill: Then we are beginning to get people who know their jobs in the South-West!

Hon. W. J. MANN: That shows an increase of 548,000 lbs. within 12 months.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That record will be eclipsed during the present year.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. I have been told by people able to speak on the subject with greater authority than I can, that the production this year will be 4,500,000 lbs. The settlement of the South-West, in which the group settlement scheme plays a part, was designed to make Western Australia self contained, and to overtake the demand for commodities that we have not been able to supply for ourselves in the past. We desire to produce in Western Australia commodities that in years past have cost us many millions to import, and the sooner we do that the better. I am certain it can be done in the South-West, but I do not say that result will be achieved very quickly unless some of the methods are radically altered.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It will not be done if you spread superphosphate with a shovel.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Given reasonable opportunity, the great bulk of the good blocks within the group settlement areas will supply the demand within the State and make provision for export as well. During the past year or two the South-West has been passing through a somewhat similar crisis to that experienced by the wheat belt some years ago. I recollect in 1914, towards the end of the drought, when farms were being abandoned and people from those areas came to the South-West we were told that everything was wrong with the wheat belt and that the land was no good. It was also said that the rainfall records had been faked and that the people responsible for sending the settlers to the wheat belt should be sent to prison. I remember a Congregational minister delivering a lecture in the town where I lived, illustrating it with lantern slides. Some of these showed humpies made of bags and the unfortunate farmers with their children standing outside the dwellings. That minister told us that the people were living on boiled

wheat and asked what we were going to do with the people who sent them there. Fortunately it was amply demonstrated later that that story was untrue. Despite the crisis through which the wheat belt passed, who will say that the advantages gained as the result of the efforts of those who established that area were not worth while? In my opinion the wheat belt is designed to be the granary of the Southern Hemisphere and those who are farming in those areas can well afford to laugh at the critics of years gone by. I believe the same thing will happen regarding the South-West.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Some men opposed Sir James Mitchell being Minister for Agriculture and Lands because he had settled the wheat belt!

Hon. W. J. MANN: There were some men—I do not infer that Dr. Saw was one of them—who were hostile in their attitude towards the wheat belt for years. It took 10 or 12 years for them to live down that hostility. The worth of the wheat belt had to be forced upon them before they acknowledged that they were wrong. Now the same people are hostile to the South-West. We have a few years to go yet and we need not be down-hearted, because the people I refer to will not be due to be convinced until 10 years hence.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The farmers in the wheat belt were not settled at 10s. a day. They had to battle for themselves.

Hon. A. Burvill: What about the I.A.B.?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I understood the men on the wheat belt received something like 9s. 2d. per day from the I.A.B. During the course of his remarks Mr. Glasheen, speaking in humorous vein, said that he presumed that I would blow his statements to ribbons regarding some figures he quoted. I have no intention of doing that, but I wish to correct one statement that he made. I think someone must have got hold of him, for if his statement were correct, it would be a wonderful thing for this State. He said that hundreds of acres of land carrying karri and jarrah, valued at between £400 and £500 an acre, had been ruthlessly destroyed by ringbarking. His statement staggered me and I made it my business to make inquiries at the Forests Department and also to consult some gentlemen who have been in the timber business all their lives. I cannot repeat in the House what the gentlemen I refer to

said when I repeated Mr. Glasheen's statement beyond saying that they wished it was true, so that they could get hold of some of the land quickly. Pertinent figures will be found in the report furnished by the Forests Department for 1922. These show that there is a yield of 2,000 loads of jarrah in the round per hundred acres, and that is stated to be a very big average. Taking that quantity of timber on a 40 per cent. recovery basis and allowing £7 10s. a load—that was the price at the time, but there has been a slump in the timber industry for some little time past and prices now range from £6 to £6 10s.—

Hon. V. Hamersley: According to the price one has to pay for timber, I thought it would have been nearer £24 a load.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The hon. member is viewing it from the standpoint of prices from the timber yards.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But timber is more expensive now than it was in years gone by.

Hon. W. J. MANN: There is a slump in the industry. For instance, sleepers cost £5 15s. per load to hew and I know of one instance in which the Railway Department offered a hewer £5 for his sleepers and the departmental officials thought they were doing him a wonderful turn. I have heard of £4 5s. per load being offered for sleepers, but that was not authentic. On a 40 per cent. recovery basis at £7 10s., the price per acre would work out at only £60 at the mill. There is a tremendous difference between £60 and £400 or £500. For karri the average is considerably higher. It is estimated that there is an average of 5,000 loads in the round to be obtained from 100 acres in the karri country. On a 40 per cent. recovery basis at £7 10s. per load, a return of £150 per acre is obtained.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are they using karri land for agricultural purposes?

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are they not using the timber?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I will come to that point. I have given these figures to the House because Mr. Glasheen said they had been given to him and he repeated them to the House for what they were worth. He was quite honest about them. Timber of an export value of over £500,000 has been sold on a royalty basis from the group settlement areas. That does not include timber taken from the group holdings in the Pemberton-

Manjimup area, which is karri and jarrah country, for that timber was subject to a hewing permit granted before the group settlements were established. Further, the timber from the group settlement country at Northcliffe has been used for the construction of buildings on the groups there. When perusing the Railway Department's report for 1925 I noticed that the timber industry has meant a continuous harvest flowing into the coffers of the department. I am not mentioning the figures for the sake of disparaging any industry, but it is interesting to note from those figures that while 567,419 tons of wheat were carried over the railways for a return of £349,253, timber aggregating 1,018,603 tons were conveyed over the railways for a return of £448,346. That shows a very considerable increase in railway earnings from the timber industry as compared with the returns from wheat. The total value of export timber since the State entered that trade has been £35,060,025. These figures are interesting and may well be borne in mind by those who wish to decry the dairying industry. I believe the land in the South-West will do what it was suggested originally they would accomplish, but I feel that the original scheme has been somewhat departed from. I believe that a great deal of the trouble experienced has resulted from that departure. I will deal with one question that is regarded seriously in the South-West. I refer to the dredging of the Bunbury harbour. The Governor's Speech includes a statement that a report from the Engineer-in-Chief regarding his investigations at Bunbury was expected at an early date. I trust that report will be received very soon, because the berthage at the port is being taxed to its utmost. Last week a steamer had to wait seven days before it could be berthed. That should not be. However, it is evidence of the growing popularity of the port. The volume of shipping has steadily improved. Last year 148 vessels of a net register of 383,078 tons visited the port, as against 138 vessels of a net register of 343,000 tons in 1926. It represents quite a reasonable increase. The necessity for deepening the berthing is borne out by the fact that the average tonnage calling at Bunbury is about 2,600 tons per vessel. It shows that the shipowners are building larger vessels and sending them to other ports. In consequence, some arrangements

must be made to accommodate them. The export of timber from Bunbury last year totalled 195,331 loads, while 58,971 tons of wheat were shipped away, which is a record. The export of coal reached 23,183 tons, there were 54 tons of potatoes and 130 tons of flour. Oats, fruit, wool and general cargo made up quite a reasonable figure, the grand total aggregating 448,318 tons. It was owing to the prolific harvest in the wheat belt that the export of wheat established a record for Bunbury.

Hon. E. Rose: What about the fruit shipped from Bunbury?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I will come to that. It is estimated that there should be another 25,000 tons of wheat to be forwarded through Bunbury; so the total export for the 1926 season should reach over 1,000,000 bags, or say, 3,000,000 bushels. At present I am given to understand the wheat shed accommodation for storage at Bunbury is equal to not more than 20,000 tons. I hope the Engineer-in-Chief's report will not be much longer delayed, and that it will at least provide for increased storage for wheat; for the wheat shipments from Bunbury are only just beginning. In coal Bunbury shows quite a satisfactory increase as compared with last year. As to fruit, I am sorry to have to say the Government have made no provision for the shipping of that commodity from its natural port. There is no question whatever that Bunbury and Busselton are the two ports through which the fruit grown in the South-West should be shipped. It is entirely anomalous that it should be hauled 120 miles farther than is necessary in order that it might be shipped from Fremantle. The growers are continually urging that their fruit shall be shipped at its natural port, and the port authorities, the Railway Department and the waterside workers of Bunbury have been praised by the Fruitgrowers' Association for their ready help and assistance in dealing with shipments at the port. It is a shame to think that an industry like that of fruit, established in the South-West, and which enjoys such a fine reputation, should be without the necessary local shipping facilities. The silting problem at Bunbury has not yet been tackled in any but a piecemeal way. The recurring expenditure of £8,000 per annum is too heavy for the port to carry. The earnings and importance of the port fully justify the Government spending money in order to afford

proper facilities. The capital expenditure to date has been £448,000. That includes the mole. The interest works out at £20,400 per annum. The amount contributed from Consolidated Revenue, after having paid all liabilities with the exception of sinking fund and replacements, amounted last year to £20,150. In 1924 it was £21,350; in 1925 it was £22,000; and in 1926 it fell away to £21,000. For 1927 the amount is £20,150. I appeal to the Government to do something that has already been promised for the Busselton harbour. On the Loan Estimates last year the Premier promised £5,000 for the improvement of the jetty. I and others have been twitted with the suggestion that that was merely an electioneering dodge, and that we were flats to believe it. However, I have too much respect for the Premier to think that even in such a small matter he was not sincere. Since he has promised that money I urge upon him that it be expended at the earliest possible moment in order to relieve the congestion at the Busselton jetty. I can assure members that the figures supplied by the Railway Department in reference to shipping at Busselton show an increased trade for last year of about £20,000. I feel sure that it will increase still further. I make no apology for referring for a few minutes to the tourist traffic. I want to quote from a letter the Honorary Minister kindly wrote me in November last. It was with reference to some remarks made by me in this House on the accommodation at Caves House. Mr. Hickey ended his letter this way—

In conclusion, the Premier is most anxious to provide the necessary facilities, but is always faced with the inevitable problem of finance. However, now that the finances of the State are on a more solid basis, and the prospects are brighter, I hope that when I put up the proposition on the next Estimates it will survive, and that the Treasurer will see his way clear to make the money available to go on with the work.

Mr. Collier has told the world that he has a surplus, and that the financial position is even brighter than when the Honorary Minister wrote this letter.

The Honorary Minister: But the surplus has been doubted.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am surprised that the Minister should accept even for a moment any question whatever about it; his colleagues say the surplus is a solid and tangible fact. In consideration of that, I

ask that Mr. Hickey be as good as his promise and do his best to see to it that the Premier keeps his word. I want to show that the tourist traffic in this State is worth a little more consideration than it gets. The Caves House at Yallingup is one of the most popular tourist resorts in Western Australia.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: For honeymoon couples.

Hon. W. J. MANN: And for others also. It is not only the most popular in the State, but it is the cheapest place I know of in Australia and the best conducted. While as a general rule I do not subscribe to State enterprises, I do honestly believe that this is one in which the State has been successful. I would add that the State should either provide adequate facilities for the people who wish to patronise the place, or should hand the task over to private enterprise. I am not concerned as to who provides those facilities, but I am concerned about the actual provision of additional accommodation at the Caves House. A week or so ago a paragraph appeared in the daily Press announcing that the whole of the accommodation at Caves House for the forthcoming Christmas and New Year had been booked up in an hour and a half. In a way that is very satisfactory, but it means that only a handful of people, and those mostly from the city, have been able to secure that accommodation, while all the people in the country who wanted to share it are squeezed out.

Hon. J. Nicholson: They will need to erect another Caves House.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Exactly. At present there is only bedroom accommodation for 64 persons. There is some verandah space, but not everybody cares to occupy a verandah bed and dress in a common room, having by way of wardrobe a locker such as one might have in a yacht club. The dining room accommodates 78 and has verandah space for another 36. The difficulties confronted in the country are such that the staff of a place like Caves House should be given better opportunity to carry out their work than they have at present. And a number of other things are badly required. A new dining-room is required while the bedroom accommodation should be trebled. I was surprised recently to find that although this hotel is run by a Labour Government, the housing accommodation supplied for the male staff is, to be charit-

able, shocking. The feminine staff have reasonably good housing, but the men all have to bundle together in a humpy that would scarcely suffice for blackfellows. When, last year, I heard something about shearers' accommodation, it occurred to me that the men working at the Caves House would gladly accept that shearers' accommodation in exchange for what they have down there. Young men, after a pretty hard day's work, are entitled to some form of comfort, and even some privacy. I hope the Honorary Minister will take note of this and have a look round and see that when the new additions are put in, something shall be done for the male staff.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Before tea I was referring to the necessity for further improvements at Cave House, Yallingup. I hope the Government will also take into consideration the question of providing some garage accommodation for motor cars. It is not unusual to see as many as 100 motor cars around Cave House. Frequently in the summer time 40 or 50 of them are without any covering. This winter I counted 20 cars, all of which were valuable, but which had to remain outside exposed to the worst elements. It would be a payable proposition for the Government to erect some sort of a covering which they could hire to the owners while staying at Cave House. I wish briefly to refer to the drainage work that is being done in the extreme South-West. I congratulate this and the preceding Government upon the success that has followed upon their efforts there. I have seen many drainage works, but have known of none which have given such wonderful results as this drainage work in the South-West. I travelled over it on two occasions. Without exception the drains are doing excellent work. They are a great credit and a tribute to the engineers who designed them. Owing to the very small fall it was a difficult proposition, but they have surmounted the difficulties with wonderful skill. I am sure, irrespective of group settlements, this work will benefit a large number of holdings, and will mean the cultivation of a large area of rich swamp land that has been under water for most parts of the year. I trust the question of drainage will be further gone into and such works

will be extended between Pinjarra and Bunbury. A great area of country exists between Coolup and Harvey, which could be drained at no very great expense. That would bring under cultivation very rich flats that are at present unsafe owing to the water. With drainage, holders could embark upon extensive cropping operations. I hope that the Main Roads Board, who are doing good work, will accelerate their operations in the South-West. On Sunday last I had the agonising experience of motoring from Busselton to Bunbury. Anyone who gets over that road needs to be fairly strong. I can hardly understand why the board in one portion have made a short length of good road, for it is practically impossible to reach it from either end. That was the case last week.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: One man said that 300 men had done only six miles of road in eight months.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I hope the board will get on with the work as expeditiously as possible. Owing to the heavy rainfall many of the roads are in a bad condition. I ask the Government when dealing with the money that has been set aside for the assistance of mining not to forget the claims of the Greenbushes tinfields. Many prospectors are vigorously prospecting there. A reasonable amount of money has been subscribed locally, and the people are hopeful of great things. Shafts have been sunk, and there is some enthusiasm over certain small lodes that have been discovered, carrying high-grade tin. Many of the leading and experienced miners are of opinion that they are going to pick up some of the lost big lodes, and that there is a much brighter future before the district. I suggest that the Government should assist them by putting down bores on the line that offers reasonable expectations of carrying lodes, with a view to proving their existence. The cost would not be great, but much good would result to the district if success were attained as a result of these bores, and the prosperity of the locality would be assured. The last thing with which I desire to associate myself is with regard to the centenary commemorations. I hope the celebration will be such as will be worthy of the State. No better means of commemorating the occasion could be devised than by completing Parliament House.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Where are you to get the money?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am sure the people of the city would readily agree to such a thing, and that the folks in the country, who are proud of the metropolis, would also support the idea. I hope the Government will see their way clear to fall in with the suggestion that has been expressed on so many sides and that has the approbation of most people who are proud of their State. I support the motion.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [7.37]: I have only three subjects to refer to to-night. The first is the financial position, which is of the greatest importance. Unique methods have been adopted by the Treasurer and those associated with him, which show the resourcefulness of the Government in being able to produce the first surplus since 1911. Few will believe that we have a real surplus, particularly those belonging to the shrewd commercial section, who have occasion to watch the finances of the State. It may serve the purpose of the Premier, in order to gull members of the rank and file of the Labour movement, who naturally believe that he has accomplished something that former Governments could not achieve. During the debate he showed he could not stand up very well under severe cross-examination. In my opinion the present position has been brought about chiefly by the grants, the loan money and the cheap money that the Government have been able to obtain from the Commonwealth authorities. Our improved position is chiefly due to the Commonwealth Government. A matter of first rate importance in the Speech is our financial relation with the Commonwealth. Some members have debated that question. As we shall have a Bill before us at an early date, and will know the exact conditions we are asked to accept, I shall reserve any comment upon that controversial subject for the time being. There is some prospective legislation forecasted in the Speech. Some of it is of great importance. I wish to say a few words upon mining. Both Mr. Seddon and Mr. Cornell have already dilated upon that industry. I believe everyone in Western Australia, from the Premier down, desires that the goldfields should regain their former prestige in the matter of gold production. We have re-

ceived at the hands of the Commonwealth Government certain sums of money arising out of the Disabilities Commission. When the Commonwealth authorities gave that money they gave it without any string to it. They left it, as the Prime Minister said, entirely in the hands of the State Government to allocate as seemed desirable. The Legislative Assembly determined to allocate £168,000 to the goldmining industry some 12 months ago, but as yet, I understand, none of the money has been spent.

Hon. J. R. Brown: There has been no genuine application for it yet.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Then one may say that some applications have been lodged which have not commended themselves to the Government.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Quite so.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The grant was made to the industries of Western Australia. We have very few of these, and of them all no industry has suffered more than the goldmining industry. It was recently announced by the Government that until such time as the mining companies on the Golden Mile were prepared to do something to rehabilitate mining and the industry generally, the Government were not prepared to assist. That would lead us to believe that the whole of the grant was to be utilised in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder district. During the election and subsequently some folks were at pains to impress upon the people in the outside mining districts that they would receive their share of the money. Seeing that the larger mining companies are confined to the Golden Mile, I should like to know what difficulty is in the way of the Government assisting the other mining centres. It is very necessary that some of the money should be spent in other districts. Surely within the last 12 months requests have been submitted to the Government for help from these outside districts, which are well deserving of attention. A statement was recently made by the Premier in which he said, "It was explained that this sum is intended for the whole of the State, and not for the Golden Mile exclusively." We are to celebrate "Back to the Goldfields" in the course of a few days and there will be many visitors at Kalgoorlie from different parts of the Commonwealth. I understand that the Premier and Minister for

Mines and others will be present. The people of the goldfields on an occasion such as that will welcome any announcement that the Premier may have to make as to the intentions of the Government relating to the position of mining, particularly in Kalgoorlie. It has been said by many that there are a thousand ways in which the money advanced by the Commonwealth can be spent. I commend that attitude of the Minister for Mines who last week published in the Press a statement as to what the Government were prepared to do respecting the Sons of Gwalia mine. Since the industry has been languishing and while we have been waiting for a statement from those in authority, we have been led to believe that offers have been made from time to time by mining companies which were not acceptable. That was the first occasion of which I have knowledge where the Minister, after the proposal had been rejected by the company, made a public statement so that the people might see what had been offered and what the company had refused to accept. Away back in September 1926 a suggestion was made that cheap power should be made available. A Commission was appointed and they inquired into the possibilities of generating electricity at a low rate and applying it to the mines. That led everyone to believe that the Government would spend a large sum of money on a central power plant. It is understood that the scheme was submitted to the mining authorities, but that it was not accepted. I would like the Chief Secretary when replying to indicate what has been done in that direction, whether any proposal has been submitted, and, if so, whether it has been rejected by the mining companies. Already, I remind the House, we have a large power plant at Kalgoorlie capable of supplying electricity, and the company controlling it might be induced to extend that plant and their operations. I wish to enter an emphatic protest against the suggestion that the State Government have been waiting for a move on the part of the Federal authorities as regards assistance to the industry.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Why should they not wait?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Why should they wait? The Federal Government made available a sum of £350,000 and the amount from that total to be devoted to assist mining was £168,000. It was not State money, but money provided by the Commonwealth, and

the Commonwealth might have said at the outset that the industry was of more value to the State than perhaps to the Commonwealth, and that therefore the State Government should indicate what it was prepared to do to assist the Commonwealth in its desire to help the industry. Obviously that was what might have been expected, remembering the staff we have in our Mines Department.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You do not wish the Government to broadcast that money?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I have no desire that that should be done, but the State might make an equal amount available. The Commonwealth authorities are still investigating the position with a view to granting further assistance, not only to the industries in this State, but throughout Australia generally. Another matter to which I wish to refer relates to the recent elections. I have before me a pamphlet issued by the Australian Labour Party, entitled "Labour's Unique Record."

Hon. J. R. Brown: Is that what you borrowed from me last night?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: No, what the hon. member gave me last night when I asked for his authority regarding a document, was something from a secretary in Queensland.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It was from the Government of Queensland.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The document I have now relates to the recent elections in this State, and is described as Pamphlet No. 5. I have an array of them here in almost all colours of the rainbow, and they deal with practically every subject under the sun.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Good stuff, too.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Yes, good stuff, perhaps, but there is also a lot of political dope in it. I congratulate the Labour Party on the way they pulled it over the public, and particularly the unionists of Western Australia. The document contains the following which is worth repeating—

It is a fundamental of British Parliamentary Government that the majority of the people, through their elected representatives, should govern.

That sounds all right.

The bold constructive policy of Labour has been founded on the principle of majority assent. The overwhelming evidence of majority approval is the sure seal of success.

Amongst the unique records there is no reference to the abnormally large number of unemployed that prevailed in various dis-

tricts since we have had Labour in power. But what I wish to take as a text is the majority rule—government by the people. Let me take hon. members' minds back to the election of 1924 when as a result of that campaign Labour came into power with 27 seats in a House of 50. They polled 41,774 votes and their opponents with 23 seats polled 56,466 votes, making a total of 98,240 votes cast at the election.

Hon. J. R. Brown: That is your way of putting up the figures.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That is the correct way; and I will demonstrate that the Government are representing a minority of the people.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: How many seats were uncontested?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: There were eleven uncontested seats and they represented 29,940 electors. Fifty per cent. of that number would be 14,970. Therefore 50 per cent. of the electors in the 11 uncontested seats added, would only slightly exceed the vote of Labour's 23 opponents. Of the 20 electoral districts with the smallest enrolment Labour captured 15 seats representing 21,997 electors, and the 5 seats represented by their opponents—seats that may also be described as pocket boroughs—contained 7,045 votes, a total of 29,042. Twenty-five electorates with the lowest enrolment equalled 33,367 whilst the other 25 represented 156,502, making a total of 189,869 on the rolls. When debating the Redistribution of Seats Bill on the 5th December, 1922, Mr. Collier, who is now Premier, used the following words which I take from "Hansard" of that year, page 1980—

Had that Bill become law, we should not now have had what I may describe as the outrageous travesty upon representative government as is disclosed in the fact that we have to-day some electoral districts with 500, 600, or 700 electors returning one member and, on the other hand, districts with 8,000, 9,000 or 10,000 electors also returning one member. It goes without saying that a redistribution of seats or a rearrangement of our electoral boundaries is a matter of first rate importance because, after all, on it rests the basis of representative government. The fight for "one adult, one vote" in nearly all of the States of Australia, as well, no doubt, as in other parts of the world, was a very long and difficult one . . . while the principle of "one adult, one vote" has been conceded, it is now attempted by the manipulation of electoral boundaries to provide that a vote passed in one part of the State shall have four, five or six times the value of a

vote cast in some other parts of the State. The growth of this geographical representation has resulted in undermining the principle of representative government. Where is the claim for government by the people, so long as it is proposed to continue a condition of things such as is set out in the Bill? . . . The fact that under the single electorate system, be the electorates ever so equally divided, it is possible for a minority of the electors to govern the country while the majority sit in opposition, shows that such a system is undesirable.

He was pointing out the inequality under this system, where there were 6,000, 7,000, or 8,000 on the roll, as against 3,000, 4,000 or 5,000. Since those words were uttered we held an election in 1924 and as we all know it was a close run. We come to the recent election which was again decided on unequally balanced electoral districts. The Government, naturally to save their own—may I use the term—political skins, decided it was advisable not to introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill. In other words they evaded bringing down the measure. The Premier indicated that at the proper time he would deal with the matter. I suppose that will be some other day when they consider that the geographical position of electors will suit them in the rearrangement of their boundaries.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You will have some fault to find with it even then.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: If there are any faults to be found it is for members to point them out, instead of interjecting as the hon. member is doing in a way that is perhaps not pertinent to the issue. The Premier endeavours to justify it by saying that his predecessors did not pursue the matter of redistribution, but the position has gradually become worse and it is practically a scandal when we find that an elector in one district has 75 times the power of an elector in another district. It may be noted that the Labour Party voted solidly against the recommendation that the Chief Justice, the Surveyor General and the Chief Electoral Officer be appointed a Commission to amend the electoral boundaries. That matter was brought forward in the Assembly and defeated by a block vote of the Labour Party. During the recent election, with a handicap of nine uncontested seats, most of which were pocket boroughs, someone determined to flood doubtful constituencies, in other words to adulterate the roll by taking numbers of workmen into those districts, employing them for a month, enrolling them and thereby endeavouring to

defeat the vote of the resident electors of the district. In the Murray-Wellington, Greenough, Albany, Yilgarn and Pilbara districts the Labour Party in 1924 won by very narrow majorities. It was into those districts that men were sent during the recent election to undertake road-making, for which work the Government utilised both Federal and State money. I should like to know who was responsible for drafting those men into the various electorates. Brief reference was made to the question in some of the speeches which have been delivered. I think Mr. Holmes spoke of it last night and I said by way of interjection that provision was made in the agreement. The agreement between the State and the Commonwealth provides that no work shall be done on the day labour principle unless with the consent of the Commonwealth authority. I should like the Leader of the House to tell us whether the Main Roads Board were the people who selected those districts where the Government had a small majority vote in 1924 in order to place the workmen there, or whether it was authorised or inspired by the Government.

Hon. H. Seddon: Did the Government get the consent of the Federal authority?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: According to the newspaper reports they did not get the consent of the Federal authority, and I believe the Federal Government have gone so far as to repudiate payment of a sum in the region of £50,000. It looks as if the State will have to pay that £50,000. If that is so, it is money that should have been paid by the State out of revenue for the year ended the 30th June last, and that would materially affect the surplus of which we have heard so much. I submit it is a vicious principle for the Government of the day or for any officers employed by the Government to transfer men into districts with the sole and express object of defeating the vote of the electors residing in that district.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Well, they did not do it, and you know they did not do it.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I know that they sent a number of men to the Yilgarn electorate and had to put them up in the road board hall because there was no other accommodation for them. It is not only alleged that the member for the district did it; there was a court case in which it was pointed out that he had enrolled a lot of those men two days after the expiration of the date for names to be placed on the roll. It is

also alleged that the member for Greenough enrolled a number of voters.

Hon. J. R. Brown: How many?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I do not know how many claim cards he witnessed, but I believe the number was in the vicinity of a hundred. The fact remains that the claim cards were witnessed on the same day and the electors were residing in various districts so wide apart that it would be humanly impossible for any one person to cover the whole of those districts in the one day.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He was only carrying out the Electoral Act.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I shall not say that the Act was broken, but the Electoral Act is not a perfect instrument to provide against folks who indulge in some of the things that were indulged in during the recent election. The Labour Party claim to be democrats and they are opposed to the principle of dumping. From time to time we hear much about people dumping goods into Western Australia. It is done in many parts of the world in commercial circles, but we find the same principle being adopted here and of folks being dumped into an electorate for a specific purpose. Under the Electoral Act the Chief Electoral Officer has no authority to take action for breaches of the Act. All he can do is to make recommendations and forward them to the Minister for Justice. If the Minister considers that the case warrants investigation, it is his duty to have proceedings taken. I understand that some of the cases have been brought under his notice, but as yet no action has been taken by the people in authority to investigate the charges or ascertain whether any breaches of the Act were committed. The total enrolments for 1927 numbered 210,949. Members may recall that the other day I asked the Chief Secretary to state the total enrolments and the enrolments for 27 seats, those 27 seats being held by the Labour Party. The total enrolments were 210,949 and the 27 Labour seats represented 104,592 electors. Thus, if the Labour Party had received 100 per cent. vote of the electors in those 27 districts, it would be impossible for them to have a majority. Therefore I contend they are representing a minority of the people. They represent 104,592 electors, whereas the other section on the roll totals 106,357. If we take the exact figures of votes re-

corded at the recent election we find 64,361 votes recorded for the 27 Labour members, while their opponents holding 23 seats had 76,145 votes recorded in their favour.

Hon. J. R. Brown: How many of those were in the cemetery?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Consequently the opponents of Labour polled 11,794 votes more than the Labour members. Following the interjection by Mr. Kitson as to the uncontested seats in 1924, let me say that in the 1927 election the uncontested seats numbered nine, representing 16,862 electors. In order to get even with their opponents it would have been necessary, had an election been held in those nine uncontested districts, for Labour to have polled exactly 70 per cent. of the votes. Taking the records for the Assembly and for the Federal elections, we find that the average is under 60 per cent.; to be correct it is 57 per cent. for the whole of those districts. Even so, had the whole of the electors voted, Labour would still be representing a minority of the people.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Have you the absentee votes there?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The Premier delivered his policy speech at Boulder, and it was recorded in the "Worker" newspaper of the 25th February, 1927. Under the heading, "Policy in Brief," the "Worker" set out these items—"Introduction of a Bill for Closer Settlement; a mandate for the introduction of State insurance. The Premier said, 'I ask for a mandate from the electors of the State for the reform of the Legislative Council franchise!'" We find these two measures embodied in the Governor's Speech amongst the list of legislation forecasted for the present session. In one of the many circulars issued by the Labour Party, circular No. 18 contains the following:—"Collier Government ask for a mandate from the people." When Parliament opened the following appeared in the official organ of the Labour Party:—

State insurance was made one of the issues of the election campaign and it is not likely that the Government having received a mandate from the people—

They did not say a minority of the people—

Hon. J. R. Brown: It was not a minority and you know it. Why talk such rubbish?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The circular continues—

—will long delay in bringing down a Bill to provide for State insurance.

The Government therefore decided to ask for a mandate from the electors to place the Closer Settlement Bill on the statute-book. Those are the issues the Labour Party put before the people and they obtained a majority of the seats from a minority of the people. I submit they have no right to come to this House and claim to have received a mandate from the people to reform the Legislative Council. Mr. Holmes told us last night that the Legislative Council was practically responsible for the Labour Party having been returned to power and I confirm what he said. While taking part in the recent election campaign, I found that the people in many districts argued in this way, "Yes, look at the legislation; there is nothing red about anything they have done. Their legislation was of a moderate character." Every hon. member knows that when Bills contained anything to the detriment of the workers, it was eliminated in this Chamber and this Chamber proved the best friend the Labour Party had.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Then how can you justify yourself in criticising them?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Will the hon. member have a little patience!

Hon. J. R. Brown: I like these Judases.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: As to the desire for Legislative Council reform, that desire really is for the abolition of this Chamber. Then we should have here the position now existing in Queensland, where the Labour Party are in the minority but have a majority of the seats, without any Legislative Council to check legislation. The strength of this Legislative Council lies in its franchise. If it were put on the exact basis alleged to be desired by the Labour Party, it would serve no more useful purpose than does the Federal Senate, for which everyone has a vote. Here is another quotation from the "Worker" that has a bearing on the desire of the present Government to represent the people. It is from the "Worker," of the 17th December, 1926.

Hon. J. R. Brown: I am glad to hear that you read the "Worker."

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I always read it. I get more ammunition from it than from any other source. The quotation is—

The Labour movement is essentially one of brotherhood.

I hope Mr. Brown will take notice of that statement.

Mr. Collier writes the following letter:—
"Christmas and New Year calls us to renew endeavours in order that the banner of Labour, which is the banner of freedom, may be kept aloft."

We know all about the freedom that was granted in connection with the tearoom strike, and also in connection with the wharf labourers' strike, when police went down with fixed bayonets and ran 64 labourers inside.

"The aim of the Government, in the name of the party I have the honour to lead, has been to emulate the ideals enunciated by that great protagonist of human liberty, Abraham Lincoln, 'Government of the people, by the people, for the people.'"

I say the Government represent a minority of the Western Australian people, and not a majority, and that, therefore, they have no mandate to introduce any legislation. Mr. Collier should be reminded of certain other words enunciated by Abraham Lincoln—

You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all the time.

The Government are fooling the people now. They have gulled the unionists. They have lulled their opponents into the belief that they did not introduce any legislation except what was for the benefit of the whole of the people of Western Australia. We may sum it up that the Government have no claim to represent the people in the Parliament of Western Australia, and that they will have no claim until such time as they are elected by a majority of the people. That is not going to be achieved while the present Assembly boundaries exist. In some circulars I have here, reference is made to the disparity in franchise between the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. I took occasion to-day to look over the metropolitan and metropolitan-suburban rolls, and to look up the statistics of the number of houses and of ratepayers in each district. I find that almost as many electors could be got for this Legislative Council as there are on the Legislative Assembly roll. Taking the total number of ratepayers eligible on

the municipal and road board rolls, and taking the number of freeholders, householders and leaseholders, it will be found that as many voters can be enrolled for the Legislative Council as for the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: That is rubbish.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The hon. member knows that a thousand or more voters could be put on the roll in his district. No doubt when it comes to opposing Mr. Potter, a number will be put on. It is obligatory to enrol for the Assembly, but optional to enrol for the Council. Before concluding I wish to quote a few further illuminating figures relating to the electoral rolls. I find that 25 rolls have 45,110 electors, and that the other 25 rolls have 165,839. And the Labour Party profess to stand for the principle of majority rule! Four seats represent 50,794 electors, or practically 25 per cent. of the total number on all the rolls. Four other seats represent 1,831 electors, not 1 per cent. of the total on the roll. One member represents 17,348 electors, and 13 Labour members represent 14,152.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: And one Labour member represents that number.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Five seats represent 61,414 electors, these seats being Canning, Leederville, Guildford, Claremont and Subiaco. On the other hand, 29 seats represent 58,410 electors, or less than the other five. Mr. Collier, speaking in 1922, said the electoral position was a travesty. I ask hon. members what term would describe the present position of affairs.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is too hot for Mr. Brown. He has gone out.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: It may be interesting to recall the recent contest in the Leederville electorate, when a lady candidate was fortunate enough to secure 711 first preference votes and yet unfortunate enough to lose her deposit. At Menzies, with 134 votes, and at Hannans, with 422 votes, the total of 566 votes, or less than the first preference votes secured by Mrs. Blake, sufficed to return two Government supporters. There is an instance of one person getting 711 votes and losing her deposit, while two members are elected by a total of 566. The total enrolments for the two electorates of Menzies and Hannans aggregate 789 votes. The position may be summarised thus: 17 members hold 33 per cent. of the Assembly seats,

while representing only 10 per cent. of the electors.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is democracy.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Democracy up to date. I just draw the Chief Secretary's attention to the anomalies existing in the various electorates. In conclusion, I would make a further reference to the pamphlet "Labour's Unique Record." That pamphlet can be found by the truckload in industrial districts, though I was surprised to find that many members of this Chamber had never seen a copy. If they had been supplied with copies prior to the election, they would have been able to make a speech on every paragraph, and certainly on every page, of the book. An item to which I desire to refer is on page 43, and is headed "Summary showing the annual value of increased wages granted since 17th April, 1924." Hon. members may some day want to refer to these figures, want to know just exactly the amount of money the Government gave away in order to secure return at the general election. For the Public Works department the amount is £53,445. That bought a few votes.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: In one year?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: These amounts are per annum—

Tramways £9,500, Electricity Supply £2,100, Lunacy Department £1,900, State Hotels £2,000, Police £25,000, Education £42,000; grand total £266,945 per annum.

And then we read in the pamphlet that the wages increases granted during the regime of the Labour Government are not passed on to the public. I do not know what becomes of them, but the pamphlet definitely states they are not passed on to the public. Another item I desire to refer to is the Government's promise of long service leave to the railway men. I have had in my possession since February of 1924 an election card of a Labour candidate, which card states, "Vote for Johnson and long service leave." Now the Government promised that when they came into office they would grant this long service leave. During the three years of the last Parliament, however, nothing was done to give effect to the promise. As members know, immediately after Parliament prorogued it was announced that the long-promised long service leave would be granted. It is to be noted that as late as the 5th August Mr. Barker, the secretary of the State Labour Executive, received

from Mr. Shapcott a statement indicating the qualifying period for long service leave for wage employees. It was not confined, as promised by the Premier, to a period of 10 years, but that period was extended some two or three years. Full particulars are given in the paper I have before me; and it is my intention at any early date, if the Government do not give effect to their promise, to ask for some further information as to how the periods for which the railway men would get their long service leave were arrived at. I should like the Chief Secretary, in replying to the debate, to indicate when the Government intend to give effect to their promise, and in what manner. There are only three ways in which that can be done—by legislation, by regulation through the Commissioner, or by an industrial agreement. As the Government had sat tight for three years, I believe they granted the concession on the eve of election because they felt that otherwise they would not obtain the votes of the railway men. One would like to know what amount of money is estimated to be involved per annum by long service leave, and also the total amount involved. With these few remarks I support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

HON. E. ROSE (South-West) [8.28]: Looking through the Governor's Speech I observe two outstanding features—the proposed financial agreement with the Commonwealth and the development of the agricultural areas of the South-West: and those are the only two subjects I shall touch on to-night. The thanks of the House are due to Mr. Lovekin and Sir William Lathlain for their very able addresses on the financial agreement. They have given every one of us food for thought and study; and when the agreement comes before the Chamber we shall be able to express our views and vote in accordance with them. As regards the arrangement offered by the Prime Minister and accepted by the Premiers of the various States, our Government have gone carefully into all the details, and know better than laymen what is best to be done. Although we may desire to amend the agreement in certain respects, we shall probably find in the long run that the arrangement, broadly speaking, will be adhered to. When we come to consider the huge debt we have to shoulder in Western Australia and throughout the Commonwealth as well, it

cannot be wondered that the Prime Minister has adopted the course outlined, which will have the effect of governing the borrowings of the various States. In June 1923, the public indebtedness throughout Australia was £905,484,946, involving the payment of an annual interest bill of approximately £46,500,000. That is an enormous figure. Three years later the national debt was increased by £108,272,115, making a total indebtedness of £1,013,757,061, with a consequent interest bill of over £51,500,000 per annum. When we come to consider that the population of Australia is under seven millions we commence to realise what a wonderful people we are, seeing that we can shoulder such a heavy financial burden. Truly it is time that the Prime Minister looked into the financial position and put a stop to the rash borrowing that has been going on. If we were to continue at the rate experienced in recent years, it would not be long before the chickens came home to roost. As it is, unless great care is exercised we shall have a financial crash as sure as we are discussing this problem to-night. That crash will be inevitable if reckless borrowing is to continue. It is high time something was done, and I congratulate Mr. Lovekin and Sir William Lathlain upon their able speeches in dealing with this problem. Their efforts will go a long way towards assisting us when we consider the whole question. I will not say any more at this stage, because there are others more competent to deal with it than I claim to be, and we will have the necessary legislation before us during the present session of Parliament. One question I do wish to deal with relates to the development of the South-West. We have heard a lot of adverse criticism regarding the different soils, the different crops, what the land will or will not produce, and so forth. Some hon. members who have discussed the problem know very little about the South-West. If they knew, they would not have spoken in the strain they did.

Hon. A. Burvill: Quite right!

Hon. E. ROSE: The group settlement scheme is one of great importance to Western Australia. The Minister for Lands, during the course of a speech recently, stated that 500 farms were to be abandoned or linked up with others. I shall be very surprised if it is found really necessary for 500 of the holdings to be turned down. If the Government were to go care-

fully into the question, they would probably find that a lot of the farms are too small and that two holdings will have to be thrown into one, or three into two. All the land should not be condemned. However, there is a portion of the Peel Estate that is not suitable for agricultural purposes or for anything else, and, as Mr. Holmes pointed out last night, that country should never have been surveyed for group settlement purposes. When a Royal Commission was appointed some considerable time ago to inquire into the purchase and settlement of the Peel and Bateman Estates, we had an opportunity of going over the whole district. I must take some credit upon myself because I was told by my colleagues on that Commission that I was the only agriculturist among them, so that they would depend upon my views as to what the land was capable of doing. As a result of our inquiries, I am pleased to state that what I told them was agreed to, and our opinions have been proved to be quite correct. I do not know the number of farms to be turned down by the Minister. What concerns me is that he has as his advisers the same officers as did the former Premier and Minister for Lands, Sir James Mitchell. If those advisers have taken all this time to determine which of the groups should be continued and were worth while persisting with, I do not think much of them. They should have found that out long before this. They should not have continued to spend so much money on propositions that they now turn down. When I went over the Peel Estate recently, I was disappointed to note what little development had taken place during the last few years. Instead of the beautiful swamps being cultivated and producing large quantities of supplies, little development of the land was to be seen. If men are to embark upon the dairying industry, they must have a certain proportion of their holdings cleared and cultivated. I congratulate the Minister on his action in appointing an advisory board, comprising three competent men capable of advising the group settlers as to the best methods to be adopted. The Government's action in that direction will go a long way towards removing the discontent that has been manifest in the groups for some time. For the last four or five years we in the South-West have been advocating a move in that direction. We have urged that the appointment of a board of practical men to deal with grievances and so forth on the

spot would be to the advantage of the scheme and would be far preferable and cheaper than the old system whereby the officials in Perth conducted the whole business. The loss of farms in connection with the group settlements will mean a great expense to the Government, but it will also involve losses in connection with the individuals affected. If they are bona fide farmers, they will lose not only their time but their money as well. In these circumstances the Government are wise in their decision to appoint a board to find out just which men are endeavouring to make good and to assist them wherever possible. While the loss is great in one direction it must be remembered that the loss also covers stock, which may be lost altogether or, at any rate, the value depreciated to a great extent. This scheme must be regarded from a national standpoint, for the settlement of the South-West is really a national undertaking. The utmost caution should be exercised in administration and that will be aided by the appointment of the board comprising men of practical experience in South-West conditions. While the dairying industry will be the mainstay of the group settlements, the settlers should be encouraged to produce whatever is considered most suitable for their various blocks. They should be compelled to grow as much of their household requirements as possible, and if they are encouraged to grow fruit trees and to plant grape vines around their homesteads, that, too, will cheapen their cost of living in a few years to come. The dairying industry in this State has made rapid progress and that can be seen in the increase of butter manufactured in the south-western districts. In 1925-26 the butter production represented a record for the dairying industry. In 1926-27 a great many farmers considered there would be a falling off owing to the number of factories established in different parts, and they predicted that a lot of the milk would be sent to Perth. At the end of the financial year which, in our case, ended on the 30th April, 1927, we had turned out 196 tons of butter more than in the previous year, or a total of 502 tons. Yet Mr. Brown said last night that we could not turn out enough butter in the South-West to grease a child's head! I do not know what sort of a child he had in mind. It shows that some hon. members do talk about things they do not understand, and I am afraid Mr. Brown did not understand what he was talking about last night.

It is to be hoped that, for the assistance of the group settlers and farmers in the South-West, it will not be long before a small bacon factory is established. The directors of the South-Western Co-operative Butter Company in Bunbury have that under consideration at the present time. We have already purchased ten acres in the Margaret River district with that object in view in years to come. Factories will be built elsewhere in the meantime and we are going into the question now. I have an appointment to discuss the position with the Minister for Lands in a few days time. Recently he promised the group settlers that he would interview the directors and see whether anything could be done to establish a bacon factory so as to encourage pig raising, which is part and parcel of the dairying industry throughout Australia. A dairy farm is incomplete unless there are a number of pigs on the holding to assist financially and, as they say in Ireland, to "pay the rint." The Government could assist the dairying industry by paying a bonus on the production of butter through the factories. I know we are blocked to a certain extent by the Commonwealth but I understand that by applying to the Federal authorities, permission can be granted to the State Government to pay a bonus for the purpose of assisting the dairying industry. When we take into consideration the thousands and thousands of pounds paid in the Eastern States by way of bonuses, we appreciate the fact that the dairying industry was built up by that system years ago.

Hon. A. Burvill: That is how it got its start.

Hon. E. ROSE: It shows how difficult it is for us the compete with the Eastern States when they have had assistance to fully develop their lands and get their dairies going. I noticed in the newspapers some evidence given in New South Wales by dairy experts in respect of the duty on butter imported from New Zealand. One of the Commissioners asked what price the dairy farmer was getting for his butter. The reply was 1s. 2½d. That meant from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 5½d. for his butter fat. We in Western Australia cannot afford to give more than from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 6½d. That was our average in Bunbury last year. Down there our land is undeveloped, and so everything is costly as compared with the old established farms in the Eastern States. So it will be seen how difficult it is for our farmers to make

a living. If only the Government would assist us in that way, we would develop our country, and our herds would increase until within a very short period we should be exporting butter. A year ago in evidence given before the Disabilities Commission sitting in Bunbury it was shown what our farmers were suffering from through the State having joined Federation. So far we have got nothing whatever out of the £500,000 granted to Western Australia through the Disabilities Commission. I maintain that our dairy farmers in the South-West should get a portion of that, because their disabilities are just as great as are those to be found on the goldfields. That will be seen when we consider the duty we have to pay on all our utensils, implements and machinery. It retards the development of the country very greatly. The Government should take that into consideration and assist the dairy farmers more than they have done, by paying a bonus on the production of butter. We do not want any money to be directly paid out, but we do want assistance to encourage the farmers to develop their land. The old farmers of the South-West have had no assistance whatever. The new farmers are beginning to get cheap money, but the old farmers have to pay to the banks 7 per cent. and 8 per cent. interest.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: It is their personality that has made them successful.

Hon. E. ROSE: There is no doubt about that. When we consider the cost of development down there, we realise that the old settlers have done wonders. The disabilities grant has not all been spent, and I think a little of it should be devoted to assisting the settlers of the South-West in developing their country. A lot of that country is not suitable for dairy farming, being altogether too good and too rich. It is better for fruit growing, for with ten acres of it an orchardist can do remarkably well. For proof of that one has only to see what is being done in the Bridgetown district. At Manjimup and other parts there is very rich soil. The Government would be wise in establishing experimental farms in those centres. We have no experimental farms in the South-West at all, although in the wheat belt there are experimental farms for demonstrating the best wheats to sow, and how to get the best results. I want to see the same thing done in the South-West, the great South-West that is going to carry

thousands and thousands of our population. The farmers there have no means of going to see what the Government are doing. Instead they have to conduct their own experiments. If we had an experimental farm at Manjimup, another say at the Margaret, and one at this end—

Hon. A. Burvill: And one at Albany.

Hon. E. ROSE: We already have one at Denmark. Then we could have those farms used as depots for stock turned off the group settlers' farms. Those settlers to-day are paying 2s. per head per week in grazing fees. Of course the Government are finding the money, but it means great expense for the settlers who are endeavouring to make a living. The Government have not given the group settlers sufficient latitude, have not allowed them to use their own discretion. On an experimental farm in the South-West, tobacco growing could well be tried. Experiments in tobacco growing by one or two people in and around Manjimup have been quite successful. If the Government in those experimental farms would try tobacco growing and the production of various root crops for the dairy farm, it would help to speed up the development of the South-West and would give the farmers an indication of what is most suitable for that district. Every man that can possibly do so should look over the fence and see what his neighbour is doing on the other side. Of course it means travel, but by travelling one gains a lot of information, and it is an education to anybody, whether farmer or business man, to see what is being done elsewhere. The settlers of the South-West would travel 40 or 50 miles to see what was being done on an experimental farm. That is why I advocate experimental farms for the South-West. In the past a lot of money has been thrown away in purchasing stock and then having to take them off the farm because there is not sufficient feed for them, and pay 2s. per head per week in grazing fees on that account. Also in the South-West we require a lot of scientific research work. This is going on in the eastern districts and other parts of Australia, and it is absolutely necessary that we should have it in the South-West, which is a very big country with a wide variety of soils. Unless the Government assist us in this respect, it will be a long time before we overcome those difficulties and determine what is required.

Hon. A. Burvill : Do you not think a special officer should be set apart for that work in the South-West?

Hon. E. ROSE: Yes, and it would be necessary to have a man who understood the South-West. It would be of no use sending down from Perth or from the wheat belt an officer who did not understand the conditions of the South-West. That is one method I advise the Government to adopt, so that this research work can be carried on for the benefit of the South-West. I am pleased to see that the Government are again going to introduce a Closer Settlement Bill. I have said times out of number that between Perth and Busselton there are hundreds of thousands of acres of first-class land lying idle alongside the railway. It is on such land that group settlement could be most profitably established. That land adjoining our railways should be developed. There are hundreds of thousands of acres of it. I view with pleasure the announcement in the Governor's Speech that we shall have a closer settlement Bill this session. The opposition in this House has been the means of such a Bill being turned down on three different occasions. I hope that this session members will take into consideration the vast areas of land being held unutilised.

Hon. V. Hamersley: When was the Closer Settlement Bill thrown out in this House?

Hon. E. ROSE: On three different occasions. I hope that when next the Bill is introduced, even if it is not adopted for the whole of the State, members will agree to apply it to the South-West division, where large areas suitable for closer settlement are available. A great many people say the South-West is not worth spending so much money upon. However, in 1914-15 immense numbers of stock were sent down the South-West in order to save them from destruction. Thousands and thousands of sheep from Geraldton and other districts were drafted to the South-West at the time of the drought, and were kept there for months. Experts were surprised to see the number of sheep the South-West could carry. Yet people in the eastern districts say that country is not worth spending money upon. The Closer Settlement Bill is absolutely necessary to a comprehensive drainage scheme, and to have the country laid out in blocks of from 100 to 150 acres. On land such as we have lying unutilised

in the South-West, group settlement would be entirely profitable. But we have in winter too much water, and so we have to take it off by drains; while against the summer, when it is dry, we require the creeks dammed up so that we can irrigate. In the Harvey settlement there are 130 or 140 settlers on some 4,000 acres, the size of many a wheat farm in the eastern district. There are 200 children attending the school there—200 children all from 4,000 acres. And what is being done at Harvey can be done at a dozen or twenty places in the South-West, where we could have group settlements. There is not a more prosperous little township in Western Australia than Harvey. To see the quantity of milk and cream that comes from there every day would surprise hon. members. Yet we hear croakers talking about the poor land in the South-West. We have very little poor land there. If in time to come dry seasons appear in the eastern districts, or the price of wheat falls, we shall be flourishing in the South-West. We are bound to have a huge population there. We have only to look at Harvey to see what lies before us. At Roelands too, and other places, we shall have large groups of people settled, and the population will be thriving. The sooner this Bill for closer settlement is carried, giving the Government the power they have been asking for some time, the sooner will that land be developed and our railways be carrying freights both ways.

Hon. V. Hamersley: So long as the land owners have the right of appeal.

Hon. E. ROSE: The older settlers have not received the assistance they might have had. I hope the Government will give them the assistance in the way of drainage and irrigation that may be necessary. It would pay the Government much better to do this than to extend our railways for closer settlement. Let us have the land alongside existing railways settled to its full capacity. We are paying high freights to-day because there is not sufficient custom along the existing railways. No railways in the State are paying better than those in the South-West. If we could get the land closely settled right through, our freights could be reduced with great advantage to the country. We know what some visitors from the Eastern States and elsewhere have to say about this land. A week or so ago a gentleman from Sydney, Mr. R. T. McKay, of the Harbour Trust there, paid a visit to the

South-West, and made the following statement to the Press. The article is headed "Valuable Land," "Attractive coastal areas" and reads—

"You have rich agricultural land in the South-West, which, when the timber is cleared, will be ideal for dairying. I know of what I am speaking, because I have been a dairy farmer in New South Wales. Further, I think your coastal areas, such as those around Bunbury, with draining, would make the class of land we have on the MacLeay, Richmond, Clarence and Tweed Rivers, which, undrained, was worth 30s. an acre, a few years ago, and is now worth £100 an acre."

Such is the considered opinion of Mr. R. T. McKay, one of the Sydney Harbour Trust Commissioners, after a visit to Bunbury and the timber country around Pemberton. The karri country carried very rich soil, he said; the rainfall was assured, and the conditions were ideal for dairying. "As for the coastal areas around about Bunbury," he continued, "I think, with a proper system of drainage, it can carry very much more than at present. To-day the ground is saturated and you cannot grow anything alongside the rivers. In New South Wales large areas of swamp lands on all the northern rivers, which were absolutely worthless, have been made to produce wonderfully. In many places this land is now worth from £50 to £100 an acre. I know some of it, near Murwillumbah, on the Tweed River, which could have been got for 15s. to 30s. an acre, which is now under sugar cane, and worth £100 an acre." Mr. McKay added that he had been through the wheat belt on a previous occasion, and knew what it could produce. He had inspected with interest the big timber around Pemberton and its handling until it went aboard ships at Bunbury.

This is the opinion of Mr. McKay after visiting Bunbury and the country around Pemberton. This class of land continues right through to Albany. Most valuable swamps exist there, and only require to be drained to grow fodder for dairying, or to be used for intense culture all the year round. At present we are growing three potato crops a year, and our yield per acre is equal to that of the Eastern States. The roads in the South-West are in a deplorable state. How much money has been spent on the roads between Busselton and Bunbury I do not know. About 100 men were sent down there in January or February. Last week I think 64 chains of road had been opened for traffic, and a few miles of road had been cleared. I do not know what the cost was. The work should be done by contract under strict supervision. The road boards have to put up more money than they can afford towards the building of

these roads and their subsequent maintenance. These works should all be carried out by contract, so that the public might know exactly what the cost is per mile. I know a contractor down there who tendered for some of the works. He was the lowest tenderer, but the department would not give him the contract. They said they could do the work cheaper. I do not know how the tenders are dealt with, whether they are sent to the Works Department or the Main Roads Board. I understood that the board were to be outside all political influence, and that the chairman was to have full control. The Public Works Department ought to have nothing to do with it except to sanction the payment of the money. If the Public Works Department wish they can put in tenders, but they should not know what the other tenders are. It seems to me that the other tenders are seen by the department, and that a lower tender is put in by them. I do not know whether they can do the work for the price. Some of our roads are not being made with proper foundations. These should be very strong in order to withstand the traffic. I am inclined to think that in a few years time, owing to the traffic on some of these roads, they will be so badly cut about that it will take a lot of money to repair them. They will also be expensive to maintain. It is difficult to say what the cost will be because they have not been in use very long. In some places it is almost impossible for the farmers to reach the railway stations with their produce. They cannot go in for intense culture and perishable products unless they can transport everything to the nearest railway station. It is absolutely necessary that the roads should be put in order so that the farmers may get their produce to market. If they cannot do that, God help them. We have often been promised harbour alterations and improvements. These promises have been made by previous Governments for many years. Surveys have been made and soundings have been taken. Practically every estuary and bay in the South-West has been sounded. Especially before election time we usually hear a lot about what is going to be done. Had there been a decent harbour at Bunbury we should have been able to export much more produce than we have done. As it is, a great deal of produce is sent 120 miles to

Fremantle. Owing to the frequent delays in the trains and the manner in which the trains are run, fruit and other produce may be severely bruised by the time it reaches the ship's side. If it were shipped from Bunbury it would reach there in good condition. The natural ports should be opened up. I believe in decentralisation. The nearest ports should get the produce of the country that is at the back of them. I am glad that Geraldton is to have a decent port; I voted for the expenditure of money there. Every port should be provided with decent facilities. The volume of trade at Bunbury should be recognised by the Government, and a determined effort should be made to provide that port with proper facilities. Many losses occur owing to the primitive methods by which goods have to be handled. There is no shelter for our wheat. This year we shipped over one million bags of wheat from Bunbury and grain is still being sent away.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Is there no cover for it there?

Hon. E. ROSE: No. Some of the trucks arrive without any covering. The stacks are covered with iron, and the sides are of hessian. When the weather is rough the covering is disturbed and the rain gets into the wheat, with the result that loss occurs. The capital cost of improvements would not be very great. Good sheds should be provided for the housing of the wheat. It is no good thinking of developing the harbour unless it is properly equipped for the trade. At Bunbury there are ten berths at the jetty where vessels may be loaded. The depth varies from 16ft. to 27ft. 6in. Of these 10 berths, six are practically useless because of the lack of water beneath the ships. Many big steamers come to that port, but only four of the berths can be utilised with safety.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Is there a silting up?

Hon. E. ROSE: Yes. When four big steamers are alongside the jetty the rest of the water available is too shallow to accommodate any more. There are two spoon dredges which take away a ton or two of silt a day, but they cannot do more than they are doing. We require different accommodation from what we have. The average steamer calling for timber and coal requires about 27ft. of water in order to load at the jetty. The ships that are en-

gaged in wheat loading also require a considerable depth of water. Some of the boats that call are 8,000 to 9,000 tons, and they require a good deal of water. A week or two ago I saw boats coming in, but the jetty was so packed that one steamer had to wait in the bay for eight or 10 days before she could come alongside. It is an expensive matter for a boat to be hung up in this way owing to the shallow water. This must add to the cost of the wheat or the timber, whichever happens to be going away. I think Mr. Mann went fully into this question. I saw this myself. I wondered why it was, and I went down to the jetty to make inquiries. I found that the ship could not come alongside because of the lack of water. Not only does Bunbury handle wheat, timber and coal, but it could handle quantities of fruit, which at present are sent to Fremantle owing to the fact that boats are unable to call at Bunbury. The producer is forced to rail his products to Fremantle or to some other port where it will be possible to get better accommodation. The Government should pay proper attention to the ports and provide facilities that are required, in order to obviate delays. Government after Government have promised to have the matter attended to, but so far nothing has been done. I hope the present Government will do something to give us the facilities that are so badly needed. I am satisfied that the Government recognise the great future that lies ahead of the South-West. It has given evidence of that recognition by embarking on a scheme of up-to-date marshalling railway yards, providing up-to-date locomotive round houses and sheds. The work is under construction and I congratulate the Government on carrying it out for the reason that it was many years overdue. Unless we have the shipping there what is the use of going to that huge expenditure? True, the railway facilities were quite obsolete and the improvements should have been carried out years ago, but at the same time attention must be turned towards the harbour. I don't think there is anything more that I need say.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about the power scheme?

Hon. E. ROSE: I regret that that has not been carried on. Many members in this House were opposed to it when the measure came along last year. I trust that negotiations will be continued so that the scheme will be finalised.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What is the cause of the delay?

Hon. E. ROSE: There is a difference between the municipalities and the Government. I understand that the Amalgamated Collieries require the contract to supply the whole of the small coal needed by the scheme for a period of something like 12 years at a fixed price.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They want to create a monopoly.

Hon. E. ROSE: Yes. They want the contract to continue for 12 years and to supply as well, the railways and the power house in Perth. That attitude is resented by the Premier and the municipal councils concerned. I do not blame the Premier. I think he is quite right in refusing to enter into such a contract with the Amalgamated Collieries, simply because they have the machinery and are providing power at the present time at Collie. Personally I am of opinion that the Government would be well advised to establish a scheme themselves and charge the different municipalities for the power they might require.

Hon. A. Burvill: Where would they get their coal?

Hon. E. ROSE: They could buy that in the cheapest local market. A power scheme such as is proposed in the South-West will greatly assist the secondary industries. There are very few in existence at the present time but if cheap power were available it would be the means of establishing quite a number. Farmers likewise would make use of current much more than they are doing now. We are looking forward to the establishment of fertiliser works at Picton, but a commencement cannot be made with them until the company are assured of cheap power with which to work the plant. Cheap power will revolutionise the position in the South-West in regard to industries, and I have in mind two particularly, the flour mills and the wood works. The latter has offered to take, I think it is 200,000 units for wood-planing, but of course it will be some time before that quantity of current can be supplied. Therefore, if the municipalities cannot agree, the Government should embark on a scheme without delay. Reverting back to the dairying industry, a "West Australian" reporter the other day interviewed me with reference to the Paterson butter scheme, which was designed to assist dairy farmers in the Eastern States. The reporter's desire was to ascer-

tain my views on the subject of its application to Western Australia. The effect of the scheme is to make a levy of a penny or 1½d. on butter produced by the factories. My reply was that I was opposed to the introduction of the scheme in Western Australia at the present time, and I gave as my reasons that I considered the State was still in its infancy in regard to the manufacture of butter, that we were not exporting any, and that whilst we were benefiting by the application of the scheme to the Eastern States, I did not consider it should be introduced here just yet. I appreciated the fact that making the levy enabled the payment of a bonus of 3d. a lb. on all butter exported from Australia, and that that helped to increase the amount we receive here for our butter. Of course it put up the price of butter to that extent. We are still in our infancy regarding butter production and on that account I did not consider it would assist to have the levy imposed here. I do not think there is anything more that I need say. I congratulate the Government on the action they have taken with regard to settlement in the South-West and on the proposal to appoint an advisory board to control group settlement.

HON. G. A. KEMPTON (Central) [9.25]: It is not my intention to keep the House very long. In the first place I wish to congratulate my old friend Mr. Drew on being re-elected Leader of the House, and also Mr. Hickey on again being appointed Honorary Minister. I would also like to sympathise with you, Mr. President, for having to listen to so many speeches dealing with the wants of the various provinces. Fortunately, in some parts of Western Australia there are some sturdy independents who do not bring forward their requirements to any extent. One of those places is Geraldton.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You have four Ministers.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: There are wants at Geraldton, and there are reasons why that district should receive attention. The district, however, is to a certain extent independent and the electors ask for very little. Mr. Rose, when speaking, mentioned that at Bunbury harbour there were 10 berths and that they were sure of only four. At Geraldton we are lucky if we can secure one.

Hon. E. Rose: You have the shipping.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: There are one or two matters to which I would like to refer in connection with the Middle North and North-West. Mr. Holmes dealt very ably, as he usually does, with the financial position. Several other members did likewise. So far as I was concerned, I felt more inclined to sit at the feet of Gamaliel rather than speak. However, it is necessary that I should refer to one or two matters. Mr. Holmes said that we should have no more railways built because we could not afford them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I said nothing of the kind.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: We must have more railways because we cannot afford to be without them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What I said was that we could only build the railways that the Loan Council would permit us to build.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I am sure that Western Australia can never get anywhere unless more railways are built in the back areas. Just before the commencement of the session I travelled around the back parts of the Middle North to get first hand knowledge in connection with the land that can be opened up for settlement. In 1924 the Advisory Board went through that country and found that there were quite half a million acres of first, second and third class. A great deal of it was first class. A railway was asked for but we had no definite reply as to why it was not built. Time after time letters were sent down in connection with the matter, more particularly from the Victoria and Murchison District Federation of Local Authorities and Industries, a body that meets regularly in Geraldton, three times a year. The delegates come from the Murchison and Victoria districts, and all the road boards throughout those two big districts. This is a letter that was received in reply to one sent by our secretary to the Minister for Works:—

Adverting to your letter of the 5th June, wherein you state you conveyed to the Minister for Railways the opinion of the conference that the Yuna-Mullewa railway extension should be extended to Bindu Well as soon as possible, I am now directed by the Minister for Works to inform you that this has not yet been authorised and that there are still many railways that have been authorised and not yet commenced. He is unable to give you any information as to

when serious consideration can be given to this proposal. As a matter of fact the number of railways under construction makes it necessary to provide a large sum of money on the Loan Estimates, and of course you are aware there is a limit to the amount that can be made available for this and other works.

Apparently there is no reason why that line should not be built. Only last session authorisation was given for certain new lines. Yet in a district like this where the settlers get the biggest average for wheat and grow such a lot of it and where they have great hardships to undergo, they cannot get a railway. Considering the network of railways in the rest of the wheat belt, I think we have been absolutely neglected in that respect. I do not blame the members in the South-West for getting as many railways as they can, provided the land is sufficiently good.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Minister is making a note of your request.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why not be independent and build a line of your own?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: We have been independent and unlike the members for some districts, particularly the metropolitan area, have refrained from bothering the Government. Therefore, we do not get our just dues. As regards this railway, we have not had our just dues.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I quite admit that, but at the same time be independent.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I wish the hon. member would practise that in the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You would favour a railway from Yuna to Mullewa?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Certainly. In 1926 the area under wheat in the Victoria district was 440,299 acres, which gave a return of 5,744,414 bushels, an average of 13 bushels to the acre. In 1927 the acreage was 552,630, the yield 7,196,883 and the average 13.5 bushels. That shows how the district is going ahead.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It will not be long before it is producing 10,000,000 bushels.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: That is true. If we had a railway running from Binnu, through the areas such as Dartmoor and Balla to Bindu Well, the yield of the Victoria district would be doubled in a few years. The Binnu people expect in the year after next to place on the siding 100,000 bags of wheat.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Where is Binnu?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: It is a new area above Northampton. So those new areas are increasing. Unless facilities are provided, however, the conditions under which the settlers are working will render it almost impossible for them to make headway.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do not the Ministers ever go up there?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Yes.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: They are going up there next week.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I admit that this railway proposal was put before the previous Government, but I think the present Government might have made a move to provide the necessary facilities. The settlers are proceeding with the work of clearing their holdings and some of them have 300 acres under crop and are 25 miles from a railway. There are thousands of acres of first-class land in that district. I have a newspaper cutting that I should like to read for the benefit of members representing the south-western part of the State. It reads—

Wheat farming in Western Australia is certainly making gigantic strides, and the rapid increase in yield during the last two years has received considerable publicity. But the magnitude of the progress being made even up to date is rather too great for many to grasp. However, with a yield of the golden grain totalling about 31,000,000 bushels last harvest, with an immediate objective of 50,000,000 bushels (within two more seasons at the outside), and a 100,000,000 bushel objective within ten years, it goes without saying that our wheat farmers are doing a colossal work. Still, outside the industry itself it is remarkable how few people in the State have any real conception of the rapid strides being made by individual wheat farmers, and the efforts many of them are putting into this great national enterprise. In 1916 Mr. F. W. Liebe grew his first wheat crop of a few hundred acres near Wubin, on the Wongan Hills-Mullewa line. Year by year his area of cropping increased until some two years ago he had approximately 5,000 acres under wheat. Conceiving the idea of becoming the biggest wheat grower, not only in Western Australia, but in all Australia, he then secured over 30,000 acres of the Waddi Waddi forest, lying between Perenjori and Carnamah and promptly commenced clearing on a colossal scale, some 130 clearers being employed. Sufficient land being cleared, last season saw the area cropped advance to over 7,000 acres. That achievement would be sufficient to satisfy most men, and incidentally it would be quite as much as most of them could manage. But Mr. Liebe is a man who has a broadness of vision on a par with the magnitude of the State he is doing so much to develop, for after last harvest he set himself the giant task of securing a world's record in the acreage of wheat grown by any

farmer. That he is not losing any time in achieving his ambition is fully reflected in the fact that he now has over 11,000 acres in crop, approximately half each on his Wubin and Waddi properties, most of which he estimates will go 10 bags to the acre if the season continues good, his objective being 100,000 bags.

If we receive the facilities that we desire and know we should have in the Dartmoor, Balla and Bindu areas there are several farmers who will have large areas under crop. Following his example, four young fellows went out and started clearing, and they will be getting huge areas under crop provided they are given the facilities necessary to build up that splendid country. The Main Roads Board have done good work in the outback districts, and we cannot thank them too much for the courtesy we have received at their hands. We want them to devote every penny they can find to the country roads rather than spend the money on roads such as that from Perth to Armadale. Members representing the South-West will agree with me in that. I know that good roads are required around the metropolitan area, but if Western Australia is to advance it is absolutely necessary that good roads should be provided in the outback areas. Western Australia is so great and so many roads are needed that only a mile or two can be constructed at a time, and it takes a few years to make a showing in any district. Then with the heavy cartage of wheat the new roads suffer and it becomes almost necessary to start the work all over again. If we had a system of railways serving those areas they would go ahead by leaps and bounds, and instead of 30,000,000 bushels being the output for Western Australia, it would be the output of the Victoria district alone. I ask the Chief Secretary to endeavour to induce the Government to take this matter into consideration. I hope they will send the Railway Advisory Board to those areas again to determine whether it is possible to give the settlers the facilities of which they stand in such great need. I should like an early date to be arranged for a party of Parliamentarians to tour that district, so that when proposals for a railway are brought before the House, members will understand the position.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They will find a bigger percentage of good land per square mile in that area than there is in any other part of the State.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I agree with that. The crops up there are looking as well as any crops in the State. In many instances after the trees have been cut down and burnt off the wheat has been drilled into the ground without any ploughing at all. That, of course, has the effect of keeping the average down. If the land were cultivated and treated as other land is, the average would be much greater, but the settlers are suffering because they must get in as much crop as possible, and they are endeavouring to be independent, as Mr. Nicholson has advised them to be, and not to approach the Government too often with requests for facilities.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What is the rainfall of the district?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: The average for Victoria district is over 17 inches. Dartmoor has had $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches so far this year. Apparently the rainfall is good. Last year the first man who put in a crop in the district had a magnificent return of something like 24 bushels to the acre.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How far is Dartmoor from Yuna?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Roughly 25 miles. A number of settlers have gone 25 miles beyond the rabbit-proof fence and taken up land there. That is equal to any wheat land not only in the State but in Australia.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If the Government had spent up there the six millions expended in the South-West, you would have seen something for the money, would you not?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Yes. When going through there the other day I saw Mr. Edwards, a man of 75 years. Five years ago he made a farm and after getting it into good order handed it to his son, who had just become of age. He went on to another block of new country, cleared it, got it into good order, and handed it to his son-in-law, a Perth man who thought he could do better in the country. Eighteen months later he took up another block of a couple of thousand acres which he has had cleared, and by his own work he has put in 600 acres of crop, which is as good as any crop to be found in the State. In connection with Geraldton itself there is one thing I would like to impress on the Chief Secretary—that he induce Cabinet to force ahead the finishing of the har-

bour. In that connection we are having a great deal of trouble. I know the difficulties which the engineers encounter in constructing the harbour, but we want the Government to force the work ahead, so that at the earliest possible date ships may be able to get in there. The "Koolinda," coming down from the North, on a day when the sea was calm and the sky was blue, came alongside the Geraldton jetty and broke three or four of the biggest springs that the port could supply. She had to lie out for a day and a half before she could come into her berth and discharge her cargo. That is an impossible position for a port which this year has exported a million bags of wheat. Therefore we want the Government to push the harbour work ahead as speedily as possible, so that we may have one or two berths available for next season, if practicable—I do not suppose it is practicable. I am sure that the Chief Secretary, knowing Geraldton as he does, realises the difficulties we have to face.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is it a fact that a thousand tons of stone were lost in that big storm?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: No. The trouble was that when the storm came along, it washed around and a good deal of sand was thrown back into the sea. That was nobody's fault: it was purely an act of God.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is it likely to occur again if there is another storm?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: It can only occur until such time as the harbour is built with cement in the same way as Fremantle harbour. Then Geraldton harbour will be perfectly all right, and in fact one of the best harbours in the State.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: How much would it cost?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: The cost will be about £500,000 or £600,000, but when the work is finished Geraldton harbour will be able to swing a P. & O. steamer. Certainly it is not likely to silt up, because there is no river running into it—which is one of the big troubles at Bunbury. Now I wish to say a few words on the North-West. I am glad Mr. Miles is present, because when the question came up last session that hon. member said Western Australia was being judged by the Commonwealth from the way in which we were developing our North-West. I then replied that we were judging the Commonwealth

by the way they were developing the Northern Territory which they had taken over from South Australia. I was hoping that some members would go into the matter in their speeches on the Address-in-reply. That debate roams over a wide field, but apparently the question of the North-West escaped notice. I have a few points to submit. When I made that reply to Mr. Miles, I had not any special figures; but I have looked them up during the last few days and find they are most interesting. They show how wonderfully the Commonwealth have developed the Northern Territory. Assuredly they are an eye-opener. The Commonwealth paid South Australia a very large sum of money when taking over the Northern Territory. The Commonwealth assumed responsibility for the whole of the debt on the Northern Territory. That is about all they are expected to do, so far as we are concerned, in regard to the North-West. As regards the Northern Territory, the Commonwealth also agreed to build or continue the North-South railway, which probably will cost many millions of money. I may quote from the Northern Territory Acceptance Act—

(1) The Commonwealth in consideration of the surrender of the Northern Territory and property of the State therein and the grant of the rights hereinafter mentioned to acquire and to construct railways in South Australia proper shall—

(a) Be responsible for the indebtedness of the State in respect of the Northern Territory as from the date of acceptance of such surrender and shall relieve the State from the said indebtedness in the following manner:

I. By annually reimbursing the State the amount of the annual interest paid by it in connection with the loans in respect of the Northern Territory; by paying annually into a Commonwealth Sinking Fund the amounts the State has undertaken to pay into such a fund in connection with the said loans; and by paying and redeeming at or before maturity the said loans.

II. By paying the amount of the deficit (or advance account) in respect of the Northern Territory to the said State in such manner as may be agreed upon. If the amount cannot be agreed upon it shall be determined by arbitration.

(b) Construct or cause to be constructed a railway line from Port Darwin southwards to a point on the northern boundary of South Australia proper (which railway with the railway from

a point on the Port Augusta railway to connect therewith is hereinafter referred to as The Transcontinental Railway).

(c) At the time of such surrender acquire from the State at the price and on the terms hereinafter mentioned the Port Augusta Railway including the lands now used for and reserved for such railway, together with all stations and other buildings, sidings, wharfs, and other accessories used in connection with the working of the said railway except the railway carriages, trucks, and other movable plant and rolling-stock.

(d) Construct or cause to be constructed as part of the Transcontinental Railway a railway from a point on the Port Augusta Railway to connect with the other part of the Transcontinental Railway at a point on the northern boundary of South Australia proper.

(e) Pay the price of the said Port Augusta Railway by becoming responsible on the date of the sale and transfer thereof to the Commonwealth for the amount of the loans raised by the State for the purpose of constructing the said railway and used therefor and by annually reimbursing the State the interest payable thereon and by paying annually into a Commonwealth Sinking Fund the amounts the State has undertaken to pay into such a fund in connection with the said loans until the said loans are paid and redeemed by the Commonwealth as or before they become due.

The Commonwealth propose to take over the North-West of Western Australia in order to show how wonderfully they can develop it, and also because it is impossible to protect Australia from outsiders unless there is population in this area. The same consideration applies to the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory is not nearly so valuable as our North-West, for many reasons. One reason is that it does not possess fine pastoral areas nor the many other advantageous conditions to be found in our North-West. However, if the Commonwealth could develop the North-West so that we could get some population there, it would be a reason for Western Australia's handing it over. Personally I am absolutely against anything of the kind. After securing the Northern Territory, the Commonwealth proceeded to develop it, with the following results:—In 1921 the population was 3,734, in 1922 it was 3,551, in 1923 it was 3,555, in 1924 it was 3,597, in 1925 it was 3,656. The net result is that between 1921 and 1925 the population decreased by 78. That

is populating the Northern Territory! The highest population figure of the Northern Territory was in 1888, when it had 7,523 people.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What have we done in our North during the same period?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I am referring to the boast of the Commonwealth that they could and would populate the North-West. We can only judge them by the way they have succeeded in the Northern Territory.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Our North-West population has gone down from 20,000 to 6,000.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: If the Commonwealth Government are so very anxious to develop our North-West, who should develop it—the people at Canberra, or the people in Perth?

Hon. G. W. Miles: The people of the North-West.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Do they want to go over?

Hon. G. W. Miles: Yes, under certain conditions.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I now quote from an article dealing with North-West problems—

Mr. G. F. Egan, editor of the "Northern Times" of Carnarvon, has written us a very interesting letter dealing with matters of general importance, both from a State and a Commonwealth point of view. A keen observer, and a man who has travelled much, most of his comments carry the hallmark of considered judgment and are well worth the careful perusal of thinking men, including legislators, in other parts of the State.

After describing the trip through the Gascoyne, Ashburton, and Roebourne districts, wherein the dry conditions, since fortunately relieved by good rains, are graphically described, Mr. Egan states:—"During the recent elections there was not a great deal made by candidates in regard to the proposed taking over of portion of the North-West by the Federal Government. The public of the North-West are generally apathetic in this connection, if we except, perhaps, those of Broome. It is rather extraordinary that there is so little interest taken in a matter of such vital importance to this huge part of the State, but the centres of population are so far apart, and the population generally so scattered, that it is difficult to arrange for any definite co-operation by the electors."

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is only one man's opinion, and the man resides in the southern part of the North.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: Another highly significant point is that the Labour candidates at the last election in the North advocated that Western Australia should

retain the North-West. The anti-Labour candidates suggested that it should be handed over to the Commonwealth. The Labour candidates were returned. What does that prove? It certainly goes to show that the people of the North are more inclined to stay with Western Australia than to go over to the Commonwealth.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Collier Government were in favour of handing the North-West over, and the North-West returned Government candidates.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: The following are the figures relating to Northern Territory migration—

	Immigration.	Emigration.
1921	516	770
1922	406	599
1923	438	468
1924	496	467
1925	567	511
	<u>2,423</u>	<u>2,816</u>

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are the nationalities given?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: They are whites; not black or brown or brindle.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you know that the population of our North-West has gone down from 20,000 to 6,000?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: As regards live stock in the Northern Territory, the following are the figures relating to cattle:—1910, 513,383; 1915, 483,961; 1921, 568,031; 1922, 760,766; 1923, 843,718; 1924, 855,285. The cattle figures certainly show increases, but the position is very different as to sheep. In 1910 the North-West had 57,240 sheep; in 1915, 57,827; in 1921, 6,349; in 1922, 6,161; in 1923, 4,728; and in 1924, 6,914. These latter figures indicate a tremendous drop under Commonwealth administration. Certainly the Federal administration of the Northern Territory have done well in one direction. There has been a tremendous increase in goats! Dealing with mining I do not wish to blame the Commonwealth Government because not so much gold or other minerals has been recovered, but the statistics prove that they have not gone in for a proper system of development. From 1869 to 1880 the value of the gold produced in the Northern Territory totalled £79,022. In 1881 alone the value of the gold produced was £111,945, whereas for the year 1921-22 the value of gold produced had dropped to

£540. The production of gold, tin, wolfram and copper from 1919 to 1925 is shown in the following table:—

Year.	Gold.	Tin Ore.	Wolfram.	Copper.
	£	£	£	£
1919-20 ...	5,282	27,610	45,646	780
1920-21 ...	1,299	7,793	9,752	...
1921-22 ...	540	5,891	560	798
1922-23 ...	743	13,887	18	30
1923-24 ...	3,270	12,855	...	239
1924-25 ...	1,939	15,966	...	15
	Less.	Less.	Less.	Less.
After 5 yrs	3,343	11,644	45,645	765

It will thus be seen that decidedly less was produced during 1924-25 than was produced in 1919-20.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The same argument applies to gold and other minerals in Western Australia.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I am endeavouring to show what the Commonwealth Government have done in the Northern Territory since they took over that area.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Were we not told that statistics are of no value?

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: As a lawyer, the hon. member is in a position to say whether they are of value or not. The statistics, however, show that there was a distinct increase in the value of mica produced in the Northern Territory and a slight increase in the value of silver. If we take the total of all these minerals we find that the value in 1919-20 was £80,101 and the value of the gold and minerals recovered dwindled down until in 1924-25, the value of the products was £21,715, showing that the production for 1924-25 was £58,386 less than in 1919-20.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You do not take into consideration the supply and demand for those minerals.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: As to the financial aspect of the Northern Territory affairs, a deficit of £150,487 is shown for 1924-25. It would be wrong in the circumstances for us to hand over one foot of the North-West of Western Australia to the Commonwealth Government if that is the way the Federal authorities develop the territory that they take over.

Hon. V. Hamersley: They had to close up the meat works there.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: There is one other small matter that I desire to men-

tion. I would draw the attention of the Chief Secretary to the necessity for a railway bridge at Mullewa. I do not desire to develop into a roads and bridges man, but this is an absolutely important work. The position at Mullewa reminds me of a young lady who asked her fiancée to spend the evening at her house. He accepted the invitation and was asked to sing. When he had concluded the young lady asked her father, "What do you think of his execution?" The father replied, "I think it is long overdue." So it is with this bridge. We have had several serious accidents. A former Government built a station that was on the wrong side of the line. They laid many lines and built many sheds between the station and the town. The result has been that there are deep pits and other obstacles that have to be crossed, and when people arrive there in the dark, it is a serious matter. It is time that attention was given to this question and the present state of affairs remedied.

HON. H. J. YELLAND (East) [10.8] : I do not intend to delay the House at any great length, nor do I desire to deal with any parochial matters. There are a few subjects of State-wide concern that have not been dwelt upon by other members and it is to those questions that I will devote attention. I wish to join with other hon. members in expressing my appreciation of the return of Mr. Drew to his position as Leader of the House. We recognise in him a gentleman we can look up to, a man who is ever ready to assist in any way he can. The visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York to Western Australia was one of the events of the year. It was of great importance, as it afforded an opportunity to the people of this State to demonstrate their loyalty to the Crown and it was one means of still further uniting us with the Motherland. Naturally such visits do a great deal to knit together and still further consolidate the British Empire. There are many matters in connection with the Governor's Speech with which I cannot see eye to eye. The first to which I will refer is contained in the second paragraph which reads:

Early in the year the Hon. W. C. Angwin left for London to succeed Sir Hal Colebatch as Agent General for Western Australia. The retiring Agent General's term of office was marked by the most faithful and efficient service to the State.

I am reminded of an instance in which a person was appointed to the position of manager of a foundry. When he took over the position he went to the man who was on wood work and said he would transfer him to the iron side of the business. The blacksmith was put on to the wheelwright's work and the wheelwright was sent to the paintshop. Yet the manager expected to make a success of the business! The Government have adopted a somewhat similar attitude. At this end Mr. Angwin was esteemed by the people as a whole. We appreciated his work and respected him in every way. The same may be said of Sir Hal Colebatch in the Old Country, yet it has pleased the Government to make an alteration. In my opinion both our representation in London and the work Mr. Angwin formerly did in this State have suffered because of the action taken by the Government. The alterations were not in the best interests of the State as a whole. I mention that because I believe that an extension of Sir Hal Colebatch's term of office would have been of advantage to this State. The Governor's Speech also states—

The condition of land settlement and development in Western Australia to-day is highly satisfactory, and the tremendous increases in primary production are having a beneficent effect upon trade and industry generally. Large sums of money are being invested throughout the agricultural and pastoral areas, adding enormously to the value of the State's permanent assets.

Further along in the Speech and under the heading of "land settlement," it is said that the keen demand for land continues. We recognise the beneficial results of the land settlement scheme of many years ago in the fruit it is bearing. It is to the land policy of years ago that we owe our present prosperity. That a keen demand for land continues is a good omen for the future of Western Australia, because it shows that our land is being developed. It is being improved in fertility, and production is being increased by the application of science. The keen demand for land means that new areas have to be made available to meet the requirements of would-be settlers. By that means we are extending our development. In other words, we are still going on developing our undeveloped resources, and the further development of our at present occupied lands along scientific lines. It may not be known to hon. members that the area under wheat in Western Australia per head of

population is four times that of Victoria and New South Wales. That in itself speaks well for the prosperity of the State and explains the reason for it. I had intended referring to group settlement matters this evening but in view of the lateness of the hour I will not do so. I congratulate the Government, however, on establishing experimental farms in areas where the land has not yet proved satisfactory for land settlement. By the establishment of experimental farms we may be able to prove a negative, and in proving that the land is useless we may save many a settler from coming to grief financially. Therefore the establishment of experimental farms is of greater importance than their actual success would make it appear. As to the suggestion by Mr. Rose that an experimental farm should be established in the South-West, I have only to remind him that a few years ago the sole experimental farm in the South-West was officially destroyed as being useless.

Hon. E. Rose: It was by no means useless.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Well, they grubbed up all the fruit trees that were there. To my mind it would have been for the benefit of the State had they continued the farm and there carried out scientific research work in the fruit industry. By doing that they would have been assisting the export apple industry and the export of other products from down there, which would have increased the total exportation from the State. I understand an effort is being made to establish an experimental farm as far east as Kalgoorlie. At present it is generally conceded that Kalgoorlie is quite outside the rainfall limit. But even if the establishment of an experimental farm there is going to prove that the place is outside the rainfall limit, it will prevent a lot of people who at present have faith in that district from the ignominy of having to pass through the courts.

Hon. H. Seddon: There have been experimental plots at Kalgoorlie for the last five years.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Such plots will not always prove that the district is safe on a large scale, whereas an experimental farm will at least prove whether the district is safe as a farming proposition. Now I wish to refer to the trading concerns. I notice that the Speech makes allusion to only one of them, namely, the State Implement Works. The sales for the year are said to have totalled £190,000, but nothing whatever

is said as to the cost of running the establishment. In regard to the other trading concerns, a discreet silence is maintained. Why is it that only the one is mentioned? Why have we not any reference to the results of the other trading concerns? There is nothing whatever said in the Speech about the others, and so the assumption we can take is that the State Implement Works are included in the Speech as being the only trading concern successful. Of course anybody who has had occasion to use State implements knows that it is more profitable to buy the imported article because of the better quality of material. I am sorry that up to the present the State Implement Works does not seem to have adapted themselves to the requirements. Only in a few instances have the local machines given satisfaction. Mr. Holmes has dealt exhaustively with the financial position, as he usually does, but I should like to ask the Minister one or two questions, the answers to which should enlighten us on several points. Taking the Treasurer's financial statement for the year ended 30th June, 1927, I note that interest on loans paid in June, 1926, amounted to £279,947, whereas for the same month of this year it was only £138,383, or £141,564 less than in June of 1926. For the whole of the year 1925-26 the interest and sinking fund amounted to £3,298,299, whereas in 1926-27 it was £3,295,039, or £3,190 less than in 1926. We know that in 1926-27 there was increased borrowing of £3,000,000. If we take it that we had to pay interest at 5 per cent., it would mean £150,000 for the year's interest. But as it has been spread over the whole of the year, there would practically be a half-year's interest to pay of £75,000. What I want to know is this: When we had an increase of £3,000,000 borrowed for the year, how is it that the interest bill is £3,000 less than in the previous year? We should expect, with that extra £3,000,000, there would be £75,000 more interest to be paid, and that if we had to pay £3,298,299 in the previous year, we should pay all that plus £75,000.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But did they not pay off 2½ millions of the water supply loan?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: From a sinking fund.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Yes, but they would save 3 per cent. interest, which they had paid previously on that.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: They would pay 5 per cent. on the new money, or a total of

£3,370,000, whereas the amount paid was £3,295,000, or a difference in interest alone of about £78,000. I want to know why we paid less interest this year than we did last year, notwithstanding that this year we had a bigger loan. Also if we turn up the Premier's Budget speech we find that he said he expected the interest bill would be £79,000 more this year than it was last year. But while he expected an increase of £79,000, he has proved capable of ending up the year with a smaller interest bill than that he paid in the previous year. Mr. Miles mentioned the maturing of the Goldfields Water Supply loan. The sinking fund to meet that loan has been handed over to our trustees and invested, and the investment has proved very satisfactory. So, when the loan was paid we had £57,000 to spare. That has been added to our revenue for the year. Even if this is quite legitimate, it seems to me it might well have been mentioned that we had benefited to that extent. If the Minister will answer these several questions for me when he replies, I shall be obliged. Now I wish to refer to taxation. I have here a folder that was used by Government supporters during the last elections. It deals with taxation measures and it starts off in this way, "Figures that cannot be refuted; here is the truth." It was authorised by Alexander McCallum, and when I read it through I concluded that the writer would have been nearer the truth if he had written, "Here is half the truth." For instance he says "The Collier Government has reduced taxation." He would have been correct if he had said, "The Collier Government have reduced taxation after increasing the land tax by 100 per cent." Then it states, "The Collier Government has not increased land values." But it was because of an arrangement entered into to have all the land revalued. No person objects to having a fair valuation placed on his land. If the value of the land increases it is only right that there should be an increased assessment. That was carried out. But if the Collier Government had not increased the land values, why should it be put forward as a reason why farmers should keep Collier Premier? It is placed before them as though they would object to increased land values. But no effort has been made to have them reduced. The landholders would object to having land values decreased, for they realise that the assessment of the land is a means of arriving at its sale value. When we have a folder of

this sort placed in the hands of electors, they are given only half the truth. If the Collier Government did not increase land values, they still allow the assessments to go on while they are in power. It would be just as well to give the whole truth. Then this document states, "The farmer pays less to-day than he did in 1922-23." Yes, he pays less income tax, but there is nothing said about the land tax. Large numbers of farmers are still paying land tax but have no income tax to pay. Then we get this, "Read these facts. In 1921 the Mitchell Government imposed a super tax of 15 per cent. on incomes and dividend duties." Then we have the astounding claim of the Collier Government that they removed that super tax. The Legislative Council positively insisted upon it, and informed the Collier Government that it would not assent to the imposition of the further tax it was intended to impose upon the landholders unless the 15 per cent. supertax was withdrawn.

Hon. E. H. Harris: They are telling only half the truth.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes, and yet the Government turn round and tell the world that they have reduced the tax by 15 per cent. Then they say they have reduced the ordinary rate by 33½ per cent. When the Federal Government gave us the disabilities grant, £200,000 of this was placed to the credit of the Treasury with a view to reducing the tax on incomes. If the Government had not reduced the tax by 33½ per cent. and had allowed the £200,000 to be used for development or some other purpose, or had refused to take the money from the Commonwealth, they would have come off second best. If they had collected the tax, they would have raised from that source £172,500. So we see that by the 33½ per cent. reduction and the substitution of the £200,000 the Government received from the Commonwealth, they benefited to the extent of £27,500. There is a line at the bottom dealing with an area of 820 acres which is an indication that the matter refers to land tax. Then there are columns showing the incomes chargeable—£400, £600, £800 and £1,000; the total tax payable in 1922-23, and the total tax payable in 1926-27. In 1923 there is shown an increase which sets out to prove a substantial reduction in 1926-27. The statement is made out in such a way as to make it appear that it is all land tax. This is sent

out to the electors to show what has been done, and the truth has never been made known. If the Minister for Works, who is a member of the Government, can issue these half truths, we are justified in being a little sceptical lest the same camouflage has been used in connection with the Treasury returns. It is sufficient to cause us to look with a good deal of suspicion upon the figures, and on the way in which the returns for last year were placed before us, especially in view of the two questions I have asked. I do not wish to impute anything, but I do say that this is positively wrong, unfair and unjust. If the Government are capable of doing that, they are capable of doing other things. With regard to the railway returns, the present Government have taken a great deal of credit to themselves. I should like to compare the last three years during which the present Government have been in power with the previous three years. In 1921-24 when the Mitchell Government were in power, the railways made a loss in 1921 of £400,000.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Shocking!

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes. That was just before the Mitchell Government assumed office. We were working under difficulties then. In 1924 the surplus was £140,000. In those three years the returns went from a loss of £400,000 to a surplus of £140,000, which meant making up leeway to the extent of £540,000. When the Collier Government took over in 1924 they had a surplus of £140,000. In 1927 they had a surplus of £34,000, showing that they had gone back £106,000. The Mitchell Government went forward £540,000 in three years, and the present Government went back £106,000 in three years.

Hon. V. Hamersley: But the rates did not go back.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The rates were increased as well as the wages. The wages were increased by the Arbitration Court during the term of the Mitchell Government. The present Government have given the employees a 44-hour week and have improved their conditions, and yet with a record production the railways have gone back. The Speech refers to a year of records, notwithstanding which the railways, which represent the thermometer of the finances of the State, have gone back during the last three years. During the past year when the surplus was only £34,000, the

earnings of the railways were £380,000 more than they were in 1924 when the surplus was £140,000.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Why not give the whole of the facts?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Those are all the facts.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: You do not know them.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I think so. The figures speak for themselves. With regard to the North-West, the Speech refers to the fact that the Government are establishing 140 farms in order to try out that part of the State. Mr. Holmes said this was useless, and he should know. This seems a modest trial. I hope it will prove successful, and will enable us to say that that part of the State is worth opening up by means of tropical agriculture. The pearling industry has given me considerable thought. I have been looking into that matter, and also into an industry that has grown up in Japan recently, and which is rapidly developing—I refer to the cultivation of the pearl. I believe this was attempted in the North-West but was immediately stopped. It is an offence here to cultivate pearls. So far as I know it is possible to cultivate and produce pearls equal to anything that is found in the natural state. We could cultivate pearls in the same way as we are trying to develop our wheat, and increase the value of our classes of wheat. There is scope for scientific research in the pearling industry. Whilst they are able to do this in Japan, and are allowed to do it there, Japan is capturing the world's pearl market. In Western Australia we have the best grounds in the whole world for the development of pearls, but we are allowing the Japanese, under great difficulties, to do what we will not do ourselves. There is a great possibility of developing the pearling industry along these lines. I throw it out as a suggestion to the Government that they should look into the matter, and see whether something can be done. Education is a matter of great concern to me. I should like to see the vote increased, especially that for the University. Our University does not stand on the same footing as those in the Eastern States. I do not say we have not the same valuable tuition given, but we have not the scope that is afforded in the Eastern States, which consequently lead the way. There is no reason

why we should not grow with regard to our schools of learning commensurate with the development of the State. The Hackett bequest has been of very great assistance in the way of buildings, but the erection of buildings means greater cost to the University. It means greater upkeep and naturally the grant will have to be extended. I submit this to the favourable consideration of the Government. I hope the time is not far distant when chairs will be established to permit of our young men and women passing through the various professions, to do which at present they have to go to the Eastern States, I refer to law, medicine and other professions. With regard to elementary education, I wish to refer to the retirement of one of the finest educationists Western Australia ever had. I am paying him a great compliment when I say that he compares with the only other man of note in his profession the Commonwealth has ever known—Mr. J. A. Hartley, Director of Education in South Australia many years ago. Mr. Rooney, who has just vacated the position at the Training College, is a man of outstanding ability and one to whom parents and young men and women who have come under his influence owe a great debt of gratitude. I only need mention this fact to show the value of the work he has done, namely, that now he has retired, his position is held by two men, one the Professor of Education and the other the Vice-Principal of the Training College. Parents are compelled to send their children to school under the compulsory education system. That is quite right. It is not a very promising feature when they have to send children to those schools where the head teacher or perhaps the assistant has not the respect of the children or of the parents. I have always felt that if the character of the teacher is such that he has not a good moral influence upon the children under his care, he is not fit for his position. The department should take steps to see that such an individual either mends his ways or makes room for others. The moral influence of a teacher is of such great importance to the rising generation that we cannot afford to trifle with it. It is sad when the parents are compelled to place their children in such environment, and I trust therefore that the Department will not overlook this matter when training their teachers. Before I close I wish to make a brief reference to

the apprenticeship question. I feel that under existing conditions we are driving our young men into the unskilled world. When I arrived in Western Australia in 1902, the first time I heard Archbishop Riely speak, he made use of words which I have never forgotten—"What the young man of to-day needs is to be a Jack of all trades and master of one. When he is able to master one trade he can go to his trade, and when that trade fails and there is nothing for him to do, he can turn his hand to almost every other trade. He is the man who will get on in the world." What is our apprentice doing to-day? The restrictions upon the employment of apprentices is such that employees refuse to take them.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Name the restrictions.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The regulations governing the employment of apprentices bristle with restrictions. The conditions are such that lads are not getting a fair opportunity to go out into the world to learn a trade. I shall mention one restriction and will satisfy myself with that one. If I, as a father, wished to have my son trained, and am prepared to pay to have that boy trained as I would be prepared to pay if it were a profession to which he was being articulated, the Arbitration makes that an offence. There are many other such restrictions, so much so that parents are refused the opportunity of permitting their boys to be taught a trade, and the lads are denied the opportunity of learning a trade. Last year an hon. member interjected that the boys would soon be taking the father's job. But is not the father expected to pass it on to the son? It is the lad's duty to take it up. Present conditions make it impossible for the boy to learn the father's trade and instead, we compel the youth to go out into the world as an unskilled labourer. I have endeavoured to deal with the broader issues which concern the State and to refrain from touching on petty parochial matters. Therefore, I shall close my remarks by supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [10.50]: In following the mover and seconder of the Address-in-reply, Mr. Lovekin preceded his speech by stating that he proposed to discuss a subject that transcended all others which Par-

liament had ever had to deal with. Mr. Lovekin referred to the legislation which it is proposed to lay before Parliament for the ratification of an agreement arrived at between the State Premiers and the Commonwealth. There is no doubt about the importance of the question. It is a question which vitally affects the future of the States, and it is a great pity that Mr. Lovekin has committed himself to a hostile form of action before the case in favour has been submitted to Parliament. In the first place let me say that the brief document from which Mr. Lovekin quoted contained only the broad principles of the proposed agreement as discussed at the first meeting of the representatives of the Commonwealth and States. The final agreement which embodies the principles in the original document, but which defines the compact more clearly, is at the present time in the hands of the Crown Solicitor, who is carefully examining the drafting in order to see that powers greater than intended are not being transferred from the State to an outside authority. In the meantime, a general discussion of the question is not advisable, for erroneous impressions formed on a faulty basis may lead public opinion in an entirely wrong direction, and one which would be opposed to the interests of the State. I do not propose, in my present address, to go over much ground, for I shall deal comprehensively with the question when the Bill, seeking the necessary ratification is submitted to this House. All I intend to do now is to endeavour to remove some of the misconceptions which must have arisen in consequence of Mr. Lovekin's speech. The question of per capita payments has been introduced into the discussion. I agree with Mr. Lovekin that this State, at any rate, was led into Federation as a result of the general belief that it would share a substantial portion of the Customs and Excise revenue for all time. But the question of the Customs and Excise revenue and the question of the per capita payments are now as dead as Julius Cæsar. We were deprived of the former in 1909, and in its place granted the latter definitely for ten years, after which we were to be absolutely in the hands of the Commonwealth Parliament. During and since 1919, when the right to a continuance of the per capita payments expired, several attempts

have been made to have them abolished, but on each occasion an allowance of less value to the States was proposed. In 1919 the Commonwealth Government put forward a scheme for the progressive reduction of the per capita payments, from 25s. to 10s. per head. Still later, the proposals providing for a relinquishment of certain taxation fields were submitted by the Commonwealth Government, but in each case the States were to receive only an equality to the per capita payments for five and three years respectively. Under the per capita system, there was not any guarantee to the States of security, as after 1920 the payments could have been stopped at any time. During the last session of the Federal Parliament, the final scene was enacted when the per capita payments were absolutely abolished as from the 30th June, 1927, with a year's relaxation in the form of a grant, and without any provision for a scheme of adjustment. The per capita payments have gone, and the States are in the position of having to accept the best arrangement possible. It is idle to carry on a discussion of this subject on the assumption that these payments were permanent. All shades of political thought realised that they would go sooner or later. We may say the States have been unjustly treated, that there has been a gross breach of faith on the part of different Parliaments. But the fact remains that the per capita payments are things of the past, and we should recognise that, as sensible people, we have to make the best of the unfortunate position in which we find ourselves. The agreement now approaching completion represents the results of the recent negotiations. Among other things it covers:—

(1.) The provision of a Sinking Fund of 7s. 6d. on all existing net debts of the States, contributed on the basis of—5s. by the State and 2s. 6d. by the Commonwealth Government. Any contractual obligation beyond 7s. 6d. per cent. to be advanced by the National Sinking Fund Trustees.

(2.) The provision of a Sinking Fund of 10s. per cent. on all new debts of the States, contributed on the basis of—5s. by the State; 5s. by the Commonwealth Government.

(3.) The investment of the fund will be made in the securities of the State concerned, and these will be cancelled quarterly. These quarterly cancellations will carry a progressive total from the 1st July, 1927, for 58 years, and the States on such progressive amount

will contribute from revenue, interest at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum. In this way, the fund will liquidate the existing debt in 58 years' time.

(4.) As the debt to be liquidated by this sinking fund is the net debt at the 30th June, 1927, and as the proposal places all States on an equality, it was necessary to provide for the cancellation of the existing sinking fund, and consequently provision will be made in the amending Bill accordingly.

This is a rough outline of the benefits accruing from the proposed agreement. The State will benefit immediately by a sum of about £100,000 per annum, and for a period exceeding twenty years the benefit to the State's finances will be greater than any possible accretion under the per capita payments. Section 105 of the Constitution Act at present enables the Commonwealth Government to take over State debts, but does not cover future borrowings. The contemplated addition to this section is provided to enable the Commonwealth Government to do constitutionally those things that this agreement with the States, or any future agreement, may decide is necessary. After the Solicitor General has completed his revision of the proposed agreement, it is intended to submit that portion having reference to the proposed constitutional amendment to the very best legal authority, so as to safeguard the interests of the State. I now propose to answer some of the objections raised by the hon. member. He indicates that there is no special advantage given to New South Wales. That Government has made its financial arrangements for 1927-28, and consequently the provisions for that State operate as from 1st July, 1928, and continue for one year longer than the period of the other States. The loan programmes of the several States are to be submitted yearly to the Loan Council. In the event of that body deciding that the total requirements cannot be obtained in Australia, England or abroad, then the programmes are subject to reduction in the following manner:—1. By mutual agreement; if this fails, then, 2. By a fixed proportional distribution based on expenditure during the past five years, subject to:—(a) the Commonwealth Government to be entitled to one-fifth, (b) the States to be entitled to four-fifths. The payment of £473,432 by the Commonwealth Government is not, as Mr. Lovekin indicated, to be for all time, but for a period of fifty-eight years, during which period the existing debts will be discharged. The question has been asked by Mr. Lovekin, "Is

there to be any real taking over of State debts, or is it merely fiction?" It is not proposed solemnly to call in all State stocks, and issue Commonwealth stocks in their place, as apparently the hon. member imagines. But the agreement does mean that the present holder has not only a security pledged on the revenues of the State, but will hold a security on which the hall-mark of the national Government will also be placed. This taking over is not fiction, but is a definite attempt to improve the credit of each State, and to obtain for each State of the Commonwealth an improvement in the quoted price of Australian stocks on the world's markets. Of course, the financial proposals are favourable to the Commonwealth, but they are also favourable to this State, and that is our main concern. They do give us security for at least 20 years, and in that respect I am informed we are better off than any of the States. The recent amendment, providing for the issue of State stocks on the London market, is not provided in the manner the hon. member would have the House believe. State stocks can only be issued with the approval of the Loan Council, and if so issued will have the backing of the Commonwealth Government, and will carry all the privileges of Commonwealth stock. The alteration was made solely to meet the objections coming from London, which it is generally believed are more fancied than real, and largely brought about from an incomplete knowledge of the proposals. The annual loan programmes of the States are forecast by Mr. Lovekin to be £40,000,000 for the future. I can only say that any attempt at a forecast by the Treasury officials would not be made at this stage. The hon. member also prepared a most imposing table, based on the net indebtedness of each State of Australia, and seriously intimated that this State had the lowest percentage of indebtedness. Having in view that the other factor in this table was the recent per capita payment, based on 25s. per head of the population, I fail to see what other result the hon. member expected to obtain from such a return. The basis is erroneous and entirely misleading. The hon. member devoted considerable time to the argument of the estimate of the future increase in population of this State, based on primary industry, and that of New South Wales or Victoria based on secondary industry.

I do not see that this gets us anywhere. The past periods of rapid growth in population in this State were not caused through farming activity, to anything like the same extent as gold mining activity, and it would only be the discovery of another Golden Mile that would enable those averages to be repeated. Mr. Lovekin has raised the bogey of the curtailment by this agreement of the loan moneys needed to expedite the settlement and development of our vast areas. I would reply that a voluntary Loan Council has been functioning for many years, and the difficulty complained of has not arisen yet. Surely with the added support of all Australia, and the inevitable improvement of Australian credit as the result of the establishment of a national sinking fund, there should not be as much difficulty ahead as in the period gone by. It is not the declared objective of the Loan Council to check and lessen borrowing, but to endeavour by sound financial methods to raise the requirements of Australia at the best interest rate, and at the highest market rate obtainable. On two or more occasions Mr. Lovekin made reference to the proposed agreement being based on—1, Increase of population at 2 per cent. per annum; and 2, flotation of loans that will give this State $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, increasing to 6 millions in 12 years' time. The agreement is based on nothing of the kind. The figures referred to represent a table prepared by the Under Treasurer, and represent an opinion only. The Prime Minister and the Premier have not been asked for, nor have they expressed an opinion, as to whether they agree or otherwise. I do not propose at present to deal with the hon. member's proposals for a basis of adjustment; suffice to say, that the road grants and wire netting advances are based on somewhat similar methods, and in dealing with the main agreement, these concessions must be taken into consideration, together with the benefits accruing from the very large proportion of the £34,000,000 of cheap money, that the State has been allocated. Finally, the hon. member says—"If the amendment to the Constitution is accepted, the Commonwealth can do nothing except by agreement with the States." This is correct, but the bald statement is misleading. The proposed addition to Section 105 has reference only to the

transfer of debts and future borrowing, and nothing else. No other financial question is bound up in the proposed agreement, and there is nothing therein to control or limit or handicap a State, except in that regard. One member stated—

Mr. Bruce has made it abundantly clear that he is prepared to co-operate with the State to assist in every way possible to put the mining industry on a proper footing. Mr. Bruce was perfectly logical when he said that until he could tell the Commonwealth Parliament that Western Australia had wisely expended the £160,000 for the benefit of the mining industry his Government would not be prepared to embark on any scheme for the rehabilitation of the industry.

Other members have spoken confidently in a similar strain, and the impression likely to be created by such remarks is that the Federal Government made a special grant of £160,000 to the mining industry. Everyone should know that they did nothing of the kind. It was the State Government that set aside £160,000 out of the Federal disabilities grant for that purpose, and without any request from the Federal Government to do so. Everyone should know why the money has not been expended. A scheme was prepared by the State Government in harmony with Mr. Kingsley Thomas's report to cheapen the cost of power to the mining companies on the fields, and the £160,000 was to be used towards carrying out the proposal. The amalgamation of the companies was the first essential to the practicability of the scheme, and for months past the Government have been endeavouring to bring about that amalgamation, but it is becoming apparent that the mining companies will do nothing to help themselves and that they want the State to bear the whole of the burden. Needless to say if that is their desire, they will be very much disappointed, and other means of aiding the languishing industry will have to be devised. As for the Commonwealth Government rendering financial assistance to the mining industry, apart from the money the State Government have taken out of the disabilities grant, Mr. Bruce has made it abundantly clear to the Premier that no monetary help will be forthcoming. A Commonwealth officer has been sent to conduct a geological survey of the fields, but that is to be the extent of the assistance to be rendered, and no good purpose can be served by endeavouring to create a contrary impression. Mr. Potter stated that a fairly large tract of land suitable for pig-raising

and pine planting had been offered to the Government at a certain price, that the offer had been refused, and that, within a week after the Government's refusal, the parcel was offered to a private syndicate at double the price quoted, and that the syndicate had recouped the whole of their initial expenditure by the sale of the timber on the land. For the refusal to purchase this estate the present Government were in no way responsible, and Mr. Potter does not say that they were. It is a very old transaction dating back to 1919, revived in 1923, and again in February, 1924, and I think, after perusing the papers, that the Government of the day were justified in turning the proposition down. This is how District Surveyor Lefroy commented on the proposition which was originally offered at £2 5s. an acre—

With regard to the offer of property submitted by the Westralian Farmers Ltd., coloured blue on litho. plan 1, I have a good general knowledge of the land in question, and am quite satisfied it is unsuitable for repatriation purposes. Out of the 12,200 acres, 380 acres are said to be cleared, and 6,000 acres ring-barked, leaving 6,000 acres unimproved. On reference to page 3 you will see that the vendors state it will carry in its present condition 700 sheep. I have no hesitation in saying that such an area of country must indeed be of the poorest description if it is only capable of carrying such a number of sheep, and further, the price is absolutely ridiculous. Do you wish the expense of a classification to be incurred?

In the circumstances the Minister in charge refused to approve of the purchase, and rightly so, too. Mr. Potter thinks that a block of land in the Jandakot district, reserved for a mental hospital, should be thrown open for selection to meet disabilities suffered by old settlers through their holdings being flooded by the overflow of Thompson's Lake. This matter was placed before me when I was on a visit to Jandakot some months ago, and investigated by me subsequently. I may say that the Inspector General of the Insane strongly urges that this site be retained for the Lunacy Department, as it will soon be necessary to start another Hospital for the Insane. The opening of Point Heathcote will relieve the pressure for a time, but the Government have to look ahead, and it will be essential to provide another institution. The Claremont Hospital for the Insane has now almost reached the limit as regards number of patients beyond which, in accordance with the experience of other coun-

tries, it is not desirable to extend one institution. Mr. Hamersley made reference to "extravagant borrowings," "a mounting interest bill," and "a strain upon our industries that may become more than they can bear." It seems to me there is no ground for apprehension unless he thinks—as I am sure he does not think—that borrowing on account of agriculture is attended with risk. I have had some figures prepared by the Treasury that bear upon the question, and should be interesting to members. We have raised altogether £65,086,772, and the expenditure in detail has been as follows: On railways, mostly agricultural lines, the expenditure has been £20,782,270; on development of agriculture, £22,112,203; on harbours £4,861,615; on water supplies, a fair proportion for the farmers, £4,343,047.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I suppose Mundaring Weir is included in that.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Is the Mundaring scheme included?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On the development of mining the expenditure has been £2,270,616. The total of those items of expenditure in the country is £54,369,751, compared with which the expenditure in the metropolitan area has been only £5,429,349.

Hon. V. Hamersley: How much of the expenditure in the country has been returned by the farmers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The amount expended on the metropolitan water supply and sewerage is £3,448,824, and on sundries £5,287,672.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What constitutes "sundries," the trading concerns?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: All sorts of things are included in that item.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Does development of agriculture include the homes of the men on the land?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am speaking of the State's indebtedness on account of money borrowed and not yet repaid. I do not think there is any cause whatever for the anxiety of Mr. Hamersley.

Hon. V. Hamersley: The farmers have returned all that money to the Government.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Hamersley's remarks regarding the dog-proof fence required by the Department of Agriculture were referred to the Chief Inspector of Rabbits, who states definitely that the fences mentioned by Mr. Hamersley are not vermin-proof, and he is strongly of opinion

that if the standard required by the department is lowered, the fence will be ineffective. I may add that before the standard was fixed, the Chief Inspector of Rabbits informed the advisory board of the standard he considered should be adopted and the board endorsed his opinion. In support of these views let me read a copy of a letter received by the department and also extracts from the Press. The following letter was received from Mr. W. R. Toesland, farmer, of Dalwallinu:—

19th May, 1927. Re my experience with dogs at Jibberding, the 5ft. 6in. netting fence which the property was fenced with, would certainly keep out by far the great majority of dingoes, but I certainly would not be prepared to call it dog-proof. I have known on plenty of occasions dogs to go over, and also to bite holes through the 17-gauge netting with 3in. mesh. I have also known a dingo caught in an 8in. dog trap to jump the rabbit fence with trap hanging on its foreleg. The fence at Jibberding was 5ft. 6in. high with barbed wire on top. In my opinion the only safe dog fence is 4ft. netting 1½in. mesh with 2ft. netting overhanging from the top of the post on the iron hangers.

The following is taken from a Press report dealing with the Kwelkan Progress Association:—

Mr. F. Warner has had the misfortune to lose 13 sheep by wild dogs. As his farm is completely netted to a height of 6 feet it is a mystery how the dogs managed to get in.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Perhaps a tame dog was responsible.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The following appeared in the Merredin "Mercury":—

Last summer the road board enforced the Vermin Act strictly, but nevertheless rabbits have secured a hold upon a number of farms, particularly those adjoining the scrub lands. Farmers are busy fumigating and in some instances erecting netting which is regarded as the only method of combating the pest effectively. Dingoes are causing owners of sheep to be on the alert. Mr. S. Herbert lost 20 sheep a fortnight ago, and Mr. F. Warner and Mrs. Rilby were also losers. These farmers have dog-proof fences, but the dingoes jump the fences. A large number of baits laid on the south of the railway line resulted in only two dogs being destroyed.

I think Mr. Hamersley, after due consideration, will recognise there was a necessity for improving the standard of the fence.

Hon. V. Hamersley: When the dogs cannot get over the top they take the netting in their teeth, and bite a hole in it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In opening his speech, Mr. Nicholson touched upon a

question which exercised my mind to some extent a few weeks' prior to the opening of Parliament, and that is whether or not it would be advisable to ask hon. members who were not attached to the Party in power to move and second the Address-in-reply. So far as I was concerned, I could see no objection, but, after giving the matter a great deal of consideration, I was loth to ask any hon. member to perform a function which might place him in an awkward position and be misunderstood outside. Probably, for some reason, a member of the Labour Party has never been asked—if my memory serves me correctly—to move or second the Address-in-reply when another Party has been in power. Let me illustrate the awkwardness of the situation. Say, for instance, that, by some freak of Fate, a party of hopeless reactionaries got into power and foreshadowed in His Excellency the Governor's Speech the repeal of the Workers' Compensation Act, the Arbitration Act, the Early Closing Act and similar legislation. The Leader of the House—if it were possible to secure a Leader in the circumstances—would be placing a severe strain on the courtesy of Mr. Brown, Mr. Gray, Mr. Kitson, Mr. Hickey or myself, if we were asked either to move or second the Address-in-reply, in such circumstances. That is, of course, an extreme case. But, so far as I can see, there is nothing in His Excellency's Speech which could excite more than the ordinary criticism which has been experienced in the House when a Government has not left itself open to extremely severe condemnation. When I was considering the question of asking some hon. member outside the Labour Party to move and second the Address-in-reply, one of the hon. members I had in mind was Mr. Nicholson himself.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I had already been there.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Perhaps after I have made that confession some hon. members will consider that my judgment was a little faulty, in view of the hon. member's speech on the finances of the State. Still, I do believe that Mr. Nicholson was not serious in all that he said—in other words, that he was in a playful and facetious mood, and that if he had been chosen as the mover of the Address-in-reply he would have adopted his usually grave atti-

tude. Otherwise we should not have heard that there was a possibility of "the figures being manipulated to show any result whatever," "that an investigation by experts would probably show a deficit of a considerable sum," and that he would "defy anyone to unravel the mysteries of the financial statement." Mr. Nicholson in support of the stand he took quoted from a leading article in the "West Australian" which it is charitable to conclude was hurriedly written after the financial statement appeared, and which did not stand the test of analysis by the Treasurer of the State.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I know that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Despite this, Mr. Nicholson still asserts in the name of the "West Australian" that by Mr. Collier taking £200,000 from the disabilities grant to make up for the 33 1/3rd reduction of income taxation the revenue benefited by £40,000. Other members have spoken in a similar strain, and some have referred to the sum as £50,000. The "West Australian" is the authority of several members. I rather thought they would be capable of analysing a financial statement themselves.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I quoted from the reply given by the Premier.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not propose to quote a mass of figures. I will put the position as clearly as I can. Mr. Collier, when setting aside the £200,000 to compensate the Treasury for the loss in income taxation by the decrease of 33 1/3rd per cent., calculated that if no reduction were made, the income tax by natural increase would go from £566,000 to £600,000, and that in reducing the £600,000 by 33 1/3rd per cent. he would be sure to get £400,000. But he did not get £400,000. He got only £345,000, and contends with great force that he sacrificed no less than £55,000. And in further proof of the loss incurred through the 33 1/3rd per cent. reduction, he received £221,000 less income tax last year than he did the year before. He was relieved only to the extent of £200,000.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: That is income tax.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. Mr. Nicholson went on to say, "It is very hard indeed for one to understand and criticise such a statement." Then he read the explanatory note at the bottom of the statement, reading thus, "Following are the operations of the State Trading Concerns which are not included in the above revenue

and expenditure figures." He then read a list of the debits and credits. And Mr. Nicholson, by some mysterious process of reasoning, arrives at this conclusion, to use his own words, "The Treasurer took over the whole of the credit balances, obviously without taking into account the debits owing by those various trading concerns, thereby swelling the revenue unduly."

Hon. J. Nicholson: The credit balance is up to the end of May.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It would not only be unduly swelling the revenue, but deliberate falsification of the position if Mr. Nicholson were correct, for the debits were in excess of the credits by £93,000. But Mr. Nicholson is not correct, and if he will read the Trading Concerns Act, passed during the Wilson administration, and peruse the Estimates he will find that the solution of his fire-side puzzle is very much simplified. And if he will look up the annual financial statements for the last ten years he will find that in every instance it has been prepared in exactly the same manner as the present one, and could not be prepared in any other way except by failure to comply with the law. It has been hinted by interjections of other hon. members that the payment of accounts was held over in order to produce a surplus. But surely it would be the height of folly for the Government to do this. It would be making things worse for the succeeding financial year. It would be dishonest, but it would be good policy although dishonest, if the Government, believing it was going out of office, endeavoured to put back the payment of accounts and produce a surplus. One moment's consideration should show hon. members that the holding over of payments of accounts by a Government in its first year after return to office would be a suicidal line of action, for the financial chickens would come home to roost with unpleasant effect at a later stage. Sir William Lathlain also dealt with the finances and says, in effect, it is no wonder the Collier Government produced a surplus, as they had over 5½ millions more revenue than the Mitchell Administration during their last three years of office. The figures are amazing—staggering is a better word—but I have made no attempt to verify them. It is not necessary. They get us nowhere. They were used largely as political propaganda by the opponents

of Mr. Collier during the last general election—very unwisely used I should say if they were intended to help the party that gave them currency. They had just the opposite effect. In various parts of the State that I visited while the elections were in progress, I heard it said—on the strength of figures such as those quoted by Sir William Lathlain—that Mr. Collier had enormously increased the revenue of the State—that his political opponents had said so—and that never before was there so much money in circulation in the State. Not one supporter of the Labour Party was so foolish as to deny that the revenue had expanded abnormally during the three years of Mr. Collier's successful administration. But now the elections are over it is as well for us to consider whether it is fair to argue that because an increased revenue has been received, a deficit should be reduced or a surplus created. It is not only not fair, but the contention will not hold water. Almost every public work that is completed and operated means increased revenue, and at the same time increased expenditure. Every railway that the Collier Government built—and they built at least six or seven—resulted in increased revenue, and of course increased expenditure, unless the railways could be run without the cost of fuel, salaries and wages and interest and sinking fund. In most cases the expenditure far greater than the revenue is involved, for few, if any, of those railways will pay working costs, interest and sinking fund from the very outset. It is ridiculous to contend that, because there is an increase in revenue, a surplus can be created. Then there are institutions like hospitals, asylums, homes, charities, prisons, and schools, etc., which involve more expenditure with the expansion of development and the increase of population, but which return very little revenue.

Hon. J. Nicholson: All of which shows the advisability of securing a detailed balance sheet.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It follows that, in connection with the administration of the State, in which a progressive policy is adopted, an increase of revenue is accompanied by an unavoidable increase in expenditure to earn that revenue. To show the fallacy of the argument with which I have been contending, during Sir James

Mitchell's five years of office the revenue increased from £4,944,000—at the time he took office—to £7,865,000 the year he left office, or an increase of £2,720,000, yet during those five years of office he built up a deficit of £2,721,000. I say that with no intention of discrediting Sir James. He was carrying out a progressive policy, and the large revenue he received was exceeded by expenditure necessary in operating undertakings which could not be expected to pay in their initial stages. Yet, if the "large amount of revenue" argument is sound, Sir James should have had a surplus a couple of years after he took control of the Treasury. Sir William, in further reference to the financial statement, draws attention to the smallness of the charge against the interest and sinking fund as compared with last year. Other hon. members have drawn attention to the same matter—Mr. Yelland was one. In reply I would point out that this fact was due to the proposed financial agreement. The item, loans, interest and sinking fund, was credited with £150,000, and the expenditure debited with the £150,000, which was transferred to the credit of the Suspense Account to meet losses on the group settlements, and there it will remain pending the decision of Parliament on the Commonwealth financial agreement. It could legitimately have not been so treated, and then our surplus would have been £178,000 instead of £28,000. Sir William concluded by saying that he would await the Auditor General's report before dealing further with the question. In view of the fact that, in his recent utterances, the ex-Treasurer of the State (Sir James Mitchell) has nothing whatever to say against this aspect of the financial statement, Sir William may rest assured that there is nothing in it which will not bear the closest investigation. With regard to Sir William's remarks that a number of Western Australian magistrates are in an acting capacity, I wish to point out that this is due to the wording of the Public Service Act, Section 30 of which provides that no person shall be permanently appointed as a magistrate unless (a) he has passed certain prescribed examinations, or (b) he is a legal practitioner; but that on the certificate of the Public Service Commissioner other public officers may be temporarily appointed as magistrates. In goldfields and remote centres it has been found necessary,

in order to obtain economy in administration, to combine the position of magistrate with that of district medical officer, or with that of warden under the Mining Act, and owing to the section I have quoted, these cannot be permanent appointments to the magistracy. Under this system we have acting magistrates at Ashburton, Esperance, Port Hedland, Roebourne, Kimberley East and Kimberley West, where the medical officers act; and at Kalgoorlie, Murchison, Broome, Ravensthorpe and Pilbara, where the wardens act as magistrates. The necessity for creating dual positions is responsible for the existing state of affairs. This would account for practically all the positions excepting in the metropolitan area, where an acting magistrate was recently appointed to cope with temporary extra business, and a decision has not yet been definitely reached regarding the permanency of this appointment. With reference to the police magistracy of Perth, the filling of this position has been on various occasions represented by the Government to the Public Service Commissioner, who has, by Statute, to take the necessary action to fill the vacancy. Nothing has yet been done, but the responsibility does not rest with the Government. Mr. Seddon credits Mr. Collier with stating that "the finances of the State did not benefit by the Commonwealth grant in any way." The hon. member did not specify when or where Mr. Collier made the statement, and I have been unable to locate it.

Hon. H. Seddon: It appeared in "Hansard."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not seen it. Mr. Seddon then proceeds to show that such a statement will not bear examination, and, in proof, he points out that the £200,000 set aside for the reduction of the deficit which was built up over a long period of years by successive Governments saved Mr. Collier the payment of £10,000 a year in interest, and that he has had the use of the interest on the £165,000 which was set aside out of the Disabilities Grant. In the first place, Mr. Collier, in introducing the Estimates last year, announced that the £200,000 would be used in reducing the accumulated deficit, and, of course, budgeted for a reduction of interest in consequence. That is common knowledge. What Mr. Collier has been contending during recent public discussions is that the general revenue

has not benefited by any secret manipulation of the Disabilities Grant.

Hon. H. Seddon: I did not say "secret."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not consulted Mr. Collier in reference to the statement I am now making, but it is certain that the revenue did benefit to the extent of about £10,000 annually owing to the reduction of the accumulated deficit. Not only the present Government, but for the next 30 or 40 years all succeeding Governments, will benefit from the reduction of interest by that amount. In the second place, if delay in spending a grant should make it incumbent on a Treasurer to add interest to the grant, covering the period of non-payment, a Gilbertian situation would arise. For instance, if Mr. Seddon's system were adopted, and if there were three months' delay in handing over a £500 special grant voted by Parliament to, say, a country hospital, then it would be the duty of the Treasury officials to sit down and calculate how much the State had gained by the free use of the money for three months, and add the amount to the £500 grant. It would be a grand idea for providing work for unemployed clerks, but it would make the Treasury the laughing-stock of the country. Mr. Collier explained, after his financial statement had appeared, that the excess of sinking fund in connection with the Coolgardie Water Supply loan had been taken into revenue. After the loan had been met, there was a balance of £57,000. The money which had created the excess had come from revenue, and the excess had to go back into revenue. There was no other place for it to go. It could not be utilised in connection with the sinking funds of other loans, for all the statutory requirements in relation to them had already been met. It had to come back to revenue; it could not go anywhere else, in the circumstances.

Hon. H. Seddon: But we had that surplus in 1926.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may, of course, be regarded as a windfall to the Treasury. But the amount of £45,000 which the Government had to find owing to the reclassification of teachers last November, after the Estimates had been framed, made a large hole in the £57,000, not to speak of the reclassification of the Public Service, with the result of subsequent appeals, which added largely to the expenditure and which was exactly the converse of the windfall.

Hon. H. Seddon: What became of the

£204,000 surplus in the sinking fund for the water supply loan?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There has been no £204,000 surplus taken into revenue. To be exact, the amount is £58,000, though I have been quoting £57,000.

Hon. H. Seddon: But there was a surplus of £204,000 in connection with the water supply loan. What became of it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is not included in the financial statement, and the revenue has never benefited by it. Dr. Saw, as usual, made an interesting contribution to the debate. The hon. member's suggestion in reference to the site of the proposed new Public Hospital I shall lay before Cabinet when the subject comes up for discussion. Dr. Saw put the case for the University in the strongest possible way. Whether this State can as yet afford to set aside yearly a sum representing 5 per cent. of the expenditure on primary education for the purpose of extending the usefulness of the University is a subject on which there is room for difference of opinion. Our first duty must be to those who, were it not for the vigilance of the Education Department, the sympathy of the Treasury, and the generosity of Parliament, would be without any education at all. Every month fresh demands for primary schools arise in every portion of Western Australia, and, in every instance in which the regulations sanction it, the demands are met without question. This means, of course, a constant expansion of expenditure, and much yet remains to be done, as suggested by Dr. Saw, in extending the scope of our Technical Schools which form the not least important branch of our system of public instruction, enabling those who have no desire for a higher education—whose vocation is differently directed—to fit themselves for other avenues of life. To give effect to my ideas in this respect will mean a greatly increased annual expenditure. There was also the suggestion by Dr. Saw that cookery classes should be established in schools at all important centres. These are matters that have been engaging my attention for some time past, and I endorse what Dr. Saw has said. As to the assistance to be rendered by the State to the University, it is useless to quote what is done in the United States, Canada, and various foreign countries. Let us take Australia and ascertain what is the position regarding the proportions spent upon primary education and university education.

After all the ratio of 3.3 per cent., which the University vote bears here to the Education vote, is not so unfair as Dr. Saw's remarks would lead one to believe. As a matter of fact it is higher than Queensland, which is 1.4; higher than New South Wales, which is 2.9; and higher than Victoria, which is 3. Tasmania and South Australia are the only two States ahead of Western Australia. Thus the University has little enough to complain about although those concerned are justified in pressing their claims. I am in sympathy with those claims so long as they are fair and not extreme, but in accord with justice. At the same time the Government are in sympathy with the University, and have already shown their sympathy in practical form. We recognise that it is a free University—that it is not a University at which only the sons and daughters of the wealthy may be trained—but an institution which, with the assistance of scholarships and exhibitions, may be reached by talented students irrespective of the financial position of their parents. Hence, in recognition of that fact, anything we may be able to do for the University will be done ungrudgingly and with the feeling that the assistance rendered is an investment which will show good returns in the years to come through the development of the intellectual powers of the youth of the present generation. I listened with great attention to Dr. Saw's views on the pasteurisation of milk. When the milk supply of the metropolitan area was investigated by a Royal Commission a couple of years ago, the Commission reported that pasteurisation might be found necessary, but did not recommend the introduction of that process until such time as other measures had been tried and had failed. It is significant, in view of Dr. Saw's contention, that the Health Department classifies pasteurised milk as fourth class. Since that report was made, pasteurised milk has been put upon the Perth market, but the efforts in this direction have been by no means satisfactory. With the exception of two, all samples obtained by this Department, both bottled and otherwise, have, after pasteurisation, shown the presence of the bacillus Coli. The presence of bacillus Coli indicates contamination by certain objectionable matter of animal origin. These samples were obtained at the point of de-

livery to the consumers and show conclusively that either the system of pasteurisation is not effective, or that subsequent contamination is permitted. The Department agrees entirely with Dr. Saw that pasteurisation is not the be-all and end-all in the treatment of any milk for human consumption, and so far as the milk supply of the metropolitan area is concerned, it considers there is very urgent need of efficient supervisors of the methods of production at the dairies and of the handling of the milk from that point to the consumer. What the Department does primarily claim is that milk shall be "clean milk" and not "cleaned milk." It is a problem which has been for some time past engaging the attention of the Minister for Public Health, and if the recommendations of the Royal Commission are to be carried out, investigations into the Wellington scheme may be necessary not only from the point of view of effective pasteurisation, but also in regard to the details of administration, and the expenditure involved under that heading. Mr. Burvill complained about the strain on the financial resources of the Albany Road Board resulting from roads constructed by the Main Roads Board in his district, and he urged that the Main Roads Act be amended. It will be remembered that this measure was practically re-drafted by a select committee of the Legislative Council, of which Mr. Stewart was chairman. There is very little in the measure for which the Government are responsible. Mr. Burvill is evidently under the impression that the Albany Board will have to meet 3/14th of the capital cost. Mr. Burvill's conclusion is based on a letter sent by the Main Roads Board to the Plantagenet Road Board. I have a copy of the letter, and the Plantagenet Road Board was referred to Section 30 of the Main Roads Act. That section makes it perfectly clear that interest only is to be paid by local authorities on one-half of the amount borrowed by the State and expended on roads which are deemed to be main roads under the Act. Of the £672,000 available under the Federal Aid Roads Scheme, the State had to contribute £288,000. As £36,000 must be found from revenue each year, £252,000 has to be borrowed. Approximately one-half of this—£126,000—will be spent on main roads, namely, those now described as arterial and trunk roads. Interest on half of this must be paid by the local authorities according to the benefits

each local authority receives by reason of the construction of those roads, and thus in the first year they would between them have to find £3,780, and the State a similar sum—that is, for the whole of Western Australia. Yet Mr. Burvill arrived at a figure that he said the Albany Road Board would have to pay, and it was in excess of that which the State as a whole will have to pay. Mr. Cornell said that we insist upon the owner or driver of a motor car insuring against accident. The Traffic Act does not do this. It provides only that vehicles which are licensed to carry passengers shall insure against injury to passengers or to pedestrians. The Minister for Works deliberately decided that he would not go so far as to compel the owners of vehicles other than those plying for hire to insure. No State has gone so far as that yet. I do not think there is much chance of the State doing that. In regard to jay-walking it can be said that a committee is now sitting to consider the revision of the existing regulations under the Traffic Act and the framing of new ones, and this matter of jay-walking is one which will be dealt with by that committee. Mr. Glasheen alleges wanton destruction of valuable timber on the groups at Denmark. The department is not aware of this. Many years ago large areas were rung at Denmark by the unemployed, and if there was destruction of good timber, it seems to the department that it may have occurred in such circumstances. The present Government was in no way responsible as the groups at Denmark were established before we came into power. Mr. Holmes was anxious to know whether the Minister for Works in constructing roads under the new agreement was breaking faith with the Commonwealth authorities. Mr. Holmes was merely seeking information and I shall endeavour to state the facts as submitted to me by the Under Secretary for Public Works, in response to an inquiry from me. In order to ensure accuracy I think I had better read his statement to have it placed on record. It is as follows:—

In each of the three years up to the 30th June, 1926, the Commonwealth Government made available £100,000 and the State had to provide an additional £100,000 for what we called developmental roads. Clause 9 of the agreement with the Commonwealth reads: "The method of execution shall be by contract, but in special cases the Minister may approve of execution by departmental labour, provided that the work is carried out accord-

ing to approved methods of construction in which modern plant is utilised to the fullest extent." During this period of three years road boards were encouraged by the department to contract and carry out works, and only when local authorities could not, or would not, undertake the works did the department take them in hand by day labour. Throughout the three years period the department did not, in any one instance, call publicly for tenders for road works. This fact was well known to the Commonwealth Government, and particularly to Mr. Hill, Engineer for Works and Railways. In the first year comparatively few of the local authorities were prepared to undertake these works, mainly on account of the comparatively high standards set under the Commonwealth conditions, as compared with the methods employed by local authorities when carrying out works from their own funds; but each year showed an improvement, and many of the boards acquired plant, so that so far as developmental roads were concerned we gradually worked up to a position when comparatively few of such roads were constructed by day labour. Under the new Federal Aid Roads Agreement, which was ratified by Parliament on the 7th October last year, it was provided that the method of execution shall be by contract except that where the Minister for Public Works for the State considers that tenders received for the execution of the work are unsatisfactory or that execution by day labour would be more economical or expeditious and so informs the Minister, the Minister may, if he is satisfied that action has been taken by the State to ensure that the work will be carried out according to approved methods of construction in which modern plant is utilised to the fullest extent, approve of the execution of the work in whole or in part by day labour. The programme of works to be carried out under this new agreement was very promptly submitted to Melbourne, and approved of, and at the end of October the Minister for Works submitted to the Commonwealth authorities a list of works totalling £749,500, and certified that they could be more economically and expeditiously carried out by day labour than if we were compelled to call for tenders. No question was then raised by the Federal Minister for Works and Railways, who promptly approved of the proposition put up. The Main Roads Board had been appointed in June, 1926, and after it became known that £672,000 a year was available for roads it immediately became evident that the staff procurable could not possibly carry out the programme, even if all of the works were to be carried out either by road boards or by day labour, and it was further realised that if tenders had to be called for all works we would necessarily have to secure the services of a considerable number of engineers, surveyors and draftsmen. Works can be put in hand under an engineer under the day labour system, without it being necessary to supply specifications and plans which can only be prepared after the surveyors have done their work in the field. It is a very different proposition, however, when tenders are to be called for works, and it is

safe to say that if the Commonwealth had made it clear that the practice which had prevailed over three years was to be discontinued and tenders called for every work, the Main Roads Board would have expended a very small amount of the £350,000 that has been authorised for arterial and trunk roads. Immediately after the board was appointed efforts were made to secure the services of a limited number of engineers, draftsmen and surveyors, and although we advertised in the Eastern States, New Zealand, South Africa and England, and Mr. Tindale and the Public Service Commissioner visited the Eastern States we were not able to secure the number required to deal expeditiously with the programme of work, and even to-day, twelve months after the board was appointed, we are still short-handed. Local authorities throughout the State were agitating for works to be commenced in their respective districts, so that after having so readily obtained the approval of the Minister for Works and Railways to the carrying out by day labour of works totalling £149,500, other works were put in hand by the same method in anticipation that approval would readily be obtained, and on the 22nd February Mr. McCallum submitted another list to Melbourne. A letter from the Minister for Works and Railways dated the 25th February, and which crossed Mr. McCallum's letter of the 22nd February, was the first direct intimation received in regard to its being mandatory that tenders must be called for all works before the Minister for Works and Railways would authorise any work to be carried out by day labour. On the 11th March, 1927, the Minister for Works and Railways replied to the letter dated the 22nd February, and after expressing his regret that the list had not been submitted prior to some of the work being put in hand, stated that his Government would not recoup the State in respect of works carried out between the beginning of January and the 22nd February by day labour. At the same time they granted authority to carry on by day labour until the 30th April. The Hon. Mr. McCallum visited Melbourne in May and fully explained to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Works and Railways how impossible it was for the department, with the inadequate staff available to prepare plans and specifications in order that tenders might be called, without there being a very serious interruption of work, which would necessarily result in many hundreds of men being thrown out of employment until work could be resumed after tenders had been called. The Minister produced evidence which convinced the Prime Minister that we were inadequately staffed, notwithstanding the earnest endeavours that had been made to secure the services of professional officers, and the period was extended to the 31st July. However, before that period expired we again had to face the fact that owing to it being necessary to, in many instances, relocate roads and make diversions in order to meet the Commonwealth standards in regard to grades, width, etc., and the surveyors and draftsmen available could not cope with the volume of work necessitated in the matter of preparing

plans and specifications in time to enable us to call for tenders without its being necessary to suddenly cease all work by day labour during the interval which would elapse, therefore the situation was again placed before the Prime Minister and Mr. Hill last month by Mr. Willcock. The result was that our peculiar circumstances were again recognised to the extent that the period has been extended to the 31st October, by which time it is confidently expected that a large number of tenders will have been called for, and following upon that action works will be put in hand either by contract or if the prices are too high by day labour, as the case may be. In that way we will gradually meet the difficulties which were so suddenly imposed upon us by the letter dated the 25th February. Outside of the plant and equipment, which has cost about £120,000, now possessed by the Main Roads Board, and that possessed by some of the road boards, there is none in the State except that owned by two companies who specialise in high class construction work in the city and suburbs, and it was and still is considered that for some considerable time at least even when tenders are called, the contractors cannot in ordinary conditions quote prices below the estimates of the Main Roads Board. In all the years gone by, no matter what Government was in power, the policy in regard to road construction work was to construct either by day labour or by arrangement with local authorities, and it will again be proved that these methods make for efficiency and economy.

I have read that in order that it may appear in "Hansard," so that those members not present may be able to read the statement of the Under Secretary for Works. I was pleased to hear Mr. Holmes on the Federal financial proposals, as he has taken a prominent and intelligent part for many years on finance. Of course, he is at a disadvantage by reason of the fact that only the skeleton of the agreement is before him. I think he will find later on when full information is supplied to the House that, even if our big sinking fund had not been deducted from our gross loan indebtedness, and if we had only provided a normal sinking fund in respect of the Coolgardie Water Scheme and the Great Southern Railway, we would still receive only the £473,432 annually towards the repayment of our interest bill, as that was the amount due to us under the per capita payments on 1st July last. No matter what our liabilities were, we could get no more, by way of interest. The final agreement which is supposed to put the whole position as clearly as lawyers can contrive to do so, as I have already said, being closely examined by the Solicitor General, and may be subjected to further legal scrutiny. It will be much better, as Mr. Holmes

realises, to await this document before offering criticism at any length on this very important question. Mr. Macfarlane urges the abolition of the surtax on dues payable to the Fremantle Harbour Trust. A similar request has from time to time been made to the Government in power since 1921, and has been firmly refused. It was submitted to the Mitchell Government in November, 1923, just a few months before they left office, and the then Premier replied—

I would state that the Government, after mature consideration, is not disposed to agree to a reduction of any of the dues levied at present, nor until a definite undertaking from shipowners is forthcoming that such reduction would be immediately reflected in lower rates of freight.

That was a direct reply. Sir James Mitchell said the surtax had to go. He said, in effect, "If you lower the freight, we will do something; but unless you do that we will do nothing." A previous Colonial Secretary in replying to a deputation in May, 1922, expressed himself in this strain—

It is even open to some doubt that the full revenue, as supplemented by the surtax, exceeds by any appreciable sum the full cost of the services of the harbour after making provision for accruing wastage, obsolescence and all contingencies; and that being so, the Government regrets that considerations of prudent finance preclude it, while these circumstances obtain, from agreeing to any adjustment of charges that would have the effect of appreciably reducing the total revenue from the services of the Harbour Trust.

That was the view of the Mitchell Government, and it expressed the view of the present Ministry. Then, again, there may be large commitments before us in connection with the improvements to the Fremantle Harbour—commitments which will involve enormous expenditure—and it is too early yet to consider the question of abandoning any of the sources of revenue now available. Mr. Macfarlane objects to the term "War Surtax" in this connection. To my mind it is a most appropriate definition of the purpose of the tax. A vast proportion of the accumulated deficit of over 6 millions was due to the wholesale dislocation of trade and industry as a result of the war. That deficit was built up despite the imposition of heavy taxation and the exercise of the most drastic economy. According to Mr. Holmes the deficit is involving the Government in an interest bill of £1,000 a day. Hence, the war surtax is still fulfilling the object

for which it was originally imposed, and the community is better able to stand it to-day than it was in 1914. With regard to compulsory pilotage from the sea inward and outward to Gage Roads at Fremantle, the Government will not take the responsibility of removing that safeguard. Shortly after the last seamen's strike in Fremantle the Harbour Trust Commissioners recommended that this compulsory pilotage be abolished. The only ground submitted for the abolition was that during three weeks of the strike ships had been able to come in and go out of the harbour from and to the open sea without the assistance of a pilot. That did not seem to the Government to be sufficient warrant to repeal a regulation which, for over twenty years, had been considered necessary by the Fremantle Harbour authorities. The Government would have left itself open to public censure if it had removed such protection to human life except for the soundest of reasons.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But the lighting of the harbour has been improved since then.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Going back 30 years we find this compulsory pilotage insisted upon. And there is on the file no recommendation for its revocation. If the dues were unnecessary why were they tolerated so long?

Hon. G. W. Miles: Because at that time we had not the buoys and the leading lights that we have to-day.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Macfarlane said that the tonnage dues should be discontinued. The tonnage dues levied by the Harbour and Light Department are very moderate, and represent a recoup from the shipping companies to the State for its share of the heavy cost of port facilities, comprising surveys, maintenance of many port lights—which the Commonwealth did not take over—as well as the cost of maintenance of sea-marks and other aids to navigation along our extensive coastline. The tonnage dues are less than those charged in the other States. At ports where a harbour board or trust is not established, the tonnage due is at the rate of 2d. per ton on the gross tonnage, subject to a deduction for vessels that do not call for cargo. At ports where harbour authorities have been established, the charge is 1d., the reduction from 2d. to 1d. being in consideration of the fact that the harbour authorities levy certain dues against shipping that are not charged at the other ports. Prior to the Commonwealth

Government taking over the coastal light-houses in 1915, the light dues charged by the State were at the rate of 4d. per ton on net tonnage. On the transfer being effected, the State light dues were reduced by 50 per cent., but the new charges imposed by the Commonwealth Government for lighting, as from the 1st July, 1915, amounted to the heavy impost of 9d. per ton, covering a period of three months, on net tonnage, and this applied to all Australian ports.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That covered the whole of the lights along the coast.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Subsequently the State light dues were merged with the tonnage dues under the latter name, and, in conformity with a resolution of an Inter-State Harbour Boards Conference, the tonnage dues were based on the gross tonnage, roughly 50 per cent. more than net tonnage. Each payment of tonnage dues covers a period of three months, and, during that period, vessels may call at ports without being again subject to this charge. The larger vessels usually call twice within that period. In any event, tonnage dues are imposed for services rendered in every instance and there is no justification at all for their removal. Mr. Harris dealt with, or attempted to deal with the financial statement. He told the House that the Treasurer and his officials, in producing a surplus, had shown their resourcefulness.

Hon. E. H. Harris: No doubt.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I was anxious to ascertain what view the hon. member had in mind. At first I thought he intended to cast a reflection upon those officers, but he simply made reference to their resourcefulness without stating that there had been any funny business on the part of the Premier or his officers. He said the surplus was produced as a result of the cheap money and the Federal money. The Mitchell and Collier Governments between them have raised £2,700,000 worth of allegedly cheap money, but over £6,000,000 has been spent on the groups. What benefit, then, have we received from the cheap money?

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have not you charged up the 5 per cent. or 6 per cent. to the group settlers and paid only 1 per cent. or 3 per cent. for it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What interest have we received on the £6,000,000?

Hon. G. W. Miles: You have a whole lot of money coming into revenue.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Apart from the cheap money we have been paying 5 per cent. and in some instances 6 per cent. for loans. How can the cheap money be responsible for the surplus? As to the Federal money, the hon. member did not explain how it had had the effect of producing the surplus. Regarding the £165,000 set aside out of the Federal disabilities grant for mining, the hon. member said that that money should not be spent on the eastern goldfields but should be distributed throughout the mining fields of the State.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It was alleged at first that the whole of it was to be spent on the eastern goldfields.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, and rightly so, with a view to assisting the companies to lower the cost of production.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about the other mining fields?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are well provided for. If I had known that this matter would be broached I would have obtained information to prove that in the Murchison and in the outback gold-mining districts assistance is granted by way of loans to mines and aid to prospectors, and there has been no complaint whatever of neglect levelled against the present administration.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then you say that other mining fields will not get anything out of the Federal disabilities money?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member argues that other mining fields should participate, but there is no necessity for them to do so.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about Greenbushes?

Hon. E. H. Harris: May we take it that, if the money is spent at all, it will be spent on the eastern goldfields?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The other fields are receiving assistance from the vote for the development of mining. I was asked whether any proposal had been submitted to and rejected by the mining companies on the eastern goldfields. I was surprised that such a question should be put. I thought it was public knowledge that the Government had been negotiating with the companies for months and that the companies will not spend one shilling to revive the industry. They want the taxpayers to

bear the burden. We have been negotiating with the companies for months. We have told them we have the money in hand; we have promised them assistance by providing cheaper power. They have been leading us on for months, and now we find they want either the Commonwealth or the State to find the money for the working of their mines. The State will not provide the money and, if we can rely upon the word of Mr. Bruce, as I think we can, the Commonwealth will not find the money either. Mr. Harris referred to some of the literature produced regarding the present Government and gave samples of it, such as "Labour's Unique Record." If I had time I could write a little book on the unique change of front of the United Party. In this House during the years 1912-16 I was bombarded and cannonaded by the ancestors of the United Party over the establishment of the State Shipping Service. What a time they gave me as Leader of the House during those years! On one occasion, owing to the action of the Legislative Council, the Labour Government of the day withdrew a proposal to provide a passenger ship for the North-West coast. After that, I enjoyed a period of retirement from public life, but I returned to the leadership of this House only to find that the atmosphere was just the same. The United Party or the Nationalist Government had been defeated, and it was said that the cause of the defeat was that they refused to sell these trading concerns.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And it was quite true.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: During the last general elections, right through the country districts, the farming community was told that if the United Party were returned all the trading concerns would be sold. It was a logical course to follow, quite in keeping with the former policy. They went to the North-West by aeroplane. When we got there we found that this plank in their platform had been thrown overboard, and that they were in favour of trading concerns. When they could not get up by aeroplane they sent a telegram to say it was a fabrication and a falsehood to suggest that the United Party were opposed to trading concerns, especially so in regard to State steamships. They were certainly in favour of them. Not only that, but the United Party claimed that before relinquishing office they had approved of the con-

struction of the "Koolinda." They even took credit for that.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Where did you hear that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was said that one of the private shipping companies had a scheme for putting up the freights, but the officers of the United Party said that they came down upon them like a thousand of bricks, and would not agree to it. They said that if returned to office they would be the salvation of the North-West.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: So they would.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is a pity that Sir William Lathlain is not present. He said that trading concerns were the curse of Western Australia and of the Commonwealth. In some districts where there was a large number of Labour employees some of the candidates were inclined to favour the 44-hour week. Mr. Holmes has told us that a member of the United Party was in favour of a 44-hour week without discrimination. Some of the others went into agricultural districts and stated that the Labour Government had brought in a Bill with the object of forcing a 44-hour week upon the agricultural industry. That was a deliberate falsehood. In the Bill that was submitted by the Government the pastoral and agricultural industries were exempt.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Those engaged in them would soon have been starving if the 44-hour week had been granted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The predecessors of the United Party had opposed long-service leave. The matter came up for public discussion when the United Party was in power, and it was defeated in another place. During the last general elections, wherever it was suitable to introduce the subject, long-service leave was promised to the wages men throughout Western Australia, and not only long-service leave but superannuation. It was stated in the North that long-service leave would cost £250,000, and one candidate of the United Party said he would extend that principle without discrimination.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I thought it was £300,000.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have £250,000 here on my notes. The sum varies in different places. Mr. Harris also said that the Labour Government had not the majority of the people on their side at the last elections. He quoted a mass of figures I could not follow. We must get down to

the trial of strength. Of what use is it to quote electorates in which there was no contest? Let us take the 37 electorates in which there were contests.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Take the election as a whole.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: The result was that the Country Party polled a total of 13,205, the Labour Party 64,667, the United Party 49,697, and non-party 1,693 votes. Leaving out the non-party votes, the combined parties polled 62,902 against Labour and Labour polled 64,667.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You are leaving out the non-party votes.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: We are not counting them on either side. These are the grounds on which to base the will of the people.

Hon. J. Nicholson: These are statistics.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: He also made a sweeping statement concerning the "adulteration of the rolls," without making any attempt to justify it. If there had been any proof of the assertion it would not have been so bad, but no proof was offered.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Did not any dead men vote at the last election?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: He said that the Government had transferred men to certain districts in order to get their votes in those districts. Where was that done? He did not name any district. At that time men were being transferred to every district. The Government had £670,000 to spend on road construction, and it was necessary to get the men out into the country. I do not suppose 10 per cent. of the men who went to the country were enrolled.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Did I not quote six electorates?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I am coming to one which the hon. member did quote. It is alleged that the member for Greenough put somewhere in the vicinity of 100 men on the roll. That was a serious allegation to make. I know it is not a fact. I know that names were enrolled for Greenough. Some 50 men were working on the Protheroe Mine in 1926 when it was closed down. I was instrumental in getting them work on the roads. They were married men and resided permanently in the district. Probably they voted at the elections.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You say they lived there. If so, these would be ordinary enrolments.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Not 100 men were enrolled by Mr. Kennedy, or anyone else. The hon. member should quote some authority for damaging statements of that sort. Mr. Rose referred to the necessity for experimental farms in the South-West. I am in sympathy with that suggestion, and will bring the matter under the notice of the Minister for Lands. I understand, too, he will support the Closer Settlement Bill and trust he will assist us in getting it through the House. I hope members will not be under the impression it is our intention to resume land that is being usefully employed. Surely there is enough land in Western Australia, that is not utilised, without our resuming land that is being used, merely for the purpose of closer settlement. If a man is putting his land to good use, it would be a wanton thing on the part of any Government to deprive him of his block, even with full compensation. We could not command enough money to do things like that, for that would involve a tremendous expenditure. Mr. Kempton referred to the possibilities of the Dartmoor and Bindu Well districts. I am in constant correspondence with the settlers there, and have brought many of their grievances before the Government. All that the hon. member has said I endorse. He will have my reasonable co-operation in every way. I may mention that only at the last meeting of Cabinet I referred to the possibilities of that district. The completion of the Geraldton harbour will also have my sympathy and support. The Government recognise that something should be done to hasten its completion. Mr. Kempton asked about the Federal proposal for taking over the North-West. I cannot go fully into that question. We have twice asked the Federal Government to put up a scheme. We want to know, first of all, what they are prepared to spend on North-Western development. No reply has been received from the Federal Government; in fact, we have had no communication on that subject from them since Parliament closed down last year. As regards the railway bridge at Mullewa it is, I think, 15 years since a deputation waited upon me urging its construction. After being six years out of Parliament, I thought the bridge had been erected; but when I went up for election again a Mullewa deputation waited on me to ask whether, if elected, I would be prepared to advocate the erection of the bridge. I promised to

use my best endeavours to get the Commissioner of Railways to agree to its erection, just as I had promised years before. Somehow or other, the Commissioner of Railways is not convinced that a bridge is necessary at Mullewa. The whole question rests with the Commissioner. I believe I have replied to Mr. Yelland's questions regarding contributions to the sinking fund. The hon. member stated that parents are compelled to take their children from school on account of the moral character of some teachers.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: No, no! I stated that parents were under compulsion to send their children to school, and thus were compelled to put them under whatever teacher might be placed in the school, irrespective of what might be his moral character.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If there is anything against a teacher's moral character, the matter should be reported, so that investigation may be made.

Hon. J. H. Yelland: My suggestion is only that there is room for supervision in that respect.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is of the first importance that the moral character of every teacher should be good.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: That is essential.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No teacher is retained in the service if his moral character will not bear inspection.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: I am merely speaking in a general way.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I agree with the hon. member. I did intend to deal with some other questions; but the hour is late, and in any case it would be impossible for me in the time at my disposal to collect the information necessary for dealing with every question that has been raised. I have endeavoured to concentrate on the subjects of greater importance. At the same time, the whole of the speeches of hon. members have received or will receive attention. I have noted numerous points; and in pursuance of a system which I adopted shortly after taking office, I have forwarded extracts from the speeches to various departments concerned. The result is that these extracts appear on the official files, and may be helpful when the questions alluded to come up for discussion. Every reference to my own department is treated similarly. Hon. members may, therefore, rely upon it that their comments and suggestions are by

no means so much wasted effort, but may even at a distant date serve the purposes intended, with good results to the State. Some of the suggestions made by members of this Chamber have already been accepted by the Government in the course of administration. In conclusion, let me thank hon. members for their congratulations on my reselection to my present position. May I add that it will be my effort to prove worthy of the confidence reposed in me.

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

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor by the President, and such members as may desire to accompany him.

Question put and passed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. H. Seddon and the Premier's Financial Statement.

HON. H. SEDDON: By way of personal explanation, I wish to say a few words concerning the Chief Secretary's remarks on certain statements attributed by me to the Premier. I think the Chief Secretary expressed himself to the effect that he could not find those statements and did not know where I got them from. As they relate to finance, I should like to make the position clear. The statements quoted by me as having been made by the Premier were three in number. The first was—

Each one of these critics knows perfectly well that not one penny of the Commonwealth money from any of these grants during the past three years has benefited Consolidated Revenue at all.

The second was—

I assert again that not £1 of Federal money has gone into Consolidated Revenue.

And the third was—

Included in gross revenue is the disabilities grant of £565,000, which of course everybody knows does not benefit revenue to the extent of one penny.

Those statements were made by the Premier, and no doubt they have escaped the Chief Secretary's notice. They appear in "Hansard." I think it only fair to myself to make this explanation.

The Chief Secretary: I did not think the hon. member was quoting from "Hansard."

The **PRESIDENT**: The hon. member was not in order in quoting from "Hansard" of the current session.

Hon. H. Seddon: These were remarks by the Premier which I read in the Press, and which I afterwards saw in "Hansard."

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [12.56]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to Tuesday, the 6th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 12.57 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 17th August, 1927.

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES, SUBSIDY.

Mr. **FERGUSON** asked the Premier: In view of the educational value to the general community of agricultural shows, will the Government take steps to re-instate the subsidy to agricultural societies?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (for the Premier) replied: It is regretted that other and more urgent claims on Government funds make this impossible at present.

QUESTION—STATE SHIPPING SERVICE, EXTENSION.

Mr. **COVERLEY** asked the Premier: 1, Do the State Shipping Service propose to extend their monthly trips to Wyndham? 2, If so, when will the extension commence?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** (for the Premier) replied: 1 and 2, The provision of monthly trips would entail heavy loss to the service under present conditions, but the matter will be reconsidered as developments warrant.

QUESTION—HALL'S CREEK, MEDICAL OFFICER.

Mr. **COVERLEY** asked the Minister for Health: 1, Does he intend financially to assist the residents of Hall's Creek for the appointment of a district medical officer? 2, If so, to what amount?

The **MINISTER FOR HEALTH** replied: 1, The matter will be favourably considered if application be made in accordance with the adopted arrangement for subsidised doctors. 2, Two-thirds of the difference between income from private practice and £1,000 per annum. One third of such difference would require to be guaranteed by a local committee.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.36]: I have had the pleasure of speaking on the Address-in-reply on numerous occasions. This debate is supposed to present an opportunity for members to discuss all matters that they consider to be of importance to the State.

Mr. Griffiths: It provides a good safety valve.

Mr. **THOMSON**: I hope some members will not be superstitious of the fact that this is the thirteenth Parliament. Possibly some do feel that way and look forward to the next elections with a certain amount of trepidation. The latest election was remarkable for the fact that it left the personnel of Parliament practically unchanged and, in a sense, no election need