

namely, the Australian standard of living. The Prune Minister recently made an extraordinary statement that in his opinion protection had not increased the cost of production to the farmer. I should be interested to learn how the Prime Minister arrived at that conclusion. One has only to consider the present price of commodities to realise that the cost of production to the farmer has increased by 100 per cent. in the last few years. I have before me a list of the costs of various articles utilised in the wool industry, which is practically the same as for the wheat industry, although some of the items would not be required even by those farmers who have sheep. Here are some of the prices—

Shearing hand pieces, 1912-13, £2 10s. each; 1939, £5 17s. 6d. each. No. 8 galvanised wire, 1912-13, £8 5s. a ton; 1939, £17 a ton. Kerosene, 1912-13, 7s. 9d. a case; 1939, 17s. a case. Working men's boots, 1912-13, 5s. 6d. a pair; 1939, 16s. a pair.

So it continues right through the list. Those added costs have been brought about by the policy of protection and the policy of the Arbitration Court. Members are fully aware of that. The policy known as the new protection was introduced about 1903 under which the worker was given some of the protection afforded to the manufacturer. That was quite a right policy to adopt. Unfortunately it has continued ever since, and as protection has been increased, so wages have risen also, with the result that the price of everything the farmer has to buy has increased out of all knowledge. The party to which I belong has been stressing for years the fact that costs were piling up year after year while the price of the farmer's produce has not even remained stationary but has fallen. Wheat is bringing only one-third of the price that ruled in 1912, whereas the costs of all the articles required by the farmer have increased by 100 per cent. at the very least. The same statement applies to the pastoral industry. What my party has been telling the upholders of the protectionist policy would occur has occurred. The costs have been piling up over the years until the farmer cannot now profitably sell either his wheat or his wool at the ruling price. In 1913-14, 2s. 9d. to 3s. a bushel was the regular opening price for wheat, and with that price the farmer was able to carry on. He is now unable to carry on any longer. In the proposals that eman-

ated from the Wheat Conference recently held in Melbourne, the farmer can see no hope whatever. Consequently I deem it my duty to move an amendment to the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, as follows:—

That the following words be added to the motion, "but this House regrets to advise Your Excellency that in its opinion the provision made by the Conference of Premiers for stabilising the wheat industry is inadequate."

On motion by Mr. Fox, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 23rd August, 1939.

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

QUESTION—MILLS & WARE, LTD.

As to Sustenance to Strikers.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Honorary Minister: Are any of the employees of Mills and Ware, Ltd., now on strike, in receipt of sustenance from the Government?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: No.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, ETC.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Honorary Minister: What is the estimated cost of—1, Perth Technical School additions; 2,

new Victoria Park State School; 3, Heathcote Mental Reception Home additions; 4, Hospital for Insane, Claremont, additions; 5, Government offices, Perth; 6, (a) King Edward Maternity Hospital additions; (b) cost to date of such additions; 7, Perth Hospital?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, £44,500. 2, £15,000. 3, £15,000. 4, £26,500. 5, Estimate not yet prepared. 6, (a) £70,000; (b) £70,000 (approx.). 7, Perth Hospital: Estimated cost of complete scheme, £765,000; estimated cost of portion now being proceeded with, £445,000.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. G. Fraser, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to the Chief Secretary (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) on the ground of ill-health.

MOTION—METROPOLITAN MILK ACT.

To Disallow Regulations.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter (East):—

That Regulations 102, 103, 104, and 105, and new Sixth Schedule made under the Metropolitan Milk Act, 1932-1936, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 9th June, 1939, and laid on the Table of the House on the 8th August, 1939, be and are hereby disallowed.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [4.37]: I do not intend to delay the House long in speaking to this motion because of the very weak case advanced by the mover. It is one of the weakest he has ever put forward, but one may offer some excuse for him owing to the very poor material that was at his disposal. When listening to the hon. member, because of the stress he laid upon the fact that a certain train arrived in Perth at a particular hour of the morning, we might have imagined that most of the milk consumed in the metropolitan area came by that train. On investigation, I find that only about 20 per cent. of the milk consumed in the metropolitan area comes from the South-West, and that, in addition to a train arriving at Perth in the morning, another arrives at about 7.30 in the evening. It is safe to say that only about 10 per cent. of the milk consumed in the metro-

politan area comes to Perth by the early train. The evening train brings fully 50 per cent. of the South-West milk and it is delivered on the following morning. The milk derived from cows this morning is put on the train to arrive in Perth this evening, and it is then ready for distribution early to-morrow morning. Evidently Mr. Baxter does not know the facts of the case. According to his statement, practically the whole of the milk arrives in Perth by the early morning train and is held until the following morning. Members may dismiss from their minds the thought that most of the milk delivered in the metropolitan area is held for 48 or 50 hours, for such is not the case. If any milk is held for that length of time, it represents about 10 per cent. The hon. member also stressed the point that this would be an interference with the award of the Arbitration Court. If we go into the matter, what do we find? The Arbitration Court made an award governing the employment of milk carters, but all that was done was to lay down the daily hours that could be worked. The hours of employment were prescribed at eight hours 40 minutes, that being the longest stretch any carter is permitted to work in any one day, while the weekly hours were fixed at 46. Any time worked over the periods I have mentioned meant that overtime had to be paid. The fixing of the time for delivery of milk between 1 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. does not interfere with any award the Arbitration Court has issued.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And I thought you understood Arbitration Court awards!

Hon. J. Cornell: So did I.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is evident Mr. Fraser does not.

HON. G. FRASER: Members will agree with me that the Arbitration Court is resorted to when disputes arise between sections of employers and employees. In this instance, no dispute existed.

Hon. J. Cornell: No. The Milk Board put it over by way of regulations.

Hon. G. FRASER: The regulation under discussion was framed as the result of a request proffered by both employers and employees. Consequently there was no dispute that would warrant the matter being referred to the Arbitration Court.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I did not say that it should have been referred to the court.

Hon. G. FRASER: When the Arbitration Court is silent, is it not reasonable to assume that both the employers and the employees will arrange conditions satisfactory to themselves?

Hon. J. Cornell: Why did they not register it as an industrial agreement?

Hon. G. FRASER: An award was issued covering the hours of work per day and per week. As there was no dispute about hours, the time for starting or for finishing work, the stretch of shifts, or any question in such a category, the employers and the employees have merely done what we would like to see in connection with other industries. Both parties were in agreement and approached the Milk Board regarding the question of deliveries.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: In other words, your crowd merely use the Arbitration Court when they deem fit.

Hon. A. Thomson: When it suits them.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Arbitration Court has been available when disputes arise and decisions are required.

Hon. A. Thomson: Why was the court not availed of in this instance?

Hon. G. FRASER: When the employers and the employees arrive at an agreement, there is no need to go to the court.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Yes, there is, if the parties desire the agreement to be registered.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, if the agreement is to be registered.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Arbitration Court represents the public and sees that agreements arrived at are fair.

Hon. G. FRASER: So does the Milk Board, the members of which body agreed to the regulation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Milk Board does not represent the public, far from it.

Hon. G. FRASER: It represents all sections of the community.

Hon. J. Cornell: The people have been shanghaied by the Milk Board, and know nothing about the matter.

Hon. G. FRASER: There has been no interference in any shape or form. Both parties were in agreement and so there was no necessity to approach the court at all. The court earlier issued its award, which embodied a clause setting out the hours to be worked. If the Milk Board had gazetted a regulation which affected that, then there might be something in the argument that

there had been interference with the functions of the court.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You know that the court declined to fix any stated hours.

Hon. G. FRASER: But in this instance the employers and employees desired the alteration. The regulation merely seeks to give effect to what both parties wished.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Hours were not fixed.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. G. FRASER: Mr. Baxter attempted to build up his case by asserting that afternoon deliveries of milk would not be permitted, and that deliveries would be effected in future once daily. One would have imagined that something entirely new regarding milk distribution had been instituted. As I interjected when he was speaking, one daily delivery has been operating in Fremantle for the last twelve years.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I know that.

Hon. G. FRASER: In fact, I could go back 20 years in my recollection of the industry there.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I know the procedure is not new.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then what disability will the people of Perth suffer?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What about the argument that prices will increase?

Hon. G. FRASER: There again Mr. Baxter was on very unstable ground, because for some years past milk has been delivered in Melbourne once daily between 1 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: But there is a different climate there.

Hon. G. FRASER: I believe that if we were to search further afield throughout the Commonwealth, other examples would be found. Nothing new has been introduced by the new regulation, nothing, in fact, that does not already operate within Western Australia. I believe the afternoon delivery of milk extends to Claremont, but across the borderline there, Cottesloe has no afternoon delivery. Now we find that, in consequence of this particular regulation having been drawn up to apply to a small additional circle of consumers, objection is taken to it in this Chamber. If there were anything in the point raised in regard to the health of the community being adversely affected, those interested in the subject might give consideration to the position. On the other hand, when we find that similar conditions to those sought to

be established under the regulation have applied for many years past almost next door, we are bound to confess that nothing has ever been heard about the health of the public at Fremantle having been impaired.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What is the object of limiting the hours of delivery?

Hon. G. FRASER: The limited hours are suitable to all concerned.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: In what way?

Hon. G. FRASER: We must take into consideration the fact that the people concerned in the milk delivery business have to work 365 days each year. Of course, the employees receive 12 days holiday annually, which means that they have to work for 353 days, including Christmas Day, Good Friday and other public holidays.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But that is a condition of the industry.

Hon. G. FRASER: The men have to work under those conditions because of the public demand. The public requires milk to be delivered each day, and so the employees must work at least 353 days each year. Members would find difficulty in discovering any other industry in which men have to work such hours.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: That is provided for in their award.

Hon. G. FRASER: No one is permitted to do it in other industries.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: At any rate, the milk carters get 12 days holidays and they work 353 days in the year.

Hon. G. FRASER: They have a 46-hour week.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon. members will have an opportunity to reply to Mr. Fraser's remarks later on.

Hon. G. FRASER: Because the regulations were not introduced earlier, those engaged in the industry in the city have had to work 353 days each year, but their daily hours have extended from midnight to as late as 5 p.m. Would members stand for such conditions for one moment?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: The men are paid accordingly.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have already referred to the stretch of hours in the industry.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What overtime do they receive?

Hon. G. FRASER: The men may not receive any overtime.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: You said they could work only 46 hours a week.

Hon. G. FRASER: The men may not work that total number of hours weekly, but, because of the adverse conditions obtaining in the industry, the regulation under discussion has been promulgated. No harm will result to anyone by the introduction of the new order but, on the other hand, much good will result to a large number of men engaged in the industry. Here we find the employers and the employees in agreement, and yet this Chamber is asked to interfere and upset conditions that are suitable to both parties.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We know what happened regarding the bakers' agreement.

Hon. G. FRASER: We are dealing with milkmen.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: What happened to that agreement?

Hon. G. FRASER: There was no industrial agreement.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Is there one between the employers and the employees?

Hon. G. FRASER: The mere fact that the Milk Board issued the regulations shows there was agreement on this point.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There is the association.

Hon. G. FRASER: We must accept the association as the guide and the association representing both sections of the industry approached the Milk Board and asked that this step be taken.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Some of them.

Hon. G. FRASER: I said the association, which of course one must expect represents the majority of the people in the industry.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Those it suits.

Hon. G. FRASER: We find that something has been done which is agreeable to both parties. I will put it that way if my reference to an agreement offends my friends opposite. A procedure that has been agreed to by both parties—the people mainly concerned—has been set in motion and now an attempt is to be made to upset it.

Hon. J. Cornell: Are the consumers not to be considered?

Hon. G. FRASER: The consumers are given every consideration. The consumers will not be detrimentally affected whether the delivery of milk be made once or twice a day. Mr. Baxter stated that there had

been increased sales of powdered milk and that the consumption of that commodity was likely to grow as the result of the abandonment of the second delivery of fresh milk each day.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: My statement can be proved.

Hon. G. FRASER: Does the hon. member think that the employers would agree to a proposal of this description if by its adoption they would endanger their own industry? To assume that is not logical. The hon. member may have figures to indicate that the consumption of powdered milk has increased in this State, but he has no figures to show that its consumption has increased in the metropolitan area, and I defy him to secure them. It is possible to get figures for the State, but on what grounds does he base his assertion that the increased consumption has taken place in the metropolitan area?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Did I say it had increased in the metropolitan area?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, definitely.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I did nothing of the sort.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Mr. Baxter was referring to the increased consumption in the State.

Hon. G. FRASER: He spoke about the consumption in the State and said that the use of powdered milk had increased in the metropolitan area.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Who is making this speech, Mr. President?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know what is in the member's proof copy of his speech, but I can depend on my own hearing.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure the hon. member will accept Mr. Baxter's statement.

Hon. G. FRASER: Even if Mr. Baxter's assertion is correct, he must realise that the growing use of powdered milk is a development of recent years. Certainly powdered skim milk has been on the market for a good many years, but the brand at present finding favour is a better product.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask hon. members to allow Mr. Fraser to proceed without interruption.

Hon. G. FRASER: Something similar may happen with regard to the powdered

milk now on the market as happened in England many years ago when that product was introduced. In that country, I am informed, there was a considerable increase in the consumption of powdered milk because of the fact that it was something new. After it had been on the market for some time, however, sales decreased, notwithstanding the fact that the price of whole milk was raised. The same thing may happen here. This particular milk has come on the market in Western Australia and as it is something new it has been readily purchased. We may find, however, that in the near future the same thing that happened in England will occur here. I suggest that the increased sales of powdered milk are due to the growth of mining and other outback districts where people are unable to get whole milk. We are all aware how the number of outback towns has grown in recent years and naturally the inhabitants of those places require milk. Being unable to obtain fresh milk, they will, of course, use the powdered article. That fact, I think, explains the increased sales of the commodity in this State. The hon. member said something about the price of milk being increased. I suggest to him that if these regulations are disallowed there will be more likelihood of an increase in the price of milk than if the regulations are permitted to remain.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The producer will get less.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Milk Board will have a say in that. If the regulations are defeated and milkmen have to do an afternoon round, costs will naturally be increased, and that will be followed by a demand for an increase in the price of milk.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Would they still deliver at 1 o'clock in the morning?

Hon. G. FRASER: The time would not be altered. Whether the milk is delivered once or twice a day, the time of delivery will be the same as in years gone by. But the disallowance of the regulations may—I do not say it will—have the effect of increasing the price of milk to the consumer. The average consumer has a milkman calling only once a day. That is the only delivery required except to large consumers, such as shops. The regulations provide for establishments that require delivery more than once a day. It was realised that in

some instances more than one delivery would be needed and further deliveries can be approved by the board if application is made to it.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Has there been a reduction in the price of milk since the introduction of the regulations?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, and a reduction is not likely whatever happens—whether the regulations stand or are rejected.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: It is hardly likely that the price will increase.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is likely, because of the extra cost the trade will have to bear. Those engaged in the industry have been dissatisfied with the price for some time. The introduction of these regulations would prevent any increase, but if the regulations are disallowed and the old system has to continue, naturally the agitation for an increased price will be intensified. As a matter of fact, a person in the trade informed me that a difference of 2d. a gallon is entailed in a second delivery, and that the trade is finding it extremely difficult to carry on. These regulations will give it an opportunity to do so. Mr. Baxter made out a case concerning the effect of the regulations on the health and the convenience of the people. I cannot see that any alteration of this kind is likely to occur, and I make that remark after comparing those who have had an afternoon delivery with those who have not. Bearing in mind the likelihood of an agitation for an increased price for milk if the regulations are not allowed, and viewing the case generally, I am of opinion that the House should allow the regulations and defeat the motion submitted by Mr. Baxter. I intend to oppose the motion.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.58]: If the only reasons for the alteration in the number of milk deliveries are those given by Mr. Fraser, I fear that the regulations are not justified. I trust that the Honorary Minister will be able to give us a somewhat better explanation. I gather that the reason for the existence of the regulations is simply that the employers and the employees have come to an arrangement. They desire to deliver only once a day and wish that delivery to take place between 1 a.m. and 9 a.m. The Arbitration Court has been established in this State for the purpose of look-

ing after the interests of the public. The employer and the employee come before that Court and although they may both agree to something, the Arbitration Court is there to see that the interests of the public are protected as well. Otherwise we would have the peculiar position that the employer and employee would combine to do something that was not right where the public was concerned. The argument advanced appears to be that because the employer and the employee in the milk industry have agreed, therefore the Milk Board is justified in usurping the authority of the Arbitration Court. That is entirely wrong in principle. If the argument is that by fixing one delivery per day, the milk would be considerably reduced in price and that the public would derive material benefit and also get just as good an article as if there were two deliveries, then I would agree to the regulations remaining in force: but what I cannot understand is this: we are told that the conditions in the industry are so dreadful that a man has to work 365 days a year, which of course is not correct, because the Arbitration Court watches the conditions. The Court declares that the employee shall have certain days off in each week and certain holidays per annum, and that the men shall work only a certain number of hours per week and a given number of hours per day. We are told that working the hours in which the carters are engaged at night is something shocking since those men have to move about in all kinds of weather, thunderstorms, rain, etc. All those matters came under the notice of the Arbitration Court, and the wages of the men were fixed accordingly. Now if the board is going to fix a particular period during which the carters are to work, it will be entirely wrong, because the board will undoubtedly be usurping the authority of the Court. Let me assume that the Court said that milk should be delivered only between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. It may be then that the Court would say that the milk driver was not having such a bad time after all, and therefore it would give him the ordinary rate of wage. Here, however, we have the Milk Board arbitrarily making an arrangement which creates an anomalous position, an arrangement fixing the easiest hours of the day for the milk carters, who, at the same time, are continuing

to receive payment for working the worst hours. The whole question is a matter purely and simply for the Arbitration Court. The Arbitration Court fixes the hours, let us assume at between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., and it declares also that the wages shall be so-and-so, and that the hours shall be so-and-so. The application has been made to the Court, and both parties have agreed. We must realise also that the Court has to look after the interests of the public. If it declared that it was reasonable that an inquiry should be held into the conditions, then the Milk Board would be quite justified in saying, "We shall frame a regulation so as to fall into line with what the Arbitration Court has ordered." That would be all right. At the present time, however, I am in the position of believing that the Milk Board has in all probability done many excellent things. But on the arguments advanced in support of the retention of the regulations, I feel that there seems to be in existence what is sometimes described as an unholy alliance, and to this the House should not agree. Up to the present time no one has looked after the interests of the consumers. However, I shall retain an open mind, and will listen to other arguments that may be advanced in support of the retention of the regulations.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.5]: I have little to say on this subject, except to mention that on the question of one delivery per day, I have no axe to grind, because I have used pasteurised milk ever since the day it came on the market. Mr. Fraser has said that because the Arbitration Court has not laid it down that there should be only one delivery a day, and that it did not adequately arrange the spread of hours, the Milk Board on the representation of the milk vendors and the carters, agreed to frame a regulation setting out that there should be only one delivery a day. It must be remembered, however, that there are four parties to the milk question, and they are the man who produces it, the man who sells it, the man who carts it and the chap who drinks it. The man who consumes the milk and pays for it has not been considered at all. My feelings towards the Milk Board are similar to the aversion exhibited by the "Bulletin" towards the Sydney Milk Board

when it raised the price of milk. But the point I wish to emphasise is whether we are going to sit down and allow a semi-governmental body to usurp the functions of the Arbitration Court. I submit that if the Arbitration Court cannot adequately adjudicate on a matter of this description there is only one other case to follow, and that is for the Legislature to declare that there shall be one delivery only in the metropolitan area. Under the Bread Act is there a regulation framed to limit delivery? Of course not; deliveries are limited by the Act itself. I shall have no hesitation at all times in voting to disagree against a semi-governmental body taking to itself a right that belongs to a constituted authority. That is what the Milk Board has done. Let us assume that the shipowners' agents at Fremantle and the lumpers say, "We will not work between midnight and 6 a.m." Would Mr. Fraser put through a regulation to give that legal sanction? That, in effect, is what the Milk Board has done. I ask Mr. Fraser whether he would support such a regulation as I have instanced.

Hon. G. Fraser: It would not be required because that is what is done now.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Probably such a regulation would have about as much effect as the burning of the National Register. I intend to support the disallowance of the regulation solely on the ground that I am against any semi-governmental body legislating in this manner.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.10]: Mr. Fraser has put forward the argument that the case advanced by Mr. Baxter was apparently so flimsy that he could not realise the possibility of members giving consideration to the motion. Mr. Fraser certainly gave some instances which may tend to support his contention, but from my recollection of the case submitted by Mr. Baxter, and I dare say Mr. Baxter, will correct me if I am wrong, I understood one of Mr. Baxter's principal arguments was that the effect of the regulations, if passed, would be to enable the Milk Board to usurp what are really the functions of the Industrial Arbitration Court. Am I right?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Yes, quite right.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: And the more we look into the question, the more we will

become convinced that there is the greatest possible strength and sound reasoning in an argument such as that. In addition, and again if my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Baxter pointed out that the regulation, instead of having the effect of increasing the sale of fresh milk, would undoubtedly operate the other way. The hon. member also advanced an argument that appealed to me very strongly, namely, that the holding up of milk—I care not whether it be 10, 20 or 30 hours; one period instanced by Mr. Baxter was 20 hours—would have a deleterious effect. Apart from that, however, the important point that does appeal to me is that the regulation of the hours in the delivery of milk will be bound to be harmful and will not be in the best interests, particularly of the consumers, and more particularly still of children. These, to my mind, are undoubtedly arguments of the strongest possible character.

Hon. G. Fraser: How is it that the arrangement has not harmed people who have been without a second delivery of milk for the last 20 years?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: May I answer the hon. member's question by pointing out to him that there was no such regulation in force until an attempt was made to bring in a regulation fixing hours for delivery, namely from 1 a.m. until 9.30 a.m. Accordingly, Mr. Fraser's suggestion is dispelled by the fact that where children require fresh milk—not milk that has been held up for 10 or 12 or 20 hours—then so long as we do not approve a regulation fixing hours, the result will be that a milk vendor may deliver that fresh milk at any hour most suitable to the consumer. That, I understand, is now the position.

Hon. G. Fraser: I tell you that my part of the metropolitan area has not had a second delivery for many years.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is quite wrong, because I know of instances where there are infants in a family and where the ordinary members receive their milk once a day but where the milk required for the children is delivered more frequently. I know that as a fact.

The Honorary Minister: And that would be a fact under the proposed regulation.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Honorary Minister is wrong, because the regulation requires the milk to be delivered between 1 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. Thus it could not be

delivered at all during the afternoon. These are points to be taken into consideration in determining whether or not we should give this power to the board. However, I shall go a little further and point out to the House that I doubt very much whether there is power to do anything of the sort. Section 36 of the principal Act, the Metropolitan Milk Act, imposes certain powers or duties upon the board, as follows:—

Subject to this Act the board is hereby charged with the following matters:—(1) The regulation and organisation of (a) the production of milk in dairy areas; (b) the supply and sale of milk by dairymen to milk vendors.

This is the point to which I desire to draw attention—

(c) the supply, sale and distribution of milk to consumers in the metropolitan area. The board is charged with the supply, sale and distribution; but there is nothing, so far as my present perusal of the Act shows me, to indicate that power is given to the board to fix hours of delivery.

Hon. J. Cornell: If Parliament had meant that, there would of course have been a limitation.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Precisely. If Parliament had intended when the Bill was introduced, to give the board power to fix the hours, I am certain objection would have been raised in this Chamber, if not elsewhere, on the ground that such a provision would be a trespass on the functions of the Arbitration Court. The section I have quoted does not, I submit, give one iota of right to fix hours of delivery, unless there is an express power to do so. The regulation of distribution is one thing, but the fixing of hours is entirely another thing and would need to be expressly named in the powers given. Later Section 38, gives power to make regulations. Section 36 merely indicates the duties which the board has to perform.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And its powers.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, and the powers with which it is charged. Section 38, on the other hand, provides—

The Minister may with the approval of the Governor make regulations prescribing forms and fees and other matters and things which by this Act are contemplated, required or permitted to be prescribed, or which appear to him to be necessary or convenient to be prescribed, for the purpose of enabling the board effectually to perform and carry out its powers.

If it can be shown by Mr. Fraser, or the Honorary Minister—who I take it will speak in due course; I should have liked to hear his views first—

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That is the usual practice.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes; and it gives one an opportunity to hear both sides of the question before making up one's mind on a matter of importance, such as I admit this to be. There is nothing in this particular section dealing with the duties and powers given to the board which would indicate the fixing of hours. But, strange to say, in the section I first read, Section 36, dealing with the duties and powers of the board, there is an express power to fix the minimum price or prices; but not to fix hours—a totally different thing.

Hon. G. Fraser: If I were a lawyer, I would be able to work that in under the word "distribution."

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The word "distribution" would have no applicability to the fixing of hours at all. To enable the board to fix hours, there would require to be a clear and emphatic power given; and that power is not given in the Act. The proposal to confer on the board powers of this nature is wrong, even though it could be established—I believe it could not be—that power was given under the Act to make regulations of this nature. But if they were made, the first result would be, if anyone were sufficiently interested, to challenge the regulations.

Hon. J. Cornell: That all costs money.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes. Having regard to the character of the regulations, the invasion of this regulation into the province and duties of an industrial court should be sufficient in itself to justify the House in refusing to approve of the regulations and in supporting Mr. Baxter in his motion.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.26]: Before dealing with the Address-in-reply, I wish to join in the expressions of very

deep regret that have been uttered in relation to the tragic death of Miss Holman. I desire also to express my deep regret at the passing of the Vice-Chancellor of our University, Professor Whitfeld, in whom we had a gentleman especially well fitted for the high office he filled with so much credit to the State, the University and himself. It was not my privilege to be closely acquainted with Professor Whitfeld; but I have reason to know that the public life of the State and all it stands for are much poorer by the passing of one so well fitted for the high office that he adorned.

The first question noticed in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech is that of defence. I do not think any one of us fails to realise the gravity of the problem facing Australia. Were I to follow my own inclinations, I would rise here and speak from now until midnight, or until next week, on the problems of the wheatgrower. However, my wish is to adhere to the order of the matters as they appear in the Speech. Reference is there made to the question of defence, and to the expenditure the Australian people are called upon to meet in that connection. I have here an extract from the "West Australian" of the 7th July, informing us, by cable from London, that the Government of Great Britain has been compelled—I use that word advisedly—to advance the huge sum of £100,000,000 to certain countries, namely Poland, Turkey, Roumania and Greece, to assist them to purchase arms and war material. That fact brings home to us the position of the Mother Country, the dreadful position facing her when she is compelled to grant credits of such huge amounts to those nations. It causes us to wonder why, if Britain can do that, we need worry greatly about finding £33,000,000 which the Commonwealth Government tells us it proposes to spend on munitions, arms, and other means of defence. Let us not forget, however—though it is one of those things that cannot be avoided—that the bulk of the money will be spent in the Eastern States. Any part of it that may be spent in Western Australia will be spent in the metropolitan area. And so it goes on. The huge expenditure of public money, no matter for what purpose, seems to be always made in the cities and larger towns. Thus we find the condition of country districts continually becoming worse. Where the expendi-

ture of public funds takes place, there the people are found; and where the people are, most other things appear to be also.

The next item in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech to which I desire to refer is the question of employment. In that connection, our thoughts fly to the young people of the State. While work must be found for married men, still the duty of those at the head of affairs is to provide work for those who will be taking our place to-morrow. One is disappointed to find that the present Government, which has been so long in power, has not shown continuity in its policy regarding employment. It is disappointing to find the Government lagging behind the Governments of the Eastern States. It is not my intention to read all the extracts which I hold; I have them to remind me and to back up my statement that Western Australia is behind most of the other States of the Commonwealth in its provision for training what might be termed the lost legion, that is, our young people, so that they may be fitted to take their place in the world. May I be permitted to read this extract from the "West Australian" of the 4th July last?—

Subsidised apprentices. The Metropolitan Council of the Australian Labour Party is opposed to any form of subsidised apprenticeships. At its last meeting it gave consideration to a letter from the Perth Women's Service Guild inviting it to appoint representatives to discuss the possibilities of subsidised apprenticeships for youths between the ages of 18 and 25. The council resolved to oppose any system of subsidised apprenticeships and declined to confer with the guild.

I have a letter written to the "West Australian" inquiring what good reasons the Metropolitan Council of the A.L.P. had for its refusal. We are, however, familiar with the reasons. One is that if the scheme were adopted tradesmen would be thrown out of work. It is regrettable that the council refused to confer with this band of women who are trying to do something for our young people, so that they might have an opportunity which I feel sure it is the desire of all of us they should get.

Another matter connected with young people is technical education. I notice that in the metropolitan area a sum of £43,000 is to be spent in providing what has been called an ambitious programme of

extensions to the Perth Technical College and the Fremantle Technical School. Under date the 6th February this year, the "West Australian," in an editorial, says—

To anyone aware of the nature of the trust, there would appear something legally doubtful and morally incredible in the Government's proposal to draw on the Jubilee Fund for Youth Employment partly to finance a building programme for the expansion of technical education.

I need say no more than that. No mention is made of drawing on that fund—whether the drawing be legally or morally correct—for the provision of technical education in the country. Quite recently the Minister for Education, with the Director of Education, visited Geraldton. Previous to their visit, a public meeting had been called at Geraldton, which we asked the young people to attend, so that they could hand in their names and the subjects they wished to study. The meeting was called for the purpose of establishing technical classes at Geraldton, and it was well attended. That was in April. On my return home last week I was informed by the head teacher of the primary school, who is an enthusiast, that as the result of that meeting he had received 250 applications from young people in the town and district for technical instruction. At that deputation to the Minister and the Director we were quite plainly told that, as the Government had spent between £22,000 and £23,000 on the high school, we could not expect the expenditure of additional money on equipment. I have the newspaper report of that deputation. The fact remains, in my opinion, that these 250 young people should have an equal chance with the young people of the metropolitan area to obtain technical education. This they are going to be denied. I am not here to utter silly threats. We have our high school, and we got it in record time.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Of course, the Premier represents Geraldton.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes. There is a good story attached to getting that high school which I would like to tell members, but I have not time to do so now.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You will tell us some day, I hope.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I hope I will. Recently I asked a question whether shorthand and typewriting was taught at the Bunbury

High School, Collie, the Eastern Goldfields Technical School, Harvey, Narrogin and the Northam High School, and whether typewriters were supplied. I cannot remember the exact reply, but it was to the effect that parents and citizens' associations supplied the typewriters. Now that we have a high school at Geraldton, I wish to know how long we shall be denied typewriters, which are necessary to teach the students typewriting.

Hon. L. Craig: You have a parents and citizens' association.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: This energetic young friend of mine! We raised that point at the deputation to the Minister and the Director of Education, and were told what the wise young man has just said, "You have a parents and citizens' association, and it is up to the parents and citizens to provide the typewriters."

Hon. C. B. Williams: Are typewriters provided in the Boulder Technical School?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No. I made it my business to ascertain that the typewriters supplied at the various places I have mentioned were not provided by parents and citizens' associations. I ask, is it fair to request parents and citizens to provide typewriters? We have an excellent parents and citizens' association at Geraldton, the members of which have raised much money for the benefit of our schools there, but I do not think they should be asked to provide typewriters.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why not get one of the typewriter firms in Perth to supply them to Geraldton as an advertisement?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Students at Geraldton have had to pay outside teachers for instruction in typewriting and shorthand. Now that we have a splendid high school at Geraldton, surely the Government—led by the member for Geraldton—should not cavil at the expense of providing a few typewriters. The Government should do the fair thing by the parents and the children.

Hon. C. B. Williams: How much do you want? Typewriters are £50 apiece.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Following on the question of youth employment is the general question of employment. At this stage I desire to pay grateful tribute to the Honorary Minister, who is at present in charge of this department. I mentioned this matter

while speaking on the Supply Bill, and I do not want the Honorary Minister to think that I failed to appreciate the telegram he sent me in connection with a very dire case. So much do I appreciate it that I intend to get it suitably framed and hang it up in my house, as a memento of a Minister with a big heart. He is the only Minister since I have been in Parliament who has responded to my requests. I received the telegram after I was given an assurance by the sergeant of police that he had sent a report to the Minister on the case. He had said, "I promise you to get my report away by to-night's mail." I know the sergeant is a humane man, and am sure he kept his promise. He has since reassured me on the point. The fact remains, however, that had I not written to the Minister on the matter, the unfortunate man for whom I was seeking assistance would have been in a parlous position for perhaps two weeks, as many others have been. On the following afternoon I received this telegram from the Honorary Minister:—

No application received from police re (mentioning the man's name). Am accepting your statement as correct. Please instruct (man's name) to report to foreman Duncan for work immediately. Gray.

The next morning I went to see the man in the bush, where he was living with his six children, and told him to report for work. It happened to be one of our coldest days, too. I thank the Honorary Minister sincerely I cannot promise him in return to support his favourite Bread Bill—I cannot go as far as that—but I shall not forget the extreme pleasure I experienced on receipt of that telegram, especially as the Minister had not received the police report, which contained a request that the matter be dealt with expeditiously.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: He has too many other duties: that is his trouble.

Hon. C. B. Williams: If some Labour members hear of this to-morrow, the Minister will get the cane!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I felt I must refer to this man's case because at long last we find we are not to be slaves of custom. Why must applications be sent to Perth for attention? Had it not been for the letter I sent to the Minister the application would have filtered through the ordinary channels, and in the meantime the applicant would have had to depend upon the charity of the

people of Geraldton. I have another case in my district, that of a man with five children. He is a widower and, after working all day, looks after his children at night. He was kept waiting for some weeks. Why cannot we have some responsible authority in the principal towns of the State to deal with these applications, pending the making of what I must admit are necessary inquiries? The Premier at a public meeting held in Geraldton informed us that Mr. Scaddan, when Minister, had investigated the matter and that the suggestion could not be adopted. That, however, was a long time ago. For me to prefer the request is probably useless, but I think the idea should be adopted, and I deemed it my duty to mention the fact.

Hon. A. Thomson: A very practical suggestion.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Speech recalls that last session we authorised an increase of capital for the Workers' Homes Board. Members of the board visited Geraldton some months ago, but instead of interviewing applicants in the council chamber, where sittings had been held previously, they held the meetings in the office of the A.W.U. Members might ask what was wrong with that arrangement. When we have a municipal chamber that belongs to all the people, why should the members of the board go to the office of a political organisation? I can imagine what a howl would have gone up from the other side had the members of the board used the office of the National Party or the Primary Producers' Association. Rightly so, too. Next time the members of the board visit Geraldton, I hope they will hold their meetings in the council chamber. I made it my business to ask the Mayor and the Town Clerk whether permission to hold the meetings at the council chamber had been refused, and they were as much concerned as I was about the change of venue.

Many years ago, probably before the present Government took office, land was required for railway purposes at Geraldton and portion of a street was closed. All the land along one side with houses on it was resumed and the houses are occupied by railway men who, of course, pay no rates. Further along there was some land that was not required. In the vicinity is a huge coal dump belonging to the loco department, and when the street was put through, a small

piece of land at the corner of Phelps street and Eleanor street was left vacant. On that piece of land, having an area of less than half an acre, four houses were built of old galvanised iron, and they are occupied by railway men. In the course of a deputation to the Premier a few months ago, I asked whether he was not ashamed of those places and whether arrangements could not be made for their removal. Those houses are sandwiched between the coal dump and a cemetery. Could not the piece of land be used for a children's playground?

Member: That would be even worse.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Four homes with outhouses are jambed up on that small block, and if there is one town in the State with plenty of vacant land available at reasonable prices and conveniently situated, that town is Geraldton. If any ratepayer sought permission to erect houses of similar type in that part of the district, the local authority would rightly refuse.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: The Government can do no wrong.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Apparently that is so. Why does not the Government provide decent housing accommodation for many of its employees? Government employees stationed in Geraldton are, on the whole, not badly housed, but outback lives the humble repairer who keeps the line in order, and the accommodation provided for him and his family is not satisfactory. Is any member satisfied with the housing accommodation made available for such people? At one time I was a Government employee—a postmaster—and a residence was provided for which I had to pay rent. I do not suggest that the Government should erect homes for which a rental of 25s. a week would have to be charged, but could not houses be provided at a suitable rental instead of allowing those people to live in any antiquated shack?

Hon. A. Thomson: Some are living in houses built of old sleepers.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is so. Last session we gave much consideration to the question of aborigines. I wish to quote a letter received from a lady at Ajana—the terminus of the Geraldton-Northampton line, some 50 miles from Geraldton, addressed to the secretary of the Northern Division of the Country Women's Association as follows:—

The Galena (where the lead mine was) half-castes live on the verge of destitution

always. Most of the crowd at the camp get no rations, and if it were not for help from my mother and the school teacher, I do not know how they would survive. Repeated appeals to the aborigines department have only resulted in the Northampton police accusing them of interfering. Actually the community there is a scandal and a blot on our civilisation.

People in the South-West have more trouble with the half-castes than we have.

Hon. L. Craig: You mean the Great Southern.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is so; but the quotation shows how the half-castes in my province are being neglected.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Did you bring that matter before the Minister?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Half-castes in Geraldton have been camped on a hill not far from my home on property very close to if not that owned by Mr. Drew. The Commissioner recently decided to erect camps for those people about a mile out of the town in order that they might be better housed. I do not think the cost amounted to much; they are galvanised iron structures. The idea evidently was to get the half-castes into some sort of decent habitation. The camps have no floors and are located on sandy ground, and there is no provision for a fire. Anyone who knows the half-castes is aware that they love a fire, but they have to go outside to do their cooking and cannot make a fire inside at which to keep warm. Whatever the cost of those camps was, the money might as well not have been spent.

The "West Australian," in a leading article on the 10th February, made the following comments under the heading "A National Native Policy":—

Even aborigines have to live on the right side of the fence to get the plums. The ambitious native policy announced for the Northern Territory by the Federal Government this week is probably good as far as it goes, but it is bounded by a series of imaginary lines which prevent it from being a proper national attack on one of the biggest social problems in the Commonwealth to-day.

We are apt to fall into the habit of saying that this is a Commonwealth matter. Mr. Parker, when speaking on the Address-in-Reply last week, made the following statement:—

We all know of s.p. shops which are never raided.

He was speaking of the failure of the Government to enforce the betting laws. I interjected, "Are there," but evidently the hon. member did not hear me. I do not know of such shops, but I am not a representative of the metropolitan area. I have no doubt that Mr. Parker would not make a statement of that sort unless he was sure of his grounds. If his statement that certain s.p. betting shops are never raided is correct, how on earth can we expect the people to show that respect for law and order which is so necessary? I repeat what I said on a previous occasion, namely that the Commissioner of Police should not be subject to Ministerial control. As the Auditor-General is the servant of Parliament, I think it equally necessary that the Commissioner of Police should be responsible to Parliament. Parliament makes the laws and Parliament should have an officer directly responsible to it in order to ensure that the laws are carried out. This policy, if adopted, would be more satisfactory to everybody concerned.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you think that any Minister would instruct the Commissioner of Police not to raid certain places?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Let me now revert to a question that I have previously asked. Does Labour, by its policy, stand for freehold or leasehold tenure of Crown land? No less a person than the Leader of the National Party in another place referred to this matter. He was speaking of a sale of public land at Kalgoorlie where all classes of people were bidding. What chance has a worker to secure a block of land against the bidding of moneyed men?

Hon. C. B. Williams: You ought to belong to the Labour Party.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If the party would have me, I might consider the point. Still, my party allows me just a little latitude, and I fear I could never tolerate the rigid discipline required by the Labour Party. Mr. Williams, of course, has been able to exert his undoubted personality and "get away with it," but I do not think I could be so successful. I am pleased that the Leader of the National Party had the courage to express his sympathy with the policy laid down by the Henry George League, namely the leasehold system of land tenure.

Hon. G. Fraser: I imagine he was hauled over the coals for it.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I had the pleasure of reading Mr. Fraser's appeal to his fellow unionists, who subsequently voted for him in the selection ballot. A friend of mine sent me a copy of the appeal, and that of his opponent. One of the points the hon. member raised dealt with the question of probate on small estates. If people in metropolitan constituencies look to their representatives in Parliament for help in matters of that kind, how inconvenient must it be for dwellers in the country, who cannot so readily have access to their members? I am amazed that no Government has yet thought fit to relieve the position in which poor people now find themselves, and I am still hopeful that those who live in the country will be put on the same footing, at all events, as those who live in the metropolitan area. I refer particularly to the Administration Act of 1903, Section 53 of which lays down that when a person dies and leaves a property not exceeding £500 in value, the widow or next of kin may apply in person direct to the Master for help in obtaining probate or administration.

The section indicates that if the deceased died more than 30 miles from Perth an application could be made to the district agent for the Master. District agents have not yet been appointed, and the probate office in Perth will not act upon any application that is sent by post. When, therefore, a widow or the next of kin wishes to obtain probate or administration in a small estate, the applicant has to apply personally at the probate office. The intention of the Act is that district agents should be appointed to receive such applications, but that intention has not yet been carried out. If district agents cannot be appointed to deal with estates when the testator has died 30 miles or more from Perth, the law should be amended so that poor persons may, by correspondence, apply for probate or administration on small estates. I know of several instances of hardship in this connection. Apparently the same forms have to be filled in for an estate worth well under £500, or worth practically nothing, as would be required in the case of a wealthy estate. I appeal to the Labour Government to have the Act amended so that widows, and those who are left with very small estates, may be saved the expense of employing a lawyer

to settle their business, and may be put on the same footing as are people in the metropolitan area. I have every confidence in believing that the Honorary Minister will have this matter put right for the reason that at present no district agents have been appointed. Many people in country districts have been put to great inconvenience and expense because of the existing state of affairs. Parliament has provided for them, but the Government has failed to appoint the necessary district agents. Such appointments should be made, or the Master should be instructed to deal with these questions when they come before him by post.

Hon. G. Fraser: Court fees in the case of small estates should be eliminated.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I feel it is the wish of Parliament that every consideration should be given to people in humble circumstances. It is bad enough for them to have lost the bread-winner without being obliged to pay lawyer's fees and have other expenses placed upon their shoulders. Upon widows this sort of thing is a hardship.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Apart altogether from having to spend a fortnight in Perth.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I know the Government is faced with many difficulties. A case came under my notice from Geraldton recently of a man in the country who for many years had been paying premiums to a life insurance company. When his policy matured he had to employ a solicitor to get his just dues, but even then he was able to regain only the money he had actually paid in. The company had the use of his money for 20 years, but returned to him only what he had paid in, and did not do that until he employed a solicitor to fight it.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Is the company still in business?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes. The "West Australian" on the 28th June last dealt with life insurance under the heading of "Federal Law Urged." The company in question has already received attention at the hands of the New South Wales Government and the Parliament of that State. It should be dealt with.

I do not want to interfere with a territory with which, as a member of this Chamber, I have nothing to do. What I am going to say now concerns chiefly members representing the North, but it also affects the whole State. I have here an extract from page 448 of "Hansard" for

1938, dealing with the debate on the Yampi iron ore embargo in another place. The Premier stated on that occasion that the people of the southern portion of Western Australia had not the necessary finance with which to do justice to the North-West. I doubt if the Government will take any notice of what I say, but I do urge it to take steps to let the Federal Government handle that part of the State, say, from Carnarvon northwards. I do not stand for any shirking of responsibility on the part of the southern portion of the State, but why should we continue to penalise the people in the North? The Premier has admitted that we have not the necessary funds with which to do a fair thing by them. Why not ask another Government, the Federal Administration, that is better equipped for such a purpose, to take the matter in hand? I have evidence here from a man who has lived and worked for years in that part of the State, and he has satisfied me that the question is one that should be attended to immediately. True, if we lost that part of our territory we would lose three excellent members from this House, and the Government would also lose four members from another place, so that a new Government would then come into power. A fig for Governments and members! We must do our duty by that vast province.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Even if it means the Labour Government going out of office.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: At the moment I am thinking of that great man, whose photograph I have at home, General Monash. I had no overseas service, but I do think that General Monash was a man we ought to be proud of. People are all too ready to sneer and jeer at the race to which he belonged, a race that has been persecuted for countless years. Let us give the people of that race who wish to settle in the North an opportunity to do something for themselves. Let us also make the opportunity available for our own young people if it is at all possible to populate and develop that part of the State.

I now come to the question of Child Welfare. Be it said to the credit of the Government that it has done something for the unfortunate fatherless children, but it has not done nearly enough. Where will it get the money? We boast of our stan-

dards of living. Members of the Labour Party and others boast of it. Can a widowed mother do a fair thing by her children on the miserable sum that is allowed her by the State Government, a little over 7s. a week? Then there are the unfortunate children who have become wards of the State. I have here a comment by the "West Australian," and the report of an interview with the Minister. That hon. gentleman admitted that a good case had been made out, but still nothing is done. Where did the money with which to build the Geraldton High School come from? We had a public meeting in the town, and word was sent out that something would happen if we did not get the school. The unfortunate people of whom I am speaking have been waiting a long time to get a fair deal. Let us do our duty by the mothers and fatherless children. We should give the mothers something to enable them to bring up their children as we would desire ours to be brought up.

Child endowment is another important question. I wonder at the attitude of the party with which such men as the Honorary Minister, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Drew are associated. It is laying itself open to the charge that it has forgotten the man with responsibilities. In New South Wales the system of child endowment is in operation. In the Post Office in this city employees have the benefit of child endowment, and work side by side with others who have not got it.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They pay for it themselves.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The interjection does not carry any weight. I do not understand the attitude of the party. The basic wage was arranged on the basis of a man, his wife and two children. Ever since I was a boy the public men of the country have been talking about the value of children to the State. Our actions belie our words. What encouragement and consideration do we show the man who has to rear a family?

Hon. G. Fraser: Do not you support the abolition of the financial emergency tax?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Last session I said what I thought about the intentions of the Government. I am sorry the Chief Secretary is not in his place, for I wish to quote the case of a young girl at Gutha who by correspondence won a Government

scholarship. Members can imagine what this meant to the parents, who are in poor circumstances and who have battled against many difficulties and hardships. The father is a returned soldier. The little daughter won the scholarship, but by Government regulations was prevented from reaping the benefit of it. I could shed tears about this, but to cry will not serve any good purpose. The child should have gone to the Geraldton High School, but the scholarship was not sufficient to live upon, and she was denied her chance. The nuns of the Dongarra convent would have taken her for the £24, educated her and kept her, but the regulations provide that the scholarship applies only at a high school, and that pupils must go to the High School in the district, in this case Geraldton. I am as keen as any man could be upon pupils attending Government high schools, but I would not in the circumstances disclosed deprive a girl who had won a scholarship the opportunity to profit by it

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Just a few final words on the position of the girl who won a scholarship by correspondence but who, on account of the straitened finances of her parents, who are engaged in farming operations, was unable to avail herself of the opportunity to attend the Geraldton High School. The value of the scholarship was £24 per annum, which was wholly insufficient to cover the cost of board for the girl at Geraldton and necessary expenditure on books and clothes. Regulations in respect of scholarships tenable at Government high schools are not framed without considerable thought. I agree that the regulations should be departed from only in exceptional circumstances. Throughout the correspondence on this matter, the point is stressed that a departure from the regulations would create a precedent.

I was a civil servant for 25 years—a humble one, I admit—and during the whole of that period, and also since becoming a member of this House, I have noted the holy horror evidenced at the creation of precedents. If we rigidly follow that principle, we shall get nowhere, nor shall we make any progress. Rather must we create precedents, to keep in step with the times. I am just as anxious as anyone else that all stu-

dents in the Geraldton district—which extends from the North-West along the Wongan Hills line to Dalwallinu, along the Midland line for a similar distance, and right through the Murchison to Wiluna—shall avail themselves of the educational facilities at Geraldton. On the other hand, so far from being selfish, I agree that, where the circumstances warrant such a course, and, after due inquiry by an authorised Government officer, it is found that parents cannot afford the extra cost of sending a daughter or son to a high school at Geraldton, Albany, Bunbury or anywhere else, and another educational institution offers to make available to the child the course of education to which she or he is entitled, then the Government should not adhere rigidly to the terms of any such regulation as that to which I have drawn attention. My efforts to overcome the difficulty were rejected by the previous Minister for Education, Hon. F. J. S. Wise. I know that one Minister is always averse to setting aside a predecessor's decision in such matters, and I do not wish to worry the Honorary Minister at this juncture. I shall await the return of Mr. Kitson, the present Minister for Education, and when I place the matter before him, I hope I shall be more successful.

Next, I wish to refer to a matter that I do not like mentioning, but I consider I should do so. I refer to a type of advertisement that appears in all the papers regarding articles that are dealt with in the pamphlet I have in my possession.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Are you referring to P.Ks.?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The pamphlet was handed to me by a railway employee living in the metropolitan area, who assured me that the leaflets were left in letter boxes throughout the district. I have no doubt the distribution has been general. The advertisements regarding the article appear in reputable journals like the "West Australian," the "Primary Producer"—of which some members may have heard—and even in our local newspaper at Geraldton. The advertisements refer to what are generally known as "rubber goods."

Hon. C. B. Williams: Dunlops or Per-drian's?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: These pamphlets are placed in the letter boxes of people who have growing children.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I thought you were referring to motor tyres.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have not drawn the attention of the Commissioner of Police to the matter, but I understand he is powerless to take action. The Government should take steps to prohibit advertisements of this description. Every member knows what I am referring to. It is high time the Government took action to prohibit the publication of such disgusting advertisements.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Are you not reflecting upon members when you say they know what you are talking about?

The PRESIDENT: Order, order!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: In his speech on the Address-in-reply Mr. Parker referred to a matter that I shall deal with, and I wrote down his words at the time. He was commenting upon the Workers' Compensation Act and, according to the Lieut.-Governor's Speech, we are to be asked to amend that statute this session. Mr. Parker said—

I believe that the workers do not receive benefits to the full extent for the injuries they sustain. Until the Act is overhauled, the workers will not derive from its provisions the benefits to which they are entitled.

Hon. G. Fraser: The workers would have derived fewer benefits still from the Act if the House had agreed to Mr. Parker's amendments of some years ago.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I wonder if Mr. Parker and other members have had experience of unfortunate instances such as I have encountered. I shall deal briefly with two cases because I regard the failure of Parliament and of the Government to deal justly with the men concerned as lamentable. At the outset I desire to quote from the speech of the then Minister for Employment, Hon. A. R. G. Hawke, when moving the second reading of the Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill last session. On page 475 of last year's "Hansard" members will find the Minister reported thus—

The injustice of the present position arises from the fact that very often, when a worker is injured, he is too ill or disabled to consider his legal remedies and his wife or someone acting on his behalf claims compensation without taking into consideration whether it would be more to the worker's benefit to proceed under the Workers' Compensation Act, or to proceed at common law. The worker is at times obliged by his circumstances to accept compensation, thereby losing benefits that he could have obtained had he been in

a fit condition properly to consider his position.

That is the point I wish to deal with. These are the words of the Minister himself, and he proceeded—

A man in ill-health or badly injured is not in a fit state to make up his mind about what type of legal action he should take, and poverty and illness often cause him to take the line of least resistance, to his own detriment.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Quite a number do that.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Then the Minister continued at a later stage—

During recent years there has been an increasing tendency for insurance companies to persuade injured workers to accept final settlements under which such workers receive amounts far less than those to which they are entitled under the provisions of the Act. There have been many scandalous cases of this nature. We all know what a great temptation the offer of a final settlement for an amount of £100 or £200 or £300 must be to a worker who has perhaps never handled more than 100 or 200 or 300 shillings at the one time. Undoubtedly, numerous insurance companies have persuaded workers to accept final settlements of this description, the companies having full knowledge that the amounts provided for in the final settlement represent only a half or a quarter of the amount to which the workers are legally entitled. The Act as it stands does not provide any supervision with regard to amounts agreed upon in final settlements of this nature. It is felt that the Act should contain some provision for supervising final settlements, and that the worker is entitled to be protected against a final settlement that gives to him far less than he should really receive. Therefore the Bill provides that clerks of courts, in addition to satisfying themselves of the genuineness of any final settlement, shall also fully satisfy themselves that the amount provided for is adequate in the circumstances. This provision will give to injured workers a protection which they deserve and which they very much need. It will put an end to an undesirable practice which has developed of recent years, and which is increasing as the days go by. The provision will, I feel sure, commend itself to every member of the House and, I hope, to a majority of members in another place.

I have stressed these references to the insurance companies and the temptation to injured workers to accept reduced sums in settlement of their claims. I intend to quote two instances that do not concern private insurance offices, but the State Government Insurance Office. Surely we can do better than this. The first matter relates to the case

of a man named Boys. The Minister, in a letter to me dated the 4th July last, wrote—

I have now had an opportunity of considering the contents of your letter of June 15th last in which you set out particulars covering the compensation case of Mr. C. Boys of Bluff Point, Geraldton. In view of the fact that Boys signed a full and final settlement in connection with his claim on February 7th last, it is regretted no further action can be taken in the matter.

I want the House, the public and the Government to take notice of this matter.

Hon. C. B. Williams: From whom did you receive that letter?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: From the Minister.

Hon. C. B. Williams: From the Minister? Not the Government Actuary?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No; from the Minister for Labour. I brought the matter under his notice. We are frequently told we should draw his attention to such matters. I did so in this instance. Boys accepted a final settlement after examination by numerous doctors and medical boards, who told him that he would be fit for work in three months' time. I think he accepted £45. At the end of the three months he applied to the Main Roads Board office for engagement. He was told, "Our instructions from Perth are to re-employ you until you can produce a doctor's certificate to the effect that you are O.K." So he went to his doctor, who said, "I cannot certify you fit for work." He pleaded with his doctor, and stated he was married with six young children. The doctor gave him a certificate, and he went back to work. He put his kit on a truck and arrived at his destination. In lifting his bag from the truck, he collapsed. The injury was to his back. After he had collapsed, he was sent back to Geraldton. To-day he is drawing from the Child Welfare Department, on the production of a doctor's certificate, the full rate of financial assistance for himself, his wife and children. That man had a doctor's certificate to say he was not fit for work; yet he was palmed off with a final settlement of £45.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I think the name of the doctor who said he would be fit for work in three months ought to be published in "Hansard."

Hon. G. Fraser: Was it on his own doctor's advice that he accepted the final settlement?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No. It was the decision of the Medical Board.

Hon. G. Fraser: What did his own doctor say?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The man was down here, away from his home. Everything was done down here.

Hon. A. Thomson: It was not his own doctor he saw?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: No. When the three months had expired he saw his own doctor, who reported him unfit for work. The medical board down here said, "You have our definite assurance that in three months' time you will be fit for work. Instead of coming for a weekly cheque, take a lump-sum payment. Sign up, and away you go." I do not think doctors do this kind of thing wilfully. I am sure they do not. But doctors are only human, and in this instance they made a mistake. Why should a doctor at Geraldton—he has been there for some time and is a clever young man—say this man was still suffering from the injury if he was not? I am sure the doctors in Perth were conscientious when they said that in three months' time Boys would be able to return to work; but the fact remains that at the end of that period he had not recovered.

Hon. A. Thomson: One would expect better treatment from the State Insurance Office.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is the point I am making. If a private insurance office were concerned, one could imagine the Minister saying, "What can you expect? If we had a Government insurance office the situation would be totally different." If a man is charged with murder, do not the judges instruct the jury that if there is any doubt at all in their minds, the accused should have the benefit of that doubt? Here is a man who has always worked for and earned his living. He came from Shark Bay about 18 months ago, and asked me to fill in his papers so that he might obtain relief work. He was doing very well. The ganger was pleased with him, and he had been chosen as a leading hand, or something of the sort. He was looking forward to a good spin. I have here two telegrams from Theo Christie, of Shark Bay. He is a man who engages in fishing and has a refrigerating plant on his boat. His wires were addressed to this man, whom he asked to return to his old job as assistant engineer on

the vessel. But the man cannot do the work. He cannot stand up for any length of time. It is high time that something was done along the lines of the Minister's suggestion to Parliament last year. This man was promised full recovery in three months' time, and he should be given a chance to obtain further compensation for his injury. I am told, however, that he signed up and that therefore the case cannot be re-opened. I have another letter here from Mr. Hawke, dated the 18th August, concerning a man named Udell. It reads as follows:—

Recently you forwarded a letter and medical certificate covering the position of Mr. H. Udell of Geraldton. You also attached a copy of letter you had received from Mr. Udell in which he sets out a history of his case.

The Government Actuary recently forwarded a report to me in connection with Udell's case. In that report Mr. Bennett states the case was settled by the payment of a lump sum equivalent to twelve months' compensation—the amount being £105. At the time the full and final settlement was made the Government Actuary was very reluctant to settle on the basis above mentioned, as he considered the payment of a lesser amount would have met the position in a reasonable way.

It is regretted that cases are not re-opened once they have been settled on a basis of full and final settlement.

It is suggested you discuss the possibility of having suitable work made available to Udell with the officers of the Employment Department.

When the Premier came to Geraldton I introduced this man to him, and the Premier promised that he would see what could be done to provide him with a light job; but the Honorary Minister, who controls the department, is well aware of the difficulty of such a course being adopted. Where are these light jobs? They cannot be manufactured; I am well aware of that. This man is not more than 35 years of age. He was a temporary employee of the Railway Department, and at the time of his accident he was on a roof, painting. He had no belt to support him, and fell on to a cement floor, injuring his back; I think his kidneys were affected. The same thing happened to him as happened to Boys. On the assurance of the doctors that in twelve months' time he would be all right, he accepted a lump-sum payment; but he has not recovered. He cannot go to work; he cannot stand up for more than half an hour

at a time. I do not want to detain the House any longer with these cases, but here is a certificate from the doctor at Geraldton under date the 5th of this month, reading:—

I hereby certify that Mr. Udell is suffering from an old back injury and is not fit to do heavy work.

Hon. G. Fraser: I am open to correction, but I think this House rejected a provision submitted with a view to enabling difficulties of this kind to be overcome.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Only last year the Minister asked another place to deal with this very matter, and said he hoped members of this Chamber would also pass the measure. So far as I remember, we did do so; but that does not seem to have met the case.

Hon. G. Fraser: I do not think we did pass it.

Hon. J. Nicholson: We passed something last year.

Hon. G. Fraser: To deal with this matter of final settlements?

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think so.

Hon. G. Fraser: It was turned down in this Chamber.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not know whether anyone has seen this document. It is entitled "The High Road to Prosperity," and declares that Labour's employment policy has revived industry. Here is another highly-coloured pamphlet, which reads—

The W.A. Labour Party calls upon its affiliations to work for the return of the Labour Government. How you may help to secure its return—By showing how Labour has raised the workers' wages; by telling your friends that Labour has shortened hours, and that Labour has increased employment.

Only the other day I read remarks of Mr. Hawke hotly contesting statements made by Mr. Baxter. He said, "Mr. Baxter knows perfectly well that the Government is not responsible for raising workers' wages and improving the conditions of labour. That is brought about by the Arbitration Court." Mr. Hawke said something to that effect. I wonder if members have also read this "Solidarity Bond"? It was issued in connection with the Legislative Assembly elections of 1939. The one I have in my hand is number 7202, and in the left-hand bottom corner

is the intimation, "Bonds, 6d." On this piece of paper appears the following:—

Labour Made This Possible.

Basic Wage Comparison—	1933.		1938.	
	Latham Government.		Labour Government.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Metropolitan...	3	9 0	4	1 1
South-West ...	3	11 0	4	2 2
Goldfields ...	3	18 0	4	15 2

Now Labour needs your help. To secure yourself, invest in Labour.

A few months later the Premier, dealing with the State finances, says they are well in hand. Although we have slipped back to the extent of £330,000, he declared that the finances are well in hand.

Here is a direction in which I find it difficult to understand Labour's policy. I refer to the employment of contract trucks on Main Roads Board work. The A.W.U. has taken the matter up with the Government, and in this instance the Government would be well advised to pay heed to the representations made by the union. As most members know, men working on the roads are conveyed by truck for long distances. Many men make the journey, and the truck travels fairly fast. If anything happens—of course we hope it will not—who is going to be responsible? I understand that these men are not insured. In fact, the deputation from the A.W.U. asked the Government to consider that very point. If the Government believes—as I understand it does—in day work, why have all these trucks been hired on contract? Some of them might be engaged at so much a day, but I think I am right in saying that the large majority is employed on contract. What happens? A man is earning his living with his own truck. He is paid so much per yard per mile and he has to work hard in order to make a decent living. I know a man who has a £500 truck engaged on this work. In order to pay off that amount he has to work very hard. He gets into a pit and is a contractor working alongside relief men on day work. If he cannot cart a certain amount of material per day he will not make good; so he says "Go on boys, put your back into it; give us a chance." They very naturally reply, "You are on contract; we are on day wages." Members will realise the position. If the Government is sincere in its advocacy of day

labour, I would ask, who is in the better position to buy these trucks and put the men on day wages? If we are in favour of a principle we should give effect to it. If not, let us say so. I have been told by the men that the reason why the Government does not do this, is that it is making use of sweated labour. What I am about to say is hardly likely to fit in with my last assertion. There are certain persons who put trucks on the road in competition with those who conduct their business on altogether different lines. I have nothing against such persons, but I do like a fair thing and if a job happens to be a sustenance job, and it is in this case, why should a man engaged in other forms of business be permitted to compete with others who are trying to earn a living with their own trucks? This matter has received the attention of the A.W.U. general secretary. All one Sunday morning it was being thrashed out, and I hope, that in fairness to all concerned, the Government will inquire into what has been going on. Other things are being done that should not be permitted.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Tell us what they are.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The department could well conduct an inquiry because there is a considerable sum of money involved. My desire is solely that those who are accused or are under suspicion should be given a chance to clear themselves. The other day a question was asked in another place by Mr. Watts about the average daily cost, including wages of the driver, of running a State-owned motor truck on main roads work in the country. The Minister's reply, I am assured by a practical man who does his own repairs and is a hard worker, is absolutely—what shall I say—? Anyway, the Minister's reply was that the daily cost was 39s. 8d. and that included allowance for depreciation as well as running expenses. I showed that reply to several men and they simply ridiculed it. It was an entirely wrong impression to give.

We have heard a good deal about secondary industries and the visit of the Minister for Industrial Development to the Eastern States. The other day I asked a question about the expenditure incurred by the Minister and his secretary on their visit to the Eastern States. The reply I

received was that in each case the expenditure was a little over £80. The figures are a mere detail since the visit might result in thousands of pounds worth of benefit to the State. We are, however, entitled to criticise and that is the privilege of our system of democracy. The Minister receives a salary of £1,500 a year and while he was away he collected roughly £20 a week for expenses. But I am wondering whether it was anyone's duty to bring under his notice the trouble that was fomenting at Mills & Ware's factory. We are told by the Fremantle Trades Hall people that the industrialists concerned at that factory are mostly young people who have been discontented for a considerable time past. Surely those young people had some means of conveying to the Minister some information about what was going on. Could not the Minister have approached Mills & Ware or the Employers' Federation and expressed his desire to end the difficulty? We have an Arbitration Act and if the Minister had interested himself in the matter, I am sure some good might have resulted. He could easily have said that he was anxious to keep the wheels of the factory in motion and if the Arbitration Court business was in a congested state and there was no chance of the case being taken for some months, he could have suggested the appointment of an arbitrator. If such an action had been taken by the Minister the trouble might have been settled before this. The strike has proved a lamentable affair. Mostly young people are involved and they are setting at defiance the law of the land. Yet the Minister goes to the Eastern States to invite people to come here and establish factories! I have no wish to throw a spanner in the wheels of industry, but a fair question to ask is why people in the State are not encouraged to invest in local industries. A canning factory that was established in the Geraldton district failed through want of capital. All who know about the operations of that industry said it should never have failed. Mr. Ackroyd Stuart had well-equipped works, but had to close them down. A business with which I was connected did not receive any assistance and so I can speak feelingly. I am wondering whether the members of the Government are really sincere on the question of establishing industries in the State. If they are, why do they not put their

hands in their pockets and back their fancy in some direction or other?

Hon. C. B. Williams: Some of them have been shareholders in mines.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: At Geraldton there are a flour mill, a brewery and super-phosphate works. I have shares in each of them because I consider it my duty to support such private enterprises. We know very well that secondary industries cannot be started here unless someone finds the capital. The Premier himself receives a salary of, I think, £1,700 a year and he could easily show that he was in earnest about these things by, as I said before, backing his fancy. Why do not the other members of the Labour Government follow the splendid example set by other Governments throughout the world, those that actively encourage co-operation? If there is one project that a Labour Government should support it is co-operation, because it is something that benefits the people. I listened to a broadcast the other evening by a reputable person who was telling the people what wonderful results were being derived in Western China to-day through a system of co-operation.

Hon. C. B. Williams: By the Chinese or Japanese?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Chinese. Wherever co-operation has been tried it has proved an unqualified success. Co-operation is not something that is merely in the air: it has been proved, and why our Government does not get right behind such a splendid movement, I cannot understand. It would not be too late even to-day for them to do so. We know how difficult it is to meet the competition from the Eastern States, and therefore I humbly desire to bring the suggestion under the notice of the Government. I have figures to show that there are immense possibilities in the State. Our imports from the Eastern States are considerable, but our exports, not counting gold, run into fairly large figures. We export such things as cheese, fish, bacon and ham, pork, confectionery and biscuits. The value of confectionery exported last year ran into £14,000. We exported biscuits of the value of £11,985, and we also exported clothing to the extent of £51,600. So this State, with all its disadvantages, is able to carry on an export trade with the Eastern States. Surely it is the duty of the Government to try to find out in what manner

it is possible to assist those people who have been battling for years in an effort to establish secondary industries in the State. Have the members of the Government themselves in a private capacity done anything at all to assist any industry in the State? I am actively interested in deep-sea fishing, having assisted to fit out a boat at a cost to me of £750. The proposition is a losing one at the present time, largely because of the manner in which the Government is hampering the industry. The cost of rail-ing fish from Geraldton is no less than £5 a ton. Is that the way to encourage private enterprise? I have an article here from the Shell Oil Company's journal written by a man who evidently knows his subject. It deals with the shark fishing industry, and is worth reading. Another article I have was written by Mr. Malloch. Perhaps it will be said that that gentleman is trying to sell some mining machinery; perhaps he is, but the article itself will probably do some good. I suggest, after due inquiry, backing small men to work old abandoned shows. I mean men who had to abandon their areas when gold was down to £4 per ounce.

Hon. C. B. Williams: De Bernales exploited that.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: In times like these when we are forced to find employment for our wheatgrowers, everything possible should be done. According to the "West Australian" of the 8th of this month, Mr. Hawke is not quite sure that the tariff is such a great handicap to the industries of this State. Well, I don't know, but the Under Treasurer, who is regarded as a very able official, stated a case before the Grants Commission as reported in the "West Australian" of the 12th April last. I have the report here. Any tribunal that would not give Mr. Reid one hundred per cent. credit in his advocacy of the claims of Western Australia would be biassed. He did not get what he asked for, but the fact remains that Western Australia has an outstanding case. I quote from the "West Australian" report—

Mr. Reid, in an ably prepared statement to the Grants Commission, showed conclusively that the tariff imposed a much greater burden on this State than on any other State of the Commonwealth.

In a special supplement of the "West Australian" of the 8th of this month Mr. Hawke declared that we must get out of the habit of blaming the tariff for so many of our

difficulties. In the "West Australian" of the 2nd August the former manager of the State Shipping Service published a highly informative and interesting article on our trade possibilities with India, giving a list of articles. I do not know Mr. Glyde very well, and I have no axe to grind; but I would say, "Here is a man who has hit the target, full of mental and physical vigour and with considerable experience, and the State would be well advised to get in touch with Mr. Glyde." I do not think Mr. Glyde would require a salary of £1,500 a year with a £20 per week expenses racket. I believe that for a small honorarium Mr. Glyde would go to India and handle the trade question in a manner that would be creditable to himself and of benefit to Western Australia. If I am not too optimistic, I hope something will be done in that connection.

Something has been said about the Perth Hospital. Mr. Bolton may well be excused for the mis-statement that the Perth Hospital Board was sacked. But those of us who follow hospital matters, and perhaps are not quite so busy as Mr. Bolton, know well that the Perth Hospital Board resigned. Why did the members of that board resign? Because they felt they could no longer carry on; because the Government expected them to do the impossible. Here I have a published letter written by Mr. Taylor on the 3rd February last, headed "Hotel and Hospital," pointing out that the Government undertook to find £25,000 for a hotel at Rottnest but could not, some years ago when things were not quite so bad as they are now or promise to be, find anything like that amount to provide sorely needed improvements to the Perth Hospital, where the poor of the State have to go for medical attention.

Hon. A. Thomson: We do not even get enough for schools.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The great pity of it is that the Perth Hospital Board did not resign years ago and thus force the Government and the people of the metropolitan area—whose duty it undoubtedly is to accept some responsibility for the hospital—to bear that part of the responsibility which people on the goldfields and in country districts have to accept.

Now I come to a subject which I should have spoken about first—wheat. I ask members' pardon for detaining them so long. However, as I said before, an attitude of

defeat is no good. We are here to do our job. Those members who are in personal touch with the people who are endeavouring, or have been endeavouring—I do not know how much longer they can be expected to continue efforts to eke out an existence by wheatgrowing—should speak up for them. When coming down in the train the other day, a man said to me, “I don’t know why it is, but we cannot get sufficient men to do the jobs that require to be done.” As an instance he told me that throughout the northern railway system from Perth to Buntine and away up to Wiluna, Northampton, Ajana and Yuna, there is one painter. One painter! That is false economy.

Hon. A. Thomson: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Go where one will on country sidings in that vast area, one sees the station buildings almost tumbling down for want of a coat of paint. To paint buildings is merely a matter of self-preservation. Yet there is only one painter for the entire northern district. Besides station buildings, there are houses in Mullewa and in Geraldton in need of painting. There are also the sign posts, and besides there are the station masters’ houses.

Hon. A. Thomson: Perhaps the Government calls tenders for the painting.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: My fellow-passenger said, “It seems peculiar that the Government cannot find money for necessary work such as this painting, whilst if there is a washaway a crowd of men rushes up at once, sometimes getting in one another’s way.” We have been temporising for several years—the Federal Government and the State Government—with the wheat question. I have heard members here make declarations on the subject. As one who claims the right to say what he thinks, I must accord that right to other members; but I disagree with them entirely when they say that the wheat business is a matter wholly and solely for the Federal Government. True, it is a major Federal question. There are four wheat-growing States in the Commonwealth. I do not want to blame the State Government unjustly. I am quite in accord with them as to this being a major Federal problem. But surely it is a problem that affects every one of us, and we should all be prepared to do our utmost to aid the people who have put up such a valiant and losing fight in the wheat areas. If it was good enough for the

State Government to put a tax on every one of us in receipt of any regular wage, salary or income, including members of Parliament and Ministers of the Crown, to relieve the unemployed, we should be taxed to the utmost to keep the farmers on their holdings.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Don’t talk rot!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Because once those men drift off their farms and come into the towns, what happens?

Hon. C. B. Williams: Five bushels to the acre!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: They have firewood to buy, and milk and butter and many other things.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Find them a better occupation!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If we can keep them in their homes, humble though they be, they will be better off. It would pay the State well if every citizen contributed something to keep the farmers on their blocks until there is time to look around and see where and how we shall get them and ourselves out of this terrible difficulty. That is my point. If it is good enough for us to be taxed—and God forbid that I should say anything against the action taken on behalf of the unemployed, I should like to see them treated better—to enable relief workers to be engaged on road work at the basic wage, most assuredly we should be taxed to provide farmers with a basic wage.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is right, but remove the man who is getting three or four bushels to the acre.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Here is another question. The old saying holds good, “The Lord helps those who help themselves.” If we did something for our men who are engaged in the wheat industry, how much stronger would our case be when we went to the Federal Government! Much stronger. We know the handicaps these men are up against, and we must realise the necessity of doing something for men who are scraped owing to the fall in oversea prices. I enjoy just as much as anybody else driving on a bitumen road, but I say that what is necessary in the way of taxation can be achieved. What was the amount of financial emergency taxation last year? A million and a quarter, I believe. And the revenue from the 1½d. hospital tax? A quarter of a million sterling. We could have done something and should have done something. I

trust members will not continue to say that this is a matter for the Federal Government. It is a matter for us all, because it is vital to us all. To the State of Western Australia the wheat industry means more than to any other State of the Commonwealth. That being so, if the men at the head of affairs realise it as they should, why on earth don't they do something? Sir Hal Colebatch, whom nobody can brand as a Nazi or a Communist, since his return to the State has made several speeches. What has he said? "Let democracy get into things and get something done." That is what is being done in the dictator countries. Things are being done there, whilst we are standing by waiting for a washaway. When that occurs, it will be too late to render assistance. People will not put up with the present intolerable state of affairs. Nor is that only my say-so; I have authorities galore—men entitled to be heard and whose opinions are sound. I shall not quote them, however.

On the 6th October, 1931, the late Prime Minister, Mr. Lyons, made an appeal to farmers to continue growing wheat. He published an article headed "The National Task. Part of Rural Industries. Fundamentals of Revival," in which he requested farmers to produce wheat for export, so that Australia could pay its way. That confirms my contention that the wheat question is mainly a matter for the Commonwealth. Do not let us hide behind the Federal Government, however, and say to it, "This is your job, not ours." Too much of that is taking place now.

For the information of some hon. members—because I am sure some of them do not fully realise the position—I quote from the "Primary Producer" newspaper of the 24th June, 1937—

Not for Fools!

Rural Relief.

Some little time ago an able exposition of the incidence of sacrifice entailed by the writing down provisions of the Rural Relief Act appeared in the "Great Southern Herald." With a directness and lack of verbiage which drove home its point more surely than would reams of turgid reasoning and frenzied denunciation, it laid bare the essential inequity of that measure. It put forward the case for the unsecured creditors, mainly country storekeepers; and, if we are honest, we must admit that there is a case.

Storekeepers, we quote the figures of the "Great Southern Herald," have written off 73 per cent. of their debts coming under this Act. They have had little choice. Nobody

supposes that they have done it willingly; nor do they make any such pretence. They are human, like the rest of us, and they want all they can get. It is, of course, impossible for the farmer to pay them all he owes; nor in the general bankruptcy of the industry, can they reasonably expect him to do so. They must be, and apparently are, prepared to bear their fair share of the losses caused by the depression—losses which have been sustained by the farmer more than by any other section of the community. But they are being asked to bear more than their share.

The Rural Relief Act is one of the most futile efforts of a Labour Government noted for its futility in dealing with agricultural problems. Its title should be, "The Act for the Elimination of Farmers' Unsecured Creditors for the Benefit of the Secured"; rather a mouthful, but it seems an apt description. It seems to be admitted by everyone but Mr. Troy that the bankruptcy of the industry is the result of the depression, and is not caused by any fault of the farmer. It seems also to be agreed that the many millions of debt can never be paid, and that an adjustment is necessary. But there agreement ceases.

The Labour Government here, with a tenderness for the interests of the big financial institutions which is not so rare among Labour politicians as might be supposed from their platform speeches, has so framed its legislation that practically the whole burden falls upon the unsecured creditor. The Country Party in Victoria has brought secured and unsecured equally under the scheme, to the real relief of the farmer, and the most equitable distribution of writing off possible.

Mr. Drew is not in his seat to-night. I attended his meeting at Dalwallinu and asked him whether it was the intention of the Government to deal with the secured creditor. I also asked whether it was the intention of the Government to ensure that that which we have heard so much about, but have seen nothing of—equality of sacrifice—would be brought about. So far, we have waited in vain for it. With all due deference to orthodoxy, the honouring of our obligations and sound finance, the sooner the secured creditor realises the position and makes up his mind to accept the inevitable, the better it will be for everyone concerned.

Hon. G. Fraser: You will be classed as a red-ragger shortly.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is a matter of indifference to me. I now quote from a newspaper dated the 28th July, 1938—

Agricultural Loan Credit in the U.S.A.

A Washington correspondent of "The Times," the leading New York daily newspaper, writes that the Farm Credit Administration in the United States is lending money

to farmers on almost everything they produce, from Maine potatoes to California oranges, at interest rates said to be the lowest in the nation's history for agricultural loans, and yet showing a surplus on the operations. This is being done without a cent of cost to the taxpayers and without using Federal funds.

The business is transacted through a dozen regional Federal intermediate credit banks, 535 local co-operative production credit associations owned by farmers, and a number of privately-owned credit institutions. During 1937 these agencies lent 450 million dollars to farmers to finance crop and livestock production, marketing, and processing of farm products. A few years ago these farmers who were in a position to obtain short credit loans were called upon to pay interest rates as high as eight or ten per cent., but under the Farm Credit Administration they can obtain short credit loans at five per cent.

Such things can be done in other countries. Why cannot something similar be done here? Why the mark-time policy that we have experienced during the past few years? I have authorities, although I shall not quote them, which confirm my opinion that the present difficult position can be overcome. It is for the Government to take action; no private member can hope to cope with the burden. Country people are directing our attention to what is happening in the dictator countries. Only last Saturday, the "West Australian" on the "Life and Letters" page published an article on Germany. The article was by a special correspondent and was received by air mail. Surely the "West Australian" would not give prominence to the opinions of a person whom they could not trust. The article is headed "No Workless. No Signs of Poverty." What price are wheat-growers getting for their product in Germany and Italy? I heard a member of this House say they were receiving 9s. a bushel. I also read a statement made in another place that the price was 12s. a bushel. We are not asking for such fantastic prices for our wheatgrowers, but we certainly request that they receive a living wage. What is wrong with our country? I have cut from the financial columns of the "West Australian" of the 18th August, the reports of companies, all of which are making profits, including banks. Why is it that every person who handles wheat, except the man who grows it, makes a profit? Some persons are making a good living out of it. The following appeared in

the "West Australian" of the 18th August, 1939—

Standard of Living.

Bank Chairman's Homily.

Need to Work Harder in Australia.

Melbourne, Aug. 17.—The chairman of the Commercial Bank of Australia, Ltd. (Mr. J. L. Webb) said at the annual meeting of shareholders to-day that every member of the Australian community must be prepared to play his part by working harder if existing standards were to remain unimpaired.

"Increased taxation appears inevitable and will call for sacrifices from all classes of the community," he said. "Faced with huge outlays on unproductive armaments, there is the greatest possible need for avoidance of all unnecessary expenditure in other directions in both the Commonwealth and State spheres. I am not suggesting that the social services of an essential character be unduly curtailed, but I do suggest that wasteful expenditure—and undoubtedly there is a great deal—must be ruthlessly abolished.

"We in Australia enjoy a standard of living as high if not higher than any country in the world."

Who are "we"? Are they the people on 7s. and a fraction per week? Are they the wheatgrowers who are suffering so severely? I am sure that "we" does not stand for the section of the community to which I have been referring. It does not even stand for the relief worker. During the controversy which lately took place between Mr. Hawke and Mr. Baxter, the statement was made that our standard of living is amongst the highest in the world. The "we" might refer to Mr. Hawke, on £1500 a year with travelling allowances when he visits the Eastern States. The term cannot be applied to a great many of our people. The following report also appeared in the "West Australian" of the 18th August, 1939:—

Bank Investments.

Plea on Behalf of Shareholders.

Brisbane, Aug. 17.—Speaking at the annual meeting of shareholders of the bank to-day, the chairman of the Queensland National Bank, Ltd. (Mr. James Love) said that bank shareholders were entitled to a return on their investment equally as favourable as that of shareholders in other established phases of Australian industry. He said that commercial companies had, in the main, returned to pre-depression levels, with an average dividend distribution of 6.2 per cent. on shareholders' funds for the year 1938. Banking had lagged behind considerably, with an average of 3.5 per cent.

Expenditure on the banking industry was consistently on the increase, most of it as a result of government enactment and there-

fore beyond control. "Shareholders may consider that the easiest thing to do is to pass on increased expenditure," said Mr. Love," "but if banks are to continue their national service in meeting the development needs of a growing community it is only right that favourable consideration be extended to them when their ability to pay higher levies is under review. Banks are one of the greatest employers of labour and contributors of Crown and municipal revenues. They should be permitted to function at a return that will permit outgoings being met without inflicting hardship on their shareholders who, in a majority of cases, are not wealthy people."

All are making profits, while the wheat-grower is watching his life savings disappear and his life work being swept away by the collapse of overseas prices, which is something over which he has absolutely no control. Is it fair, is it right, is it equitable? I ask, how long can these people be expected to continue this losing fight? They look for relief to Parliament, not only to members representing country districts, as I do, but to all members, whom they desire to come to their rescue in their hour of need. We have temporised too long with this position, waiting. You, Sir, know the old proverb, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

I desire to refer to the marginal areas. The most depressing experience I have ever had was the week I put in with the Lands Revaluation Board in my district, traveling from Ajana across to Mullewa. City members have no idea of the position in those districts. For some years past, before the present bountiful rains fell, everything in the district was parched, and it was a wonder how the women and children existed. There are 12 settlers in the Ajana district. Yet an Agricultural Bank Commissioner receiving £1,200 a year, a Cabinet comprising seven members whose salaries range from £1,500 to £1,700 a year, a Parliament of 80 members on £600 a year each—less deductions, do not forget—cannot do anything for those 12 settlers. The Agricultural Bank admits they are good settlers, yet it cannot do anything for them. They are left there to perish slowly. There is an abandoned property not far away that would offer a fair living, but when a settler applied for it, he was told that he could have it provided he paid the indebtedness. To take it over he needed several hundred pounds, and he did not have several hundred pence. There are many abandoned farms that could be made avail-

able; some are not worth very much, but others would give settlers a chance.

Hon. A. Thomson: The farmer would have to apply through Goldsbrough Mort and Co., Ltd.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I thank the hon. member for his interjection; that point is worthy of mention. It is not as though something of a constructive nature had not been suggested. These farmers are definitely outside the recognised wheatgrowing areas. The properties were taken over from pastoral lessees, and are essentially sheep-raising propositions. Of course a little cropping must be done to provide feed, but instead of there being 12 settlers in that locality, larger holdings should be allotted and given to four of the men, and they would then have a chance. I listened to the heartbreaking stories related by those settlers to the Land Revaluation Board. The Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank now realise that those settlers have no chance of growing wheat profitably. In making this statement I am not speaking of the present devastating prices; I have in mind that in those areas drought conditions have prevailed for some years.

What troubles me is the inability to get anything done. We hear plenty of talk, but nothing is done. The Chairman of the Agricultural Bank has visited the district and said, "Yes, something must be done." But nothing is done. I impress upon members that the people will not tolerate this sort of thing much longer. We have to do something to justify ourselves. We are not here for fun. The people expect results, and if we plead that no money is available for this and that necessity, if we argue that the Commonwealth Government should take over the care of the aborigines, should assist us with our hospitals and schools, as well as in other directions, what will become of the sovereignty of the State? It will mean allowing the Commonwealth to take over the State and abolishing the State Parliament—

Hon. H. Tuckey: Unification.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes, and thus effecting some economy in the cost of government. By our attitude we are playing right into the hands of those people who are advocating unification. Recently we had Senator Johnston quoting Mr. Menzies and Mr. Scullin in favour of the Commonwealth taking over State activities. Members should

note how this movement is growing. Mr. Menzies at the time was Attorney-General. Now we have the Federal Minister for Health and Social Services (Sir Frederick Stewart) and the Assistant Federal Treasurer (Mr. Spender) talking along the same lines. In view of the manner in which we have temporised with the problem of the wheat industry, I am convinced that if a vote on secession were taken at present, the previous decision would be reversed. If we cannot accomplish anything, what is the good of our being here? I maintain that, provided the facts are faced and Ministers are strong enough to do the right thing, something can be accomplished. A recent speech by Sir Hal Colebatch was headed "Get the Work Done." It was a plea for efficiency and for quick decisions in order to meet the challenge thrown out by totalitarian countries. That is what we want.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to the Bread Act, about which I have received numerous complaints. I am satisfied that the Honorary Minister is sincere in his views, but this matter has been discussed by the Geraldton Municipal Council, and I have been informed by many people that the Act is operating very unsatisfactorily in Geraldton. If the Act is submitted for reconsideration this session, I am afraid that, in view of the case presented to me, I shall not be able to support the Honorary Minister. The Act has not operated as he said it would. After a visit to the Eastern States, he spoke enthusiastically of this legislation, but the fact remains that it has not given satisfaction to the people, and they are the ones who have to be considered. This is a question affecting not only the bakers and the employees; it also affects the public at large, and the public must be considered. I thank members for their courteous hearing. I regret having occupied so much time, but I felt it my duty to ventilate the matters with which I have dealt.

On motion by Hon. H. Tuckey, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [8.51]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 29th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned 8.52 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 23rd August, 1939.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, FREIGHT ON PETROL.

Mr. **STYANTS** asked the Minister for Railways: What is the freight, per gallon, on petrol hauled in bulk from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie, inclusive of the charge for bringing back the empty "tanker" from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: 4½d.

QUESTION—BREAD PRICES.

Kalgoorlie-Boulder District.

Mr. **STYANTS** asked the Minister for Industrial Development: Is the maximum price of bread in the Kalgoorlie and Boulder district, as declared by the Wheat Prices Fixing Board, also the minimum?

The **MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT** replied: Yes.

QUESTION—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS.

Mr. **WATTS** asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that copies of private members' Bills are made available at any time before the second reading is to be moved, either to any Government departments other than the Government Printer, or any member or officer of the Government? 2, If so, to what departments, members or officers of the Government are they made available, and how long has the practice been in operation, and will instructions be given to cease the practice? 3, If not, why not?

The **PREMIER** replied 1, 2, and 3, Copies of all Bills, when printed, are supplied to the Premier and the Crown Law Department. The length of time the practice has been in operation with regard to the Crown