

those engaged in the dairying industry of Western Australia would suffer severely. However, I shall have the opportunity to say something more on that subject in the near future.

I wish to conclude by drawing the Government's attention to the serious water shortage in the irrigation areas of Harvey and Waroona. There are two unfinished irrigation schemes in those districts. No irrigation area can function successfully if it has an uncertain water supply. In that respect both these schemes are most uncertain. In all irrigation areas there is now a tendency to use more water, and unless the additional water is used pastures cannot be what they ought to be. In connection with both the Harvey and the Waroona irrigation area a shortage of water is being felt more acutely each year. We did have a deputation to the Minister for Employment, in the absence of the Minister for Water Supplies, urging that those works should be taken in hand. That was about 18 months ago, but nothing further has been done. Certainly we shall now have to face another summer with an acute shortage of water. I know men who have bought land in those irrigation areas and paid high prices for their holdings. They are now told that they cannot get water, though that means a heavy loss, to them. Thus they have bought properties that they would not have purchased had they known water would not be procurable. It will also have the effect of depressing land values. I trust the Minister will make some pronouncement of the Government's policy regarding the additional storage of water in those areas. Much uncertainty exists, and, unless the farmers can formulate plans for areas to be irrigated in future, those districts will suffer certain loss. I hope the Minister will, at an early date, inform us of the policy of the Government on this question.

On motion by Mr. Doust, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.42 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 24th August, 1938.

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

QUESTION—HEALTH, UNDER SECRETARY.

Visit abroad.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Have any funds been made available, or promised, to the Under Secretary for Public Health, Mr. F. J. Huelin, in connection with his visit abroad? 2, If so, what is the amount? 3, For what purpose?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, 2, and 3, No, but Mr. Huelin has been granted five weeks special leave to enable him to visit in England institutions of a kindred nature to those under the Chief Secretary's Department here.

QUESTION—RAILWAY FREIGHTS.

Reductions on Fertilisers.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY asked the Chief Secretary: 1, During which months of the year is a reduction in railway freight made on the carriage of superphosphate? 2, Does the reduction apply to other classes of fertiliser? 3, Is agricultural lime included in the concession? 4, Does the reduction operate only on the Government railway system? 5, Are there any portions of the State where the reduction applies throughout the year? 6, What is the freight per ton on fertiliser, and what is the reduction per ton when the reduction operates?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Of late years 1st December to 30th June inclusive. 2, Yes. 3, Yes. 4, No. 5, Yes. 6, For the average distance hauled (140 miles), 12s. 8d. per ton ordinary and 4s. 11d. per ton concession rate.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Drew, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. T. Moore (Central) on the ground of private business.

On motions by Hon. H. Seddon, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. C. B. Williams (South) on the ground of ill-health, and to Hon. J. Cornell (South) on the ground of public business.

MOTION—HEALTH ACT.

To Disallow Amendment to Regulations.

Debate resumed from the 17th August on the following motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter (East):—

That the amendment to Schedule B of the regulations made under the Health Act, 1911-1937, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 5th August, 1938, and laid on the Table of the House on the 10th August, 1938, be and is hereby disallowed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.39]: I oppose the motion. Apparently Mr. Baxter and the parties who are pressing for the disallowance of the regulations have not given them more than cursory study. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the hon. member even knows what would be the effect of his motion, if passed. Members have been reminded of what happened in the case of certain regulations that were disallowed in 1935 and have heard Mr. Baxter repeat statements he made when previously moving for the disallowance of certain meat inspection regulations and branding regulations. They have been told that the amendment will be the means of sacrificing hundreds of small producers and that the price of meat may rise; and they have heard the same deprecatory references to the Health Department's methods of inspection at Midland Junction that were made by Mr. Baxter three years ago. Finally Mr. Baxter requested the House to reject the regulations because the same matter had been thrashed out on two previous occasions when somewhat similar regulations were disallowed by the House. On this point I will quote what he said when moving his motion on Wednesday last—

In view of the fact that Parliament on two occasions definitely indicated, by rejection of the regulations, that it disapproved of

them, I ask whether it was reasonable for the Government to impose fresh regulations of a like nature, and to put them into effect several months before Parliament met. One would have thought that the Government, recognising the attitude of Parliament, would have waited until the House met and then gazetted the regulations so that they could be laid on the Table of the House and exception taken to them, if necessary, before serious damage was done by their application.

To say that the Government was endeavouring to do something of which it knew Parliament would disapprove is a strong charge to make. I wonder if Mr. Baxter really believed what he said. It almost appears that in his enthusiasm to take up the cudgels on behalf of the small producers he forgot to ascertain the purport of the regulation he seeks to have disallowed. He certainly did not explain how he connected his statements with the motion. This amendment is in no way related to the regulations that were disallowed in 1935. The first of these—Regulation No. 4, laid on the Table of the House on the 13th November—appointed the places at which all unmarked or unbranded meat, offered for sale in the metropolitan health districts, should be exhibited for inspection. It may be recalled that objection was taken to this regulation on the ground that it excluded the Perth and Fremantle meat inspection depots. Regulation No. 4, laid on the Table of the House on the 17th December, and also disallowed, provided *inter alia* for the retention of those depots, but in respect of carcases or calves of a weight only of 125 lbs. or under. The present amendment makes no reference to Regulation No. 4, but is bound up with Regulation No. 3, which provides—

No person shall sell, offer, or expose for sale, or have in his possession for sale within any of the health districts specified in Schedule 8 hereto, any carcase or portion of a carcase which does not bear a mark or brand indicating that it has been passed as wholesome in accordance with the preceding regulation.

Members will note that Schedule B relates to health districts and not to places appointed for inspection, as did the regulations that were disallowed. On the 17th June last the metropolitan abattoirs area was extended by proclamation to include the following—

All portions of the State comprised within the circumference of a circle having a radius of 25 miles from the G.P.O. at Perth as the centre, and also all those portions of the

State outside the said circumference which are comprised within the boundaries of every road district as constituted for the time being, through which the said circumference of the said circle passes.

Hon. J. M. MacFarlane: What was the original radius.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: About 12 miles.

Hon. G. B. Wood: That might mean 50 miles in the case of a road board area.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member, too, appears to have been under a misapprehension. This misapprehension could hardly have arisen if proper consideration had been given to the regulation and to the effect it would have. As a natural corollary the Health Department amended Schedule B, so that its meat branding regulations would apply within the proclaimed area. This amendment appeared in the "Government Gazette" of the 15th July. Subsequently, however, it was learned from the Department of Agriculture that permits would probably be issued for the slaughter of meat for local consumption in some districts outside the 25-mile limit. The Health Department, therefore, decided to re-amend the schedule in such a way as not to include areas outside the 25-mile limit, whether in a road district intersected by the circumference of the circle or not. Consequently a further amendment was gazetted on the 5th August confirming the operation of the regulations in the areas comprised within the circle. This is the amendment the hon. member desires to have disallowed. By this amendment we are taking away all those areas which were situated outside the 25-mile circle. If this latest amendment of the 5th August is disallowed, it means that the regulations will be made applicable outside the 25-mile limit, instead of being circumscribed within that limit. I do not know whether this statement will have any effect upon the desire of the hon. member to have the regulation disallowed. This is a position he evidently had not visualised when he moved his motion. It seems obvious, therefore, that Mr. Baxter, and perhaps some other members, have confused the regulation with the proclamation extending the abattoirs area. The position to-day is as follows:—

(a) All meat exposed for sale within a 25-mile radius of the G.P.O., Perth, must be certified fit for human consumption.

I do not think any member will object to that.

(b) Slaughtering is prohibited in the area, except at the State abattoirs or at slaughter-houses where pigs are slaughtered under permit and inspected at the time of slaughter.

(c) Carcases of animals slaughtered outside the abattoirs area, but intended for sale therein, can still be inspected and branded at the meat markets or the abattoirs.

This being the case, it is strange that the hon. member should have stated that the amendment will result in sacrificing hundreds of small producers who customarily send carcases to the meat markets. Then again, Mr. Baxter has possibly overlooked the fact that this regulation will be of considerable benefit to producers within the abattoirs area. First, I would point out that whatever is done regarding the regulation, the proclamation extending the abattoirs area will remain in force. Producers in districts such as Armadale, Kalamunda, Mundaring, Darlington and Bullsbrook will still be obliged to slaughter at the abattoirs.

No such obligation, however, would apply to growers outside the 25-mile radius, and while producers in those districts are at present unable to sell their meat in the abattoirs area except at the meat markets, in the event of the lifting of the regulations, they would be free to dispose of it in any manner they pleased in the very districts where local growers are subject to the Abattoirs Act. That is very important from the point of view of the producers in those areas. If Mr. Baxter had his way, we would have the strange spectacle of the public in the abattoirs area purchasing and eating meat which had not been inspected and which, in some cases, would undoubtedly be diseased, particularly when supplies were drawn from dairying districts where cattle are more frequently infected than in pastoral or beef producing areas.

I need scarcely add that illicit slaughtering within a prohibited area would also be encouraged. Surely the hon. member will concede that abattoirs are essential in a capital city, and that meat treated there must necessarily be in a better condition than meat killed in the bush or in an improvised slaughter-house. I do not contend that all meat slaughtered in the bush or in an improvised slaughter-house is diseased, but I do say that some of it probably is, and I am advised that it is necessary to have a proper inspection of those carcases. Per-

haps he will also admit that, if abattoirs are necessary, the butchers slaughtering there and paying the prescribed fees are entitled to some little protection against the type of competition I have mentioned. It is regrettable that members cannot gain a fuller knowledge of the subject by personally visiting the abattoirs and observing the conditions of slaughter, which have been partly the reason for the abattoirs area extension and these branding regulations. Enlightening, too, would have been a visit to the abattoirs to see the system of meat inspection and the conditioning of meat carcasses.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You have power under the Act to proclaim an extension.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so. I should like to refer to certain remarks made by Mr. Baxter when arguing that metropolitan inspection was just as rigid as that at the abattoirs.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You cannot have the same inspection there.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member said that we do have it. Although his statements are relevant only insofar as they apply to the abattoirs extension proclamation, I feel that his references to the inspection methods of the Health Department call for reply. Mr. Baxter stated—

We are told that the main issue at stake is the health of the people.

In this, the hon. member is correct. The main issue is to prevent diseased meat being placed on the market by having it inspected at the place of slaughter with the organs available to enable the inspector to determine the extent of the disease in the carcase. This is being carried out in the interests of public health. The extent of the protection afforded can be judged from the condemnations for diseased conditions in animals slaughtered at the Metropolitan Abattoirs during the year ended the 31st December, 1937. The total condemnations were—1,424 carcasses, 1,301 part carcasses, and 60,572 organs. I have details of the items making up those totals, but I do not propose to read them. The condemnations at the West Perth Meat Market for the six months ended the 30th June, 1938, were—271 carcasses, of which 162 were condemned for putrefaction, 17 part carcasses, and 101 organs, of which 42 were condemned for putrefaction.

We may reasonably assume that a similar class of stock is slaughtered and placed on the market where meat inspection is not operative. The Department of Agriculture has definite proof of dealers submitting parts of diseased carcasses for inspection at the meat markets. The other diseased half has been sold to butchers where the branding regulations do not apply. That is a rather serious state of affairs. While the inspector at the market was not deceived, the consumer who bought the unbranded meat from the butcher where the regulations were inoperative, was not to know that he had purchased diseased meat. Therefore we are seeking to exercise all possible care. The department is perfectly genuine in its desire, by means of proclamation and regulations, to ensure that the public, so far as is humanly possible, shall be safeguarded. The hon. member also made the statement that some of the meat from Midland Junction was not fit for dogs.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That was not my statement. I merely repeated a statement by the Minister for Agriculture published in the "West Australian."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I accept the explanation, but that was my reading of the hon. member's remarks. If that was their purport, I suggest that those remarks were purely hypothetical. All meat slaughtered at the abattoirs is inspected and branded.

Hon. G. B. Wood: The insides of sheep are not inspected at the abattoirs.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I shall deal with that matter in a moment. Any carcase branded is guaranteed to be free from pathological conditions that may be harmful to the consumer. Mr. Baxter's experience is that metropolitan inspection is just as rigid as that at the abattoirs. Insofar as the conditions will permit inspection to be carried out, the hon. member is probably correct. The fact remains, however, that market inspection of dressed carcasses is not, and never can be as efficient as inspection at the place of slaughter where the offal—both edible and inedible—is available for examination. Anyone having a knowledge of the subject, I think, will agree with that statement.

The Health Department is definitely convinced that the only efficient method of inspection is at the place of slaughter, where the inspector is on the killing floor at the

time of evisceration and the organs are available. These are a guide to the inspector in determining the ramifications of disease in the carcase. To ensure that inspection is carried out as it should be, the department's instructions to meat inspectors are fairly comprehensive and rigid. The chief inspector makes frequent visits to the abattoirs to supervise the work of meat inspection, and has expressed his confidence that the inspectors carry out their duties without fear or favour. On that point I have a lengthy report from the chief inspector. Members are at liberty to peruse it if they so desire. I am advised that, although an unqualified person might consider that an inspector's work is not thorough, it is in fact so, provided the departmental instructions are carried out, and I have no reason to believe they are not. The inspector, because of his technical training and intimate knowledge of anatomical conditions, is able by macroscopic examination and palpation of the organs, at once to detect any abnormal or pathological condition that calls for further minute investigation. The statement that the inspector merely looks at the fat around the viscera in beef animals and lets it go is therefore wide of the mark.

The statement that there is practically no examination of sheep at all is absurd. Every carcase is inspected and palpated for any unusual condition, which, when apparent, is promptly further investigated as the inspector's trained mind dictates, and such action is taken as is deemed expedient. I can quite understand that very frequently, as a result of long experience, an inspector would be able to tell almost at a glance whether there was any necessity for a further inspection. In regard to pigs, similar action is taken as with beef. The organs are inspected macroscopically and by palpation and, as in the case of beef, the lymphatic glands of the carcase are also inspected and incised. An untrained person might consider the inspection not rigid enough because the organs are not dissected with a knife, but an inspector knows when this is necessary or unnecessary.

The Commissioner of Public Health states that it is impossible for an inspector examining dressed carcasses in a market, with no offal available, to say definitely that the carcase is in all instances free from disease. That is an opinion which very few people, I imagine, would be prepared to combat. I do not profess to be an expert on disease in

animals, but I am prepared to accept the opinion of the Principal Medical Officer and those associated with the Medical Department and the Department of Agriculture. The Commissioner of Public Health instances pigs. He says that if on inspection at the abattoirs, tubercular lesions are found in any of the organs, although macroscopically the disease may not be apparent in the carcase, it is condemned, but it is almost certain that if parts of the carcase were examined microscopically the infection would be located. This indicates the disadvantage of an inspector's being called upon to give a decision on dressed carcasses in the market with no offal available, and, I submit, refutes Mr. Baxter's contention that "the Midland Junction examination is no better than the examination in the Metropolitan Markets."

As to the pros and cons of the proclamation extending the abattoirs area, these surely are not strictly relevant to the debate on the motion before the House. However, since the hon. member has mentioned that the extension will result in losses to producers, it might be well to deal with that aspect. Abattoirs revenue will benefit by the extension, as Mr. Baxter claims. On the other hand, if the area had not been enlarged, revenue would have decreased owing to the number of dealers operating as butchers within easy distance of the markets. Does the hon. member maintain that butchers operating at the abattoirs are not deserving of some consideration?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I am not concerned about them. The producers are the people I am seeking to protect.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Meat market interests are the main objectors to the extension of the abattoirs area. They are the people that have been agitating in this matter for a long time. The extension was not brought about with any desire to damage meat market interests. In fact, since it has been in force, there has been little, if any, falling off in the number of carcasses offered for sale at the markets.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The health of the public should come first.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is the reason for the regulations. The supply is being forwarded from the abattoirs and will continue to increase. Butchers buying carcasses at the meat market will give up to 1d. per lb. more for meat slaughtered at the abattoirs, because it is chilled and in better

condition. Producers can slaughter their stock in the abattoirs and have the same rights as any butcher operating there. I would emphasise that genuine producers in the outer abattoirs area, who cannot conveniently market their odd cow or a few pigs, will be permitted to slaughter them on the property, to be forwarded to the meat market for inspection previous to sale.

Because the Department of Agriculture has been prepared to give permits for that purpose, the regulation to which the hon. member objects has been framed with the object of taking away from the area previously covered by the regulations certain localities outside the 25-mile radius, in the interests of the small producers. Yet the hon. member desires to have this regulation disallowed because, otherwise, he says, hundreds of small producers will be seriously affected. Under the conditions of the permit, pork carcasses must be forwarded to the markets with the head, liver, and lungs attached. In the case of beef, carcasses must include the tongue in addition to the organs mentioned.

To date permits have been issued to 20 producers covering 30 pigs, 3 cows, and 2 bulls. Calves up to 150 lbs. weight can be slaughtered without a permit within the abattoirs area. The department is assisting the producers by controlling the slaughter of stock within a reasonable area. Several producers now realise that the extension will prevent stock losses since the department will have a check on carcasses being forwarded to the markets. Even the meat market interests that at present are responsible for most of the agitation will eventually realise that they will benefit by the extension of the abattoirs area and the branding regulations.

It will therefore be seen that the motion, if agreed to, would not have the effect Mr. Baxter suggests. An exactly opposite effect would ensue, and, in view of the information which has been supplied to me, and which I have endeavoured to give to the House in a comparatively brief form compared with the time I could have occupied in presenting the facts, I feel that members will agree with the department that it is doing only the right thing and that the regulation should stand. In any event, if this regulation be disallowed, the abattoirs proclamation will still stand, as the hon. member admits, and

the position will be worse from the point of view of the producers whom, the hon. member states, he desires to assist.

I do not propose to say any more on the subject, except to remark that the whole aim of the departments concerned is firstly to protect the public from a health point of view; secondly, to ensure that those people using the abattoirs are given the protection from unfair competition to which they are entitled; and, thirdly, to make sure that the meat markets shall not be in a position to unload on to the people, either wittingly or unwittingly, meat the sale of which would not ordinarily be permitted if the regulations applying at the Midland Junction abattoirs had to be complied with. I therefore hope that, notwithstanding the statements made by the hon. member, the House will not be prepared to disallow the regulation.

On motion by Hon. G. B. Wood, debate adjourned.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.10]: May I, Sir, add my congratulations to those already offered you on your re-election to the position of President of the Council. I hope your occupancy of the Chair will be a long and a very happy one. I want also to thank those members who have made such kindly references to my entry into Parliament. I thank them not only for their references in this Chamber but also for their generally helpful attitude within the precincts of the House but outside the Chamber. I may mention that I was pleasantly surprised to find such a spirit of comradeship throughout the House, in spite of political differences of opinion. As a junior member, I think I can safely say that my outlook is at least untrammelled by a too close-up view of politics.

I feel it would be a mistake on my part to view the Lieut.-Governor's Speech merely as a statistical record, and let it go at that, because a close examination of the statistics appearing in the Speech has proved very interesting and illuminating to me. Such statistics should be a measure of

the State's progress, and the yardstick by which one should measure the success or failure of the Government's policy. I recognise that some Governments are assisted by a set of fortuitous circumstances, and this Government has enjoyed better economic conditions during the past three years than prevailed in former years. This has resulted in the collection of £4,372,476 in land, income and emergency taxation, against a total of £1,310,158 in the three years previous to Labour taking over the Treasury benches. In other words, this Government has benefited from those three sources alone to the extent of more than £3,000,000. I suggest that there is not sufficient evidence of general improvement to indicate that the Government has taken full advantage of the better conditions bequeathed to it by forces over which it had no control. That brings me back to the Speech, from which we find that the State has virtually regained financial equilibrium. But it has done that on an added income of £3,000,000, which does not suggest to me any very marked achievement.

We learn from the Speech that the number of men dependent upon the Government for relief work or sustenance has been fairly steady at a figure of 6,500 during the past year. Surely there is something disturbing in this admission by the Government that it has failed in its attempt to solve the unemployed problem; for we must accept the statement that Western Australia has a permanent army of 6,500 unemployed as disclosing failure on the part of the Government to deal with the unemployment problem adequately. If I may again quote the figures, business establishments have increased their employment from 14,810 in the year 1932-33 to 22,712 in the year 1937-38, an increase of approximately 8,000, so that the Government has been relieved of the necessity to find sustenance or work for 8,000 men. Now, the building trade, which is looked upon as a fair barometer of business conditions, has also been responsible for absorbing a large number of men over and above the 8,000 to whom I have referred as absorbed by business establishments. The Government, in spite of these two avenues of relief, is still obliged to admit an army of 6,500 unemployed. Perhaps some Government supporters may regard the maintenance of such an army as essential, for from that army can be expected a con-

tribution of £8,000 a year under the iniquitous system of compulsory unionism which the Government has forced on the indigent whom it claims to protect. The fact that nothing it has done has provided work, or any prospect of work, for these 6,500 men is evidence of the Government's failure to cope with the unemployed problem. I have come to the conclusion that the Government's so-called unemployment policy—if it can be described by so grandiose a term as a policy—has broken down of its own weight.

Before leaving this highly important question of unemployment I wish to make just one more point. It is this. I am informed that the majority of men who go to make up the vast army of 6,500 unemployed are unskilled; and a closer examination of the position might reveal that here is the starting-off point of an extremely important inquiry. If a survey could be made of the circumstances under which these unskilled men were launched on the employment market, we might find one of the most potent factors creating unemployment. I have the idea that we might find the potent factor to be that period of time in a youth's life just after the completion of his primary education. Now, primary education costs Western Australia something like £750,000 a year, and each year 4,000 boys and girls are launched on the employment market. I ask hon. members, what facilities do we provide for those 4,000 children to become skilled artisans? The answer is, all too few. Our annual expenditure on technical education is the totally inadequate sum of £18,300. This, as has already been pointed out by Mr. Bolton, does not provide for the training of sufficient youths to fill the technical occupations that are available, so that a much larger sum could and should be spent on technical education. Opportunities in apprenticeship are all too few, and much too circumscribed. In many cases, because of the drain on the family budget, it is necessary for these boys and girls to seek employment immediately they leave school, the result being that they are hurried into jobs without much inquiry and after very little thought. One of our principal difficulties, I feel, is that we have no satisfactory link between the potential employer on the one hand and the potential juvenile employee on the other. And I believe it is these boys who contribute largely

to the unskilled unemployed. The Government is doing very little to provide opportunities in trade for our boys. We constantly hear of artisans coming from other States and even from overseas and obtaining employment that should rightly belong to our own boys. In one trade—I refer to stone masonry—foreigners have completely ousted Australian boys. There is little credit to the Labour Government in that fact.

Further on in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech I notice that the Government takes credit for giving assistance to some 600 men at present under the prospecting scheme, and that 7,012 men have received help from it since its inauguration in 1933. The total return from these operations is valued at £203,122. That looks an imposing figure, but upon examination it is not so imposing. Indeed, I go so far as to say that it is extremely disappointing, because an examination of the figures reveals that 7,500 men have averaged £28 each over the period of five years that the scheme has been in operation. Probably all hon. members know that at least one of these prospectors struck a very rich find, so that the actual average of the remainder must be well below £28 per head, and the percentage of total failures must have been extremely high. As a means of getting men into the gold-bearing areas, the prospecting scheme had its appeal; but as a permanent contribution to the solution of the unemployed problem it needs to be viewed with caution. It is high time that the whole scheme was thoroughly investigated and completely overhauled.

Attention was drawn by Mr. Baxter to the powers of the Commissioner of Native Affairs under the regulations governing control of the natives. I particularly draw the attention of hon. members to that part of the regulations which provides that the Commissioner appropriate a portion of the native's wages and place that portion in a trust account. A careful scrutiny of the regulations fails to reveal any provision for an annual statement of that trust account, nor do the regulations reveal any provision for the native to possess himself of the amount standing to his credit in the trust account. I should like the Chief Secretary in the course of his reply to advise the House what would be the position of a native who sought to recover the amount standing to his credit in this uncontrolled trust account. It may be worthy of the Govern-

ment's thought, in dealing with the regulations, to consider the possibility of appointing a board rather than the creation of a dictatorship, which these regulations envisage.

Reference was also made by Mr. Baxter to the provision for the construction of a high school in Geraldton, the Premier's electorate. Further, Mr. Baxter referred to the need for schools in less favoured centres. I may inform hon. members that since my election to Parliament I have been asked by a parents and citizens' association attached to one of the schools in my province, to investigate a request which was made on their behalf by my predecessor for the top-dressing of the playground with a water-proof material. I made investigations in the proper quarters, and found that an estimate and plans had been prepared, and that it had been ascertained that the sum required for this highly essential work was between £200 and £300. The Treasury advised me that it was unable to allocate this money, but also advised me that it would provide the modest sum of £15 with which to do the essential patching. I regard that as just toying with the job, because at the first heavy rain the repair material would be simply washed away and the playground would be in as bad a state as before, or worse. I know that new facilities are needed, but the point I wish now to make is that existing facilities should be maintained in a proper state of repair. I do not doubt that a high school is needed at Geraldton. I am sure that a high school is wanted on the south side of the river. That would relieve the congestion which, I understand, is in evidence at the Modern School, and would also save the high cost of transportation which parents of children on the south side of the river have to meet. The need for secondary schools on the south side of the river has already been recognised by private secondary school authorities, several of whom have built schools there; but, unfortunately, education in those secondary schools is available only to the children of parents who can afford to pay the required fees. A high school is also needed, I am given to understand, at Fremantle. Pressure has been brought to bear, I see by the Press, for the erection of a high school there. Midland Junction, too, is in need of such a school. But perhaps Canning and Midland Junction and Fremantle are not so seriously in need of pre-election promises.

A few moments ago I said that existing facilities should be maintained, and I make no apology for repeating that statement, since one of the fundamental principles of business is that it is essential to maintain capital investments at their full asset value. I shall repeat that statement so that it will be indelibly impressed upon the minds of members of the Government in this Chamber and on those of members generally, for I have reason to hope that some of the latter will occupy Cabinet positions in the near future.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do not be too optimistic!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I repeat, it is essential to maintain capital investments at their full asset value. On the other hand, I point out that the present Government has completely disregarded that sound business principle. This can be realised when we consider what Parliament House is like. We enter from Harvest-terrace and we find the doors, window frames, venetian blinds and all the exposed woodwork shrinking and rapidly deteriorating through want of a coat of paint. The Nedlands school ground to which I referred previously is being speedily washed away on to the road simply for want of top-dressing. The Bunbury harbour, to which Mr. Craig referred, is sitting up for want of dredging. These represent some of the country's capital investments, and they are rapidly deteriorating for want of proper maintenance. It should be borne in mind that the adequate maintenance of the country's investments will provide employment, and the provision of that employment will relieve the Government from the necessity to find sustenance money at a time when it is not easy to raise funds.

Hon. W. J. Mann: For 6,500 men.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I was particularly interested in a statement appearing in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech concerning the Perth Hospital. In carefully chosen phraseology, the announcement, *inter alia*, stated—

The first section of the work to provide additional bed accommodation and facilities for the treatment of out-patients would involve approximately £445,000, and will be initiated as early as possible. Preparation of the comprehensive plans and specifications will occupy some time, after which immediate construction will commence, and will take approximately 2½ years.

I ask hon. members to mark those words. The paragraph continued—

Upon completion Perth will have a splendid modern hospital, adequate to meet the needs of the community.

That sounds very nice indeed, but what does it all mean? The actual facts are these: Almost a year ago it was decided by experts, whose opinions have since been confirmed by other authorities, that to meet the then need—that is, the position a year ago—would entail the expenditure of £765,000. The Government has now decided to make available some of the money necessary for part of the vitally-needed work to be carried out, and at the end of 2½ years from the time the plans and specifications are completed, Perth will be in possession of portion only of what was sadly needed in its entirety four years ago. It may be true that upon the completion of the building Perth will have “a splendid modern hospital, adequate to meet the needs of the community,” but when will the building be completed, and how long does the Government intend to allow the present dangerous position to continue? What we require from the Government is a statement to indicate that its gesture is not, as it would appear to be, an election promise to still the public clamour regarding a vital and urgent need.

Hon. G. Fraser: The present Government never does that sort of thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I think it never does anything else.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I recognise the urgent need for some immediate action on the part of the Government to deal with the serious situation confronting the wheatgrowing industry, and I trust the Government is fully alive to the position. I hope that every effort will be made to co-operate with the Federal Government and the other State Governments to effect some control over the industry. Whether that control should be by way of a home consumption price, by a bounty or by some other means, I am not prepared to suggest at this stage, but I am just as anxious as any Country Party member and, I believe, as most Labour members, to secure some solution of this most urgent national problem.

During the course of his remarks, Mr. Angelo referred to the unenviable record of this State regarding road fatalities. They are an indication that something should be done. But I think Mr. Angelo was wrong

in-attributing that lamentable state of affairs to speeding. His remarks were likely to convey a wrong impression. Admittedly, if all motorists travelled at 20 miles per hour, fatalities and accidents would be fewer, but there are hundreds of miles of roads in Australia where cars can be driven with absolute safety at three times that speed by even the more mediocre type of driver. Although I agree with Mr. Angelo's opinion that magistrates deal too lightly with the drunken and reckless drivers by the penalties they impose, I am just as surely convinced that some magistrates impose penalties all too high for trivial breaches of parking regulations.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: I believe that our large army of traffic police who are almost wasting their time in dealing with trivial parking offences could be much better employed in attending to more serious traffic breaches. I suggest that the head of the Traffic Department could, with advantage, be sent to the larger capital cities of Australia to investigate the method of handling the traffic in those centres. Their problems are the same as ours, but on a much larger scale. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.39]: I also desire to associate myself with other members in extending congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the presidential Chair. For once at least I agree with the remarks of Mr. Holmes that members generally should be given an opportunity to fill positions such as the one you occupy, and that held by the Chairman of Committees. I go further and say that members generally should have an opportunity to sit on the sessional committees. From year to year the same members are nominated by the Leader of the House and no objection is taken to the selection. That is done not by one Government alone, but by all Governments. We are quite satisfied that the members so nominated do their best and carry out the work required of them very well. It would be better if we recognised that in all these positions a member having served a term of office should stand down and allow another member to be elected to the position whether it be as President, Chairman of Committees, or a seat on one or other of the sessional committees. It is a pity that principle was

not adopted long ago. I extend my congratulations to those members who have been returned unopposed. Notwithstanding what was said on one occasion to the effect that it was just as well to have an election, we all envy those who are returned without the necessity to shoulder the expense of fighting for their seats. I also join in welcoming the new members. We have just listened to a speech by one of them, Mr. Dimmitt, with very great pleasure. I envy him. He gave us an extremely fine address, and we shall look forward to hearing him again.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And so did Mr. W. R. Hall.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I did not hear Mr. Hall; that is a pleasure to come. With deep regret I refer to the death of Mr. Elliott whose sincerity of purpose appealed to members; we miss him greatly. I am sorry to hear of the illness of Mr. Williams and hope that he will soon be with us again. Although it may come as a shock to members, I intend to be as brief as possible in my remarks. I heard Mr. Wood say that at one time he considered the Address-in-reply debate a waste of time, but that he now recognised it afforded members an opportunity to "let off steam." After having been a member of this House for about ten years, I am sorry to say that more than ever do I consider it futile. I do not wish to hurt anyone's feelings, nor do I wish to be disrespectful in making that statement. Perhaps it is not the right attitude to adopt towards the debate, and I certainly do not expect every member to see eye to eye with me. Nevertheless, that is how I view it.

Irrespective of the drift of our form of government and with all its defects, I certainly prefer it to a dictatorship such as we read about, and so we must content ourselves with what we have. Nevertheless, I feel that we cannot achieve anything, even though we do express our opinions. Members have a duty to their constituents and they can perform it free from heat, as Mr. Holmes once reminded me when he remonstrated with me about some remarks I had made. We are expected to speak as fairly as we can in presenting our views. If no notice is taken of us, we at least have the satisfaction of knowing that we endeavoured to point the way. Not only is no notice apparently taken of the statements of members who do not see eye to eye with

those entrusted with the government of the country, but the same applies at times to opinions expressed by the supporters of the Government. I shall refer to a suggestion made by a member of this House who always votes in support of the present Government. It related to a matter of vital importance; yet no action resulted, so that tends to smooth over matters for members generally. One could understand the Government's not accepting the advice of members opposed to it politically, but it is difficult to understand its failure to introduce legislation advocated by members of its own political party respecting matters of vital importance to the community at large.

Hon. A. Thomson: Notice should be taken of that.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Needless to say, I agree with the hon. member. The fact remains that a number of members have been here for many years—for instance, Mr. Holmes, who has been connected with many enterprises. If I asked him what he would do, he would probably reply that he was always pointing the way, but that members of the Government did not seem to take much notice. Among the many matters that are claiming our attention, I find it difficult to place a particular one first. There are many needs that require consideration, but it is my intention to place first on my list that which I consider to be the most important; I refer to the employment of our youth. We have before us a voluminous report issued by the Royal Commissioner who was appointed to investigate the question last year. I wonder how many members have perused that report. It was on the 5th April, 1937, that the Royal Commissioner received His Excellency's Commission to inquire into and report upon this important matter, and I intend to ask members to bear with me while I make a few quotations from the report. Before I do so, however, I should like to mention that the Premier in another place said that the problem had been tackled energetically.

Hon. A. Thomson: God help us!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: How the Premier and those associated with him can claim to have tackled this great problem in an energetic manner, I am unable to say. The Commissioner, in dealing with the youths who

lost their opportunity during the depression, had this to say—

Inasmuch as this Commission arose out of the plight of many youths who had not been in employment, or had been in no useful employment since the date of their leaving school, I feel constrained to give special consideration to their case.

A little later the Commissioner remarks—

The first essential, in my opinion, is to conduct a survey in a similar manner to the surveys conducted in the other States, particularly in Victoria, where I think the survey was made more thoroughly than anywhere else.

It will thus be seen that long before the Western Australian Government made a move, investigations had been conducted not in America but right here in the Commonwealth, and many of the conclusions arrived at here had already been reached elsewhere. Yet we are told that the man whom we all admire for his plain statements of facts is ready to make himself believe that the Government of this State had tackled the question of youth employment in an energetic manner. When the Premier makes a statement of that description, it is up to us to examine whether he really can lay any claim to having dealt with the problem. The Commissioner continues—

In some States the principle of subsidising labour is being employed, but I would have no truck with that method of stimulating employment. Many of the employers who employ subsidised labour are well able to afford labour at full wages.

A little while ago a member of our Legislature, Mrs. Cardell-Oliver, returned from the Eastern States and reported what had been done in New South Wales. In that State the Government scheme for providing work for the unemployed youth has been attended with great success. An article appeared in the "West Australian" of the 20th September, 1937, and in it Mrs. Cardell-Oliver dealt with the success that had followed the action taken by the Government in South Australia, where a settlement known as Kuitpo had been established for unemployed youths. How much better it would have been if we attempted something of that kind to prevent our young men jumping trains to seek work in various parts of the State, but finding very little to do. On the subject of education, the Royal Commissioner had this to say—

The president of the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce stated that members

of the Chamber had consistently complained of the low average standard of efficiency, in the commercial sense, of a youth entering business.

Then Mr. Cross, Secretary of the Boys' Employment League, made a similar complaint—

Criticism of this nature is not uncommon elsewhere.

The Commissioner proceeded to quote an extract from the New South Wales Commission's report which made much the same adverse comment and went on to refer to a report of the Committee of Education and Industry in Scotland presented to the British Government in 1928, in which adverse criticism was made in regard to the lack of accomplishments in the three Rs. This was the comment—

We are of opinion, however, that without making any radical changes in the existing system, a higher degree of proficiency in the essential three Rs could be secured if, within the limits of these subjects, less were attempted, but that less were more thoroughly done.

Judging from those authorities, it seems to me that the education systems are overloaded. At the same time, one should be careful not to form conclusions from isolated instances, but from my own experience, children of tender years are expected to learn far too much, though in other respects—matters of everyday usefulness—they do not appear to learn enough. I have some idea of the difficulties confronting the Education Department. Many of those associated with the department are my personal friends, and members will agree with me when I say that in Mr. Klein, who was recently retired on account of having reached the age of 65 years, we had an officer of outstanding qualifications, and it seems unfortunate that the State is not now able to make some use of his services. On page 21 of the report, the Royal Commissioner quotes a table showing the average expenditure per head of the population over the years 1925 to 1934 for each of the States of the Commonwealth. These are his figures—New South Wales, 1s. 6d.; Victoria, 3s. 3d.; Queensland 1s. 10d.; South Australia, 2s. 3d.; Western Australia, 1s., and Tasmania, 1s. 9d. We in Western Australia have been congratulating ourselves for some years past that our system was as good as that of any of the other States, but, as I said before, when we expect teachers to in-

struct children thoroughly even in the three Rs, and those teachers have classes of perhaps 60 or 65 children, we are expecting the impossible.

The Chief Secretary: What figures were those you quoted?

Hon. H. Seddon: They must be wrong, surely. They cannot refer to education generally.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: They refer to technical education. What I have quoted bears out to the extent of 100 per cent. what Mr. Dimmitt said earlier in the evening, that we are building up in this State a huge number of unskilled labourers, and we have the mortification of seeing men coming in from overseas—foreigners mostly—to take places amongst us as artisans.

The Chief Secretary: Whom do you blame for that?

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Government.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Commissioner goes on to say—

There is every reason to believe that a large number of the more promising students who, if properly selected, could go on to higher branches of education, and make use of that education, is prevented from doing so by reason of the fact that the students have obligations at home and are compelled to take up employment which, in many cases, is not suitable to their mental attainments.

That shows that although we have a free University, only those who can afford it avail themselves of the advantages that are offered. The Commissioner continues—

The country apprentice is at a distinct disadvantage as regards technical instruction. I consider this disadvantage could be partly offset by a system of correspondence instruction and that provision should be made for the periodical visit of a lecturer and demonstrator to the larger country centres.

That might do some good. Many railway workers in the State are compelled to occupy houses that are not a credit to the Government. Even in the town of Geraldton railway workers are occupying old houses that are no credit to the Government. Had the Government gone in for a five-year plan—that is a popular phrase—and built homes for their employees, they could have been sure of at least 300 or 400 young men being given the opportunity to learn trades, such as carpentry, plumbing, painting, etc. No action, however, has been taken in that direction at all. The report continues—

That the psychologist appointed at the bureau should from time to time travel

around the outlying centres with a view to ascertaining what is being done at each centre, and give advice to the teachers in regard to guidance.

Much evidence was given on this point by a gentleman who formerly taught at the high school at Geraldton. He afterwards obtained a degree and went to England. He made a very close study of the subject. The report continues—

In Western Australia we have no scheme of child endowment or unemployment insurance such as exists in New South Wales and Queensland; those States are able to obtain a degree of statistical information from the bodies administering these social services.

That is another blot on our Government, which has not done in this connection what the Commonwealth and other States have done. Mr. Justice Wolff names the States, Queensland and New South Wales.

I, being a country member, must refer to the wheat industry. One finds it hard to understand why the Government has not taken action earlier. I heard the Chief Secretary and the Honorary Minister ask during the last week, "Is this a State matter?" I will reply to the question in this way: When the Federal Government took the referendum some time ago on the question of the Commonwealth's taking action in the matter, I think I am right in saying that our Government actively opposed the granting of the power sought. That being so, why does not the State Government rise to the occasion and show practical recognition of the dire need of our wheatgrowers? The State Government said, "How can we do it? We have not the finance." Where there is a will, however, there is a way, and I shall quote the remarks of the president of the Wheatgrowers' Union on this matter. He advocated the other day that no higher freight than 3d. per bushel should be charged for wheat. Seriously, I consider that charge too high, when the price of wheat is as low as it is to-day. There should be a sliding scale.

The Honorary Minister: Why not carry it free of charge?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That remark is not so ridiculous as it may seem to be at first glance, for this very good reason: Without railways, there would be no development. The railways, like schools and gaols, should not be a charge on Consolidated Revenue. The moment one leaves

the metropolitan-suburban area, one notices that disabilities begin.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I dislike referring to this matter, but I will quote some of the W.A. Wheat Pool prices at sidings, commencing with the year 1923-24. In that year the price was 4s. 3 9/16d., and from then on the prices were as follows:—

1924-25, 5s. 9 3/4d.; 1925-6, 5s. 8 3/4d.; 1926-27, 4s. 11 3/4d.; 1927-28, 4s. 11d.; 1928-29, 4s. 1 1/4d.; 1929-30, 7s. 7 1/2d.; 1930-31, 1s. 11 1/2d.; 1931-32, 2s. 8 7/8d.; 1932-33, 2s. 5 1/4d.; 1933-34, 2s. 2 5/8d.; 1934-35, 2s. 5 1/4d.; 1935-36, 3s. 2 3/4d.; 1936-37, 5s. 0 1/2d.

The price has fallen considerably; yet little, if anything, is being done to assist the industry while wheat production is being carried on at a loss.

I do not wish to exaggerate, but hardly a week passes without some young man calling at my door for a reference. When I inquire why he wants it, the answer is, "For a Government job." Where are those men coming from? In many instances, from the country. When I inquire why they wish to join the police force or the Railway Department, the answer is, "Well, Mr. Hall, dad has not been able to pay me any wages for the last two or three years, and has told me to try and get into the Government service." Other members must have had similar experience, and it gives one cause for thought. Five lads on Saturday and five on Monday came to Perth with me and I asked them where they were going. They answered, "We are applying to the Railway Department for jobs as cleaners." The Railway Department had advertised for cleaners; I think there were 50 vacancies, and the department received 500 odd applications. Not all those boys were out of work; many of them were working in my town, but they were willing to throw up the jobs they had in order to secure work that was constant and sure. Now, that is all wrong. We must have men to carry on the essential industries, such as wheatgrowing. I dislike to refer to wool, on account of the colossal losses that have been suffered in that industry. I gladly welcome the increase in the basic wage, because it has always been a wonder to me how some people can manage to live on it at all. As for shorter hours, let us have them. Let us have the five-day week; but, Sir, I say with all the fervour I possess, let us be fair. Let it apply all round. No

wonder these young men are applying for Government jobs.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Do you wish it to apply to the dairyman, too?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Let it apply all round.

Member: That would fix it.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We suffer from many disabilities in our State. One of them, lack of water, is the cause of much concern in the country. I noticed that conferences were recently held on this matter by road boards and municipalities at the following places:—Narrogin, Pingelly, Kafanning, Wagin, Wickepin, Williams, Cuballing, Kulin and Woodanilling. I thought to myself that if those favoured portions of the State, which enjoy a regular and good rainfall, are in difficulties, what about my end of the State? We have heard it said repeatedly in this Chamber that something should be done to provide adequate supplies of water, not in a small way, but in a large way. I noticed in the "West Australian" lately that the Government proposes to extend the goldfields water supply from Goomalling to Ballidu, so apparently we are making some little progress. It is, however, all too slow. Water is a great problem to the Railway Department, which has put down expensive dams along the railway lines, but if there is no rain the dams do not fill. In Geraldton we are taxed heavily for the dam at Wiecherina, which cost a considerable sum of money. It has filled in only one year, the year in which it was completed, and we in Geraldton are now relying entirely on bore water.

I would like to deal with Mr. Dimmitt's remarks about the Geraldton High School. He seems to have a good grip of things political, but we cannot expect a city man to be au fait with country matters, even if they concern an important country town like Geraldton. I am speaking in no uncertain voice when I say that if ever a town was justified in having a high school, that town is Geraldton, which caters for students who have gained scholarships at places as far north as Broome, at Dalwallinu on the Wongan line and Carnamah on the Midland line and in towns on the Murchison to Wiluna. I am sorry I must add my regret at the loss of the services of Mr. Pittman, lately of the Agricultural Department.

Hon. A. Thomson: We all regret the loss of his services.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: My regret is great, as he left the service because he was not satisfied with his remuneration. In answer to a question asked by me the other day, I was informed that the Commissioner of Railways and his finance officer attended a conference in Melbourne, and they drew £78 and £56 respectively for travelling expenses, which, of course, they did not have to pay, as they travel free. Apparently, some Government servants are treated more generously than others.

I wish to refer briefly to the unfortunate and regrettable occurrence at one of our mental hospitals, Point Heathcote. I hope that the Royal Commission about to be appointed will get to the bottom of the trouble, and that it will be put right. There is not only trouble at Heathcote. In the report on our mental hospitals laid on the Table, we are reminded from year to year that the accommodation at the Claremont hospital is altogether inadequate.

I was considerably perturbed, in looking through the report of the Railway Commissioner, to find no mention at all of an equalisation or financial adjustment between the Midland Railway Company and the Railway Department. There should be some mention of it. Anybody who travels along the Midland line cannot fail to notice that Government rolling stock is mostly utilised. Three parts of the Midland railway train that pulls in at Geraldton consists of rolling stock belonging to the Government.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: One would have expected the Government to take the long view and lay down a plan providing means for our youths to learn trades. There would be no risk about making a commercial success of the venture. For many years I was a postmaster under the Federal Government, and had to live in quarters provided by the Government. Rental for those quarters was deducted from my pay. The Government of this State should be able to adopt a similar policy for railway employees. It would be a great thing for the women and children of the railway repairers if they could live in cottages, instead of the wretched places now allotted to them along the line. Particularly is it desirable that this matter be taken up in Geraldton. Many years ago the Railway Department resumed a large

portion of a nice residential area to make way for railway yards. There is now left a triangle between three streets. On this area are three or four cottages belonging to the department and housing railway employees. I should like to take members to see those places. A street runs along the front and back and there is no yard space whatever. These are just habitations, and by no means a credit to any Government. A graceful act on the part of the Commissioner of Railways, or on the part of the Government if he can do nothing, would be to knock those habitations down, build decent residences elsewhere, and use the land as a reserve, which could then be made available as a playing area for the children in the eastern portion of the Geraldton municipality. If the Government had taken up this matter throughout the State it would have ensured that from 400 to 500 youths would have become artisans, instead of being left to roam about from one place to another, jumping trains in their endeavour to find work.

Before tea I pointed out that there was no mention in the annual report of the Commissioner of Railways as to how things stand between the Midland Railway Company and the State Railways. I wish here to pay a tribute to a man of outstanding personality who has just passed away, namely, Mr. J. J. Poynton—a wonderful man in his own way, but it is not to be held against him that he was a very good servant to his company, and was out to make profits for his shareholders. The State railways cannot show their shareholders—the people—a profit, but it is our duty to ensure that their interests are safeguarded. Quite a number of persons think that some return or accounting from the railways should be brought to the notice of the public. We have the annual report of the Commissioner, but it does not tell us how matters stand between the Government Railways and the Midland Railway Company. There are such matters as the accountancy side of the operations, the bookkeeping, and the actual loading and unloading of goods carried over the respective lines. Is all the work involved in connection with the goods and passenger traffic over the Midland line done by the employees of the company, or is it done by Government employees? I think it must be performed mostly by Government employees, because the line linking the Midland railway at each end is owned by the Government.

Then there is the matter of rolling stock. How is that arranged as between the two parties? I should like some notice taken of this request. There is no other way to get the information except through the report of the Commissioner. A public service list is laid on the Table of the House for perusal by members. Anyone who chooses may go through the various departments, and ascertain how many officers there are in each, who they are, and what remuneration they receive. We cannot get anything like that in the Commissioner's report with respect to the railways. We find "the Commissioner and Secretary's staff, number 17." Who those officers are, what they are doing, and how much remuneration they are getting, we do not know. We have a right to know. It is not idle curiosity that prompts me to mention these matters. If it is good enough for other departments to give such details, why should not the biggest department of all give them?

Earlier I referred to suggestions made by members. It is perhaps too much to expect that suggestions advanced by members who differ in political faith from the Government should receive attention, but one would think that suggestions put forward by members supporting the Government, especially when such suggestions are good, would be noticed and adopted. I refer particularly to Mr. Fraser's suggestion, made some years ago, respecting the third-party risk. Everyone knows the results of the failure of the Government to introduce the legislation suggested by one of its own supporters.

Hon. G. Fraser: Governments, not Government.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The present Government has been in office for nearly six years, but has failed to take any action in this important matter. The result of this failure has been that women have lost their husbands, and children have lost their fathers, and in some instances have had to come to the State for sustenance. I do not know what excuse the Government can offer for its neglect in this matter. It amounts to a dereliction of duty. The Chief Secretary may smile.

Hon. A. Thomson: It is long overdue.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Apparently the Government saw fit by private arrangement, according to Mr. Baxter, to part with the motorship "Kangaroo," the property of the

taxpayers of the State. The custom of Governments is to call for tenders, and their duty is to give everyone an opportunity to buy that which belongs to the taxpayer. If what Mr. Baxter says is correct, this vessel was sold for £25,000. How easy it is for any company to say now, "We would have paid £80,000." I do not know whether there is anything in the suggestion that another party would have paid more than £25,000, but the Government was wrong in effecting a private sale.

The Honorary Minister: No offer like that was made before the vessel was sold.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Government should have given everyone a chance to bid, and in that way cut the ground from beneath the feet of those who might come along afterwards and say they would have given a bigger price.

I call attention to the disgraceful action of going behind such an established authority as the Arbitration Court. I do not know as much about arbitration questions as do many members, but I think I am right in saying that the Act provides that the Minister was within his rights in appointing a conciliation commissioner. That commissioner made his report. I think the Act also provides that no conciliation commissioner may override a decision of the court.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Act does provide that.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I understood it did.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Government does not care for Acts of Parliament.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We all know where the political sympathies of the President of the Court lay before he was elevated to his judicial position.

Hon. G. Fraser: They often change, you know.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: By training and in every way. I think the President is a man who would do the fair thing, and carry out his duties in accordance with his conscience. That is the opinion I hold. He left no doubt whatever as to his opinion and I prefer his opinion to that of the Minister. It is our proud boast that throughout the British Empire the administration of law by our courts of justice is beyond reproach. There is no taint about it. I firmly believed we could proudly claim that nothing of a political nature interfered with judicial appointments or decisions. Yet we find that the reason

why an officer of the Crown Law Department did not receive promotion was that he had not been in the service long enough. The recommendation of the official whose duty it was to recommend was ignored and a man with no experience of the service was elevated to the position of Crown Solicitor. I do not hesitate to express my opinion of that appointment, and next March the electors will have an opportunity to express their opinion. Theirs is the final judgment. If the people of this, my native State, will stand for the ignoring of the Public Service Commissioner's recommendation and be satisfied with the paltry reason given in the file that the officer who was passed over had not been in the service long enough, I shall be surprised. I do not care what political opinions the successful appointee holds; that is beside the question. Years ago the various States of Australia decided to take the matter of making appointments out of the hands of Parliament. We have set up an official to make those appointments, free from political bias or taint. To me it seems remarkable that the Government should have resorted to such a paltry subterfuge in explanation of its action in making that appointment.

Now I come to the threadbare subject of starting-price betting. What should one say about it? I have three newspaper cuttings—I do not propose to read them—recording not petty offences but thefts by boys of money with which to back horses in betting shops. We have not to go to the country towns to find these betting shops. Within five minutes' walk of Parliament House on any day when country racing is being held, one may see betting shops filled with young and with older people. We are concerned about the young people. Some folks say that a man should be allowed to have his bet. I confess that I have bet on a race-course: I have even made a bet in a starting-price shop, but, believing that I should be amongst those to set an example to the younger people, I have not so indulged for 12 months. If we have one duty, surely it is to guard the young from the pitfalls that beset them. I was shocked to read in the "West Australian" the other day a statement by a headmaster of one of our schools—his name was not disclosed; he must have asked the newspaper to withhold his name—that if young men wanted to hang around the street corners, let them do so.

"Why should they not do so?" he asked. I cannot believe that anybody picks up much good when hanging around street corners. Starting-price betting is definitely wrong when indulged in by the younger people. The Government's failure to grapple with this evil must condemn it in the eyes of all right-thinking people.

In one of our leading churches last Sunday the question was asked, "Why does not the Government take action to suppress this illegal betting?" This set me thinking, and I wondered why, in a democratic country such as this, the Commissioner of Police should be under any Minister. Parliament makes the laws, and the Commissioner of Police is appointed to see that those laws are carried out.

Hon. A. Thomson: I want to know why he does not carry them out.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I consider that the Commissioner of Police, like the Auditor-General, should be the servant of Parliament, reporting direct to Parliament. He should not be under any Minister who could give him instructions, which is said to have been done. If it is necessary for the Auditor-General to be free of political control, it is equally necessary, in the interests of law and order, that the Commissioner of Police should be similarly free.

Compulsory military training was advocated by Mr. Angelo. I wish that I, too, could advocate it. However, I have had a little experience of it. I am not a returned soldier, although I am an ex-member of the A.I.F. During the war part of my duty was to inspect military establishments throughout the Commonwealth. In the course of that duty I travelled to every State, including Queensland and Tasmania, and submitted reports on my inquiries. Fairly strong reports they were, too. Universal military training was one of the matters on which I had to report. During my inquiries I discovered what a large amount of money was wasted; it seemed to me to be deliberately wasted. Would it not be better, for a start at any rate, to bring in universal physical training rather than universal military training? Judging by the experience elsewhere, it would be highly beneficial for the youth of this country. I am definitely of opinion that young men need some form of discipline, but I believe that we could not do better

than by starting with compulsory physical training.

Let me briefly refer to native affairs. On several occasions I have interviewed the Commissioner, Mr. Neville, and my sympathies are with him. I hold him in high esteem. Like other heads of departments, he is strenuously endeavouring to do his best, but he has a very difficult task to perform. Let me give an illustration. In a certain town there is a half-caste family that includes a girl as black as the ace of spades and an older girl, about 14, who could not be distinguished from a white child. They are living in the native area, but I felt that as sure as the sun would rise it would be only a question of time before something happened to that girl. I asked Mr. Neville whether he could do anything for her. I know that Sister Kate is doing excellent work amongst the half-caste people. Mr. Neville said he would get the girl down as soon as he could. Since then a couple of years must have elapsed. I appreciate the difficulties that confronted him when he attempted to take that girl away. I believe that the Act passed last year gives him the necessary power, but because of his sympathetic nature, he has hesitated, in face of the greatest hostility on the part of the father and mother, to remove that girl from her dangerous environment. If that assumption is correct, no wonder Mr. Neville is in trouble. Because of his finer feeling, he has hesitated to take the child from her parents. At the same time, Mr. Neville has to do the right thing. I am wondering whether the recent storm of abuse has been due to his being perhaps a little too lenient. Some people contend that he is too lenient; others call him a dictator and another man a Mussolini. The instance I have quoted is not an isolated one; it could be paralleled in almost all parts of the State.

The half-caste problem has not attained serious proportions in my town, but in various parts of the State, I understand that it is causing great anxiety. The father of the child mentioned and another man are sustenance workers in receipt of the basic wage. Last week two other half-caste men—one the father of eight and the other the father of five children—came to me from Northampton. They said they had been rabbiting and kangarooing, but could not earn enough money in that way. They

put it to me that certain men were receiving sustenance and they, too, wanted sustenance. The Department of Employment has refused to register them. When I inquired why registration had been refused, I was informed, "We cannot give half-castes this work." I said, "There are two half-castes already on sustenance work but these men have been rabbitting and kangarooing for years." The legislation we passed last year does not seem to afford much assistance to half-castes. If, as many people contend, the desire is to give the half-castes a chance, and if the children are to attend schools with white children, who is to say that the parents should be denied sustenance work to enable them to purchase the necessaries for their children and live becomingly amongst whites? I asked, "What is to become of those men and their families?" Mr. Holmes knows what is happening because he is brought into close touch with the problem, and probably Mr. Craig knows more about it than I do. The reply to my question was, that those half-caste men could apply to the Commissioner and get rations. Are we going to tell the half-castes that we cannot give them sustenance work. They say they cannot get work on the farms or on the stations and cannot make a living at rabbitting or kangarooing. Are we going to say that their only recourse is to apply to the department for rations?

Here are the remarks of a man who is an authority—so the "West Australian" says. His name is Dr. Donald F. Thompson. He states that when a white man sets out to try to do something for the natives and half-castes, he makes the last condition of those people worse than the first. Our efforts on their behalf are along wrong lines. If the men are not eligible for sustenance work and cannot get employment, are we going to claim that we are doing them or their wives and families any good merely by supplying them with rations?

Hon. A. Thomson: They have to feed and clothe their youngsters.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes, that has to be done. We cannot let them starve and go naked. Hardly a week passes without some of them asking for old clothes. If the men are paid white men's wages, they should live as white men. A young man came to me one day and said, "I have to

apply for exemption from the provisions of the aborigines Act." I asked him what was wrong with that. He said, "I have never had to do that before. I have worked with white men; why should I have to apply for exemption from the Act?" I said to him, "I cannot see any objection to your applying for exemption," and I asked him his name. I then went to the Commissioner for Native Affairs and explained the situation. Mr. Neville said, "I have known this man for a long time and I think you will agree with me that he is faced with a fair proposition. He wants to be classed as a white man, but is he prepared to live as a white man?" I said, "I do not know." Mr. Neville asked me, "Where is he living now?" I told him he was living with natives and the Commissioner replied, "Tell him that if he is prepared to live as a white man, and then applies for exemption, he will obtain it, but he cannot have it both ways." I delivered the message, but the man is still living with the natives. That sort of thing is still going on and it is no wonder that people are crying out about the number of half-castes we are called upon to maintain.

I have under date the 19th August, 1938, a reply through the Child Welfare Department to an application for assistance under the McNess Housing Trust—

Replying to inquiry through the Child Welfare Department, I enclose application form for completion by you to be signed before a justice of the peace and returned to this office, when the application will be kept under attention for review with other applications when further moneys under the McNess Housing Trust Act become available. At the present time there are over one hundred waiting applications registered at this office and the available funds have all been allocated, and it is not possible, therefore, to proceed with the erection of further homes, nor are any of the existing cottages vacant just now.

That is a letter to a widow. Now I am going to tell members what was said by Judge Foster in Victoria. The "Bulletin" of the 27th July, 1938, stated—

According to Judge Foster, most Victorian criminals come from a group of suburbs in which they have no real homes:—

People may say "Flog this delinquent," or "Put that one in gaol." In my opinion it is we who should be sent to gaol; we have failed to provide a proper environment for the young mind.

Four or five other authorities are quoted by the "Bulletin" as agreeing with Judge Foster. While I am on this subject, I would mention the cheap houses which I understand the Government intend to erect. The sooner those houses are built, the better. Unless we can provide people with decent habitations, I do not know how we can expect children to grow up as they should. My namesake, Mr. W. R. Hall, on the opening day of the session of Parliament is reported to have said—

In the metropolitan area single men are provided with rations, but for single men on the goldfields the Government is not disposed to provide rations.

When I read that, I came to the conclusion that the two Halls were thinking along the same lines. I made reference to this matter last year. On page 2506 of "Hansard" appears the following under my name—

In the Appropriation Bill various Ministerial votes are mentioned. I will refer to one of which I regard the administration as unsatisfactory and which it is very hard to get to the bottom of—the amount for unemployment relief. The following details are given—

	£	s.	d.
Bed tickets	252	19	0
Meal tickets	323	16	0
Board and lodging	372	7	6
Ration orders	33,348	10	8
Total	£34,297	13	2

The principal amount, it will be seen, was the £33,348 for ration orders. On that occasion I continued as follows:—

I have repeatedly been asked by unemployed men in my town of Geraldton to obtain ration orders for them. I have gone to Perth and made inquiries and have been informed—though not on paper—that there is no such thing as a ration order.

Hon. A. Thomson: Yet £33,000 was stated to have been expended in respect of ration orders.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That is so. I asked for information. I am prepared to put a charitable construction upon the matter. It was late in the session and a good deal of legislation had to be rushed through, such as Bread Bills, etc., so that there was no time perhaps for a reply to be given. I hope, however, that in common courtesy, the Chief Secretary, when replying to the debate, will make mention of the matter. A member of this House of the same political

faith as the Chief Secretary has been complaining that in Kalgoorlie the single unemployed men cannot obtain rations, and I am complaining that the same state of affairs exists in Geraldton. Only yesterday I took two men along to the department. One was due to start work on the 20th, but there was nobody in Geraldton to whom I could take him—certainly nobody connected with the Government of the country who had authority to issue an order for rations. It is left to the private storekeeper and the private charitably-inclined person to lend or to give to such men in order to tide them over temporary difficulties.

Speaking on the subject last year, I said: "One law for the country and another for the city should not exist," and Mr. Thomson interjected, "unfortunately it does exist." That is true; it does exist. But why? I do not contend that the man in Perth who is entitled to rations should not obtain them. God forbid! But why should not such men in the country districts receive similar consideration? I will tell hon. members what men in country towns can obtain and I say it is to the shame of the Government! A young fellow at the Geraldton police station was given a ration of 1s. and he was told to leave the town and go to the next police station for further aid. He was given a ration order of 1s.! It is enough to make a man lose his temper and become all heated! That young man had to clear out to the nearest town. Mr. Drew knows as well as I where the town nearest to Geraldton is situated. It is 30 odd miles to Northampton in one direction. In another direction he would have to go to Mullewa, which is 65 miles distant; while if he travelled south, Dongarra, 50 miles away, would be his first stop. If I know anything of the members of the Government I do not think any one of them individually would treat a man like that. Yet this sort of thing is taking place.

Before tea I was endeavouring to hurry so that I might complete my speech. Since then I have been advised not to hurry, and I consider that I have a right to say what I have in mind. My remarks are not personal. I propose to quote a statement made by Mr. Colin Clark, who was formerly a lecturer in our University. Mr. Clark gave evidence before the Arbitration Court, and his remarks were accorded serious attention by the court when an increase in the basic wage was being

considered. This is what appeared in the "West Australian" on the 27th April, 1938—

Dealing with the question of diet, Mr. Clark submitted a comprehensive table in which various foods were listed. He mentioned that he held a university degree in chemistry, that having been his subject before he became a statistician, and he was, therefore, able to discuss the question of diet from the chemical as well as the statistical aspect. He said that at present Perth prices it was not possible to provide an optimum diet under a cost of 10s. per head per week. "And let me get away from any idea that it is cheaper to feed children than adults," he added. "The requirements of children in the body and bone-forming foods are greater, if anything, than those of adults." Family allowances ought to be considered as a matter of urgency, he said, but those in authority seemed to be willing to let this urgent problem slide from year to year. Full provision for the children of basic-wage earners could not be regarded as a light or postponable matter.

As I said before, I was glad to observe that an increase of the basic wage had been granted. I have here a letter from the Child Welfare Department. I quoted instances of this kind last year. When I was reading from similar letters, Mr. Holmes became impatient with me for going into detail. The letter I am about to read was written to a widow on the 18th August, and was given to me just before I left Geraldton. It reads—

Dear Madam,—I would be pleased to hear whether it is your intention to place David in employment when he attains the age of 14 years. Should you be successful I should be immediately advised of his earnings and the amount he is able to give you. I have communicated with the Workers' Homes Board and requested that in the event of a Mc Ness or other home being available in your town your claim for occupancy be given every consideration.—Yours faithfully, F. E. Meachem, Secretary.

David came to my house yesterday and said, "I was 14 years old this morning," and by that morning's mail arrived a letter informing his mother that the 9s. that he had been worth to her was to be taken away. In addition the department wanted to know when David could start work so that—let it be whispered—the department could make a further deduction from the paltry amount allowed to this woman to keep herself and her five children. If an increase of 5s. in the basic wage is considered necessary; if what Mr. Colin Clark said was right—and the Arbitration Court must have considered

that it was—why should not the widows of this State receive an increase of their paltry allowance of 9s. or 7s. per head per week? For how many years have they been endeavouring to feed, clothe, house and educate their children on that amount? Shame upon us all!

I should like to look the members of this Government in the face and tell them that not only are they to blame for what is going on at present but also they are to blame for what has been going on for the last six years, because they have failed to take any remedial action. If the people were fully aware of the position, I am satisfied they would rise up and throw the members of the Government from the seats they occupy. A woman who is living in her own house—a little bit of a shack perhaps—is entitled to 7s. a week for each of her children. If such a woman has not her own home and has to pay rent, she is entitled to 9s. a week. The woman to whom I have referred is paying rent. She has five children all under 14, and a boy down here under treatment at the Children's Hospital for asthma. That woman has been getting 45s. a week. The boy turned 14 on the 23rd August, and she is now paid 36s. a week. She pays 20s. per week house rent; everybody knows that house rents are high in Geraldton. That is a fact which has been proved before the Arbitration Court. The home is nothing very great—a small, semi-detached place. She has 16s. per week to feed herself and five children. The boy is halfway through his first year working hard for his junior. I have letters from the Child Welfare Department claiming that as the children were earning, the allowance to the parent could be reduced. In the secretary of the Child Welfare Department the State has a very fine officer. Indeed, so far as I know, all the officers of that department endeavour to do their duty. They have to carry out the Act. Hon. members will recollect a question I asked here recently about a very zealous officer going around to women on Sundays with a uniformed policeman. He had no right whatever to do that, I have found out since. The Chief Secretary promised to make inquiry into the matter. I hope the hon. gentleman will give the House the results of that inquiry. The widow to whom I have referred was one of the women the police-

man went to see. He found out that she was getting £1 per week from a certain lodge.

Member: Would the department begrudge her that?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The department would not merely begrudge her it. If the department knows that a woman is going out to work and earns 10s. or 12s. or 15s. a week, it deducts that amount from her allowance.

The Honorary Minister: The boy studying for an examination does not go off sustenance until he passes the examination.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I would like Mr. Gray to tell me afterwards what he wants to say.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask the hon. member to allow Mr. Hall to proceed without interruption.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I shall be very glad indeed to receive any information that Mr. Gray cares to give me. I know that many of our large taxpayers complain about the burden of taxation. Therefore I wish to congratulate the staff of our University on the issue of a booklet I hold in my hand. It is entitled: "University Studies in History and Economics. The Economist and Rearmament, by Colin Clark, M.A. (Oxon), and The Community Income of Western Australia, by H. J. Goodes, B.A." Mr. Colin Clark says—

As a contrast, Great Britain, even with the present full programme in force, is not spending much more than 6 per cent. of her national income on armaments. U.S.A. is spending 2½ per cent. and Australia is spending 1.2 per cent., while New Zealand figures are so small as to be infinitesimal.

The writer has taken in recent expenditure on armaments.

Referring first of all to the burden of taxation, Australia and New Zealand are at present carrying, in relation to their national income, a considerably lighter burden of taxation than Great Britain is carrying. In fact, it may come as a shock to many Australians to realise that except for possibly Sweden, Australia is carrying, in relation to her national income, one of the lightest taxation burdens in the world. . . .

We must take it therefore more or less as an axiom that a modern industrial community such as this, to provide social services, must tax itself to the extent of between 15 per cent. and 20 per cent. of its national income. Possibly as national income rises, it may be able to tax itself in a smaller proportion, but it can without any serious economic damage

raise taxation up to 25 per cent. of the national income, as was the case in Great Britain a few years ago, and even now British taxation is not far below the 20 per cent. figure.

I wish to emphasise that the following extract refers to social services, and not to armaments:—

There is a great deal of misconception on the subject of the potential capacity of the Australian money market. During the last year, when Australian national income has been at high level, the annual savings of Australia have not been far from the figure of 80 million pounds, and I do not think it is generally realised, even by politicians and bankers, who have to deal with these problems, how large a sum of loan expenditure Australia can afford to finance from her own internal resources. I would go further, and say how large a sum of loan expenditure should necessarily be undertaken if an outlet is to be found for the tremendous savings Australia is capable of making with the present high level of national income.

I quote that passage to make my final point. I have here the annual report of the Child Welfare Department for the two years ended 30th June, 1937. On page 13 of the report members will find the following particulars:—

Statistics of this branch as at 30th June, 1937, show the following:—The total number of families receiving assistance is 1,230, comprising 2,539 children and 420 incapacitated husbands, making a total of 4,189 persons, which, in comparison with the figures for the previous year, which were 1,210 families, 371 incapacitated husbands and 2,442 children, a total of 4,023 persons, discloses for the year 1936-37 an increase of 20 cases, involving 166 persons.

A table on the same page shows that the cost per week from March to June of 1937 was £1,416.

Recalling what I said about the 9s. and the 7s., I was at a loss to know how the department worked out the cost for the 4,189 persons at 6s. 9d. and a fraction of a penny per head. I thought there was some mistake in the figures. Accordingly I went to see the secretary of the department, and he said to me, "No; the figures are quite right." I said, "Will you kindly explain them?" He replied, "When children start to earn, the mother's allowance is reduced, and so the average paid is not 7s. or 9s., but is reduced to 6s. 9d. and a fraction by reason of the fact that the children's earnings are taken into consideration in the assessment of the total amount

payable by the State to the widow and the fatherless children." Do not you think, Mr. President, that it is time we did something for these defenceless people? I believe hon. members will be with me when I say that such paltry anomalies should not continue. We are told that the children of to-day are the men and women of to-morrow. Is it fair and reasonable to expect children to grow up into capable citizens under the conditions disclosed? Only a fortnight ago I remember a batch of boys being brought out by a certain church. To the support of those children the State Government contributes 3s. 6d. a week, the Commonwealth Government 3s. 6d., and the Imperial Government 5s. I should like to see thousands of men, women and children come out here; but when we do not do anything better for the widows and fatherless children of our own community than allow them a paltry 6s. 9d. per head per week, I say "Shame on us!"

The Chief Secretary: Yet that is the highest rate in the Commonwealth.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I thank the Minister sincerely for that interjection. I was going to remark that it would be said the allowance here was the highest in Australia. If it were the highest rate in the world, still we ought to be ashamed of it. A few years ago I asked a question about Ministerial travelling allowances, and got the cane for doing so. I was told "The other fellows do just the same." Let me tell the Chief Secretary, we will never get anywhere while we argue on those lines. Let Western Australia show the way in this small but important matter. Recently Mr. Seddon asked a question as to the hospital tax. That is a tax I am fond of, because I know it is put to good use. The Treasurer has nothing to do with it. I know that the Minister for Health has the spending of proceeds of hospital taxation. The reply to Mr. Seddon's question was that hospital tax for the year ended 30th June, 1938, produced £245,659. For goodness' sake let the present Government in its dying hours introduce another 1½d. tax and do the fair thing by the widows and the defenceless children of Western Australia! I have much pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [8.28]: Before speaking to the motion, I

desire to associate myself with the expressions of regret that have been voiced by other members at the absence of some familiar faces from our midst. In the great drama of life change is unceasing, and the sphere of Parliament is no exception. It is certain that we shall always retain pleasant recollections of those who are no longer with us. We appreciate their friendship, and admire the desire that always animated them to serve the country. We can safely say that the degrees of diligence and zeal, and honesty of purpose, are monuments of their work, and will find honoured places in the annals of this Parliament. We feel richer for having had their companionship, and we deeply regret that they have passed—one from this mundane sphere, the other from the life of Parliament. At the same time I wish to join in the welcome extended to our two new members. May their labours prove acceptable to the people of their Provinces and to the State, and may their experience as our colleagues be marked by that spirit of courtesy and friendliness, which is one of the outstanding and at the same time one of the most delightful features of this Chamber. I do not intend to cover a wide range of subjects in the course of my remarks. I desire to congratulate you, Mr. President, as have other members who have spoken. I believe that we have had a high standard of debate on the motion before the House. I do not intend to cover the same ground as other members. I shall make brief references to a few subjects before turning to one that will constitute the balance of my remarks.

I wish to stress the necessity that still exists for greater expenditure on the provision of educational facilities for children in the outback parts of the State. Since we met last year I have been called upon to travel from one end to the other of my Province. It was not exactly a pleasure trip; it was forced upon me in order that I might re-appear as a member of this Chamber. During my election campaign I saw sufficient of the country schools to make me more determined than before to leave no stone unturned in an effort to secure better accommodation and facilities. I quoted figures last year to indicate that about 94 per cent. of the Education Vote was absorbed in salaries and expenses, only about 6 per cent. being applied to the provision of

maintenance and new facilities. In some parts of the South-West I saw seating accommodation for children that was positively dangerous. I saw school furniture made of kerosene boxes, and any other timber that the schoolmaster could secure. I wrote to the department regarding the position at one school, and pointed out that the two cupboards there, which were supposed to represent State furniture, consisted of scraps of boards and pieces of tin that the schoolmaster had been able to get hold of. I suggested the provision of at least some decent seating accommodation for the children and cupboards for the master. The reply I received from the department completely ignored the reference to seating accommodation, and stated that for its size the school was entitled to only one cupboard. That is as far as I got with that matter. It seems to me that the present Government spends most of its endeavours in looking after industrialists and little of its effort is directed towards improving facilities in other directions. Complaints regarding school accommodation are State-wide. I congratulate Mr. Dimmitt on the wonderful reply he got from the Government when he was promised the expenditure of £15.

Hon. H. Tuckey: He did very well.

Hon. W. J. MANN: He must have created almost a record. I have endeavoured to get approval for the expenditure of a few pounds to protect the children at one centre from the wind and rain in winter and from the sun in summer, but I have been unsuccessful. In the words of an ex-Director of Education, I "had not got a hope."

I desire to make brief reference to the necessity for early action regarding the Bunbury harbour. Last week a deputation of members representing the South-West waited upon the Minister for Works and the position was placed clearly before him. The Minister informed us that the matter would be considered. I hope the Government will recognise that the South-West is rapidly expanding, and that the volume of the products of that portion of the State is increasing rapidly. The time is not far distant when it will be imperative for the Government to provide proper shipping facilities for the South-West, and the port for that purpose will naturally be Bunbury. I am not prepared at this stage to say what should be done, but I am inclined to believe

that sooner or later the Government will be forced to admit that a mistake was made in the earlier stages of the development of that port, and will have to revert to one of the alternative plans suggested to ensure that deep water will be available that will not be affected by silt.

Another matter I desire to mention briefly is the distribution of the virus with which experiments are being made for the destruction of rabbits. Mr. Craig furnished us with the proper designation of the virus, but I have forgotten the technical term.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: So long as it kills rabbits, that is all that matters.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. From the evidence submitted so far, it appears that it has been amply proved that the virus is effective in killing off rabbits and is harmless to domestic animals or to human life. We are 2,000 miles away from the scene of these experiments and the rabbits are becoming a steadily increasing menace in the South-West. In the past the wheatbelt acted as a buffer and experienced the worst of the ravages of the pest. Now it is rapidly making its presence felt in the South-West, and the sooner action is taken, the sooner can reasonable control be expected.

Next I propose to deal with a subject that is not mentioned in the Lieut-Governor's Speech, apart from a paragraph in which reference is made to expenditure incurred in providing the new Cave House at Yallingup. The matter is one that members know is of considerable interest to me, namely tourists and the tourist traffic. By following up this subject, I hope to increase the sympathetic interest of members and to demonstrate something of the value of this great business to the community. For many years it has been a matter of extreme regret to me that succeeding Governments have regarded the tourist business as of minor significance. No matter how we tried, those who have constituted the Cabinets in the last few years, with one or two exceptions, appear to have possessed no tourist conscience, no idea of the value of the traffic, and apparently little inclination to learn. In my opinion, and I will quote some authorities in corroboration of my statement, instead of being a matter of minor importance, it is really one of major significance. The term "tourist traffic" suggests the form of travel usually associated with holiday-making and pleasure

seeking, either on land or sea, sight-seeing and so on. That is the popular conception. There are much more important aspects. Behind tourist travel are factors that can make for the benefit of the State. There is the phase of tourist traffic associated with persons seeking education by travel. Another concerns the movements of individuals partly for the purposes of commerce. Then there are the journeyings of a large number of important people who are impelled by a genuine search for opportunities. Instead of looking at the tourist business as a matter relating purely to pleasure, it must be obvious that it is one of much wider moment.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Then there are the people in search of health.

Hon. W. J. MANN: All these angles are of particular interest to a new country, and when we urge greater attention to the tourist business, we may well be pardoned for harbouring the hope that behind the element of pleasure, the State may reap a measure of permanent benefit. We require population and we need new industries, and the development of the great variety of resources spread over the vast area under our control. We want new business; we require new avenues of employment; we require increased production of national income. As a means to this end, an active tourist traffic policy can be most effective. Generally advocates of a bigger and better tourist activity fail to get beyond the question of gain resulting from individual cash expenditure. I submit that extensive and acceptable as is the immediate financial phase, it is but one consideration and by no means the most important. A more valuable aspect is that which can follow the wide dissemination of reliable information concerning the advantages, opportunities and resources of a country, gained first hand and from personal contact. I suggest that a lamentable lack of vision and understanding has, in the past, prevented our tourist department from functioning in anything like an adequate manner. The paltry votes that from year to year have been allotted to the department have prevented anything in the way of publicity being undertaken. Successive Governments have been content to vote a sum that would be just about sufficient for the upkeep of an office, and worse still, Governments have remained content after having done that, and have left the concern to the mercies of departmental officers whose sympa-

thies I sometimes imagine are not really with the department. That kind of thing has continued too long, and I submit that a radical change is necessary. Further than that, I hope a change will be brought about without delay.

The Chief Secretary: What do you suggest?

Hon. W. J. MANN: A change of outlook on the part of the Government for one thing, a change in the amount of the vote for another, and a wider appreciation of the value of the trade and traffic generally. During the past year an attractive office has been opened in a prominent position in Perth. That is what I have frequently advocated in this House, and late and all as it is, I appreciate the change because I believe it to be a distinct step forward. Further, if the Government will do as I suggest it may mark the beginning of an era of much increased usefulness. Money must be provided and in good measure. Any business conducted by an individual or a company in possession of commodities for which there might be a demand cannot expect to flourish unless it makes known the fact that it can provide the commodities that the public need. An energetic executive promptly sets out to advertise its wares and to broadcast all the information at its disposal, well knowing that any expenditure thus incurred will be repaid many fold. What is essential with an individual or company is equally essential with the State, and I contend it is not only the duty of the Government, but it is imperative also, unless we are going to lag behind other places, to make much more widely known this State's attractions, opportunities and advantages. In Perth we have a tourist and publicity office maintained by the small State of Tasmania. More recently the States of Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland combined to open another office in our midst. If it is a payable proposition for the Governments of the States mentioned, who are well aware of the advantages to be gained from advertising, to come to a State which has less than seven per cent of the population of the Commonwealth for the purpose of making known its attractions, how much more essential is it that Western Australia should open offices in their territory and seek business from the other 93 per cent.? It seems to me very evident that if the States that appreciate the value of tourist trade and traffic are

satisfied that it is a good proposition to come here where there is only a small population and maintain offices in prominent positions, it is much more necessary that we should go to the centres of greater population and seek to attract business. While we have done little more than talk about tourist business, the other States have been encouraging and building it up as rapidly as possible. In a report on commercial activities of the small State of Tasmania issued by one of the prominent banks a month ago, I find this—

The tourist traffic for the season to date has shown a big increase on that of previous years. The values of bookings at the mainland capital offices of the Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau over the past four years are here compared—

1934-35	..	..	..	..	6,794
1935-36	..	..	..	..	10,229
1936-37	..	..	..	..	13,556
1937-38	..	..	..	..	19,313

Thus there was an increase in four years from £6,000 to £19,000, over 200 per cent., and there is still an upward tendency. Inquiries show that the value of bookings means only the value of the transport—rail and steamer—and what accommodation is paid for in advance. The aggregate tourist expenditure would be much greater. Perhaps that aspect is better illustrated by a statement made to the "West Australian" recently by Mr. E. T. Emmett, Director of the Tasmanian Tourist Department, when he prefaced his remarks with the words: "Tasmania's tourist traffic is estimated to be worth nearly a million pounds a year." He went on to say:—

The Tasmanian Government regards the tourist trade as one of its main assets. Despite the infantile paralysis scare last year, record tourist figures were obtained by Tasmania. The Government is doing everything possible to foster the trade, not only by extending booking facilities and publicity, but by building motor roads to resorts hitherto inaccessible except to the hardy few who could walk. . . . I have been in charge of the Tourist Bureau since it was inaugurated in 1914. The gross receipts in the first year amounted to £5,000, but for the year ended on the 30th June last they totalled £159,500. The department was opened by myself and three clerks, but now we have a staff of over fifty.

So much for the State with the smallest area and the least population in the Commonwealth. A study of the activities of other States shows similar progress. In Victoria

a few weeks ago the Governor's Speech, referring to past achievements, contained the following passage:—

Substantial sums made available by the Government have been expended on the improvement of a number of tourist resorts.

Later, on the 3rd of the present month, the Premier of Victoria, explaining his financial Estimates, dwelt upon the necessity for doing everything possible for the development of tourist business. Mr. Dunstan said:—

The Government is fully aware of the importance of providing for the requirements of tourist traffic, and the desirability of embarking upon an active policy for the development of tourist resorts, with a view to making them more accessible and more attractive. Legislation to enable a scheme of development to be undertaken will therefore be placed before you during the present session.

Commenting on that declaration, the Melbourne "Age," a couple of days later, published the following:—

The Government is fully aware of the importance of providing for the requirements of the tourist traffic and the desirability of embarking upon a policy of development of the tourist resorts and making them more accessible and more attractive and intends this session to introduce legislation to that end. The legislation will be in the form of a Bill to authorise the raising of a tourist loan, and the expenditure of the money in accordance with plans brought forward by the Tourist Committee of the Government.

The comment continues:—

It is intended first of all to attract the motorists and walkers of Victoria, interstate motorists, and increasing numbers of overseas tourists.

The Victorian Government, members will note, have awakened to the value of tourist traffic. Members will agree that there is need for as much pressure as possible being applied to the Government of this State to fall in line and do a great deal more than has been done in the past, so that our State may receive some advantage. The New South Wales and Queensland Governments are likewise making the tourist trade quite an important matter. From being relegated into the category of small things, the tourist traffic has been brought to the forefront of their programmes. Even Commonwealth Ministers are examining the Commonwealth territory with the same end in view. Members will recollect that a fortnight ago the Minister for External Affairs (Mr. W. M.

Hughes) returned from a trip to the centre of Australia. He is reported to have said:—

In the interests of Australia, Central Australia should be developed to attract tourist trade. The tourist trade was one of the greatest industries in the world to-day, and the interior he considered could be made a tourists' paradise. Oodnadatta, which was only a dustheap, could be made into a lovely place with good streets, gardens and buildings.

We have had perhaps a different idea from that of the interior of Australia. The fact remains that Mr. Hughes has investigated that country and drawn a vivid picture of its worth. Whether it be possible or not it is the statement of a gentleman whose experience is very great and whose knowledge is profound. He is satisfied that tourist traffic is one of the most important matters that can be undertaken to-day. While I am illustrating what has been done elsewhere, I do not want it to be thought that I am unmindful of the efforts of the few Western Australians who recognise the value of the tourist industry. I very gladly acknowledge the efforts of the Leader of this House. A little while ago I said that, with few exceptions, members occupying ministerial offices had not shown much sympathy for the tourist traffic. Mr. Kitson is one of the exceptions, and I am convinced that if he had his way much more would be accomplished than has been done in the past. I am also convinced that if he can have his way in the future, more progress will be made. I would also pay a tribute to the untiring efforts of Mr. Hayward, the Director of the Tourist Bureau. His is a most difficult task. He has been expected to make a decent showing—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: He has been expected to make bricks without straw.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is true. Mr. Hayward has been expected to do big things with practically no resources.

I congratulate the Premier, Mr. Willcock, upon having succeeded in finding the money to erect a new Cave House at Yallingup. In this effort, at least two of his predecessors failed.

Hon. G. Fraser: You are throwing bouquets about to-night.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Government got the insurance money from the fire.

Hon. W. J. MANN: A very small amount. I never fail to pay a compliment when I believe it to be justly due.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. J. MANN: And I never hesitate to condemn when I believe condemnation is justly deserved. In this instance, I am sure that Mr. Willcock, whatever his views may have been in the past, has shown considerable interest in the tourist trade. The new Cave House promises to be a building of exceptional beauty and will not only be a good business proposition, but will prove immensely popular with our own people and with those who visit us from other lands. When the building is completed we shall be in a much better position to invite visitors from overseas to inspect the caves, and we shall no longer be ashamed of what was left undone in the past.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You have great advantages in your district.

Hon. W. J. MANN: In the past, we have been positively ashamed to take overseas visitors, especially those who may have what might be termed a complex for visiting caves, to Yallingup. We have hesitated to invite them because we felt that after they had visited other places, they would be disappointed at the accommodation provided for tourists. After all, we have wonderful natural beauties, but many people seem to be unmindful of their value.

I wish to make a few suggestions with regard to Yallingup, and I want them placed on record. I have already made the suggestions to the Chief Secretary, who administers the State hotels, but I desire also to make them to the Government. I refer to the landscape features and the environs of Cave House. Members know that the natural scenic setting of that delightful spot is almost unparalleled for its beauty, but certain work is required to be done in laying paths and bushland walks and in the selection of view points. No amateurs or inartistic persons should be entrusted with that work. I urge the Government, before anything further is done, to have a complete plan prepared of the caves reserve, with the object ultimately of securing the best possible picturesque effect and still further adding to its attractiveness. All future work to be undertaken could then be carried out in conformity with that plan. I am prompted to make this suggestion because I sometimes walk through King's Park and, as I look around, I become sad

when I think of what might have been done with that wonderful site had the laying out of the park been entrusted to some person of vision and artistry, and with an appreciation of the beauty of the area. I am glad that in the new superintendent or curator of the park, Mr. Watson, a young man whom I know, we have a person who will do his best to make the park even more delightful. Recently, I went through it a couple of times and already I can see the hand of the artistic craftsman in the landscape work that Mr. Watson is doing. In view of the fact that Yallingup will be a tourist resort for all time, I do not desire any incompetent person to go on to the reserve with an axe and proceed to chop down trees and generally make a mess of the place. Such a person may do damage that could not be repaired in a hundred years.

I would also urge the Government to provide a road along the top of the coastal hills extending from Yallingup to Cape Naturaliste. Such a road would provide a delightful scenic run or a comfortable walk. It would look down on the Indian Ocean and on the rugged shores. If members were to visit the district I am sure they would be charmed with its beauty and grandeur. The piece of coast there is wonderful, but it is known to very few people. At present, it is practically inaccessible. I have discussed this matter with prominent road engineers who have been over the country, and they tell me there are no engineering difficulties in the construction of the road. The idea appeals to me very greatly. Sustenance labour could be employed in the construction of the road, which would be one of our few drives on hilltops with the ocean at its feet.

On previous occasions I have spoken of the attractions Western Australia has to offer the tourist. It is not my intention tonight to detail them again, but I would remind members that mechanical transport is playing a tremendous part in bringing into prominence new tourist assets. In the province that my colleagues and I represent, we are finding many desirable spots of which even we, who knew the country very well, were previously ignorant. From Safety Bay right down to Nornalup quite a number of new beaches and camping places have been opened up which are rapidly developing into small towns that will in the future become

very popular. Our older towns are also realising the necessity for bringing themselves up-to-date; and municipalities and road boards are very vigorously improving their facilities. The same thing is going on from Denmark and Albany to Esperance. Thanks to the good work of the Main Roads Commissioner, trips to parts of the country devoted to fruitgrowing, dairying, sheep and cattle raising, tobacco growing, forests, as well as to the great asset we have in our caves, can now be made with the minimum of effort and with a great deal of enjoyment. These are inland places, but they all have a special charm. I could say the same of the Midlands and the North, the great wheat belt, and certainly of our world-famous goldfields. All these portions of the State have an appeal of their own, particularly to those whose lives are spent in the crowded cities of other lands. Everywhere in this State, which covers a third of the continent, we find something different, something of interest to people who delight in travel. All these places are now accessible, either by train, boat, motor car or aerial service. The Government should rise to the occasion and do everything possible to strengthen the appeal which these tourist areas already have, and should distribute as much literature as possible to advertise them. I wish to congratulate the producers of two excellent publications recently issued in Perth, along the lines of which I have been speaking. I dare say each member has been provided with a publication known as "Glorious Western Australia." This was printed by F. Daniels Ltd., of Perth. I am informed it was supplied to the Tourist Department at no cost other than that of an advertisement, the loan of photographs and blocks, and the assistance of Mr. Hayward and his staff. It is one of the outstanding publications that has been issued for years by any State. I am in the habit of collecting good printing matter, and have quite a number of publications covering different States. I defy anyone to produce anything better than "Glorious Western Australia." I have also a second publication. I refer to "Springtime in Western Australia." This comes from the Government Printer, and is also of outstanding merit. I congratulate that office on this effort. It is the type of thing we want. If large numbers of these bro-

chures could be circulated throughout the Commonwealth and made available on steamers, and wherever tourists resort, I am satisfied that the return would be worth while.

Hon. G. Fraser: The picture on the cover ought to attract tourists.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. I understand the original of the cover is a copy of a poster supplied by the Australian National Travel Association. To that organisation we are indebted for a very charming poster. Some figures I am going to quote will give members an idea of the immensity of the tourist business in one country. Europe, which, I suppose, has by far the greatest amount of tourist traffic, is the scene of the expenditure of huge sums of money by tourists, but at present some of the frontiers are closed, so I am taking American figures as an illustration. My authority is the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce of the United States. I want members to grasp the immensity of the business in that country. It is estimated that more than 50,000,000 persons took trips of some sort in 1935. Here are some astounding figures—

Transatlantic passages between Europe and the ports of Canada and the United States totalled 594,698 compared with 571,044 in 1934. The major portion of the increase was in west-bound passengers. These amounted to 258,396, a gain of 14,511 over the 1934 figure of 243,885. Passengers travelling from American ports to Europe also showed some gain, amounting to 248,145, an increase of 8,632 over the 239,512 passengers eastbound in the previous year. The total travel bill for 1935 was estimated at 9,000,000,000 dollars, of which approximately 5,350,000,000 dollars was spent in foreign travel.

The number of people who travel by car, airlines, etc., is also given. Members should bear in mind that 5,350,000,000 dollars has been spent in one year by the people of one country in foreign travel. If this figure is reduced to sterling we get a sum of approximately £1,100,000,000. The figure is almost too large to appreciate. The revenue of the Government of this State for last year was £10,819,042. The total amount of money spent by the people of the United States in one year on travelling in foreign countries is therefore equivalent to nearly one hundred times the revenue of this State for last year. It is the duty of the Government to endeavour to have some

of this money brought here. Every 12 months the equivalent of at least that amount of money will be expended somewhere amongst some people. We should urge the Government with all the force we can to realise what is ahead of a country possessing the attractions Western Australia has, and to make a determined effort to participate in this huge outlay. I am not able to give the figures of Continental countries, for most of them are incomplete. If the amount spent on foreign travel in Europe alone were added to the American figures, I am sure the total would be even more staggering. If we who are entrusted with the development and advancement of this country do not carry out this suggestion, we can justly be accused of falling down on the job. The business of improving our publicity on behalf of this State could be taken up progressively. We do not expect the Government to set out upon a huge campaign all at once, but we do suggest that the Government should transfer this question from one of minor significance to one of major importance and act accordingly. I also wish to quote from an Eastern States newspaper which, a few days ago, announced the arrival of a steamer travelling between the United States and Australia. My cutting is from the Melbourne "Age" of the 13th August. There is a double column heading, "American Liner Arrives," "Increasing Tourist Trade." The article says—

The arrival yesterday of the liner "Mariposa," with over 200 passengers and tourists from the United States, promises a flourishing tourist season. The general opinion is that with the return to better business conditions, Americans, who have learnt much more of Australia in the last few years, will come to Australia in greater numbers than ever before. The prospects of the American tourist traffic were dealt with by Mr. D. M. Dow, official secretary for Australia in United States for 14 years, who thinks that Americans have largely exploited Europe and the East as tourist resorts, and are looking increasingly towards Australia. "The American tourist is fastidious," said Mr. Dow. "He has been spoilt by American hotels. He goes out of the city in America, and in even small places he finds such excellent facilities at hotels and eating houses that when he visits an Australian country hotel he sometimes gets a bad impression. Even so, Americans, especially those who have been to Europe, like Australia because they find the character and speech of the people are so similar to those of their own country."

Mr. Dow is of opinion that Australia must cater more for American tourists. "They have come a long way," he said, "and if they are subjected to discomfort they will not be so keen when telling their friends about the country. Apart from this improvement, Australia wants nothing else. I know a man who has come all the way from Brooklyn just to see a kookaburra. Australia has scenic attractions and fauna, in particular koalas, which send Americans crazy with excitement. Because of the work of the National Travel Association, many more hundreds of Americans are going to come here."

Apropos of this, members may recollect that Mr. Dow was formerly Secretary to the Prime Minister of Australia. He was afterwards sent to New York as Official Secretary for Australia in the United States. I had the pleasure of meeting him on several occasions before he left Australia, and again when I was in New York and saw something of the ramifications of his work. Mr. Dow happened to return to Australia on the "Mariposa," and that is how he came to be interviewed. Those are the remarks of a much-travelled gentleman who knows the Continent well and who, after 14 years' experience in the heart of the United States of America, knows the desires and wishes of tourists and something also of their expenditure. He tells us we must get to work and secure some of this tourist business. I hope the Government will realise that this business is somewhat different from other classes of business. As I have mentioned on previous occasions, it is the only thing we can sell and still have. We can keep on selling our tourist attractions year in and year out, and they never diminish. I hope the Chief Secretary will impress on Cabinet the necessity for exerting greater efforts to secure tourist traffic, and that as a result of those efforts, we shall be able to gain some of the advantages. I support the motion.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [9.31]: In the few remarks I propose to make I shall be fairly brief. I wish to offer my congratulations to you, Sir, and also to the members newly elected to this House. I also join in the expression of sympathy extended to the families of bereaved members. I have further to express regret at the passing of one of my colleagues from this Chamber. That, however, does not diminish the warmth of my welcome to new members, and I trust that during the years they are with us, any-

thing in the shape of industrial legislation introduced by members on this side of the House will receive their support.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There are no sides in this House.

Hon. G. FRASER: I congratulate the member who made his maiden speech this afternoon. While congratulating him, however, I must express surprise that he had not been informed by members on the other side of the Chamber that this is a non-party House. If he had been so informed, he would not have made some of the remarks that fell from him in criticism of the Government, particularly about political advantages and matters of that kind. However, I believe that he will receive the necessary instruction and that the offence will not be repeated. While I do not propose to speak of wheat and wool, some primary production is carried on in my electorate.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You would not have an electorate but for wheat and wool.

Hon. G. FRASER: I was about to point out that members on this side of the House have always been exceptionally sympathetic to legislation designed to help the man on the land.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why members on "this side" of the House?

Hon. G. FRASER: Members of the same political faith as myself on all occasions have done everything possible to help the man on the land. We are not concerned whether the person we are endeavouring to assist is a man who works for wages or tills the land. So long as he is a worker we are prepared to do our best to assist him. We have helped him in the past, and we will help him in the future. In my electorate there are some primary producers who, in common with other primary producers, are having a rough spin. Later on I expect to sponsor a Bill designed to improve the conditions of those people, and it will be a test of the sincerity of Country Party members as to what assistance they are prepared to give men who eke out a living by tilling the land. I shall not deal with the matter further than to say that a Bill of the kind will be brought before us, and I trust will receive sympathetic consideration.

Throughout this debate I have been surprised at the mildness of the criticism levelled at the Government for its actions during the past few years. I cannot suppress my surprise, particularly in view of

the approach of the elections for another place.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We do not trouble about them.

Hon. G. FRASER: This being a non-party House, I suppose we need not trouble about them. I have been surprised that the comments of members against the administration have not been more caustic. That merely goes to show that members here are taxed to find something for which they can criticise the Government. Generally Mr. Holmes is very caustic in his criticism, but on this occasion he could not even find the nigger in the wood-pile. Evidently that nigger has disappeared since the Native Administration Act came into force. To me it is pleasing that the Government, in six years of office, has put up a performance provocative of so little criticism. Unfortunately for those members who have indulged in criticism, their remarks, generally speaking, can be adequately answered, and their attacks have thus proved futile. Most of the attacks made during this debate have been based on unemployment, which matter was mentioned at least twice today. I am not yet satisfied with the unemployment position and will not be satisfied until such time as every person in the State is enjoying full-time employment. Still, I give the Government credit for the vast improvement it has wrought in this direction.

I was astounded this evening to hear one member blame the Government for the position of the unemployed and particularly for lack of sympathy displayed towards those people. What astounded me was that the hon. member could make such remarks.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You said just now that there had been no criticism.

Hon. G. FRASER: I said there had been very little criticism and that that little could be easily answered. I was saying that one hon. member's criticism astounded me, and especially was that so in view of the fact that I cannot recollect having heard any protest from him against the previous Administration when conditions in one of his own towns had reached such a pass that soup kitchens had to be introduced. He would criticise the Government that had so vastly improved the condition of the unemployed, but because he was of the same political leanings as the previous Administration, he made no protest against the conditions that then prevailed.

What improvements have been effected? Mr. Dimmitt stated this afternoon that 6,500 men were still unemployed. That statement is quite incorrect; there are not 6,500 men still unemployed. The truth is that there are about 6,500 men still being assisted by the Government in that they are receiving ration tickets or are employed on Government relief work, which is an entirely different matter from having 6,500 men unemployed. The scheme of Government relief works operated by the present Government differs entirely from that adopted by the previous Administration. At that time there were something like 17,000 unemployed.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: There was no depression at the time, was there?

Hon. G. FRASER: Those 17,000 men were mostly on ration tickets, and those who were not on ration tickets were loaned to local authorities and largely were doing nothing better than pulling grass off the footpaths. Even those men were not employed at the basic wage rate, but they were given an amount equivalent to the value of the rations they could draw. But conditions have greatly improved.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: To the extent of over a million.

Hon. G. FRASER: At present only about 600 men are drawing ration tickets, and the remainder of the 6,500 are employed on ordinary work of the departments. Certainly their work is styled Government relief work, and the men are picked up from the State Labour Bureau, but it is the ordinary work of the departments. For instance, unemployed are engaged on work for the railways doing the ordinary track work, such as regrading, but they are still classed in the Speech as being on Government relief work. Similarly with the Main Roads Board; perhaps 1,000 or 2,000 of the 6,500 men are to-day engaged on main road work in the country districts. Some of the 6,500 men are employed on sewerage work in the metropolitan area, but they are still included in the number of men on Government relief work. What I wish to stress is that those men are not on ration tickets and they are not unemployed. They are engaged in work of the departments, many of them full-time, according to their responsibilities. A man with a wife and three children is classed as a 35s. man, and there are 42s. and 49s. men, according to their responsibilities.

Those men having started on a job remain until the work is finished, which may be a matter of six months or nine months, and they earn at least the basic wage.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Do you expect a woman and four children to live on about 16s. a week?

Hon. G. FRASER: I will deal with that point later. Those men who are now engaged on full-time work are included in the 6,500 men who Mr. Dimmitt tells us are unemployed. As I have pointed out, they are doing railway, sewerage, road and other work customarily done by the working men of this State for Government departments. Many of them are employed full-time: only those whose responsibilities class them below the 35s. men are not receiving full-time. Yet we have criticism of a Government that lifted the benefits received by such men from rations for 17,000 to the point when a majority are employed full-time earning the wage ordinarily paid in the industry, which is not less than the basic wage. Such criticism of the Government is based on an under-estimate of the truth for the purpose of making political capital.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Tell us how the Government has been able to do that?

Hon. G. FRASER: I am telling the House what is happening.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: The Government has had an additional income of £3,000,000.

Hon. G. FRASER: And the Government has spent it wisely. Yet the hon. member says that there are 6,500 men out of work. Nothing of the kind.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: I did not say that.

Hon. G. FRASER: We were told that there were 6,500 men unemployed.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: No, on relief work, which is true.

Hon. G. FRASER: No, unemployed. All except about 600 of them are in work, the majority of them being in full-time work.

Criticism came also from Mr. Wittenoom, who complained about work not being done in the country. He said that all the work was being performed in the metropolitan area. Those of us that represent metropolitan Provinces are complaining that not enough work is being done in the metropolitan area. An examination of the figures shows that of the 6,000 men employed on Government relief work, about 75 per cent. are engaged in the country.

Hon. H. Tuckey: So they ought to be.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yet we find country members complaining. What do they want? Do they want the whole hundred per cent. to be employed in the country? All that is needed is a fair deal and fair criticism, but criticism of that description is neither fair nor just and no political capital can be made out of it because the people concerned know the true position. They know, too, the bad conditions to which they were subjected by a previous Administration.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Be fair yourself.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. G. FRASER: They are aware also of the improvements made by the present administration. Criticism of the kind I have mentioned does not cut much ice, because the true position is known to those concerned. I join with Mr. E. H. H. Hall in requesting the Government to consider the position of widows and children of this State. I agree with him that the amount of 9s. per week given to each of these people is too small for their maintenance, and I implore the Government to give careful consideration to cases of that kind. We should realise that a widow who desires to look after her family properly finds it impossible to undertake outside work. It would pay the Government to increase the allowance to widows so that they might remain at home and give their children a proper upbringing. We cannot wonder if children go wrong when the mother is forced to take outside employment and is thus unable to give her youngsters the care they need. I therefore urge the Government to increase the amount of the allowance, although I am well aware that ours is the highest sum paid anywhere in Australia.

The Chief Secretary: Is that not a Commonwealth responsibility?

Hon. G. FRASER: It should be a Commonwealth responsibility, but the Commonwealth Government shelves its responsibility in that direction as it shelves its responsibility in other directions, and the duty of caring for these people thus devolves upon the State. I hope some increase will be made available by the Government to these women. A woman who has one or two children and consequently receives only 18s. to 27s. a week, out of which she has to pay rent and maintain her family, finds it difficult to make ends meet. I am aware of the financial position and of the de-

mands made upon the Government, but I hope that if possible greater payments will be made to these people. In my district a good deal of unoccupied land is available.

Hon. T. Moore: Is that the Peel Estate?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, the district does not quite embrace the Peel Estate. It is much closer to Fremantle. I am referring to the area around Bibra Lake. In that area a number of homes could be built. In Fremantle I suppose we have a greater number of casual workers than has any other part of the metropolitan area. If the Government were to tackle the question seriously I think it would be found possible to build homes for those men on the land I have mentioned and to give them two-acre blocks. The Workers' Homes Board or some other housing trust could operate there and those casual workers, who are essential to the maintenance of certain industries in the State, could be provided, at a very low cost, with small selections upon which they could have their own homes and grow produce and thus assist to rear their families. On those selections they could profitably spend the periods when work in their particular industry happens to be slack. Such casual workers are necessary, but it is regrettable that during slack times they should have to fall back on the Government for assistance. If the Government were to do something along the lines I have suggested the money would be well spent. The Government would not be called upon to foot the whole bill because the men so assisted would be able to work on their allotments during their periods of enforced idleness and accordingly would not require so much assistance from the Government.

Member: Is the land cheap?

Hon. G. FRASER: The land is cheap and accessible to Fremantle. It is within two or three miles of the city. The locality is suitable in every way and not only would the adoption of the scheme I have suggested be of benefit to the Government by way of relieving it of expenditure in the provision of relief work for these men, but it would also be of great importance to the individuals themselves. To-day those men are unable to obtain their own homes, but if houses were erected as I have proposed, they would be able by easy payments gradually to make the homes their own. They would have a greater interest in the buildings because they would be purchasing them with money which

they are now paying in rent. I hope the Government will consider establishing a closer settlement scheme in that area. If it does, it will be well recompensed.

I hope that during the session some of the industrial legislation mentioned in the Lieut.-Governor's Speech will find its way on to the statute-book. I particularly hope the Fair Rents Bill will be passed. I should like members who are not too familiar with what is occurring in the metropolitan area to make a few inquiries, before the measure is introduced, with a view to ascertaining for themselves the conditions that exist. The chief complaints are made in respect of those houses for which a rental of up to 25s. a week is charged. People are forced to take those houses and to pay a rent far in excess of the real value of the property. That is a phase of the matter to which consideration should be given by Mr. E. H. H. Hall when he speaks of granting additional assistance to widows. Most of those women are renting homes of the cheaper type and the usual procedure is that when extra payments are made to them there is a demand for additional rent. Some safeguard in the way of a Fair Rents Bill is therefore needed to protect them from exploitation should the Government decide to give them further assistance.

Much has been said about the basic wage adjustment. Of course no one can cavil at the increase, which was arrived at by the figures which the court had before it. As the index figures rise and fall, so does the basic wage increase and decrease. When a rise takes place, however, there is always a certain amount of protest about the unemployment that is said to be caused by it. I will admit that quite a number of industries are not in a position to pass on the extra charges and that may result in unemployment in those industries. An increase in the basic wage should, however, make for increased employment in many other industries, because there is a greater amount of money in circulation and a larger turnover is evident in most of the retail stores. On account of the increased turnover there is increased activity in the industries supplying those stores and extra employment results. I am pleased that the basic wage has been raised to the standard that the index figures indicated was required, but it is time consideration was given to the question of

affording an assurance to those obtaining the rise in wages that they will enjoy the benefit of the increase. The only way that can be done is by the introduction of a price-fixing measure. What happens to-day is that immediately an increase occurs it is followed by a rise in the cost of living, and that rise persists until there is a further adjustment of the basic wage. Between the two adjustments the worker is that much behind. An increase is granted to-day and a rise in prices takes place to-morrow. It may be three months before a further increase is granted and during that period the worker is not receiving the amount that he should receive according to the index figure. In three months' time he obtains a rise that he should have had a month or six weeks previously. Until something is done to control prices, that position will recur. The introduction of some such measure would tend to stabilise prices and the basic wage. It sounds much better to say that a man is receiving £1 rather than £3 15s., but if he is obtaining only £3 15s. worth of goods for his £4, he is no better off. A measure such as I have suggested would stabilise the wage at £3 10s., £3 15s. or £4 or at whatever other figure might be decided. The amount would not matter. So long as the worker obtained value for his money he would be quite satisfied.

No speech on the Address-in-reply debate would be compete unless some reference were made to the question of starting-price betting. Most speakers have mentioned this matter and I wish to say something about it also. I do not know the reason for it, but I generally seem to be taking an opposite view to that of most other members in this Chamber. I am in that position now. It has been said that something should be done to suppress starting-price betting, but members making that suggestion know very well that the people of Australia will gamble. The general idea of members is that if people want to bet there is one place where they should bet and that is on the racecourse. The desire of such members appears to be to drive all who wish to bet on to the racecourse. Let us assume that this Chamber passed legislation that closed all starting-price betting shops in the State. What would happen? If people wanted to bet, they would have to go to the racecourse.

This sport is called the sport of kings and there is no doubt that that is a correct designation when one considers the price charged for admission to racecourses. Evidently it is thought that those who participate in this sport are all kings, but it is beyond the means of the average individual to indulge in the sport because of the high cost.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: You and I have met there often, have we not?

Hon. G. FRASER: When a person decides to go to the races, there is an unholy combination of the Government, racecourse officials, horse owners and trainers, and others to fleece that person. He goes to the railway station and asks for a ticket to the course. The usual fare is 6d., but because that person is going to the races he is usually charged 1s. 9d. At the racecourse gates he is asked for an admission fee, sometimes of 7s. 6d., but generally of 10s. or 12s. That is merely to enter the racecourse. If he wants to go to another part of the racecourse, there is another half-crown to pay. If he wants to buy a pencil to make a note of his transactions, he has to pay 3d. for a half-penny pencil. And so the thing goes on right through the afternoon. Suppose he decides to have a 5s. bet on the tote. Again the combination of Government and racecourse officials comes in. The Government says, "We require payment of a tax of 13 per cent. out of that 5s." The racing club works out the amount to be distributed, and if the amount happens to come to an odd elevenpence the club says, "We will have the 11d., and you can have the 5s." The clubs retain all fractions over the shilling. A cup of tea on the racecourse costs two or three times as much as a cup of tea in town. And so it is right through the piece. Charges are at least doubled to the person who visits a racecourse. Yet hon. members are prepared to take action to drive everybody who wants a bet to the racecourse, where he will be fleeced. And that is without taking into account the betting phase. I have dealt only with actual charges of which the largest ones cannot be escaped. I leave aside the question of betting, because that is a matter for the individual himself.

Some hon. members decry starting-price betting shops while they themselves are members of racing clubs, whether proprietary or non-proprietary does not matter. They cry out that the law should be put into opera-

tion and betting shops closed; yet some of them are members of clubs which not only permit the law of the land to be broken but charge a premium for permitting that to be done. The only legal form of betting in this State is the totalisator.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: Have you read the West Australian Turf Club by-laws?

Hon. G. FRASER: Those by-laws are not superior to the laws of the land, and I am dealing with the laws of the land. This shows how consistent those hon. members are when they declare that they want the laws of the land enforced. They belong to clubs which break the laws of the land, clubs which charge certain persons large sums of money for permission to break the laws on club premises.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But they do not accept their hospitality; they pay for it.

Hon. G. FRASER: I am showing the hon. member how inconsistent his attitude is. I refer to the flouting of the law. Some members of this House are members of such clubs, and people who live in glass houses should not throw stones. That is the true position. In spite of any excuses made, that is the state of affairs with regard to betting in Western Australia.

Hon. H. Tuekey: Do you say the present position should continue?

Hon. G. FRASER: Nothing of the kind. But I do not say I will support legislation providing that anybody who wants to bet must go to a racecourse for that purpose. I am prepared to give every person in Western Australia the opportunity to go to a football match or, if he so desires, to invest on a race. I ask hon. members who object to that attitude and who belong to clubs which flout the laws of the land, whether they are not aiding in the doing of the very thing they want to prevent others from doing. I realise that in view of the present position something has to be done; but I believe that if a referendum of the people of Western Australia were taken on the question of betting, there is no doubt what their decision would be. I hold no brief for the starting-price bookmaker. I only want to see a fair thing done by the people of the State. We are told that attendances at race meetings have fallen off because of the operations of starting-price bookmakers. If that is so, why have the attendances at football increased by 60,000 in a period of two years? Thirty thousand

more people enjoyed football matches last year than in the previous year, and there has been a similar increase this year. One objection to starting-price betting, that it lowers the morale of our young people, will not bear investigation. I understand there is a proposal to introduce legislation prohibiting betting. But in New South Wales and Victoria, where anti-betting laws exist, one can get a bet just as one can in Western Australia. Victoria permits no starting-price betting, and that is the reason why men, like the butcher or the baker, go around to take bets. Queensland also has anti-betting legislation, but betting goes on there just the same as it goes on here, and as it would go on here despite any anti-betting legislation. Betting is one of the things that seems impossible to stop, even if we wanted to stop it. These are just a few questions I desired to bring under the notice of members. I trust that the legislation which is coming forward this session, particularly that of an industrial nature, will receive the approval of members of this House, and that we shall be able to record a further step in the progress of the industrial laws of Western Australia.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Heenan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.11 p.m.
