

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. H. S. W. PARKER** (Metropolitan-Suburban) [6.9]: I have made some inquiries about the Bill and find its essential purpose is to prevent abuses in the future. One or two cases have occurred where the principal Act has been circumvented. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

*House adjourned at 6.11 p.m.*

## **Legislative Assembly.**

*Thursday, 23rd September, 1943.*

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

### **QUESTIONS (3).**

#### **METROPOLITAN MILK ACT.**

##### *As to Compensation Funds.*

**Mr. McLARTY** asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What is the amount of money now credited to the Producers' Compensation Fund under the Metropolitan Milk

Act? 2, What interest has accrued? 3, What is the total amount standing to the credit of the Retailers' Compensation Fund? 4, Have any payments been made from either funds for compensation purposes? 5, How is the money invested, and what amount from each fund?

The **MINISTER** replied: 1, To the 31st August, 1943—£11,819 15s. 10d. 2, £1,723 15s. 3, The amount standing to the credit of the Milk Vendors' Compensation Fund at the 31st August was £16,354 18s. 1d. 4, No. 5, In Australian Commonwealth Stock, from the Dairymen's Compensation Fund, £11,100 18s. 0d.; the Milk Vendors' Compensation Fund, £15,151 10s.

#### **PETROL SUPPLIES, GREAT SOUTHERN.**

##### *As to Charges.*

**Mr. WATTS** asked the Minister for Railways: With reference to the transport of petrol from a southern port to the lower Great Southern, does the Railway Department receive freight charges for the transport from that port to places on the lower Great Southern equivalent to the freight which would be received for the longer transport from Fremantle, or is the petrol carried by the railways at the normal freight for the actual distance covered?

The **MINISTER** replied: The petrol is carried by the railways at the normal freight for the actual distance covered.

#### **DAYLIGHT SAVING.**

##### *As to Correspondence with Commonwealth.*

**Mr. WATTS** (without notice) asked the Premier: 1, Was the decision of both Houses of the State Parliament re daylight saving conveyed to the Commonwealth Government? If so, was a reply received? 3, If so, will he lay the correspondence on the Table of the House? 4, Does the Government intend to make any protest to the Commonwealth in respect of the decision to recommence daylight saving in this State as reported in the Press?

The **PREMIER** replied: The hon. member gave me a copy of the questions he has asked and my replies are as follows: 1, 2, and 3, Yes. 4, This has already been done. With regard to the correspondence I have had a copy made and will lay it on the Table.

**BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.**

- 1, Albany Cemeteries.
- 2, Road Closure.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

**MOTION—STANDING ORDERS  
SUSPENSION.**

**THE PREMIER** [4.37]: I move—

That during the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills appearing among the Orders of the Day to be passed through their remaining stages in one day, and all messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the same day they are received.

This is the usual motion moved towards the end of the session for the purpose of expediting the business of the House. Members are aware that there is a motion on the notice paper in the name of the member for Irwin-Moore recommending the Lieut.-Governor to issue a warrant for a general election for the Legislative Assembly. Neither the Government nor members on either side of the House, so far as I can learn, have expressed any opposition to the motion. The prolongation of Parliament was undertaken for a specific purpose. That purpose has now been fulfilled, and we are in honour bound to hold an election at a reasonably early date. The tentative date was fixed at the 27th November.

**Hon. N. Keenan**: Is that a Saturday?

**The PREMIER**: Yes. However, under the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act elections for municipal corporation vacancies have to take place on the last Saturday of November. The Government thought it would be quite unwise to hold elections for the Legislative Assembly on the same date as municipal elections were to be held, and consequently the 27th November was discarded as the date for the parliamentary elections. The date now fixed is a week earlier, namely, the 20th November. It is desired to give as much time as possible between the date of the elections and the closing date of nominations so that all arrangements can be made for postal voting, soldiers' votes, etc. The date selected will provide the maximum allowed by the Act of 30 days. Nominations will close on the 21st October, and that will automatically close the rolls on the 30th September.

**Mr. Seward**: They are only just out!

**The PREMIER**: Sometimes the rolls are not out when an election takes place. How-

ever, the best has been done with regard to the rolls on this occasion, and hon. members have been supplied with copies. They were told that elections were to be held and nobody can be violently surprised at the information I have given. The only surprise that might be expressed is that the elections were not held earlier!

**Hon. N. Keenan**: Members have not been supplied with copies of the electoral roll. I have not had one, although I have applied for it.

**The PREMIER**: The hon. member has received a roll but he may not have obtained the latest one.

**Hon. N. Keenan**: I can get the 1941 roll.

**Mr. Fox**: I have not had one.

Several members: Nor have I.

**The PREMIER**: The very best possible has been done in regard to supplying members with copies of the roll. The Electoral Department is very helpful, and if a member wants to obtain any information—

**Mr. SPEAKER**: I would point out to the Premier that this has nothing to do with the motion. It is all right, I suppose, for the Premier to make a statement on the matter, but it has nothing to do with the motion.

**The PREMIER**: That is the reason for the motion, Mr. Speaker, and therefore I thought my remarks were apropos. However, I have completed what I wish to say in that regard. As to the motion itself, no great difficulty should be experienced in dealing with the business on the notice paper during the next three weeks, particularly if the House should deem it necessary to sit on Fridays. Little contentious matter remains to be dealt with and, apart from the Loan Estimates and the Loan Bill, practically all the business to be placed before Parliament this session is already on the notice paper. The consideration given to private members' business has been very generous, and we even sat late in order to reach decisions on matters brought forward by them.

**Mr. Thorn**: We will be interested in legislation from now on.

**The PREMIER**: I do not know that there will be much that the hon. member need be very concerned about, except to see that the legislation brought forward is in proper form and order. Seven or eight of the Bills this session have been continuance measures and as such have been merely formal. In

view of the dates chosen in connection with the election, members will desire to terminate the session as early as possible. They will no doubt support the motion and also any subsequent motions that may be necessary to facilitate the transaction of the business of the session.

**MR. WATTS** (Katanning): I have no objection to the motion submitted by the Premier who was good enough to tell me yesterday afternoon that he had this move in mind. I regard the motion as reasonable enough, for it is one to which we have become accustomed late in each session and I have certainly no objection to raise to it. I am rather interested in the Premier's statement as to the definite selection of the dates in connection with the election. When I realise the legislation that still appears on the notice paper of the respective Houses, and appreciate that that legislation includes one or two most important Bills, among which I would specify the one which has reference to votes for members of the Forces, it seems to me it will be necessary for this House to rise, if the Premier's stated intentions are to be carried out, not later than about the first week in October.

The Premier: Oh, no.

**Mr. WATTS:** Three weeks from now would take us to the 14th October and, in view of what the Premier has said, I am just wondering what is in his mind regarding the passage of the Bill to which I have already alluded as one in which I take considerable interest. While I was not altogether satisfied with the terms in which it left this Chamber, I said at the time that I was desirous that members of the Forces who had been resident in my electorate at the time of their enlistment, should be afforded an opportunity to vote—as far as was practicable. When he replies I think the Premier should say what is in his mind regarding the passage of that Bill so that we shall have some certainty regarding the matter, and that that legislation will not be in such a state of flux when Parliament adjourns that electoral officers and members themselves will hardly have become acquainted with its terms almost on the eve of the election campaign. The House is entitled to some assurance on that point. We cannot say what the position will be, and the Premier is better able to judge when that Bill can be passed and regarded as a statute, so as to

enable members to get to work to ensure that the votes of members of the Forces may be recorded in what they consider will be the right direction.

As to the legislation that remains on the notice papers of both Houses, much of it will hardly be given proper consideration and perhaps the Premier has in mind withdrawing some of the Bills. If that is so, seeing that it is mostly Government legislation, I shall have no particular objection to that course. But I think that we should have some reasonable assurance as to where we stand and what we shall have to do in the limited time at our disposal. However, in view of the interjection by the member for Nedlands a few minutes ago, I may regard myself as one of the fortunate in that I was supplied with a copy of the reprinted roll for my electorate a couple of weeks ago. On the other hand, the member for Nedlands whose roll would probably be twice the size of the Katanning roll, is not in that happy position. When I was speaking on the Electoral (War Time) Bill I made reference to various difficulties of members regarding enrolments.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member is not entitled to say what he said on another Bill.

**Mr. WATTS:** I am not quoting what I said, but merely mentioning the difficulties that members would experience and here is one of them, the member for Nedlands not having been able to secure a copy of his roll. That is a matter that should receive early consideration. Doubtless the member for Nedlands will put forward his views on this subject, but I think we are all entitled to ask that even-handed justice shall be meted out to all members in the matter of rolls before the election takes place.

**HON. N. KEENAN** (Nedlands): I do not desire to raise any objection to the motion, but I confess, although I am not prepared to cover the ground that the Premier traversed, that some of the matters dealt with by him as well as the Bills on the notice paper require careful consideration. At the end of this month the rolls will be closed and that is most important. In my own case, I have made strenuous efforts to get a copy of my roll, but I have been told—I have accepted the explanation as being doubtless quite correct—that the fault is not that of the

Electoral Department, but of the Government Printing Office. I have been told that there is no prospect of getting a copy of the roll this week.

Mr. Needham: Both the Electoral Department and the Government Printing Office are short-staffed.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I have no doubt that is the explanation. The fact remains that it will be some time before the roll is in my possession so that any errors in it may be discovered and corrections made.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Has there not been any canvass made in your electorate?

Hon. N. KEENAN: No; not that I am aware of. I do not propose to canvass my electorate.

Mr. Doney: But has it not been canvassed?

Hon. N. KEENAN: I cannot say. I presume it has. But there are omissions from the roll, and also erroneous insertions on it. I reported the name of a certain deceased lady in order that it might be removed from the roll, and I informed the department that her sister was taking her place. What was the result? When the roll came out, the dead person's name was still on it and her sister's name was not. Obviously when the rolls come out there will be a considerable number of mistakes in them, as well as omissions which should not have occurred. But we have no time to correct the position, except one or two days. Apparently the view is that because the obligation is on the elector to have his name on the roll, the roll will be in order. We know perfectly well that it will not be. I do not know that I am entitled to make any further comment. I must say I admire the attitude the Speaker has adopted on this motion. With these few observations, which I hope are not entirely out of order, I do not propose to offer any opposition to the motion.

MR. NORTH (Claremont): Will the Premier inform the House when he expects to get the business concluded, so that members may get out into their electorates?

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly): The Premier has displayed, in my opinion, something like indecent haste in putting the business before the House in the way he has done. I have sent out some of my rolls today, and they will not be delivered until Saturday, so that

there can be no possibility of receiving a reply before Saturday of next week. At that date it will not be possible to get names on the roll. The position is all very well for members who have little pocket-handkerchief electorates in the city. That people should have only till next Saturday to get on the roll amounts to a scandal.

The Premier: They have had three years to get on the roll.

Mr. SEWARD: That is all very well. There has been no expression of opinion in favour of rushing through the business and holding an election in November.

**THE PREMIER** (in reply) The member for Claremont asked me a question and then went out; so I do not know whether to reply to it. The electors have been spoon-fed for years and years in the matter of enrolment. They have got away from their statutory obligation to place their names on the roll because candidates have taken the trouble to get people on the roll. People not on the roll have broken the law. In order to assist where it can be conveniently done, the Electoral Department, being anxious to have up-to-date rolls, has done its utmost, though there is no obligation on either the department or the Government or anybody else to have up-to-date rolls.

Mr. Doney: Why does the Premier take this particular occasion?

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows that as regards the prolongation of Parliament there was a great deal of criticism. It was said that Parliament was extending its life and hanging on to office. However, both Houses of this Parliament on two occasions held that the unusual position justified an unusual procedure, and were prepared to accept the responsibility. But when we have no less a person than the Prime Minister of Britain saying, this week, that Australia is practically safe, there is no reason for further prolongation of the life of Parliament.

Mr. Doney: Not by another week?

The PREMIER: Fortuitous circumstances arose. The Commonwealth Parliament was subject to an election, and as we did all the work for the Commonwealth in regard to rolls the time of our Government Printing Office which would have been occupied in getting our rolls up-to-date, was given to the Commonwealth rolls. Instead of work-

ing to supply members with copies of State rolls two or three weeks ago, the Government Printing Office was occupied right up to its neck with Federal business; and the Government Printer cannot in existing circumstances get additional manpower for his work. I have told the Government Printer not to worry too much about "Hansard" but to get the rolls out. However, there is a regulation that printers must not work more than 56 hours per week, and that maximum is being worked. It is impossible to get a linotype operator, because no linotype operators are left to be engaged.

Mr. Sampson: Nor any tradesmen!

The PREMIER: That applies to tradesmen of all descriptions. It is almost impossible to get surplus men to do this work connected with the rolls. The Government has not connived at the circumstances. The circumstances are there. Moreover, when the motion of the member for Irwin-Moore was adopted, most members thought that a decision would be reached and an election held promptly.

Mr. Berry: Some members displayed a special alacrity!

The PREMIER: The Government assented to the motion of the member for Irwin-Moore, and everybody assented to the desire of the Government to have an election as early as possible. We agreed with the motion of the member for Irwin-Moore and thought it perfectly right, and everything has been done in order to suit the convenience of the people. As regards the member for Nedlands and his complaint concerning canvassers, in large country towns such as Katanning, Narrogin and Merredin for example, a canvass has been made by the department in order to assist people to get on the roll.

Mr. Doney: Not in my electorate. However, that is not the fault of the Electoral Department.

The PREMIER: In the electorate of the member for Nedlands a canvass was made departmentally and the roll rectified to a great extent. No-one can say that any roll is perfect on the day of nomination or of election; there will be some omissions, but these things are to be expected. I would not expect more than two per cent. or three per cent. of error. Every endeavour has been made by the department to put the rolls in order.

In view of all the circumstances I do not think Parliament is justified in extending its life longer than is absolutely necessary. We have not acted with indecent haste. This matter has been brought before the House, but a decision has not been reached on the recent motion. Were that motion carried in its present form, I have no doubt His Excellency the Lieut.-Governor would consider himself in duty bound to take the necessary steps immediately. With the object of avoiding a rush election, we put whatever business we could on the notice paper so that it could be dealt with promptly. Parliament has been sitting almost continuously now for two years. In that period it has not had a break of more than two or three months. I think Parliament sat two or three times during the emergency period dealing with civil defence and other urgent matters. This year we sat until May discussing the Commonwealth Powers Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Premier is introducing new matter into his reply.

Mr. North: The Premier has not answered my question.

The PREMIER: I answered the non-member's question while he was out of the Chamber.

Mr. Watts: I asked you what you thought of the Electoral (War Time) Bill.

The PREMIER: That was given preference on the notice paper in this House. When it reached the Legislative Council it was placed first on the notice paper on each occasion possible. The Chief Secretary cannot refuse adjournments, but every expedition has been given to it. This Chamber occupied four or five sittings in dealing with the measure and I do not think the Council will take longer. The provisions of the Bill are well known. When we were closing the last session of Parliament, I went out of my way to exhort members to give consideration to this legislation. I told them that possibly an election would be held during the year and that the Government intended to bring down a Bill to give the soldiers a vote. I asked members to give consideration to the matter, so that when the Bill was brought down they would have their minds made up upon it.

Mr. Watts: Only one side can make up its mind!

The PREMIER: That is so. I do not think I have missed any other matter in my reply. From my long experience of Parliament, I know that very often, within three weeks of the close of the session, the notice paper has been burdened with much matter of a highly controversial nature, yet the House has finished its labours within the three weeks. I see no reason why we cannot do so on this occasion, if there is a genuine desire to proceed with the business. Members can scarcely say there is anything of a highly controversial nature at present on the notice paper. Should it become necessary, I should have no hesitation in asking members to sit on Fridays, so that we can get through the business.

Mr. Sampson: And, if necessary, on Saturdays.

The PREMIER: I hardly think that will be necessary.

Motion put and passed.

### **BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.**

- 1, Workers' Homes Act Amendment.
- 2, Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment.
- 3, Wood Distillation and Charcoal Iron and Steel Industry.

Transmitted to the Council.

### **BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR** [5.7]: in moving the second reading said: This is a fairly short Bill. It contains only four proposals, each of which of course involves an amendment of the principal Act. The first proposal is to bring under control the rents of furnished houses and furnished rooms. Under the principal Act such places are not under control in respect of the amount of rent or hire chargeable for the furniture. This means that a landlord who lets a house with furniture in it belonging to him is restricted as to the rent he may charge for the house, but not as to the rent he may charge for the hire of the furniture. Many instances have been brought under the notice of the Government of landlords having charged extortionate rent or hire for the furniture contained in a house or in a room where the furniture has been the property of the landlord. It has therefore become neces-

sary, in view of those many complaints made to the Government, to seek to amend the Act in a suitable manner so that the rent or hire to be charged for furniture in a house or room may be brought under the control of the law and the courts of the State.

The Bill contains a provision making it an offence for the landlord to refuse to let a house to a prospective tenant with children where such children would occupy the house with the prospective tenant. Members are aware that for many years some landlords—fortunately not many—have refused to let premises to tenants with children. This attitude on the part of those landlords is considered to be most unjust, as it has a tendency to discourage the right type of family, that is, the family in which there are several children. It is not difficult to realise the unfortunate position in which a man and his wife are placed if, because they have four or five or more children, the landlord refuses to let a house to them and they are left without accommodation. The provision in the Bill on this point aims at overcoming the difficulty by making it an offence for a landlord to refuse to let a house to a person on the ground that children, as well as adults, would occupy the premises.

The Bill also provides for a tenant, other than the first tenant, to be legally entitled to apply for the declaration of a fair rent. Under the Act the standard rent is the rent which was charged on the 31st August, 1939. The Act gives the tenant who was then in occupation the legal right to apply to a court for the fixation of a fair rent. If, however, the tenant in occupation on the 31st August, 1939, does not take advantage of the right, no tenant who subsequently occupies the house has any right whatever to make an application for the declaration of a fair rent. Many cases are known where the first tenant, for reasons best known to himself, has not made such an application. Subsequent tenants, however, have desired to obtain a declaration of a fair rent; but because the Act gives that right only to the tenant who was in occupation on the 31st August, 1939, the subsequent tenant has been denied the opportunity of obtaining a fair rent declaration. This Bill provides that a subsequent tenant shall have the legal right to seek the declaration of a fair rent if the previous tenant did not

take advantage of his legal right.

The fourth, and last, proposal in the Bill makes it possible for a tenant to obtain a statutory declaration from the landlord as to the standard rent being charged on the 31st August, 1939. This is necessary because many tenants have not been able to ascertain the standard rent being charged at that date. They have applied for the information but have not been able to obtain it. It is considered that where the landlord, or his agent, has refused to supply information regarding the standard rent, the standard rent has been departed from and a higher rent, as a result, is being charged. In those circumstances it has been difficult for the tenant to take any action to obtain the protection which the Act aims to give to every tenant. The Bill, therefore, proposes that a tenant may get from a landlord a statutory declaration in which there shall be set out the standard rent being charged for any premises at the 31st August, 1939. Those are the proposals contained in the Bill. They are clear and capable of being easily understood. I think the measure will commend itself to members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Seward, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—MINE WORKERS' RELIEF ACT AMENDMENT.**

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 16th September. Mr. Withers in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—New section:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 5 to which the member for Murchison had moved an amendment to strike out the word "shall" and insert in lieu the word "may" in line 12 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 49A.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: As I stated the other night, this is an important clause. Since then I have had the opportunity to discuss the whole question with the Mine Workers' Relief Board which will be responsible for financing the scheme. It is particularly anxious to give the experiment—if I may term it such—a trial. For that reason I will agree to

the deletion of the word "shall" with the object of inserting other words. As a result of this amendment, a number of further amendments appearing on the notice paper will have to be made.

Amendment (to strike out the word "shall") put and passed.

Mr. MARSHALL: I wish to move the amendment appearing on the notice paper in the Minister's name. I move an amendment—

That the words "may be requested by the Minister" be inserted in lieu of the word struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by the Minister for Mines, clause further amended—

By inserting after the word "prohibition" in line 8 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 49A, the word "to";

By inserting in line 11 of Subsection (1) of proposed new Section 49A, after the word "worker" the words "if he accedes to such request";

By striking out Subsection (2) of proposed new Section 49A;

By inserting after the figure "(3)" in line 1 of Subsection (3) of proposed new Section 49A the letter "(a)";

By inserting after the word "charges" in line 1 of paragraph (a) of Subsection (3) of proposed new Clause 49A, the words "as may be prescribed from time to time and are";

By striking out the words "as may from time to time be prescribed" in lines 3 and 4 of paragraph (a) of Subsection (3) of proposed new Section 49A, and inserting the words "who submits to treatment and continues under the same until he is cured or is discharged therefrom by the Minister" in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I now wish to have a new paragraph included. I move an amendment—

That in proposed new Subsection (3) a new paragraph be inserted as follows:—

(b) Where a mine worker refuses or fails to continue under treatment to which he has submitted until he is cured or discharged therefrom by the Minister paragraph (a) of this subsection shall not apply and any expenses or charges already paid in relation to such treatment may be recoverable by the board from the mine worker as a debt.

When a man elects to submit himself for examination, we expect him to continue with the treatment. This paragraph provides that if he undergoes treatment for, say, three years and then stops, the amount already expended would be recoverable.

Amendment put and passed.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** I do not know whether my interpretation of paragraph (b) of proposed new Subsection (4) is correct. The Minister will probably explain the view held by himself and the department. We must read paragraph (a) of this subsection with paragraph (b) in order to understand what it actually means. The subsection provides that if a man elects to go back into the mining industry and does continue to work on, in or about a mine—with certain reservations that we all know—and is ultimately found, upon examination, to be suffering from tuberculosis, he will be able to go back on to the fund and enjoy the benefits from the point where he left off. The Minister must understand that if on examination a man is found to be suffering from tuberculosis, plus silicosis, after having returned to the industry, he would have a claim under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act because he had contracted an industrial disease—not tuberculosis, but silicosis. That man having been admitted to the mining industry would have the right to claim £750 under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. But that is not the point that is worrying me. I would not care if he got £1,500 compensation! Even then he would be getting no more than he deserved. This is the point about which I am agitated. If a man did not elect to return to the industry, but accepted employment elsewhere, he would not be examined every year or two years as would the men who returned to the industry.

The Minister for Mines: Such a man need not be examined at all.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** Eventually he might find that he was suffering from a recurrence of tuberculosis and seek re-examination. If this revealed tuberculosis with some degree of silicosis, he would not be entitled to any compensation. Silicosis would not be a recognised disease in the industry in which he was working, and he could not claim to resume his compensation payments where he had left off. If he had tuberculosis only, he could resume the benefits where he left off, but not so if he had silicosis. The Minister said that 4.7 per cent. of the men examined were cases of tuberculosis only. Consequently, only a small number of men will be concerned. No harm will be done if the reference to silicosis is struck out, but harm might be done if it is retained. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of paragraph (b) of the proposed new section 49A (4) the words "without silicosis" be struck out.

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** The Mine Workers' Relief Act deals with men suffering from tuberculosis without silicosis. If a man has silicosis, he comes under the Workers' Compensation Act. How, therefore, can we introduce silicosis by an amending Bill if it is not recognised in the principal Act? It is possible but very improbable that a man would be treated for tuberculosis under this measure if he had an indication of silicosis. All that this Bill provides for are cases of tuberculosis without silicosis, and medical advice is that it is not worth while worrying about men suffering from tuberculosis with silicosis, whether it is silicosis early or advanced. A man treated for tuberculosis under this measure and discharged as cured would not have any sign of silicosis. The proposed new section deals only with a man who has been cured. A man who returned to the industry would be examined every six months because of the fact that he was still working amongst silica. If he entered another industry, he need not be examined at all. If he was examined and was found to be suffering from tuberculosis, he would come under this provision. If he had silicosis also, he would not come under it.

**Mr. F. C. L. Smith:** What would happen then?

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** What happens now? If a man suffering from tuberculosis entered another industry and elected to continue his contributions to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, he would be entitled to come under the fund again if anything went wrong.

**Mr. TRIAT:** I appreciate the points made by the member for Murchison as well as those of the Minister. Suppose a miner suffering from tuberculosis receives from the fund £600, is totally cured and leaves the industry. He might continue to work in a mining town, and there is conclusive proof that people living in the vicinity of mines may contract early silicosis. The wife of a mine manager at Meekatharra was examined and found to be suffering from early silicosis, and she had never been down a mine. Suppose £150 of the benefits due to the man remained in the fund and he was found to be suffering from silicosis! If he, on leaving the industry, took



employment with a storekeeper or cement works and developed early silicosis, he would not receive compensation. Probably cases of this sort would seldom occur, but there is substance in the argument of the member for Murchison.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** There are many industries in which silicosis can be contracted, but they do not come under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. Industries such as mining, cutting, quarrying, stone cutting and crushing are the only ones in which men working and contracting silicosis can get compensation under that Act. The paragraph says that if a man secures a certificate that he is free from T.B., and elects to leave the industry, he then leaves behind in the fund a certain sum of money. Under the paragraph the Minister says to some ex-miner, "We regret to say that your legal rights have finished. Although you would be entitled to a further payment from the fund, plus your legal right to the lower rate of benefit afterwards, because you have contracted silicosis you forfeit those rights and get no more." The Minister should give the matter further consideration, and the paragraph should be re-drafted along sounder lines. If a man elects to leave the mining industry as provided for in paragraph (a) and he is ultimately found to have a recurrence of T.B., and he has been employed in an industry in which compensation for silicosis is not permitted under the Third Schedule of the Act, he should have a right to the benefits that are provided for him under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, and he should be able to enjoy those rights just as does the man who elects to remain in the industry. I do not desire that the man who may have a right to many hundreds of pounds and compensation or benefits for a lifetime be cut out of those things. The Minister has been generous up to a point, and I have no desire to tantalise him or to be obstructive. I want every man who has contracted this dreadful complaint and leaves the industry, to be on the same footing if he has a recurrence as would be the man who remained in the industry.

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** This Bill has been before the House for some three weeks and I have no intention of postponing it any further. It is beyond my power to introduce an amendment of the kind suggested by the hon. member. The position up to the present is that the man who is

found to be suffering from T.B. whilst in the mining industry will, if the Bill passes, have the option of being treated in the way that is being provided. The member for Murchison has forgotten that as soon as a man leaves the mining industry he can continue his contributions to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. Should he then contract silicosis he can come back on the fund. If it has taken three years to cure him, he would have drawn a certain amount under the Workers' Compensation Act. If he elects to contribute to the fund all the time he is away from the industry, and so insure himself, and is subsequently affected with the disease, he will come under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund for the rest of his life. Does the hon. member contest that argument?

**Mr. Marshall:** I do.

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** The position is as I have stated.

**Mr. F. C. L. Smith:** The man who continued his payments would be a beneficiary and the other would not.

**The MINISTER FOR MINES:** A man may make himself entitled to become a beneficiary. It is impossible for me to do what the member for Murchison wishes. If the Bill is lost, it will be just too bad for those men who are prepared to come under it.

**Mr. LEAHY:** I should like to see the Bill passed, for I look upon it as a step in the right direction. There is a slight mistake in the statement made by the Minister. He said that a man having been treated for T.B. could leave the mining industry and yet continue to contribute towards the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, and that if he then developed silicosis he could be brought under the fund. That is not correct. A man may have been notified that he is suffering from early silicosis. If he then desires to leave the industry, under Section 50 he can give three months' notice of his intention to do so. He can still contribute his 9d. per week to the fund, and if at any time after examination he develops advanced silicosis, he can come back on the fund and receive all the benefits therefrom. We should do all we can to help these miners, even if there are a few shortcomings in the legislation that is brought down for their benefit.

**Mr. MARSHALL:** I am pleased the member for Hannans has made the statement he did. This Bill does not provide for any

payments under the Act, and does not provide for contributions to the fund. All those things are covered by the parent Act. The Minister by this Bill in effect says to a man, "You are now free from T.B.; you can please yourself whether you continue in the industry or go out of it. If you go out of it, you go outside the pale of the parent Act; you would not be entitled to make any further contribution to the fund because you are no longer a mine-worker within the meaning of the Act." The Minister was correct in his first statement that if a miner was eligible to pay his 9d. a week to the fund he would be entitled to receive the benefits derived therefrom until he had absorbed the £750 under the Workers' Compensation Act. This Act does not deal with industrial diseases but only with tuberculosis, and the contribution paid by the miner is for benefits after the £750 has been absorbed. Should any trouble arise in the future—I hope it never does—I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that I have done all that is humanly possible. If this goes through as worded, a man will forfeit his legal rights to compensation once he accepts a certificate stating that he is free from the disease. If he is not further treated and goes on, he gets all the benefits. If he takes a risk, is examined, gets his certificate, and goes out of the industry and contracts T.B. plus silicosis, he forfeits all legal rights to further compensation whether in a lump sum or under the mine workers' relief regulations.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clauses 6, 7, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

### **BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) ACT AMENDMENT.**

Received from the Council and read a first time.

### **ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1943-44.**

*In Committee of Supply.*

Debate resumed from the 21st September on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

*Vote—Legislative Council, £2,012:*

**MR. GRAHAM** (East Perth) [6.5]: It is not unlikely that, this being the occasion of my first speech to the House, memories will be revived in the minds of all members. While there may be many more speeches there can of course, for me, be only one first speech. Bearing in mind the statement of the Premier which drew attention to the fact that an election will be held before very long, perhaps we can say with considerable feeling that we hope—and in any event it is so in my case—that there will be many more speeches! I daresay the Treasurer has every right to feel pleased with the result of the financial operations of the State for the past 12 months, particularly as the present happens to be the third consecutive surplus that has been achieved. But I am inclined to be a little unorthodox, perhaps, in considering that we show a tendency to mesmerise ourselves with figures.

I say quite frankly that I am more concerned with the physical facts and realities of life than with the figures and accounts that are presented to us from time to time. In that respect I feel that this period of war has taught all of us some lessons. One is that financial restrictions seem, in the main, to have gone completely by the board and if it is required that certain things be undertaken those things are undertaken in the national interest. If that conception of the duties and responsibilities devolving upon parliamentary representatives generally is borne in mind there may, in the future be less suffering and fewer inequalities than are prevalent at the present time. I appreciate that it is presumptuous for one who is not only a new member but is also young in years to lecture to those who have had considerable experience not only of public life but of civil affairs generally. However, I believe that youth has a purpose to serve, that youth has a message to give and that a new and more energetic approach to the questions confronting this country is inevitable and essential. This terrible conflict in which we are engaged symbolises, in reality, the death-rattle of the old order and the birth pangs of the new. In other words, democracy is on trial and, such being the case and we being the custodians of this democratic system under which we live, there is a responsibility and a duty to which we must all respond. I hope that during my term in this Chamber—be it short or long—it will be possible

to advance the cause of the younger generation in order that they might be provided with some of the things that even those of us who are younger had unfortunately to do without in our time.

The all-important questions affecting the people concern the basic requirements of food, clothing and shelter. But I believe that modern civilisation, given a tremendous impetus by the oncoming of the war, has demonstrated to all thinking people that, by and large, the more difficult problems of production have been resolved and that, whereas previously the whole of our endeavours and energies of necessity had to be concentrated and trained on the problem of finding sufficient of what I call the basic requirements of modern life, those requirements can by comparison now be produced with the greatest facility. I feel, therefore, that the time is rapidly approaching and it is a time for which we should make preparation now, even to the extent of passing legislation at the moment which will become effective at the conclusion of this conflict—when greater attention can be given to other avenues than those of the mere providing of basic necessities. Surely we are not planted on this earth for the purpose merely of working! Surely it is intended that work should be merely the means of providing ourselves with a reasonable subsistence in order that we might be able to live! It is my belief that the foundations should be laid, particularly with the younger generation, so that perhaps for the first time people in the mass will eventually have an opportunity really to live and enjoy life, to realise their potentialities and generally embark upon some of the cultures and sciences that the modern world has to offer.

I consider that education is the very basis of democracy. My definition of democracy is government by an enlightened people. There is, therefore, a need for a sound basic education of our people. Provision should be made for vocational training and guidance with a view to fitting the citizens of tomorrow to perform the services that are required of them. In addition to that, they should be trained to make their minds receptive and to desire to learn all they can and to pursue further their earlier studies so that in after years they may be able to enjoy some of the benefits modern civilisation has to offer. I suggest that with regard to the subjects that are taught in the

schools, there is room for a considerable improvement. I venture several suggestions in that regard. From my own experience I can say that there is far too much cramming in the earlier years of one's school life.

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

Mr. GRAHAM: There was a tendency for the immature mind to be asked to grapple with more than it is capable of doing. It was only after a considerable period, and at the expense of a considerable amount of energy, that I was able to grasp the fundamentals of what was being taught. In later years, when my mind was more mature, that became a comparatively simple matter. This is likely to turn a child's mind against the very things that educationists believe to be necessary. In my own case—and I suppose I could not give a better example because I know it best—the works of Shakespeare and the other classical writers were to be avoided like the plague. They were entirely beyond my conception and appreciation. For many years that had the effect of making me desire to read anything and everything so long as I could keep away from the classical text-books placed before me.

In the earlier period of school life a greater attempt should be made to teach the child to learn as it plays—building up from the kindergarten idea. Quite a number of subjects taught in schools today serve very little purpose. We might take, for instance, Latin, Latin roots and chemistry. Certainly it sounds as if one really knows something when, instead of saying, "sulphuric acid" one uses the chemical symbol of  $H_2SO_4$ , but we should ask ourselves how many of the average children attending school make any practical use of such knowledge. If we could get away from the present tendency to prepare every child, even in his or her tender years, as though we were going to make that child a school-teacher to be employed under our present education system, and make our chief aim and object the better equipment of a child to play a useful part in the community, we would be doing something far more advantageous. We should also attempt to give him a thirst for knowledge and an appreciation of the arts and sciences that civilisation has made possible. Economics, in a very elementary way, might be submitted to the school child.

I believe that children should know something about our living standards, and what our basic wage caters for and means. They should be given a grounding in civics so as to be able to understand the general set-up of our constitutional organisations and democratic functions generally. Some attention should be given to instructing the child—and this is very necessary because, after all, it is the basis of our democracy—how to mark a ballot paper. It should also be taught the difference between the State and Commonwealth Governments, and the respective rules of the two Chambers where a bi-cameral system of government exists. These things should be put in such a form that even a youthful mind could assimilate and follow them. The children could conduct ballots and elections in order to equip themselves for the time when they will be called upon to exercise the franchise. Our schools should pay greater attention to such questions as health, personal hygiene and sex matters.

Some members might advance the argument that sex matters should be the responsibility of the parents, but we must remember that in a great percentage of cases parents have neither the necessary knowledge nor the correct approach to explain in simple understandable language the complexities of this problem which, if neglected, can, as we know, have such terrible repercussions upon the health and welfare of the community generally. There is one subject which should, above all others, be included in the curriculum of all schools, not only in the Commonwealth, but in every country of the world. Together with the other students I learned English and, I also learned a language, which happened to be French. Today it should be an indispensable part of the education of every child that he should learn in addition to his mother-tongue, an international language. I suggest that instead of a class of 50 students in a particular school taking either French or Latin, we in Australia should endeavour to lead the way by adopting what has some common acceptance—an international language, Esperanto. With modern facilities for travel and with the necessity for leaders of different countries to assemble at conference tables, some tongue, common to all, is indispensable to modern life.

With regard to health and physical fitness, it is to me a matter for regret that there is

a tendency to associate movements for securing physical fitness with preparations for another war. The greatest attention seems to be given to building up the physique of the community ostensibly on the premises that the youth of the country must be made physically fit in order that we might draw on their numbers to fill the gaps in our Fighting Services. Indisputably, the wealth of any land is the capacity of its people to apply themselves to developing the resources of their country, and it is of paramount importance to our ordinary normal procedure that the population of this country should be built up to a high level. I do not argue from any belief that war is inevitable and will for ever recur. Of course, it is necessary from the point of view of defence to have a fit and healthy population.

I believe that after the termination of the present terrible conflict, which has shown that war is no longer confined to the battle fronts but comes definitely to all alike on the home front, wiser counsels will prevail than hitherto and reforms will go further than the conference table and will have greater ramifications—that is an economic basis—and the root cause of international conflicts will be removed. My approach to the question is that, for the betterment of this country and for its peace-time pursuits, we must necessarily have a fit and healthy community. I suggest, therefore, that we might learn from the facts attending the present conflict. If we can take from the ordinary economic make-up under which we live hundreds of thousands of our fittest and most able men for interminable periods—may be for months or may be for years—for war service, surely when peace returns it should be possible to draw upon the youths and send them to camps or establishments, not for extended periods but for several weeks, and provide them with every facility for enjoying physical recreation and for cultivating a healthy mental outlook.

If it is possible to construct military establishments for the training of our youth while fighting continues and the strongest efforts have to be exerted to hold the enemy at bay and drive him back whence he came, it should be possible—and not only possible but also easier—when all these men and women have been released from the Fighting Services to provide swimming pools,

gymnasia, holiday camps, playing fields and other facilities necessary to build up the physical well-being of our people. If it is possible to place weapons in the hands of our boys, why should it not be possible when the conflict is over to provide sporting equipment for them—cricket bats, tennis racquets, etc.? This may sound fantastic, but when the war has shown that so many of our fittest and most capable youths can be withdrawn for the Fighting Services, surely when hostilities cease provision could be made for them to engage in peace-time pursuits in such a form as will build up the physique of our people generally!

Mr. North: Perhaps the will is lacking in peace-time.

Mr. GRAHAM: We might learn something from our friend the enemy, Hitler. He instituted a rather wonderful scheme to develop the physical fitness of the young people of Germany. Unfortunately it was turned to evil purposes, but there is no question that the youths of Germany, in the main, learnt to take a pride in their bodies and an interest in their physical fitness. Apropos of this, a great deal of time and discussion have been expended on the subject of S.P. betting. I believe that if we could inculcate in the minds of our youth a pride in their own physical fitness, it would be reflected in their mental and moral outlook, and instead of spending Saturday afternoons in dark, dirty and dingy S.P. shops, often behind closed doors, they would be proud of themselves and would prefer to be on the playing fields, not in tens of thousands behind the pickets watching 20 or 30 players indulging in a game, but themselves participating in healthy sport. This might be a positive approach to the question. If we could embark upon a policy somewhat along the lines I have suggested, it would follow that there would be a tremendous saving to the community in respect of medical officers, nurses and hospitalisation and, so far as industry is concerned, absenteeism would be a much lesser factor than it is at present.

Provision has been made up to a point for the erection of new public offices in Perth. The land has been acquired and plans have been drawn. As an ex-civil servant, I cannot too strongly emphasise the grave necessity that exists for a central block of Government offices, but I suggest that before the work is embarked upon, be-

fore allocations are made in the building to house the various departments, and before partitions are built and other facilities installed peculiar to the different types of work performed, some consideration might be given to a re-organisation of the Public Service.

May I indicate one direction in which I believe distinct savings could be effected and general efficiency improved. Round about now, it seems to me, is the appropriate time for making such a suggestion, because there is a shortage of manpower, and if the suggestion were adopted, there would not be the troubles of unemployment or the difficulty of finding other occupations for those who might be displaced. Everybody knows that Government departments, Federal and State alike, are crying out in vain for experienced officers to assist in the very many new departments rendered necessary by the exigencies of the war. The example I have to give relates to the production of maps and plans. At present military plans are founded on a certain projection. The basic plan—if I can call it such in Western Australia—is that of the Department of Lands and Surveys, which is founded on another projection. Accordingly, when time presses as it did about 18 months ago, when circumstances were most acute, it was a difficult problem to correlate information from one set of plans with the information on another set, in order to make them conform. That is a Federal department as against a State department.

At the present moment we have the spectacle of a set of plans being produced by the Department of Lands and Surveys and another set of plans being produced by the Forests Department, on surveys carried out more or less independently. Surveys effected by the Railway Department are on a slightly different basis from those effected by the Public Works Department and the Main Roads Board; and there are other surveys undertaken by private contract, namely the plans in the Land Titles Office. It has occurred to me that there is necessity for a central survey organisation responsible for all surveys, on a common basis, required by Government departments, whether Federal or State. At present, I may add, the Department of Lands and Surveys will not recognise the surveys of, for instance, the Forests Department. And the same remarks apply to many surveys

carried out by the Main Roads Department. Following that, there are other departments having their own survey branches. This necessarily produces duplication and overlapping. The matter could be gone into at greater length; but perhaps I have said sufficient to indicate in one respect what possibly could be repeated in many, that with a system of co-ordination and a general investigation into Public Service practice in this State, far more competent methods could be arrived at than exist now; and I suggest the present time is appropriate before new public offices are proceeded with.

I wish to conclude on the note that it is necessary for all parties in all the parliamentary institutions of this country of ours to bring their minds from the prejudices of the past and to realise that an entirely new conception is necessary in order to approach the problems of tomorrow, which will be far greater in magnitude than those of the past if we endeavour to apply patches to a wholly outmoded system. I hold that our task and responsibility, as responsible leaders of the people today, is to do our utmost to build better for our children and for those who are to come after them. But we must forget our prejudices and our personal interests, and must at all times realise this fact perhaps above all others, that if we, in spite of all the promises that have been made of better things to come, allow the peoples of this and other countries to be betrayed—I know that I am using a very strong word—there may be repercussions that are not pleasant to contemplate.

Just as in Germany after the last war it did not require much of a tip of the scales to turn a swing to the left into a swing towards the right, I feel from my knowledge of the people, limited though it may be, that there is a very definite and earnest desire that those things should be attained in the years to come which for far too long have been denied to the people of this country. If we fail in this critical hour, when, if I may end upon the note on which I started, democracy is on its trial, then instead of this country of ours becoming the nation that we all hope for, if we allow things to slip back to the old ways and follies, history will regard us in terms most unkindly.

**MR. NORTH (Claremont):** I am sure it is a great honour to follow our new mem-

ber and to be the first to congratulate him upon his excellent exposition of his views. This afternoon the Premier announced, very importantly, that we are to have an election on the 20th November, a Saturday. At the same time we are in the throes of the Fourth Victory War Loan; and I feel that it is going to be a very bad example to set to the people of Western Australia if the various parties spend so lavishly on fighting the election as they have done in the past. The three Leaders in this House, together with perhaps one of the Independents—whom we might get to join the Party—might meet and decide that it is possible to dispense with a great deal of the election work that is customary and, instead, put the money into the Fourth Victory War Loan. That would be a good patriotic gesture, and I submit that in the long run it might save a lot of money all round. For, after all, there are very good returns from our war loans. That, in my opinion, is a point desirable to be considered. In the past a great deal of money has been spent on such things as hoardings. This money could be applied to the purpose I have suggested with advantage to all parties concerned.

My second point has reference to some remarks made by the member for West Perth. We are at the moment discussing the Budget, which is very much affected by the policy of the Grants Commission. If we are to continue the system of State Parliaments, this State should not be encouraged to think of itself as being the child of rich parents, a child full of enthusiasm and possessed of talent, whose parents could say to it, "Just loaf around the town. We will give you a remittance. We will make a remittance man of you. Do not develop your talents or improve your position in life." That is the attitude of the Grants Commission to this State. As was suggested by the member for West Perth and has been suggested by other members, we could well use the brains and ability of the members of the Grants Commission, who might be supported by two or three other men, preferably with engineering knowledge. These men could tour the State, ascertain where improvements could be effected and thus help to build up the wealth of our State, instead of allowing us to remain practically in a condition of stagnation. I shall not dwell further on this

point, because it was so well stressed the other night by the member for West Perth.

My third point is to declare myself on the political outlook. The recent landslide has caused an exceedingly unfair reaction to the outlook of Opposition members. It is not altogether correct to say that only one-half of Australia believes in a better order. To illustrate my point, I shall quote from an article published in the "Worker." It reads—

Australia wants no more poverty amid plenty, and it has done with governments that act upon the principle that adequate food, shelter, clothing, comfort, and security for all means national disaster.

That statement is one which I imagine no candidate on the hustings would dare to repudiate. No candidate today would dare to say he did not believe that a country could not supply these simple requisites to its people without going bankrupt. Any candidate who did so would deserve to lose his deposit. I admit quite frankly that during the economic revolution of the past 12 or 15 years there was in some quarters a policy of despair; a few men to be sacked here and the wages of other men to be clipped there. Many industrialists thought that was the way to progress in the world; their slogan was, "Buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest." Any party which in these days of 1943 used such arguments would not be a party that would gain my adherence. Any candidate who would dare to deny such fundamental rights to the worker would, to my mind, be entirely out of date. It may have been true at one time that prosperity could not be attained. Under our system as it operated before this war, it was quite impossible for the whole community to be employed without the risk of inflation, which would have been brought about by rising prices.

Every few years we had the spectacle of international interests in control pulling down prices. People in those days were honest in their belief that full employment and prosperity would result in rising prices and eventually in a crash. We heard people at that time saying, "This improvement is artificial; this prosperity is unreal; there will be a crash." The statement contained in the quotation which I read is true, and every party would be justified in making it. Despite the war, prices in Great Britain have risen only by one per cent. in 24 months. Prices there, in Canada and in Australia

are pegged at earlier figures. That policy is not common to any one party. Any candidate who does not advocate it is, in my opinion, deserving of losing his deposit. I therefore hope that when the platforms of the various parties are made public, we shall see this very sensible statement as the common ground of all parties. I shall not deal further at this juncture with this matter, as I am anxious to see what the platforms will turn out to be. What is the basis of the statement which I quoted? Are we all able to say truly that after the war there will be full employment? With the tremendous strides made by science and the improved machinery now available, one man can today do as much work as four men did 25 years ago. That is the basis on which we can build a sound policy.

The only other point with which I wish to deal relates to the number of members of Parliament this State should have. Throughout the years I have had the honour of representing a constituency in this Chamber, there has been a continuous attack on members of Parliament. It is said that there are too many members, that there is not enough for them to do and that the number should be cut down drastically. One form of propaganda today is that there should be only one Parliament for Australia, that at Canberra. The implication is that State Parliaments are a burden around the necks of the people of Australia, that they are costly and that the members are not even necessarily employed. The first illusion on that score that I wish to shatter is that State members have no work to do. In fact, they are doing much of the work which concerns Federal members. So we today are doing probably two-thirds of their work and everybody knows it is the ordinary bread-and-butter, rough-and-ready work in the community that it keeps it going. The big high-lights are much rarer, and not of so much significance in the long run.

Some people do not even know the name of their Federal member! For several years—indeed, ever since he has been Prime Minister—I have had the pleasure of doing work for the member of Fremantle, Mr. Curtin. It has been a privilege to do that work for him and I know that similar work has been done for other Federal

members by members of this Parliament. Work is being done that it is proposed should be done from Canberra. If that is brought about, I think the electors will receive a great shock when they find that their voice and their messenger have left them. However, the people must decide whether we are to have only a central Government. It is their will that will prevail if there is a referendum. If a central Government takes complete control, I have some interesting figures to indicate what size it ought to be. By an extraordinary coincidence I was fortunate enough to come across some information regarding the House of Commons. I found that in the reign of James I, when the population was under 5,000,000, the House of Commons had 500 members. With a population of 7,000,000 people, Australia today has a total of only 450 members of Parliament in the popular Chamber, so we are represented in Parliament to a much lesser degree than were the people of England in the time of James I.

Mr. Watts: And we have much more to do.

Mr. NORTH: We have an area the size of Europe to handle, whereas the Parliamentarians of the time of James I. had only a little island to consider. I admit that the Press has since come into existence, and that by means of literature and in other ways it is possible to ventilate public opinion to a much greater extent than was possible in the time of King James. But the figures I have quoted indicate that a much bigger Parliament in Canberra will be necessary if the State Parliaments are wiped out. On those figures there would need to be a Parliament of at least 300 members in the lower House, and that would lead to difficulties that will readily occur to this Committee. For instance, there would be no opportunity for most members to speak. How could an Assembly of 300 members voice their views to the Speaker? It is almost impossible, when there are more than 60 or 70 members of Parliament, for all to speak. For those reasons, I feel there is a lot to be said for the examination of the idea of maintaining a central Parliament—perhaps enlarged, to some extent, perhaps doubled—with properly organised powers, while still leaving the develop-

mental work which lies before us to the various State Parliaments, particularly so far as Western Australia is concerned.

I feel that we can take an example from the Old Country—the Mother of Parliaments—which has shown us that there is plenty of work for us to do as we are today, and that we are not redundant, as people have been taught over the past ten or 12 years to think. It is well within the capacity of this country to finance its existing members of Parliament. It has been shown that the cost of Parliament is much less than £1,500,000 a year, out of a national income of £1,000,000,000. It cannot be said that our Parliaments are redundant. But there should be a careful readjustment of power, a matter to which attention has already been given in this House. Amongst other things, we have difficulty over educational problems, and the educational vote will have to be largely supplemented by the Commonwealth Government in the future.

**MR. NEEDHAM** (Perth): Like the member for Claremont, I desire to compliment my colleague, the member for East Perth, on his very eloquent address on the occasion of his maiden speech. That speech indicated that he will be a decided acquisition to the debating powers of this Assembly. I listened very attentively to the speech delivered by the Treasurer on the Estimates and the subsequent remarks by the Leader of the Opposition. I notice that the Leader of the Opposition established two records. The first was in delivering the policy speech of his party in Parliament instead of from the hustings in the constituency he represents.

The Minister for Mines: He was practising on us!

Mr. NEEDHAM: Whether that is a good precedent to establish I do not know. Hitherto it has been the custom for the leader of a party—whether of the Government or the Opposition—to deliver his policy speech in the electorate he represents. It is true that the present Prime Minister of Australia departed from that practice to an extent by delivering the policy speech of the Federal Labour Party from Canberra, the capital of Australia.

The Premier: That was delivered over the air.



Mr. NEEDHAM: But the Leader of the Opposition has broken new ground and has established a precedent by delivering his policy speech in Parliament. During that speech, he contended that the Labour Government of this State had done nothing to justify its existence in the 10½ years it had been in charge of the destinies of Western Australia. He disparaged all it had done and told us very calmly and quietly that if his party had a chance to go on to the Treasury bench, it would do a lot of things this Government had failed to do. The hon. gentleman forgot to tell this Committee that the party to which he belongs has had more years of governmental control in this State than has the Labour Party. If he goes back to the first year of responsible government, 1890, and views the circumstances prevailing up till today, he will find that the Labour Party has had fewer years of governmental control than has the party to which he belongs. He also forgot to tell this Committee that every time his party has been on the Treasury bench it has been in full and complete power, whereas the Labour Party has never been in complete power but simply in office. His party has had the support not only of another branch of this Legislature but has had also the strong and full support of a capitalistic Press. On the other hand, the present Government, during the 10½ years it has been on the Treasury bench, has had to meet the opposition of the Press and the determined opposition of another branch of this Legislature. I might also remind the Leader of the Opposition of another very salient point concerning the last 10½ years about which he talks so much. Two of those years were depression years. The Labour Government took over from the National Government in 1933 in the midst of the depression. It had first of all to clear up the mess left by its predecessors in office.

Mr. Mann: You are talking a lot of rot!

Mr. McDonald: I think this is a policy speech.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I am talking a lot of truth. The Collier Government, when it came into office, had to clear up the mess left by its predecessors. For another four years out of its total term of office it had, like other Governments in Australia, to carry on during the war. If the hon. member will appreciate these two incontrovertible facts,

he will realise that there have really been only about four years during which the Labour Government of this State has had an opportunity to put its policy into operation. If the member for Beverley considers that I am speaking rot, then he will have an opportunity before the debate is closed to disprove my statements. It may be thought that only the workers—that is the members of the trade unions—have benefited from the legislation enacted during the last 10½ years. It is true that they have benefited as a result of it, but the people represented by the member for Beverley have also benefited. Before he leaves the Chamber I would remind him that one of his colleagues on the bench at the back of him stated on one occasion that the best friend the farmers in Western Australia ever had was the Labour Government led by Hon. P. Collier and followed by the present Premier. The hon. member's colleague to whom I refer is the member for Avon. I place the member for Avon in the witness box to prove the statement I have made, which the member for Beverley considers to be rot.

In reply to the statement by the member for Katanning that the Labour Government has not done much, I say that the wonder is that it has done what it has. The member for West Perth, in the course of his usual eloquent remarks, referred to the matter of uniform taxation. He mentioned the necessity for an alteration in the method of taxation and suggested that it might be as well to go into the matter of "pay-as-you-go" taxation. The time is more than ripe for the consideration of that suggestion. The member for Claremont is also in favour of that idea. I think it is a necessary reform, but I can visualise the position of many people who would find themselves out of employment and therefore without income but still compelled to pay the tax under the assessment raised on the income earned during the previous year when they were earning a salary or wages. While I realise the virtues of this "pay-as-you-go" system, I can appreciate that it would mean a loss of revenue, but that position must be faced. When speaking on this matter on another occasion, I was told that the present method of tax collection would permit of the establishing of a credit by the end of the financial year to build up eventually a sum of money so that any person out of work would have a credit. For instance, if in March of next

year I had completed the payment of my income tax and then allowed the deductions to go on until June, I would establish the nucleus of a credit to meet a time when I might be out of employment and would have to pay the previous year's tax. I would have to be paying a long time before I could establish a sufficient credit to meet that tax! It is time that we requested the Commonwealth Government to follow the good example of Great Britain and, I think, New Zealand, and go into the question of introducing this system.

Mr. North: The United States of America has adopted it too.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I also want to refer to the matter of tariffs. If the war in which we are at present engaged has taught us any lesson at all it is the necessity to break down tariff barriers between nations. I speak as one who, all along, has been an advocate of protective tariffs to foster Australian industries, but I realise, since we have been fighting this war, that we will have to revise that idea with a view to seeing that there will be free interchange of goods between nations. With that freedom of exchange we will be able to establish a better good-will and probably lay the foundations of a lasting peace when this terrible struggle is brought to an end. Another subject to which we shall have to pay attention is that of immigration. After all, no policy of the Australian Labour Party has been so much misrepresented as its attitude towards immigration. Time and again we have been told that we are against immigration. That is wrong. The Labour Party was never opposed to immigration. It always recognised and will continue to recognise that a country such as Australia—a vast territory rich in minerals and rich in many other ways—cannot be held unless it is populated. But Labour always contended that there should be a planned scheme of immigration—

Mr. Sampson: You are beginning to see the light.

Mr. NEEDHAM: — not an indiscriminate system such as was inaugurated in this State in 1923. It is of no use to bring people here from distant countries if they are immediately to compete with our own people on the labour market. If a planned scheme of immigration was necessary in the past, it will be all the more necessary in the years to come. Australia must be popu-

lated in order to develop its natural resources, and of course we must have the manhood to defend the country should unfortunately the tocsin of war sound again. The native immigrant is the best immigrant and, unless we maintain and improve our standard of living, we will not encourage the native immigrant. By keeping our standard of living at a high level, we shall encourage young married couples to become parents. On the question of immigration generally, we should lose no time at all in getting our friends of the Allied Nations to agree to a stream of suitable people coming to this country in order to help us develop and, if necessary, defend it.

Before long we may be discussing the question of amending our education laws. A proposal to raise the school leaving age has been placed before us. In moving the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I referred briefly to this subject. When we raise the leaving age to 15 years, we shall have to be prepared to meet a considerable amount of cost in the way of providing additional teachers and increased accommodation, but I hope we shall also be prepared to do something for the parents of children who will be kept at school for another year. Personally I should like to see the leaving age raised to 16. Dealing with the question of making it 15 years, however, I can visualise the difficulties that will confront many parents of children through losing 12 months of their help and having to maintain them for a longer period. True, the child endowment scheme will help, but something more will have to be done to aid a father on the basic wage to meet the expense necessary to maintain a child until he or she begins to earn money to assist the household expenditure. We shall have an opportunity to discuss this matter fully at a later stage, but I hope the economic side will not be lost sight of and that some allowance will be made to the parents of children who have to bear the expense of maintaining them for another year.

On the subject of education generally, I think it would be much better if the Commonwealth Government took charge and assumed the responsibility for the cost. The outlay for education is a very big drain on the revenue of the States and of this State in particular and, since the introduction of uniform taxation, we cannot expand our education system in the way we would like

and in the way that is necessary, owing to the lack of finance. If there is any department that should be handed over to the Federal authorities, I think it is education.

There is another phase of education which was mentioned by the member for East Perth and to which I would like to refer. That is the suggestion to give sex instruction in schools. I think we would be doing wrong if we provided for teaching sex matters to children in the schools. I regret to note that the Minister for Health recently expressed the view that this subject should be introduced into our schools. This is a very delicate subject and there are many phases of it. If sex matters are to be taught in the schools, I hope that, before a start is made, the teachers will have to undergo very strict training to ensure that they are fit to teach it.

The Minister for Mines: I agree with that.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I consider that the matter of imparting sex education is one for the parents. In fact, I wonder whether it is a subject to be taught in the school at all. I have a statement made by a man who is a recognised authority as follows—

Leslie Weatherhead, author of "Master of Sex" (S.C.M. Press) cannot be labelled obscurantist; yet he quotes with approval Stekel's judgment, "Enlightenment en masse in schools is a monstrous idea whose execution would certainly start countless sex traumas, etc." And he himself says (page 28—"It is impossible for any teacher of sex facts so to gauge the needs of individuals in the class that he can answer the questions of some without wounding the susceptibilities of others.")

So I say it would be a very dangerous experiment to start sex education en masse in our schools. The suggestion has been made that if sex instruction is imparted it will have the effect of saving the future generation from the evil of venereal disease. I have my doubts about that. The teachers handling this very delicate subject must be well instructed in the matter, not only from the point of view of biology, but also from the religious aspect. He should not only have a complete knowledge of biology, but should be competent to deal with the religious and spiritual aspects of the subject, which should also receive attention. I sincerely hope that before anything is done in this regard, the teachers themselves will receive instruction in the matter of sex psychology. There

has been no suggestion that those who teach this subject in schools have scientifically studied it. Even if it were so, I should be very chary about introducing the subject; for I consider that the proper place for this teaching is in the home, by the parents themselves.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan): I desire to express my appreciation of the remarks made by the recently-elected member for East Perth; and I am sure that his dad, a very old friend of mine, would have been proud if he had been present to hear what his boy had to say and the manner in which the boy said it. I was indeed sorry to note that there appears to be a decision arrived at in Canberra by which daylight saving is to be re-established here. It is a reversion, and something opposed by nearly everyone in Western Australia. It discourages people. I have questioned many persons, because I wanted to know what was the opinion of the people themselves. Daylight saving will not affect me very much personally; but I know there are today women and men and children who rise at 5 o'clock in order to enable the workers to go to munition factories. With daylight saving another hour will be cut off. I earnestly hope the Premier will not allow this matter to pass without making a special effort to induce consideration for the continuation of the present method. We do not want daylight saving; there is a widespread feeling against it.

The Minister for Works: You have taken a Gallup poll?

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes. I have never found anyone who wanted daylight saving. There is no one in this Chamber but has expressed disbelief in it. I trust that the Premier will be successful in a strong effort on his part to ensure that daylight saving will not again be inflicted on the people of Western Australia.

Mr. North: Our time would not clash with that of the Eastern States at all.

Mr. SAMPSON: No. We are isolated in relation to the Eastern States. I do not see why the people should have to carry this added burden, for it is a burden. I desire to say a few words on the importance of primary production. It has been spoken of on different occasions, but there are more than food values in the subject. Primary production means that something is done in a definite way to enable this State to meet

its accounts. I was greatly struck by some figures contained in Professor Hitch's book, "American Economic Strength." It is an exceedingly interesting publication, and I am sure it would appeal to everyone who has the opportunity to read it. I shall give a few figures, sufficient to show that not only does the work provide justification for serious thought, but that it indicates that primary production is more than a matter of providing food. These are the figures:—

In Great Britain the value of production per person on farm work is £180 per year, and the value per person in factories is also £180. In the United States of America the average production per person on farm work is £187 per year, and in factories £360 per year. In New Zealand the average production per person on farm work is £600 per year. In Australia the average production per person on farm work is £425 per year, and in factories £180.

That gives us furiously to think, because it does indicate that primary production is of first importance so far as Australia is concerned. The subject is one worthy of the closest consideration. The prosperity we enjoy is only apparent. It is a visionary prosperity, a misleading prosperity. The net result of the position today is that workers are encouraged to leave the land. We have heard on very many occasions references to reconstruction, and in passing I would like to say that recently the Minister for Works arranged for five addresses to be delivered to the Road Board Conference. The addresses dealt with world reconstruction. They were interesting in every way, and were helpful, and reflect great credit on all who took part in them. The Under Secretaries and other public servants gave the Road Board Conference a wonderful set of addresses.

When the war ends we shall find that there is a set of problems to be faced throughout the Commonwealth. One of the main problems is the persistent removal of workers from the land. That makes the position today one full of danger. It has been said—and I believe there is much truth in the statement—that city dwellers may yet be hard pressed to obtain their daily bread. That may be considered by members a bald statement, but figures do not lie and primary production is steadily declining. In the cities, on the other hand, the numbers are steadily increasing; and that is where our danger lies for, unless we maintain primary production, unless we

make it worth while for people to remain on the land, good-bye to any hope of Western Australia proving a progressive country! We know, as we have known for a long time, that the price paid for wheat has not been sufficient to meet the cost of producing it, and consequently farmers have been deprived of large sums spread over a long period. They have been the serfs of the community. There has been an absence of efficient effort to secure for them the return required to make life tolerable for them.

From the farmers' standpoint the tariff is becoming more impossible as time goes on. It is no exaggeration to say that they have been the victims of a confidence trick; they have been grossly ill-treated by reason of the tariff. In many respects Australia, and particularly Western Australia, is better off than is the Motherland. We have gold, fruit, wine, timber and cereals. We are in this indeed a very fortunate people. We have suitable arable land, but we should treat our farmers fairly. We have not taken the necessary action to provide them with essentials, such as adequate water supplies. Our marketing system needs re-organisation. Unless that re-organisation takes place there can be no permanent success for the farmer.

Nowadays we hear a great deal about ceiling prices. What are they? It seems to me to be a one-way argument. The price must not go beyond a certain point; but is there anything to say that it shall not go down to ground-floor or even basement level? There is only one control, and that is the ceiling price, which must not be exceeded. The position amounts to this: That workers in our secondary industries are enabled to enjoy a greater measure of prosperity and comfort than is the worker on the land. Why should not the latter be equally well placed? I am not saying that workers in secondary industries are doing too well. I do not say that for a moment, but I maintain that the workers engaged in producing food should receive the same consideration as is extended to workers engaged in secondary industries. If we persist in our present attitude our farmers will be abandoning the land, with the result that the country will be left in a hopeless position.

The Minister for Mines: Why do they not get better conditions?

Mr. SAMPSON: On many occasions I have expressed the opinion that they should be working under an Arbitration Court award.

The Minister for Mines: Why do they not combine and get an award?

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister is now speaking without full knowledge of the facts.

The Minister for Mines: I know all the facts.

Mr. SAMPSON: I make the statement now—and it is by no means the first time—that workers on the land should receive the same consideration as is extended to workers in secondary industry. I say that without ambiguity or possibility of misunderstanding. The products of the farm are greatly in excess of the value of the products of the workshop or the factory, so far as Australia is concerned, and thus we have real proof of the importance of giving consideration to our country workers. Our primary products are world-famed. We have cattle, sheep, wheat, dairy products, gold, and many other minerals and products. We must not forget that the more people we have settled on the land the greater will be the opportunities for the men engaged in secondary industry. Each will help to make the life of the other better and success more certain. Our standard of living would improve if what I suggested were carried into effect. Recently we have had a shortage of vegetables. If the shortage were to become worse, the position would indeed be serious.

Everyone desires to see the school-leaving age raised, but it is no use merely expressing that wish. Much fundamental work will have to be done; we shall require more teachers and additional buildings. We must work actively towards that end, as it is of no use merely to stress the importance of education. I do not intend to labour this point further. I have expressed my belief and faith that the security, the prosperity and the future of Australia depend upon education, and further that Western Australia will never become a closely settled State, unless those who work on the land are given the same consideration as is given to city dwellers. One aspect of reconstruction about which we have not heard much is the training of our youth. We know what happened during the recent financial depression, when hundreds of men were placed on sustenance. That position may recur un-

less we take adequate steps to ensure that our boys have the right either to learn a trade or to be trained in farming work. I hope we shall never again experience a period when men will have to be put on sustenance. We remember what occurred in those days; no work was available for a man until he had expended any money he might have saved. We need not have that experience again; we can obviate a recurrence of it in the future. One aspect of the shortage of manpower has impressed itself upon most homes and that is the difficulty of obtaining firewood. It might be said that this has nothing to do with the subject, but actually it has. Men who go into the bush to earn a living by cutting firewood or burning charcoal have been treated in a filthy and disgraceful way. There is no question about that. They have never, as a body, received reasonable payment for their work. No wonder now that, when the opportunity has come, they insist upon fair payment. I hope they will continue to do so.

The Minister for Mines: You are a bit late in your repentance.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is not a matter of repentance; that has been my viewpoint all my life, because I am a member of a family the breadwinner of which had to do this work. My dad was a woodcutter and did not get the treatment he should have had. No, repentance does not come to a person who has been so situated and has had that experience. I have realised for many years that there has been a brutal discrimination against the man who works in the country, whether in the bush or in any phase of primary production, or in any avenue in which he has not the protection I have urged on so many occasions should be given him. I hope it will be possible for a full consideration to be given to this matter, and that there will be a full realisation that these people are flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood, people of our race, and members of the great human family, and that what we receive they should receive on the same basis and with the same consideration.

MR. HILL (Albany): I listened with great interest to the Premier's speech, and was rather amused at the efforts of the member for Perth who tried to make out that the Labour Government since 1924

had done a very good job. I have some figures here which show the drift in the finances of this State since 1924. The population in that year was 360,000. In 1941 it was 460,000. The debt per head in 1924 was £140 13s. 6d., and in 1941 it was £207 5s. 9d. Taxation in the respective years amounted to £1,173,000, and £3,127,000 or £3 5s. 1d. and £6 0s. 1d. per head. The loan liability on our railways amounted to £16,620,000 in 1924, and £26,000,000 in 1941, and the deficit in the respective years was £30,700, and £441,000. During the past year there has been no unemployment. There has never been so much money in circulation. Our governmental activities were working flat out during the year, but in spite of those advantages the surplus totalled only £24,000. Even that does not touch upon the worst feature of government in Western Australia. A few months ago I had the very great pleasure of entertaining for a few hours Sir Ronald and Lady Cross. They had been on a trip from Geraldton to Albany. Lady Cross turned to me and said, "My word, you have a very big State!" I said, "Yes, we have, but half of our population is in an area smaller than the Isle of Man." I have here a map of Western Australia.

The Minister for Mines: What did Lady Cross say?

Mr. HILL: She looked at me in surprise and asked me if I was sure. I told her that half the population was concentrated in an area no bigger than that little speck of land in the Irish Sea. The Minister is a member of a Government that professes a policy of decentralisation, yet that is the position in this State. The little red spot on this map indicates where half our population is concentrated. I have a friend today—I will not say where he is, but he is not very far away—who is in command of a battery of mobile 155 mm. guns. If he brought them here and put them in King's Park he would have them within range of one-half the population of this State, the biggest self-governing State in the world. He would have not only half the population of the State within range, but also a monopoly of the shipping of this State and all the important industries. That is a very serious matter, and I think that one cause that has contributed

throughout the world to the policy of centralisation has been the failure to keep pace with transport. In 1924 our Premier became Minister for Railways, our main transport undertaking. Except for the three years of the depression, he has held that position or the office of Premier ever since. I have a few figures which show that the total liability of our transport undertakings in this State on the 30th June last was £38,724,000, and their deficit last year was £514,146. The total debt of this State is £97,000,000.

The Premier: We have some assets to show for it, have we not?

Mr. HILL: Yes, but the whole of our transport is in a most unsatisfactory condition.

The Premier: According to you!

Mr. HILL: Our Premier, in his professed policy of decentralisation—

The Premier: We have a woollen mill at Albany.

Mr. HILL: I will deal with Albany later on.

The Premier: We have a freezing works at Albany.

Mr. HILL: Yes, and we have to ship lambs from Albany through Fremantle! During the seven years the hon. member has been Premier I have never once had the privilege of introducing him to my people at Albany.

The Premier: Do you think I want to be running round all over the place?

Mr. HILL: I think the Premier owes a duty to all the people of the State and not just to the people of Geraldton.

The Minister for Mines: He sent me down.

Mr. HILL: I have here the returns submitted with the Estimates. On page 15 is a detailed classification of our assets. Our railways showed a loss of £341,000. Our Premier, when he was Minister for Railways, introduced the port zone system. Once upon a time—I will not say when—I was talking to a man who was probably the leading railway man in Australia. He said, "What is this zone system based on?" I said, "It is based on one factor only—railway mileage." We are very fortunate so far as our railway mileage is concerned. Not only are we fortunate in that respect, but our transport problem is the simplest

of those of all the Australian States. Our administration, however, is the worst. Field-Marshal Smuts, one of the leading men of the Empire, when re-organising his Cabinet a few weeks ago, appointed a Minister for Transport. All transport experts recommend that one Minister should be responsible for every form of transport. I will take members for a tour to the offices of the various Ministers who are handling our transport in this State. First of all come with me to the Supreme Court buildings, and we shall find the Minister for Justice, who is also Minister for Railways. Last year the railways showed a loss of £341,000, but that is not the worst feature. Four or five years ago I travelled with one of our senior railway officers who told me that 60 per cent. of our locomotives were at the end of their economic life.

The Minister for the North-West: How long ago?

Mr. HILL: Four or five years ago.

The Minister for the North-West: They have been a long time collapsing.

Mr. HILL: I wish the Minister had been with me last Friday when I only took three hours to travel from Perth to Chidlow's Well, a distance of 30 miles!

The Minister for Labour: Did you walk?

Mr. HILL: No, I travelled in one of the Western Australian Government's first-class carriages.

The Premier: It took the pioneers longer than that.

Mr. HILL: It may have, and that is the trouble with our administration today. It thinks in terms of the pioneers and the administration is the same today as it was 30 years ago. The Government follows the lead of grand-dad instead of trying to work for future generations.

The Minister for Mines: We reckon that Lord Forrest was a statesman, and have followed him.

Mr. HILL: That is not so. The next are the tramways. Last year they made a profit of £59,339. Was that profit used as the Fremantle tramways, which are run by the municipality, would have used it? The municipality paid off its loan indebtedness with its profits, and today as a result all profits go to the revenue of the Fremantle municipality. I believe they have equivalent to a 9d. rate. The profits of

our tramways, instead of being used to improve the service, have been applied to meet losses in other directions. The tramways and other metropolitan systems of transport are in a deplorable condition. I remember some years ago when Mr. Connell, retired Commissioner of Police, and Mrs. Connell, spent an afternoon at my home. Mr. Connell told me he had been to Sydney and that when he returned he said to his Minister—I do not know whether the Minister was our present Premier or the late Mr. Scaddan—"You will have to look out for motor transport. It is going to compete with your railways and tramways." I believe the Commonwealth Grants Commission referred to the wonderful opportunity that our Government lost when it failed to use motor transport in the metropolitan area. Exactly three years ago I had lunch in Sydney Parliament House with the Minister for Transport. The whole of the metropolitan transport in Sydney is under the control of the Government. Years ago when motor transport came into being our Government should have seized the opportunity to use it in conjunction with the tramways.

The Minister for Labour: It would have been more socialisation.

Mr. HILL: The next item deals with harbours and rivers, and here we have a proper comic opera state of affairs! It is interesting to read what the Commonwealth Grants Commission has to say on the subject. In its eighth report (1941) it states in paragraph 178—

Harbours—The expenditure out of loan funds on outer harbours in Western Australia is large and it does not appear to us that a sufficient attempt is made to get an adequate return from the users in the districts served. If the traffic will not stand the cost, there is no reason for expenditure on harbours unless it is essential for the industry of the district, in which case the industry should be charged through a special rate. This policy has been tried in other parts of Australia, and insistence upon it has on occasions led the people of a district to decide that the expenditure on a harbour was not really necessary for their interests. A multiplication of harbours is uneconomic. It is true that in Western Australia the port of Fremantle returns a large profit, but this does not make up for the losses on the other ports. In any case the profit of Fremantle is no excuse for an unscientific and unco-ordinated policy of harbour development. A large expenditure has been made on the Bunbury Harbour, which is only about 100 miles from Perth, and it is doubtful whether

it has succeeded in overcoming the disadvantages of the port.

The next item on this return shows the harbours under the heading of Harbours and Rivers. Here is a joke! The Harbours and Rivers Department is a branch of the Public Works Department so that the Minister for Harbours and Rivers does not control or administer our ports. The Minister for Works is the dictator who decides whether a port shall or shall not be developed. On one occasion he stated in this Chamber that only one man wanted the port of Albany developed. The fact is that thousands of people want that port developed. I wish Mr. Chairman, that you could have been with me in recent months when I have talked with naval officers. They have asked me, "Why is this place with its natural advantages so neglected?" Today one man has complete power in regard to the position and he does not do justice to the southern end of the State. I have here a list of the expenditure on the ports since 1924. That list is as follows:—

	£
Fremantle Harbour Works( including bulk handling) .. ..	1, 236, 009
Geraldton Harbour Works .. ..	794, 709
Bunbury Harbour Board (including bulk handling) .. ..	318, 166
Albany Harbour Works .. ..	131
Esperance Jetty .. ..	70, 113
Other .. ..	637, 413
<b>Total for the State .. ..</b>	<b>3, 056, 410</b>

The Premier: Esperance is decentralisation.

Mr. HILL: I do not object to the development of Esperance or that of Geraldton. I advocate the development of these places. The amount received by Albany during these 19 years would not pay the Premier's salary for one month!

The Minister for Mines: But you have a natural harbour.

Mr. HILL: I wish the Minister could have been with me a few months ago. An American ship loaded with valuable material had to put into Albany. She experienced trouble outside and only by skilful management reached the port. I called on the naval officers to see if I could render any assistance. One of them said, "The sooner they stop wasting money around the corner and develop this place the better." When I spoke to the captain he said "I think we can

manage. I have never been in a port where I received such co-operation from the local people as I have received here." He then went on to say that it was his first visit to Australia. When I asked him if he had been to Sydney he replied "Yes." I said, "They have something to be proud of." He said, "Yes, they have, but they have nothing on you. By spending a reasonable sum here you would have as good a port as Sydney."

We laugh at the people of Sydney because they are so proud of their harbour. When I went through that port with the engineer-in-chief I did not laugh because they are proud of that port. They have spent £13,000,000 on developing it, but here we neglect our natural advantages and spend borrowed money on unsuitable localities, and then wonder why we have to use the Fremantle Harbour Trust as a taxing machine. The first port mentioned under the Harbours and Rivers heading is the Fremantle Harbour Trust. The loan liability is £2,876,310. The surplus last year was £147,392. Another item immediately under that is "Fremantle Other." In that case there is a loan liability of £682,000 and the net earnings last year amounted to £4,529, with a deficiency of £28,251. That is a new item and I would like the Premier, or the Minister controlling harbours, to tell us what that loan liability of £682,000 represents. The next item is the Bunbury Harbour Board. In that case there is a loan liability of £610,000. It is not fair to deal with the figures of the out ports last year.

The Minister for Mines: Are you referring to the Loan Estimates?

Mr. HILL: No, to the statements supplied with the Estimates. Here again beneath the item "Bunbury Harbour Board" we have, "Bunbury Other" with a loan liability of £79,000 and a deficit of £4,700.

Mr. Withers: That is the member's pocket money.

Mr. HILL: He is very lucky. Owing to the war conditions affecting port finances I have taken the figures for our last normal year. They will deal with some of the babies which the Fremantle Harbour Trust has to keep. The Bunbury Harbour Board in 1939, had a deficit of £22,821. Bunbury is the only outport with a harbour board, and the figures for Bunbury are complete. The next port is Geraldton. That had a deficit of £32,192, but those figures



are not complete. The Geraldton wharves are administered by the Railway Department, and no figures are available dealing with the financial results for that part of the port.

The next port is Albany which shows a deficiency of £4,809. The Railway Department, which controls the jetty, carries a surplus of £2,944, and so the net loss was £1,865. That is a very good record for Albany, because interest is charged on every penny that has been spent on the port since 1860. The bulk of the trade is in wheat and fruit, which do not pay wharfage. If the port of Albany had been encouraged and enjoyed the trade of its zone, it would be the best cow of the Treasurer's herd. Esperance shows a deficit of £794, but here again the figures are not complete as the Esperance jetty is controlled by the Railway Department. Other losses shown are—

Busselton, £989.

Roebourne, £2,092.

North-West ports, £30,287.

Swan River, £19,216.

Dredging, etc., £13,488.

Other jetties, etc., £7,832.

These leave a deficit of £18,020, in spite of a profit of £116,000 at Fremantle. I draw attention to the Swan River figures. I understand that the bulk of the expenditure there has been on reclamation work, and I contend that that money should be charged up to parks and gardens and not to harbours and rivers. The Fremantle Harbour Trust Act is administered by the Chief Secretary; the Bunbury Harbour Board is controlled by the Minister for the North-West; Geraldton is under the Harbour and Lights Department, which is controlled by the Minister for the North-West and partly also by the Minister for Railways. The same applies to other ports.

Another item I wish to refer to is that of roads and bridges. The loan liability for roads and bridges is £3,443,985 and the deficit £133,500. That deficit is due to the fact that the Government used the Main Roads Department as No. 1 employment department, and from 1932 to 1941 spent an average of £136,600 of loan money on roads. The average amount of loan money spent on roads is practically equal to the deficit of £133,500. Had the Government financed the work for unemployment out of revenue instead of loan money, there would have been no deficit in respect of roads today.

Previous speakers have referred to the need for population. We have to face the fact that if we do not people this country we shall never hold it. I again draw attention to the map before me. I have divided it into three zones. One line runs midway between Fremantle and Geraldton and another line midway between Fremantle and Albany. I will not trouble about the northern part of the State. We have no fewer than 17 members representing the metropolitan area. I should like to refer to some of the differences in conditions which people in the city enjoy as compared with those in the outlying parts of the State. Let me start with members of this House. A city member has his home here, from which the House is easy of access, and on Saturday afternoon he can walk around his electorate. I have to leave my home at mid-day on Monday and, if the trains do not break down, I do not get back until mid-day on Saturday. My usual weekly routine is two nights at home, two nights in the train and three nights in Perth. Then consider a woman who lives at Mount Helena, 24 miles from Perth! If she wishes to come to Perth she has to pay a fare of 3s. 6d. and, if she has a pram, she has to pay railage on it. If a woman wishes to travel from Bellevue to Fremantle, a distance of 24 miles, her return fare is only 2s. and her pram is carried free of charge. People in the lower Great Southern are getting petrol through a southern port. It is conveyed as far north as Narrogin, but we are called upon to pay the same charges as if the petrol was railed from Fremantle.

The Premier: By whom?

Mr. Patrick: The same thing applies at Geraldton.

Mr. HILL: I believe that is so. The map shows that we have the centres of Geraldton, Fremantle, Albany and Esperance almost equally spaced and we should have in those areas a population proportionate to that of the other States.

The Minister for Labour: You have omitted Bunbury.

Mr. HILL: If the Government will treat the Bunbury Harbour Board as it treated the Albany Water Board, I will not say another word about that harbour. We had a water board that was not making the scheme pay, so the Government took it over and said the people had to find sufficient to

make it pay. We did so, and last year this was the only water board under the control of the Government that made a profit.

The Minister for Works: Splendid!

Mr. HILL: The southern zone on the map is not unlike the State of Victoria, and holding a position corresponding to that of Melbourne we have the port of Albany. We at our end of the State have no reason to love the Labour Party. Some years ago the member for Katanning and myself introduced a deputation to the Minister for Works and the Minister for Lands. The Minister for Works produced plans for a modern harbour for the port of Albany. The date on those plans was 1911. I remember that year very well.

The Minister for Works: So do we.

Mr. HILL: The people of Albany returned a Labour member and helped to place the Scaddan Government in office. That harbour scheme was scrapped and three years later the present deep water jetty was forced upon the people. Before 1924 there were proposals to develop the southern end of the State. These proposals included the Jardee-Denmark railway, Manjimup-Mt. Barker railway and Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway. The Labour Government, on taking office, built a line to Northcliffe and another to Nornalup and left a gap in the centre. It placed the Manjimup-Mt. Barker and the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway legislation on the statute-book, but has never carried out the work. It passed the Albany Harbour Board Act, but it has never proclaimed the Albany Harbour Board.

The Government is very proud of what it has done for the freezing works at Albany,

but what does it amount to? Very little! It left private enterprise to take the risk of establishing those works. I am quite convinced that the southern end of the State has a very great future, but as it was necessary to develop the port of Melbourne in order that the State of Victoria might be developed, so it will be necessary to develop the port of Albany in order that the southern end of this State may be developed. The Minister for Works has attempted to justify the continued neglect of Albany by saying that we should grow something to ship from the port. The Minister picked the wrong target when he fired that squib. A few years ago a business change took place at Albany.

The firm of Hill and Co. changed hands and was taken over by the Albany Freezing Works. That change is symbolic of that which has taken place at the southern end of our State. The original name of the company was Clutterbuck Bros., of Adelaide. My father became acquainted with the firm when he used to buy cattle and ship them to Esperance to be overlanded to Norseman. On his recommendation the firm closed down the Esperance business and started at Albany. In my boyhood I used to help drive the cattle from the jetty out to the paddocks. After school and on Saturday I had to take out South Australian-grown hay to feed the cattle. But what is the position today? The firm of Hill and Co. has been taken over by a firm which does not import cattle but exports them. I have here figures prepared by the Government Statistician, and I quote agricultural, pastoral and dairying statistics for the season 1938-39 relating to the ports of Albany, Bunbury, Fremantle and Geraldton—

#### AGRICULTURAL, PASTORAL, AND DAIRYING STATISTICS—SEASON 1938-39.

Zone.	Wheat for Grain.	Wool Clip.	Clip.	Sheep as at 21-12-38.	Apples.	Pears.	Cream sent to Factory.
	bushels.	lbs.	lbs.	No.	bushels.	bushels.	lbs.
Albany ... ..	11,805	882,147	8.5	102,915	478,671	29,167	1,472,617
Bunbury ... ..	138	730,288	5.7	128,453	312,009	24,387	1,459,376
Fremantle ... ..	...	77,597	3.2	24,094	109,640	44,494	576,448
Geraldton ... ..	825,602	2,007,290	7.5	266,026	29	9	4,371

NOTE.—The above zones are approximately the areas within a radius of 40 miles from the port specified.

The Minister for Lands: Have you the figures for Carnarvon?

Mr. HILL: No. I wanted only the figures for the four principal ports of the State.

The Minister for Lands: Your figures for sheep are only a drop compared with Gascoyne.

Mr. HILL: I know it.

The Minister for Lands: Then why do you not mention Carnarvon?

Mr. HILL: Carnarvon is represented by a Minister. I have to battle for Albany. The figures I have given represent the production within a 40-mile radius of Albany. That area south of the line shown on the map I have in 1939 produced over 1,000,000 cases of apples and 100,000 cases of other fruits, as well as 100,000 tons of wheat. If it were possible to ascertain what the State lost because that trade was not done through its natural port, the figures would prove astounding.

I shall never forget when the members of the Commonwealth Navigation Royal Commission spent the day at my home. I was talking to a New South Wales Senator, and he said, "As far as I see, the people of Perth and Fremantle are so worried about the treatment they receive from the Commonwealth that they cannot realise that they themselves are giving the outlying parts of Western Australia far worse treatment." We have a great State, one of the finest States in the British Empire; but we shall never hold it if we do not populate it. And we must populate the State as a whole. I appeal to the Government to cease being a Swan River Government instead of a Western Australian Government, and further I appeal to Ministers that they extend to the outlying parts of Western Australia the same consideration as they in their turn would like to receive from the Commonwealth.

MR. SEWARD (Pingelly): I want to have a word or two before these Estimates are rushed through.

The Minister for Mines: Why "rushed through"?

Mr. SEWARD: Because the Government is rushing the Estimates through—rushing the whole of the business so as to close down. We are told that we have to finish this whole thing tonight.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair, and pay no regard to interjectors.

Mr. SEWARD: The Premier in the course of his remarks made one statement which I would like him to prove on some future suitable occasion. He was dealing with the finances of the State, and he stated that the profit received from the Railway Department was not as large as we thought it might be, adding that increased revenue necessarily involved increased expenditure. Of course that is not so. It might be so in an undeveloped business that was expanding, but with a developed business, or a business financed properly, there is no possible excuse for expenditure to increase in the same proportion as revenue increases. So there ought to be some critical examination of the railway accounts to ascertain the reason for this extraordinary increase, as I regard it, in expenditure.

The tables supplied to us by the Minister for Railways show that earnings increased by £421,595, while expenditure or working expenses increased by £421,593. There is, therefore, only a difference of £2 between the two increases. Looking through the various figures quoted in these tables, I find that the staff of the Railway Department at all events has not increased. The figures for the five years ranging from last year down to 1939 are—7,244, 7,133, 7,137, 7,531, and 7,711. Thus, while the increase in the number of employees in the last year was only 174, there was a decrease of 467 as compared with 1939. It follows, therefore, that the increased expenditure is not due to the railways having extra staff put on last year. Looking for some other reason for the increased expenditure, I notice that the tonnage carried by the railways was 127,060 tons less in the last financial year than in the previous financial year, and 544,000 tons less than in the year 1939. While the expenditure increased by nearly £500,000, the tonnage has decreased by half a million tons, as from the year 1939. We are told that the Railway Department is not able to earn as much revenue as it might have done because of the transfer of some stock to the Commonwealth Government. According to the table furnished to members the total carrying capacity of the railway stock this year was 115,925 tons; whereas for the previous year it was 116,073 tons, a decrease of 148 tons in the year. From 1939, however,

there is a falling off of 1,000 tons, but when we consider the big reduction of 500,000 tons in goods and stock carried there seems to be some other reason which ought to be advanced to account for the big increase in the expenditure.

I find that last year the working expenses per employee came to £414, whereas for the four previous years they were respectively £371, £349, £337, and £322. Therefore, since 1939 they have increased by practically £100 per man. In all the figures I have been able to examine in the short time this return has been at my disposal, I can find nothing to account for the extremely large increase in the working expenses. There is need for very close investigation of the position to ascertain the reason why, with an increase in revenue of £500,000, the department has only managed to make an additional contribution to profits of £2 for the whole year's working. There is something radically wrong. I was pleased to note the Minister gave attention to a matter I have brought forward on more than one occasion. Better provision has been made for refreshments at Chidlow's. A new refreshment stall has been erected, and this should give people a better opportunity to get refreshments at that station.

Mr. Sampson: And in comfort.

Mr. SEWARD: No, not comfort! However, it is a big improvement on the previous arrangement. The Minister should next turn his attention to Spencer's Brook station, where the refreshment room is most primitive. It is situated at the end of the station and passengers have to run down to it in the rain in order to get a cup of tea. Incidentally, the Minister might endeavour to give effect to the recommendation made by the Royal Commission which investigated railway matters over 20 years ago. That Commission strongly recommended the lengthening of the platform at Spencer's Brook. People at present have to jump from the train in the dark into trenches. That is a most dangerous practice and it is time the platform was made long enough to accommodate the trains. I hope consideration will be given to that matter.

I was travelling home the other night in a fairly crowded train. When we reached Midland Junction, there were some 25 to 30 soldiers waiting to join the train. When they boarded it they looked like Christmas

trees. I have never before seen our soldiers wandering about the country with full kits, including rifles. One of these men had a complete wireless cabinet. They had to board the train where they could. Why cannot the military authorities arrange to have a coach ready at Midland Junction to accommodate these men so that they can travel in some degree of comfort, instead of wandering up and down the full length of the train looking for a vacancy and getting in wherever possible? It would have been better had one of the compartments been locked at Perth so as to be available for them when the train reached Midland Junction. Surely that is not too much to ask; in fact, it is due to all passengers, not only soldiers.

With regard to that particular journey, I warn the Government that if some improvement is not made we shall have a very big accident on the hill approaching Chidlow's. We left Perth on time, at about 4 o'clock last Friday afternoon and reached Midland Junction at 4.30. We left for Chidlow's and when we arrived at a point about half-a-mile beyond the tunnel the train came to a stop. On looking out, we found the second division, which had left about a quarter of an hour before us, about 100 yards ahead, also stopped on the hill. I have never before seen trains approaching within 50 or 100 yards of each other. I always understood that there must be a section between one train and another. Certainly there was a signal box between one train and the other. The train to Northam was also trying to proceed, with the result, as the member for Albany pointed out, that instead of arriving at Chidlow's at 5.30, we only reached it at 7.15. There were at least 10 stops between the tunnel and Chidlow's as we waited for trains to proceed. It only required one of the engines to fail and slip back and there would have been a first-class smash.

The Premier: No. The vacuum brake will not let the engine go backwards. It is only very occasionally that the brake does not work.

Mr. SEWARD: What about the accident in the tunnel?

The Premier: It did happen once.

Mr. SEWARD: It is no use saying these accidents will not happen. There were three heavily loaded passenger trains on the line. Our engines are being loaded beyond

their capacity. Years ago I was on a train that left Spencer's Brook an hour late, yet it arrived in Perth on time. The driver experienced no difficulty in making up the time. Nowadays, if a train is even five minutes late in leaving Narrogin, the driver cannot make up that time on the run to Perth. I am convinced that it is because the engines are overloaded.

Mr. Styants: They are in poor condition and have been so for years.

Mr. SEWARD: They are not efficient. However, it is not fair to the travelling public and I warn the Government that if something is not done to remedy the matter we shall have a first-class railway smash.

The Premier: You can rest assured that the trains will not run backwards. They do not do that.

Mr. SEWARD: There were three heavily loaded trains between the tunnel and Stoneville. They were very close together and it does not take much to cause an accident.

The Premier: Two people would have to become unconscious.

Mr. SEWARD: I wish also to deal with the treatment meted out by the department to consignments. I have had a series of complaints. I instanced one earlier, the case of a man whose property was burnt out last year and who got no compensation. Two other cases were submitted to me recently. Two machines—combines—were consigned to Kondinin. The machines cost not less than £100 each and both arrived at their destination damaged. Two hubs were broken and the wheels bent. I reported the matter to the department and received a reply that, when the machines were loaded, they were roped down at the sides and ends, but somebody had removed the ropes, presumably a chaffcutter. I do not know how the railways arrived at that conclusion. However, the owners of the machines had not the slightest redress. It is no joke to a farmer to purchase so expensive a machine and then have it delivered to him in a damaged condition. The whole machine was practically out of gear because it works from the wheel, and the farmer had no appliances to repair the damage. He surely is entitled to better treatment than that. Also, a truck of pigs was sent from that town in March last. When the truck reached Midland, six of the pigs were dead.

That must have been due to gross carelessness and I point out that people concerned in these losses have no redress. They are told, "We are sorry," and that is the end of it. It is not fair. I have repeatedly asked that one man should travel on these stock trains, say from Narrogin or one of the big junctions where the trains begin to grow to a fair size, and it should be his job to look after the stock and see that they are at least on their feet. It is not fair to ask the guards to do this work because, from what I have seen of them, they have quite sufficient to do. A man should be specially engaged to look after stock and see that they arrive in a proper condition. I was interested in the speech of the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe the other evening. I am always interested to hear him speak but I was surprised to hear him advocate unification. I was more amused than surprised when he stated that the campaign against unification was being started by big business. I have nothing to do with big business.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: It is probably being started by the National Union.

Mr. SEWARD: I have no connection with the National Union, either! I might not have mentioned this matter had not the hon. member referred to it. I mention it now because I do not think we should delay one minute in commencing a big campaign in this State to resist the proposed referendum which the Commonwealth Government has under consideration.

Mr. Kelly: It would meet with the same fate as our protest against daylight saving.

Mr. SEWARD: We can start a campaign—and it is high time we did—to warn the electors of what is before them if they are so foolish as to permit the referendum to go through. I make this qualification: It will be all right provided the proposals when submitted do not go beyond those in the Commonwealth Powers Bill as passed by this Assembly last year.

The Minister for Works: You are going to mix things a bit!

Mr. SEWARD: No, I am going to keep them pretty straight. The member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe referred to the necessity of giving powers to the Commonwealth Government to carry out post-war reconstruction. As was emphasised by speakers in this House earlier in the year, all parties

are agreed that the Commonwealth Government should have those powers and the powers were provided for in the Bill that we passed. If the Commonwealth Government seeks any additional powers I hope a movement will be launched very quickly in this State in opposition to the proposal. I was pleased to hear that the Premier of South Australia had made a broadcast about the matter. I hope a similar movement will be organised here to instruct the people in what is before them if they permit a referendum to be carried giving to the Commonwealth Government more powers than it requires to carry out post-war work. I was interested to hear a certain remark of the Premier last night. I was not able to get it in detail but I assure him I will get it and give it the State-wide publicity it deserves. I would be sorry if we did not make a proper note of it. He stated that he did not mind what powers or finance the Commonwealth Government had to carry out social services so long as the present Government was in office. I will give that statement all the publicity I can.

The Premier: You had better get it right. Do not quote it until you get it right.

Mr. SEWARD: Is what I have said wrong?

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. SEWARD: Then I stand corrected but I think the Premier said he would be satisfied for the Commonwealth Government to carry out social services so long as it was the present Government. His statement was quite near enough to that for any difference not to matter. I will give an instance of how the Commonwealth Government is carrying out social services at present. Perhaps one case is better than a lot of opinions. There is a native woman in Pingelly who applied for the maternity bonus and was refused on the ground that she was more than a half-blood. This woman has been living in Pingelly for 20 years. Her husband is a returned soldier from the last war. They reside in the town and have a fairly large family who are being educated at the school. I saw the Commissioner of Pensions about this matter and he could do nothing. He said the position was governed by the Act. I saw the Commissioner of Native Affairs and he could do nothing, so I wrote to the Federal Minister for Social Services and gave him

particulars of the case. I pointed out that this woman could get the bonus if she obtained exemption from the provisions of the Native Administration Act. But she did not want that exemption. I pointed out to Mr. Holloway that if natives are given exemption they have the right to purchase liquor, which might not be desirable. Furthermore, if this woman obtained exemption she would be precluded from associating with her relatives. Thus, if her daughter married a native she would not be able to visit her and her husband. I said that was not desirable. I pointed out that we had in this State an efficient Department of Native Affairs which could probably give all the details about every native in Western Australia.

I suggested that instead of having a hard and fast rule that anybody over half-blood could not get the bonus but anybody under half-blood could do so, the matter should be left to the discretion of the Minister for Native Affairs in this State. If the Minister recommended that a native should receive the bonus, it should be paid; otherwise it should be withheld. In his reply Mr. Holloway stated that that could not be done, and that unless this woman obtained exemption from the Act she could not receive the bonus. I point out that she is living under reasonably good conditions in a house in the town but is not eligible for this bonus. If she were a half-blood or less and were living in a bag hut on some reserve she would be eligible. It is ridiculous to have a hard and fast rule like that. This correspondence has been going on since April, and I am still trying to get the Minister to make an alteration and to leave the matter to the discretion of the Department of Native Affairs.

Mr. Watts: What about the medical emergency services, too?

Mr. SEWARD: I am giving this as an illustration of the treatment we shall get from Canberra if we give the Commonwealth Government power to legislate for a State like this. Of course, I do not suppose the Minister for Social Services (Mr. Holloway) has seen half a dozen natives.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You have given the Federal authorities the power of the purse.

Mr. SEWARD: No. They took it.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: It was given to them by referendum.

Mr. SEWARD: I want to see that they do not get any additional powers in the future. I could continue instancing these things. There is the rationing of butter. The Commonwealth Government would not take any suggestions about that. The scheme had to be applied by rule of thumb everywhere, with the result that the production of farm butter in this State was reduced by 80 per cent. and will probably be wiped out altogether. Then we had the illustration of the motor tyre business last night. A little while ago I had occasion to ask the Premier what was the position of prisoners of war. Four or five months ago an officer of the Manpower Department went to the Great Southern district and canvassed the farmers for about six weeks. He told the farmers what a great scheme this was and informed me he had practically placed all the men. The farmers were making preparations in anticipation of their coming down when a notice appeared in "The West Australian" to say that they would not be coming. We got in touch with the Premier and were told that they could not be got to Australia, because the shipping difficulties between India where these men were, and Australia, prevented them being brought here. When one has dealings with a Commonwealth department one is always a bit sceptical. For that reason I wrote to Melbourne to find out what was the position there. I thought it possible that these prisoners of war had been retained in the Eastern States instead of being sent on here. I received this letter in reply—

I acknowledge your letter of the 31st ultimo regarding the employment of prisoners of war on rural work in Victoria. The Rural Officer, State Manpower Office, Melbourne, has advised me that you would be able to obtain the fullest particulars regarding the employment of prisoners of war in all States from the Deputy Director General of Manpower in Perth. However, I have been advised briefly that prisoners of war are only employed in this State on rural work of the highest priority and that limited numbers are made available to individual farms. A control centre is established under military supervision in certain localities and prisoners of war are made available to farms from this centre. I am given to understand that they are visited at the farms periodically by the Army authorities.

So, it was not due to shipping difficulties between India and Australia that prevented these men from coming to this State. I

venture to say that the Eastern States found this scheme would be very useful to them, with the result that instead of sending the men here they kept them over there.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: They were already there.

Mr. SEWARD: I thought they were. That is just another instance of how we are going to fare in this State if we pass additional powers to the Commonwealth.

The Minister for Mines: They have been on the Trans-Australian line for a long time.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If we can protect ourselves now, why do we not do it?

Mr. SEWARD: We cannot.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you cannot do it, what are you moaning about?

Mr. SEWARD: I have made myself clear. The Commonwealth Government is in control and it does not care what happens to Western Australia.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you cannot get the powers back again, transfer them all.

Mr. SEWARD: That is the delightfully casual way by which the Government shelves its responsibilities. The Government is elected to administer the State and it simply says, "Pass the responsibility on to Canberra." That is not my idea. During the course of his advocacy of unification the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe gave us a quotation from Alexander Hamilton. When that was written America was founding the Constitution of the United States. I will give the hon. member another statement—one made years after the Constitution had been operating.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: By Daniel Webster?

Mr. SEWARD: No, by President Calvin Coolidge, in 1926.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: The great champion of the Southern States.

Mr. SEWARD: I would leave out the word "southern" and say the great champion of the States. This statement is taken from "Australia's Changing Constitution" by E. H. Drummond, M.L.A., of New South Wales. In reply to a deputation asking for additional powers for the Central Government, President Coolidge said—

No method of procedure has ever been devised by which liberty could be divorced from self-government. No plan of centralisation has ever been adopted which did not result in bureaucracy, tyranny, inflexibility, reaction and decline. Of all forms of government those

administered by bureaux are least satisfactory to an enlightened and progressive people. Being irresponsible they become autocratic, and being autocratic they resist all development. Unless bureaucracy is constantly resisted it breaks down representative government, and overwhelms democracy. It is the one element in our institutions that sets up the pretence of having authority over everybody and being responsible to nobody. While we ought to glory in the Union and remember that it is the source from which the States derive their chief title to fame, we must also recognise that the national government is not and cannot be adjusted to the needs of the local government. It is too far away to be responsible to local needs; it is too inaccessible to be responsive to local conditions. The States should not be induced by coercion or by favour to surrender the management of their own affairs. The Federal Government ought to resist the tendency to be loaded up with duties which the States should perform. It does not follow that because something should be done the National Government should do it.

That is a very weighty statement and one that could be made by Australian statesmen in reply to a deputation seeking greater powers for the Commonwealth Government. Those remarks contain nothing to localise them in America. Possibly Alexander Hamilton might have been able to alter his opinion had he had experience of the working of the American Constitution, as President Coolidge had in 1926.

Mr. Patrick: The States had increased in number from 13 to 48.

Mr. SEWARD: That is so. That was because they had, to a large extent, the management of their own affairs.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: After 28 years experience in Australia we handed over the control of our finances to the Commonwealth Government by the vote of the people.

Mr. SEWARD: If the hon. member did, I did not. I have no objection to his assuming that responsibility. The present President of the United States has said that when the war is over any powers temporarily surrendered by the States will be returned to them.

Mr. F. C. L. Smith: You know what they did to him over his new deal.

Mr. SEWARD: That is very different from the attitude adopted by our Federal politicians who, after having inveigled us into this uniform taxation scheme as a temporary measure, immediately turned round and said it would be permanent. We

are indebted to the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe for mentioning this matter of unification because it has warned us of the likelihood of its being brought into effect in the near future. As a result, we realise the necessity for taking action to prevent that being achieved.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How are you going to prevent it?

Mr. SEWARD: I have been endeavouring to explain to the hon. member. I do not want to say much more, but I would like to mention one other matter which I think the Government would be well advised to look into. I have noticed that in some of the city buildings the large wooden structures—pillars—erected as air-raid precautions, are being removed. It might be possible to take similar action in connection with some of our departmental buildings. The other day I was in the Titles Office and I said to the clerk, "You must be driven nearly mad trying to dodge these posts every time you move." There is another aspect I wish to bring before the notice of the Government. There is an air-raid shelter outside the Government offices on a level with the windows. That shelter is mostly used as a latrine.

The Minister for Mines: Where is that?

Mr. SEWARD: In Cathedral-avenue. The stench that blows in through the windows to the offices is simply shocking. If the air-raid shelter cannot be kept clean, it should be removed. I went to the Agricultural Bank one day and found that the officer had swilled out the shelter there with phenyle in order to counteract the stench that pervaded the structure. The only other matter I shall comment on is that recently I noticed in the Press that some newspaper boys had been prosecuted and fined on a couple of occasions for running out on to the streets to the danger of the oncoming traffic, in order to hail taxi-cabs for servicemen. Of course, small boys like that have no votes to cast, so we can get down on them and fine them. The pity of it is that the Government does not do something about taxi-drivers. We must remember that last March a meeting was called and the taxi-drivers were told they would all be registered, that they could be hired in future through only one agency, that they could not be picked up indiscriminately, and so forth—but that was the end of it. Nothing at all was done. I think the Government should



certainly take action against the taxi-drivers. If any one of us wishes to secure a car, we can blow our teeth out, whereas the boys can get one in a moment for the servicemen. Let us deal with the real offenders and do not wreak our vengeance on the small boys in the streets!

**MR. PERKINS (York):** I want to take this opportunity to tell the Committee something about the position that is developing in connection with our meat supplies. A good deal of publicity has been given to the matter in the Press and, in last night's newspaper, a report was published indicating the likelihood of a system of rationing being introduced under which people would be allowed 2 lbs. per head per week, with the use of coupons. Many contradictory statements have been made about the matter, but obviously the situation is being discussed by the powers-that-be in the Eastern States. It is quite apparent that some further restriction is contemplated in addition to the 15 per cent. cut that has been made in the meat supply available to the wholesale trade and retail butchers. That scheme did not appear to work well, according to statements in the Press, and some drastic system of rationing is likely to be imposed. I do not believe it is in the interests of anyone to ration mutton in this State for at least a considerable time to come.

The position in Western Australia is entirely different from that obtaining in the other States. As members are aware, the season in the Eastern States has been very indifferent, and in some places almost drought conditions have prevailed. The effect has been to lessen the supplies of fat stock of all kinds for the meat market over there. The position regarding pig-meats and beef has been acute for some time, but now fat sheep are also very short over there. The situation has developed to the stage where it has been found most difficult to fulfil contractual obligations to the United Kingdom and to make the provision necessary to meet the demands of the Armed Forces. That being so, it is reasonable to ask people in that part of Australia to forgo the fairly liberal ration of meat that they have always enjoyed in order that those contractual obligations to Great Britain may be maintained and that an adequate supply for the Fighting Forces may be available. The position in Western Aus-

tralia is entirely different. We have had an exceptionally good year and the supply of fat sheep here is probably greater than ever before in the history of the State.

**Mr. Patrick:** If they ration mutton here, there will be a glut.

**Mr. PERKINS:** The position could develop very seriously for our producers, and we may have the spectacle of so many fat sheep being in the country areas that the growers will not know what to do with them. Difficulty will be experienced in carrying them on the farms, and yet it is suggested by the Federal authorities that mutton will be rationed to the consuming public. Apparently the reason for that is to make the administration uniform throughout the whole of Australia. I can think of no other reason in explanation of the imposition of such a restriction in Western Australia at this juncture. It merely serves to provide another instance of what the member for Pingelly has just stressed, namely, the impossibility of administering the affairs of Western Australia from so far away as Canberra. It is a striking instance of the muddling that is inevitable if our affairs are to be administered from such a distance. The provision regarding beef and pig-meats here is admittedly difficult, although supplies are sufficient to meet the whole of the local demand. I understand that whatever surplus could be obtained through the rationing of those meats would be used by the Commonwealth Government not only to meet the requirements of the men in the Fighting Forces but also to assist in fulfilling Australia's obligation to Great Britain.

With respect to mutton and lamb, if any restriction is placed upon supplies here, the Commonwealth Government will find it impossible to make any use of the surplus that will become available for the simple reason that there is no provision for killing and freezing the meat and despatching it to the point of consumption. At the present time, the W.A. Freezing Works are occupied entirely in handling spring lambs, and I understand the works are about a week behind in their schedule. We have not yet reached the peak of the lamb-killing season. Appeals have been made for more labour at the works. I understand there were arrangements to get another chain operating at the meat export works.

and arrangements were made to get men released from the Forces, but the military heads got to hear of the matter and the men were sent away on army work. The extra men whose services have been obtained are unskilled, and so the position has not improved as it would have done if additional skilled men had been obtainable. Even now I understand that the full complement of men is not working and that the killing of spring lambs is likely to be delayed with inevitable loss to the growers.

Most members are aware that producers cannot carry lambs much beyond their normal marketing time. In most agricultural districts, the grasses run to seed and the seed gets into the wool and penetrates the flesh, rendering the carcasses unsuitable for freezing. When carcasses are thus affected, they have to be sold as rejects. So the position as regards lambs is serious enough. In the consumption of mutton there has been a 15 per cent. cut. The prices at Midland Junction, which are an indication of the supplies offering, have been falling for some time. The price might rise this week, but that will be only a weekly fluctuation. The indications are that there are large numbers of mutton sheep available for killing. In the country districts there are huge numbers that could be sent forward if the price was satisfactory and the growers were assured that use could be made of them. At this time of year it is usual to have a considerable surplus of fat wethers, without there being a 15 per cent. cut in the consumption. Now the cut has been introduced, however, the position is likely to be threatened.

What is the use of making a 15 per cent. cut in consumption if no provision is made to handle the surplus stock—kill it, put it into the freezing works and send it to Britain to meet the needs of people there? No use can be made of it. The works are fully occupied in killing lambs. In this they are a week behind, and they are likely to fall back still further. So the chance of any great number of fat wethers being used is very remote indeed. In addition to wethers, there is a considerable number of fat ewes rather on the aged side that could be used but, with the killing works fully occupied in dealing with lambs, it is impossible to treat them. Unless provision is made for as many of these sheep as possible to

go into consumption, the fat stock position next year will be aggravated.

From inquiries I have made from stock agents, I understand that the number of sheep in this State at present is far too great to be carried safely through next autumn. The only way in which sheep numbers can be lessened is by a percentage being killed for meat and thus got rid of. The Commonwealth Controller of Meat Supplies is doing his best to rectify the matter. Still, as I have pointed out, a cut in the consumption of meat has been introduced and that will aggravate the position. It will also be further aggravated by the fact that the fodder supplies likely to be available next autumn will be much reduced. I raised this matter on the Address-in-reply debate, and suggested it was the duty of the Minister for Agriculture to make urgent representations to the Federal authorities to have men made available for the conservation of fodder this spring. I do not know whether any action has been taken. From statements made in the Press, it appears likely that nothing will be done. Appeals have been made to workers on holiday to engage in this labour of fodder conservation. Only a limited amount of labour has come from this source. Much of it would not be suitable for this type of work, which is of an arduous nature. I believe that my suggestion made on the Address-in-reply debate to get certain military units not actively engaged in military work to camp in the agricultural areas and help farmers out with this work would be a practical way of tackling the problem.

Mr. McDonald: The men would welcome the change, too.

Mr. PERKINS: I have spoken to quite a number of these men. They have completed their training and at present are doing very little. When I asked them what they thought of the idea, they said they would grasp it with both hands and would be only too pleased to feel that they were doing something to assist in the production of foodstuffs. Unless we have reserves of fodder to safeguard the position in autumn, it is quite possible that instead of having a normal supply of fat stock next autumn and early winter, the reverse might be the case. If we had a smaller number of stock with the same fodder reserves, it would be possible for growers to maintain their stock in good condition, but with a greater number

of stock and a smaller fodder reserve to spread over that greater number, the stock is less likely to be maintained in good condition.

From the experience of growers in previous years and with the Prices Commissioner stepping in and limiting the maximum price growers may obtain in the late autumn and early winter markets, there is a much smaller percentage than there used to be for growers to incur the extra expense of carrying fat stock over the autumn months and marketing it in the period when fat stock normally is in short supply. So, taking all in all, it is possible that a very serious position may develop this year regarding the supply of fat stock if the season is either late in opening or happens to be a dry one. The State Government should inform the Federal authorities what the Western Australian position really is, because I firmly believe that they cannot know it. Surely no rational man would impose a 15 per cent. cut in the meat consumption of Western Australia if he knew that we had a great number of surplus sheep here which the growers simply did not know what to do with. There is no opportunity to market them; there is no provision to kill and freeze them and hold them for any future short-supply period. They are simply a drag on the market at the present time, and store prices are falling week by week—a strong indication that the position is as I have stated. I think the Government should take some action to remedy the position.

**MR. SHEARN** (Maylands): As the Premier has gone around the Chamber indicating to members that he has no desire to stifle discussion but has a desire that members should be as concise as possible, I propose to fall in with the hon. gentleman's wish. The Premier, it may be said, has had his attention on the prospects of the election rather than on the demands of the State. That we can understand, as also that the present discussion does not have the same effect on the situation as otherwise would be the case. In debating the subject, we have before us the fact that some contend that the elections have been brought on with undue haste. I feel, however, that on mature consideration members will realise that, after elections have been postponed for about two years, there is nothing

extraordinary in bringing on an election so quickly as this. So far as the public are concerned, I am certain that they have been watching and that they will be able to draw their own conclusions as to errors of commission or omission by the Government, and so be able to judge the policies introduced to them by any of the three Parties.

One feature to be noted with gratification is the almost complete absence from this Chamber, at any rate, of undue intrusions of Party politics. I hope that experience will continue into the first peace years. I realise that Party politics and democracy are parts of the structure of government, but the proportions are a matter of degree; and I feel that on both the Government side and this side there has been a genuine attempt at co-operation. Therefore I may express the hope—before passing from this subject—that some unfortunate incidents that were reported as having occurred at a recent Federal election meeting will not characterise the event we are about to face, but that we shall be able to go to the public placing facts, and facts alone, before them, leaving them as the judges rightly to say whether the present Government should be returned to office or whether there should be a change.

Like previous speakers I wish to offer my congratulations to the member for East Perth, and wholeheartedly to associate myself with the sentiments he has expressed in relation to the subject of education. I also desire to express my appreciation of the very explicit way in which the Treasurer presented his Budget. I feel that the virtual control which the Loan Council exercises is due in a large measure to recommendations made from time to time by the Commonwealth Grants Commission; and that the effect has been more or less to reduce the Budget Speech to a departmental review. In that connection I wonder what exactly will be the ultimate result.

It appears to me that a suggestion of the Minister for Works might receive consideration as regards our State and Federal financial relationship. I am wondering whether, in view of the spirit that has animated this Chamber, it might not be quite a desirable and reasonable idea to try out the principle of the Premier and his Ministers seeking the co-operation of representatives on this side of the Chamber who might be thought to have some special ability

to go into the whole matter. After all, as the member for Claremont mentioned here recently, private members get but little opportunity to play any important part. We realise that the Government must take the major responsibility, but I do not think the Premier will dispute the fact that some practical use should be made of private members possessing special qualifications. I am wondering whether it would be possible to explore the possibilities of setting up a Parliamentary Committee for the purpose of bringing forward recommendations, which in due turn, and in a proper manner, could, after consideration here, be submitted to the appropriate Commonwealth department.

Some mention has been made this evening of the possible effects of unification. I do not think we could have a more classical example of what our position might be under unification than the notification appearing in today's newspapers that daylight saving, despite the fact that this House and another place are unanimous in their opposition to it, is to be imposed on Western Australia. We find that that course has been determined upon. This shows either that there is a total disregard by the Commonwealth Government of Western Australian needs and desires, or that there is in Canberra a total lack of knowledge of Western Australian conditions. I hope the Premier and his supporters will make another effort to see whether some influence cannot be brought to bear on the Prime Minister and those associated with him to ensure that Western Australia shall not suffer this undoubted injustice.

Mr. McDonald: Let us send the Commonwealth Government an ultimatum!

Mr. SHEARN: The Premier's speech made reference to the flax and other industries that have been established in Western Australia. I am sure we all appreciate that in a State such as Western Australia—where unfortunately at the outbreak of war we had a smaller number of industrial activities than the Eastern States—numbers of war contracts must be lost to Eastern States manufacturers. The fact of this not being an industrialised community meant that we had a goodly number of untrained or but partially trained personnel. A result of that is that orders are going in a higher percentage to the Eastern States, and, further, we shall have a greater number to be

repatriated. Therefore every possible avenue should be explored to see that we can repatriate these men and women.

Reference was made by the Premier to the work on the Perth Public Hospital. In that connection I would like the Premier or the Minister concerned to ask the hospital committee whether there is any possibility of making some plan for the purpose of amending the state of affairs resulting from lack of accommodation for mothers who are about to be confined. Many men and women have come to me pointing out the acuteness of the position. I understand hospitals are finding it impossible now even to provide temporary accommodation. I wonder whether the Minister for Health or the Premier has given consideration to the matter and whether there is a possibility of obtaining an alleviation of this distressing state of affairs. I desire to express my appreciation of the efforts made by the Forests Department to overcome the firewood shortage early this year. Had it not been for the efforts made by the department, I do not know what would have happened in my district.

The Premier: It was not necessary to ration firewood in this State, either.

Mr. SHEARN: No. We have already this session dealt with the question of housing accommodation. Notwithstanding that, has the Premier considered any proposals to provide accommodation for the large number of people who are now virtually walking the streets unable to find even temporary accommodation? I believe the Commonwealth Government has been investigating the matter and I should be glad if the Premier would let the Committee know whether he has received any communication from that Government. When replying, he might inform us whether he has any information to give the Committee on this point. I appreciate what has been done by the Department of Industrial Development in the many activities which it has undertaken. It is yet too early to judge of their ultimate success; an honest attempt has been made, however, to establish industries in the State. Without these industries it will not be possible for the State to have a balanced economy. There are other matters to which I would like to refer but I shall conclude by saying that, whatever may be the result of the forthcoming election, I hope when Parlia-

ment does reassemble, the same spirit of co-operation will be manifested as has prevailed in this Chamber tonight.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Tuesday, 28th September, 1943.*

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

### QUESTION—IRRIGATION.

*As to Wellington Area Rating.*

Hon. L. CRAIG asked the Chief Secretary.

(i) Is it a fact that the basis of rating for irrigation purposes in the Wellington irrigation area has been changed from one-third of the irrigable area of a property to one-third of the whole property if that one-third is irrigable?

(ii) If so, why, and under what authority?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied—

(i) Yes. The rating has been altered periodically as follows:—First year—No rating. Second, third, fourth, and fifth years—One-third of irrigable area with a maximum of 33 acres. Sixth year—One-third of irrigable area with a maximum of 40 acres. Seventh year—One-third of irrigable area with a maximum of 45 acres. Eighth year (1940-41)—One-third of irrigable area with a maximum of 50 acres. 1941-42 onwards—Rate of 1940-41 increased by 10 acres or 10 per cent. of one-third of the holding, whichever is the greater, with a maximum of

one-third of the holding if the one-third is irrigable.

(ii) To obtain a revenue return somewhat more appropriate to the benefits conferred on irrigationists and to bring the district into conformity with Harvey District No. 2 and proposed Harvey extension. In the Waroona District the rating is 1 in 3½ acres because of the limited quantity of water available. The Rights in Water and Irrigation Act, 1914-1941, empowers the Minister to rate all irrigable land within an irrigation district.

### MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST.

*To Disallow Bagged-Wheat Charges Regulation.*

Debate resumed from the 21st September on the following motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter:—

That new Regulation No. 148 made under the Fremantle Harbour Trust Act, 1902, as published in the "Government Gazette" on the 4th June, 1943, and laid on the Table of the House on the 10th August, 1943, be and is hereby disallowed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [4.37]: In moving this motion for the disallowance of a regulation covering handling charges for bagged-wheat at Fremantle the hon. member spent very little time on the actual facts of the case. He certainly outlined many of the difficulties of the wheatgrowers and, on the wrong argument that the wheatgrowers should not have to meet any increased charges, asked this House to disallow the regulation. One would have thought the hon. member would have inquired as to the reasons for the increase in the charge made by the Fremantle Harbour Trust for the handling of bagged-wheat. I want members to understand that these are handling charges. They are not the ordinary charges of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. They represent money which has to be paid out by the Trust for labour to handle the bagged-wheat. Consequently there is a big difference between charges of this kind and harbour dues, tonnage rates and so on. The handling of bagged-wheat has always been subject to a special charge. The first rate was fixed in 1912 at which period all the wheat exported from Fremantle was despatched in bags. Obviously there was no bulkhandling system in operation then.