

prices remain firm, we may see a return of our former prosperity. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Coverley) made reference to the aerial medical service in the North. In doing so he touched a subject that suits me. The aerial medical service has proved a wonderful boon to the people of the North. It has given them a different outlook altogether. Coupled with the installation of pedal sets, the medical service has given people living off the beaten track a feeling of security, and brought them into contact with a circle of friends whom they have never met. They can sit at night talking about things of mutual interest to them. The wireless service is a wonderful boon, and I am indeed thankful that the Government have seen their way to make a grant for its upkeep. I hope that grant will be continued. One cannot speak too highly of the flying doctor and the efficient wireless staff.

The Minister for Health: Don't you think the nationalisation of the rest of the medical profession in the North is coming too?

Mr. WELSH: A large improvement in that direction has taken place lately. The people in my electorate and further North are perfectly well satisfied. I wish to mention that the wireless staff are always ready and willing to help the man outback in every way possible so as to make life there much easier. I feel sure that whatever State assistance can be given to this service will be highly appreciated and fully justified. The member for Kimberley also referred to the matter of road grants. The people in the North are very grateful to the Government for the assistance they have rendered in that direction. The expenditure of that money was urgently required in the North. I have frequently pointed out that in the Far North our roads are really roads in name only, and it would require the expenditure of a large sum of money to carry out the thorough construction of them. In fact, it would take quite a lot of money to put them in anything like a condition of repair. I am sure that whatever money the Government make available for the work, the sum represents the most they can provide with the funds available to them, and I hope that the amount of the grant will be increased later on. The money that has been made available will go far towards providing the North with roads, and I hope

that better things will be apparent in the future.

On motion by Hon. P. D. Ferguson, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.52 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 19th August, 1937.*

	Page
Question: Mining diseases and State Insurance .....	172
Motions: President's gallery, admission of ladies .....	173
Native Administration Act, to disallow regulations .....	173
Address-in-reply, sixth day .....	179

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

### QUESTION—MINING DISEASES AND STATE INSURANCE.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the amount of premiums collected by the State Insurance Office for the year ended 30th June, 1937, from the goldmining industry for insurance against liability to pay compensation for mining diseases under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act? 2, What were the total payments made under the Workers' Compensation Act for the year ended 30th June, 1937, as compensation to sufferers from mining diseases?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, £122,488 5s. 3d. 2, Actual payments, £27,341 17s. 5d. In addition, there was an amount of £25,000 paid to the Treasury in respect of payments previously made under the Miners' Phthisis Act and which could have been claimed under the Third Schedule of the Workers' Compensation Act. These figures do not show the amount outstanding in regard to claims already admitted, the

liability for which is estimated at about £66,000. In addition, the liability on account of claims which are expected during the next twelve months but of which no notification has been received, is estimated at £56,250.

### MOTION—PRESIDENT'S GALLERY.

#### *Admission of Ladies.*

The PRESIDENT: A notice of motion appears as the first item on the Notice Paper in the name of the Hon. H. V. Piesse. It was placed there as it was assumed it would be a formal matter. Under Standing Order 104 a motion for the disallowance of regulations must take precedence over Government and private business. If Mr. Piesse's motion is treated as formal, which I assume will be done, it can be dealt with now. If not, the motion for the disallowance of the regulations relating to the Native Medical Fund will be dealt with first.

**HON. H. V. PIESSE** (South-East)

[4.36]: I formally move—

That in the future ladies be granted admittance to the President's gallery.

Question put and passed.

### MOTION—NATIVE ADMINISTRATION ACT.

#### *To Disallow Regulations.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Hon. G. W. Miles:

That the Regulations (Nos. 1 to 9 inclusive) relating to the Natives' Medical Fund made under the Native Administration Act, 1905-1936, as published in the "Government Gazette" on 2nd July, 1937, and laid on the Table of the House on 10th August, 1937, be and are hereby disallowed.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.37]: Mr. Miles has raised objections to these regulations. Summarised, his main objections are to (a) the contribution of £1 to be paid by employers; (b) the use to which the fund is to be put; (c) the onus upon the employer in regard to sending sick natives in for treatment. To begin with I propose to deal with the first objection because it is the most important aspect of the matter. It has to be borne in mind that three classes of natives are to receive benefits under the fund, namely (1) working natives; (2) dependants of work-

ing natives; (3) indigents. With one or two exceptions, where natives themselves contribute to the fund, and they are very few in number, the employer is required to pay in respect to the number of natives covered by his permit only, though the dependants and indigents would receive equal benefits. If an employer takes out a general permit by which he is authorised to employ ten or 20, or 30 natives, whatever might be the number his permit gives him permission to employ, that is the number on which he will be expected to pay the contribution of £1 per year. At the same time, the dependants of those natives who are employed, and who are living on the same station, for argument's sake, and also the indigents who are living on the property of that employer, would receive the same benefits as those covered by the permit, and in respect of which the employer would have to pay £1 per annum. I would point out that this medical fund, so far as Western Australia is concerned, is something new. We have very little to guide us as to what the expenses are likely to be in the course of 12 months, except that our records do show that in the past considerable sums of money have been spent in hospital and medical expenses, and such-like, on behalf of natives who have been injured, or who have suffered illness while in the service of their employers. In many cases, of course, employers have paid the whole of the expenses, while in others it has been necessary for the department to pay considerable sums from time to time on behalf of natives who have received injury while in employment. Quite a lot of time was spent by the department in endeavouring to arrive at what would be a fair contribution per annum under this scheme. In the course of inquiries we found that there were other medical funds in operation in Western Australia dealing, of course, with white people, which provided for certain annual contributions in return for certain benefits. I propose to give the House the benefit of the information I have in regard to these funds. First I will deal with the Railway and Tramway Hospital Fund of Western Australia. The contribution to that fund is 7s. 6d. per member per annum, and the benefits granted are maintenance in hospital at a favourable rate up to 61 days only, and nothing else. In connection with the Commonwealth Railway Medical and Provident Fund, the contribution is £4 6s. 8d.

per member per annum, the Commonwealth Railway Commissioner also paying 25 per cent. of the expenditure, excluding sick allowance. The benefits granted are practically the same as under the Natives' Medical Fund for members and their families. Members will notice that the contribution is £4 6s. 8d. per annum, whereas the contribution we are asking in regard to the Natives' Medical Fund is only £1. The contribution to the Boulder United Societies Medical Institute is as follows:—males 36s. per annum, females 24s. per annum, juveniles 8s. per annum. The benefits granted are:—supply of medicines, medical advice and attendance to members, their wives and children, but no sick pay or hospital maintenance. There again I would point out that the contribution is 36s. per annum for male members as against £1 per annum necessary in respect of the Natives' Medical Fund. With regard to the United Friendly Societies' Voluntary Hospital Fund, the contribution is 10s. 6d. per member per annum. The benefits granted are practically the same as in the case of the Railway and Tramway Hospital Fund, but no member can be over 45 years of age. It will be seen, therefore, that the only fund which provides the same benefits as the Natives' Medical Fund is No. 2, where the contribution is very much greater than in the case of the Natives' Medical Fund, while the others do not concede the benefits provided by our fund. Under the Natives' Medical Fund provision is made for hospitalisation, medical and surgical fees, outdoor treatment, X-ray fees, anaesthetic fees, artificial limbs, and after-maintenance, which, in many cases, will mean permanent maintenance. Often the department have had to take in hand natives who have suffered injury while in the employ of an employer, or who have been stricken with illness of a serious kind, and it has not been a question of looking after them for a week or two or a month or two. We have had to look after them so long as they lived; we have had to transfer them to our own institutions, not once but many times. Looking for a moment at the balance sheets of the two societies to which I have referred, the W.A. Railways and Tramways Fund has 5,971 members, and the total contributions equalled £2,239 at 7s. 6d. per member, while claims amounted to £1,867, being 7.54s. per member. The United Friendly Societies had 3,566 members at 10s. 6d., equal to £1,869, and the claims amounted to £1,597, equiva-

lent to 8s. 11d. per member. As I have pointed out, the benefits obtained from those particular societies are very small indeed. We do not know what our claims will amount to, but it is questionable whether the contributions laid down in these regulations will be sufficient to cover them. If they do not, the fee will have to be reconsidered later on. If they more than cover them, next year the fee may be less. Even should there be a balance at the end of the first year's operations, I should say it would be sound policy, whatever the balance might be, to place it in reserve in the event of there being a year when the expenditure exceeded the contributions received.

Referring to the second of Mr. Miles's summarised objections—the use to which the fund is to be put—members will recall that Parliament deliberately amended the clause to include all indigent natives, and referred specifically in discussion to the native retainers of various stations. I think Mr. Miles and Mr. Holmes in particular referred to that feature of native life, namely, the large number of natives living on and not employed by a station. It is the intention of the department to bestow the benefits of the fund upon the working natives, their dependants and the indigent retainers on the various stations. All other indigents will, as at present, be maintained out of other resources of the department and will, as in the past, receive free hospital and medical attention, except in a few surgical cases, respecting which the department have an arrangement with the medical men covering the payment of a small fee. Thus the point raised by Mr. Miles as to who would be responsible for the indigent native is explained by that statement. As regards the stations themselves the contribution by the employer of £1 per head per annum, in accordance with the number permitted to be employed, will cover not only the natives actually employed but their dependants, and also the indigent natives who may be living on the station.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Hangers-on.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They might be called hangers-on, but we have to remember that this is their country. It is the only home they have ever known. Many of them are not fit to be employed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is so.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They could not do much work, we cannot remove them, and they are entitled to the best that we

can give them. Thus they will be treated in exactly the same way as the natives actually employed on a station. The third point upon which Mr. Miles was anxious to have information was the responsibility of the employer. The regulations provide a penalty for an employer who does not act reasonably, and only in such a case would a penalty be imposed. In the past, unfortunately, numbers of natives have died on stations owing to neglect or at the hands of those who should have seen that they were sent in for attention. I regret to say that that statement applies not to one or two but to a considerable number of stations. Some of the particularly hard cases were referred to during the discussion when the measure was before this House. On the contrary, natives have been sent in to native hospitals who had nothing whatever the matter with them. This has involved considerable expense, and we say that if such a case occurs, it is not right that this fund should have to stand the brunt of the expense, which in some instances will be fairly considerable, when it was the employer's responsibility to attend to that native without incurring the expense. To cover this, these clauses have been included. When we consider that the legislation was introduced to safeguard the welfare of the native, I cannot see that there is much to complain about if we provide that an employer of natives who puts the department to undue expense should himself be called upon to bear the expense.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Would the employer pay £1 per head for casual labour, the same as for permanent hands?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, but if the employment is for a less period than that mentioned in the regulations, there shall be a refund, but the refund shall in no case be more than 75 per cent. thus making the minimum 5s.

Hon. C. B. Williams: What would be the total cost to a big station?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is an innovation in Western Australia and I am anxious that the regulations should stand.

Hon. C. B. Williams: How many natives at most would be employed on a station?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The number varies from one to 40 or 50.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Tell us the minimum and the maximum.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As I proceed the honourable member will see what

it will mean to some of the station owners. A point was raised by Mr. Miles regarding mission natives. He asked whether the fee of £1 would be chargeable against mission stations for natives domiciled at the mission. The minor inmates of a mission when sent out to employment will be covered by permit in the usual way and a contribution of 10s. will be payable to the medical fund. Some natives employed by the mission authorities are paid wages for the work they perform and they would be on the same footing as natives employed by any other employer. The mission would be expected to contribute £1 per annum in respect of such natives.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Those natives who simply went to a mission station would not be affected?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No, that is an entirely different matter. They would not be employed by the mission but would be inmates of the mission, and the mission would look after them. Mr. Tuckey raised a point about casual labour. This is provided for in Regulation 4 (ii) and is, as I have already pointed out, a provision whereby a refund will be made where a native is employed for a less period than 12 months, but no refund may exceed 75 per cent. of the contribution, thus making the minimum contribution for a casual worker 5s. Additional regulations are now under discussion designed to cover casual labour to a further extent, but this is only a minor matter and is not affected by the motion for the disallowance of these regulations. It is quite illegal for any person to employ a native except under permit or permit and agreement, and it would be advisable for station owners to remember that. I do not think it is right that the genuine employer, who is prepared to meet all his obligations to native employees, should be called upon to pay the fees, small though they are, while other employers are allowed to go scot free. All said and done, the department are operating in the interests of the natives, and over the years the department have done much work at considerable expense, which expense, in many instances, should have been borne by the employer. Under the present scheme those who take out a permit and pay the contribution will be relieved of some of the obligations they have had to carry in the past. Financially, I believe, they will be better off than before.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have you any estimate of the amount you are likely to receive?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Will you give us the figures?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One other point I should like to stress because it relates to the question of workers' compensation. Previous to the passing of the Native Administration Act all natives were workers within the meaning of the Workers' Compensation Act. The pastoral industry was required to insure natives, for which it paid a premium of £2 12s. per £100 paid in wages, while for a domestic the minimum was 7s. 6d. and 5s. for each additional like employee. Quite a large number of employers, however, have not complied with the law: they were not insuring their employees. Consequently those employers who did not insure under the Workers' Compensation Act and who are now called upon to pay this £1 per head per annum, feel that they are being hardly dealt with, while the other employers, who have always recognised their obligations to the natives and who have always insured the natives employed by them, welcomed the introduction of these regulations. In some cases it means a big saving as compared with the amount which they would have to find for insurance each year of all the natives they employ. On 30 or 40 natives under permit, an employer would pay considerably more in the way of premiums under the Workers' Compensation Act than he is now called upon to pay under these regulations. In that way such an employer gets considerable relief. The employer who did not insure previous to the passing of the Native Administration Act and who is now called upon to pay his contribution of £1 per head per annum, feels that he is being badly used. Before these regulations were submitted, the department consulted several well-known pastoralists and pastoral firms, and with one exception they all considered the fee quite reasonable.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The objections I brought forward have been put up by the Pastoralists' Association.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I did not know that that was actually so, but I presumed that that was the position.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I think we all did.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The probability is that employers who employ larger

numbers of natives would not agree with the proposals of Mr. Miles. The Pastoralists' Association may have submitted the matter which the hon. member used, and may have said that they would like to have the regulations disallowed; but I have a feeling that the individual members of the association, particularly the larger employers of native labour, welcomed this opportunity to cover the whole of the natives on their stations at the rate of £1 per head per annum.

Hon. T. Moore: In some places natives themselves pay so much to the hospitals.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I suppose that is so. No doubt there are numbers of natives employed in various capacities throughout the State who pay the hospital tax, as pointed out by Mr. Miles. Such a native is in exactly the same position as any other person in the State, in that he is earning money and is called upon to pay a contribution of 1½d. in the pound on his earnings towards the hospital fund. That native is in just the same position as any white worker. If his circumstances are such that he is entitled to hospital treatment free of charge, he gets it. If the case is otherwise, if the native is earning more money than would entitle him to free treatment, he has to pay his share of the cost. Natives within the meaning of the Act are in that fortunate position.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would the employer still have to pay the £1 to the fund although the native was paying the hospital tax?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, if the employer is employing the native under permit.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Despite the fact that the native was paying hospital tax?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. It is a contribution which the employer has to pay. It covers not only the employee, but the employee's dependants. To withdraw these regulations at the present time would completely disorganise matters. We have deliberately refrained from introducing these regulations until the 1st July, a period of about six months, in order that the term might coincide with the period for which permits are issued. We want to make it clear that it is not a question of gaining a profit. It is just a question of making adequate provision for natives

throughout the length and breadth of the State. It will have very little effect so far as the department's funds are concerned. Mr. Miles suggested that the regulations would mean a saving to the department. I assure the hon. member that there will be no saving whatever to the department. Even if there was going to be a saving in that particular direction, whatever saving there was would be spent in the interests of the natives in other directions. The hon. member pointed out that in the Northern Territory the contributions paid by employers are much smaller than the contributions in Western Australia. That is quite true. The Northern Territory has a graduated scale running up to £16 per annum, but it is not possible to make any exact comparison between the Northern Territory and Western Australia in that respect. My own personal opinion is that, particularly on account of its not being possible for the department to get any detailed information as to the operation of the system in the Northern Territory, the system there is practically a dead letter. We have tried by all means available to us to get some details of the operation of that scheme, and we have failed. From information which we have obtained from individual sources I say very definitely indeed that it is not possible to establish any comparison whatever between anything that may be operating in the Northern Territory and anything operating here. In addition, there is no obligation on the Northern Territory employer to insure the natives he employs under the Workers' Compensation Act, while in this State the Native Administration Act does impose that obligation on the employer. The Commissioner of Native Affairs took the scale of contributions which is supposed to apply in the Northern Territory, and applied it to Western Australia. There are two Northern Territory scales, one being known as the country scale and the other as the town scale, applying to natives employed in either country or town in the Northern Territory. It was found that if we adopted the country scale, the amount of revenue which we would receive in one year would be £1,417. That would be the total amount received from contributions to the fund to cover the whole of the medical and hospital expenses for all the natives in this State. It will be seen, therefore, that the adoption of that particular scale would

be quite inadequate for our purposes. If we adopted the Northern Territory town scale, the position would be worse still. It would simply mean that on the permits issued by the department last year, the revenue received would be £1,140, considerably less than under the Northern Territory country scale. It requires little calculation to appreciate that the amount of revenue received even under the Northern Territory country scale would not be nearly sufficient to meet the liability which is intended to be covered.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have you an estimate of what you are likely to receive from the £1 per head?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not got the figures here, but it is easily arrived at. The amount would be about £4,000. It would vary each year according to the number of permits taken out and the number of natives employed. It would not be a stationary figure, but one varying from year to year. There is only one other point I desire to make clear with regard to the matters raised by Mr. Miles. It is as to whether the scheme is optional or compulsory. Hon. members may recollect that while the Act was going through the House, there was a good deal of discussion on that point. The Bill originally provided that the scheme should be optional, but that where an employer contributed to this particular fund he should be relieved from any obligation under the Workers' Compensation Act. As the result of amendments moved here, and finally as the result of a decision reached by managers in conference, Clause 36 was altered, especially at the request of Mr. Holmes, so as to make the fund compulsory. At present, therefore, one cannot obtain a permit to employ a native unless at the same time one is prepared to pay the annual contribution to the fund. In the event of the native not being employed for a full year, there is a regulation, as I have already pointed out, whereby a refund can be made up to 75 per cent. of the original contribution.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about the Third Schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The measure is so clear that it is rather surprising that a question of that kind should be asked, unless the explanation is that the legal phraseology in which the regulation has been drawn may have given the hon. member or his advisers the idea that employers would still

be liable under the Workers' Compensation Act. Subsection 5 of Section 36 of the Native Administration Act reads:—

The holder of a permit who complies with the provisions of this section shall not be under any liability for workers' compensation to an injured native in his employ, or to the dependants of any such injured native, under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act, 1912-24.

I am advised that that provision relieves the employer of all obligations under the Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That was the intention of Parliament.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, and these regulations have been compiled with that end in view. So that I fail to see why there should be any strong objection to them. I can assure Mr. Miles that a great deal of time has been spent in framing the regulations, and that their whole object is to cover the natives who are employed under permits, those who are not under permits, and also those who reside on a station but cannot by any stretch of imagination be considered employees—in other words, indigent natives. This is purely an experiment. We cannot say with any exactness whether the amount which will be received will be sufficient to cover our expenditure for the year. If it should prove insufficient, the probabilities are that we shall have to ask for a somewhat higher annual contribution. If it is sufficient, then it is quite possible that the department will be content with a smaller contribution, although, as I have said before, my own personal opinion is that any margin over and above the expenditure in any one year should be, as a matter of wise foresight, placed to reserve in order to meet the probability of a deficit in future years. It is only reasonable to say that it will probably take two years of the operation of the fund before either the department or anyone else will be able to say with any degree of certainty whether the fund is sound financially or not. I do hope the House will not disallow the regulations. I believe them to be in the best interests of all concerned. Once they are in proper operation, the natives of Western Australia will be in a position to receive far better treatment during sickness or disability from accident than they have ever received before. Therefore I oppose the motion.

The PRESIDENT: It has been pointed out that the motion as it is worded is hardly correct inasmuch as it would imply that it refers only to Nos. 1 to 9 of the regulations. Therefore I suggest that to put the matter in order the hon. member might ask leave to have the words appearing in brackets omitted. The meaning would then be clear.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I ask leave of the House to delete the words which appear in brackets.

Leave given, the motion amended accordingly.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.17]: I have no wish to enter into this controversy but I have no desire to cast a silent vote. If my memory serves me correctly, this was the most contentious part of the amending Bill which was before us last session.

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Then it was one of the most contentious—the question of native coming under the Workers' Compensation Act. I think a compromise was arrived at. At any rate, I do not see any necessity for hurry in the disallowance of the regulations. I would suggest to Mr. Miles that as the Minister has already told us that this is merely a beginning and something in the nature of an experiment, he should not press the matter to a finality just now. The debate might be adjourned and an endeavour made between the parties concerned to arrive at an amicable decision. It is not the first time in my recollection where the necessity for disallowing a regulation has arisen, and when the contending parties have come together and arrived at a satisfactory solution of the difficulty by the Government withdrawing the regulation in question and substituting another that met with general approval. The position is that if we disallow these regulations and there is no move to bring the two contending factors together with a view to unanimity being arrived at at some time limit being imposed, the Minister will be forced to draw up another set of regulations in order to comply with the provisions of the Act, and those regulations also might not be satisfactory. I have yet to learn that there is not a way out of the difficulty. The Minister could put a time limit on the regulations and see how they work.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson debated and adjourned.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Sixth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central) [5.6]: My remarks will be fairly brief, but I think it is necessary that we who represent a portion of the State far removed from the capital should give those who represent the capital some idea of the real position of the State. It has been thought by some who have already spoken that everything is quite all right as far as the State is concerned, and I am afraid that that is the idea that obtains in the metropolitan area.

**Hon. V. Hamersley**: The Lieut.-Governor's Speech gives us that idea.

**Hon. T. MOORE**: We have had Governor's Speeches as long as I can remember and a good picture is always painted though it does not often represent the actual state of affairs. We in the back country know that for quite a long time the farming industry has had a very bad spin. For the past six years it has been a losing proposition and alongside of that is the pastoral industry which also in the last few years has experienced a very bad time. Along with those two industries we have the mining industry which certainly is a very bright spot. The timber industry likewise, I am glad to say, is also a bright spot but from a financial point of view the State has to be carried on with money obtained from those industries. Therefore, if those industries were in a healthy condition the finances should be good. We know that when our industries are not in a healthy condition the finances cannot be good, and when the Government in power to-day are blamed for not doing this and not doing that, I would like those people who are casting the blame to say where they would get the money with which to do all those things that they ask should be done, if they were in control of the affairs of the State.

**Hon. H. S. W. Parker**: Put them in and find out.

**Hon. T. MOORE**: We put them in before and they did not find out.

**Hon. C. B. Williams**: They reduced wages when they were in power.

**Hon. H. S. W. Parker**: This is not part of the depression.

**Hon. T. MOORE**: The hon. member has expressed the belief that the depression is over. I hope he is right, but I know it is

not as far as the back country is concerned. The farming industry is in a deplorable state.

**Hon. G. W. Miles**: And so is the pastoral industry.

**Hon. T. Moore**: Yes, and the pastoral industry, too. The position of those two industries is obvious to anyone who is moving about the country. It was a real struggle last year to get a crop put in, but I must say that the farmers and financial institutions pull together very well. We certainly had a little difficulty with the Associated Banks where those banks had second mortgages over farms, but in the area I represent that difficulty was overcome and it was found possible to put in a pretty fair acreage of wheat. Most of that acreage was put in on liens and seeing that the crops were put in for several years under the same set of circumstances, the liens would not be met and the interest would creep up. The position to-day is that a lot of the farmers do not know exactly how they are going to get out of the trouble. That is the sum total of farming conditions to-day. One party in Parliament declares that the time is ripe for the introduction of a rural bank. It is pretty difficult, however, to start a rural bank in this State to-day. A few years ago when the time was ripe for such an institution an endeavour was made to establish it. At that time we had the foundation in the State Savings Bank, and if the party clamouring to-day for the establishment of the bank had supported a move that was made at that time, there would have been a rural bank in existence now. But that party did not do so. How would they start such a bank to-day? Where would they get the money? That brings me to the point that recently we heard from the Lieut.-Governor a statement that it was a good thing that we had never given away our sovereign rights to develop the State as we thought fit. I disagree with that remark because every few months we have to see how much money we can get on which to exist, and we have to submit a statement showing what we propose to do with the money. There is no doubt about it, therefore, that our sovereign rights have been taken from us. We have to go to the East to battle with the wise men over there for our share of the funds to enable us to carry on. And the Lieut.-Governor tells us that we have not given away our sovereign rights! Seeing that we have given



to the wise men of the East the right to dictate to us as to the amount of money we are to get, the position is now altogether different from what it was a few years ago. Thus have not our sovereign rights unfortunately been taken away from us? I have dealt briefly with the farming industry because I know that many other members have touched on it already. The pastoral industry is long-suffering, but we hear very little of what is taking place in the areas occupied by pastoralists who do not run to the Government with their troubles. To their great credit be it said that they have battled very hard and they have asked for very little. The Government have met them in many of the small requests that they have put up but they are in by no means a good position. For the past five or six years they have had no lambing, and when we know that kangaroos have died in many of those areas, we can understand how sheep have fared. Kangaroos and emus have died and yet in some cases sheep have lived on. This shows that a sheep is a pretty hardy animal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It will take them five years to get back to the position they were in.

Hon. T. MOORE: It will take a good many years to get back to a decent set of conditions. As to the mining industry, we have a very bright spot on the Murchison. Wiluna to-day is carrying over 7,000 men. Meekatharra's great mine is expected to make progress soon. Then we have Cue—once a good town but almost off the map a few years ago—now full of activity. Triton is now carrying a large number of men, and so too is Yonanmi, and both are likely to carry more. Many mines at Mt. Magnet are opening up, and then there is the Big Bell, which promises to be a very large producer and which consequently will be of great benefit to the State. Mining is the one bright spot in the province I have the honour to represent. If it were not for that, this State would be in a pretty bad way. Provided the price of gold holds—and I think it will—mining should be bright for many years to come. However, I have one grievance, and that is in regard to our educational facilities, or lack of them. If there is one thing we have a right to it is the expectation that our young people should be looked after, and that there should be decent houses and accommodation for the teachers so that

the children might get a fair share of education. Unfortunately, that is not provided. There are numerous instances when the State Treasurer says he would like to provide these facilities, but that unfortunately he has not the money.

Hon. H. Tuckey: And that applies all over the State.

Hon. T. MOORE: But it is wrong, and how it is going to be overcome I do not know, for I certainly cannot suggest any further taxation.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Federal Government are to blame.

Hon. T. MOORE: I support that. Mr. Thomson said yesterday that the Federal Government had forced this State to do certain things. He went on to say that the Federal Government were giving to this State £14,000 to deal with 1,100 men and youths looking for work. We can imagine how much that will do for those unfortunate people. The Federal Government have been unfair to us in many directions. And what do we get from them? We are supposed to get certain services, but look at that unfortunate episode on the North Coast, when a Government vessel arrested a foreign pearling boat, and the arrested boat had to tow the official boat to port. It made us the laughing stock of other countries. Certainly something more should be expected of the Federal Government than we have had from them. If they would retire from the field of taxation or, at all events, from income taxation, the State might be in a position to get back to normal. The Federal people came into it during wartime and have remained in.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Are you a secessionist?

Hon. T. MOORE: I believe I am likely to be, although I have not been in the past. The Federal Government are levying indirect taxation to altogether too great an extent, so pushing up prices on the individual. They never provide schools, hospitals, police, or many other things that the State Governments have to provide. They have all the field of taxation to exploit, and they take full advantage of it. We have been bled by the wise men of the East, and until they cease that operation I do not see how the State is going to get on. I for one cannot tell the State Treasurer where he can get more money, and I hold that unless we can do that we have no right to criticise the Government. There are many things the Government could do if only they had the

money. Our housing accommodation is by no means good. Just consider the railwaymen's houses at Mullewa. The Government say they would like to build houses there for the railwaymen, but they have not the money. I want to know how long we are going to carry on under this sustenance system. It is hard enough for the basic wage man to make ends meet, but the sustenance worker is sent out into the country, where prices are high, and so he has to keep two homes going. Moreover, this system is likely to break up the happy homes in which those men should be living. I hope the time will soon come when the sustenance system will be discarded and we shall get all our men on to the basic wage. The basic wage men have taken a stand in so far as the wife and two children are concerned. We said that we would provide a basic wage for a man on the basis of his wife and two children, and it remains at that to-day, which is surely very unfortunate in a young country like this. Jack Lang has an awful name in this country, but it is to his credit that he instituted child endowment in New South Wales. It has remained there. Had we instituted it in Western Australia at the same time, it would have become a Treasury responsibility, as it is in New South Wales, and so when we go to the Loan Council we would be on the same basis as in New South Wales. In New South Wales the scheme is costing about £1,000,000 and, of course, that is taken into account. The leaders in New South Wales took the responsibility in the first place, and when they go to the Loan Council they put that up as a reason for more money, and so they are allowed for it. It is unfortunate for this young country that we have not larger families. That is the view working men are taking to-day, with their two children when they should have more. Much of the work of the working men is being done by machinery, and no provision is made for the men themselves. We introduced machinery without making any provision for the men who had carried on the industry for years. Whenever machines are put in, those looking after the affairs of the State should make provision for those men who will be put out of work as a result of the introduction of the machinery. There are many other matters I should like to touch upon, but I am aware, of course, that I shall have an opportunity later on. I ask members to remember that the Government of the day have not a very enviable task before them. Mr. Parker said that previous Governments had had

a very bad time. However, I do hope that members of Parliament will do all they can to assist the Government of the day to do their best for the State. That would be much better than continually finding fault. A little praise gets us a long way. If you are continually telling someone that he does not do the right thing, I think he gets sick of trying to do the right thing. Here we have a Government endeavouring to provide necessary facilities in this large State, and we realise what an impossible task that is for the Government in their present circumstances. We should endeavour to put forward ideas as to how things could be improved, rather than be content to sit back and criticise the Government, without ever offering a useful suggestion.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Elliott, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.40 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Thursday, 19th August, 1937.*

	PAGE
Questions: Imprisonment of Frank Evans .....	181
North-West problems .....	183
George Elliott's file .....	183
Committees for the Session .....	182
Address-in-reply, seventh day, conclusion .....	182
Bills: State Government Insurance Office, 1E. ....	214
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment, 1E. ....	214
Air Navigation, 1E. ....	214
Main Roads Act Amendment Act, 1932, Amendment, 1E. ....	214
Rural Relief Fund Act Amendment, 1E. ....	214
Sales by Auction, 1E. ....	214
Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment, 1E. ....	214

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

### QUESTION—IMPRISONMENT OF FRANK EVANS.

Mr. J. MacCALLUM SMITH asked the Minister for Justice: 1, How long before the death of Frank Evans was it decided by the