

tlers were given sufficient work, still on the 10s. a day, in the way of clearing until such time as they got cattle.

Mr. Latham: How long do the officers estimate it will be before the pasture is available?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: October of this year. It is considered that by far the better course would be to get hold of the burr of the subterranean clover this year than to put cattle on the clover. The amount paid last year for seed was much greater than the value of the clover as feed for cattle. On some of the blocks in group No. 32 there is no seed sown yet for dairy purposes. As regards the complete scheme of group settlement, it is estimated that to settle 6,000 people Western Australia must borrow seven millions sterling over and above the £6,000,000 provided. That additional amount will provide the funds needed to carry on the group work. As regards the Agricultural Bank and Soldier Settlement and the Industries Assistance Board, the financial position is such that I ask more particularly those representing the farmers' interests to try to assist the board, who do their best for the settlers and take extreme measures only against such men as have not carried out their work in accordance with the board's requirements. Group settlement, the Agricultural Bank, and soldier settlement would absorb all the money the Government could raise during the next 12 months. I hope every member of the Chamber will give the matter due consideration and realise the difficulties the officers have to contend with.

On motion by Mr. Barnard, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.41 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 13th August, 1924.

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

QUESTION—STATE STEAMERS, NORTHERN RUN.

Hon. G. W. MILES asked the Colonial Secretary: In view of the loss now being incurred by the State steamships in running a two-monthly service from Fremantle to Darwin, will the Government consider the question of discontinuing this service and substituting a monthly service from Fremantle to Wyndham?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: In view of the agreement between the State Government and the Federal Government and the increased subsidy lately obtained from the Federal Government, it is not considered desirable to alter existing conditions of running the s.s. "Bambra." When considering reorganisation of the State Shipping Service the point raised of an increased service to Wyndham will be considered.

QUESTION—RAILWAY TRANSIT, DELAYS.

Hon. G. W. MILES asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that Truck No. 051, containing explosives, which left Perth on Monday, 4th August, is still in transit to Meekatharra? 2, If so, is this due to some of the railway employees working 44 hours instead of 48? 3, Do the Government realise the seriousness to the mining industry of such delay?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Truck left Perth on night of 4th August and arrived at Meekatharra this morning. Owing to an error of judgment truck was delayed two days at Buntine. 2, No. 3, Yes, and action has been taken accordingly.

QUESTIONS (2)—MINING.

South African Conditions, Report.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Has the Government mining representative who was recently appointed and proceeded to South Africa to inquire into the ventilation, sanitation, and working conditions of the gold mines, submitted a report? 2, If so, when will it be available to members?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, The report has been received and is being prepared for publication as early as possible.

Occupational Diseases.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Colonial Secretary: What action, if any, does the Government intend taking to enact a satisfactory law in regard to miners' occupational disease, including fibrosis, silicosis, and other forms of dust disease except phthisis and tuberculosis?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The policy of the Government in the matter will be disclosed in Bills to be introduced during the session.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan) [4.35]: The remarks of Mr. Gray yesterday in referring to the repute of this house in the public mind call for comment from hon. members. While in the main his charges may be regarded as vague, the outstanding one he levelled against this Chamber was that it was conservative, and that the timber workers and other non-householders did not have a vote for this Chamber. Mr. Gray and his colleagues know the facts well enough to inform the "common people," as he called them, of the true position. He knows the Constitution under which both Houses function—the Assembly with the franchise, and the Council on the property basis. If he looked into the matter he would see that the qualification is sufficiently low already.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It shuts out thousands.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Only on the property basis.

Hon. E. H. Gray: No, in the timber areas they pay 2s. a week for four-roomed cottages.

Hon. T. Moore: And for about 6s., which is slightly less than would entitle them to the vote, they get a house as fine as any in Victoria Park.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Bring in a Fair Rents Bill and that will give them the vote.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Under the regime of a Labour Government it may be expected that legislation based on latter day advanced ideas will be introduced, in which event the people will be subjected to a class of legislation that will not be scrutinised by this Chamber, if the Labour policy be carried out. If the Legislative Council were abolished, the State would suffer from hasty legislation, particularly of the advanced type suggested by Mr. Gray. However, that hon. member's remarks need not be taken notice of so much as those of a Labour Minister who was recently reported in the Melbourne Press as having stated that although he was addressed as the well beloved of the representative of His Majesty the King, a partner in concerns of magnitude in the State and held responsible positions, he was not qualified for a vote for the Upper House.

Hon. E. H. Gray: And it was true too.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: We know very well that the statement was made in order to inflame the wage-earners. That Minister could easily qualify for the vote in any one, or all, of three provinces. He could be qualified in respect of farming operations, of orchard operations, or in respect of his house if he saw fit to have one. Such a statement by a public man is not fair and I do not think it was honest.

Hon. E. H. Gray: But it was true.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: If he can qualify but does not do so, it is wrong to make such a statement.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Is he one of those bloated capitalists who will not get a vote?

Hon. E. H. Gray: He does not own a house and therefore is not entitled to get a vote.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Those who voted for Federation—I was one of them—expected that economies would be effected in the State Legislature. I felt that with the advent of Federation the value of the State Parliaments, in view of the Customs and Postal Departments having been taken over by the Commonwealth, would have diminished, with the result that the numerical strength of the State Houses would have been reduced even if the Chambers and State Governors were not abolished altogether.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The States were deprived of two non-paying departments—Defence and Post and Telegraph.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: But that did not compensate for the loss of the Customs Department, for that deprived the State of a chance to develop along proper lines.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Still the defence of the State cost a lot of money.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I agree with that contention, but I desire to point out the position. The Labour Party desire to abolish the Legislative Council. Up to the present it is held by many people that Federation has been of little value to Western Australia. That being so, why cannot the Labour Party move to have the Federal Constitution amended? I will be prepared to assist them, for although I voted for Federation and believe in it, some good may come from a demonstration of that description. I do not say it would be successful. If we cannot obtain the relief we desire, from an economic standpoint, owing to the difficulties arising from Federation, the Labour Party should move to have the State Legislatures throughout the Commonwealth abolished. If we cannot get the relief we require in respect of the Federal burden, I will be prepared to support a move of that description.

Hon. E. H. Gray: You are in favour of unification?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I am prepared to go a bit further than the Labour Party. They merely wish to abolish one Chamber. I would abolish the two State Chambers, but only on condition that every State House of Parliament were reduced or abolished too.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You want unification?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I do not want unification, but it is all I can see for the State in the future in order to effect economy. We must either get rid of the lot and have Federation alone, or seek a return to State Government alone. Unless that is done we will never have true economy.

Hon. J. Duffell: How would the non-payment of members appeal to you?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: It would meet with my approval.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Surely we would have to amend the constitution of the Senate before taking such a drastic action as you suggest.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: We would require to have better conditions than we have to-day. What I wish to secure is some alleviation of the present condition of affairs. To-day State Parliaments and Ministers find themselves greatly overworked. This is quite contrary to what was expected. It was thought their labours would be considerably lessened when the Federal idea took effect. Owing to the fact that they have taken on State trading, Ministers have become managers of trading concerns, and are now busier than ever. They know they are working these concerns at a loss and are placing a further burden upon the State.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Are not they managers without any qualifications as managers?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Yes. They also know that these trading concerns cause incalculable loss to the State because they check individual effort and retard the introduction of capital. As regards the Metropolitan Province, the Governor's Speech is more noteworthy for the questions omitted than for the questions included. One matter dealt with, however, is that of continuing the work to provide an adequate water supply. It is pleasing to know that Mephan Ferguson is reopening works and that the necessary pipes are being constructed in Western Australia by Western Australian labour. I was impressed with the statement of the Premier to a deputation that he was not averse to handing over the metropolitan water supply and sewerage works to a board, and I hope effect will be given to the proposal. It will certainly make for a full and surer supply of water for the city. If the trams also were handed over to a board of control, it would be appreciated by the councils and road boards interested, if for no other reason than that it would abolish the present dual control of the roads traversed by the trams. The local authorities would then be able to keep the streets in better order, and would not be subject to reproach on the score of the disrepair of the centre of the streets, for which the Tramway Department is wholly responsible. The Minister has announced that the relaying of tram lines in the main streets is to be undertaken immediately. This will put an end to the disgraceful condition of affairs that has existed during the last two or three years. When this work is put in hand protection should be provided for the police on point duty at the principal intersections, much as is done in Adelaide. It is not to the credit of the authorities that these men should have to provide themselves with a piece of duckboard by way of protection from the damp in winter and from the heat

of the tar paving in summer. I suggest that a small platform be placed at intersections and provided with an umbrella arrangement to protect the point constables from the weather. In winter the point police may be seen directing the traffic from the shelter of a verandah. With the growth of traffic, point duty cannot be properly performed unless the constable takes up his position in the centre of the street. The Minister has announced his intention of running the trams along William-street in order to avoid the present congestion at Newcastle-street. This will merely have the effect of removing the congestion from the present dangerous spot to another still more dangerous. We all know William-street, the Horseshoe Bridge and its approaches, and we can picture the sort of curves that will be necessary to enable the big bogey trams to negotiate the bridge. I support Mr. Baxter in his protest; Wellington-street is the best thoroughfare to carry this traffic. I do not agree with him, however, that the trams should be run over the Melbourne-road crossing. They should be taken across a new bridge linking up with Oxford-street. This would give a direct route to Mt. Hawthorn and the top end of Oxford-street, and would serve for an extension—definitely promised for this year by the ex-Premier—along Cambridge-street to the Ocean Beach. If this line were constructed, Ocean Beach would become a popular summer resort. The manager of the tramways, Mr. Taylor, considers that the congestion in Newcastle-street can best be relieved by an extension down Oxford-street to Thomas-street and thence into Hay-street. I do not agree with his proposal because it would involve a heavy pull up a long narrow street and past schools where children are liable to meet with accidents, and an ugly angle would have to be negotiated to get into the already congested Hay-street. I have to commend the Government on their attitude to the work of reclaiming our foreshore. This is not mentioned in the Speech but I know that negotiations have taken place with the City Council with a view to securing their co-operation. If an agreement be arrived at, I understand a sum will be placed on the Estimates for this work. It is to the credit of all concerned that at last this question has been tackled, because I believe it will in a great measure do away with the nuisance for which the filter beds have been blamed, but which I believe arises largely from the emanation of gases from the marshy ground when the waters of the river recede.

Hon. V. Hamersley: That is a new idea.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The matter of providing central markets might well have found a place in the Speech in order to show the Government's attitude. The Minister for Agriculture has stated that he does not favour this work being undertaken by the Government, because he regards it as a function of the City Council. I have

long held that a market area should be declared, and that all marketing should be done within that area. This would be advantageous to buyers because it would save their time and give them full opportunities to buy, in addition to which they would have a better collection of goods to choose from.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is agreed upon by all parties. The stumbling-block is the amount of money to be borrowed.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The markets at present are spread all over the city and are held at about the same hour of the day, and unless one can send a buyer to each market, he cannot get the same range of supplies that he could if all marketing were carried out in a declared area. The producer would not have to incur so much expense for handling and would have better opportunity to sell his goods by reason of the greater competition that would ensue and ultimately, I believe, he would secure a better return. That is the real reason why I am anxious to see such a market established. The present system results in a great economic loss to the producer. The proper body to handle the markets is the City Council, but they should act in the capacity of landlords only. Facilities should be afforded to conduct sales under the conditions at present in vogue—*auctioneering*—with additional provision for trade by private barter and an extension of the open markets that have been found necessary in most large cities. The market gardener would then be able to sell his produce direct to the purchaser, or if it was not convenient for the grower to attend the market, one man might be selected to act for several growers in a district. Sales would be made much more expeditiously than by *auctioneering* and time would be saved. Under such a system, too, the householder would be able to get garden produce fresh on the day it was brought in.

Hon. J. Ewing: Have you any idea what the cost would be to erect suitable markets?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The City Council asked for a quarter of a million. To my mind it will be sufficient if the markets deal with produce such as that grown by market gardeners, and fruit, dairy produce, poultry, eggs, beef and pork. Those are the lines that the City Council had in mind and they are the lines, too, in regard to which immediate relief is needed. The ex-Premier demanded that the City Council should also have the handling of horses and cattle as well as chaff and oats. It was that that caused a great deal of confusion. The City Council did not have anything of the kind in mind. Their desire was to provide facilities in respect of the lines to which I have referred so that the producer and the consumer would both derive advantage, the latter particularly getting relief at a reduced cost. Parliamen-

tary sanction is necessary, so as to ensure a maximum number of tenants and rents sufficient to provide revenue for the payment of interest and sinking fund on the capital invested. I was a member of the committee that was appointed to investigate the question, to take evidence, and to draft a Bill for submission to Parliament. I was employed upon that work for nearly two years. Evidence was taken from market gardeners and from everybody engaged on the production of the lines I mentioned. All agreed that what had then been suggested was a good idea, and the committee were given many valuable points. These are still to be found on record. Then there was the difficulty of determining the site.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is the point; they got the wrong site.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Every available position along the railway line was tried out. The City Council thought they would be able to get a site on the north side of the railway line where they have seven and a half acres of freehold land. It was suggested that the area required was 13 acres, and that nothing less would permit of a proper scheme being carried into effect. It was considered that the cost of resuming the remainder of the land would not be heavy, and that the capital cost would, in consequence, be kept down. After consulting the Railway Department—and I wish here to pay a tribute to the late Mr. Light for the assistance he gave—we were informed it was no use thinking of going north of the railway line. As shunting across a main line was had engineering, we had to abandon that idea and to select a site on the south side of the line. It was then felt that, as we had a mandate from the Government it might be possible to make a deal in regard to the resumed land in Marquis-street whereon it was originally intended to establish markets. We approached the Premier and he advised us to see the Commissioner of Railways because he had an idea that a change had taken place in railway views respecting the site and the use to which it was intended to put it. The Commissioner of Railways told us that it was useless to hope to get that site for the reason that the railways would, in the not distant future, require it for their own purposes. We asked whether an idea could be given as to how long it would be before it would be so used, and the reply we received was, "Too soon for you to get any return for the capital you may invest." Then we had to discard that. Next we went to East Perth where the City Council has three and a half acres of land in Wellington-street. There was no difficulty there in regard to a siding because there was one there already. It was found, also, that the

necessary resummptions would not amount to anything like the cost of a new area, and that a second siding could be got in on the north side. Thus the site was regarded as admirable, being easily accessible, which was a very important factor, inasmuch as it would be possible to take in there truck loads of fruit where it would not be possible at any of the other sites that had been inspected. Then we asked the Premier—we placed all our cards on the table—to have the draft Bill prepared. He said that he would instruct Mr. Sayer to frame the Bill. As the Bill did not come forward in due course we interviewed the Premier again and he told us that the Government did not intend drawing up the Bill, that it was the City Council's job. He added that if we got a draft Bill prepared he would submit it to Mr. Sayer. This was done by the City Council's solicitors, and that was the Bill that gave rise to so much misrepresentation. It was declared in the arguments that were used against the Bill that the City Council intended to levy toll on all goods that came into the city. That was quite wrong, and it caused the defeat of the Bill in another place. The intention was that anything sent in for stock purposes or manufacture, or private consumption was exempt, and that all goods sent in for sale by auction should pay toll. This was misrepresented and the Bill went out. I understand now that a request has been preferred for the appointment of a select committee to deal with the proposal, and I trust it will be granted and that the result will be more satisfactory than was the case last year. We must remember that in the not distant future some of the group settlements will be sending their products to market, and that we must have better facilities than those existing to-day. A good metropolitan market, working on the lines I have suggested, will be of great help to the settlers and to the traders. There is another question of local interest to which I desire to refer, and which affects my province; it is the widening of Hay-street. A deputation that waited on the Premier a little while back brought the subject under notice and I hope he will soon give effect to the promise he made that he would consult the metropolitan members with a view to having certain dangerous elements existing to-day attended to. Two important matters in this respect that are worthy of prompt consideration are the rounding off of the corners at George-street and at Harvest terrace. In respect of the latter it is important that the hedge should be removed. I live in Hay-street at the foot of Harvest-terrace and I regret to say that the experiences I have had there have convinced me that the hedge must

go. It may sound like vandalism to make such a suggestion, but it is a question as to whether we value the hedge more than we do human life. During the last few months there have been several accidents at this corner in consequence of cars coming down Harvest-terrace not being able to see the traffic that is proceeding along Hay-street, whilst vehicles proceeding along Hay-street and desiring to negotiate the turn into Harvest-terrace incur a risk when getting up speed to take the rise.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The cars have brakes they can use when going down the hill.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Though they may have brakes, I am satisfied that if something is not done in the direction I suggest there will be a fatal accident at this corner. With regard to Malcolm-street, the difficulty there is capable of settlement because a footpath is provided for on the north side under the lee of the fence of Parliament House grounds. But a footpath is not required there as there is ample space on the south side for pedestrian traffic. Therefore if the space intended for the footpath on the north side were used for road purposes, we would have a thoroughfare wide enough to meet all requirements. I am quite at one with the Government in their endeavour to develop the mining industry and to create a revival. I fully appreciate the value to the State that the discovery of a new field would mean, and I trust that the predictions with regard to Wiluna will be fulfilled. That is just what the State needs at the present time to give it a fillip. If it were possible through the medium of the opening up of a new goldfield to secure employment for 10,000 or 15,000 people, the good that would result to the State would be incalculable. Therefore any money that may be spent by the Government in the direction of bringing about that result will meet with my approval. It is interesting to note that a new process for the treatment of low grade ores is said to have been discovered. This might make some people shy, and induce them to ask whether it is going to mean the cutting of wages. But if there be any possibility of bringing our low grade ores to show a small working profit, I trust the Government, the mine owners, and the miners themselves will do all they can to render it a success. Kalgoorlie just now is not affording much work for miners, but if this low grade ore could be brought into profitable exploitation, it would be an excellent thing for the men.

Hon. T. Moore: And it might teach them to work for low wages.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: No, I do not mean that. Let me congratulate the Government on their announcement of a vigorous migration policy. This is the most important question before us, because as a solution of our troubles the settlement of capable farmers on the land

is the only alternative to the discovery of a new rich goldfield.

Hon. T. Moore: Do you think we are getting capable farmers?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I purposely said "capable." Whether or not they are all capable just now, I am sure they will become capable in time. Certainly they will become public debt sharers, an important thing for us. I trust the Government will push forward their vigorous policy and get a really good body of men settled on the land within the next three years, so that they may help relieve us of our load of interest on borrowed capital, which is now almost stifling the community.

Hon. T. Moore: Then you do believe in State farming?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I did not say so.

Hon. T. Moore: What is group settlement but State farming?

Hon. J. Cornell: State and Commonwealth.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Whilst we are anxious to settle the newcomers on the land, we must be careful not to drive them off again with high railway freights or other similar charges. The primary producer is the only man in the country producing wealth. The secondary industry man is protected by a high tariff, while the wage earner is under the protection of wages boards and the Arbitration Court. The primary producer has neither Arbitration Court nor wages board, notwithstanding which the tariff hits him directly. While we have our State and Federal debts to carry, it is highly desirable that we induce new people to come here and help share our burdens. Still we require to be very careful in handling them, to give them a chance to make good. In the returns issued by the Commissioner of Railways the other day we saw how the settlement of the land has improved the finances of the railways. Wheat two years ago contributed 10.60 of the railway revenue, whereas last season it contributed 13.84, the second highest contribution to the railway revenue, timber holding prime place. Then hay, straw, chaff, wool, fruit and vegetables, products of the land, also contribute to the success of the railways. Undoubtedly it is the primary producer that will make the State; certainly not the city worker nor the secondary industry man. We sometimes forget that the primary producer is the man, and although we wish to be fair to him, we do not give him the deal he ought to get. Even the oversea freights affect him, and every rise in Arbitration Court awards, every reduction of hours, prejudicially touch him. We are too ready to forget that the State can develop only along the lines of primary production. Except we go on producing, we shall have continued stagnation and continued borrowing merely to keep things going, all adding to the burdens that ultimately will sink us and

impel us to do as a friend of mine now in Melbourne has done. For a long time he was a resident in our eastern districts, but in Melbourne recently he told me that he had left Western Australia because in Victoria income taxation on personal exertion was 6d., whereas in Western Australia it was 4s. He added that on going into the sum he found that on the difference he could keep and educate his children, and consequently he had transferred his activities from Western Australia to Victoria.

Hon. J. Cornell: We have not lost much in losing a man of that type.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Still it makes it difficult for us to keep people whom we bring to our shores. It is of no use inducing people to come here and swell the population of the metropolitan area. Since last session I have learnt as much as I could about group settlement. My investigations have convinced me that the Premier will be wise in getting his Royal Commission to work very quickly. I am confident about the scheme if only the overhead charges are kept down to a minimum, and if the group settler be not put on to his block with too heavy a capital charge. The climate and soil are both right. The country down there will grow anything. Moreover the class of people introduced, both men and women, are of very fine type; eager, confident and anxious to make good. But I have this in mind: I am told that the transplanting of the group settlers to their blocks will cost, not the £750 originally estimated, but something between £1,500 and £1,800 each. Therefore the interest charge to the settler will be very much greater than was anticipated, so making it much more difficult for him to succeed.

Hon. J. Ewing: Is that when they have their cattle and their pigs?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: No. That figure does not include stock. Here is the point that worries me: While these people, full of enthusiasm to make good, are there and have had two years' experience as bush workers, they are still inexperienced in stock and farming. When, as suggested, they are given 10 cows, imported cows brought to new pastures in a new climate with new and inexperienced handling, what will happen? In place of the standard yield of milk for 280 days in the year, with a maximum return of a pound of butter per day—no more than is to be expected of a good herd—the change of climate, of surroundings, of feed, and the inexperienced handling, will so affect the cows that the inexperienced settler will not get half so good a return in the first year. The experienced man will get good returns, but not those unaccustomed to the handling of cows.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: They will require a milking stool from which to milk the cow.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I have seen the report of the select committee on the Peel Estate and I know the position there.

I have come to the conclusion that group settlement should not be handled by the department, but should be put in charge of three men, a financial man, a commercial man and a mixed farming man.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is what we, as a select committee, suggested.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: All group settlement should be under such a scheme. I have met inefficient men in charge, and I have seen men working entirely out of unison, pulling one against the other. They get their instructions from different departments, and the result is that expenses must mount up. This would be obviated if they were working under a board of management.

Hon. J. Ewing: Would you take it out of the hands of the Government altogether?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Yes. The ten cows suggested may prove too many for some inexperienced settlers, and not enough for an experienced man knowing how to handle them and provide feed for them.

Hon. A. Burvill: What about the side lines?

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: Pigs and poultry are side lines, and must be thoroughly understood. The cow may be regarded as the main line for the settler. The market for the cow product is at our own door. We are some £500,000 a year short of supplying our own requirements in butter. We have not attempted to manufacture cheese, and are a long way behind our requirements in bacon. Dried milk, concentrated milk and other lines of that sort, are all in the making so far as our group settlement is concerned. It is suggested that 34,000 cows will be required during the next three or four years for group settlers, and almost an equal number of pigs. The difficulty is to find the cows in full profit for the settlers by the time they are wanted. The department or board, if it is appointed, might well concern itself with the question of buying yearlings and upwards. These could be bought very much cheaper than cows in milk. A suitable arrangement might be made with farmers to carry them, feed them and look after them, and prepare them as calf heifers for the settlers. The animals that would then be supplied to the groups would be acclimatised. I would rather see a settler make a start with acclimatised cows than see him start with an imported animal in full milk that had not yet been accustomed to the new conditions. We had an experience of Sir James Mitchell's attempt to import cows into this State some years ago.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They were some cows!

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The venture proved to be of no use whatever. The cows did not yield the returns expected of them. I am quite sure that the bills of the farmers who took them were never properly met. The cows were allowed to wander amongst Zamia palms and they got rickets, and no one knows to this day what the final stage

of the scheme was. There is no doubt the group settlers will have to be watched for a period of at least 12 months when discharged from the sustenance scheme, and put on to their own holdings. They will have to be taught how to arrange for the rotation of crops, and how to properly feed their cows. They will have to be made to understand that when a cow goes dry, after, say, nine or ten months' milking, another cow must be provided to take its place. The settler must be a producer all the year round with his 10 cows, and he cannot afford to have any idleness at all throughout the 12 months. He must be able to milk some of his cows all the year round. The Department will have to see that this state of affairs is maintained, otherwise they will encounter trouble. It is pleasing to note that a new world's market has recently been opened up in America for the sale of butter and dairy produce. During the last three years America has not been able to provide her full requirements in butter, and the Argentine, New Zealand and Australia have had to go to her assistance. We have been able to establish a very satisfactory market there. The difficulty experienced by Australia is in making direct shipment in refrigerators, and in sending away a sufficient quantity of butter. This difficulty is being watched with a view to exploiting the American markets. A fierce fight has been commenced for the British butter market. Russia, after years of inactivity in this direction, is making an attempt to gain a foothold there. The Argentine has quadrupled its output in the last five or six years, and in 1922 exported 16,800 tons of butter to Great Britain. New Zealand has also very greatly increased its output. Thousands of tons of butter will also be supplied by Siberia during this year. Australia's principal opponents are New Zealand and the Argentine, both of which countries produce their maximum supplies at about the same time as we do. Recently the Federal Government and the Ministers for Agriculture of the various States brought into being an Australian Dairy Council. This is a board appointed by the Advisory Dairy Board in the different States. The object is to advise the Minister for Agriculture in each State, as well as the Minister for Trade and Customs, as to the best methods of uplifting the industry and encouraging the export trade. This board has gone so far as to recognise the standardisation of products under a national brand, with the object of competing on the British market along the lines laid down by New Zealand and Denmark. Mr. O'Callagan, the Commonwealth Dairy Expert, who returned some few weeks ago from the Old Country, says there is clear evidence in London that the prices ruling there this year,

as a result of the try-out on the national brand basis, prove that it will not be long before we approximate the New Zealand prices for our produce in England. This will mean hundreds of thousands of pounds a year to Australia. The conditions that have now been set up are meeting with approval in Great Britain. In the past the multiplicity of brands has confused people, but the new system will effect great improvement in that direction. It is also arranged that all butter shall be pasteurised as well as standardised. When it bears the national brand the buyer will know that he is getting butter of 92 points and over. With regard to the quality of the cows, a national herd testing is one of the things that is advocated. This will supplement the work that is carried on by the different States. The quality of the animals and their productivity will gradually reach the maximum standard. This will improve the comparatively low standard that has appertained in Australia as compared with the output per animal in New Zealand and elsewhere. Another method for uplifting the dairying industry has been adopted by the producers themselves. Stabilisation is the watchword now on the part of the dairy produce farmer throughout Australia. He now claims equal right to a living wage with the man engaged in secondary industries and with the wage earner generally. He is asking for a stabilisation of prices so that he shall get a return equal to at least the cost of producing a pound of butter. Investigations are being made with the object of introducing this system into every State, and ascertaining what it costs throughout Australia to produce a pound of butter. The Prime Minister has been asked to introduce legislation to bring this about. He says this means handing over to the board the fixation of prices for home consumption, and that this is inimical to the interests of the Federal idea of free interchange within the States. He, therefore, said he could not undertake to comply with the request. He does, however, realise that an industry that is worth in milk products to Australia £40,000,000 a year must be looked after. He has called a conference for the 18th of this month of representatives of those engaged in the industry in Australia. This conference will discuss with him what kind of legislation he can favour, so that he may then put it before the Federal Parliament with a view to bettering the conditions governing the industry. This should be a distinct advantage to Western Australia, for it would be the means of overcoming one of the main difficulties governing dairying on the group settlements. It will be a fine thing for the dairy farmer in this State to know that over a

period of years he can be certain of getting level prices for his produce that will ensure for him a living wage. As things are to-day he may be thrust down by a falling market, and the local prices may be reduced to a figure below that of a supportable value. Whilst I look upon the settlement of the land as the most important question for this House to consider I also recognise that the financial question is the most vital. I have handled the financial question only from a desire to show the difficulties that are faced by the primary producer. He is the wealth earner of the State. I have also desired to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that, by reducing the working hours to 44 per week, they may very seriously affect the development of the State from the primary producer's point of view. I agree that every man should get a decent living and a decent wage, and should work under decent conditions, but I would point out that it is of paramount importance to the finances of the State that the country should be properly settled. Those engaged in our secondary industries, our wage earners and everyone, must recognise that this question requires most serious consideration; otherwise the financial position will never be improved and the Government will never be able to lift the stagnating load of taxation from our shoulders, and give this State a proper chance of developing. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.55]: I desire to add my congratulations to those that have been accorded to Mr. Drew upon his return to this House. Every shade of political thought will welcome him not only to Parliament, but to his old position as Leader of the House. Those of us who have had experience of his leadership will remember how pleasant it was, and will be pleased to see him back. I also congratulate Mr. Hickey upon his elevation to the position of Honorary Minister. I extend a hearty welcome to the new members of this Chamber, and trust they will prove equal to the task of filling the positions of those who, we regret to say, are not with us to-day. Members may differ in politics, but there is always a bond of friendship between them that makes those who are left feel the loss of the others who drop out at election time. Mr. Macfarlane has referred to the important question of the widening of Hay-street. It is strange that the only way to carry out that work, in the eyes of the civic authorities, is to cut into a part of the grounds that constitute one of the beauties of the city. I wonder if the civic authorities have ever realised what will happen in the future regarding the congestion of traffic in the city. Taking from Barrack-street along Hay-street to Milligan-street, one finds that portion of the city extremely

congested. As regards vehicles, the difficulty could be overcome by the expedient of one-way traffic. Seeing that on the south side of that portion of Hay-street there are only a few buildings of importance, it might be well to consider getting through Parliament an Act extending the alignment of footpath 15 feet further south. In the case of any buildings that are of importance trouble could be avoided by installing pillars and securing the extra 15 feet underneath the structures. But very few of the present buildings are important, and the unimportant ones will disappear within a few years.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about compensation for the owners?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That must naturally follow. But if our city fathers had dealt with the question 20 or 25 years ago, the new buildings put up in the meantime would have been kept back on an alignment on both sides of Hay-street.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: The City Council tried repeatedly to get the necessary amendment of their Act. They desired that every building should be set back to the alignment of the Economic building. That building reflects much credit on the Economic firm.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have no recollection of this means having been suggested during the past 10 years.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It was suggested 25 years ago.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If it was done for the part of Hay-street between George-street and Harvest-terrace, why was it not done for the whole length?

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: It is suggested in every case when an old building comes down, and in some instances the suggestion has been acceded to. The City Council have no power to direct in this matter, but they get it done as far as possible.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am sure that if they put forward the necessary amending Bill now, the wisdom of Parliament would prevail and they would be successful. I have heard many members express pleasure at the improved condition of the State finances. No doubt the financial position has improved, but I would like to see it improve more as regards production. All our improvement so far has been in connection with the expenditure of loan moneys, but that expenditure adds to our interest bill. The new Government should move in the direction of increasing the State's production, which is the one sound economical method of overcoming the deficit. But undoubtedly we have made some progress in that respect during the past few years. There have been repeated references to the wonderful improvement of Western Australia in the last five years. But this is a new country just passing the pioneering stage, and necessarily it must make

good progress. Still, the progress has not been very wonderful in the agricultural areas. According to the figures of improved land, the total acreage in 1914 was 7,320,000, and in 1923, nine years later, it was 8,304,000 acres, an increase of less than a million acres in nine of our best years, speaking from the seasonal standpoint and from the aspect of prices. Land improvement is one advancement we should have in this State, and we must push forward in that respect.

Hon. J. Ewing: The period you have taken was the war period.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Those nine years cover the war period, but they also cover years of wonderful prices and wonderful harvests.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Doubtless you favour a Closer Settlement Bill with a view to increasing production?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If a genuine Closer Settlement Bill had been placed before the House, it would have passed.

Hon. H. Stewart: The Bill was not worth passing.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: While we are pushing forward land settlement, we are not making the necessary advance in extracting the best from our soil and from primary production generally. Let members think for a moment what it would mean if we had the scientific knowledge that is required for the benefit of our producers. Those acquainted with the position are aware that we do not possess that knowledge. The reason why it has not been secured seems to be that it would involve an expenditure of £8,000 or £10,000 per annum. What would that slight expenditure mean to a State such as this! It is quite easy to get that money back from an increased wheat yield, say a yield raised by five million bushels. Some time ago I gave the figures of what an increased yield of three bushels per acre, which is obtainable in this State, would mean. If I recollect aright, it meant an increased wheat value of one million pounds per annum.

Hon. H. Seddon: Why isn't it done?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not know. I, as a farmer, cannot get beyond a certain standard, and neither can other farmers. What is needed is a soil survey for the whole of our agricultural areas. That may seem a big undertaking, but it is very necessary. Here one finds three or four changes of soil in a hundred acres. Along the Great Southern line, for example, farmers have been trying to grow wheat for the past 20 years. There is land on the Great Southern railway that never has produced, and I believe never will produce, a payable wheat crop. The farmers have since discovered that by growing sheep food and oats they can make a profit. But in the meantime many of the older settlers on those lands have left their properties, broken in health and in pocket. Had they

been given the necessary advice, they would have been on their holdings to-day. They did get a certain amount of advice, as much as could be furnished by an impoverished Agricultural Department.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: How many soil surveyors would be necessary for this State?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Three, or perhaps four. The whole survey would not have to be done in a month; it is a gradual process, extending over a number of years.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Every block should be soil-surveyed when it is surveyed originally.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: But Mr. Baxter said the soil varied in every hundred acres.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If we had an overflowing Treasury, such as there was in the days of John Forrest, I would ask for a number of soil surveyors; but under existing financial conditions I would ask for only three or four. The National Government tried to do something in that direction, but we had the war with us and we could not at that time borrow money.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: We don't always have the war, but we always have no money.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I fear the present Government are unfortunately going to experience some difficulty in borrowing. However, let us take the wheat yield and observe the advances in that direction. For the 1914 season our average wheat yield was 12.15 bushels. For the 1923 season it was 8.92 bushels. The seasonal differences were not very great.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Wasn't 1914 the drought year?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I know what I am talking about, because I speak from my own experience.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I know I couldn't get a blade at Korrelocking that year.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Let the hon. member make his statement.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The year does not make any difference.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The return I have quoted is on record officially. I use it as an illustration showing that we have not made that advance which we should have made in our wheat yield. And that applies to other branches of primary production as well.

Hon. J. Cornell: You took almost the worst year on record.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The same slowness of improvement applies to pretty well everything.

Hon. J. Cornell: How does our wheat yield compare with that of South Australia?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I think we are a little better than South Australia.

Hon. J. Cornell: And as regards Victoria?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We are behind Victoria. But it matters little whether we are behind another State or ahead of it. As a practical farmer I say we can improve

the Western Australian wheat yield by three bushels per acre, provided we obtain the necessary scientific advice. We do want that advice. I want it as badly as other farmers. Although I have been farming here for 23 years, I am still lacking in that particular direction. Every bushel extra that is produced represents clear profit over and above the extra cost of handling and of bags.

Hon. T. Moore: You are 10 years behind in your methods.

Hon. J. Cornell: Couldn't you have the soil of your property analysed to-day if you went to the trouble of taking a sample?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The hon. member interjecting has had a fair experience of farming, and I ask him if he would be willing to incur the cost of having the whole of his property analysed. And in the second place to whom am I to go to get my soil analysed? There was one officer who could do soil analysis, but the Government retired him. In any case, that officer had not the necessary time to do what is suggested by Mr. Cornell. If Australia as a whole, and not this State alone, is going to pull out of the present financial situation, it will be done on what Australia produces, and on nothing else. Every effort must be made to increase the production of the Commonwealth. Look at the enormous return it means if the value of production per acre is increased. The benefit accrues not only to the one State, but to every State of the Commonwealth.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Would the individual farmer be prepared to pay for this expert advice, or would he want it free?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not think the individual farmer would look upon expenditure for that purpose as an extravagance, but still I think the matter is one of national importance. While the individual farmer would no doubt be prepared to bear 50 per cent. of the cost involved, the question is one of national concern. The individual farmer is only a cog in the wheel which produces the wealth that carries the State on.

Hon. E. H. Gray: But very often he says he is the whole wheel.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: He frequently is. I notice that reference is made in the Governor's Speech to railways. We have got into difficulties regarding railway construction in Western Australia but unfortunately the trouble occurred at the commencement. Instead of providing railway facilities to an area and fully settling it, the State has allowed settlement to take place at many isolated points. The result has been that settlers have agitated for railways and these have been built until now we have a regular cobweb set of railways spread over the State. Despite this, many of the areas concerned have not been fully settled yet. On the other hand there has been neglect of settlers who have been long established. I know of one instance where settlers have been labouring under

great hardships for over 16 years and promises made to them for railway communication have been broken again and again. In the Yorkkrakine district we have one of the finest belts of country in the State held up because no railway facilities have been afforded. We have not even got a promise of a line in that district.

Hon. A. Lovekin: At any rate promises are not worth much.

Members: A Bill was passed last session!

Hon. J. Nicholson: Yes, the Yarramony Eastward line was passed last year.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, only the survey. There are settlers in that district who have been carting over a distance of 22 miles.

Hon. J. Ewing: Are you sure that railway was not passed?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, it was not passed.

Hon. J. Ewing: I think it was passed last session.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Is it in your province?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. I suppose it is no crime to urge the construction of a line! It is an important matter.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: It is not a crime, but I thought you might get into trouble if your electors were aware you did not know the line had been passed.

Hon. J. Cornell: The railway is one of the first that should be constructed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am glad to hear that interjection from Mr. Cornell because he knows that part of the State well. It is useless to expect to develop the country unless proper facilities are made available for the settlers. When we ask farmers to carry on operations beyond 12½ miles away from a railway, it becomes difficult to make farming pay. The only way to get over the difficulty is to provide railways. About 18 months ago I had what was then referred to as the temerity to speak in strong terms in opposition to the way the developmental works on the Peel and Bateman estates were being carried out, and my remarks applied also to the group settlements. Not only in this Chamber but outside, I was attacked very bitterly. The "West Australian" newspaper in January, 1923, published strong comments concerning my attitude. That followed on an interview I gave to a "West Australian" reporter on the 7th January, 1923. In effect the article set out that I was against the advancement of the country and I was not the sort of person who should be in Parliament. The "Daily News" adopted practically the same stand. In the issue of the "West Australian," dated the 8th January, 1923, the present Minister for Lands attacked me rather bitterly after he had paid a visit to the group settlements. It will be rather amusing to see what will occur in the near future regarding the bitterness displayed towards me. At that time I pointed out the position and outlined what would occur.

What I had in my mind was the consideration necessary for the interests of the State and with the information I had at my disposal, I knew perfectly well that the expenditure of money on both the Peel and Bateman estates and on the group settlements as well, was excessive. I knew that there was extravagance. Notwithstanding that, when I gave my interview to the Press, a strongly worded leading article appeared in the "West Australian." To that I replied on the Tuesday. To show how kindly disposed the "West Australian" was towards me, despite the fact that promises of publication were given day by day, it was not until the following Friday when I approached one of the head men in the newspaper office, who told me he knew nothing about it, that I got any satisfaction, and the interview appeared next day. This is the treatment meted out by that journal to a public man who merely tried to do his duty in the interests of the State! What has happened? A Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the operations at the Peel and Bateman Estates. I ask hon. members to throw their minds back to the time I made this speech, so as to refresh their memories. The report of the Royal Commission shows that every charge I made in the course of that speech was fully justified. That justification came 18 months later, but I am afraid it came rather late in the day. I had been written down as a traitor, as a doubting Thomas, and so forth, but proper recognition of the truth of my statements did not come at the time. Confirmation of my statements is in the hands of members to-day. Had proper recognition been given to my statements at the time, Western Australia would have been saved a considerable amount of unnecessary expenditure and blocks on the estates would not have been so over-capitalised.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The Commission did not cost the State anything.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am not speaking about the cost of the Commission. Had the public generally taken notice of my remarks, the Commission would have been appointed a year earlier.

Hon. J. Cornell: The position regarding the Commission's report seems to be the same as that in reference to your remarks. No one believes it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is hardly correct. There are many people who believe what I have stated. The present Government view the position rather seriously. They believe it, at any rate. The trouble is how to right the position. I said at the time that there was no policy in evidence in connection with the land settlement question, and I was attacked on all sides. In fact, a former Minister made the statement at a farmers gathering that the policy was so simple that probably the people would not understand it, if they were told what it was! On the other hand this is what the

Commission had to say on the point and their comments prove that what I said was correct:—

It will thus be apparent that before any such undertaking is embarked upon, the objections must be clearly defined. There must be full co-ordination of effort on the part of all concerned. The work to be undertaken must be prescribed in full detail; surveys and classifications of areas must be carefully prepared; estimated costs must be calculated, and at least some general conception must be predetermined as to the ultimate capital which will need to be borne by the settler—what class of production he is to embark upon, and what future prospects are ahead of him, provided he is capable and industrious. Your Excellency's Commissioners regret having to report that the evidence before them discloses non-compliance with any one of these essentials prior to the placing of the settlers on the land, or before the work of development was proceeded with.

My charge all through was that there was no policy to govern the carrying out of the work on the Peel and Bateman Estates, nor yet in connection with group settlement. That my statements were well founded is proved by the extract from the Royal Commission's report that I have read to non-members. That confirmation, however, comes late in the day. I also referred to the cost of development at the Peel Estate and stated that the work would cost £1,000,000. I was ridiculed at the time. Mr. Ewing, who was then Leader of the House replied to my statements and the figures he furnished to the House were much below those I had mentioned. In the course of his reply Mr. Ewing said—

I shall quote the correct ones and the hon. member can judge for himself. The expenditure on lands and surveys to date amounts to £48,623; and on roads, drainage, etc., £332,120, a total of £380,743. The amount recoverable from plant, tramway, etc., is £20,000, leaving a total of £360,743.

Now we find that according to the report of the Royal Commission the actual costs have been well over £1,000,000 so far.

Hon. J. Ewing: The Royal Commission did not say that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is no question about it. They did say it.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member is speaking. He can say whatever he thinks fit.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The report of the Royal Commission says that the total cost has been £1,169,648.

Hon. J. Ewing: But that was the estimated cost!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: But that is the departmental estimate and we know what such estimates are.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is not the departmental estimate. That is the estimate arrived at by the Commission.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The figures are taken from the evidence given by the expert officers.

The PRESIDENT: I do not want this argument to continue. The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The figures referred to in the Commission's report were supplied by the expert officers.

The PRESIDENT: Well, you quote them; you are justified in doing so.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We know that if there is any mistake in connection with departmental estimates, it is that they are always under the ultimate cost.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That applies to expenditure, not to revenue.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Quite so.

Hon. A. Lovekin: In paragraph 18 of the Commission's report you have their estimate. The figure you quoted referred to the departmental estimate.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am being as lenient as possible, because I desire to do what I can in the interests of the State. I want to impress upon the present Government that unless they take up the matter promptly, the position will become more serious.

Hon. J. Ewing: You do not want them to stop, do you?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Who wants the Government to stop? Can the hon. member stop a bolting horse without doing some damage? In this instance, there will be a good deal of damage done before the bolting horse is stopped. The Government are saddled with this and other babies, and they are very costly ones, too. Any help I can give to the Government in overcoming the present difficulties will be gladly made available to them. Another matter I dealt with was the necessity for appointing experienced men. The Commission recommended that also, thus bearing out the truth of what I said. It is impossible to handle such country as I have referred to with men of no experience. It is only necessary to visit the scenes of these activities to ascertain what this means. If hon. members go down to the groups to-day they will see big trees uprooted. That would never be done by a man having experience in that class of country. This procedure will cause the cost or clearing to be double that which any experienced settler would provide for. It is obvious to hon. members that the high cost will have to be written down and the poor old State will have to take over the burden. When referring to the question of sustenance I told the Government of the day that they would have to continue those payments and this has been done. The upshot is that what should have been a successful scheme is turning out to be something in the nature of a calamity.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: During the course of my remarks prior to tea when discussing the Ucarty-Yorkrakin railway, I confused the passing of the Bill with the construction of the line. A deputation waited on the Minister for Works, but very little encouragement was given regarding the building of the line. I trust the Leader of the House will note what I said as to the importance of the line and that if any money is available for building railways, this line will not be overlooked. It has been held in abeyance for a long time, and its construction will mean much to the State. Dealing with group settlements, one matter I have stressed in the House and outside of it has been that of the number of cows that would be available for the settlers. The Peel Estate and group settlers will have to rely mainly on dairying. The greatest drawback is that it is impossible to go into the market and buy more than 500 cows. I stated that 18 months ago and repeated it a year ago, and was taken severely to task by the then Leader of the House (Hon. J. Ewing), who assured us that there were plenty of cows available. During the course of the debate I stated by way of interjection, "You cannot get enough cows." He replied, "The cows are available." I said "You do not know what you are talking about." The Minister then stated, "To show that I do know what I am talking about, the Minister for Agriculture gave me information today; he said that we are in no way hampered with regard to cows. We can get them whenever we want them." The Commission have shown that the cows required in the near future will number over 30,000, and it would be impossible to buy 500 tomorrow. That is the most important point regarding group settlements and yet nothing has been done.

Hon. J. Ewing: The rinderpest cost us 1,500 cows.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: They were not all dairy cows.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Even if they were all dairy cows it would be a very small number compared with what is required. Up to the time the Commission sat, the Government had not taken the expert advisers into their confidence. They had not referred to the dairy expert as to the possibilities of dairying on the Peel Estate or what was needed. What is the good of having Government experts if they are ignored? The Government could not have lacked confidence in the dairy expert, Mr. Hampshire, because he is one of the best men in the Commonwealth, has had long experience, and is acquainted with the conditions in New South Wales as well as in Western Australia. Yet he was brought in only at the eleventh hour when it was almost too late. He told the Commission it would be impossible to get more than 500 cows. It is all very well to talk of buying cows in the Eastern States. What would they cost?

Too much for group settlers. Besides, if any beasts were transferred from the Eastern States to Western Australia, they would have to become acclimatised, so that imported cows would be of very little value for eight to 12 months.

Hon. J. Ewing: How many will be required at the end of the year?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If only 1,000 were required where would they be obtained?

Hon. J. Ewing: I think they will be obtainable.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is of no use thinking. Mr. Ewing told us last year that he had it on the authority of the Minister for Agriculture that the cows were available. Yet he had not referred to Mr. Hampshire. Mr. Hampshire would have told him the position. If the Government of the day had taken notice of my remarks, preparations might have been made to secure the requisite number of cows. The new Government want to put settlers on their blocks, and are talking of giving them one cow and one pig because additional stock is not available. That is the unfortunate position in which the Government are placed. Then take the capitalisation of the blocks. I said it looked as if the capitalisation would be in the neighbourhood of £1,600 per block. I was told it would not reach anything like that amount. Now we find from the figures of the departmental experts that the capitalisation of each block stocked with 10 cows will be over £1,800. How are the blocks going to carry that capitalisation? The maximum revenue that can be expected from 10 cows is £150 per year. I can well remember Mr. Willmott, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Lovekin and myself stressing the point regarding the capitalisation of the Peel Estate. When Mr. Willmott said it would be half a million he was taken to task, but were not the figures right? The estimate is 1½ millions. I had my mind fully made up as to what the cost would be. Some people said, "Where did the information come from?" Would a member of Parliament make such a statement unless he could substantiate it?

Hon. J. Ewing: He should not.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: He would not, and yet the hon. member was one of the first to challenge my statement at the time. Before a settler can hope to make anything like a living, he must be supplied with 20 cows. Those members acquainted with dairying will bear me out in that. Given 20 cows a settler and his wife will have little time to do anything more than grow fodder for them. Therefore they cannot expect to produce much revenue from side lines. Allowing 1½ pigs to the cow a settler will do very well if he secures a return of £15 from each cow per year, or a total of £300. Taking the capitalisation at £2,000, interest at the rate of seven per cent. will mean £140: manure, seed, etc., will cost £50, and incidentals £30. I am cutting the figures fine. Then allow £20 revenue from side lines. I have allowed £15 a year from each

cow, which is a very high rate for this State. I doubt whether that average will be obtained, but let us put the best case possible. The settlers would have £320 revenue against £220 liability, or £100 clear per year, equal roughly to £2 per week. I wonder if they will be content with that when the basic wage is over £4 a week?

Hon. J. Ewing: It would be a pity to make them discontented.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is as well to let them know the truth. I want the Government to realise the position in order that they may put things right and see that future groups are handled more economically and are not over-capitalised as are those at present. Mr. Macfarlane referred to the tramways. I view with alarm the statement that the Government, for the sake of expediency, intend to lay a double line over the horseshoe bridge. I saw surveyors at work there to-day, so I assume they intend to proceed with the work. I have stressed the necessity for inquiry regarding the dangerous nature of that bridge. I have driven vehicles in most parts of the Commonwealth and I do not know of any crossing so dangerous to life as is the intersection of Roe-street and the horseshoe bridge. Then we have to consider the tremendous expenditure that will be entailed to construct a double line across the bridge. After that is the wear and tear. The lines across the bridge will be all curves, and a tremendous amount will be required for upkeep, not alone on rails and roadway, but on the cars as well. This will go on for all time. Where is the advantage? Mr. Macfarlane said he did not agree with my contention that the tramways should be taken along Wellington-street and over Melbourne-road crossing. Something must be done. A bridge must be built at the Melbourne-road crossing.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Then it will have to go from Murray-street and not from Wellington-street, so as to provide sufficient room for the trains to pass beneath the bridge.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That would not make any difference. The fact remains that we must seriously face the question of building a bridge over the Melbourne-road crossing. A little while back I counted no fewer than 78 vehicles waiting to cross the line while shunting operations were being carried on. These vehicles waited no less than 15 minutes. Imagine the cost of that to the community. Every man who was driving a vehicle was being paid while he was wasting time waiting for the gates to open, and if there were some who owned their own vehicles, their loss of time also would be a matter of consequence. This kind of thing is an economic waste as well as a hindrance to trade. The

crossing is a most important one on account of the railway goods sheds, and if a bridge is built there, provision can be made for the trams to cross the line by means of that bridge, and more people will be served than if the trams were taken over an existing dangerous bridge which will cost a great deal of money before it can be made fit to carry the tramway traffic. Then there will always be the danger of bogies leaving the rails at the curves. We have often seen bogies running off the lines where the curves are sharp. I tremble to think what will happen one of these days if a bogie travelling at a fair speed leaves the rails on the William-street bridge. It will finish up somewhere in the railway yards below. I shall not deal any further with the subject at present because I intend to submit a motion to the House regarding tramways and water supplies. I would like to say a few words in reply to Mr. Gray's remarks on the subject of meat supplies, and perhaps my remarks will save the Leader of the House indulging in straight talk to one of his own supporters. The course the hon. member suggested will not have the effect of cheapening the price of meat; as a matter of fact it will make the price dearer. More especially does that apply to what he says is a monopoly on the part of some firms. The Government have been bringing frozen meat from Wyndham to Perth. It is necessary to cultivate a taste among people for frozen meat, and that is a difficult thing to do.

Hon. E. H. Gray: We are doing it successfully now.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: To a certain extent, but I know the prejudice of the people against frozen meat. The people of Melbourne would never have frozen meat and at one time it was not possible to give it away. Then when the war was in progress frozen meat came into the market and was sold at 7d. and 8d. per lb., while fresh meat was retailed at 1s. 4d. and 1s. 5d. The result was that the hotels and eating houses obtained almost entirely frozen meat. It was found so good that they had no difficulty in cultivating a taste for it and now, pretty well two-thirds of the meat consumed in Melbourne and suburbs is frozen. But it is necessary to first overcome the prejudice of the people in this respect, and that will take some time. So far as the Government are concerned, the space on the "Kangaroo" is not adequate either for frozen meat or for the carrying of livestock. The present is a very bad season in the North, and there are not many people with fat cattle to put on board. I have a small interest in one place, and we could not put 50 fat cattle on the ship. There is no doubt about there being space avail-

able at the present time, but in an ordinary year when the season has been fairly good, it is not possible to get space. I remember one year we made application for space and it was allotted for December when, of course, it was too late to bring down cattle. If the Government can see their way to secure more space, we shall have cheaper beef, and that, to a certain extent, controls the price of mutton. Let me now refer to the monopoly of which the hon. member spoke, the monopoly in respect of the control of trucks on the Government railways. Prior to the agents having control of the trucks, a state of chaos existed. One week there would be an over-supply of stock in the market, enough for the needs of the metropolitan area for a fortnight or three weeks. Then the price would drop to zero. A few middlemen would come in, buy most of the stock, and having paddocks adjacent would hold the stock until the next market. Just consider the position of the railways. They never knew what to do; one week they would find trucks that their clients required, and the next week there would be a surplus of trucks, and then, of course, when the market was shy, the middlemen who had bought the stock on the previous market would put that stock out and practically command their own price. Meat would be dearer under that system than it is under the existing system. The agents who have control, know what stock is required and they make every endeavour to get a full supply of stock for every market, and it is seldom they are short. The agents are trying their best to keep the market well supplied. They are not interested in the price that stock brings, though of course they want the market price.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They want the highest price they can get.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, but they do not do anything to push up the price. Their desire is to stabilise the market and see that it is well supplied. Regarding the sheep position, I doubt whether there will be any increase in numbers this season. The lambing percentage will be very low while the mortality rate has been high. Therefore we cannot but expect to find only a small increase throughout the State. Then with the high price that wool is commanding, mutton is bound to be dear for some time to come. The outlook is not very bright, due to the seasonal difficulties to which I have just referred. The hon. member dealt with the price of bread, and declared that the price of wheat should be fixed on the basis of the cost of production. The average farmer does not work 44 hours a week; he works 16 hours a day. Cut his hours down to 44 per week and I do not know to what price wheat may soar. There is no place in the world where bread is as cheap as it is in Australia.

Hon. J. A. Greig: It is the cheapest article on the table to-day.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I am sure the hon. member desires to see the farmers in this State make a fair living. They are not making too much with the price of wheat as it is, though they will get some recompense for their labours this year. If wheat were fetching any less, they certainly would come out on the wrong side of the ledger. The position to-day is that the primary producers are being bled by a tariff which is of no use to any country. I cannot understand why the Government of a country like Australia, with a population of only five and a half millions, are pursuing a mad career in respect of secondary industries by imposing a high tariff on commodities that are necessary for primary industries. Australia must look to its primary industries if it wishes to make any headway. Too much consideration has been given to merchants and manufacturers. I tell the workers that what the Federal Government are doing is of no benefit to them because the sole effect is to increase the cost of living. The Government of the State would do well to approach the Federal Government on the subject of the tariff, and to assist those Federal members who are working so earnestly in the direction of bringing about a reduction. I am not speaking alone for the wheat grower; I have in mind all who are interested in primary production, because all have to pay exorbitant rates caused by the high tariff for everything that they require. With respect to secondary industries there are a few that can be worked successfully, but only a few, and if due consideration were given to primary industries, we should find that there would be an influx of population which would make it worth while later on to establish secondary industries. We have now established secondary industries to supply merely a small number of people who are scattered over this vast continent. Let us make the primary industries attractive and we shall get population here and then secondary industries will follow as a matter of course. They are bound to follow if the trade is here. I do not think anyone in his wildest dreams will suggest that we can manufacture in Australia and export to other countries when we know that in other parts of the world the labour conditions are much easier than those existing in Australia, a country that is known as the working man's paradise.

Hon. E. H. Gray: A very poor old paradise.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not think the hon. member gave much consideration to the matter when he referred to the price of bread and said that where the loss was made was in the distribution. I tell the hon. member that that is nothing new in Western Australia. For the past 20 years moves have been made in the direction of trying to overcome the excessive cost of delivery. This applies not only to bread

but to every commodity that is delivered. I remember four or five years ago counting eleven bakers' carts in one small street. All the customers have their fads, and cannot be weaned of them.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: I know of a bakery turned down because the customer did not like the look of the man on the cart.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I trust the Government will give consideration to the producing interests of the State. I am glad they propose to assist the mining industry. That industry has not received the consideration due to it. There should be one Minister in control of the mining industry. From past experience I know that one man exclusively administering the Mines Department would be overloaded if he did his work properly. Quite recently a well known Kalgoorlie mine closed down, and the Government went out of their way to find employment for the miners thrown out of work. For that they are to be commended. But I disagree with the nature of the employment found, namely, the construction of roads. The money could have been better expended in developmental work.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: The men could have been sent to Greenbushes to find the lost tin lode.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I should like to impress on the Government the necessity for doing what they can to increase the water supplies in agricultural areas. This would do a great deal to encourage stocking up, and would serve to overcome some of the difficulties of the settlers. I hope the Government will continue their work of constructing dams and extending the gold-fields water scheme. Those extensions cost the Government nothing, yet bring in much indirect revenue. I am pleased to note the Government have made a move in the direction of establishing an agricultural college. Although only a few months in office the Government, sometimes said to be unsympathetic towards primary producers, have set about the establishment of an agricultural college.

Hon. J. Ewing: Give the late Government fair play.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I will. Five years ago a committee was appointed to consider the question. After four months of consideration they sent in their report to the Government. But the report was sat upon. An election intervened, but still the report was kept in the shadow. Only just before the recent elections was it resurrected and something done towards establishing an agricultural college. At several gatherings attended by me the Premier was forced into the position of declaring that he would establish an agricultural college. Had he been at all sympathetic, this most important link in our educational chain would have been established long ago. If the Labour Government push on with it, I will certainly give them credit for having established it.

Hon. J. Ewing: That would be quite wrong.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: According to the hon. member, the king can do no wrong; however, the king does not reign any longer. The Government have a very heavy task before them. The load of responsibility on their shoulders probably is far worse than they expected. I trust they will be successful in their endeavours to secure enough money to carry on a vigorous policy of development. I shall be ready to give them every assistance in putting the State on a sound footing.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: How will they get the necessary money: by borrowing or by taxation?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I notice the Premier is inclined to reduce taxation, knowing what it means to the State. The hon. member earlier this evening related how a former resident of Western Australia had been driven out of the State by taxation. Many such instances have come to my knowledge. During my numerous visits to the Eastern States, on practically every trip I met one or another who, on account of heavy taxation, was leaving this State.

Hon. J. Ewing: They made their money here.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, but it is human nature to hold on to what one makes. By a heavy burden of taxation we are crushing out the men with money, the very men we want, and bringing in paupers. The only way in which to develop the State, at all events for the time being, is by continuing our borrowing that has been going on for so long. Then, by increased production, we can put the State in a better financial position than it is in to-day.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (South-West) [8.9]: Like others, I wish to congratulate Mr. Drew on his return to the House. It was not my good fortune to sit under him when last he was Leader of the House. I was then in another place. The Labour Party were in power and doughty opponents they were. A few months before the general elections one reading the daily Press could only come to the conclusion that the Mitchell Government were bound to return with increased numbers. Then we had the Country Party split. I say that was a domestic quarrel and did not concern the "West Australian" or anybody else outside the organisation. Yet with remarkable instinct that great leader of thought, as it thinks itself—

Hon. J. Ewing: It will give you "beans" after this.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Had that paper minded its own business and not enlarged on this domestic quarrel, it might have been possible to bring the parties together and heal the breach; but when, day after day, the matter was brought before the public, served up with

the porridge at breakfast, it could have only one result, namely, that each side defended itself and so widened the gap until it was impossible to bridge it over. Then we went to the polls. The result was that Labour came back to power.

Hon. T. Moore: A good thing for the country.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Then the paper turned round and again blamed the Country Party. If we examine the election results in the various electorates we can treat that statement for what it is worth—rubbish. Why did the Mitchell Government go out? Because they had promised one section of the community that they would get rid of the State trading concerns. It was that policy that ousted the Labour Government. When Mr. Colebatch sat in this House, did he not, night after night, week after week, slate the Leader of the House over the State trading concerns? The opponents of the Labour Government went to the country on that point, yet when they occupied the Treasury benches only two State trading concerns were got rid of. I am proud to say that I got rid of both and was well and truly taken to task for having done it. I refer to the fish and meat shops, which were of no earthly value to the Government or to the people. Meat was purchased on the hoof in the Kimberleys, brought down, sold at Robb's Jetty at 1s. 2d. per lb., and the State shop retailed it at half that price. Only a few people were benefiting—those who wandered into the shop and carried away their purchases under their arms. The balance of the people were paying for the privilege enjoyed by the few.

Hon. T. Moore: Now tell us about the fish shops.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes, that great enterprise that was to get fish to the public at a reasonable price, presumably at 3d. per lb. without the bone. I took a trip up to Shark Bay over the business. The "Torrens" was anchored there to house the fishermen, and provide the refrigerating space in which to place the fish in readiness for that great liner the "Una." I had the misfortune to travel in the "Una." The ups and downs of politics are nothing at all to the ups and downs of the "Una." When I reached Shark Bay there had been a blow, which was hard enough to blow the funnel out of the "Torrens." The gale had blown away the fish, and there was nothing ready for us. The local people, however, had caught some schnapper, and we brought down half a ton of fish to Fremantle. It smelt so badly that, it did not matter what part of the "Una" we walked in, the smell followed us. Upon our arrival at Fremantle the fish was jettisoned. That fish cost about £2

a lb. Those who were engaged in the industry at Shark Bay wished to work eight hours a day between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., irrespective of wind, tide or anything else. The result of my trip was that the fishing industry as a Government concern was closed down.

Hon. T. Moore: And now the "dagooes" run the whole show and get big prices from the public.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: The industry is now in the hands of foreigners. On Sunday I was speaking to an Australian fisherman and asked him why this was so. He said, "Blime, boss, you do not expect us to live on the boats like these foreigners. We like to go ashore when we get a little money and have a drop of beer. These other chaps fish all the time and get all the business." No doubt the Australian does not like working 24 hours a day on a boat. When he comes in with a catch he likes a few hours off. The other fishermen go straight back without leaving their boats.

Hon. T. Moore: Do you think they are good citizens?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I am not arguing that point. They get us fish, but whether or not it pays us to get it under those conditions is a different matter.

Hon. T. Moore: They will not build up the population.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Not if they live on their boats by themselves. The second reason for the change of Government was the extraordinary effect upon the farming community of the order that went forth regarding the Industries Assistance Board. Immediately prior to the elections Industries Assistance Board clients were warned what was going to happen to them. The Labour Party made great capital out of that in the electorates in which the clients of the board lived. It did not, of course, apply to the South-West, where the board refused to come to the assistance of the settlers when they were being flooded out. The clients of the board went about in fear and trembling, and expressed their views by voting for Labour against the Government. I admit they were misguided, but that is what they did. This was one of the reasons why some of the country constituencies turned to Labour in the way they did.

Hon. J. Ewing: You think that was the reason?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes. A Labour Government is now in control. I hope one of the first steps they will take will be to appoint two more portfoliod Ministers. I voiced that opinion several times when the Mitchell Government were in power. I was twitted with a desire to get a position in the Cabinet, but there was no foundation for the suggestion. I cannot be twitted on that score now, because I am not likely to be offered a portfolio. If

government is to be carried on successfully there must be two more portfolioed Ministers. The remuneration is not so large that Ministers can afford to give a proportion of it in order to pay an honorarium to the Honorary Ministers. I was an Honorary Minister for a little over five years, and I know it is not the sweetest position in the world. A man would do many things if he held a portfolio that he has to submit to his Minister for approval. Matters, for a knowledge of which I take second place to none, have been turned down because in the opinion of the Minister it was unwise. Had I held a portfolio I would have carried out my policy with good results. I hope the Government will take early steps to alter the Constitution so as to permit of these extra Ministers being appointed. It is impossible for a Minister who controls a number of departments to keep his eye on them all. Group settlements have been discussed ad nauseam. I was taken to task by Mr. Ewing, who was then Leader of the House, for a statement I made regarding the Peel and Bateman estates. I said that over half a million pounds had been spent there. I was told that the figure was ridiculous and there was no foundation for it. The Royal Commission said the expenditure had reached £711,000. I was, therefore, £211,000 under the estimate. I wanted to be a member of that Commission, but I was told I was too biassed, and they would not have me at any price. The land in the groups is all right. On the Peel estate there is some land equal to anything in Australia.

Hon. T. Moore: Is that in your province?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes. There is also some very poor land there. I pointed out the inadvisability of placing people on some of these blocks, but I was told I knew nothing about the matter. My opinion, however, has been corroborated in toto by the report of the Royal Commission. There is some beautiful land in the South-West. I have seen land there producing, without an orchard, £70 per acre per annum. If it will do that it will surely grow fodder crops for cows. I agree with what Mr. Macfarlane said, and with a great deal of what Mr. Baxter said, that all this cannot be done in a day. In a short space of time the South-West will be a wonderful dairying centre. We must get the cows, the difficulties with regard to which have been set out by Mr. Macfarlane. Outside the forest areas particularly, the land requires draining. It is a very expensive operation, but if carried out properly the work will be remunerative. The Minister for Lands has already experienced difficulty in getting land for new group settlers, because the Forests Department has refused to allow the land to go. I advise the Government to amend the Forests Act as early as possible. Although I was in Cabinet when it was brought down, I fought it a little in the House, but outside I fought it as hard as I could. It is an awful Act. It gives such power to the Con-

servator as to make one shudder. This is nothing to the Act he endeavoured to ram down the throat of Parliament. There is some beautiful land in the immediate neighbourhood of Bridgetown reserved for forest purposes, and farther south between Bridgetown and Manjimup there is another large area also reserved. I went over it one day with Mr. Hampshire, the dairy expert, and Mr. George Wickens the fruit expert. After I had shown them the land I asked them to climb to the top of one of the highest blackboys, and to tell me if they could see a jarrah tree anywhere. They said there was not one within two miles. I then showed them the plan indicating that the land was reserved for forest purposes.

Hon. J. A. Greig: What kind of timber is on it?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Blackboy and banksia. It is beautiful country for dairy purposes. The ex-Conservator was out to grab the South-West division and bring it under his own thumb; and he nearly succeeded. Under Section 4 of the Act he has control of everything in the forest from timber to beeswax. No one can rob a hive without his permission. One cannot remove a single stick or stone, or even a lump of gravel for the road. The Conservator controls even the birds in the air and the kangaroos that hop along the ground. Do members know that under Section 4 the Conservator can lease land for pastoral and agricultural purposes, or for any other purpose he thinks fit, the revenue going to the Forests Department? When I was Honorary Minister for Lands, I had certain blocks surveyed on Lefroy Brook, immediately adjoining Pemberton. They had a little karri on them, but the bulk of the land never had any karri and ran down into beautiful swamps—ideal country for settlement. I was informed by the Conservator that I could not have the blocks, as he wanted the land for forest purposes. But to-day it is found that the Conservator has leased those blocks, as he has the right to do under the Act, for agricultural purposes. Do we want two Lands Departments—one under the Minister for Lands as it should be, and the other under the Conservator of Forests as it should not be? Having administered the Lands Department for a long time under the Lefroy Government and under the Mitchell Government, I know that the position is unbearable for the Minister. The Forests Act of 1919 should be amended as speedily as possible. Under that Act the Conservator of Forests can construct tramways on any Crown lands he thinks fit, and can also run those tramways. He can build his own railways on Crown lands and run them. Was that ever intended by Parliament? The Act must be rectified at once. There is a beautiful road running around one side of Mundaring Weir, a road constructed by the late Conservator of Forests. No one is allowed to set foot on that road. One is ordered off if one appears

on it. It is one of the best drives in Western Australia. Do hon. members consider it right that the public should be deprived of such a beautiful drive? The road ought to be completed right around the weir and thrown open to the public. Why it was built I do not know, but I can think. In my view, the late Conservator's intention was to complete the road right round eventually, and then to charge a shilling or half-a-crown for permission to drive on it, the profit to go into the coffers of the Forests Department. I trust the new Minister for Forests will take action to have the road made available to the people. Let it be built right round the weir and then we shall have a splendid drive along a lovely sheet of water for our own population and for visitors from overseas. In Mr. Kessell, the present Conservator, the State has an excellent officer, and his staff is very good. I have not one word to say against the present Conservator or his officers, but I have a great deal to say against the Forests Act, which gives the Forests Department altogether too much power. I have consistently held and expressed the opinion that our forests should be under the control, not of one man, but of a Conservator and two other men possessing practical knowledge of our timber requirements and of our forests. At one time our Forests Department was controlled by practical men, but now theory rules alone. I was not a forest ranger for 17 years without getting to know something about this subject. When a mandate went forth from the Hon. John Scaddan, as Minister for Forests, that after cutting a sleeper or felling a mill log one must gather the whole of the top of the tree and place that debris in a heap of a certain specified diameter, ready for burning, did the people responsible for that regulation know anything practical about their subject? Did not I go round from group to group working out exactly what the cost involved would be? I pointed out that if we got £1 for every sleeper produced under that regulation, in many instances that extraordinary price would not cover the cost of the extra and unnecessary work imposed by the new regulation? For once State trading proved itself a good thing, because the absurd regulation affected the State Sawmills and their permits. It was quite impossible to work under the regulation, and very soon pressure was brought to bear by the then Minister for Works, who controlled the State Sawmills, and the regulation was altered. If there had been a practical man in charge of forestry matters that ridiculous regulation would never have been foisted upon the timber trade. Mr. Kessell with one or two good practical men who know the country should be placed in control of forestry and timber-getting matters if the Government want to settle our lands in a proper manner through the Lands Department, and not through the Forests Department. Mr. Gray spoke about the price of meat, and Mr. Baxter has dealt

fully with that question, and I agree with every word uttered by that hon. member. In the old days, before Elders and Dalgetys and other firms had obtained control of the truck supply, one could never get trucks when one wanted them, and when one did not want them they came along in droves. As Mr. Baxter said, in those days chaos reigned in the matter of truck supply. To-day the man who is sending stock to market on the hoof has to get trucks through those firms. That arrangement is better for the Commissioner of Railways, and better for the grower of meat, and better for those who eat meat. But the price of meat is not coming down awhile. At the risk of wearying the House, I must repeat that it is impossible for the price of meat to come down in the near future. As has been stated, there is a heavy shortage in lambing. A feature that people are apt to lose sight of is the depredations of the dingo. Years ago, when I was first elected to another place, I pointed out the danger that lurked in not taking immediate steps to deal with the dingo pest, and I brought into the Chamber the skin of a dingo which, to my knowledge and my sorrow, had killed 200 sheep—worth to-day £2 10s. per head. Sheep were much cheaper in those days, but still the loss caused by that one dingo was severe. Now, however, we find the dingo right through from Leonora to the Leeuwin. Dingoes cause enormous losses in sheep, cattle, and horses. In the Warren district the dingoes pull down the foals. Ever since the wreck of the "Pericles," in 1909, they have increased out of all belief. Before that disaster a couple of pups were a large litter in the Warren district; but with the hundreds of tons of provisions washed ashore from the wreck the dingoes increased hugely in numbers, and to-day there are watering places to which the pests resort in droves of 40 and 50 at a time. People without personal knowledge of the position can hardly conceive to what a degree the Warren country is infested with dingoes. Foxes, too, have become a menace in various parts of the State, and are causing serious loss. I trust the Minister for Lands will make it his business to see that a dingo drive is arranged and carried out, so that something tangible may be done to deal with the dingo from one end of Western Australia to the other. Now just one word about the Perth Hospital. Dr. Saw spoke very ably on that subject, pointing out how urgently funds are needed. But if those responsible for the launching of the appeal wish each and every one to contribute, they must first inform the public that it is their intention at once to reduce the hours of the nurses and improve their conditions generally. Many a person has spoken to me about the appeal and has said that while the present hours and conditions of the nursing staff remain they will not put their hands in their pockets to help the Perth Hospital. I can assure the organisers of the appeal that the

remedying of the situation as it affects the nurses will make a big difference in the amount resulting from the effort. I learn from the Press that it is intended to expend £200,000 on the East Perth power house. On reading that announcement I thought to myself what a great pity it was that Parliament had not listened to the suggestion made by Mr. Ewing years ago to erect our generating station at Collic. How much better would it have been for the State to-day had that suggestion been adopted. The East Perth power house is a vile proposition, as will be acknowledged by everyone who saw the foundations put in. Again, for all time that power house means the draining of fuel to East Perth. As soon as the new plant has been installed, there will be a drain of between 1,500 and 2,000 tons of coal to East Perth every week. What a waste, seeing all the coal there is at Collic. Surely it is easier to carry the juice than to carry the coal. If the Commissioner of Railways is right, he is carrying coal at a loss; and the sooner we cut that loss and carry the juice over the wire instead of carrying the coal over the railways, the better it will be for everybody. A great deal has been said against the group settlements, but much of that country on which the groups are established is eminently suitable for orchards. As an orchardist I wish to point out that for years we have been asking for the establishment of cool chambers on the wharf at Fremantle. I was sorry to learn that it is not the intention of the Government to go on with the erection of cool chambers on the wharf.

Hon. T. Moore: Would that be another State trading concern?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I do not see why it should be. Those facilities could be provided at small cost. We are prepared to put in cool chambers for £25,000 if the Government will provide us with one of the sheds on the wharf. I have not referred to freezers, but to cool chambers where the fruit can be kept with the temperature at 45 degrees. If we are required to send fruit to Robb's Jetty, there will be no case left intact, because, owing to the wretched condition of the road, the cases will be bumped to pieces. There are holes in that road in which one could place six men and then go over them without noticing their presence! It is one of the most awful roads in Australia. We are told that we need not use that route and that the fruit could be sent down by rail. If a ship comes to Fremantle and discovers at the eleventh hour that she has space for another 4,000 cases of apples, the growers should be able to have the fruit on the wharf and put it direct aboard with as little delay as possible. If we have to send the fruit to Robb's Jetty, we would have to get a special train to shift the fruit and then we would have to rail it

to the wharf and put it in the ship. By the time we could get the fruit to Fremantle, the ship would be 10 miles the other side of Rottnest. No ship would wait while 4,000 cases were being loaded at Robb's Jetty and railed back to Fremantle to be placed aboard. The only hope we have of getting the fruit placed on the London and European markets in perfect condition is to have every available facility to enable us to do it. For that purpose we could have cool chambers on the wharf. If the State is to encourage the establishment of further orchards on the groups, the Government should give the growers a chance to make good.

Hon. T. Moore: Is fruit growing a profitable industry now?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Last year it was; the year before that, it was not profitable.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Take an average year?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: In an average year fruit growing is profitable. In fact, it must have been profitable this year, because I notice a great many orchardists running about in new motor cars. There is no greater indication of prosperity than to see a man going to a garage in Perth and ordering a new car.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Perhaps the firms give better terms now.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: But the firms require a certain amount of cash down, and unless an orchardist is prosperous, he cannot pay away that money. So far as I am concerned the present Government have nothing to fear from me as regards opposition so long as they do not bring down communistic or socialistic legislation. With the toning influence of the Leader of the House and other of his supporters, I feel sure that that aspect will be so managed that we will find that only sound and sane legislation will be brought before us, and that the whole House will be able to give support to the Government. I have pleasure in supporting the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.50 p.m.